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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Optimizing Language Learning: A Focus on Social Strategy Preferences in Second Language Acquisition

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates second language learning strategies (SLLS) among learners, focusing on the role of social strategies in enhancing language acquisition. Using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), the study measured learners' strategy preferences across six categories: Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social strategies. Results indicate that participants, particularly in the experimental group, displayed a notable preference for social strategies, reflecting an emphasis on interactive learning approaches. This preference suggests that learners benefit from activities involving social interaction to enhance language skills.

The study also found high usage rates of metacognitive and affective strategies, underscoring the learners' ability to reflect on and manage their learning processes, as well as to maintain a positive attitude toward language acquisition. Memory and cognitive strategies were also employed, though to a lesser extent, suggesting a more selective use of techniques like vocabulary memorization and mental imagery to aid comprehension.

The findings highlight the importance of self-assessment and motivation in language learning. Participants who rated themselves positively in language proficiency were highly motivated to improve, which aligns with the work of Jäkel (2015) on the impact of positive self-perception in learning outcomes. These insights underscore the need to foster motivation and a positive self-image among learners, as these factors significantly influence engagement and success in language learning. Overall, the diverse range of SLLS employed suggests adaptability among learners in using different strategies for various contexts, supporting their language learning goals effectively.

In conclusion, this study provides evidence that social strategies are central to successful language learning and suggests that language programs could benefit from integrating these strategies, alongside metacognitive and affective strategies, to foster autonomous and motivated language learners.

INTRODUCTION

The effective acquisition of a second language (L2) is essential in an increasingly globalized world where multilingual proficiency can enhance both personal and professional opportunities. Language

learning, however, involves more than rote memorization; it requires the strategic use of various learning techniques

tailored to individual learner needs and preferences. Second Language Learning Strategies (SLLS), such as social, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies, have been shown to play a significant role in the success of language acquisition efforts, as learners utilize these methods to process, retain, and apply new language skills effectively (Oxford, 1990; Cohen, 1998). Among these strategies, social strategies—those that involve interaction with others—are increasingly emphasized for their role in creating immersive, communicative contexts that can enhance linguistic competence.

Previous research indicates that successful language learners tend to use a combination of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies, with social strategies showing particular efficacy in interactive and practical language application (Jäkel, 2015). Moreover, self-assessment and positive self-perception have been identified as influential in sustaining motivation and encouraging learners to take ownership of their learning processes (Bisson et al., 2015). This connection between learners' self-perception, motivation, and strategy use is crucial, as motivation often drives the choice and persistence of strategy use, further reinforcing language acquisition outcomes (Sukying, 2021).

The present study aims to examine strategy preferences among learners, focusing on the impact of social strategies within the broader context of SLLS. Specifically, using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), this study assesses learners' strategy use across six categories to explore how these strategies influence their language learning experiences and self-assessment. By identifying patterns in strategy preferences and linking them to language learning success, this study seeks to inform educators on how best to structure learning environments that foster effective strategy use and motivation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) as the primary instrument for assessing language learning strategies among participants. SILL is a widely recognized tool developed by Oxford (1990) to evaluate six distinct categories of strategies used in language acquisition: Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social strategies. The SILL has been validated in numerous language learning studies and offers a reliable means of quantifying learners' strategy preferences (Cohen, 1998).

Participants

The study involved university students enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses in Kosovo. The participants were divided into an experimental group and a control group to allow for comparative analysis of strategy use and effectiveness. All participants were native speakers of Albanian with varied levels of English proficiency, as determined by a pre-study assessment.

Procedure

Participants in the experimental group received specific guidance and activities aimed at enhancing their social strategies, such as group discussions, peer interactions, and collaborative language exercises. The control group followed the standard curriculum without additional emphasis on social strategy use. Both groups completed the SILL at the beginning and end of the study period to capture any changes in strategy preference and usage.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data from the SILL were collected and scored according to Oxford's guidelines, yielding scores in each of the six strategy categories for each participant. Scores were analyzed to determine the frequency and preference of each strategy type, with particular focus on the social strategies category. Statistical analysis, including t-tests, was used to assess significant differences in strategy use

between the experimental and control groups. Descriptive statistics and correlations were also calculated to examine the relationship between strategy use and participants' self-assessed language proficiency.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to the study. Confidentiality was ensured by anonymizing participant data and strictly limiting access to study materials.

RESULTS

Background Questionnaire

The information collected in the background questionnaire can also be used to predict second language proficiency and identify risk factors for language difficulties, which can be valuable for researchers and practitioners alike, as it helps us gather crucial information that can informthe design and interpretation of the study, and provide valuable insights into second language acquisition.

Distribution of different languages spoken at home and a language mostly learned as a second language (L2) among the participants:

Based on the given data, we can understand the following about the distribution of different languages spoken at home and a language mostly learned as a second language (L2) among the participants:

The vast majority of participants, 96.3%, reported speaking Albanian at home.

A small percentage of participants reported speaking other languages at home,including Albanian-Bosnian, Turkish, and Turkish-Albanian- Gorance.

The language mostly learned as a second language (L2) among the participants wasEnglish,with 80% of the respondents indicating that they learned English as a second language.

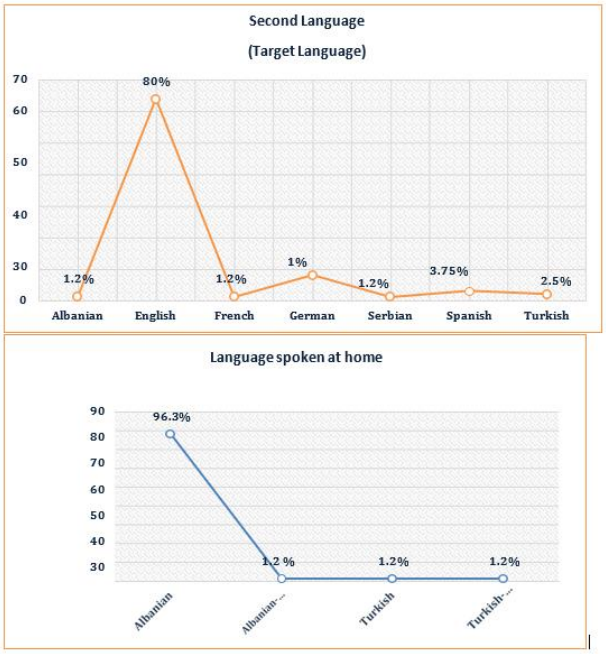


Figure 1: Distribution of different languages spoken at home and a language mostly learned

as a secondlanguage(L2) among the participants

Overall, the data proofs that Albanian is the dominant language spoken at home among the participants, while English is the most commonly learned second language.

Students perceived English proficiency compared with otherstudents

English proficiency compared to their peers on a 4-point scale: Excellent, Good, Fair, andPoor, and the results are as follows:

The majority of students, 71.4% of respondents, rated themselves as Good in

English proficiency.

A significant number of students, 19%, rated themselves as Excellent inEnglish proficiency.

Only a small percentage of students, 6% of respondents, rated themselves as Fair in English proficiency.

A very small percentage of students, 1.2% of respondents, rated themselves as Poor in English proficiency.

A few students, 2.4% of respondents, did not provide an answer to this question.

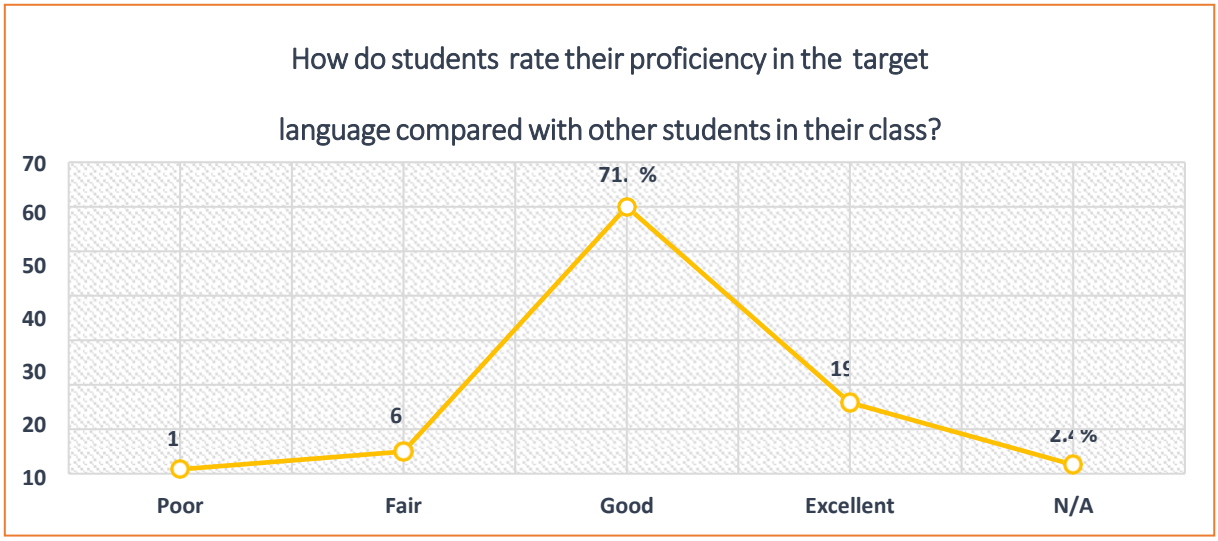


Figure 2: Students` proficiency rate in English compared with other students

Overall, the data suggests that the majority of students have a high level of confidence in theirEnglish proficiency, with most of them rating themselves as Good and a significant number asExcellent. However, it's important to note that self-assessment may not always be accurate, andother measures of English proficiency may provide a more objective evaluation.

Students perceived English proficiency compared with nativespeakers

The given data leads us to understand the following about students' perceived English proficiency compared with native speakers:

Students were asked to rate their English proficiency compared to that of nativespeakers on a 4-point scale: Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor.

The majority of participants, 61.9%, rated themselves as Good in Englishproficiency com-pared to native speakers.

A significant proportion of participants, 27.4%, rated themselves as Fair inEnglish proficiency compared to native speakers.

A small number of participants, 7.1%, rated themselves as Poor in Englishproficiency com-pared to native speakers.

2.4%, did not provide an answer to this question.

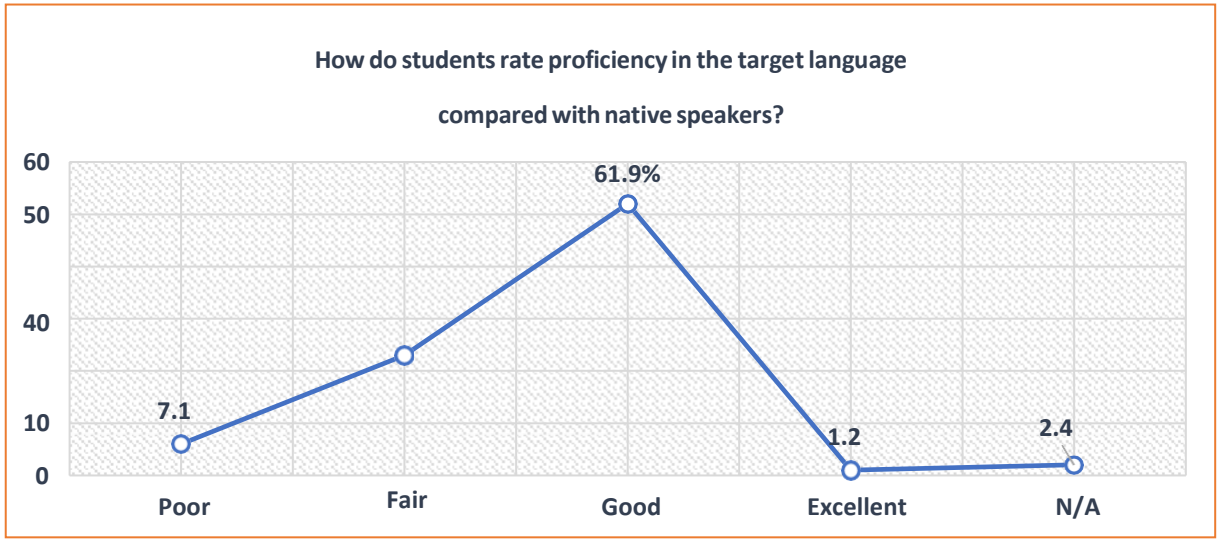


Figure 3: Students` proficiency rate in English compared with native speakers

Overall, the data suggests that the majority of participants have a positive view of their English proficiency compared to native speakers, with most of them rating themselves as Good.However, there is also a significant number who see room for improvement, with over a quarterof participants rating themselves as Fair. This is a rational and realistic self-assessment, as it is reasonable to expect some differences in language proficiency between non-native speakers andnative speakers.

Students` importance scale on second (target) language proficiency

Students were asked to rate the importance of their second language proficiency on a 3-point scale: Very Important, Important, Not Important.

The majority of participants, 65.5%, rated their second language proficiency asVery Important, indicating a high level of importance placed on this aspect of their language development.

A significant proportion of participants, 32.1%, rated their second language proficiency as important, further highlighting the importance of this skill.

Only a small number of participants, 2.4%, did not provide an answer to this question.

Additionally, a vast majority of participants, 95.2%, felt the need to improve their language proficiency, which further emphasizes the significance and value that participants place on their second language proficiency.

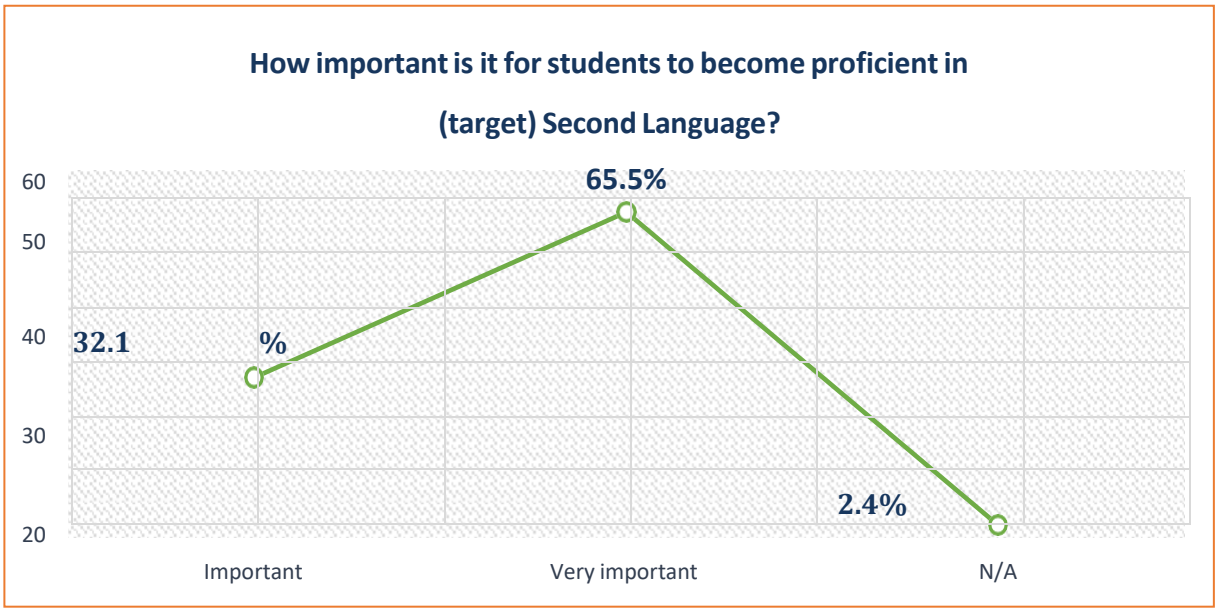


Figure 4: Students` importance scale on second (target) language proficiency

The data suggests that participants place a high level of importance on their second language proficiency, with a majority rating it as Very Important. The fact that most participants feel the need toimprove their language proficiency further highlights its importance as an aspect of their personal andprofessional development.

Students` types of interest on second (target) language

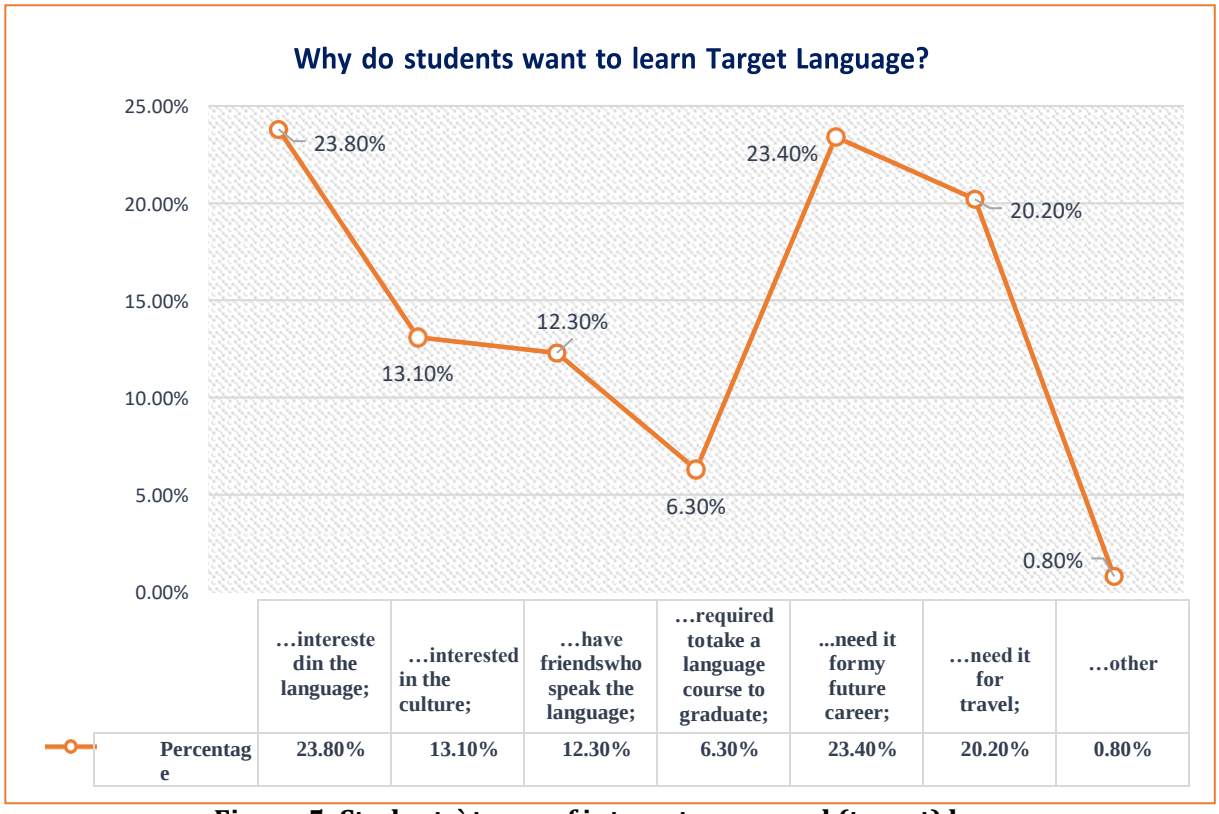
The results show that the participants had various reasons for their interest in learning the languageA significant proportion of them, 23.8%, were interested in learning the language itself, indicating a genuine desire to acquire language skills.

Other participants had more specific reasons for their interest, such as cultural interest(13.1%), which suggests an interest in understanding the cultural context of the language being learned.

Some participants were motivated by practical reasons such as speaking with friends (12.3%), completing a course (6.3%), career advancement (23.4%), or travel (20.2%).

Only a small proportion of participants, 0.8%, cited other interests as their motivation forlearning the language.

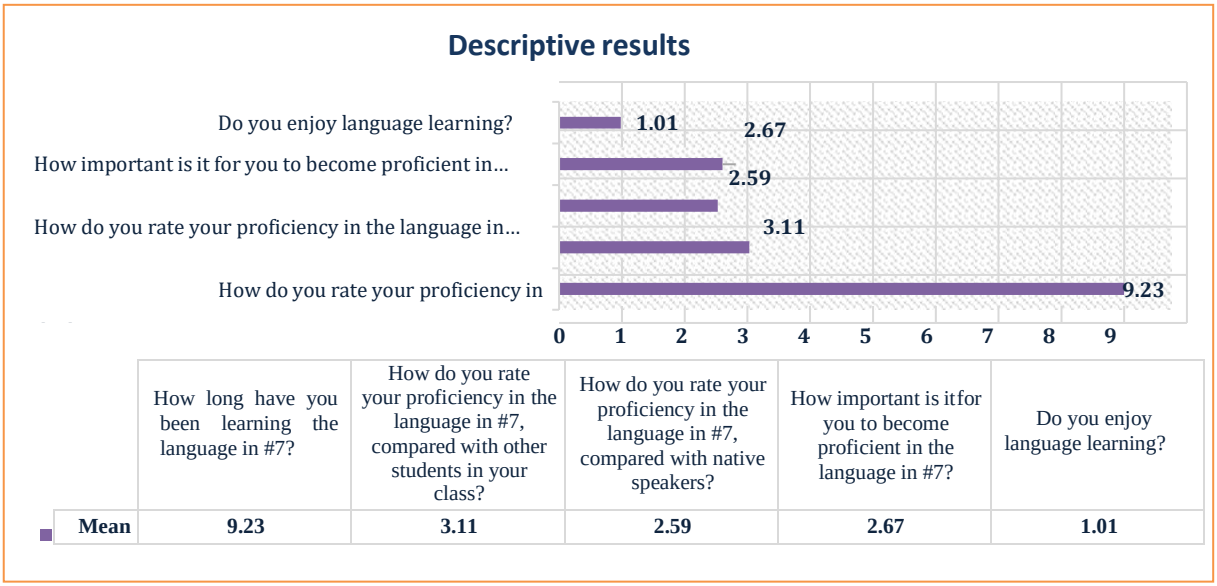
The diverse range of motivations highlights the importance of considering individual needsand interests when designing language learning programs.



	…interested in the language;	…interested in the culture;	…have friends who speak the language;	…required to take a language course to graduate;	…need it for my future career;	…need it for travel;	…other
Percentage	23.80%	13.10%	12.30%	6.30%	23.40%	20.20%	0.80%

Figure 5: Students` types of interest on second (target) language

Overall, the data suggests that participants had varied reasons for their interest in learning the second (target) language. The most significant proportion were motivated by the language itself,while others had more specific or practical motivations. This diversity of motivations highlightsthe importance of designing language learning programs that cater to individual needs and interests.



	How long have you been learning the language in #7?	How do you rate your proficiency in the language in #7, compared with other students in your class?	How do you rate your proficiency in the language in #7, compared with native speakers?	How important is it for you to become proficient in the language in #7?	Do you enjoy language learning?
Mean	9.23	3.11	2.59	2.67	1.01

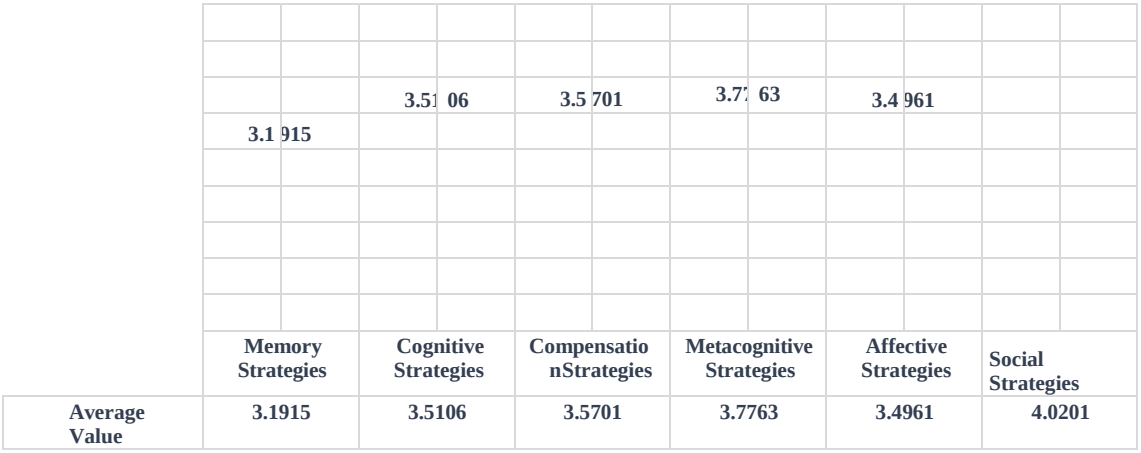
Figure 6. Descriptive Section Results of SILL

In the context of the provided data, the majority of students rated themselves as either good or excellent in terms of their language proficiency compared to their classmates, and the majorityalso rated themselves as either good or very good compared to native speakers. Additionally, the majority of students rated being perfect with the language as very important, indicating a high level of motivation to improve their language skills. These findings suggest that the studentsin this study have a positive perception of their language proficiency and a strong motivation tocontinue improving their skills.

Descriptive Group Results of SILL

The results of the research show the current state of the experimental group on the SILL test, where the overall average for Memory strategies is 3.191, while for Cognitive strategies we havean average of 3.510. Additionally, the average for Compensation strategies is 3.570, with 3.776 for Metacognitive strategies, while 3.496 is the average for affective strategies and

4.020 for Social strategies.



	Memory Strategies	Cognitive Strategies	Compensation Strategies	Metacognitive Strategies	Affective Strategies	Social Strategies
Average Value	3.1915	3.5106	3.5701	3.7763	3.4961	4.0201

Figure 7. Overall percentage in all categories of SILL

Additionally, a study by Oxford and Nyikos (1989) found that affective strategies, such as managing anxiety and motivation, were important for second language learning success (Galti, 2017). This supports the average score found for Affective strategies in the SILL test results presented. In terms of Memory strategies, a study by Anderson (2005) found that using mnemonic devices, such as visual imagery, can be an effective memory strategy for language learning. This may support the average score found for Memory strategies in the SILL test results presented.

Part A: Memory Strategies

According to the following results, we see that the majority of respondents emphasize that it isusually true that they think about the relationships between what they already know and new things they learn in English (İlçin et al., 2018). The majority of respondents emphasize that they use new English words in a sentence to keep them in mind, and also claim that they associate new English words with a sentence image or phrase to help remember that word (Riazi & Rahimi,2005). On the other hand, there is agreement about the statement that they remember a new English word by making a mental image of a situation in which the word can be used (İlçin et al., 2018). Most of them do not use poems,

flashcards to remember new English words, anddo not physically play with new English words or review English lessons, except for a lower percentage (Cohen,1998). Among others, the majority claim to remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on a page, in a table, or on a road sign (Cohen,1998).

Based on the SILL test results presented and the relevant studies that support the effectivenessof different language learning strategies, we can say that the experimental group appears to have a good understanding and use of different language learning strategies. The higher averagescores in Metacognitive, Social, Compensation, and Affective strategies suggest that these strategies may be particularly effective for second language learning. However, it is important to note that the SILL test only measures self-reported strategy use and does not necessarily reflect actual language learning strategy being used.

In terms of memory strategies, the average score for creating mental linkage is 3.514, 2.885 for applying images and songs, while 3.330 for reviewing well, and 2.631 for employing action.

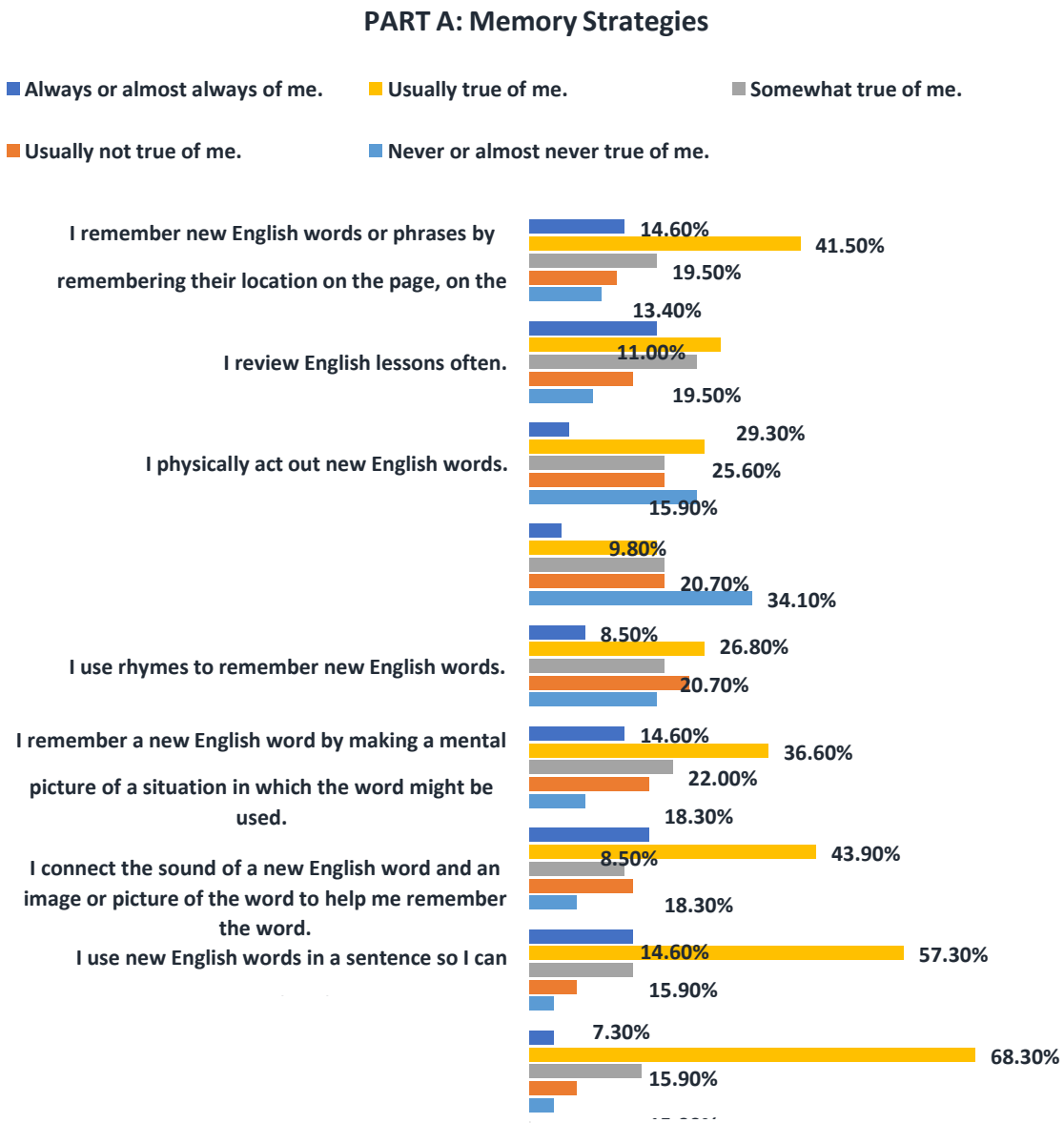


Figure 8. Presentation of detailed data from Memory Strategies - SILL

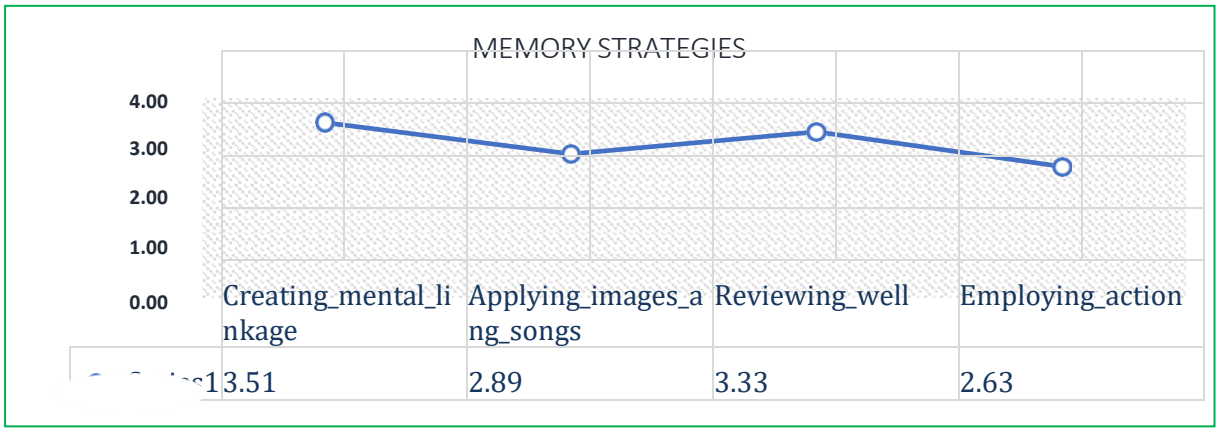


Figure 8. SILL Memory Strategies- Subgroup data presentation

The findings presented in this section align with previous research on memory strategies for language learning. These strategies include mental linkage, which involves connecting new information to existing knowledge, and using imagery and songs to create associations with new vocabulary.

The average score for reviewing well in this study also supports the importance of repetition and review in language learning.

Overall, the findings presented in this section align with previous research on memory strategiesfor language learning, providing further evidence for the effectiveness of mental linkage and imagery in vocabulary retention, as well as the importance of repetition and review

Part B: Cognitive Strategies

In the context of Cognitive Strategies, it is seen that the majority of students express that they write or say new English words more than a few times, and the same opinion is held by the majority in terms of their effort to speak English as their native language. They also express that they practice English sounds, while using words less in different ways. The overwhelming majority begin conversations in the English language, and also watch television in English orgo to movies to speak English. They say they often write notes,messages, letters, or reports in the English language. On the other hand, the majority acknowledge that they look up words in their own language that are similar to new English words, while less interested in finding models in the English language. A smaller percentage are interested in finding the meaning of an English word by breaking it into parts to understand it, while the majority acknowledge that they try not to translate word for word (Mahlobo, 1999).

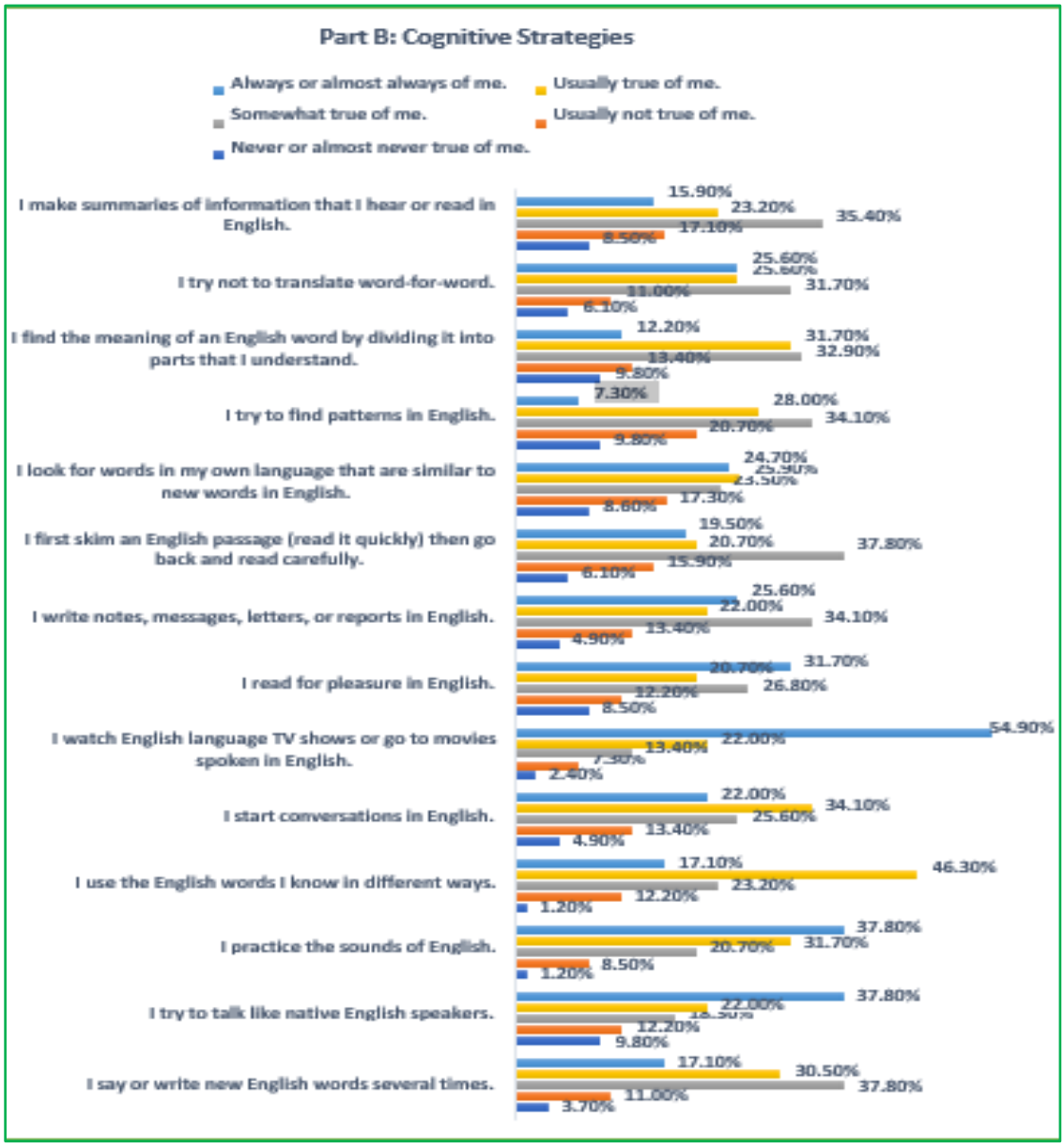


Figure 9. Presentation of detailed data from Cognitive Strategies SILL

In the group of cognitive strategies, the average score for practicing is 3.659, and for deepprocessing, the average score is 3.323.

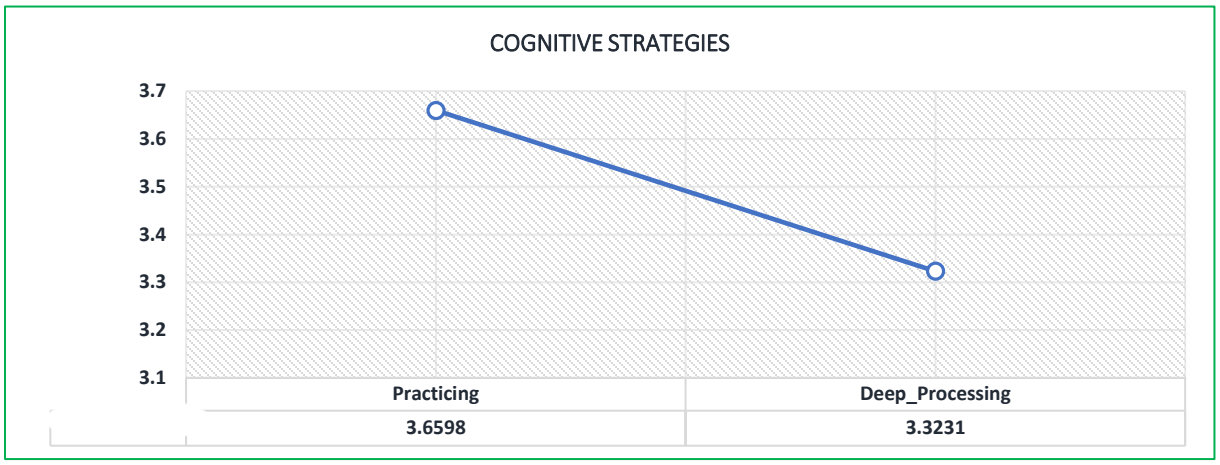


Figure 10. SILL Cognitive Strategies- Subgroup data presentation

Using cognitive strategies can be effective in language learning. In a study by Oxford and Crookall (1990), cognitive strategies were found to be positively correlated with language proficiency (Oxford & Crookall, 1990). The results from the present study align with these findings, as the majority of respondents reported using cognitive strategies such as practicing new words and speaking English as their native language.

Furthermore, the high average score for practicing (3.659) and deep processing (3.323) in this study suggests that the participants are actively engaging with the language and trying to internalize it. This is consistent with research that has found that language learners who engagein more practice and deeper processing of the language are more likely to improve their proficiency (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Schmidt, 1990).

Overall, the findings from this section suggest that the participants are using effective cognitive strategies to learn English and are actively engaging with the language. By continuing to use these strategies and engaging with the language in meaningful ways, they are likely to continueto im- prove their proficiency.

Part C: Compensation Strategies

In the category of compensation strategies, we see that the majority of students claim that to understand unknown words in English, they make assumptions, and also acknowledge that whenthey cannot think of any words during an English conversation, they use gestures to beunderstood. A smaller majority claim that they create new words if they do not know them accurately in English,

and also read English to search for every new word. The majority acknowledge that they try to understand what the other person means in English, and use aphrase that means the same thing (Riazi & Rahimi,2005).

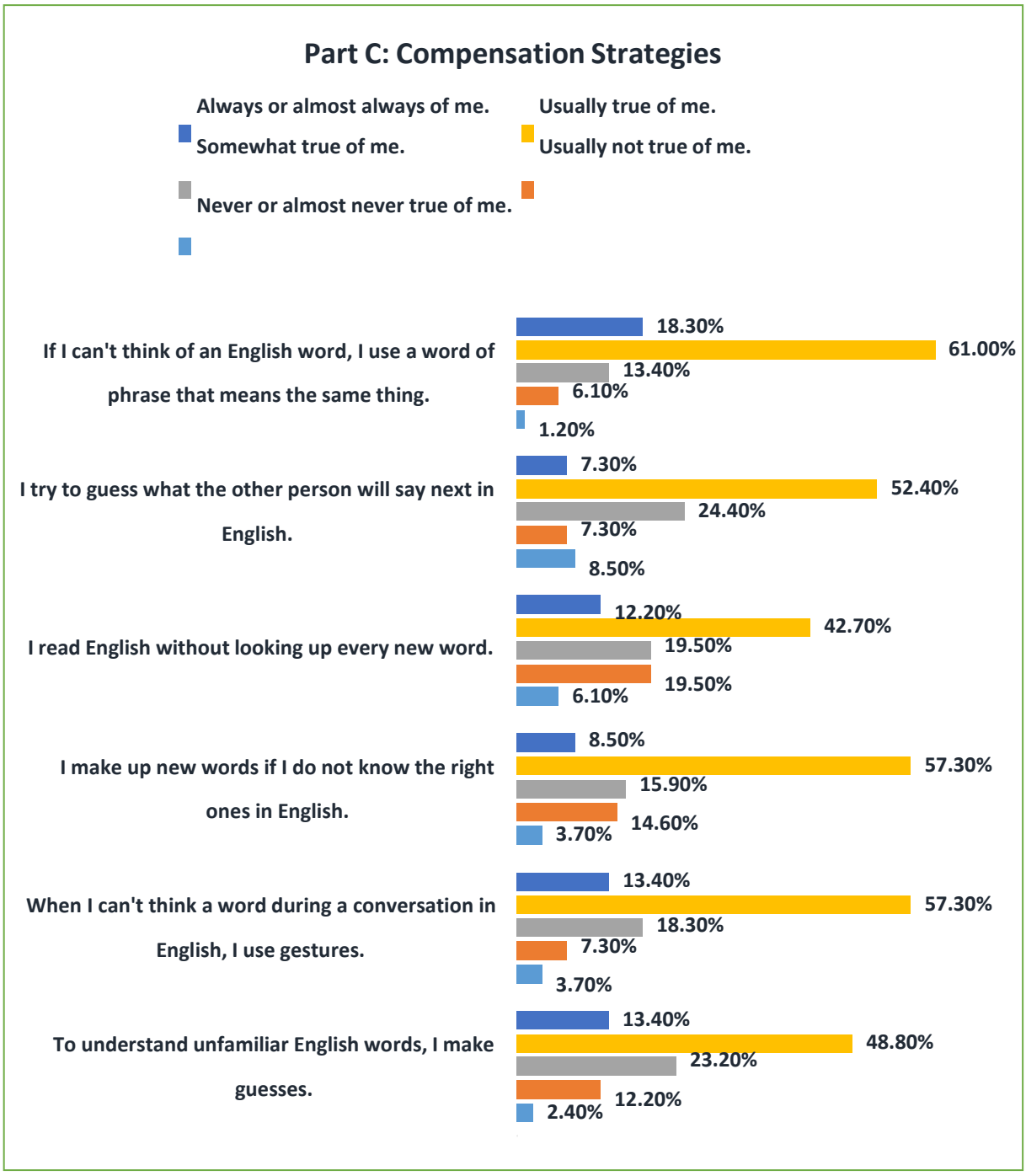


Figure 11. Presentation of detailed data from Compensation Strategies - SILL

In the compensation strategies group, the average score for guessing intelligently is 3.558, whilethe average score for overcoming limitations is 3.600.

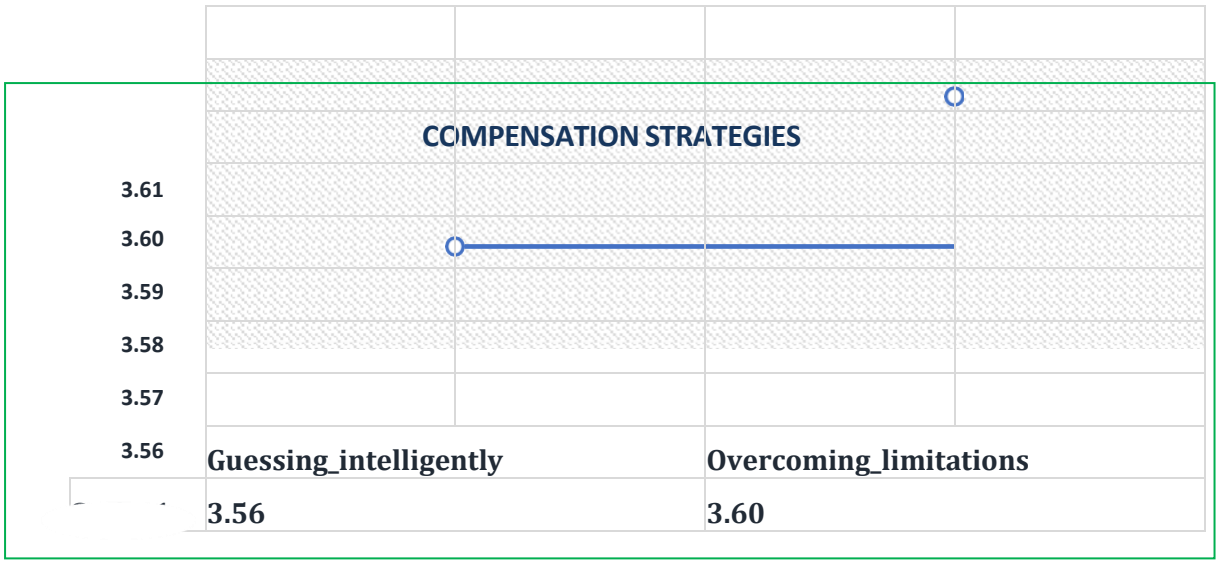


Figure 12. SILL Compensation Strategies- Subgroup data presentation

Compensation strategies play an important role in second language acquisition, especially when learners encounter difficulties in communication (Liu, 2016). According to research by Yilmaz(2019), compensation strategies are an effective way for learners to overcome their language limitations and communicate effectively. The study found that learners use various compensation strategies, such as guessing intelligently, asking for clarification, using gestures, and using synonyms or alternative words, to overcome language difficulties.

Similarly, the findings from the context align with the research on compensation strategies. The majority of students in the study use guessing intelligently and try to understand the meaning of unfamiliar English words, which is a common compensation strategy used by learners (Chamot &O'Malley, 1994). Moreover, the use of gestures to convey meaning is also a widely used compensation strategy by learners (Gullberg & De Bot, 2010).

The current study found that the majority of learners try to use phrases that convey the same meaning when they cannot find the right words during an English conversation. This aligns with research by Kuo and Anderson (2010), who found that learners use lexical phrases to compensate for their limited vocabulary and lack of fluency in the target language.

In conclusion, the findings from the context are consistent with research on compensation strategies in second language acquisition, emphasizing the importance of these strategies in overcoming language limitations and communicating effectively.

Part D: Metacognitive Strategies

In the context of the metacognitive strategies category, we see that most students agree that they try to find as many ways as possible to use their English, while a large majority also agree

that they notice their mistakes in English and are able to use information to help improve their communication (Seven, 2020). A large majority of students agree that they pay attention when someone speaks in English, and also that they agree that they plan their schedule to have enoughtime to study in English. Most of them are neutral or deny that they seek out other people to speak English

with, while a majority agree that they seek out opportunities to read as much as possible in English. They also express that they have clear goals to improve their skills in the English language (Riazi & Rahimi, 2005).

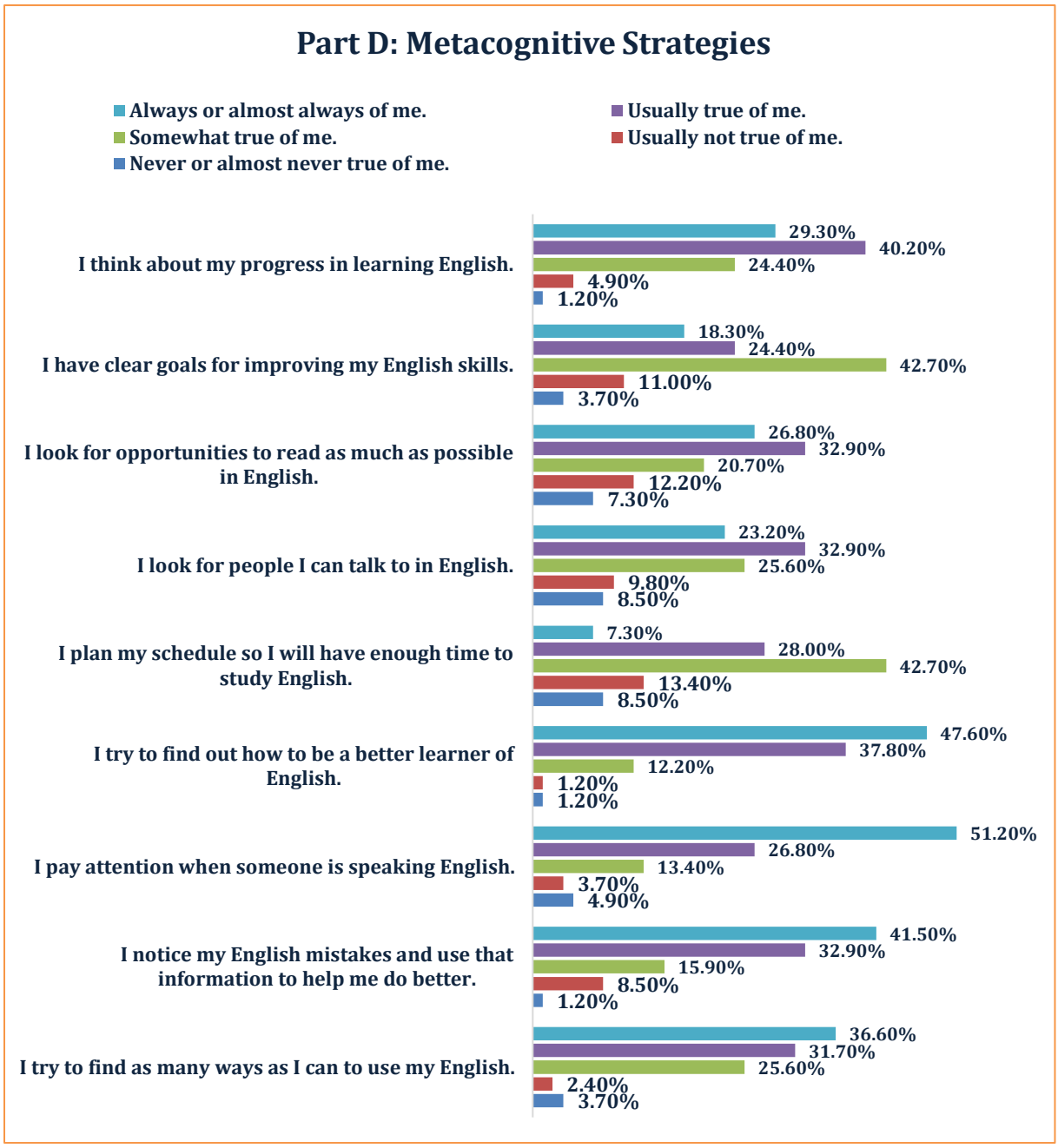


Figure 13. Presentation of detailed data from Metacognitive Strategies - SILL

In the metacognitive strategies group, we see that the average score for centering learning is 3.971, followed by 3.354 for arranging and planning learning, as well as 3.993 for evaluating learning.

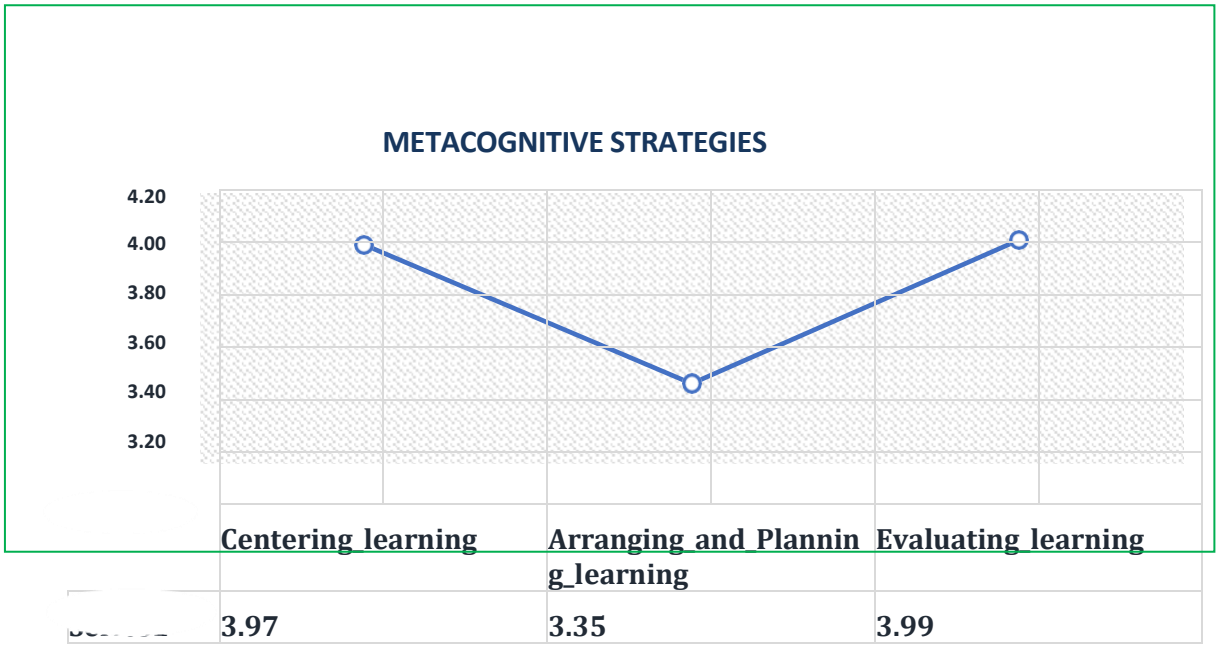


Figure 14. SILL Metacognitive Strategies- Subgroup data presentation

In the context of the current text, the results indicate that the majority of students engage in metacognitive strategies such as setting clear goals for improving their English skills, seekingout opopportunities to read in English, and planning their schedule to have enough time to study in English. Additionally, most students report that they pay attention when someone speaks in English and notice their mistakes in order to improve their communication.

The average score for cantering learning was 3.971, indicating that students place a high valueon focusing their learning efforts. The average score for arranging and planning learning was 3.354, suggesting that students also prioritize planning and organizing their English learning. Finally, the average score for evaluating learning was 3.993, indicating that students arereflective in their learning and seek to assess their progress.

Overall, the findings suggest that students who engage in metacognitive strategies may have agreater chance of success in their English language learning endeavors.

Part E: Affective Strategies

Under the category of affective strategies, we see that the majority of students agree that they try to relax whenever they are afraid to use English, and also encourage themselves to speak English even when they are afraid of making mistakes. Most of them agree that they give themselves a reward or

treat when they know English well, and also agree that they observe if they are tense or write down their feelings in a language learning diary, and also talk to someoneelse about how they feel when learning English (Sariçoban & Karadayioğlu, 2022).

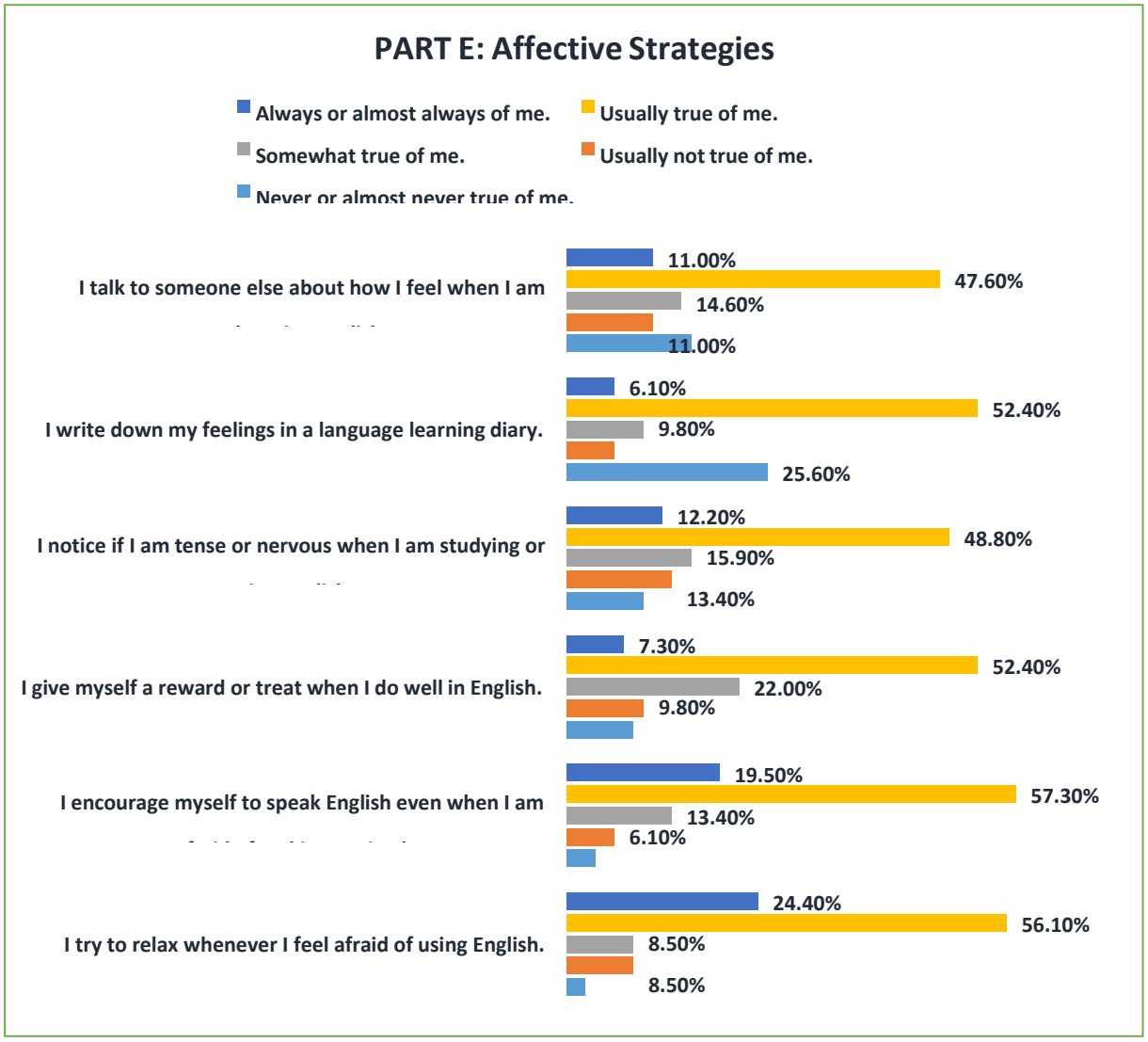


Figure 15. Presentation of detailed data from Affective Strategies - SILL

Within the affective strategies group, we see that the average score for reducing anxiety is3.94, while 3.81 for encouraging oneself, and 3.285 for emotional state.

Figure 16. SILL Affective Strategies - Subgroup data presentation

The strategy of encouraging oneself aligns with research on self-efficacy, which is the belief inone's ability to perform a task successfully (Bandura, 1977). A study by Chen et al., (2022) found that students with higher self-efficacy were more likely to persist in language learning and had higher levels of achievement.

Finally, the strategy of emotional state aligns with research on the impact of emotions on language learning. A study by Pekrun et al. (2002) found that positive emotions such as enjoyment and interest can lead to better learning outcomes, while negative emotions such as anxiety and boredom can have a negative impact.

In conclusion, the use of affective strategies, such as reducing anxiety, self-encouragement, and emotional regulation, can play a crucial role in language learning success, and the findings presented in the given context align with previous research in this area.

Part F: Social Strategies

In the context of social strategies, we see that the majority of students report that if they do not understand something in English, they ask the other person to slow down or repeat it, and alsoask English speakers to correct them when they speak (Chand, 2021). The majority alsoreport practicing English with other students, and also seeking help from English speakers. A high percentage report asking questions in English and trying to learn about the culture of English speakers (Martirosyan et al., 2021)

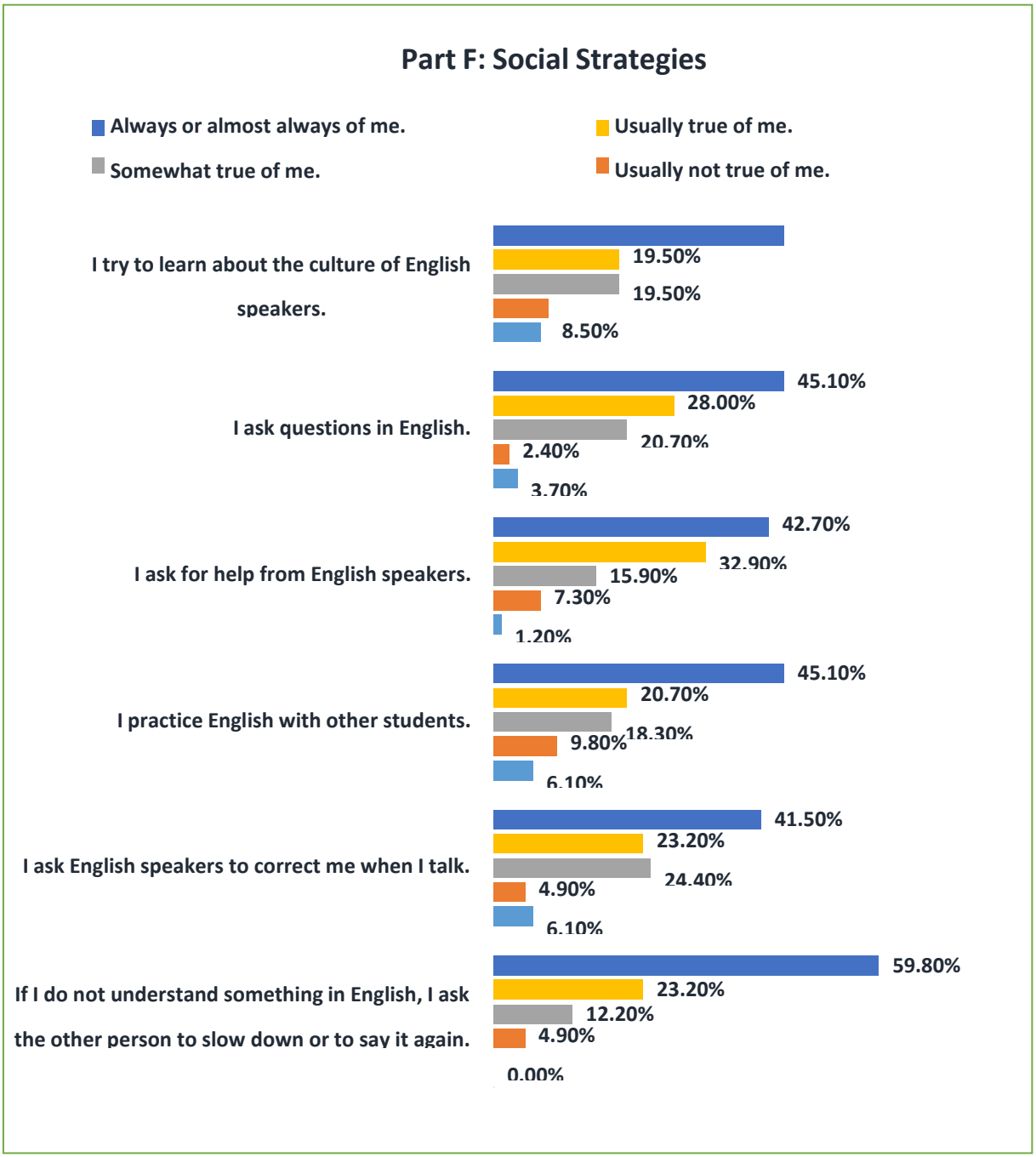


Figure 17. Presentation of detailed data from Affective Strategies - SILL

Also, in the social strategies group, the average score for asking questions is 3.990, followedby 4.108 for cooperating with other peers, as well as 3.843 for cultural awareness.

Figure 18. SILL Social Strategies- Subgroup data presentation

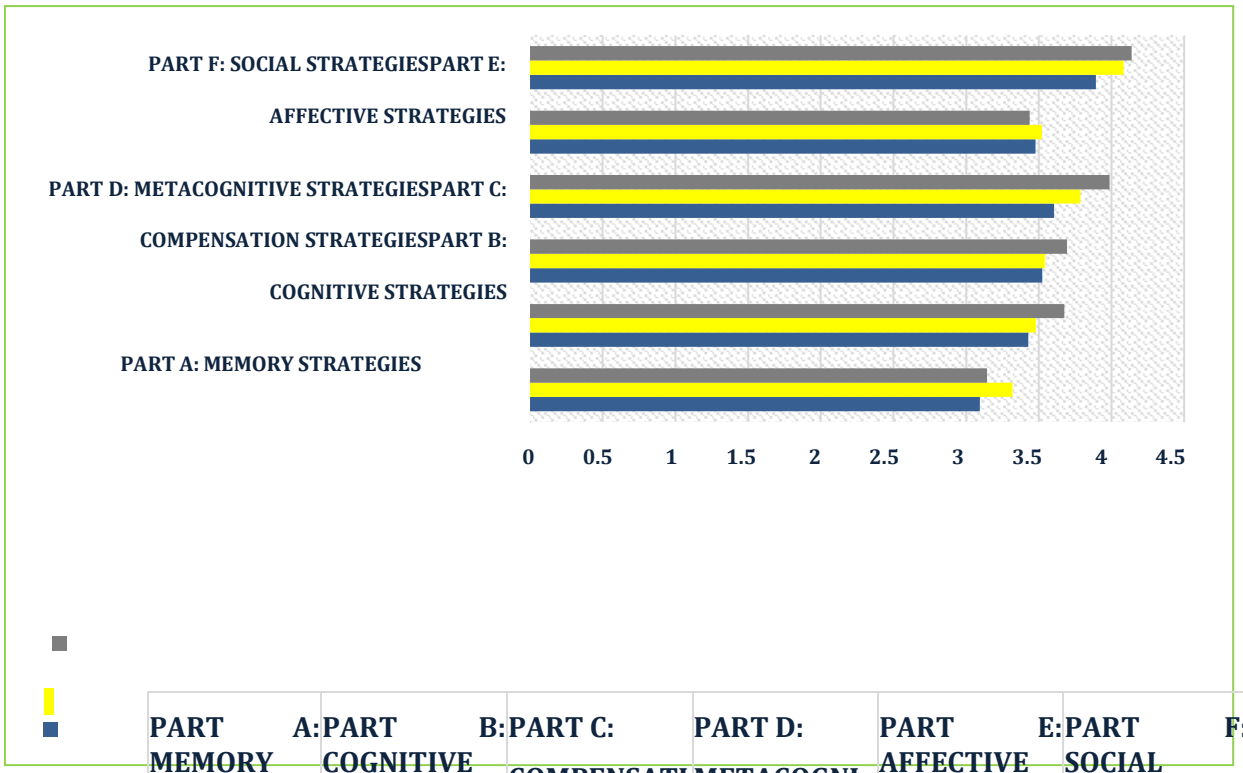
The present study's results indicate that students' social strategies, such as seeking clarificationand assistance from English speakers, practicing with peers, and learning about the culture of

English speakers, can enhance language acquisition, a finding consistent with Boyce's study in2010. Moreover, the average scores for asking questions, cooperating with peers, and cultural awareness indicate that students in this study recognize the importance of social interaction in language learning.

The ANOVA test in SILL

IT is an important tool in SILL investigation as it can be used to determine if there are significant differences in the SILL scores between groups, providing important information for verifying hypotheses and advancing our understanding of language learning strategies. The comparison between the three levels of the English language B1, B2 and C1, in comparison with the SILL personality categories.

The following results were achieved for the purpose of comparing the three levels of the English language, B1, B2, and C1. A total of 82 respondents were used, of which 28 were in category B1,30 in category B2, and 24 in category C1. Results were performed through a one-way ANOVA test, where the difference between these three groups of students was compared withthe six SILL personality categories, (part a: memory strategies, part b: cognitive strategies, partc: compensation strategies, part d: metacognitive strategies, part e: affective strategies, and partf: social strategies).



	PART A: MEMORY STRATEGIES	PART B: COGNITIVE STRATEGIES	PART C: COMPENSATION STRATEGIES	PART D: METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES	PART E: AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES	PART F: SOCIAL STRATEGIES
C1	3.1435	3.6756	3.6944	3.9861	3.4375	4.1389
B2	3.3185	3.4767	3.5389	3.7852	3.5222	4.0778
B1	3.0952	3.4286	3.5238	3.6032	3.4762	3.8929

Figure 19. Comparison between three levels of language proficiency B1, B2, and C1, in comparison to SILLcategories

In the first category of memory strategies, the B1 level students had an average of 3.095, compared to B2 level students who had an average of 3.31, and C1 level students with an average of 3.14. The F test was 0.984 and p-value was 0.378, which means that even though there are small average differences, they are not statistically significant.

In cognitive strategies, it was seen that B1 level students had an average of 3.42, lower than B2level students who had an average of 3.47, and also lower than C1 level students who had an average of 3.51. In this level, the F coefficient was 1.305 and p-value was 0.277, which meansthat there are no significant differences among students of different language levels.

Similarly, in compensation strategies, B1 level students had an average of 3.52, while B2 levelstudents had an average of 3.53, and C1 level students had an average of 3.69. The F coefficient

was 0.579 and p-value was 0.563, which is higher than 0.05, indicating that there are no significant

differences among students of different language levels.

In metacognitive strategies, the average of group B1 was 3.60, that of group B2 was 3.78, and that of C1 was the highest average of 3.98. The F coefficient was 2.156 and p-value was 0.123,which means that there are differences among these three language levels.

Similarly, in affective strategies, B1 level students had an average of 3.47, B2 level students had an average of 3.52, and C1 level students had an average of 3.48, with a coefficient of 0.088and ap-value of 0.916, indicating no significant difference among students of different languagelevels.

No significant difference was found in social strategies either, where B1 level students had an average of 3.89, B2 level students had an average of 4.07, and C1 level students had an averageof 4.13, with a p-value of 0.438 indicating no significant difference among students. In this category, there is no significant difference between students of different language levels in the six SILL personality categories.

The results show that there is no significant difference between students with different languagelevels B1, B2 and C1 in relation to the SILL personality categories (part a: memory strategies,part b: cognitive strategies, part c: compensation strategies, part d: metacognitive strategies, parte: affective strategies, and part f: social strategies), p-value > 0.05.

The results of ANOVA indicate that no significant differences were found between the three levels of language and subgroups. However, in the analysis of specific subgroups, it was found that in the Creating mental linkage and Applying images and songs categories, group B2 had thehighest average. In the Reviewing well category, group B had the highest average. No significant differences were found between the three levels of language and subgroups.

Hereby we assume that based on the ANOVA data presented, it can be concluded that there areno statistically significant differences among students with different language levels (B1, B2, and C1) in relation to the SILL personality categories (memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, affective strategies, social strategies).

Validation of correlation hypotheses in SILL:

In this study, we aimed to refine the research question, design more effective experimental phase/stimulation phase, and ultimately lead to a better understanding of the relationships between variables to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables, and also better understand how different variables are related in SILL (Booth,2019).

The results of the research show that significant positive correlations have been found between various factors, as follow:

between cognitive strategies and memory strategies (r=0.495**, p-value=0.001)

The positive correlation between cognitive strategies and memory strategies: This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown that cognitive strategies, such as organizing and elaborating information are important for effective memory encoding and retrieval (Rafiq,Ahmed, & Ahmed, 2014). Furthermore, the use of memory strategies such as mental imagery and repetition can enhance the effectiveness of cognitive strategies (Barghchi & Sadighi, 2015).

between compensation strategies and cognitive strategies (r=0.366**, p-value=0.001)

The positive correlation between compensation strategies and cognitive strategies: This findingis consistent with the idea that compensation strategies, such as guessing and using contextual clues, are often used when cognitive strategies fail (Dreyer,1992). Hence, as noted by Mahlobo in 1999, it

is unsurprising that a positive relationship exists between the utilization of compensation strategies and cognitive strategies.

between metacognitive strategies and memory strategies (r=0.413*, p-

value=0.001), as well as with cognitive strategies (r=0.722**, p-value=0.001) and

compensation strategies (r=0.295**, p-value=0.007).

According to Dülger's research in 2007, there was a positive correlation observed between metacognitive strategies and memory strategies, as well as cognitive strategies and compensation strategies. By using metacognitive strategies, learners can monitor their own use of memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies and adjust their strategies accordingly (Mahlobo,1999).

between affective strategies and memory strategies (r=0.233*, p-value=0.035), as well as with metacognitive strategies (r=0.388**, p-value=0.000).

The positive correlation between affective strategies and memory strategies and metacognitive strategies: This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown that affective strategies, such as motivation and anxiety regulation, can influence the use of other learning strategies (Yilmaz, 2018). By regulating their affective states, learners can enhance their motivation to use memory and metacognitive strategies effectively.

between social strategies and cognitive strategies (r=0.299**, p-value=0.006), metacognitive strategies (r=0.502**, p-value=0.001), and affective strategies (r=0.292**, p- value=0.008).

The positive correlation between social strategies and cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and affective strategies: This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown that social strategies, such as collaboration and interaction with peers, can enhance the effectiveness of other learning strategies (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). By interacting with others,learners can ex- change information and ideas, receive feedback, and develop a sense of belonging and motivation to use learning strategies effectively.

Regression on SILL

In the study conducted by Riazi and Rahimi (2005), the SILL Oxford (1990) investigation utilized regression analysis to explore the correlation between the utilization of various strategies (including cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies) and memory performance. By using regression, researchers can determine how much of the variation in memory performance can be explained by the use of these strategies (Mahlobo,1999). This information can then be used to develop recommendations for improving memory performance,such as advising individuals to focus on using specific strategies that are most effective.

Regression analysis has been conducted to measure the impact of cognitive, compensation, meta-cognitive, affective, and social factors on memory (Sariçoban & Karadayioğlu, 2022). According to the results, we see a correlation of R=0.495, a regression of 0.245, and a p- value=0.001,which means that cognitive strategy factors have significant effects on memory strategy factors.

The following results show that only cognitive factors have statistically significant effects on memory, B=0.544, t=5.097 and p-value=0.000. The other factors do not have statistically significant effects on memory.

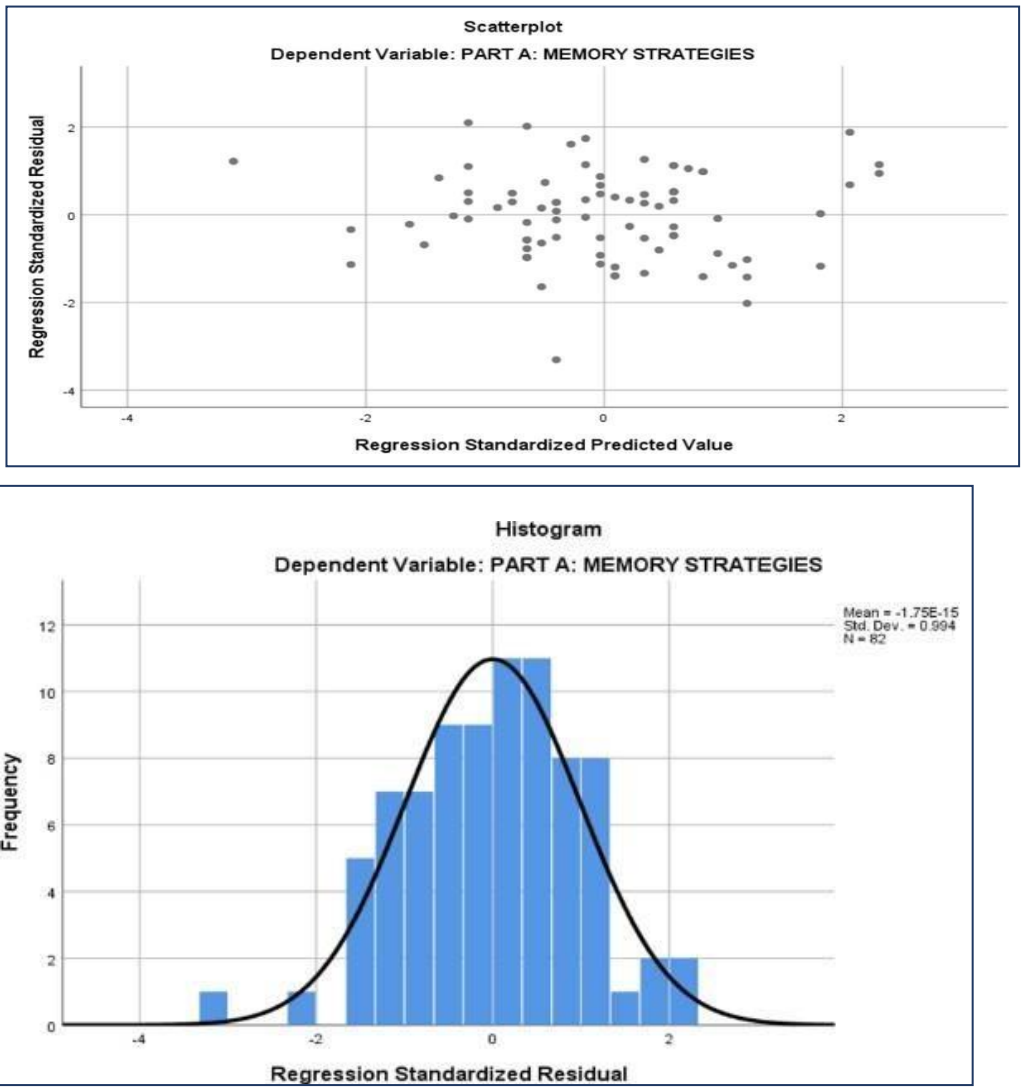


Figure 20. SILL Regression analysis graphical presentation

CONCLUSIONS

The provided information, we can conclude that the students in the study have a positive perception of their English language proficiency and are motivated to improve their skills. Thestudents' self-assessment of their language proficiency is an important factor that can influencetheir motivation to continue learning and improving their skills. The fact that the majority of students rated them- selves as good or excellent in comparison to their classmates and native speakers, and rated being perfect with the language as very important, indicates a high level ofmotivation and a positive attitude towards language learning. These findings emphasize the significance of fostering positive self-perception and motivation among language learners, as stated by Jäkel in 2015, which can substantially influence their language learning outcomes.

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the experimental group employed a range of different second language learning strategies, as indicated by their average scores on the SILL. The highest average scores were observed for social strategies, indicating that the experimental group relied heavily on interactions with others to support their language learning.The next highest average

scores were for metacognitive and affective strategies, suggesting thatthe experimental group was able to reflect on and manage their own learning processes, as wellas maintain a positive attitude towards language learning Bisson et al. (2015).

The average scores for memory and cognitive strategies were slightly lower than those for meta-cognitive, affective, and social strategies, but still above the midpoint of the SILL scale. This suggests that the experimental group also used memory and cognitive strategies to some extent,such as memorizing vocabulary or using mental imagery to aid in language comprehension.

Overall, the study suggests that the experimental group employed a variety of different second language learning strategies, indicating a diverse range of approaches to language learning. Thisisa positive finding, as it suggests that the experimental group was able to adapt their learning strategies to different situations and contexts in order to support their language learning goals.

DISCUSSION

The study examined second language learning strategies (SLLS) used by learners to improve language acquisition. Using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), which categorizes strategies into Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social, the findings revealed that learners preferred social strategies, highlighting a focus on interactive learning approaches. This inclination suggests a tendency among learners to engage in activities that promote social interaction for language improvement. Cognitive and metacognitive strategies also showed high scores, underscoring their role in effective language learning.

This aligns with past research showing the effectiveness of diverse strategies depending on task and context (e.g., Dreyer, 1992; Oxford, 2017). The emphasis on social strategies suggests that learners might benefit from teaching activities that foster interaction. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of understanding learners' unique strategic preferences to inform tailored instructional approaches that could foster learner autonomy and confidence. By analyzing SLLS data across different learner groups, educators can identify patterns in strategy use, aiding in developing personalized, efficient language learning programs.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

APK (Amantina Pervizaj Kelmendi) conceived the idea, designed the study, collected and analyzed the data, and wrote the manuscript. All aspects of the research and manuscript preparation were conducted solely by APK.

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