

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES, ENGLISH MOTIVATION, AND ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF DIPLOMA EFL LEARNERS IN MALANG

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Abstract

This study aimed to measure the relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation toward English proficiency of EFL learners. SILL questionnaire, English motivation questionnaire, and also simple TOEFL test were administered to 37 diploma EFL learners in Malang. All the instruments were administered via G-form in pandemic COVID-19. The SPSS was applied to calculate the multiple regression. The results showed that there were no significant relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation; there were no significant relationship between English motivation and English proficiency; and there were no significant relationship between language learning strategies, English motivation, and English proficiency simultaneously. This results may be useful for understanding the language assessment in measuring students' ability. To gain deep information, further researcher can combine interview method to measure students' language learning strategies and English motivation.

Key words: *Language Learning Strategies, English Motivation, English Proficiency*

INTRODUCTION

The researches related to language learning strategies have been conducted from several aspects such as English proficiency. Particularly, English Proficiency in a second/foreign language is acquired increasingly and effectively than others (Nisbet, Tindall & Arroyo, 2005). Moreover, Nisbet et al., (2005) believed that from all subjects' language learning, proficiency becomes the paramount objective.

Some researchers have proven the relation between language learning strategies and English Proficiency in which Wu (2008) states that the higher proficiency level, the more often learners use learning strategies than lower proficiency level of learners. Madhumathi, Ramani and Prema (2014) investigated English proficiency in form of the TOEFL test, and they assume that the higher achievers of the TOEFL score use language-learning strategies more frequently. Besides, Goh and Foong (1997) conducted the use of language learning strategies with English proficiency at the Chinese EFL students, and in brief result, Chinese students banefully use all language learning strategies. However, Kato (2005) rejected the previous data by finding that language learning strategies didn't correlate with English proficiency, yet not all aspects prevail to proficiency.

Moreover, language learning strategies often relate to other variables such as gender, language proficiency, age, and self-efficacy (Yilmaz, 2010; and Nasihah & Cahyono, 2017). Learners' motivation affects the choice of their language learning strategies (Zarei & Elekai, 2013). Besides, language learning strategies are

triggered by motivation (Teh, Embi, Yusoff & Mohamod, 2009). The consideration of investigating the relevance of motivation and language learning strategies are based on the assumption that motivation takes the functional parts to suggest the use of specific language learning strategies (Campos, 2012). It has been proven that motivation has a significant relationship with language learning strategies.

Additionally, the researchers related to language learning strategies with motivation have been investigated all over the world in the education field as it is one of the most vital aspects of the learning process. Nourinezhad, Kargar and Rostampour (2015) concluded that language learning strategies and motivation affected writing achievement. Furthermore, Teh et al (2009) assume that language learners with higher motivation often use language-learning strategies more frequently than less motivational language learners. Therefore, the more motivated learners are, the more language learning strategies they use. However, Zia and Salehi (2008) only found a significant relationship between language learning strategies and intrinsic motivation, but not in extrinsic motivation. Thus, motivation may not influence students' choice of language learning strategies.

Some studies investigated the relationship between motivation and English language proficiency. A previous study focused on the TOEFL score to investigate students' English proficiency. Jannati and Marzban (2014) informed that the more motivated students the higher slightly their English proficiency than the low motivated students in Iranian EFL students. Additionally, the research related to the learners' motivation and English proficiency has also been investigated by Lee and Oh (2011), yet the English proficiency used learners' TOEIC scores, in a result that the highest learners' interest, the faster learners improve their English proficiency. However, Ilma (2018) opposed the recent study that there was no significant relationship between learners' motivation and English proficiency in Indonesian ESP students.

Explicitly, the relation between language learning strategies and motivation, the relation between language learning strategies and English proficiency, and the relation between motivation and English proficiency have been investigated in some researches. Ghavamnia, Kassaian, and Dabaghi (2011) studied related three after mentioned variables in time, however, in Indonesia, there were no direct answer toward the relationship between the use of language learning strategies combined with motivation and English proficiency toward Diploma EFL learners.

In Indonesia, Nasihah and Cahyono (2017) have been investigated the relationship between the use of language learning strategies combined with motivation and writing skills toward senior high school students. Hence, the study investigated language learning strategies and motivation toward English proficiency, and it focuses on Diploma EFL Students. Thereby, the study focuses on the relation between language learning strategies, English motivation, and English proficiency toward diploma EFL learners. The research questions stated as follows:

1. Do students' language learning strategies correlate with their English Proficiency?
2. Do students' English Motivations correlate with their English Proficiency?
3. Do students' language learning strategies and students' English motivation correlate with their English Proficiency?

REVIEWED LITERATURES

Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies issue began to introduce in learning a language for four skills from the past decades. Oxford (1990) assumed that language learning strategies are essential since it is a device for students to be active and autonomous in the development of communicative competence. In this study, communicative competence is both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills.

Language learning strategy is defined as the students' ability to understand, keep, and recall the latest knowledge and skills (Chamot & Kupper, 1989). Learners may access their knowledge differently, and they have different behaviors in developing the new knowledge they had. According to Benjamin (2003), language learning strategy is the impact of students' actions in processing the information. In sum, language learning strategy includes the way learners to grasp, process, stimulate, recall, regulate, apply, and utilize the new knowledge and information they get from their experiences.

English Motivation

Motivation defined by Brown (2000) as the measurement of successful learners, and the word "motivation" has emerged from three historical schools of (a) behavioristic perspective seen that a reward reinforce students' behavior, (b) cognitive term refers to the individuals' decision, and (c) constructivist view often affected by students' environment. According to Oxford (2003), the word motivation is derived from Latin "*movere*" means to move, and to motivate has meaning as persons' strong behalf and desire to reach the goals, whereas motivation means step taken to act. Thus in general, motivation occurs when a person is willing to do something strongly as their goal to achieve, while in terms of the learning process, learners build their motivation because they need to succeed and foster their academic score.

In a psychological view, the pursuit of motivation is seen to be an individual human behavior motoric system rather than social (Dörnyei, 1994). This behavior motoric system appeared when individuals are willing to do something. In motivation, individuals tried to meet their needs. According to Goyal (2015), needs in motivation are a strong behalf when someone doing something as their needs. In general, motivation concepts appear in every individual to set their goals. Then, these concepts began to manipulate in every field of researches, especially in the educational field. In the learning process, both teachers and students are motivated for different purposes. Still, students need more personal motivation to foster their learning academic achievement.

English Proficiency

English proficiency refers to the overall students' English ability in mastering English in four skills, speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Lowenberg (2002) assumed that the English proficiency test is occupied and acknowledged by native speakers since it is a Standard Norm test used around the world. This test has been proven to be appropriate in measuring students' English ability.

The measurement of English proficiency determined successful and unsuccessful learners. If their proficiency score is high, they may able to acquire the language well and reverse for the low proficiency students. Additionally, English proficiency is a foundation that formed non-native English teachers' professional confidence (Eslami & Fatahi, 2008). Thus, English proficiency not only determined overall academic success but also build a good professional English teacher.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a multiple regression to measure the three variables simultaneously. The study involved 37 diploma EFL students in their second year at University of Merdeka Malang. The participants were taken by using the convenience sampling from all diploma EFL students majoring in English.

The study applied questionnaires and test. The questionnaires were distributed in two section, and all of the questionnaires were adopted from the previous study. First, SILL questionnaire used for measuring the language learning strategies. It is adopted from Oxford (1990) with 50 items. However, in this study, the researcher only used 49 items and dropped item number 42 since it was not valid through the try out. Also,

English motivation was measured from Nasihah and Cahyono's (2017) questionnaire. There were 20 items in the questionnaire. All the questionnaire used a Likert scale with four degrees as follows: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Agree, and (4) Strongly agree. The last, the simple TOEFL test was applied to measure students' English proficiency. It involved 15 item test for listening, 15 items test for structure, 20 items test for reading, and 1 item test for writing.

All the instruments were distributed through online G-form (Google Form) since the researcher was conducted during the pandemic of COVID-19. The researcher sent the G-form link to the lecturer, and it was transferred to the respondents. About the simple TOEFL test, there was a timer in completing the test so that the pages will disappear if the time run out. The researcher used timify.me to make the timer. All students' response were recorded in the G-form. Then, it was analyzed quantitatively using SPSS version 2.0.

Also, the descriptive analysis statistics were calculated to present the numerical results. To answer the first and the second research questions, the Pearson Product Moment was applied using SPSS. Then, to gain the third research question, the regression correlation was applied to measure three variables simultaneously.

FINDINGS

The results answered the relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation, English motivation between English proficiency, and the relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation toward English proficiency.

Table 1. Analysis Descriptive Statistics.

Analysis Descriptive Statistics							
	N	Min	Max	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
ENGLISH_MOTIVATION	37	50	77	2240	60,54	6,636	44,033
SILL	37	116	196	5268	142,38	19,317	373,131
ENGLISH_PROFICIENCY	37	242	366	10450	282,43	30,608	936,863
Valid N (listwise)	37						

Table 1 showed numerical measurement for the three instruments, those are minimum score, maximum score, total score, mean, standard deviation, and the variance. The total of participants also shown as N with 37 participants.

The Relationship between Language Learning Strategies and English Proficiency

Table 2 Pearson Product Moment between Language Learning Strategies and English Proficiency

		LLS	ENGLISH_PROFICIENCY
LLS	Pearson Correlation	1	.142
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.401
	N	37	37
ENGLISH_PROFICIENCY	Pearson Correlation	.142	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.401	
	N	37	37

The table showed that the significance value was (0.401) in which higher than 0.05; while the correlation coefficient was 0.142 in which lower than the r table with 0.3246. Apparently, from the interpretation of the data, the alternative hypothesis was rejected, while the null hypothesis was accepted. It means that the data was negatively significant in which there were no significant relationship between language learning strategies and English proficiency.

The Relationship between English Motivation and English Proficiency

Table 3 Pearson Product Moment between English Motivation and English Proficiency

		ENGLISH_M OTIVATION	ENGLISH_P ROFICIENCY
ENGLISH_MOTIVATION	Pearson Correlation	1	.045
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.790
	N	37	37
ENGLISH_PROFICIENCY	Pearson Correlation	.045	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.790	
	N	37	37

The table showed that the significance value was (0.790) in which higher than 0.05; while the correlation coefficient was 0,045 in which lower than the r table with 0.3246. The data were interpreted and it was gained a result that the alternative hypothesis was rejected, while the null hypothesis was accepted. It means that there were no significant relationship between English motivation and English proficiency.

The Relationship between Language Learning Strategies and English Motivation toward English

Proficiency

Table 4. ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	798.125	2	399.063	.412	.666 ^b
	Residual	32928.956	34	968.499		
	Total	33727.081	36			
a. Dependent Variable: ENGLISH_PROFICIENCY						
b. Predictors: (Constant), ENGLISH_MOTIVATION, LLS						

Table 4 gave the measurement of the two variable predictors toward the criterion variable simultaneously. It was gained from the data that the significance value was 0.666 lower than 0.05 and the F value was 0.412 lower than the F table (3.28). In this case, the alternative hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted. It means, there were no significant correlation between language learning strategies and English motivation toward English proficiency.

Table 5. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.154 ^a	.024	-.034	31.121

a. Predictors: (Constant), ENGLISH_MOTIVATION, LLS

Table 5 showed the result of the simultaneous analysis of the predictors toward the criterion variable. R square was converted to the percentage. The R square indicated the contribution of predictor variables to the criterion variable. The predictor only contributed 2.4% to the English proficiency in which the rest of 97.6% was

influenced by other factors. It can be concluded that, although it was stated that there were no significant relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation toward English proficiency, the two predictor variables still gave contribution with 2.4% while the 97.6% was affected by other factors.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, first it was found that the use of language learning strategies did not give implication to the students' English proficiency, and it did not contribute to the students' improvement of their English proficiency. Although students use language-learning strategies more often, it could not improve their English proficiency. The researcher indicated two possibility reasons which influence the result of the study. First, the use of language learning strategies' questionnaire might be answered not serious by the respondents. The measurement of the language learning strategies might need more deep information to the respondents. For instance, rather than use one questionnaire to measure the language learning strategies, the use of interview method may help to dig new finding to the study. Then, the simple TOEFL test items include low, medium, and difficult test items. Meanwhile, medium test items are the most appropriate test items for determining the test. Hence, the simple TOEFL test might influence the result of the study since the test is less appropriate to measure the English proficiency.

This finding was in line with Salem's (2006) study. He stated that there were no significant relationship between high and low proficient students in the use of language learning strategies. He found that only metacognitive strategy relates to English proficiency. The researcher mentioned the limitation of the study in which the SAT test might influence the result of the result. He indicated that the SAT test do not appropriate to measure the proficiency. Also, Kato (2005) assumed that metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategy give better result toward students' English proficiency, while other strategies such as compensation, memory, and affective strategy do not correlate with students' English proficiency.

This finding rejected the previous study in which it indicated that there was a significant relationship between language learning strategies and English proficiency (Goh & Fong, 1997; Wu, 2008; and Madhumati, et al., 2014). Wu (2008) proved that the use of language learning strategies gave a contribution to English proficiency. She noted that metacognitive, affective, cognitive, and social strategies have a high relation to English proficiency improvement. When the students use metacognitive, affective, cognitive, and social strategies more often, they acquired a high score in English proficiency. Moreover, Madhumati, et al. (2014) pointed out that the use of overall language learning strategies relates to students' English achievement. The result showed that low and medium proficient students used the least language learning strategies, while high proficient students use language-learning strategies more often. In their study, the use of language learning strategies could predict students' English proficiency in which the more proficient students, the more they use language-learning strategies more often.

Second, there were no significant correlation between English motivation and English proficiency. It means that the more students motivated in learning English, they do not proficient in English. Again, the test of determining English proficiency did not appropriate enough, and it influenced the result of the study. The researcher could not monitor the respondents directly in answering the questionnaire since the questionnaire was distributed online. Somewhat, the respondents were not serious in answering the questionnaire.

This finding advocates the previous study of Ilma (2018) in which learners' motivation did not relate to their English proficiency. She assumed that the respondents did not serious in answering the English motivation's questionnaire. She also noted that higher motivated students had other purposes in learning English. For

instance, students were highly motivated by extrinsic motivation since they would be given punishment by their parents if they did not learn English.

Nevertheless, this study did not support Lee and Oh's (2011) study in which stated that English motivation correlated with English proficiency. Lee and Oh (2012) categorized motivation into four types (heuristic, intrinsic, instrumental, and integrative motivation). This technique was efficient in measuring the relationship toward English proficiency. The result showed that intrinsic and heuristic motivation gained greater improvement in English proficiency than those with instrumental and integrative motivation.

However, Nasihah and Cahyono (2017) gained a good result that English motivation, in general, correlates with one of the English skills such as writing. The study did not differentiate students' motivation type and proved that general English motivation could improve one English skill. It leads to the conclusion that using general English Motivation could be measured for a single English skill or ability.

The third discussion attempted to elaborate on the correlation between language learning strategies and English motivation and English Proficiency. The result showed that there were no significant relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation toward English proficiency. The test of English proficiency was not appropriate enough in determining students' English proficiency. Moreover, it needs a more deep understanding of the use of language learning strategies' instruments. Somewhat, students might no serious about answering the questionnaire.

This finding was similar to Salem's (2006) study related to the use of language learning strategies and English motivation toward English proficiency. He found that the study was not statistically significant. He also elaborated the findings into several limitations such as the inappropriateness of the participants in the study and the SAT score for determining the measurement of students' English proficiency. He implied that the participants could not represent the relationship between language learning strategies, English motivation, and English proficiency. Also, he stated that the SAT is an aptitude test rather than a proficiency test.

Nevertheless, Nasihah and Cahyono's (2017) study opposites with this study. They examined the relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation toward writing skills. This study and the previous study have similarities in research methods such as the design, the questionnaires for language learning strategies and English motivation, and also the data analysis. Both studies do not specify the categorization of language learning strategies and English motivation. Also, this study calculated the relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation simultaneously such as the previous study. However, this study gained different results from the previous study since the previous study specify one skill, but this study focuses on the overall skills.

On the other hand, another result studies (Ghavamnia, et al. 2011; and, Zhang and Xiao, 2014) showed that language learning strategies and English motivation relate to English proficiency. Unlike this study, these studies employ the analysis into part of language learning strategies and also part of English motivation. These studies also do not analyze the variables simultaneously. The findings show that both language learning strategies and English motivation relate to English proficiency.

Indeed, although two predictors variable enforced to English proficiency, it still could not improve students' English proficiency. Other factors should be included since that indicated to be able to reinforce the language learning strategies such as students' age, type of task, and students' level. There were other variables of language learning strategies that could be measured in improving English proficiency. Oxford (as cited in

Oxford 1990) brought up numerous variables that influenced the use of language learning strategies those are motivation, gender, cultural background, attitudes, beliefs, type of task, age, and L2 stage.

Students' age and level also needed to include the treatments since the TOEFL test more appropriate for senior students in their four years in learning English. Although early year students were already introduced to the TOEFL test, they still did not have experience in doing the TOEFL test. Therefore, students' experiences and knowledge are also important to be considered.

From this discussion, it gained some limitations to the study. The simple TOEFL test can be applied for determining students' English proficiency if the items test are classified as medium items test. The result might gain a negative relationship because the items test includes low, medium, and difficult items. Moreover, students' might not serious in answering the language learning strategies and English motivation's questionnaires. Hence, this result gives implications to the study that both researcher and lecturer need to improve their language assessment and pedagogical assessment ability.

CONCLUSION

This study unveils that a good language assessment and students' self-evaluation of language learning strategies and English motivation are essential for the research. The result showed a negative relationship because of the weakness of the instruments for online research. The use of questionnaires in answering students' language learning strategies and English motivation might not reflect students' situation. Also, the researcher could not monitor the whole research directly. Concerning the simple TOEFL test, the test items were classified as inappropriate test items since it did not meet the medium test items. Thereby, this study resulted negative relationship between language learning strategies and English motivation toward English proficiency.

Hence, this study suggested the teachers to measure students' English proficiency using a good test measurement. Further researchers need to determine good test items for the English proficiency test. Moreover, to gain deep information related to the use of students' language learning strategies and English motivation, further researchers suggest using the interview method.

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