

Original Article

Language Learning Strategies as Predictors of English Proficiency Among Freshmen Tertiary Students

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Abstract. This study examined the predictive relationship between language learning strategies and English language proficiency among freshmen students. Specifically, it aimed to determine the common language learning strategies used by students, their overall English proficiency in vocabulary and grammar, and to examine whether these strategies significantly predict students' English proficiency. To determine whether language learning strategies significantly influence students' English proficiency, a predictive-correlational survey research design was employed. A total of 301 first-year students from Apayao State College, Luna Campus, during the Academic Year 2025–2026 served as respondents, selected through stratified systematic random sampling to ensure representation across academic programs. Data were collected using a questionnaire adopted from Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to measure the extent of language learning strategies, and an adapted English proficiency test across multiple researchers covering grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Results revealed that freshmen students often used language learning strategies, with metacognitive strategies being the most frequently employed. Memory and cognitive strategies were also commonly used, while social strategies were practiced to a moderate extent. In terms of English proficiency, students demonstrated an approaching proficiency level. In addition, regression analysis indicated that language learning strategies significantly predicted English proficiency, although the explained variance was minimal. Among the strategies examined, metacognitive strategies had a positive influence on proficiency, whereas social strategies showed a negative relationship. Overall, the findings suggest that while students frequently use language learning strategies, other factors may also contribute to the development of English language proficiency.

Keywords: *Language learning strategies; English proficiency; Metacognitive strategies; Freshmen tertiary students; Predictive correlational*

English plays a vital role in today's interconnected world as the dominant language of communication, commerce, science and technology, education, and in other fields. It serves as a global medium that bridges cultures and enables individuals to participate actively in international discourse. In the Philippine context, English has been one of the official languages since the American period, and it remains a key component of the educational system and government. From elementary to tertiary levels, English is offered as fundamental and basic subject.

However, despite its emphasis in education, numerous local and international assessments have shown a noticeable decline in English proficiency among Filipinos. As recently stated by Commission on Higher Education Chairperson Shirley Agrupis (Philippine Star, 2025), English Communication has become the “weakest skill” among Filipino students, professionals, and even government employees. Similarly, Pablo (2023) found that approximately 90% of 401 Filipino English teachers failed to achieve 75% in grammar proficiency, particularly verb and adverb usage. In another study, Tataro et al. (2025) reported that first-year teacher education students exhibited low proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension, underscoring the need for targeted interventions. Likewise, Samillano and Pastolero (2025) revealed that pre-service teachers do not meet the English proficiency standards expected of future educators. Collectively, these findings underscore a systemic concern regarding English language competence within the Philippine education system.

Many studies attribute the decline in English proficiency to systemic and institutional factors such as curriculum design, instructional materials, teacher competence, and limited exposure to authentic language use. However, less attention has been given to the learners themselves, particularly the language learning strategies they employ and how these strategies influence their English proficiency. Language learning strategies refer to the conscious and semi-conscious behaviors, thoughts, and actions that learners use to improve their learning (Oxford, 1990). Helping students become aware of these strategies essentially teaches them how to learn effectively. In reality, learners who fail to recognize their personal learning styles and strategies, their academic performance often suffers (Soliman & Gorospe, 2024).

Numerous studies have consistently shown that the use of language learning strategies (LLSs) significantly contributes to the development of English proficiency across various educational settings. Learners who consistently use strategies, especially cognitive and metacognitive, are found to have higher proficiency levels than those who use simple memorization (Habok et al., 2022; Soliman & Gorospe, 2024; Fortes et al., 2023). Metacognitive strategies, such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning, have been identified as strong predictors of language competence. Meanwhile, cognitive strategies support tasks involving reading comprehension, writing, and grammar application (Habok & Magyar, 2018; Alfian, 2018; Soliman & Gorospe, 2024). These findings suggest that learners’ proficiency improves when they can apply various strategies according to task requirements and learning contexts.

Moreover, contextual and individual factors further influence the choice and success of language learning strategies. Different learning environments, such as blended, online instruction, and resource-limited schools, affect the strategies preferred and employed. On the other hand, individual variables such as gender and affective regulation may shape one’s strategy habits (Lestari & Wahyudin, 2022; Opina et al., 2023; Fortes et al., 2023; Gaoat et al., 2024). These findings indicate that strategy use is dynamic and context-dependent rather than uniform across learners.

Taken together, these studies indicate that language learning strategies are not merely supplementary tools but significant predictors of English proficiency across cultural contexts, learning environments, and learner characteristics. Metacognitive strategies consistently support self-regulated and sustained learning, while the combined use of cognitive, social, and affective strategies further enhances communicative competence. Hence, these insights underscore the importance of investigating how learners in specific educational and sociolinguistic contexts employ different language learning strategies and how these strategies contribute to English proficiency.

Turning to the local context, particularly in the province of Apayao, there is a notable lack of empirical literature on language learning strategies. Although several studies have examined LLSs in different regions of the Philippines, limited research has explored how students in Apayao utilize these strategies in relation to English Proficiency. Apayao, a multilingual and predominantly rural province in the Cordillera Administrative Region, presents a distinct sociolinguistic environment where English serves as an academic requirement and a language that bridges people from different cultural backgrounds. This unique language context may shape the types, frequency, and effectiveness of strategies that students employ in language learning. With these considerations, it is relevant and timely and to investigate how learners from a province with high literacy performance manage their language learning and whether they demonstrate distinct patterns of strategy use.

According to Pontillas et al. (2025), the tertiary level requires new academic demands, and proficiency in English among first-year college students is crucial for academic success. Higher level of education requires students to

have higher-order communication skills, more complex and specialized vocabulary, and independent learning strategies. In a separate study by Widiati et al. (2023), the authors discussed that first-year college students are facing challenges with higher-level academic tasks such as reading and writing. This study emphasizes that this stage is formative in developing and reshaping learning habits. As students adjust to new expectations, effective language learning strategies are required for higher education. Therefore, this study provided a comprehensive and timely understanding of how early academic experiences can affect English proficiency and inform educators to design practical classroom strategies and interventions before the gaps in learning become entrenched in higher levels.

Hence, this study sought to investigate which specific language learning strategy best predicts English proficiency among freshmen college students in Apayao.

Methodology

Research Design

A predictive correlational survey research design with survey questionnaires served as the primary instrument for data collection. This research design allows the examination of the relationship among naturally occurring variables without manipulation. Furthermore, the predictive component of the design aligns with the study's objective of determining the extent to which specific language learning strategies contribute to variation in English proficiency. This enables the identification of significant predictor variables and provides empirical evidence on the relative influence of each strategy type on language proficiency outcomes.

The survey research method was employed as the primary data collection approach because it is well-suited to obtaining standardized data from a relatively large and heterogeneous group of respondents. This method facilitates the systematic quantification of both language learning strategies and English proficiency, thereby allowing for rigorous statistical analysis, particularly regression techniques used in predictive modeling. Furthermore, the use of a structured survey instrument enhances data consistency, reliability, and comparability across respondents, which is essential in correlational and predictive research designs.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The respondents in this study were first-year students enrolled in the academic year 2025-2026. The study employed stratified systematic random sampling, in which the population of first-year students was divided into strata by academic program to ensure equal representation across programs. From each stratum, a proportionate number of students was selected to participate in the study. Within each stratum, the researcher used a sampling interval of five (5), meaning every fifth student in the official list of enrolled first-year students was chosen as a respondent. The selection started from a randomly chosen starting point within the first five names on the list. After determining the starting point, every 5th student thereafter was included in the sample until the required number of respondents was reached.

This ensured that all students had an equal chance of being selected while maintaining proportional representation across academic programs and minimizing selection bias. On the other hand, the official list of enrolled freshmen students was obtained from the Office of the College Registrar. Based on the institutional record, there were 1,213 freshmen students enrolled across different programs. Using Slovin's formula, the required sample size was computed to be 300.81, rounded to 301.

Research Instrument

A standardized questionnaire was used as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire is adapted from various studies for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire is composed of three main parts. Part I deals with Demographic profiles of the respondents with 12 items short response questions. Part II consisted of statements rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from never to always. This part measured the students' language learning strategies adopted from Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL, Version 7.0, 1990), to determine the frequency and types of strategies used by the respondents. This section contained 50 items across the six strategy categories: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social. The SILL has been widely validated and has demonstrated high reliability coefficients, ranging from 0.85 to 0.95 (Habok & Magyar, 2017; Lestari & Wahyudin, 2020).

Part II consisted of a 50-item test that assessed Vocabulary, Grammar, and Reading comprehension. The vocabulary test, adapted from the Vocabulary Size Test (VST) developed by Nation and Beglar (2007), has 15 questions covering learners' receptive vocabulary knowledge across various word-frequency levels. Beglar (2010) conducted a Rasch-based validation and reported a reliability coefficient of .96, indicating a high degree of internal consistency and validity. Meanwhile, the Grammar Skills Test by Pontillas et al. (2024), with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, was used. This particular section consisted of 20 items covering proper usage of conjunctions, prepositions, adverbs, verb tenses, and pronoun-antecedent.

The reading comprehension section, on the other hand, was adapted from the Reading Comprehension Test developed by Arienda and Ignacio (2025). The test consisted of 15 items with short passages that assessed literal, inferential, and critical comprehension skills. The English proficiency test was presented in a multiple-choice format for objective and efficient scoring. To ensure reliability in the local context, a pilot test was conducted. The results showed acceptable reliability coefficients, with 0.77 for the Vocabulary Test, 0.81 for the Grammar Test, and 0.85 for the Reading Comprehension Test, indicating satisfactory internal consistency of the instruments.

Data Gathering Procedure

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research results, the research underwent a rigorous process. First, the researcher obtained formal approval from the campus and college authorities to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researcher coordinated with the program chairs of the various academic departments to conduct the study.

Second, after all respondents were identified, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to them. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to data collection. Fourth, to ensure consistency and fairness, all test administration procedures were fully standardized. The survey questionnaire and data collection were conducted using printed copies. The questionnaires were administered under uniform conditions, including the same instructions, time limits, and testing environments for all participants.

Throughout the administration process, the researcher facilitated and monitored the submission to ensure an accurate and complete response. Once all respondents had completed and submitted their responses, the researcher tabulated, organized, and prepared the collected data for statistical analysis. The collected data were carefully tabulated in a password-protected Excel file for coding and manual checking. Only the researcher had access to the dataset. Completed instruments were then stored in a sealed envelope within a locked cabinet accessible only to the researcher. Consent forms were kept separately from the questionnaires to further protect anonymity.

Lastly, upon completion of this study and after the final research report was approved, all printed materials were shredded using a paper shredder, and all electronic files were permanently deleted from storage devices to ensure destruction of the data.

Data Analysis Procedure

To shed light on the problems of this study, several statistical tools were used to measure and interpret data. The coded data from MS Excel were treated using statistical software for in-depth analysis. Frequency counts, percentage distributions, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize and analyze the respondents' demographic profiles, language-learning strategy use, and English proficiency levels. In addition, Multiple Regression was used to examine the predictive nature of LLS on English proficiency.

Ethical Considerations

Different ethical standards were observed in this study. Prior to data collection, approval was obtained from the campus authorities. The research protocol was reviewed and approved by the University Ethics Review Board of Cagayan State University.

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, and all participants were required to provide informed consent before taking part in any data-gathering activity. To uphold integrity, fairness, and the protection of all respondents, the researcher discussed the nature, objectives, and procedures of the research with respondents, including their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any academic consequence. Respondent's

anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained. No identifying information, such as names, student numbers, or contact details, appeared in the final dataset or research report. Instead, the researcher assigned numerical codes to the responses, ensuring that individual identities cannot be traced.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents

Age

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Personal Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
25	2	1%
24	3	1%
23	0	0%
22	4	1%
21	23	8%
20	29	10%
19	103	34%
18	136	45%
17	1	1%
Sex		
Male	126	42%
Female	175	58%
Program		
BEEd	8	3%
BPEd	17	6%
BS Agricultural and Biosystem Engineering	30	10%
BS Agriculture	46	15%
BS Business Administration	33	11%
BS Forestry	21	7%
BS Hospitality Management	36	12%
BS Information Technology	81	27%

As shown in Table 1, the majority of respondents were 18 years old, comprising 45% of the total sample. This was followed by those aged 19 (34%), 20 (10%), and 21 (8%). Only a minimal proportion belonged to the older age groups, with 22-, 24-, and 25-year-old respondents accounting for 1% each, while no respondents were recorded for age 23. These findings indicate that the respondents are predominantly in the typical age range of first-year college students, a developmental stage characterized by ongoing adjustment to academic demands and the continued development of academic language proficiency and learning strategies.

This result aligns with existing literature emphasizing that students entering higher education, particularly around 18 years old, are still strengthening their academic language competence and strategic learning behaviors. Galabasa et al. (2022) found that while college freshmen generally possess foundational English knowledge, many continue to experience difficulties in more complex academic language tasks. Similarly, Siraji (2024) and Marengo (2025) reported that first-year college students frequently rely on language learning strategies to enhance vocabulary acquisition and communicative competence. Collectively, these studies suggest that the early years of tertiary education represent a critical transitional period for the development of academic proficiency, during which learners actively refine strategies to cope with increasing linguistic and cognitive demands.

Sex

In terms of sex distribution, the results revealed that 175 respondents were female (58%) and 126 were male (42%), indicating a slightly higher representation of female students. This distribution may reflect broader enrollment trends in higher education programs, where female students often exhibit higher participation rates, particularly in language- and education-related fields. However, these patterns may vary across institutions and disciplines.

Academic Program

Table 1 shows that the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) accounted for the highest proportion of respondents (27%). This was followed by Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (15%) and Bachelor of Science in

Hospitality Management (12%). Other programs included the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (11%), the Bachelor of Secondary Education (10%), and the Bachelor of Science in Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering (10%). The remaining respondents were distributed among the Bachelor of Science in Forestry, Bachelor of Physical Education, and Bachelor of Elementary Education, which recorded comparatively smaller shares.

This distribution suggests that respondents are primarily enrolled in programs that are aligned with applied, technical, agricultural, and service-oriented disciplines. Such a pattern reflects students' preference for programs perceived to offer practical competencies, employability, and alignment with local and regional labor market demands. This supports the findings of Sadjail et al. (2022) and Tee et al. (2024), who emphasized that employability prospects and the relevance of digital skills strongly influence enrollment in information technology programs. Likewise, Ibañez Jr. et al. (2023) and Almanzor & Almanzor (2024) highlighted that students' choice of agriculture-related programs is shaped by personal interest, familial and community influence, and perceived career opportunities. For hospitality-related programs, Orpia & Cacabelos (2023), Velasco et al. (2025), and Valero et al. (2025) noted that student motivation is often driven by industry demand, passion for service-oriented careers, and institutional reputation.

Overall, the predominance of BSIT, BS Agriculture, and BSHM respondents suggests that students are strategically selecting academic programs that are perceived as economically viable, skill-oriented, and contextually relevant to local industries such as digital services, agriculture, and tourism. This implies that respondents are not randomly distributed but are shaped by broader socio-economic and institutional factors that influence program choice. Consequently, the diversity of academic programs represented in the study strengthens its capacity to examine variations in language learning strategies and English proficiency across disciplinary contexts.

Language Learning Strategies Used by Students

Table 2. Language Learning Strategies Used by Students

Category	Mean	Descriptive Value
Memory Strategies	3.89	High Usage
Cognitive	3.72	High Usage
Compensation	3.66	High Usage
Metacognitive	3.90	High Usage
Affective	3.73	High Usage
Social	3.65	High Usage
Grand Mean	3.77	High Usage

Displayed in Table 2 are the mean scores for the language learning strategies employed by the respondents across the six sub-factors of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL): memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social. As indicated in the findings, all six categories obtained composite means interpreted as "Often" with a descriptive level of "High Usage." This result suggests that learners generally employ different strategies and behaviors to understand, retain, and use English. Moreover, this also indicates that students possess a high level of strategic awareness in managing their language learning processes. Among the categories, metacognitive strategies recorded the highest mean, followed closely by memory strategies, while social strategies obtained the lowest mean, though still interpreted at a high level.

These findings align with Magnal et al. (2023), which reported that learners used language learning strategies extensively, particularly metacognitive strategies, supporting the present findings. Similarly, Yecyec et al. (2024) reported that students exhibited high levels of strategy use, particularly in listening, vocabulary, and translation strategies, which are closely associated with metacognitive and memory strategies. On the other hand, in the undergraduate EFL context, Mega Lestari and Wayudin (2020) confirmed that metacognitive strategies are the most employed, followed by social and memory-related strategies.

Overall, the findings indicate that learners demonstrate a strong level of strategic awareness and actively utilize multiple strategies to regulate their learning, retain linguistic information, and facilitate communication in English.

English Proficiency Level

Table 3. Overall English Proficiency Level in Vocabulary, Grammar, and Reading Comprehension

Program/ Course	Mean	Descriptive Value
BEEd	24.13 ^{CD}	Approaching Proficiency
BPed	24.76 ^C	Approaching Proficiency
BSABE	29.20 ^A	Approaching Proficiency
BSA	27.11 ^B	Approaching Proficiency
BSBA	27.15 ^B	Approaching Proficiency
BS Forestry	23.67 ^{CD}	Approaching Proficiency
BSHM	23.33 ^D	Approaching Proficiency
BSIT	24.10 ^{CD}	Approaching Proficiency
BSEd	26.41 ^B	Approaching Proficiency
Grand Mean	25.72	Approaching Proficiency

Table 3 presents the overall English proficiency levels of the respondents in grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension, grouped by program/course. The results reveal that the grand mean of 25.72 corresponds to the descriptive level “Approaching Proficiency.” The data reveal that respondents meet the minimum proficiency standard in English. They generally demonstrate adequate comprehension and functional use of grammar, vocabulary, and reading skills, enabling them to understand academic texts and communicate basic ideas in English. However, the results also suggest that minor lapses in language use and comprehension are still evident, particularly when dealing with more complex grammatical structures, unfamiliar vocabulary, or higher-level reading tasks.

Furthermore, the BSABE program recorded the highest mean score ($M = 29.20$), followed by BSBA ($M = 27.15$) and BSA ($M = 27.11$), indicating relatively stronger English proficiency among other programs. BSEd students, on the other hand, also demonstrated a moderate level of proficiency ($M = 26.41$). Meanwhile, BEEd ($M = 24.13$), BPED ($M = 24.76$), BSIT ($M = 24.10$), BS Forestry ($M = 23.67$), and BSHM ($M = 23.33$) obtained comparatively lower mean scores.

Despite these variations, all programs fall within the same descriptive level of “Approaching Proficiency.” This means that students across programs generally meet the minimum English proficiency requirement, although differences in the extent of mastery exist. Generally, while students demonstrate minimum English proficiency, there is a need for instructional reinforcement and targeted language development interventions to strengthen students’ mastery of grammar rules, vocabulary enrichment, and improve their ability to comprehend complex reading materials that may help them progress from Approaching Proficiency to Advanced level.

Predictors of English Proficiency

Table 4. Model Summary of Multiple Regression Predicting English Proficiency from Language Learning Strategies

Statistic	Value	Interpretation
R-squared	0.0447	4.5% of variance explained
Adjusted R-squared	0.0252	Adjusted for model complexity
F-statistic	2.29 (df: 6, 294)	Overall model significance
p-value	0.0353	Statistically significant

Table 4 above shows a multiple linear regression analysis to determine whether language learning strategies predict students’ English proficiency. From the data, the overall model was statistically significant, $F(6, 294) = 2.29$, $p = .033$, indicating that the set of language learning strategies collectively predicts English proficiency. The coefficient of determination showed that the model explained 4.45% of the variance in English proficiency ($R^2 = .0447$). This means that language learning strategies contribute to proficiency, but many other factors also influence students’ performance.

Furthermore, the adjusted R^2 value of .0252 indicates that when the number of predictors and sample size are taken into account, approximately 2.52% of the variability in English proficiency can be explained by the six language learning strategies included in the model. This means that while language learning strategies have a statistically significant relationship with English proficiency, a large portion of the variation in proficiency is likely

influenced by other factors not included in the model, such as exposure to English, motivation, and learning environment. Given the model's statistical significance, the null hypothesis is rejected.

These findings are supported by Yecyec et al. (2024) and Paglilingan and Cruz (2026), who found that Language strategies significantly predict English proficiency. Their studies demonstrate that strategic use of language learning behavior can meaningfully predict learners' ability to perform in English, directly supporting the notion that language learning behaviors are not merely correlated with proficiency but actively influence it.

Table 5. *Regression Coefficients of Language Learning Strategies Predicting English Proficiency*

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	p-value	Remarks
Intercept	24.7071	2.7895	8.8573	< 0.001**	Highly Significant
Memory	-0.3115	1.1257	-0.2767	0.7822	Not Significant
Cognitive	-1.5322	1.6503	-0.9285	0.3539	Not Significant
Metacognitive	4.5155	1.3915	3.2450	0.0013**	Highly Significant
Compensation	0.2744	1.0306	0.2663	0.7902	Not Significant
Affective	-0.5147	1.2935	-0.3979	0.6910	Not Significant
Social	-2.3364	1.0668	-2.1900	0.0293*	Significant

Table 5 presents the regression coefficients that determine which language learning strategies significantly predict students' English proficiency. Among the six predictors included in the model, only metacognitive strategies and social strategies were found to significantly predict English proficiency. Metacognitive strategies showed a positive and significant relationship with English proficiency ($\beta = 4.5155$, $t = 3.245$, $p = .0013$), indicating that students who frequently engage in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning tend to demonstrate higher levels of English proficiency. This finding suggests that metacognitive awareness plays an important role in the success of language learning.

Social strategies demonstrated a significant negative relationship with English proficiency ($\beta = -2.3364$, $t = -2.190$, $p = .0293$). This only means that students who reported greater use of social strategies tended to have lower proficiency scores. Learners with lower language proficiency may rely more heavily on interaction with peers and teachers to overcome linguistic difficulties. Thus, the increased use of social strategies may reflect a compensatory behavior among less proficient learners rather than a direct cause of lower proficiency.

On the other hand, memory strategies ($p = .7822$), cognitive strategies ($p = .3539$), compensation strategies ($p = .7902$), and affective strategies ($p = .6910$) did not significantly predict English proficiency. These findings suggest that these strategies did not contribute significantly to explaining variations in students' proficiency levels in the current model. Given these results, the null hypothesis for the individual predictors is rejected for metacognitive and social strategies but retained for the other four strategies, as only these two showed statistically significant relationships with English proficiency.

Correspondingly, these results support the statement of Abang and Paglinawan (2024), who found that metacognitive ability significantly predicted students' language competence among junior high school learners. Their regression analysis further revealed that evaluating strategies and learning output under metacognitive ability emerged as the strongest predictors of language competence, indicating that learners who actively monitor and evaluate their learning tend to demonstrate higher levels of language proficiency.

In contrast, Soliman and Gorospe (2024) examined the relationship between language learning strategies and English proficiency among Filipino students. They reported that, while overall strategy use was significantly related to English proficiency, only cognitive strategies emerged as a statistically significant predictor.

Conclusion

This study investigated the language learning strategies and English proficiency of freshmen students. Findings show that students frequently employ a range of language learning strategies to support their learning, with metacognitive strategies as the most frequently used. This highlights students' capacity to monitor, regulate, and evaluate their own learning processes. Furthermore, the results indicate that students generally meet the minimum standards of English proficiency, demonstrating adequate levels of comprehension and functional use of grammar, vocabulary, and reading skills. However, minor difficulties remain evident, particularly in handling complex grammatical structures, unfamiliar vocabulary, and higher-order reading tasks. In addition, data analysis

revealed that language learning strategies significantly predict English proficiency, although they account for only a small proportion of the variance. Among the different strategy types, metacognitive strategies emerged as a significant positive predictor, while social strategies demonstrated a negative predictive relationship with English proficiency.

These findings carry important implications for learners, language teachers, and higher education. For learners, the study underscores the importance of developing active and reflective learning practices, in which strategies are not only used but also appropriately selected and adapted to specific learning tasks and objectives. For teachers, the results highlight the need for explicit instruction in the effective use of language learning strategies, particularly metacognitive strategies. Moreover, educators are encouraged to design discipline-based language tasks and communicative activities that reflect authentic, real-life interactions to enhance learners' proficiency across academic programs. For higher education institutions, the findings suggest the need to integrate discipline-based language support and institutionalized intervention programs to promote equitable opportunities for language development and to enhance students' overall communicative competence for academic and professional readiness.

Contributions of Authors

The author independently conducted all phases of the research process, including conceptualization, literature review, instrument preparation, data gathering, interpretation of data, manuscript preparation, proofreading, and submission for publication.

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Conflict of Interests

The author affirms no conflict of interest in the publication of this document.

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