

**LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY ENGLISH STUDENTS
AT INTERMEDIATE LEVEL**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education
in Partial Fulfilment for the Master of Education in English**

**Submitted by
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A Research Proposal
on
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Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted for the candidature of research degree to any university.

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DEDICATION

Dedicated

To my late father-in-law Koshal Raj Khanal

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ABSTRACT

The present study entitled “Learning strategies used by the students of higher secondary level” aimed to find out the learning strategies used by the students of higher secondary level while learning English language. The study was carried out by using both primary and secondary sources of data. She used a set of questionnaire as a tool for data collection. Data were collected from 80 students who were studying at intermediate level. The researcher applied non-random purposive sampling procedure to select colleges and simple random sampling procedure to select the respondents. The data were analyzed and interpreted by using simple statistical tool like percentage and presented with the help of tables. It was found that although all kinds of learning strategies were used by the students, cognitive strategies were used to a great extent.

The study consists of four chapters. Chapter one is an introductory one. It consists of general background, review of the related literature, objectives of the study, significance of the study and definition of specific terms. Chapter two deals with the methodology which includes sources of data, sampling procedure, tools for data collection, process of data collection and limitations of the study. Chapter three encompasses analysis and interpretation of the data elicited. Chapter four incorporates findings and recommendations for pedagogical implication after the analysis and interpretation of the data. The reference and appendices form the concluding part of the thesis.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

%	:	Percentage
Dr.	:	Doctor
e.g.	:	For Exammple
etc.	:	Etcetra
Fre	:	Frequency
i.e.	:	That is to say
K.U.	:	Kathmandu University
L2	:	Second Language
No.	:	Number
P.	:	Page
Per	:	Percentage
SLA	:	Second Language Acquisition
T.U.	:	Tribhuvan University
Viz	:	Namely

CHAPTER – ONE

IN1 ON

1.1 General Background

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is a relatively young field. Although some interests had been seen in the past, the study of SLA has expanded and developed significantly only in the last 40-45 years. Since that time, the body of knowledge of the field has been increased very much.

Second language acquisition is the process by which people learn languages in addition to their native language(s). The term second language is used to describe any language whose acquisition starts after early childhood (including what may be the third or subsequent language learned). The language to be learned is often referred to as the "target language" or "L2", compared to the first language.

Generally, SLA refers to the process of acquiring the language other than the first language. Gass and Selinker (2008, p. 7) define SLA as "the process of learning another language after the native language has been learned." According to them, SLA sometimes refers to the learning of a third or fourth language, too. Similarly, Ellis (1985, p.6) says, "Second language acquisition refers to the subconscious or conscious processes by which a language other than the mother tongue is learnt in a natural or a tutorial setting." By this definition we can understand that SLA is used as a general term that includes the acquisition of second language either in natural setting or in formal setting.

Both Ellis (1985) and Gass and Selinker (2008) define SLA in a similar way though the wordings they use seem different. The important aspect is that SLA refers to

learning of a non-native language after learning the native language. As Gass and Selinker (2008) state:

SLA is the study of the acquisition of a non-primary language; that is,, the acquisition of a language beyond the native language. It is the study of how language learners create a language system with only limited exposure to a second language. It is the study of what is learned of a second language and what is not learned; it is the study of why most second language learners do not achieve the same degree of knowledge and proficiency in a second language as they do in their native language.(p.1)

The term "language acquisition" became commonly used after Stephen Krashen contrasted it with formal and non-constructive "learning." Krashen (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 181) makes distinction between acquisition and learning. According to him, we get mastery over two procedures; acquisition and learning. Acquisition occurs subconsciously in natural setting in which the focus is on meaning whereas learning occurs consciously in a tutorial setting in which the focus is on form or structure.

Generally second language acquisition and foreign language learning are used synonymously. But they are not the same. Making difference between second language acquisition and foreign language learning Gass and Selinker (2008) state that "Learning in a second language environment takes place with considerable access to speakers of the language being learned, whereas learning in a foreign language environment usually does not" (p.5).

Today, most scholars use "language learning" and "language acquisition" interchangeably, unless they are directly addressing Krashen's work. However, "second language acquisition" has become established as the preferred term for this academic discipline.

SLA is an emerging discipline in the field of applied linguistics and language learning. Schachter (1993, p.173) states:

SLA is thought of as a discipline devoted to discovery and characterizing how it is that a human being is able to learn a second language: what knowledge does he or she bring to the task, what set of learning procedures does he or she use, what strategies are appropriate for certain phenomena and not others, etc. (as cited in Awasthi, 2007, p.13).

While being developed as a full-fledged discipline, SLA is also drawing the knowledge from other different disciplines. It has a close relation with other areas of inquiry such as linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, sociology, discourse analysis, conversational analysis, education, etc. each of which brings to the study of SLA its own goal, own data collection methods, and its own analytic tools. Thus, SLA is truly an interdisciplinary field.

Under SLA, we can study different theories, principles and factors related to it. Among them a variable, i.e. learning strategy is one. Many learners are learning English as a second language from school level to University level in Nepal and elsewhere. But one question can be raised in this context, i.e. how do they learn English? So, it seems very important to find out the learning strategies used by them.

1.1.1 Learning Strategies

Learning strategies refer to the techniques or deliberate actions that the learners use to make language learning successful and enjoyable. According to Mayer (1988, as cited in Clouston, 1997), “Strategies are the behaviors of learners that are intended to influence how the learner processes information.” These are the plans intended to achieve a particular purpose. Brown (1993, p. 104) defines strategies as “specific methods of approaching a problem or task, mode of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information.” Strategies are contextualized “battle plans” that might vary from moment to moment or day to day. These are involved in all learning, regardless of the content and context and vary intraindividually. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. According to Rubin (1987), “Language strategies are strategies which contribute to the development of the language system, which the learner construct and affect learning directly” (as cited in Griffiths, 2004). The process of planning something or carrying out a plan in a skillful way is known as learning strategy. As O’Mally and Chamot (1990, as cited in Griffiths, 2004, p. 5) put, “Strategies are the tools for active, self-directed involvement needed for developing L2 communicative ability.”

A common observation is that not only are some language learners more successful than others but also those good language learners sometimes do different things than poorer language learners. These differences that the learners do are termed as learning strategies. Cohen (1998) defines language learning strategies as “those processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in action taken to enhance the learning or use of a second or foreign language thorough storage, retention, recall and application of

information about that language” (as cited in Gass and Selinker,2008,p.439). He says that such strategies include strategies for identifying the material that needs to be learned, distinguishing it from other material if need be, grouping it for easier learning, having repeated contact with material and formally committing the material to memory when it does not seem to be acquired naturally. In a similar way Oxford (1990) refers to learning strategies as “specific actions, behaviors, steps or techniques that students use to improve their own progress in developing skills in a second or foreign language.” These are the tools for self-developing communicative ability. For example, in order to remember difficult vocabulary, the learners may consciously choose to associate a particular word with the situation with which they first seriously notice that word. The learners would probably continue to do this if it turned out that this strategy of ‘first serious notice’ did in fact consistently help them learn vocabulary.

Strategies in second language learning are like the ‘layers of onion’. For this students are to be encouraged to use a variety of learning styles such as applying prior knowledge, scanning for specific information in graphs and charts, getting meaning from the context, etc. For Skehan (1989, p. 73), “learning strategies are the choices that the learners make and the possibility that the efficiency with which the learners’ capacities are used can be changed.” This definition highlights the importance of learning strategies for effective learning.

Gass and Selinker (2008) state:

Learning strategies clearly involve internal mental actions, but they may also involve physical actions as well. The claims made in the literature involve potential improvements in language learning related to the selection of information from the input and the organization and

integration of it in terms of learner systems. The ways in which information is selected from the input are an important part of the concept. (p.440)

Thus, learning strategies are particular actions employed by learners to make their learning faster, easier and more effective. These do not imply overall plans, but rather methods using which one can comprehend and remember the language while s/he is learning it. Since language classroom is like a problem-solving environment in which language learners are likely to face new input and difficult tasks given by their instructors, learners' attempts to find the quickest or easiest way to do what is required, that is, using language learning strategies is inescapable. Research has repeatedly shown that the conscious, tailored use of such strategies is related to language achievement and proficiency.

1.1.1.1 Characteristics of Learning Strategies

Some characteristics of learning strategies include such notions as effortless, goal-oriented, intentional. But perhaps the most useful way of thinking of strategic learning is in terms of a larger goal and the steps that one might take to achieve that goal, e.g. putting them on cards, coloring them, visualizing, etc. Thus, strategic learning involves overall goal i.e. become proficient in second language, a plan to accomplish that goal i.e. learn 10 vocabulary words a day, and the steps needed to achieve the goal i.e. coloring, flashcards.

Reading the literature of language learning strategies, it is clear that a number of further aspects of language learning strategies are less uniformly accepted. When discussing language learning strategies, Oxford (1990a) and others such as Wenden and Rubin (1987) note a desire for control and autonomy of learning on

the part of the learner through language learning strategies. Cohen (1990) insists that only conscious strategies are language learning strategies, and that there must be a choice involved on the part of the learner. Transfer of a strategy from one language or language skill to another is a related goal of language learning strategies, as Pearson (1988) and Skehan (1989) have discussed. In her teacher-oriented text, Oxford summarizes her view of language learning strategies by listing twelve key features. In addition to the characteristics noted above, she states that language learning strategies:

- allow learners to become more self-directed
- expand the role of language teachers
- are problem-oriented
- involve many aspects, not just the cognitive
- can be taught
- are flexible
- are influenced by a variety of factors (Clouston, 1997)

Being based on the above discussion, we can conclude the characteristics of language learning strategies in our own way. First, language learning strategies are learner generated; they are steps taken by language learners. Second, language learning strategies enhance language learning and help develop language competence, as reflected in the learner's skills in listening, speaking, reading, or writing the target language. Third, language learning strategies may be visible (behaviors, steps, techniques, etc.) or unseen (thoughts, mental processes). Fourth, language learning strategies involve information and memory (vocabulary knowledge, grammar rules, etc.).

1.1.1.2 Importance of Learning Strategies

The importance of language learning strategies is now widely recognized in all areas of education. As Oxford(1990, p.2-3) says, “ under various names such as learning skills, learning-to-learn skills, thinking skills, and problem-solving skills, learning strategies are the ways students learn a wide range of subjects, from native language reading through electronics trouble-shooting to new languages”. Language learning is concerned with the assistance given to the learners to learn that language more effectively and successfully. In language learning, researchers have shown that some language learners are more successful than others. If these strategies are suggested to adopt to poorer learners, they can improve their language learning. Brown (1993,p.125) states, “With many styles and strategies operating within a person, hundreds of cognitive ‘profiles’ might be identified, if we could discover some overriding and all pervading variables that classify learners neatly categories of ‘unsuccessful’, then of course we could make a case for typing language learners”.

Within communicative approach to language teaching, a key goal is for the learner to develop communicative competence in the target language, and language learning strategies can help students in doing so. Bialystok (1990) says, “Communicative strategies are used by speakers intentionally and consciously in order to cope with difficulties in communicating in second language (as cited in Clouston 1997)”. Clouston (1997) uses the term ‘language learning strategy’ more generally for all strategies that second language learners use in learning the target language, and ‘communication strategies’ as just one type of language learning strategies. For all second language teachers who aim to help develop their students’ communicative competence and language learning, then an understanding of language learning strategies is crucial. As Oxford (1990....) puts

it, “Language learning strategies are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed movement, which is essential for developing communicative competence.” According to this definition, language learning strategies develop communicative competence, which is the overall goal of teaching or learning language.

In addition to developing students’ communicative competence, language learning strategies are important because the use of language learning strategies can help the students become better language learners. Since the amount of information to be possessed by language learners is high in language classroom, learners use different learning strategies in performing the tasks and processing the new input they face. Language learning strategies are the good indicators of how learners approach tasks or problems encountered during the process of language learning. In other words, language learning strategies while non-observable or unconsciously used in some cases, give language teachers valuable clues about how their students assess the situation, plan, select appropriate skills so as to understand, learn or remember new input presented in the language classroom.

Metacognitive strategies improve organization of learning time, self monitoring, and self-evaluation. Cognitive strategies include using previous knowledge to help solve new problems. Socioaffective strategies include asking native speakers to correct their pronunciation, or asking a classmate to work together on a particular language problem. Developing skills in three areas such as metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective can help the language learners build up learner independence and autonomy whereby they can take control of their own learning.

Thus, language learning strategies are very much important for language learners. Being specific actions, behaviors, tactics or techniques, learning strategies facilitate the learning of the target language of language learners. All language learners, needless to say, use language learning strategies in learning process. These strategies help teachers to make lesson according to the strategies the students use. Learners also take benefit from learning strategies as they can leave some strategies and adopt some new strategies to become successful learner and learn language easily. Thus, language learning strategies are important for teachers, learners, course designers and all other related people.

1.1.1.3 Types of Learning Strategies

Language Learning Strategies have been classified by many scholars. However, most of the attempts to classify language learning strategies reflect more or less the same categorizations without any radical changes. Stern (1992, as cited in Hismanoglu, 2000) has classified learning strategies into five types. These are as follows;

i. Management and Planning Strategies

- Decide what commitment to make to language learning
- Set himself reasonable goals
- Decide on an appropriate methodology, select appropriate resources and monitor progress
- Evaluate his achievement in the light of previously determined goals and expectations

ii. Cognitive Strategies

- Clarification / Verification
- Guessing / Inductive Inferencing
- Deductive Reasoning
- Practice
- Memorization
- Monitoring

iii. Communicative - Experiential Strategies

- Circumlocution
- Gesturing
- Paraphrase
- Asking for repetition and explanation

iv. Interpersonal Strategies

v. Affective Strategies

Hedge (2000) puts forward four types of learning strategies used by good language learners. These are:

i) Cognitive Strategies

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| • Repetition | • Substitution |
| • Resourcing | • Elaboration |
| • Grouping | • Summarization |

- Note taking
- Deduction
- Induction
- Transfer
- Inference

ii) Metacognitive Strategies

- Planning
- Directed attention
- Selective attention
- Self management
- Self-monitoring
- Self-evaluation

iii) Socio-affective Strategies

- Questioning for clarification
- Co-operation
- Self-talk
- Self-reinforcement

iv. Communication strategies

Rubin (1987, as cited in Hismansglu, 2000), who pioneered much of the work in the field of strategies, makes the distinction between strategies contributing directly to learning and those contributing indirectly to learning. According to him, there are three types of strategies used by learners. These are:

i. Learning Strategies

They are of two main types, being the strategies contributing directly to the development of the language system constructed by the learner:

- Cognitive Learning Strategies
 - Clarification / Verification
 - Guessing / Inductive Inferencing
 - Deductive Reasoning
 - Practice
 - Memorization
 - Monitoring
- Metacognitive Learning Strategies
 - Planning
 - Prioritizing
 - Setting goals
 - Self-management.

ii. Communication Strategies

iii. Social Strategies

O'Malley et al. (1985, as cited in Brown, 1994) divide language learning strategies into three main subcategories. They have developed taxonomy of their own identifying 24 strategies into following three types;

i. Metacognitive Strategies

- Advance organizers
- Directed attention
- Selective attention
- Self-management

- Functional planning
- Self-monitoring
- Delayed production
- Self-evaluation

ii. Cognitive Strategies

- Repetition
- Resourcing
- Translation
- Grouping
- Note taking
- Deduction
- Recombination
- Imagery
- Auditory representation
- Key word
- Contextualization
- Elaboration
- Transfer
- Inferencing

iii. Socioaffective Strategies

- Cooperation
- Question for clarification

Oxford (1990, p. 9, as cited in Hismanoglu, 2000)) sees the aim of language learning strategies as being oriented towards the development of communicative competence. Oxford divides language learning strategies into two main classes, direct and indirect, which are further subdivided into 6 groups. In Oxford's system, metacognitive strategies help learners to regulate their learning. Affective strategies are concerned with the learner's emotional requirements such as confidence, while social strategies lead to increased interaction with the target language. Cognitive strategies are the mental strategies learners use to

make sense of their learning, memory strategies are those used for the storage of information, and compensation strategies help learners to overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication. Oxford's (1990, p. 17) taxonomy of language learning strategies is given below:

i. Direct Learning Strategies

- Memory
 - Creating mental linkages
 - Applying images and sounds
 - Reviewing well
 - Employing action
- Cognitive
 - Practising
 - Receiving and sending messages strategies
 - Analysing and reasoning
 - Creating structure for input and output
- Compensation strategies
 - Guessing intelligently
 - Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing

ii. Indirect Learning Strategies

- Metacognitive Strategies
 - Centering your learning

- Arranging and planning your learning
- Evaluating your learning
- Affective Strategies
 - Lowering your anxiety
 - Encouraging yourself
 - Taking your emotional temperature
- Social Strategies
 - Asking questions
 - Asking for clarification or verification
 - Asking for correction
 - Cooperating with others
 - Co-operating with peers
 - Co-operating with proficient users of English language
 - Empathizing with others
 - Becoming Developing cultural understanding
 - aware of others' thoughts and feelings

1.1.1.4 Description of Language Learning Strategies

Here, language learning strategies has been described being based on the O'Mally and Chamot (1985)'s classification.

i. Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies are the strategies that the learners use to control their own cognition by co-coordinating the planning , organizing and evaluating the learning process. These strategies deal with pre-assessment and pre-planning, online planning and evaluation, and post evaluation of language learning activities. As O'Mally et al.(1985, as cited in Brown, 1993) define, “ Metacognitive is a term to express ‘executive function’, strategies which require planning for learning, thinking about learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one’s production of comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed.” Similarly Rubin (1987, as cite in Hismansglu) states, “Metacognitive strategies are used to overuse, regulate or self-direct language learning.” He describes the processes as planning, prioritizing, setting goals and self management under this category. In a similar vein, Oxford (1990) defines metacognitive strategies as “those strategies that the learners use in order to regulate their learning.” Cohen (1998, as cited in Chaudhary, 2009) names these strategies as rehearsal strategies which are used for rehearsing target language structure.

Thus, metacognitive strategies refer to the attempt of regulating language learning by means of planning, monitoring and evaluating. Such strategies help learners to pay attention, consciously search for practice opportunities, plan for language tasks, arranging, focus and evaluate their own learning and monitoring errors.

ii. **Cognitive Strategies**

Cognitive strategies refer to the operations used in problem solving. These strategies require direct analysis, synthesis and transformation of learning materials. According to O'Mally et al. (1985), "These strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks which involve more direct manipulation of the learning materials." Rubin (1987) defines these strategies in similar way to o'Mally's definition. Oxford (1990) says, "Cognitive strategies are those mental strategies that the learners use to make sense of their learning. These are for memorizing and manipulating target language structures."

To sum up, Cognitive strategies encompass the language learning strategies of identification, grouping, retention, and storage of language materials. These are the language use strategies of retrieval, rehearsal and compensation of production of words, phrases and other elements of the second language.

iii. **Socioaffective Strategies**

Socioaffective strategies include the actions which the learners choose to take in order to interact with other learners and native speakers. O'Mally et al. (1985) state, "Socioaffective strategies are related with social mediating activity and transacting with others." These are concerned with the learners' emotional requirements. These strategies help learners to control feelings. Motivations and attitudes related to language learning. So, these strategies are sometimes described as affective strategies. Anxiety reduction, self-encouragement and self-reward come under these strategies.

Socioaffective strategies are also described as social strategies because such strategies afford the learners opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge. As Oxford (1990) states:

Social strategies involve learning by interaction with others. These lead to increased interaction in target language. Asking questions, cooperating with native speakers of that language and becoming culturally aware come under social strategies.

These strategies are mostly known as communication strategies since the learners use these strategies in order to be engaged in communication and establish relation with others. Rubin (1997, as cited in Hismanoglu, 2000) says, "These strategies are less directly related to language learning since their focus is on the process of participating in a conversation and getting meaning across clarifying what the speaker intended." These strategies are used by the speakers while being faced with some difficulties due to the fact that their communication ends outrun their communication means or when confronted misunderstanding by a co-speaker.

1.2 Review of the Related Literature

In recent years, numerous studies have been carried put on the effectiveness of learners' using a variety of strategies in their quest for language competence.

Wong-Fillmore (1979, as cited in Skehan 1989, p.73) studied some Mexican children who were attending English-speaking school in California in order to investigate how the children increased communicative competence in English. In her study she identified some social strategies and some cognitive strategies. The

children were more interested in establishing social relationships than in learning language, but in order to establish such relations, they had to learn English. As Fillmore (1979) says:

The crucial factor was that; because the friends believed the learners should understand them and that communication between them was possible, they included them in activities and conversations, and this allowed the learners to assume roles in social situations and activities that made sense to them and gave them an opportunity to observe and acquire the kind of language children use in these activities, despite their initial inability to speak or understand the language. (p.74)

Fillmore finds the social strategies more important than the cognitive ones. From this study she reported that good language learners spend more time in socializing with their classmates. At first they join groups and act as if they understand what is going on in them. The next social strategy is to give the impression that they can speak the language. If the first social strategy is the entree to a group, this next social strategy is the justification for staying there.

Another research was conducted by O'Mally et al. (1985b, as cited in Skehan 1989, p.86) on "Effectiveness of Language Learning Strategy Instruction". It was an experimental research. A group of 75 ESL students were randomly assigned to one of the three groups. The first group was provided with strategy training in metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective strategies, the second group was in cognitive and socioaffective strategies and the third one was control group i.e. no special instruction in language learning strategies. They conducted research

for listening, speaking and vocabulary acquisition skills. Among other findings, it was discovered that for vocabulary, the control group actually scored slightly higher than the treatment groups. O'Mally explains this unexpected finding as being due to the persistence of familiar strategies among certain students who continued to use rote respective strategies and were unwilling to adopt the strategies presented in training, especially when they knew that they would be tested within only a few minutes.

A similar study which researched the effects of the teaching of cognitive and metacognitive strategies on reading comprehension in the classroom was conducted by Tang and Moore (1992, as cited in Griffiths, 2004, p. 16). They concluded that, while cognitive strategy instruction (title: discussion, pre-teaching vocabulary) improved comprehension scores, the performance gains were not maintained upon the withdrawal of the treatment. Metacognitive strategy instruction, on the other hand, involving teaching of self monitoring strategies, appeared to lead to improvements in comprehension ability which was maintained beyond the end of the treatment. This finding accords with that of O'Mally et al. (1985) who discovered that higher level students are more able than lower level students to exercise metacognitive control over their learning.

One study was carried out by Politzer and McGroarty (1985, as cited in Skehan, 1989, p.83) on this area. Their study was based on a questionnaire administered to a group of 37 students who were preparing for postgraduate study in the United States in an intensive eight-week English course. The group was made up of approximately equal number of Hispanic and Asian students. The questionnaire they used consisted of three sections; classroom behaviors, individual study and interaction with others outside the classroom. In addition to the questionnaire, the students were given three pre- and post-course

proficiency tests; an oral comprehension test, grammar test and a communicative competence test. In this study, the researchers found several interactions between learners' strategies and ethnic background. The Hispanic students scored significantly higher than the Asian ones on all learning behavior scales, especially in interaction suggesting that the Hispanic students should be more successful language learners. However, the only significant difference between the gain scores of the two groups was on the discrete point scored form of the communicative competence test and the greater gain was for the Asian students. From this study, they point out that different groups may have different norms for behavior and we can only interpret these behaviors within the set of cultural assumptions that hold within each group. A second factor concerns the nature of the criterion test as the researchers used in this study and found different relationship between them and the strategies items.

In many ways, this study is exemplary. It includes many crucial variables and has a research design which lays the groundwork for many important questions to be addressed. It also seemed to be well timed to build upon the insights arising from the more biographical or observationally oriented strategies research. As an exploratory study, it is interesting and provides the basis for further questionnaire based studies.

Nunan (1995, as cited in Griffith, 2004, p.17) conducted another classroom based study which aimed to research whether learner strategy training makes a difference in terms of knowledge. He involved 60 students in a 12 week program designed to help them reflect on their own learning, to develop their knowledge of and ability to apply learning strategies, to assess their own progress, and to apply their language skills beyond the classroom. He concluded that his study supported the idea that language classrooms should have a dual focus, teaching both content and an awareness of language processes.

Besides these studies, some studies have also been done in this area in our country. In the department of English Education, Faculty of Education, T.U., there are few studies conducted on learning strategies that learners adopt while learning English as a second language. Devkota (2003) carried out a research on “Learning Strategies: An attitudinal study”. His purpose was to find out the techniques or strategies employed to learn literature. He used questionnaire to collect data from students and structured interview to collect information from the teachers. He found that one of the causes of students’ failure is due to the lack of writing practice. Moreover after overall analysis, he found that studying texts in English was geared toward examination. In a similar way, Rain(2006) conducted a research on “Learning Strategies used by Maithili Learners of English at Secondary Level”. His study was centered on how Maithili learners of English learn English as their third language. He used questionnaire, structured interview and class observation as the tools for the study. He found that the learners used very few techniques to learn English language. He concluded that teachers and learners do not use communicative strategies in classroom.

Another study was carried out by Chaudhary (2009) on “Learning strategies used by the class toppers”. She aimed to find out the learning strategies used by class toppers of higher education to learn the English language. She used a set of questionnaire as a tool for data collection. She found out that metacognitive strategies were used by the class toppers of higher education to a great extent. She concluded that the class toppers had a strong desire to communicate and are willing to guess meaning when they are not sure.

Although some researches are conducted on the area of learning strategies, no research study on learning strategies used by the students of higher secondary level is carried out so far. Thus, the present researcher aimed to identify the

learning strategies used by the learners of higher secondary level. She carried out a survey research and used questionnaire as the tool for data collection.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- i. To identify and classify the learning strategies used by the students of higher secondary level
- ii. To suggest some pedagogical implications for the improvement of teaching learning process.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study is supposed to be significant to the students who are studying English at Intermediate level. It will let them know whether they are adopting the strategies adopted by other learners in learning English. A poor learner can adopt the strategies used by the successful learners. Similarly, it will be significant to the teachers to teach according to the strategies that the learners adopt while learning English. They can also suggest their students to use effective learning strategies. Brown (1993,p.124) says, "Teachers, therefore, can benefit from an understanding of what makes learners successful and unsuccessful and establish in the classroom a milieu for the realization of successful strategies." The findings and recommendations of the study will be helpful to the real classroom teaching.

Moreover the findings of the study will be beneficial to course designers, textbook writers and material producers. They can design course and devise materials according to the strategies that the students use while learning English. Likewise, it will be equally helpful to the teachers, trainers, counselors, subject

experts, parents and others who are directly and indirectly involved in language teaching learning activities.

1.5 Definition of the Specific Terms

The specific terms used in this thesis have been defined as follows:

Learning strategy: It refers to the particular action, behavior or technique employed by the learners to make their learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more effective and more transferable to a new situation.

Cognitive strategy: It is the strategy used for forming and revising internal mental models and receiving and producing message in target language such as analyzing, summarizing and practicing.

Metacognitive strategy: It can be defined as a strategy which helps the learners to control their own recognition by coordinating the planning, organizing and evaluating the learning process.

Social strategy: It refers to the strategy which facilitates interaction with others often in discourse situation.

Affective strategy: It can be defined as a strategy which enables the learners to control their feelings, motivations and attitudes related to language learning.

Memory strategy: It refers to the ways which aid in entering information into long term memory and retrieving information when needed.

Compensation strategy: Compensation strategy is one which is needed to overcome any gaps in knowledge of language. It is used to compensate for limited knowledge.

Direct language learning strategy: Direct language learning strategy can be defined as a strategy which directly involves the target language.

Indirect language learning strategy: It is the strategy which does not directly involve the target language but is essential to learn language

CHAPTER – TWO

METHODOLOGY

To carry out this study, the researcher adopted the following methodology.

2.1 Sources of Data

The researcher used both primary and secondary sources of data in order to carry out this research.

2.1.1 Primary Sources

The primary sources of data were the students studying at higher secondary level. The whole study was based on the responses from the students through the questionnaires distributed to them.

2.1.2 Secondary Sources

To widen the knowledge and insights in the related area, the researcher used some related books, articles, journals, encyclopedia, dictionary, dissertations, websites etc. Some them were Ellis (1985), Skehan (1989), Brown (1993), Clouston (1997), Griffiths (2004), Gass and Selinker (2008), <http://iteslj.org/> , <http://www.google.com/> language learning strategies. All these sources were the secondary sources of data.

2.2 Sampling Procedure

The total sample of the study consisted of altogether 80 students studying at higher secondary level. Since the research area was Palpa district, the researcher purposively selected four colleges of Palpa, viz. Saraswati Higher Secondary School, Millennium Multiple College, Janata Higher Secondary School and

Damkada Higher Secondary School. Twenty students from each college were selected using simple random method. Thus, the magnitude of the sample population was eighty only.

2.3 Tools for Data Collection

The researcher used a set of questionnaire as the tool for data collection. The questionnaire contained close-ended questions and it was only for the students.

2.4 Process of Data Collection

First of all, a set of questionnaire was prepared. The researcher visited the selected college administration. Then, she told the concerned authority about her study and requested for a list of the name of the students. Then she randomly selected 20 students from the list. After that, she met the selected students and established rapport with them. She instructed them in order to administer the questionnaire. At last, she collected the questionnaire after the completion.

2.5 Limitations of the Study

The study had the following limitations:

- a. It was limited to the learning strategies used by the 80 students only.
- b. It was limited to higher secondary level only.
- c. It was limited to the four colleges of Palpa district only.
- d. It was limited to the responses collected by the questionnaire only.

CHAPTER – THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter incorporates analysis and interpretation of the data collected. Interpretation is divided into nine categories of strategies-viz- to be familiar with new words, to learn grammatical items, to comprehend the texts, to develop listening skill, to develop speaking skill, to develop reading skill, to develop writing skill, to enhance communicative competence and to get prepared for exam. Data were collected by using questionnaire. The researcher mainly used simple statistics like percentage and table to analyze and interpret the collected data.

3.1 Classification of the Strategies Used by the Students

The students employed many strategies while learning English as a second language. Different scholars have provided different models of learning strategies that the students use and those models are more or less similar to each other. Here, the researcher followed the model given by O'Mally and Chamot (1985) in which learning strategies have been divided into three types. Being based on that model, the classification of the learning strategies used by the students has been presented below:

3.1.1 Metacognitive Strategies Used by the Students

The metacognitive strategies that the students used while learning English have been presented in the following table.

Table No. 1

Metacognitive Strategies Used by the Students

Rating	Always (Per)	Sometimes (Per)	Never (Per)
Strategies			
Comprehension			
Reading more for understanding	76.25	20	3.75
Reading author's biography	32.5	51.25	16.25
Skimming texts	62.5	33.75	3.75
Reading sociopolitical background	37.5	41.25	21.25
Average (Per)	52.13	36.56	11.25
Listening skill			
Listening English news	27.5	61.25	11.25
Listening English songs	40	53.75	6.25
Average (Per)	33.75	57.5	8.75
Speaking skill			
Participation in Speech contexts	10	65	25
Reading skill			
Reading loudly	28.75	35	36.25
Reading English newspapers and magazines	60	36.25	3.75

Average (Per)	14.37	35.63	20
Writing skill			
Doing homework	71.25	26.25	2.5
Participating in writing activities	28.25	58.75	12.5
Average (Per)	49.75	42.5	7.5
Exam preparation			
Reading throughout the year	50	41.25	8.75
Studying at exam period	30	36.25	33.75
Reading own note	57.5	26.25	16.25
Going through the old questions	57.5	31.25	11.25
Average (Per)	48.75	33.75	17.5

As indicated in the above table, while learning English, metacognitive strategies were used by the students to a greater or lesser extent. However, majority of the students always used this strategy while comprehending texts, developing reading skill, writing skill and to get prepared for the examination. For the comprehension of texts, majority of the students always read more for understanding and skimmed the texts first to get theme. In a similar way, to develop listening skill, majority of the students sometimes listened English news and English songs and in order to develop speaking skill, they sometimes participated in speech contexts. Similarly, most of the students always read English newspapers and magazines and did their homework. In order to get prepared for exam, majority of the students read throughout the year, read own notes and solved old questions. So, it can be said that metacognitive strategies are popular among the students.

3.1.2 Cognitive Strategies Used by the Students

The following table shows the cognitive strategies used by the students while learning the English language.

Table No. 2

Cognitive Strategies Used by the Students

Rating scale	Always (Per)	Sometimes (Per)	Never (Per)
Strategies			
Vocabulary			
Translation	33.75	57.5	8.75

Remembering with images	37.5	55	7.5
Guessing in context	56.25	40	3.75
Consulting dictionary	45	50	5
Memorizing meaning	33.75	60	6.25
Using words in speech	36.25	60	3.75
Using reference materials	51.25	42.5	6.25
Average (per)	41.96	52.14	5.89
Grammar			
Memorization	55	31.25	13.75
Generalization	31.25	63.75	5
Translation	25	48.75	26.25
Using while communicating	23.75	63.75	12.5
Average (per)	33.75	51.88	14.38
Comprehending texts			
Asking for summary	27.5	40	32.5
Consulting guide and guess paper	23.75	52.5	23.75
Collecting summary	21.25	30	48.75
Visiting library	26.25	65	8.75
Average (per)	24.69	46.88	28.44

Listening skill			
Imitating teachers	41.25	45	13.75
Writing skill			
Copying	36.25	47.5	16.25
Practicing exercises	35	56.25	8.75
Preparing own note	61.25	35	3.75
Average (per)	41.17	54.17	12.5
Communication competence			
Guessing meaning from expression	40	57.5	2.5
Preparation of exam			
Revising learnt units	58.75	37.5	3.75
Memorizing important answers	62.5	28.75	8.75
Average (per)	60.63	33.13	6.25

As mentioned in the above table, more or less, the cognitive strategies were used by the students while learning English. However, the average percentage shows that the students used these strategies in order to get prepared for examination very often. Majority of the students (revised learnt units and guessed and memorized the important questions to a great extent. Likewise, majority of the students always guessed meaning of words in context, memorized meanings and grammatical items and prepared own notes very often. They never collected the summaries given in other colleges for understanding quickly. In other cases, they sometimes used above mentioned cognitive strategies. This reveals the fact that

majority of the students often use cognitive strategies while learning the English language.

3.1.3 Socioaffective Strategies Used by the Students

The socioaffective strategies that the students used while learning the English language have been mentioned as below.

Table No. 3

Socioaffective Strategies Used by the Students

Rating scale	Always (Per)	Sometimes (Per)	Never (Per)
Strategies			
Vocabulary			
Asking meaning with teachers	23.75	63.75	12.5
Comprehending texts			
Initiating classroom discussion	31.25	60	8.75
Discussing with friends	46.25	47.5	6.25
Average (Per)	38.75	53.75	7.5
Listening skill			
Listening native speech	12.5	56.25	31.25
Speaking with English native speakers	33.75	51.25	15
Average (Per)	23.13	53.75	23.13

Speaking skill			
Interacting with teachers in English	50	47.5	2.5
Participation in classroom discussion	38.75	55	6.25
Doing activities in English	27.5	57.5	15
Recording and listening own speech	15	40	45
Speaking native language	53.75	37.5	8.75
Average (Per)	37	47.5	20.5
Reading skill			
Understanding with teacher's loud reading and explanation	50	38.75	11.25
Communication competence			
Communicating in English	18.75	70	11.25
Speaking own language	47.5	46.25	6.25
Average (Per)	33.13	58.13	8.75

This table shows that half of the students always used socioaffective strategy in order to develop reading skill; otherwise, they used these strategies occasionally. They always tried to understand the texts with teacher's loud reading and explanation. Majority of students always speak their native language in social gatherings. The students sometimes used socioaffective strategies in order to learn vocabulary, to comprehend texts, to develop listening skill, speaking skill and communicative skill. It shows that the students occasionally used socioaffective strategy while learning the English language.

3.2 Identification of Learning Strategies Used by the Students

The learning strategies that the students of higher secondary level used while learning English language have been identified being based on the responses collected through the questionnaire distributed to them. The interpretation has been done on the following nine separate categories.

3.2.1 The Strategies Used to be Familiar with New Words

There were 10 items in the questionnaire to find out the strategies that the students use to be familiar with new words. From the careful observation of the responses given by the students, the following frequencies and their percentages were found.

Table No. 4

The Strategies Used to be Familiar with New Words

Rating scale	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Translation	27	33.75	46	57.5	7	8.75
Remembering with images	30	37.5	44	55	6	7.5
Guessing in context	45	56.25	32	40	3	3.75
Consulting dictionary	36	45	40	50	4	5
Memorizing meaning	27	33.75	48	60	5	6.25
Using words in speech	29	36.25	48	60	3	3.75
Using reference materials	41	51.25	34	42.5	5	6.25

Asking meaning with teachers	19	23.75	51	63.75	10	12.5
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The first item in the questionnaire included the strategy of translating new words in the students' mother tongue. The above table shows that 57.5% of the total respondents used this strategy sometimes, 33.75% of them always used this strategy and 8.75% of them never used this strategy. It shows the fact that majority of the students used this strategy sometimes.

The second item in the questionnaire was of remembering new words by making a clear mental image or by drawing a table. As indicated above 55% of the respondents used this strategy sometimes, 37.5% of them always used this strategy and 7.5% of them never used this strategy. The responses towards the strategy of guessing the meaning of the new words with the help of given context shows that majority of the respondents, i.e. 56.25% always employed this strategy. Similarly, as mentioned in the above table, half (50%) of the total respondents sometimes noted down the difficult words immediately and consulted dictionary. The next item in the questionnaire inquired whether the students memorized the meaning of the words. It was noticed that majority (60%) of the respondents employed this strategy sometimes. In the same way, majority 60% of the respondents tried to use new words in speech.

The seventh item in the questionnaire consisted of the strategy of using reference materials to get the meaning of the words. While responding to it, 51.25% of the total respondents said that they always adopted this strategy, 42.5% of them mentioned that they sometimes adopted this strategy and 6.25% respondents did not adopt this strategy. As can be observed in the next item, the majority (63%) of the total respondents sometimes noted down the words and

asked teachers the meaning of that words.23.75% of the respondents always and 12.5% of them never did it. It proves that majority of the students sometimes adopted this strategy.

From the above interpretation it can be concluded that majority of the students always guessed the meaning of new words and used reference materials to get the meaning. Likewise, they sometimes translated words in their mother tongue, remembered meanings with images and consulted dictionary. They memorized meaning, used words in speech and asked the meaning with teachers occasionally.

3.2.2 The Strategies Used to Learn Grammatical Items

There were four items in the questionnaire to find out the strategies that the students use to learn grammatical items. The following table shows the overall analysis and interpretation of the responses regarding the strategies of learning grammatical items.

Table No. 5

The Strategies Used to Learn Grammatical Items

Rating scale	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Strategies						
Memorization	44	55	25	31.25	11	13.75
Generalization	25	31.25	51	63.75	4	5
Translation	20	25	39	48.75	21	26.25
Using while communicating	19	23.75	51	63.75	10	12.5

The first question presented in the above table was designed to investigate

whether the students memorize the grammatical rules in order to learn grammar. Out of the total respondents, 55% agreed that they always memorized grammatical rules, 31.25% of them employed it sometimes and 13.75% of them did not employ it. It proves that the strategy of memorizing grammatical rules is popular among the students.

The next item the questionnaire incorporated was the strategy of generalizing grammatical rules from the context. Out of the 80 respondents, the majority (63.75%) responded that they sometimes used this strategy. Regarding the next item, the strategy of translating grammatical items into their mother tongue, nearly half of the respondents i.e., 48.75% sometimes translated grammatical items into their mother tongue. On the other hand, 25% of them always and 26.25% of them never used this strategy.

The last item in the above table asked how often the students used the grammatical items while communicating with others. The above table shows that 63.75% of the total respondents sometimes used this strategy whereas 23.75% of them always used this strategy and rest 12.5% of the respondents never used this strategy.

According to the above data, it is found that the students memorized grammatical rules to a great extent. They did not generalize and translate them into their mother tongue very often. And they occasionally used those items while communicating with others.

3.2.3 The Strategies Used to Comprehend the Texts

Altogether ten items were included in the questionnaire to elicit the responses about the strategies used by the students to comprehend the texts.

The study found the following frequencies of the strategies used by the students.

Table No. 6

The Strategies Used to Comprehend Texts

Rating scale	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Strategies						
Asking for summary	22	27.5	32	40	26	32.5
Consulting guide and guess paper	19	23.75	42	52.5	19	23.75
Collecting summary	17	21.25	24	30	39	48.75
Reading more for understanding	61	76.25	16	20	3	3.75
Reading author's biography	26	32.5	41	51.25	13	16.25
Skimming texts	50	62.5	27	33.75	3	3.75
Reading socio-political background	30	37.5	33	41.25	17	21.25
Initiating classroom discussion	25	31.25	48	60	7	8.75
Discussing with friends	37	46.25	38	47.5	5	6.25
Visiting library	21	26.25	52	65	7	8.75

Among the ten items included in the above table, the first item was the strategy of asking the teacher to write the summary of the text and learn by heart. The above table shows that 40% of the respondents adopted this strategy sometimes, whereas 22% of them always and 32.5% of them never adopted this strategy. Regarding the next item, majority of the respondents i.e., 52.5% responded that they sometimes consulted guide and guess paper to read summary. On the other hand 23.75% of the respondents always and the same number of the students

never used it.

The next item in the above table inquired whether the respondents collected the summary given in other colleges and compare it to understand quickly. According to the above data, nearly half (48.75%) of the total respondents never used this strategy, 30% of them sometimes and 21.25% of them always used this strategy. Similarly, the above table shows that the majority 76.25% of the respondents always read the texts several times for understanding. 20% of them adopted it sometimes and very few (3.75%) of them did not adopt it. In a similar way, with reference to the strategy of reading author's biography to understand the text, the analyzed data tells that majority of the respondents i.e., 51.25% sometimes employed this strategy.

The next item comprised the strategy of reading socio-political background to understand the main idea. As presented in the above table, 41.25% of the total respondents sometimes adopted this strategy. As mentioned above, majority of the respondents i.e., 60% responded that they sometimes initiated classroom discussion to clarify difficult portions. The next similar item also found that 47.5% of the total respondents sometimes discussed the difficult items with their friends. The data of the both items show that the students occasionally initiated classroom discussion.

The last item in the table was the strategy of visiting library to get reference materials. As presented in the table, it is shown that majority (65%) of the respondents employed this strategy sometimes, 26.25% of them responded that they always employed this strategy and 8.75% of them did not employ this strategy.

From the above data, it is concluded that in order to comprehend the English texts, the students were more interested in skimming the text and loved reading more for understanding. Similarly, majority of them often asked the teachers to

write summary. They often consulted guide and guess paper and visited library to get reference materials. They sometimes read author's biography and sociopolitical background of the text and occasionally initiated classroom discussion. Minority of the students collected summaries given other colleges to understand quickly.

3.2.4 The Strategies Used to Develop Listening Skill

Five items were incorporated in the questionnaire to find out the strategies that the students employed to develop listening skill. The following table shows the overall analysis and interpretation of the responses regarding the strategies of developing listening skill.

Table No. 7

The Strategies Used to Develop Listening Skill

Rating scale	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Imitating teacher	33	41.25	36	45	11	13.75
Listening English news	22	27.5	49	61.25	9	11.25
Listening English songs	32	40	43	53.75	5	6.25
Listening native speech	10	12.5	45	56.25	25	31.25
Speaking with English native speakers	27	33.75	41	51.25	12	15

The first item in the above table included the strategy of doing listening practice with teacher's imitation. The data given in the table show that 45% of the total respondents sometimes used this strategy, 41.25% of them always used this strategy and 13.75% of them never used this strategy. In a similar way, it was found that majority (61.25%) of the respondents sometimes, 27.5% of them always and 11.25% of them never listened English news on radio and television. Regarding the next item, the table says that majority (53.75%) of the respondents responded that they listened English songs sometimes, whereas 40% of them

always and 6.25% of them never used this strategy.

The next item was designed to investigate whether the respondents listened English native speech with the help of recorded materials. According to the above table, the majority (56.25%) of the respondents responded that they listened English native speech sometimes. On the contrary, 31.25% of them responded that they never listened English native speech and only 12.5% of the respondents responded that they always listened English native speech. As indicated in the above table, 51.25% of the total respondents were in favor of using this strategy sometimes. 33.75% of them always and 15% of them never followed this strategy. The data obtained reveals that majority of the students hardly speak with native speakers of English.

The above data shows that majority of the students use all the above strategies sometimes. From this, it is clear that they did not do listening practice very often.

3.2.5 The Strategies Used to Develop Speaking Skill

There were six items in the questionnaire incorporated to find out the strategies that the students used to develop speaking skill. The study found the following frequency of the strategies used by them.

Table No. 8

The Strategies Used to Develop Speaking Skill

Rating scale	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Interacting with teachers in English	40	50	38	47.5	2	2.5

Participation in classroom discussion	31	38.75	44	55	5	6.25
Doing activities in English	22	27.5	46	57.5	12	15
Participation in speech contexts	8	10	52	65	20	25
Recording and listening own speech	12	15	32	40	32	45
Speaking native language	43	53.75	30	37.5	7	8.75

Item number 1 in the above table aimed at collecting data about whether the students interacted with teachers in English. As can be seen from the above table, half (50%) of the total respondents responded that they always spoke English with their teachers, 47.5% of them sometimes and 25% of them never spoke English with their teachers. The next item included in the questionnaire inquired whether the respondents participated in classroom discussion in order to develop speaking skill. According to the data, majority (55%) of the respondents sometimes employed this strategy. On the other hand, 38.75% of the respondents responded that they always employed and 6.25% of them never employed this strategy. This information may direct us that the students participate in classroom discussion occasionally. Similarly, as presented in the table no. 5, majority (57.5%) of the respondents sometimes did activities such as playing, singing, telling stories in English.

Regarding the responses towards the strategy of taking part in speech or debate contexts conducted inside and outside the college, only 10% of the total respondents were found to use this strategy always, 65% of them sometimes and 25% of them never used this strategy. Likewise, with reference to the next item incorporated in the questionnaire i.e., the strategy of recording own speech and listening it, 15%, 40% and 45% of the total respondents were found to use this

strategy always, sometimes and never respectively.

The next item included in the questionnaire was the inquiry about whether the respondents spoke their native language with their fellow. The data shows that 53.75% of the respondents always adopted this strategy, 37.5% of the respondents adopted this strategy sometimes and 8.75% of them did not adopt this strategy.

So, in order to develop speaking skill, majority of the students interacted with teachers in English but they had been found to use their own language while communicating with their fellow. They occasionally participated in classroom discussion and speech contexts as well as did activities in English. Majority of them did not record their own speech and listen it.

3.2.6 The Strategies Used to Develop Reading Skill

There were three items included in the questionnaire to inquire about the strategies that the students used to develop reading skill. The study found the following frequency of the strategies used by them.

Table No. 9

The Strategies Used to Develop Reading Skill

Rating scale	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Understanding with teacher's loud reading and explanation	40	50	31	38.75	9	11.25
Reading loudly	23	28.75	28	35	29	36.25
Reading English newspapers and magazines	48	60	29	36.25	3	3.75

The first item in the above table consisted of the strategy of understanding the text with teacher's loud reading and explanation. It was found that half (50%) of the respondents always followed this strategy, 38.75% of them sometimes and 11.25% of them never used this strategy. Regarding the next strategy in the questionnaire, the above data shows that 36.25% of the total respondents did not read texts loudly. 35% of them sometimes read texts loudly and 28.75% of them always read texts loudly.

The next item incorporated in the questionnaire inquired how often the students read English newspapers and magazines. Majority of the respondents i.e., 51% responded that they always read English newspapers. On the other hand, 36.25%

of them sometimes and 3.75% of them never read English newspapers and magazines.

In this way, for developing reading skill, majority of the students tried to understand texts with teacher’s loud reading and explanation and read English newspapers and magazines regularly. Majority of them did not read the texts loudly.

3.2.7 The Strategies Used to Develop Writing Skill

Five items were incorporated in the questionnaire to inquire about the strategies used by the students to develop writing skill. The study found following frequency of strategies used by them.

Table No. 10

The Strategies Used to Develop Writing Skill

Rating scale	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Copying	29	36.25	38	47.5	13	16.25
Practicing exercises	28	35	45	56.25	7	8.75
Doing homework	57	71.25	21	26.25	2	2.5
Preparing own note	49	61.25	28	35	3	3.75
Participating in writing activities	23	28.25	47	58.75	10	12.5

The first item in the above table was designed in order to investigate whether the students copied whatever their teacher taught. As shown in the table, 47.5% of the respondents were found to adopt this strategy sometimes, whereas 36.25% of them always and 16.25% of them never adopted this strategy. The next item that the questionnaire consisted of was the strategy of practicing transformation

exercises. According to the collected data, 56.25% of the total respondents responded in favor of using this strategy sometimes. On the other hand, 35% and 8.75% of them responded in favor of using this strategy always and never respectively. Similarly, with reference to the strategy of doing homework regularly, as indicated above, it was found that majority (71.25%) of the respondents regularly did their homework.

The next item in the questionnaire was about noting down the main points during teacher's explanation and preparing own notes after that. Majority (61.25%) of the respondents responded that they always employed this strategy. In a similar way, regarding the last item in the table, majority 58.75% of the respondents sometimes took part in different guided and free writing activities. 28.25% of them always used this strategy whereas 12.5% of the respondents did not use this strategy.

On the basis of the above interpretation, we can conclude that the students gave priority in doing homework and preparing own notes. Majority of them occasionally take part in writing activities and sometimes copy whatever teacher says.

3.2.8 The Strategies Used to Enhance Communicative Competence

There were three items included in the questionnaire to find out the strategies that the students use to enhance communicative competence. The table below shows the analysis of the responses.

Table No. 11

The strategies Used to Enhance Communicative Competence

Rating scale	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Strategies						
Communicating in English	15	18.75	56	70	9	11.25
Guessing meaning from expression	32	40	46	57.5	2	2.5
Speak own language	38	47.5	37	46.25	5	6.25

Item number 1 incorporated in the above table asked how often the students communicated with friends in English. As mentioned in the table (70%) of the respondents followed this strategy sometimes. On the contrary, 18.75% of them always and 11.25% of them never followed this strategy. As presented in the table, majority of the respondents i.e., 57.5% were found to guess meaning from other's expression and gestures.

The strategy that the next item describes was to talk to individuals who speak native language of the respondent in social gatherings. The table tells that 47.5% of the respondents always adopted this strategy. On the contrary, 46.25% and 6.25% of the respondents responded in favor of employing sometimes and never respectively.

As a conclusion, it can be said that the students sometimes communicated with their friends in English and guessed meaning from other's expression. In social gatherings, they always tried to talk to individuals who speak their native language. It reveals the fact that they were not very conscious about developing communicative skill in English.

3.2.9 The Strategies Used for the Preparation of Exam

In order to find out the strategies used by the students for the preparation of exam, six items

were incorporated. The overall analysis and interpretation of the responses regarding the strategies of getting prepared for exam have been presented below.

Table No. 12

The Strategies Used for the Preparation of Exam

Rating scale	always		Sometimes		Never	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
Strategies						
Reading throughout the year	40	50	33	41.25	7	8.75
Studying in exam period	24	30	29	36.25	27	33.75
Revising learnt units	47	58.75	30	37.5	3	3.75
Preparing own note	46	57.5	21	26.25	13	16.25
Memorizing imp. answers	50	62.5	23	28.75	7	8.75
Going through the old questions	46	57.5	25	31.25	9	11.25

Among the six items included in the table no. 9, the first item was the strategy of reading throughout the academic year regularly to refresh what they had learnt. Out of the total respondents, 50% responded that they always used this strategy; very nominal number (8.75%) of them responded that they never used this strategy and 41.25% of them sometimes used this strategy. In a similar way, another item wanted to find out whether the students pay much attention to their study for attending exam generally two months prior to exam instead of reading the whole year. Only 30% of the respondents were found to use this strategy always. 36.25% of them sometimes and 33.75% of them never used this strategy.

The next item given in the questionnaire encompassed the strategy of revising the learnt units to refresh their memory by writing it. According to the collected

data, 58.75% of the respondents always, 37.5% of them sometimes and 3.75% of them never adopted this strategy. Regarding the strategy of reading notes prepared by the students themselves, majority (57.5%) of the respondents always followed this strategy.

As indicated in the table, the majority (62.5%) of the respondents was found in favor of always guessing the important questions and memorizing their answers. The last item incorporated in the questionnaire was the strategy of going through the examination questions of previous years and solve them to check their understanding. The above table says that, 57.5% of the respondents always used this strategy. On the other hand, 25% of the respondents sometimes used this strategy and 11.25% of them never used this strategy.

From the above facts, it can be inferred that in order to get prepared for exam, majority of the students revised the learnt units, guessed important questions and memorized them and solved old questions as well. They read throughout the whole year instead of reading only for attending the exam. They read their own notes.

CHAPTER – FOUR

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the major findings of the research on the basis of analysis and interpretation of the data. It also incorporates some suggestions on the basis of findings of the study.

The principal aim of the present study was to find out the learning strategies used by the students of higher secondary level to be familiar with new words; to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills; to comprehend the texts; to enhance communicative competence and to get prepared for the exam. The data were collected from the 80 students studying at higher secondary level in different colleges of Palpa district. The data were carefully presented in tables and analyzed and interpreted to accomplish the objectives, using simple statistical tool like percentage.

4.1 Findings

It would be fair to say that to a greater or lesser extent, the students used language learning strategies of all kinds. The following findings have been drawn after the completion of analysis and interpretation.

- a) **Metacognitive Strategies**, the students
1. read the texts several times until they can understand.
 2. read author's biography to understand the text.
 3. skimmed the text first to get the theme then they read it more carefully.
 4. often listened English news on radio and television.
 5. listened English songs.
 6. often read English newspapers and magazines.

7. did their homework regularly.
8. read throughout the academic year regularly to refresh what they had learnt.
9. read own notes.
10. went through the examination questions of previous years and solved them to check their understanding.

b) Cognitive Strategies, the students

1. guessed the meaning of new words with the help of given context.
2. immediately noted down the difficult words and consulted dictionary.
3. used reference materials such as glossaries to get meaning of the new words.
4. memorized the grammatical rules.
5. generalized rules from the context.
6. often visited to library to get reference materials.
7. liked to do listening practice with teacher's imitation.
8. practiced transformation exercises.
9. noted down the main points during teacher's explanation and prepared their own notes.
10. often guessed the meaning of what somebody said either from his/her expressions or gestures.
11. revised the learnt units to refresh their memory by writing it.
12. guessed the important questions and memorize their answers.

c) Socio-affective Strategies, the students

1. discussed difficult sections with their friends.
2. initiated classroom discussion to clarify the difficult portions
3. interacted with teachers in English
4. liked to participate in classroom discussion.

5. spoke with their fellow in their native language.
6. tried to understand the text with teacher's loud reading and explanation
7. tried to talk to individuals who speak their native language in social gatherings.

The above strategies have been categorized in to the following sub categories:

a) To be familiar with new words, the students

1. guessed the meaning of new words with the help of given context.
2. immediately noted down the difficult words and consulted dictionary.
3. used reference materials such as glossaries to get meaning of the new words.

b) To learn grammatical items, the students

1. memorized the grammatical rules.
2. generalized rules from the context.

c) To comprehend texts, the students

1. read the texts several times until they could understand.
2. skimmed the text first to get the theme then they read it more carefully.
3. discussed difficult sections with their friends.
4. often visited to library to get reference materials.
5. initiated classroom discussion to clarify the difficult portions
6. read author's biography to understand the text.

d) To develop listening skill, the students

1. often listened to English news on radio and television.
2. listened to English songs.
3. liked to do listening practice with teacher's imitation.

e) To develop speaking skill, the students

1. interacted with teachers in English
2. liked to participate in classroom discussion.

3. spoke with their fellow in their native language.

f) To develop reading skill, the students

1. tried to understand the text with teacher's loud reading and explanation.
2. often read English newspapers and magazines.

g) To develop writing skill, the students

1. practiced transformation exercises.
2. did their homework regularly.
3. noted down the main points during teacher's explanation and prepared their own notes.

h) To enhance communicative competence, the students

1. often guessed the meaning of what somebody said either from his/her expressions or gestures.
2. talked to individuals who speak their native language in social gatherings.

i) To get prepared for exam, the students

1. read throughout the academic year regularly to refresh what they had learnt.
2. revised the learnt units to refresh their memory by writing it.
3. read own notes.
4. guessed the important questions and memorize their answers.
5. went through the examination questions of previous years and solved them to check their understanding.

After overall analysis, it was found that the students used all types of learning strategies, viz. cognitive, metacognitive and socioaffective. However cognitive strategies were used by them to a great extent.

4.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings obtained from the analysis and interpretation of the

collected data, some recommendations for pedagogical implication have been suggested as follows:

1. The study shows that cognitive strategies are used by the students to a great extent. So, the teacher should be conscious about it while teaching them.
2. The teachers need to provide students with sufficient opportunity for practicing English language by creating different real life situations.

3. The teachers need to motivate the students to initiate classroom discussion on different topics.
4. They need to suggest students to go to library regularly and read prescribed authentic materials and reference materials as well.
5. The teachers should provide their students with sufficient opportunity to listen authentic or native speech in the classroom with the help of different recorded materials.
6. They need to motivate their students to use the English language always while interacting with teachers and while communicating with their friends.
7. They need to teach English vocabularies with the help of English songs.
8. The teachers need to organize different guided and free writing programs and encourage their students to participate.
9. The teachers should encourage their students to read English texts several times and try to understand themselves.
10. The teachers need to conduct speech or debate contexts inside or outside the classroom time to time and inspire their students to take part time and again.
11. Teachers need to bring newspapers and magazines in the classroom and encourage students to read them regularly to develop vocabulary power and to develop the capacity of comprehending the texts.
12. They need to inspire their students to prepare their own notes and go through their course books continuously throughout the academic year for better result.
13. The learners should try to speak with English native speakers whenever possible.
14. The teacher should encourage their students to go through the questions

of previous exam and try to solve them within a limited time to evaluate themselves.

15. Syllabus designers and textbook writers need to develop syllabus and textbooks which emphasize all the language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing equally.

16. All the language skills should be equally emphasized by the teachers and learners.

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