

The Relationship between Language Learning Strategies, Beliefs and Teaching Methodologies for Student Teacher at College Level

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Abstract

Strategies language learning are the best and right way to learn a foreign language and also are considered one of the key and important elements for students of EFL to achieve their goals of mastering the foreign language and its culture, because they are an essential part of the improvement of the language framework which the learner develops. Unfortunately, our student-teachers have no idea or belief to use a certain strategy or a certain method of teaching and linking them to the success of the teaching and learning mission.

Keywords: student teacher, language learning strategies, methodology, beliefs, English as a foreign language.

1.Introduction

1970 seemed to discover language learning strategies (LLS) cross-culturally on the field of second language acquisition (Griffiths, 2003:367-383). In the same decade as well there has been a growing interest toward language learning and language learners with the emergence of cognitive revolution, and since then great attention has been paid to language learning strategies.

In the 1980s, viewed the cognitive psychology and social linguistics are two perspective of toward LLS. The first perspective, LLSs is defined as the learners' behaviors and thoughts to facilitate them to acquire, store, retrieve, and use information. The second perspective of LLSs is defined as the learner's efforts to build up his semantic or linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the language he needs to learn (Yang, 1992:19). The current study led to efforts to clarify the cognitive processes in all aspects of learning that including language learning. First studies of language learning concentrate on describing externally observable behaviors of language learners, followed by attempts to label strategic behaviors and finally to categorize those strategic behaviors and link them to language proficiency.

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Applied studies on LLSs investigates the chance of helping students become more effective language learners by teaching them some of the learning strategies that descriptive studies have identified as characteristic of the "good language learner" (ibid).

Learning styles are the general approaches, for example, global or analytic, auditory or visual, that students use in acquiring a new language or in learning any other subject. These styles are "the overall patterns that give general direction to learning behavior" (Cornett, 1983: 9). In studies of good language learners, researchers mentioned lots of various behaviors that they referred to globally as strategies some managed to describe strategies more specifically.

Learning Strategies have been described (Rubin, 1975:45) as "the techniques or tools that a learners can use to acquire information". LLSs are also defined from the cognitive psychology perspective, by Rigney (1978:165) as an operation to help the learner to store, acquire retrieve, and use information. This definition was adopted by major researchers in the ESL/EFL field, for instance, O'Mally and Chamot(1990:1) defined learning strategies as "the specific thought or practices that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or keep new data".

Oxford (1990:8) also adopted the sociolinguist's view and proposed that the first key feature of LLS was to help the learner towards the wide-ranging goal of communicative competence: grammatical accuracy, sociolinguistic ability or competence, talk fitness or discourse competence, and key capability or strategic competence. Furthermore, Oxford extended the above definition to stating "learning strategies are particular move made by the learner to make learning quicker, easier, more enjoyable, more self-coordinated, more compelling or effective, and more transferable to new positions" (ibid:8). (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995: 79; Oxford, 1996:73) stated that LLS could aid learners to increase their study autonomy and improve their learning of language.

However, a few studies in Iraq have dealt with this important aspect of EFL teacher's use of LLSs to increase their English ability. Therefore, there is a need to explore how EFL student-teachers' language learning strategies work. Activating EFL student-teachers' awareness of language learning strategies and their effective use is expected to have positive effects on their language teaching in future.

Delivering teaching methodologies is main stream in ESL/EFL teacher education programs (Richards, 1998:14). Although some scholars (e.g. Richard and Nunan, 1990; Holliday, 1994) claimed that teaching

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methodologies may limit ESL/EFL teachers' creativity and cause inappropriate teaching, there are some benefits of delivering teaching methodologies to ESL/EFL teachers (ibid).

Larsen-Freeman (2000:ix), in the introduction to the second edition of her book writes to the teacher education that studying methods is invaluable for ESL EFL teachers due of several reasons?

Firstly, methods can assist educators in conveying to conscious mindfulness or awareness the reasoning that underlies their activities.

When they are exposed and respond to these methods, they can understand more clearly "why they do what they do". Secondly, by being more aware of their teaching position, educators can select "to teach differently from the way they were instructed". Thirdly, teachers can share information with other teachers because they all have similar knowledge based on methodologies. Fourthly, by sharing information, teachers' teaching will become alive. Finally, knowledge of methodologies extends a teachers' repertoire of teaching skills and techniques.

There are many studies that tackled methodologies, most of which have discussed teaching or learning techniques (e.g. reading skills), or mainly focus on one specific method, especially on the communicative language teaching. However, in Iraq there is no study that has dealt with teacher's beliefs toward methodologies to the best of the researcher's information. Since there is no review on the relationship between EFL Iraqi student-teachers' LLSs and their beliefs toward teaching methodologies, the present study will attempt to investigate such relationship in an attempt to help student-teachers increase their own English ability while they teach English to others. This issue is important among these teachers for their professional development.

2. Aims

The current study aims at:

1. Identifying language learning strategies utilized by Iraqi EFL student teachers.
2. Describing Iraqi EFL student-teachers' beliefs toward language teaching methodologies, and
3. Identifying the relationship between Iraqi EFL student-teachers' LLSs and teaching beliefs toward language teaching methodologies.

3. Methodology of the Study

Aims at reporting the particular steps followed the researcher to accomplish the points of this current study and clarifies the accompanying:

- 1- Selecting the standardized questionnaires of the study

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- 2- Selecting the populations and the sample,
- 3- Applying the instruments,
- 4- Analyzing the data and computing results using the appropriate statistical means.

3.2 Population and Sample

3.2.1 Population

The population of the current review covers the 4th-year students in the Departments of English in the Colleges of Basic Education at Al-Mustansiriyah and Daylia University for the academic year 2015-2016. The Department of English in the College of Basic Education at Al-Mustansiriyah University includes two sections with 70 students, while its counterpart in the College of Basic Education at Daylia University includes two sections with 162 students.

The reason for choosing this population is that 4th-year EFL college students or the pre-administration teachers in the study in their second semester of the instructor education programs are considered student-teachers at practicing teaching in the second course at 4th year by whom the researcher achieves the aims of her study. The total population is distributed as appeared in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 The Population and the Sample of the Study

Name of the College	No. of Students	No. of Sample	
		Pilot	Main
Basic Education/Al-Mustansiriyah	70	40	70
Basic Education/Diyala	50	40	32
Total	120	80	102

3.2.2 Sample

The sample involved in the current study, which presents 83% of the whole population, in that the main sample consists of 102 students.

3.3 Instruments of the Study

3.3.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a self-report questionnaire. Although self-report questionnaires are criticized for their precision and varying understandings of or distinguishing pieces of proof toward a similar term, the greatest advantage of the self-report questionnaire is that the analyst can get quantitative information for analysis (Cohen, 1998; Ellis, 1994). The questionnaire in this review comprises measures (1) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Version 7.0 for ESL/ EFL, Oxford, 1990); and, (2) Beliefs toward English Teaching Methodologies (the Audio-lingual

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Method and Communicative Language Teaching) which was composed by Chen (2005:183-186).

The researcher takes five sections from 7.0 rendition or version of SILL for language learning Oxford, 1990 where cognitive strategy, 15 items; metacognitive strategies, 14 items; affective, 6 items; social, 7 items; memory, 8 items and totals 50 items. However, three-point Likert Scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree) and 50 items was disseminated as appeared in Table 3.2 :

Table 3.2 The Number of Items for the LLS of the Subcategories of the Initial Form of the Inventory

Strategies	Cognitive	Metacognitive	Affective	Social	Memory	Total
No. items	15	14	6	7	8	50

Section 2: Convictions toward EFL Teaching Methodologies (BETM)

This section was to describe members' beliefs toward two EFL teaching methodologies: the Audio-lingual Method and the Communicative Language Teaching. The surveyed things in this segment were adjusted from Chen (2005:183), the researcher took 7 statement items depicting the Audio-lingual Method, 11 statement items portraying Communicative Language Learning, members needed to rate the statements on a three-point Likert Scale going (strongly agree, agree, disagree).

Table 3.3 The Number of Items for the BETM of the Subcategories of the Initial Form of the Questionnaire

Beliefs	ALM	CLL	Total
No. items	7	11	18

3.3.2 Reliability of Questionnaires

For the reliability of the SILL, testing the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the score generated by the instrument was determined to be 0.60. The measure is well accepted in social science research. The reliability of the beliefs toward EFL teaching methodologies(BETM) by inspecting Cronbach's alpha unwavering quality coefficient it was discovered that the Cronbach's alpha of the measure (0.51) for 18 items was acceptable in social science study.

3.3.3 Procedure

The data was collected in April-May, 2016.

With a specific end goal to satisfy the aims of the current study, the following procedures are applied:

1. Selecting a sample representative of Iraqi EFL student-teachers from the College of Basic Education the English Language Department.
2. Designing two questionnaires to evaluate Iraqi EFL student-teachers' LLSs and their beliefs toward teaching methodologies.

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3. Exposing the questionnaires to a committee of experts to ensure their validity.
4. Conducting a pilot study.
5. Applying the questionnaires to the sample of study.
6. Using statistical tools to obtain the right results and finally,
7. Interpreting the obtained results to come up with conclusion, recommendation, and suggestions for future studies.

3.4 Data Analysis

The statistical means which uses in analysis of results, they are:

1. ANOVA
2. Item Discrimination Power.

4. Results

4.1 Results Related to the First and Second Aims

To achieve the first and the second aims of this current study; i.e., identifying and describing the LLS and beliefs utilized by Iraqi EFL student-teachers.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Grades Members of the Sample Categorized by University

Variables	Univer. 1 Must. 2 Diayala	No. Sample	Mean	Std. Deviation
Beliefs	1	66	30.30	3.499
	2	36	31.36	4.257
Cognitive S.	1	66	16.39	2.83
	2	36	17.277	3.26
Metacognitive S.	1	66	26.939	4.28
	2	36	28.33	5.115
Affective S.	1	66	9.772	2.422
	2	36	10.72	2.80
Memory S.	1	66	16.48	4.265
	2	36	17.08	2.989
Social S.	1	66	15.212	3.30
	2	36	15.69	2.36
Total	1	66	84.954	12.281
	2	36	90.222	12.405

The researcher notes from the table above that the performance of a sample of Diyala University members is better than the performance of Mustansiriya University in beliefs and learning strategies ranging over the arithmetic mean of the grades sample Diyala University (10.722-28.33) and it seems that their performance in the metacognitive strategy(28.33) it is the largest means while the affective strategy(10.72) is the least means and other strategies were utilized at a medium frequency level. The sample of

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the Mustansiriya University has ranged over the averages(9.77-26.939). But the performance of student at Mustansiriya University in metacognitive strategies is also the largest averages (26.939) and the effective strategy (9.77) is least means and other strategies were used at a medium frequency level.

The researcher also found that Iraqi EFL student teacher considerably preferred CLT Approach to the ALM, because the items that belong to CLT Approach was agreed on by most student teacher of EFL. However, when these student teachers tried to reach the goal of increasing students' communicative competence, they would adapt the theories of language learning both from the Audio-lingual Method and Communicative Language Teaching.

4.2 Results Related to the Third Aim

The third aim is to detect the strength and direction of the occurrence between beliefs and discrimination strategies among individuals sampler. To achieve this Pearson correlation coefficient was used to calculate the strength of the relationship among all grades of beliefs and all grades for each class strategy and total strategies, as shown in the table 4-2.

The outcomes demonstrated that there was noteworthy relationships between language learning strategies and educating beliefs toward EFL methodologies. Specifically, there were significant correlations among the overall strategy employ and the teaching beliefs toward the two methodologies (i.e., CLT and ALM)although there was little variation in the results between student-teachers of Al-Mustansiriya University and Diyala University. In brief, the connections among language learning strategies and teaching convictions were low, the results showed the low connections existed as seen in the tables 4-2, 4-3, 4-4.

Table 4-2 Pearson Correlations Between Language Learning Strategies and Teaching Beliefs for the Sample as a Whole

Beliefs	Pearson Correlation Test. (2-tailed) N	.224* .023 100
Strategies of Cognitive	Pearson Correlation Test. (2-tailed) N	.679** .000 100
Strategies of Metacognitive	Pearson Correlation Test. (2-tailed) N	.736** .000 100
Affective S.	Pearson Correlation Test. (2-tailed) N	.594** .000 100

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Memory S.	Pearson Correlation Test. (2-tailed) N	.673** .000 100
Social S.	Pearson Correlation Test. (2-tailed) N	.661** .000 100

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As for the coefficient of correlation between beliefs and strategies of the sample Al-Mustansiriya University (n=66), as illustrated in the following table.

Table 4-3 Pearson Correlations among Language Learning Strategies and Teaching Beliefs for Sample the University of Al-Mustansiriya (n=66)

Strategies	Pearson Correlation
Cognitive	.163
Metacognitive	.169
Affective	.176
Memory	.050
Social	.200
Total	.224

It is out of the ordinary from the above surface depart the strength of the relationship is very weak and unacceptable when compared with the clever financial statement of the correlation coefficient of (dt=64) for degree of freedom and under the significance level 0.05 which is (0.254).

The students of Diyala University (n=36) correlation coefficients are shown in table 4-3 and is evident foreigner the table that the strength of the relationship among beliefs and strategies of learning is weak except affective strategy and social strategy and total score were significant because the calculated value of the coefficient is greater than the value link spreadsheet degree of freedom (dt=34) under the level of significance 0.05 (0.333).

Table 4-4 Pearson Correlation among Language Learning Strategies and Teaching Beliefs for the Sample of Diyala University (n=36)

Strategies	Pearson Correlation
Cognitive	0.126
Metacognitive	0.223
Affective	0.363*
Memory	0.170
Social	0.412*
Total	0.392

4.3 Interpretation and Discussion of the Results

The following discussion covers the results of the aims at the current review that was mentioned earlier and comparing it with similar studies.

4.3.1 Student teachers' Language Learning Strategies

Student teachers' language learning strategies at the current study were compared to other studies in terms of language learning strategy use. There are many studies that have shed light on the use of language learning strategies, but the researcher takes five studies associated with the current study to compare:

- (1) Chen's study (2005)
- (2) Griffith's study (2003)
- (3) Sheorey's study (1999)
- (4) Yang's study (1992)
- (5) The research of Oxford et al. (1990)

Table 4-5 Comparison Between the Current Study and Chen's, Griffith's, Sheorey's, Yang's, and Oxford et al.'s Studies

Strategies	The Current Study	Chen (2005)	Griffith (2003)	Sheorey (1999)	Yang (1992)	Oxford (1990)
Cognitive	3.04=M	3.44= M	M=3.15	M=3.37	M= 2.89	M=3.7
Metacognitive	M=4.69	M=3.47	M=3.40	M=3.76	M=3.07	M=3.9
Affective	M=2.61	M=3.20	M=2.98	M=3.18	M=3.17	M=3.4
Memory	M=3.62	M=3.08	M=2.92	M=3.37	M=2.74	M=3.0
Social	M=2.83	M=3.42	M=3.42	M=3.35	M=2.97	M=4.0

The above five studies were chosen because they were all based on Oxford's strategy classification system.

Comparing this current study to the language strategy use of student-teachers in Sheoey's study(1999), from Table 4-5, it seems which the language strategy uses of the two gatherings are like: metacognitive strategies were frequently employed and affective strategies were minimum often employed. This is consistent with the current study. Also the current study is consistent with Chen (2005), from Table 4-5, it seems that the metacognitive strategies were most often utilized but memory strategies were minimum often used. However, when the Oxford et al.' (1990) and the Griffiths' (2003) studies were examined, it was discovered that both social and meta-cognitive strategies were the two strategies most often used by EFL language learners. These results are almost close to the outcomes of the current study.

In Yang's study (1992), from Table 4-5 it seems that affective strategies were used in a higher priority by the college students than by pre-service teachers. Yang explained the affective strategies were used in a higher priority by college students probably because they used affective strategies to adjust to their learning pressures.

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It is worth mentioning a study in Baghdad University by Suhaila S. A.(2006) that has adopted the classification O'Malley and Chamot's (1985) according to the analysis of three LLS classes: metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective, she found that the category of social-affective LLS occupies the highest rank and is mostly used by the study sample.

The Iraqi student teachers of EFL in the current study appeared to use language learning strategies unevenly, where metacognitive strategy first and affective strategy finally, as shown in the following arrangement of: metacognitive, memory, cognitive, social, affective. Metacognitive strategy is one of the indirect strategies according to the classification of Oxford(1992), which means general management of learning, clarify more metacognitive strategy learn language by centering learning and coordinating the learning process (e.g., setting goals) and assessing learning(e.g., self-monitoring). This means student-teachers EFL in Al-Mustansiriya and Diyala University are ready for general management of learning in terms of the planning the learning process, development of appropriate goals, monitor and evaluate learning.

As for the memory strategy it was ranked second and cognitive strategy was ranked third both direct strategies according to the classification Oxford (1992). The practice of remembrance is student way to use as a strategy for learning. Cognitive strategy can be for understanding and producing the language.

The lowest use of strategies that are social and affective strategies both indirect strategies, this means, that there are constraints of the social and psychology by students have made little use of these strategies.

4.3.2 Student Teachers' Teaching Beliefs

This current study indicated the student-teachers preferred Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to Audio-lingual Method. The goal of increasing under-study s' communicative competence was their prior teaching belief among 14 questionnaire statement items. However, when these student-teachers tried to help their students increase their communicative competence, it was found these student- teachers would adopt language theories from both CLT and Audio-lingual Method. In brief, these student teachers would mix methodologies to fit their teaching even though they preferred one methodology.

In sum, the outcomes of the study showed that these student-teachers' teaching beliefs trends supported the Ministry of Education to teach English language in modern methods like the communicative method and blending low percentages with other methods.

4.3.3 The Relationships Between Learning Strategies and Teaching Beliefs

Several qualitative studies (Bailey et al., 1996; Moran, 1996; Numrich, 1996; Sugiyama, 2003; Wang, 2002) have shown that student teachers' learning experience would affect their teaching. The current quantitative study of 102 participants was conducted to examine the connection among student-teachers' language learning strategies and their teaching convictions. Using Pearson's correlation, it was found there were statistically significant correlations among language learning strategies and their teaching convictions. Nevertheless, the correlations were small. It may be explained that the employ of language learning strategies may be one of the factors that influences teaching beliefs although the influence were small.

5. Conclusion

In the light of the results obtained, the following conclusions can be drawn. It was found that the Iraqi EFL student-teachers appeared to use LLSs unevenly, with the metacognitive strategy first and effective strategy finally. The researcher concludes from this that the use of a metacognitive strategy most preferred among other strategies by the student-teachers. The advantage of this strategy is to rely on self-help in the learning and teaching process. This means student-teachers of EFL in AL-Mustansiriya and Diyala University are ready for general management of learning in terms of the planning the learning process, development of appropriate goals, monitor and evaluate learning. The researcher has found that the concept of learning strategies and use of them is unclear or unknown among students who are studying and learning randomly without specific use of the strategy. Moreover, we have seen through the results that the performance of Diyala University is better than the performance of the Al-Mustansiriya University in strategies and beliefs, even a few ahead.

As for the student-teachers' teaching beliefs this current study indicated that student- teachers preferred CLT to Audio-lingual Method. From this, it was found that these student-teachers would adopt language theories from both CLT and ALM. In other words these student-teachers would mix methodologies to fit their teaching even though they preferred one methodology. While the results showed the connection among student educators' LLSs and their teaching beliefs and there were statistically noteworthy correlations, nevertheless, the correlations were small. It means that there is positive relationship occurred among learning strategies and teaching beliefs. In other words, this study presented that learning practice would influence the teaching beliefs of teachers.

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العلاقة بين استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة والمعتقدات نحو منهجيات التعليم للمعلم الطالب في مستوى الكلية

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الملخص:

تُعد استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة هي افضل واصح طرق لدارسي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية وتعد واحده من العناصر الرئيسية والمهمة لدارسي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية لتحقيق اهدافهم في اتقان اللغة الاجنبية وثقافتها لان هذه الاستراتيجيات تُكون الجزء الاساسي في تطوير النظام اللغوي الذي يبنيه المتعلم وتؤثر في التعلم بصورة مباشرة. ولكن نجد طلابنا ليس لديهم فكره او اعتقاد لاستخدام استراتيجية محددة ويعتقدون بفائدتها او طريقه محدده من طرائق التدريس ويربطون بينهم لأنجاح مهمة التعليم والتعلم.