

## THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCE ON LANGUAGE LEARNER STRATEGY USE IN TURKISH EFL CONTEXT

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims at investigating language learner strategies deployed by 275 Turkish university students at English Language Teaching Department and seeks for possible differences in strategy uses of learners with different educational backgrounds. The theoretical framework of the study was informed by Oxford's taxonomy (1990) and SILL was implemented as a data collection tool. The findings of the study parallel previous studies conducted in Turkey, in that Turkish university students mostly employ compensation and metacognitive strategies. The present study goes beyond this and reveals that educational background is a factor influencing the strategy choice: more experienced learners have wider range of strategy repertoire and use compensation and cognitive strategies significantly greater than less experienced learners. This article introduces the educational backgrounds of experienced learners as a sample of English language learning that promotes the use of language learner strategies.

**Key Words:** Language learner strategies, language learning experience, language educational background, English as a foreign language, English language teaching in Turkey.

### INTRODUCTION

Language learning strategy research goes back to the 1960s (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). The scopes of research studies have undergone significant changes according to the conceptualisation of the learner role in learning a language. The early studies (for example, Rubin 1975; Stern 1975) were informed by behaviouristic point of view, in that the main concern was to identify the strategies employed by good language learners which can be transferred to less successful learners (Greenfeel & Macaro, 2007; Lai, 2009; Wong & Nunan, 2011). By the development of cognitive psychology in the 1980s, the focus of language learning strategies shifted from methods of teaching to learner characteristics and second language acquisition process (Wenden, 1987). In the 1990s, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Oxford (1990) introduced language learner strategies from learners-as-individual's perspective and learners, rather than teachers, were seen as responsible agents of learning process (Cohen, 1998). This gave birth to the consideration of language learner strategies as having value-neutral nature: there is no good or bad strategies but they are used either effectively or ineffectively by learners (Grenfell & Macaro, 2007). In the light of this, qualitative studies were conducted and individuals became focal points of post-1990 strategy research (Grenfell & Macaro, 2007).

The history of strategy research summarised above illustrates that, despite differences in its conceptualisation, strategy research is still a significant area of investigation in the field. This is because strategy research allows for gaining insight into language learning process through revealing how learners cope with various problems to learn language effectively. To address this, the present study introduced a new perspective through comparing strategy uses of learners with different educational backgrounds. To shed light on the backdrop of language learning strategy use, this study is designed to explore whether language learning experience is a significant factor influencing strategy choice.

## THE DEFINITION AND CLASSIFICATION OF LANGUAGE LEARNER STRATEGIES

Defining and classifying language learner strategies were the major concerns of strategy research (Grenfell & Macaro, 2007). There are different views about its definition, each of which relies on different understanding of what constitutes language. Stern (1983) considers strategies as particular form of observable language behaviours. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) highlight the cognitive process and define learning strategies as "special ways of processing information that enhanced comprehension, learning or retention of the information" (p.1). Oxford (1990:8) provides a humanistic point of view and states that "language learning strategies are behaviours or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed, and enjoyable".

Macaro (2006) provides an alternative theoretical framework underpinning cognitive psychology and claims that strategies should not be defined but described in relation to variables such as a goal, a situation and a mental action. He also criticised previous research studies and put forward a number of problematic issues in strategy research. Macaro's emphasis on some unresolved issues portrays the lacks of strategy research and provides a glimpse about the issues to be addressed in future strategy research studies. Nevertheless, the high number of unresolved issues cannot undervalue strategy research but should increase researchers' enthusiasm to provide profound insight in the role of strategies in language learning.

In addition to defining the term, different classification systems were proposed (e.g. Rubin, 1987; Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot 1990). This study was informed by Oxford's taxonomy (1990) because it is 'very comprehensive' (Ellis, 1994:539; Lai, 2009: 256) and 'detailed and systematic' (Vidal, 2002:47). Oxford's classification of language learner strategies is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Oxford's strategy classification system (1990)

Category	Function	Sets of categories
<i>Memory Strategies</i>	Enable learners to store verbal material and then retrieve it when needed for communication	Creating mental linkages Applying images and sounds Reviewing well Employing action Practising
<i>Cognitive Strategies</i>	Enable learners to better understand produce the target language	Receiving and sending messages Analysing and reasoning Creating structure for input and output
<i>Compensation Strategies</i>	Enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite the limitations in knowledge	Guessing intelligently Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing
<i>Metacognitive Strategies</i>	Enable learners to coordinate their own learning process	Centring your learning Arranging and planning your learner Evaluation your learning
<i>Affective Strategies</i>	Enable learners to gain control over affective factors	Lowering your anxiety Encouraging yourself Taking your emotional temperature
<i>Social Strategies</i>	Enable learners to interact with others through the target language	Asking questions Cooperating with others Empathizing with others

## LANGUAGE LEARNER STRATEGY RESEARCH

Many studies devoted to explore how language learning strategy use is influenced by different variables. Overall, these studies conclude that more proficient students employ more language strategies (Chamot, Kupper & Impink-Hernandez, 1988; Green and Oxford, 1995; Lai, 2009; Magogwe & Oliver, 2007). Gender is also found as a factor influencing strategy use and females were reported to employ greater number of strategies (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Macaro, 2000; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Yalçın, 2006). Some studies also confirmed that strategy use differs across contexts (Levine, Reyes & Leaver, 1996; LoCastro, 1994; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989).

The context-specific nature of language learning strategies was confirmed by Chamot (2005), who asserted that “learning strategies are sensitive to the learning context and to the learner’s internal processing processes” (p.113). According to Ellis (1994), situational factors influence strategy choice, and therefore, it may be problematic to generalise findings to other cultural context in strategy research (Lai, 2009; Olivares-Cuhat, 2002).

A number of studies has been carried out to investigate Turkish learners’ strategy uses in relation to different variables such as 'proficiency' (Yılmaz, 2010), 'learner perceptions' (Yalçın, 2006), 'adult learners' (Karatay, 2006) 'class grade' (Karahan, 2007; Razi, 2012), 'self-efficacy beliefs' (Yılmaz, 2010), 'age' (Hiçyılmaz, 2006), 'tutored and non-tutored learning' (Alptekin, 2007), and 'gender' (Dursun, 2007, Karahan, 2007; Razi, 2012; Yılmaz, 2010).

Three studies addressed learners’ language learning experiences (Hiçyılmaz, 2006; Yalçın, 2006; Razi, 2012). Yalçın (2006) compared strategy uses of preparatory students from different departments at a university and focused on different variables such as gender, subject of study, and type of high school that students had graduated. He compared strategies employed by learners with different educational experiences: the ones who had and had not taken preparatory class in high school. The only significant difference was found in the use of compensation strategies: students who had taken preparatory class employed greater number of compensation strategies.

Hiçyılmaz (2006) compared strategy uses of ninth grade high school students and university preparatory students. She revealed a disconnection between language learning experience and strategy use, in that ninth grade students employed more strategies than university students. Although this finding seems interesting as it conflicted with the common assumption, Hiçyılmaz’s study has a number of limitations. Firstly, the study was small-scale and the sample comprised of 50 students. Furthermore, no information is available regarding the educational backgrounds of university students and it is doubtful whether all participants have similar educational backgrounds. Ninth graders may have more effective educational background compared to university students.

Razi’s study (2012) had similar scope to the current study. He investigated English Language Teaching (ELT) department students’ language learning strategy uses with reference to gender, class and period of English study. With regard to language learning experience, he grouped students into two: with less than ten years of learning experience and with more than ten years of learning experience. His analysis did not reveal significant differences in terms of both class and learning experience. This showed that having more or less than ten years of English language learning experience does not differentiate learners’ strategy uses.

The studies discussed above show that the pedagogical tendency to investigate strategy uses of language learners affects the scope of studies in Turkish context and a great number of studies devoted to investigate strategy use. However, the role language learning experience on strategy use is still questionable. This study attempts to mask this gap through investigating strategy uses of learners with different educational backgrounds and aims at revealing the impact of language learning background on the use of language learner strategies.

This study addresses following research questions:

1. What language learner strategy categories and individual language learner strategies do Turkish EFL learners use?
2. Are there significant differences between Turkish EFL learners with different educational backgrounds in terms of the use of language learner strategy categories?

## METHODOLOGY

The scope of present study is in line with the objectives of survey methodology, which is one of the most common methodologies seeking for the relationship between variables in data collected from a large group of participants (Mackey and Gass, 2005). A scale was administered to collect valid and reliable data, which allows for implementing statistical analyses to explore similarities and differences between variables.

The sample involved 275 students pursuing different years of university at ELT Department. Purposive sampling was used: preparatory (Level 1), first year (Level 2) and fourth year (Level 3) students participated in the study. Preparatory students had recently graduated from high school. Considering the structure-based English language education in Turkey (Alagözlü, 2012; Işık, 2011), these students, around eighteen years old, mostly focused on developing their grammatical, reading and lexical skills, and hence, they are highly competent in these skills but less so in listening, speaking, pronunciation and writing. Level 2 students completed the preparatory class last year and had been taking skill-based classes at more advanced level than Level 1 students. Level 3 students were the final year students, around 22 years old, who would be qualified as English language teachers at the end of the year. These students experienced five-year ELT department education and had taken various courses that required dealing with different aspects of English such as writing short dissertation projects, doing several micro-teachings and giving oral presentations. For that reason, these students experienced various aspects of English compared to other groups of participants. The biographic information of participants is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: The Distribution of participants according to level, age and gender

Years of study	N	Gender		Age (average)
		Male	Female	
Prep (Level 1)	101 (38%)	21 (21%)	80 (79%)	18.88
First Grade (Level 2)	92 (34%)	28 (30%)	64 (70%)	19.75
Fourth Grade (Level 3)	80 (28%)	14 (18%)	66 (82%)	22.17
Total	273 (2 missing)	63 (24%)	210 (76%)	20.13

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was implemented. Being informed by Oxford's taxonomy (1990), SILL is most widely used questionnaire in strategy research (Chamot, 2005) because of its high reliability across many cultural groups with Cronbach alpha values 0.93-0.98 (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). SILL comprises 5 point Likert-type items in 6 categories, involving 'memory', 'cognitive', 'compensation', 'metacognitive', 'affective', and 'social' strategies. The Turkish version of SILL, which was formed by Dursun (2007) with Cronbach alpha values 0.76, was implemented in this study to ensure that the participants understand the items thoroughly.

The participants' responses are measured on an interval scale and the mean and standard deviation were calculated by using SPSS v.16. The levels of differences were checked through ANOVA and the LSD posthoc test was used to see the direction of significant differences between participants.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### The use of SILL categories of all participants

The frequencies of the use of SILL categorises revealed in the current study are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequency of the use of SILL categories

Rank	Category	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
	Compensation Strategies	273	3.76	.59
	Metacognitive Strategies	265	3.75	.61
	Social Strategies	273	3.46	.61
	Cognitive Strategies	263	3.28	.44
	Memory Strategies	264	3.19	.50
	Affective strategies	268	3.10	.54
	TOTAL	239	3.43	.61

According to Oxford's category sets (1990), a frequency between 2.5 and 3.49 is the mid-level of strategy use. This shows that the participants employ language learner strategies at medium level. This is in line with previous studies conducted in Turkish context (e.g. Hiçyılmaz, 2006; Yalçın, 2006). Participants reported a high-level of compensation and metacognitive strategy use, which parallels Yılmaz's study (2010), a study with similar scope conducted in the same context.

Turkish learners' higher dependence on compensation strategies was also supported in previous studies (e.g. Alptekin, 2007; Hiçyılmaz, 2006; Karahan, 2007; Razi, 2012; Yalçın 2006; Yılmaz, 2010). Furthermore, relying on compensation, metacognition and social strategies more than other three strategies was another common point of previous studies, the results of which are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Findings of previous studies on the use of SILL categories

	Yalçın (2006)	Hiçyılmaz (2006)	Dursun (2007)	Razi (2012)	Current Study
1.	Compensation	Social	Metacognitive	Compensation	Compensation
2.	Metacognitive	Compensation	Social	Metacognitive	Metacognitive
3.	Social	Metacognitive	Compensation	Cognitive	Social
4.	Memory	Cognitive	Cognitive	Memory	Cognitive
5.	Affective	Affective	Affective	Social	Memory
6.	Cognitive	Memory	Memory	Affective	Affective

The frequent use of compensation strategies may reflect Turkish learners' weaknesses in speaking skills because compensation strategies serve the purpose of comprehending or producing the language despite the limited knowledge (Oxford, 1990). This is because compensation strategies concern using the language rather than learning it (Dörnyei, 1995). In doing so, learners employ different strategies to compensate the lacking information such as using clues, getting help, coining words, adjusting or approximating the message, and using mime or gesture.

The less dependence on cognitive strategies may seem contradictory because it is believed that there is a linear relationship between cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Green & Oxford, 1995; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). This is probably because cognitive strategies play important role in achieving a particular objective and metacognitive strategies indicate whether the objective is achieved or not (Phakiti, 2003). However, as confirmed by other studies conducted in Turkey, Turkish learners do not tend to use cognitive strategies as frequently as metacognitive strategies. This may indicate that Turkish EFL learners employ strategies to organise their learning through setting goals and objectives but they do not frequently use strategies that help them learn and produce the target language. With regard to social strategies, participants seemed to prefer involving others by asking questions, co-operating and empathizing with others. This reliance illustrates the willingness to collaborate with other people.

The less frequent use of the affective strategies confirms that learners do not tend to gain control over emotional factors through lowering anxiety, encouraging or taking emotional temperature. The low frequency

of memory strategies may not indicate participants' low reliance on memory strategies (Goh and Kwah, 1997); there are numerous memory strategies to be used in language learning and SILL only addresses a limited number of it. I would therefore restrain to make generalisation about the use of memory strategies.

### The use of individual strategies

In addition to the use of SILL categories, it is worth considering the popular individual strategies, which profile the strategy repertoires of Turkish EFL learners. The descriptive analysis of the use of individual strategies is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5: Most frequently used individual strategies

Rank	Item	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Strategy
1	32	274	4.38	.78	Paying attention to the interlocutor
2	45	275	4.33	.80	Asking for slowing down or repetition
3	29	275	4.21	.80	Using a different word or phrase with similar meaning
4	31	275	4.11	.80	Noticing and using mistakes for doing better
5	27	275	4.05	.90	Trying not to look up every word while reading in English
6	1	274	4.03	.80	Trying to make connections between known and new things
7	24	275	4.02	.82	Guessing unknown words
8	42	273	4.01	1.09	Noticing nervousness when speaking English
9	33	272	4	.90	Trying to find different ways to learn English more effectively
10	37	274	3.97	.94	Having clear objectives about improving abilities in English

Some of these findings are in line with previous studies: 'Paying attention to the interlocutor', 'asking for slowing down', 'trying to make connections between known and new things', 'noticing and using mistakes' were found as the most popular individual strategies employed by Turkish learners (Karatay, 2006; Razi, 2012).

It is possible to categorise these popular strategies into three. First category specifies that Turkish learners frequently deal with problems stemming from the lack of competency in speaking skills. To overcome this, they closely pay attention to interlocutors to understand the message thoroughly and frequently ask them to slow down or repeat. The third popular strategy, which is about circumlocution, refers to participants' lack of speaking skills as well because this strategy is used when the speaker has difficulty in sending a message and tries to send it by using different words or phrases (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). Furthermore, noticing nervousness during conversations was another issue mentioned by participants. This is also related to other popular strategies as students may not feel comfortable when dealing with problems in conversations because speakers need to find immediate solutions while speaking, and therefore, speaking is considered as the most anxiety-producing experience (Young, 1990). The second category indicates that Turkish EFL learners tend to use existing knowledge through connecting it with the new information: they try to guess unknown words and avoid looking up the dictionary. The third category may reflect students' attitudes towards studying English: reporting that they frequently try to learn from mistakes, find different ways to learn English more effectively and have clear objectives about improving their abilities in English, the participants seemed to be pleased with their learning process.

In addition to the popular strategies, unpopular strategies may also profile the characteristics of Turkish EFL learners. The results of the ten least-used individual strategies are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: Unpopular individual strategies

Rank	Item	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Strategy
41	41	273	2.97	2,96	Rewarding yourself after a success
42	14	274	2.94	2,93	Creating opportunities to speak English inside or outside the classroom
43	21	275	2.93	2,93	Finding the meaning from the structure of a word
44	44	272	2.70	2,70	Explaining feelings to other people
45	17	274	2.69	2,68	Writing notes, messages, letters in English
46	23	275	2.63	2,63	Making summary of what is learned
47	5	270	2.47	1,12	Using rhymes to remember new words
48	7	274	2.04	1,17	Physically acting out new English words
49	6	274	1.95	1,06	Using flashcards to remember new words
50	43	274	1.37	.83977	Keeping a language diary

The less dependence on some of these strategies parallels Razi's study (2012), where 'keeping a language diary', 'using flashcards', 'physically acting out new words', 'explaining feelings', 'using rhymes', and 'rewarding your success' were the most unpopular strategies.

When the natures of these strategies are examined, it is clear that participants do not create opportunities to use the language through speaking and writing in English. This tendency also shows less dependence on cognitive strategies and illustrates the fact that Turkish learners do not deal with English outside the class. Although Turkish EFL learners prefer involving others to their learning process, they do not tend to share their feelings. Examining the structure of a word to find the meaning and making summary of what is learned may also indicate that they do not commonly analyse and synthesis the target language.

#### The differences in the use of SILL categories

To explore the differences in strategy uses of participants with different educational backgrounds, One-Way ANOVA and LSD post-hoc tests were carried out, the results of which are displayed in Table 7:

Table 7: The differences between participants in using SILL categories

Category		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Direction of differences
Memory Strategies	Between Groups	4,987	2	2,494	8,866	.000	Level 3>1 p<.000
	Within Groups	73,407	261	.281			
	Total	78,394	263				
Cognitive Strategies	Between Groups	1,571	2	.786	3,125	.046	Level 3>1 p<.023
	Within Groups	65,357	260	.251			
	Total	66,929	262				
Compensation Strategies	Between Groups	4,665	2	2,332	6,812	.001	Level 3>1 p<.000
	Within Groups	92,457	270	.342			
	Total	97,122	272				

Metacognitive Strategies	Between Groups	.569	2	.285	.758	.470	N/A
	Within Groups	98,371	262	.375			
	Total	98,940	264				
Affective Strategies	Between Groups	.199	2	.100	.260	.771	N/A
	Within Groups	101,604	265	.383			
	Total	101,804	267				
Social Strategies	Between Groups	2,985	2	1,493	3,969	.020	Level 1>3 p< .014
	Within Groups	101,535	270	.376			Level 2>3 p< .015
	Total	104,520	272				
TOTAL	Between Groups	.455	2	.228	1,176	.310	N/A
	Within Groups	45,689	236	.194			
	Total	46,145	238				

As can be seen in Table 7, Level 3 students employ memory, cognitive and compensation strategies significantly more than Level 1 students. Although Level 3 students develop more varied English competencies than Level 1 students, I would be cautious to argue that participants' proficiency levels are different in this study because no proficiency test was administered. However, the differences between Level 3 and Level 1 students parallel the differences between proficient and less proficient learners in terms of the use of cognitive strategies, in that proficient learners employ cognitive strategies significantly greater than less proficient students (Chamot, Kupper & Impink-Hernandez, 1988; Green & Oxford, 1995; Lai, 2009; Magogwe & Oliver, 2007).

According to Oxford (1990), cognitive strategies are crucial for language learning. Employing cognitive strategies enhances language practice and this is essential for learning a language. Through practice, learners develop competencies in different aspects of English and they are more likely to internalise the language through integrating it to everyday life by carrying out activities such as watching English programmes or films, reading English books, and studying on pronunciation. Considering the participants of the present study, as a result of dealing with English only in classroom, less experienced learners regard English solely as a course rather than a language and this hinders using cognitive strategies.

Compensation strategies are the other type of strategies that were employed significantly greater by Level 3 students. Yalçın (2006), who compared strategy uses of students who had taken and who had not taken preparatory class at high schools, also found significant differences in the use of compensation strategies. In essence, compensation strategies are different in nature. As maintained by Dörnyei (1995), these strategies do not address language learning but language production. Therefore, compensation strategies are closely related to communication strategies which are used to overcome communication difficulties in spoken language (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). The present study illustrated that dealing with different aspects of English result in greater use of compensation strategies.

Another strategy type that the participants differed was social strategies. However, contrary to other categories, social strategies employed by less experienced learners and significant differences were found not only between Level 1 and Level 2 but also between Level 2 and Level 3. This result parallels Magogwe and Oliver's study (2007), who concluded that social strategies are deployed more by less proficient learners. This is probably because less experienced learners need more support. They reported to rely on other people who are more competent in English through asking questions, cooperating, and empathizing. This is what Williams and



Burden (1997:133) term as 'the involvement of significant others'. The greater use of social strategies by less experienced learners may indicate their needs for assistance in language learning.

## IMPLICATIONS

A number of useful implications for ELT field can be suggested considering the findings of the present study. Firstly, this study showed that learners with different educational backgrounds use language learner strategies differently: learners who have experienced different aspects of English tend to use greater number of strategies compared to learners solely focused on structural aspects of the target language. To address this, teachers should be aware of the needs of learners in using language strategies and appropriate teaching procedures should be provided to develop learners' ability to use varied language strategies.

Secondly, the findings of the study parallel earlier studies conducted in Turkey (e.g. Alptekin, 2007; Hiçyılmaz, 2006; Karahan, 2007; Razi, 2012; Yalçın 2006; Yılmaz, 2010), in that Turkish EFL learners are high users of compensation and metacognitive strategies. This shows that learners mainly have problems in using the language communicatively because, in broad perspective, compensation strategies serve the purpose of coping with problems in speaking by means of communication strategies. Furthermore, compensation strategies were found to significantly differentiate more experienced learners and less experienced learners. Considering the differences of participants in language educational backgrounds, this may indicate that, dealing with different aspects of language lead to the development of ability to use compensation strategies. For that reason, rather than solely dealing with the structural aspects of English, language classes should also focus on communicative aspect of the target language. It is therefore recommended that less experienced learners' weaknesses in using compensation strategies should be considered in classes and teachers should take into account their needs to learn and use strategies while using English communicatively.

Thirdly, despite common belief in the literature (Green & Oxford, 1995; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990), the majority of strategy research studies in Turkish context support that high metacognitive strategy use do not lead to the high use cognitive strategies. Moreover, the data yielded by this study revealed that gaining experience in language learning results in higher use of cognitive strategies. The less dependence on cognitive strategies may be problematic for less experienced language learners because cognitive strategies are directly related to specific learning tasks (Brown, 1987) and allow for practising the language which enables learners to use and produce the target language (Oxford, 1990). This should be one of the major concerns of English language teachers in Turkey and appropriate teaching procedures should be presented to provide learners with the opportunity of using their cognitive skills in learning English.

Lastly, this study revealed a disconnection between language experience and the use of social strategies. This is probably because less experienced learners needs more support, and therefore, they tend to rely on other people more. More experienced learners, on the other hand, are better at controlling their own learning. To address these, teachers should consider learners' characteristics and less experienced learners should actively take part in the learning process.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study was designed to investigate possible differences in language learner strategy use of learners with different language learning backgrounds. The results portrayed the strategy repertoire of Turkish EFL learners and statistically significant differences were found in strategy choice.

The present study confirmed that Turkish EFL learners rely more on compensation and metacognitive strategies. However, the high use of metacognitive strategies was not congruent with the use of cognitive strategies. Additionally, this study concluded that more experienced learners use compensation and cognitive strategies significantly more than less experienced learners. On the other hand, less experienced learners' social strategy use were significantly higher than more experienced learners.

Although this study goes beyond previous research studies by addressing different perspectives of strategy research, it also posed a number of limitations. This study was conducted in Turkish context, and therefore, it is difficult to generalise the findings into other contexts. However, readers and researchers can compare the research context with their own context and see the relevance of the findings and implications. The study was conducted at a particular university in Turkey. For that reason, it is difficult to assure that the sample represents the characteristics of Turkish EFL learners at other universities. The study also reported of the findings of one data collection method. Further research is needed employing multiple data collection tools. It is also recommended to conduct qualitative studies which will be useful to gain more insight into the use of learner strategies.

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