

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING
STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY
FORM FOUR STUDENTS IN
SARAWAK**

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of
Master of Education
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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This topic has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

In the event that my dissertation be found to violate the conditions mentioned above, I voluntarily waive the right of conferment of my degree and agree to be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA.


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ABSTRACT

This study was done to investigate the language learning strategies (LLS) employed by Form 4 students in Sarawak. LLS refer to particular behaviours or conducts, actions, steps or techniques students use to enhance their process of second language learning and improve their second language skills (Oxford, 1990). The study focused on three main aspects: the LLS used by the students, the LLS used by successful and less successful students as well as the variances in the choice of LLS used by the urban and rural students and how the strategies used by successful students can be adapted by rural students to improve their second language skills. A total of 200 students from two rural schools and two urban schools in Sarawak were selected from the best and weakest class to answer a questionnaire adapted from Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL). Students were asked to answer 40 questions and indicate their frequency of use of a given strategy on a four-point Likert scale (Always to Never). The researcher also interviewed students to further clarify their preferences. Descriptive statistics showed that the students were mostly moderate users of LLS. The most frequently used LLS was metacognitive strategies ($M=2.86$, $SD=0.68$) and the least frequently used LLS recorded was memory strategies ($M=2.13$, $SD=0.49$). Descriptive statistics also showed that the more successful learners were more moderate users of LLS ($M=2.68$, $SD=0.41$) while the less successful learners were low strategy users ($M=2.34$, $SD=0.48$). Independent Samples T-test showed a significant difference in the use of four strategies by the urban students. Examples of the strategies were then proposed to the rural students and their responses were presented. Additionally, the findings of the study were

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study as well as a background on Malaysia's education system. The problem statement of the research is also presented. This is followed by the research objectives and research questions that the study sets out to answer. The scope and significance of the study is provided as well. Additionally, this chapter provides the definition of key terms in this research. Finally, Ellis' (1994) conceptual framework which this study has adapted is explained.

1.1 Background to the Study

English is undeniably the language of the world today. In Malaysia, particularly, the importance and influence of English in all domains need no further elaboration. Hanapiah (2004) asserts that since the introduction of Vision 2020, the function of English in the country has been identified and acknowledged.

In reality, however, the proficiency in the language has declined steadily in the country for the past decades. Tan Sri Dr Fong Chan Onn who was the former Human Resource Minister said that English among Malaysians has been declining for more than two