

An Assessment of the Language Learning Attitudes, Learning Strategies, Language Proficiency of First Year College Students

NELSON U. JULHAMID

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8064-6092>

nelson.julhamid@gmail.com

Sulu State College

Jolo, Sulu, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-correlational research described the Language Learning Attitudes (LLA), Language Learning Strategies (LLS) and Language Proficiency (LP) of 120 college students from 4 courses. It employed Lunsford's Standardized LLA Questionnaire, Oxford's (1994) Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL); and Reading Proficiency Test. It used mean, standard deviation, Pearson r , Multiple Regressions, t -Test of significant difference, and One-Way ANOVA for treatment of data. This study found out that students are Average in LLA; "Somewhat true of me" in LLS and Poor in reading proficiency. No significant relationship between respondents' LLA and reading proficiency; Very low correlation between respondents' LLS and reading proficiency; Sex and course do not affect students' LLA and do not influence the latter's contribution on reading proficiency except for the inferential level; and Sex does not influence respondents' LLS and reading proficiency except course. This study hardly provides empirical data to support the theories in LLA and LLS which are supposed to have a

significant role in affecting students' reading proficiency. It also denies the role of schema theory in reading by activating learners' prior knowledge to process meaning and concepts from the reading selections. Variable course may seem to provide empirical support to the extension of the theories in LLS as well as schema theory in reading.

Keywords — English language learning attitudes, language learning strategies, language proficiency

INTRODUCTION

Growing interest in the study of learner's propensity in second language learning and pedagogy has been acknowledged for a considerable number of years. In fact, there have been "a large number of second language learning researchers ventured into this area such as Filmore (1979), Ellis (1985), Willing (1988), Ellis and Sinclair (1989), Oxford (1989), O'Malley and Chamot (1990)" as cited in Martínez (1996:104) . Similarly, Griffiths (2003) explored the relationship between patterns of reported language learning strategy (LLS) use by speakers of other languages (SOL) and proficiency with implications for the teaching/ learning situation. In Indonesia, Ghufon (2017) analyzed language learning strategies used by EFL fluent speakers in the Indonesian context.

Consequently, a substantial body of research now exists describing the taxonomies of learning attitudes and strategies and their accompanying relations to language learning such that by Oxford (1994), Oxford (1996), Cohen (1996), Lessard-Clouston (1997), Griffiths (2003), Shermila (2006) Samida (2012) and many others. However, less is known about how language learning tendencies inter-relates each other, vis-à-vis language learning attitudes, learning strategies, language proficiency, gender and learner's preferred academic program when these variables are taken altogether.

Second language learning in college is a continuing process where learners must have diverse attitudes and strategies for learning (Cohen, 2007; Cohen 2016). How learners behave and process new information and what kinds of strategies they utilize to understand, learn or retain the information as well as the role of learners' other personal and demographic factors have been the crucial concern of present research that ventures into the area of second language learning (Wyner & Cohen, 2015). Language learning attitudes and strategies as well as sex and course preference, therefore, are potential factors on how learners approach learning tasks or problems encountered during the process of learning. With

college students as second language learners, these factors must affect learner's desire and ability to learn a second language (Wyner & Cohen, 2015).

In the Philippine context, as with most other research in second language learning, little attention has been paid to how learning attitudes, strategies, sex and belonging to the course program affect the variability of learners' second language proficiency. An adequate database in this area could help parents, college faculty and schools make more informed decisions about their populations of learners. Hence, this study was conducted to investigate the degrees of relationship and difference of learner's language learning attitudes, language learning strategies and language proficiency in relation to sex and academic course among first year college students.

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the following models and theories:

Schema Theory

Schema theory suggests that schemata are unconscious mental structure or models that underlie and control the simplifying process that is essential to human learning, skill acquisition, and problem solving. Schema Theory for Reading affirms that this learning theory views organized knowledge as an elaborate network of abstract mental structures which represent one's understanding of the world (Anderson, 1983 as cited in SIL International, 1999).

Language Learning Attitudes

In this study, language learning attitudes are described as the way college freshman students think and feel about learning English as a second language in a formal language learning setting. Attitudes and belief were reported to have a profound effect on the strategies learners choose, with negative attitudes and beliefs often causing poor strategy use or lack of orchestration of strategies (Oxford, 1994). These are categorized according to Orwig (1995) taxonomy of language learning attitudes, namely: self-image, inhibition, risk-taking, ego permeability and tolerance of ambiguity.

Language learning Strategies

Language learning strategies are those that were described by Oxford (1996) as specific actions taken by them to make their learning convenient, easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, and more transferable to new situations.

Under Oxford's (1994) classified these are: *Memory strategies*, such as grouping, imagery, rhyming, and structured reviewing (9 items); *Cognitive strategies*, such as reasoning, analyzing, summarizing (all reflective of deep processing), as well as general practicing (14 items); Compensation strategies (6 items); Metacognitive strategies (9 items); *Affective* (emotional, motivation-related) *strategies*, such as anxiety reduction, self-encouragement, and self-reward (6 items); and Social Strategies (6 items).

Language Proficiency

The overall language proficiency of the respondents is described under reading comprehension levels and classified based on Smith and Barret (1974) as cited in Shermila (2006) which are: literal, inferential, and evaluative. *Literal comprehension*, the ability to recognize and recall of explicitly stated information, to read for the central thought and main ideas, remembering significant details, the sequence of event and to find the answer to specific questions; *Inferential comprehension*, the ability to make hypotheses based on stated information, intuition and personal experience. Grasping cause-effect relationships, anticipating the remainder of a story, and forming opinions, and *Evaluative comprehension*, the ability to judge based on the reader's experiences, knowledge or values. It focuses on qualities of accuracy, acceptability or probability of occurrence that includes making value judgments and analyzing the intent of the author.

Sex is the first moderator variable posited to influence other variables in this study. Sex is assumed to significantly influence the degrees of relationship and difference between students' levels of language learning attitudes, language learning strategies and overall language proficiency, i.e., reading comprehension.

The course is the second moderating variable that is hypothesized to influence other variables in this study. The basis for the inclusion of this variable in this study is based on the assumption that the course of the respondents may influence other educational variables.

In this study, the levels of language learning attitudes and language learning strategies are treated as the independent variables while reading proficiency levels treated as the dependent variable. Each level of language learning attitudes interrelates with each level of reading proficiency. In like manner, each level of language learning strategies interrelates with each level of the reading proficiency.

Variables sex and course preference differentiate each level of learner's language learning attitudes, learning strategies and reading proficiency. Sex and course preference also moderate the degrees of relationship among levels

of language learning attitudes and language learning strategies with reading proficiency.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study sought to determine the following: (1) Levels of respondents' language learning attitudes, language learning strategies and reading proficiency will serve as inputs to teachers' preparation for language teaching; (2) The differences in these variables will help teachers to synchronize their teaching between male and female as well as to deal with students enrolled in different course; and (3) The contributions of sex and course to the variances in these will help teachers in aligning their language learning activities.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A research design is a program that guides a researcher in collecting, analyzing and interpreting observed facts (Bless, Higson-Smith, & Kagee, 2006). Similarly, Babbie and Mouton (2001) regard to research design as the road map or blueprint by which one intends to conduct research and achieve his/her research goals and objectives." This study employed a descriptive research design via a quantitative-correlational research method. That is, with purport to describe, quantify, and infer the phenomenon of college freshman students' language learning attitudes, language learning strategies and language proficiency, the significant relationship, and differences of these variables when data are grouped according to sex and course preference.

Research Site

This study was conducted at the Sulu State College. This is a government higher educational institution under the direct supervision of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) with State Universities and Colleges (SUC) level II status.

Participants

This study used first year college students taken purposively from each of the following 4 academic departments, namely: Education, Business Administration, Computer Science & Engineering, and Nursing as respondents. Thirty (30)

students were chosen purposively to represent each department. The use of non-probability sampling method through purposive technique in this study was to ensure the representation of male students since it has been observed that Education and Nursing departments used to have few male enrollees unlike those in Business Administration and Computer Science & Engineering.

Instrumentation

The study employed standardized self-report questionnaires and proficiency test as an instrument for data gathering. The researcher administered the standardized questionnaires on language learning attitudes, language learning strategies, and reading proficiency test at the same time to first year college students.

Orwig's (1995) standardized measured the first year college students of their ability to think and feel toward learning English as a second language. It consists of the following categories: Self-image, Inhibition, Risk-taking, Ego permeability and tolerance of ambiguity with 27 close-ended questions using a five-point Likert scale and corresponding numerical value. Choices for each item are SA=Strongly Agree (8), A=Agree (6), N=Neither Agree nor Disagree (4), D=Disagree (2), SD=Strongly Disagree (0).

This study also used Oxford's (1996) Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL) Version for speakers of other languages learning English which consists of 50 close-ended questions with the five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

The researcher also adopted Reading Proficiency Test from Shermila's (2006) standardized reading comprehension test consists of Literal (reading the lines), Inferential (reading between the lines), and Evaluative (reading beyond the lines). This consists of five reading comprehension texts selected from various books with the help of English Language Teaching (ELT) experts to measure the students' skills in literal, inferential and evaluative which consists of an objective type of test items with suitable distracters.

This study employed the following steps in data collection procedure: (1) The researcher sought permit to administer the questionnaire and to read proficiency test was sought from the deans of the respective departments where the target respondents of this study are under them; (2) The researcher administered the research instrument at the same time which was started on the first week and has ended on the second week of the second month of the first semester of the academic year; it was administered first to education students

and then was followed by business administration, computer engineering and nursing students respectively; and (3) The researcher administered the research instrument during the regular schedules of students' English classes. Thirty (30) minutes was required to answer both languages learning attitudes and language learning strategies questionnaires. One hour and thirty minutes were required to answer the reading comprehension test. In case the questionnaire and test administration incurred two class periods, an arrangement was done in advance with the instructor/professor of the succeeding class period.

Scoring Procedure

The researcher adopted the following steps: (1) Each question in the questionnaire was rated on a five-point Likert scale such as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neither Agree nor Disagree (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD); (2) Each scale was assigned with numerical value such as SA=8, A=6, N=4, D=2 and SD=0; (3) The point value of each question was placed on the line next to its corresponding number; (4) The total points in each column were divided by 8 to find the average score for each of the five levels of language learning attitudes; and (5) The sum of total scores in all columns was divided by 40 to obtain the overall average score. Finally, the rating scale for language learning attitudes is shown as follows: High (7-8); Above Average (5-6); Average (5-4); and Low (1-2).

Statistical Techniques

The researcher treated and analyzed the data using the following statistical tools: (1) For research question number 1, 2 and 3, the levels of respondents' language learning attitudes, language learning strategies and reading proficiency were determined through mean and standard deviation; (2) For research question number 4 and 5, the degrees of relationship between students' levels of language learning attitudes and reading proficiency as well as language learning strategies and reading proficiency were determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r); (3) For research question number 6, 7, and 8, the significant differences in students' levels of language learning attitudes, language learning strategies and reading proficiency were determined using t-test of significant difference for independent samples (for sex) and One-Way Analysis of Variance (for course); (4) For research question number 9 and 10, the extent of contribution of variables sex and course to the variance in the relationship between the variables were determined using the test of Multiple Regression.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On students' levels of language learning attitudes

The students obtained the mean score of 5.3085 for risk-taking with a standard deviation of 1.0625, and 5.1084 for tolerance of ambiguity with a standard deviation of 0.9717 and are described as *above average*. This means that although the respondents have somewhat developed the feeling of being pretty good language learners, they do not have much idea how to go about learning a language.

However, the data also reveal that the students obtained the mean score of 4.9886 for self-image with a standard deviation of 1.1778, and 4.5375 for inhibition with a standard deviation of 1.1412 and are both described as *average*. The ego permeability had a mean score of 5.0084 with a standard deviation of 0.9717 which described as *above average*. These categories fall under unfavorable language learning attitudes. This means that these students have not attained a high level of language learning attitudes along these categories. With only "average" degree in self-image, it also means that the respondents do not think that they are pretty good language learners.

On students' level of language learning strategies

Except for compensation level in language learning strategies, which is described as "Usually Not True of Me," all the other five levels such as memory, cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social are described as "Somewhat True of Me." It means that the learners are likely to enter information into long-term memory and slow to retrieve information when needed for communication. They seem to overcome any gaps in knowledge of the language. It also suggests that the students seem to exercise executive control through planning, arranging, focusing and evaluating their learning. The learners are likely to be able to control their feelings, emotions, and attitudes related to language learning. Learners seem to select when they want to interact with.

On students' level of reading proficiency

Students' reading proficiency in three levels such as literal, inferential and evaluative are described as poor. It means that the poor performance of the respondents in these three categories may be due to their limited exposure and experience in reading proficiency exercises. Perhaps, their teachers have not exposed them to varied reading materials thereby affecting their reading performance in the three levels.

Moreover, having poor reading proficiency, the respondents are said to have low ability in relating the information they read from the text to their background knowledge.

The importance of background knowledge in reading is also central to schema theory (Rumelhart, 2017). This theory claims that reading a text implies an interaction between the reader's background knowledge and the text itself. The knowledge that is organized and theory, fluent reader's mind is called schemata. According to this theory, fluent readers relate their schemata with the new information present in the text. Therefore, the poor performance of the respondents in the reading proficiency test indicates that they cannot use well their schemata with the information they read from the texts.

On the significant relationship between students' language learning attitudes and reading proficiency

The Pearson r value of 0.133 with a probability value of 0.149 is not significant at alpha .05. It means that language learning attitudes are not related to reading proficiency in this study. It also indicates that even when the respondent's language learning attitudes are favorable for language learning, this does not necessarily mean that he would obtain a high score in reading proficiency. Or, if he happened to have unfavorable language learning attitudes that he should always get a lower score in reading proficiency.

On the significant relationship between students' levels of language learning strategies and reading proficiency

The correlation matrix between the students' language learning strategies and their reading proficiency indicates that the r -value of 0.175 is significant at alpha .05. It means that language learning strategies are related to reading proficiency, but the relationship is too low. That is, respondents who scored high in language learning strategies are those who scored high in reading proficiency test; whereas, respondents who scored low in language in language learning strategies are also those who scored low in reading proficiency test as well (Chamot & O'Malley 1987; Oxford 1994; Wenden, 1991; Cohen 1996). Chamot and O'malley (1987) has affirmed that "learners might be able to learn the language more effectively by the use of language learning strategies" (Griffiths, 2003). Lessard-Clouston (1997) asserts that 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 second language.

On the significant difference in the levels of students' language learning attitudes when data are grouped according to sex and course

By Sex: Out of the five levels in language learning attitudes, only self-image and inhibition with t values of 2.663 and 2.212 which have corresponding probability values of 0.009 and 0.029 significant at alpha .05. This means that male and female respondents differ significantly in language learning attitudes along these levels only. This implies that sex is generally not influencing language learning attitudes. Moreover, the t value of 1.640 for risk-taking has a corresponding probability value of 0.104 is not significant at alpha .05 but meaningful. To be meaningful, its probability value is greater than .05 but less than .20. It means that there is a good reason not to discard such variable but to affirm or disaffirm its contribution in any research endeavor in the future.

By Course: The F-ratio of 2.678 for risk-taking and 5.222 for tolerance of ambiguity have the corresponding probability values of .034 and .002 which are significant at alpha .05. This means that out of the five components in language learning attitudes, only in two components such as risk-taking and tolerance of ambiguity where the respondents differ significantly. This indicates that the respondents vary in their language learning attitudes given the right circumstances. This further implies that the course is not a great factor affecting students' language learning attitudes when grouped according to course. These respondents further differ in ways of overcoming their feelings of vulnerability and exposing themselves in front of others by taking part in classroom activities, as well as in dealing with confusing language learning situations without clear demarcation.

Moreover, the respondents vary in the ways that they overcome uncertainties, which are inherent in English language learning. Ambiguity tolerant people who are eager to deal with new, complex and insoluble situations are more receptive to change, more willing to take the risk (McLain, 1993).

Similarly, the findings also negate Gardner's (1985) Socio-educational Model that explains how the setting is related to proficiency by positing a series of intervening variables (attitudes, motivation, self-confidence) and by trying to plot how these are interrelated and how they affect factors influence proficiency currently available.

Out of the four groups of students, only two groups differ significantly in their language learning attitudes for components risk-taking and tolerance of ambiguity. The difference is shown in the result of the Post Hoc Analysis using Tukey's test. It shows that only BEEd and BSN groups differ significantly in the

components of risk-taking and tolerance of ambiguity. This means that the course of the two groups of respondents has the potential for affecting their language learning attitudes. Being an education and nursing students with high degrees of risk-taking and tolerance of ambiguity, these respondents believe that they should show active participation in class as well as social maladjustment (Lavery, Siegel, Cousins, & Rubovits, 1993); and the will to accept and relate to confusing situations without clear demarcation lines (Ely, 1989), that is, situations in which is linked to persistence at language learning (Goodman, Cunningham, and Lachapelle, 2002).

On significant differences in the levels of students' language learning strategies by sex and course

None of the components in the language learning strategies is significant at alpha .05. This means that sex does not influence the respondents' language learning strategies. However, the t value of 1.509 for metacognition, which has a corresponding probability value of .134, is not significant at alpha .05 but meaningful. According to Pedhazur (1975), its P value is greater than .05 but less than .20. This means that there is a good reason not to drop off this variable but to affirm or disaffirm its contribution in any future research work.

Also with Azadeh Nemati's (2008) study on the "Use and Ranking of Vocabulary Learning Strategies by Indian EFL Learners" which showed no significant difference between gender and strategy use. However, this finding seems to contradict Green and Oxford's (1995) finding that in the four significant language learning strategies categories, significant variation occurred by gender, with females using strategies significantly more often than males. It also opposes Kaylani's (1996) attribution the presence of gender difference to the socio-cognitive development and learning strategy.

7.2. On Differences by course: The F-ratio of 4.832 (Memory); 5.9741 (cognitive); 8.199 (Compensation); 8.453 (metacognitive); 4.078 (Affective; and 3.358 (Social) have corresponding P values of .003, .001, .000, .000, .009, and .021 which are all significant at alpha .05. This means that the respondents differ significantly in their language learning strategies. In other words, courses of the respondents influence their language learning strategies which imply that students in the four courses utilize different learning strategies during their coursework in learning a second language which is English. They use different specific actions to make learning easier, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations.

Spolsky (1989) posited that student's decision to what school to go to is one among the causes for good learning behavior/strategies and setting for educational goals. Thus, in this study, the chosen field of each course group of the respondents can be assumed as one factor that causes the differences in their language learning strategies. A group of students enrolled in the four courses (BEEd, BSBA, BSCoE, and BSN) have different educational goals and therefore tend to use different language learning strategies relevant to their course orientation. A study on the "Reliability and Validity of the Felder-Solomon Index of Learning Styles" by Litzinger, Lee, and Wise (2005) indicate that there are significant mean differences among colleges on all scales.

The Post Hoc Analysis using Tukey's Test was conducted to determine which among groups classified according to course have different language learning strategies mean per component. It can be noted that the difference in the means of language learning strategies by components of the two groups being compared shows that it is the lower group mean minus higher mean. Therefore, a positive difference would mean that the lower group means are greater than, the higher mean group means. For example, in the memory component, the mean difference between group 1 (BEEd) ND GROUP 2 (BSBA) is .67433. This indicates that the mean of group 2 (BSBA) is greater than the mean of group 1 (BEEd). No students in group 1 are supposed to be better in language learning strategies.

On differences in the reading proficiency levels of respondents by sex and course

By Sex: Female respondents obtained the *t* scores and corresponding probability values which are all not significant at alpha .05. This means that the male and female respondents do not differ significantly in their reading proficiency. This further implies that the respondents may have similar background experiences and limited reading experiences along the three levels.

This result supports Shermila's (2006) finding that boys and girls are very much identical in their skill of reading comprehension in English, that is, they fall under the 'moderate' category in the skill of reading and its dimensions reading the lines, reading between the lines and reading beyond the lines. However, this result seem to contradict Najafdari's (2008) findings on the study of "The Impact of Gender on Proficiency, Attitude and Social Class of Pre-University Students in Mysore within the Framework of Learners' Multilingualism" where multilingual females are better than multilingual males in proficiency test (comprehension

test) as a general English knowledge.

The F-values of literal, inferential and evaluative levels with their corresponding probability values are all significant at alpha .05. It means that the respondents differ significantly in their reading proficiency among three levels. It further implies that the course influences the respondents reading proficiency.

Further analysis of the results indicates that the responding vary in their performances in the three reading levels because teachers teaching different courses tend to give different reading materials and exercises to their students. Such varied inputs may impact the students' performance in reading. Hence, the course is a factor affecting the students reading performance in all three levels.

The Post Hoc Analysis using Tukey's Test to determine which among the groups of students classified according to course differ in their reading proficiency along three levels. It can be noted that the differences in the means of reading proficiency by levels of the two groups being compared show only BEEc and BSN, BSBA and BSN, BSCoE and BSN differ significantly in all the three levels of reading proficiency. While groups BEEd and BSCoE, BSBA and BSCoE differ significantly for the literal and inferential levels only.

It can further be noted that the differences in the means of reading proficiency by levels of the two groups being compared show that it is the lower group minus, the higher group means. Therefore, a positive difference would indicate that the lower group means are greater than the high group means.

However, a negative difference indicates that the higher groups' means should be greater than the lower group means. The result of this kind is the usual expectation because the perception of groups having technical and medically related courses is perceived to have better performance in reading comprehension. The difference in all the groups is negative which implies that course influences the students' reading proficiency.

On the contribution of sex and course to the variance in the relationship between language learning attitudes and reading proficiency

The F values of male and female respondents with corresponding probability values are not significant at alpha .05. It means that the students' language learning attitude, either male or female, in all the five dimensions when taken together do not significantly influence the contribution of language learning attitude to the variance of students' reading proficiency along the literal level. This implies that sex does not significantly influence the contribution of language learning attitude to the students' literal level in reading comprehension. The result suggests that

students, being male or female, do not have anything to do with the contribution of language learning attitude on reading proficiency along the literal level.

The *t* values for male and female respondents in all the five components of language learning attitude are not significant at alpha .05. It means that sex, as a variable does not significantly influence the contribution of students' learning attitude in the literal level in reading proficiency. This finding seems to oppose the result of Najafdari's (2008) study on "The Impact of Gender on Proficiency, Attitude and Social Class of Pre-University Students in Mysore within the Framework of Learners' Multilingual Males in Proficiency Test as a General English Knowledge."

The R values and F values and probability values for female and male are significant at alpha .05. It means that sex influences the contribution of language learning attitude on respondents' reading proficiency along the inferential level. This implies that the students' reading proficiency in the inferential level largely depends on their language learning attitude. Najafdari's (2008) study reveals that gender affects the variation in proficiency test as general English knowledge.

The *t* and probability values for ego permeability and tolerance of ambiguity are significant at alpha .05 while risk-taking is not significant. It means that at least two the components in the language learning attitudes can significantly attribute to the variance in the students' reading proficiency along the inferential level. In other words, sex influences the contribution of language learning attitudes on these components only. Thus, 8.64% of the contribution of language learning attitudes such as ego permeability and tolerance of ambiguity is done by the female respondents, 7.88% of the contribution of risk-taking on the students' reading proficiency is influenced by the male respondents.

Spolsky (1989) and Ellis and Ellis (1994) asserted that culture is among the social factors affecting second language learning. In Sulu, particularly the Tausug ethnic group, cultural differences in the upbringing of girls and boys seem to be persisting despite the modernization brought about by education and modern technology. Similar to Shermila's (2006) observation of her respondents, compared boys, and girls, girls withdrawn from schools and have more restriction to involve in social activities. Therefore, in this study, for female students to have a higher degree in ego permeability, i.e., being more conservative and easily intimidated by the reactions of other students in language learning activities may be due to the influence of Tausug cultural practices already embedded in them.

The regression of language learning attitude on the evaluative level of students' reading proficiency wherein R and F and probability values for female respondents is significant at alpha .05. It means that only the female respondents

that are influencing the contribution of language learning attitudes on the evaluative level of students' reading proficiency. In this study, the evaluative level is dependent on the language learning attitude which is influenced by the female respondents only.

Further analysis shows that female students in this study are better than male students in dealing with judgment based on their experiences, knowledge or values presented in the text. They have a better focus on qualities of accuracy, acceptability or probability of occurrences and in making a value judgment and analyzing the intent of the author. Green and Oxford (1994) and Najafdari (2008) reported significant variation occurred by gender along with language learning categories.

The Beta Coefficient for the model where language learning attitudes are regressed on the evaluative level of students' reading proficiency. It indicates that the t and probability values of ego permeability and tolerance of ambiguity are significant at alpha .05. It means that at least one of the components in the language learning attitudes contributes significantly to the variance in the students' reading proficiency. In other words, female respondents significantly influence the contribution of the two components in language learning attitudes on reading proficiency along the evaluative level.

Female learners generally do better than male. Boyle (1987) reports on the study conducted with 490 (257 male and 233 female) Chinese university students in Hong Kong where female students achieve higher over-all means on ten tests of general L2 English proficiency and in many cases the differences were significant.

Language learning attitude on the students' literal level in reading proficiency by course shows that none of the R values in all the components of language learning attitudes is significant at alpha .05. Its means that course does not influence the contribution of language learning attitude on the reading proficiency along the literal level.

This result further implies that students in the four courses whose reading skills in recognition and recall of explicitly stated information, ability to read for the central thought and main ideas, remembering significant details, the sequence of event and to find the answer to specific questions are not influenced by their language learning attitudes.

Related to this finding is Shermila's (2006) report where she found that the reading attitude of her respondents does not significantly influence their reading comprehension levels.

The Beta Coefficient for the model where language learning attitude is regressed on the reading proficiency along the literal level shows none of the t values of the five components of language learning attitudes is significant at alpha .05. It means that course does not influence the contribution of language learning attitude on the students' reading proficiency along the literal level.

Language learning attitudes regression on the reading proficiency in the inferential level reveals that none of the R values of the five components of language learning attitudes is significant at alpha .05. This means that course does not influence the contribution of language learning attitudes on the students' reading proficiency in the inferential level.

The data further implies that all groups of students belong to the four courses whose reading skills in making hypotheses based on stated information, intuition and personal experience, grasping cause-effect relationship, anticipating the remainder of a story and forming opinions do not differ and not influenced by their language learning attitudes. Shermila (2006) found out that students' reading attitudes does not significantly influence their reading comprehension in the three levels.

The Beta Coefficient where language learning attitudes are regressed on the reading proficiency in the inferential level by course indicates that the t and probability values are significant at alpha .05. It means that language learning attitudes are inversely contributing to the variance in the students' reading proficiency in the inferential level.

The summary regression model where language learning attitude is regressed on the reading proficiency in the evaluative level by course shows that R, F, and corresponding probability value is not significant at alpha .05. It means that BEEEd and BSCoE have no significant influence on the contribution of language learning attitudes on the students' reading proficiency in the evaluative level. Shermila (2006) reported that her respondents do not differ significantly in their reading attitude. And that skill of reading comprehension in terms of reading the lines (evaluative) and its components are not associated with their reading attitudes.

The Beta Coefficient for the model language learning attitude regressed on the students' reading proficiency in the evaluative level reveals that none of the t values is significant at alpha .05. It means that course does not influence the contribution of language learning attitudes on the students' reading proficiency in the evaluative level.

The contribution of sex and course to the variance in the relationship between language learning strategies and reading proficiency

The summary regression where the language learning strategies are on the literal level of reading proficiency when grouped according to sex shows that it is only the female respondents having r -value with corresponding f -ratio and probability value which is significant at $\alpha .05$. It means that the female students are the ones who largely influence the contribution of language learning strategies on the variance in their reading proficiency at the literal level. Green and Oxford (1996) found out that in four significant language learning strategies categories, significant variation occurred by gender, with females using strategies significantly more often than males. This result also supports Shermila's (2006) finding that students' skill of reading comprehension in English found to be influenced by their gender where girls have scored better than boys.

The Beta Coefficient for the model where language learning strategies regressed on the reading proficiency in the literal level shows that none of the t values in the language learning strategies is significant at $\alpha .05$. This means that female respondents have limited influence on the contribution in the students' reading proficiency in the literal. Hence, sex is not a factor affecting such contribution of language learning strategies on the students' reading proficiency. Green and Oxford (1995) found out that in the four significant language learning strategies categories, significant variation occurred by gender, with females using strategies significantly more often than males.

The summary regression of language learning strategies on the reading proficiency in the inferential level by sex reveals that the R -value with corresponding F -ratio and probability values for female respondents is significant at $\alpha .50$. It means that female students significantly influence the contribution of language learning strategies on their reading proficiency in the inferential level. This result supports Shermila's (2006) finding that students' skill of reading comprehension in English found to be influenced by their gender where girls have scored better than boys. Goodman, Cunningham, and Lachapelle (2002) indicated that positive women are good at their courses and performance in the academic fields.

The Beta Coefficient for the model where language learning strategies regressed on the reading proficiency in the inferential level indicates that the t values with corresponding probability value for cognitive component among male respondents are significant at $\alpha .05$. It means that at least one of the components in the language learning strategies significantly contributes to the variance in the students' reading proficiency. For females, the t value with

corresponding probability value for a metacognitive component is significant at alpha .05. It means that both male and female respondents have only limited effect on the contribution of language learning strategies to the variance in the students' reading proficiency in the inferential level.

The summary regression of language learning strategies that regressed on the reading proficiency in the evaluative level by sex indicates that none of the R values is significant at alpha .05. It means that sex does not influence the contribution of language learning strategies on the variance in the students' reading proficiency along the evaluative level. This result support Najafdari's (2008) study where he reported that gender distinction in finding the errors in the specific and mixed texts is not significant.

The Beta Coefficient for the model where language learning strategies regressed on the evaluative level of reading proficiency by sex. The data reveal that none of the t values in all the components in language learning strategies is significant at alpha .05. It means that sex is not a factor influencing the contribution of language learning strategies to the variance in the students' reading proficiency in the evaluative level.

The summary regression for language learning strategies on reading proficiency in the literal level by course reveals that only the BEEed group with R-value with corresponding F-ratio and probability value which is significant at alpha .05. It means that only the BEEed students on their reading proficiency at the literal level. Hence, generally, the course is not a factor influencing the contribution of language learning strategies on the variance in the students' reading proficiency.

Beta Coefficient for the model where language learning strategies regressed on reading proficiency along the literal level reveals that none of the t values in the components of language learning strategies is significant at alpha .05 except for the cognitive component. This implies that at least one of the components in the language learning strategies contributes significantly to the variance in the students' reading proficiency at the literal level. This implies that at least one of the components in the language learning strategies contributes significantly to the variance in the students' reading proficiency at the literal level.

The summary regression where language learning strategies regressed on the students' reading proficiency in the inferential level shows that none of the R values in the language learning strategies but the course is significant at alpha .05 except for BSCoE students. It means that BSCoE students are influencing the contribution of language learning strategies on the students' reading proficiency.

Thus, course generally does not affect the contribution of language learning strategies to the variance in the students' reading proficiency along the inferential level.

The Beta Coefficient where language learning strategies regressed on the inferential level of reading proficiency shows that the t values of affective and metacognitive components have the probability values which are significant at alpha .05. It implies that these components are significantly contributing to the students' reading proficiency in the inferential level. However, this implies that generally, the course does not influence the contribution of language learning strategies to the students' reading proficiency.

The summary regression where language learning strategies regressed on the students reading proficiency indicates that none of the R values of language learning strategies is significant at alpha .05. It means that generally, the course does not influence the contribution of language learning strategies on students' reading proficiency in the evaluative level.

Beta Coefficient for the model where language strategies regressed on the evaluative level in the students' reading proficiency indicates that none of the values in the language learning strategies. Only in the memory component where the t values with the corresponding probability value are significant at alpha .05. It means that the memory component is inversely affecting the contribution of language learning strategies along the evaluative level. Hence, the course generally does not influence the contribution of language learning strategies on students reading proficiency.

CONCLUSION

Firstly, it can be logically inferred from the foregoing finding that this study hardly provides empirical data to support the theories in language learning attitudes and language learning strategies which are supposed to have a significant role in affecting students' reading proficiency. Secondly, it also denies the role of schema theory in reading by activating learners' prior knowledge to process meaning and concepts from the reading selections because these learners performed poorly in reading comprehension test. Finally, it can be concluded that the preceding findings on the moderator variable course may seem to provide empirical support to the extension of the theories in language learning strategies as well as schema theory in reading because from the different courses, students show varied use of language learning strategies which ultimately affect their reading proficiency.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The findings of this study could be translated into a conceptual manual that draws the relationships between the language learning attitudes and language learning strategies in enhancing the language learning proficiency among second language learners of English. The conceptual manual drawn can also be evaluated by the stakeholders alike for acceptability and impact.

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