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Науковий керівник: **Леврінц Маріанна Іванівна**
                                                                              доктор пед.наук, професор

Завідувач кафедрою: **Берегсасі Аніко Ференцівна**
                                                                              д-р габілітований, професор

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доктор пед. наук, професор

Рецензент: **Маргітич М.Я.,**

канд.філ.наук, доцент

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Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education
Department of Philology

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES, THE RATE AND QUALITY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Bachelor's Thesis

Presented by: Barbara Csüri

a 4th year student

Professional Education program:

014 Secondary education. Language and literature (English)

Thesis supervisor: Marianna Lőrincz
DSc, Professor

Second reader: Marianna Margitics
PhD, Associate Professor

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ЗМІСТ

INTRODUCTION

Language learning is a complex process which requires different action and techniques to be adapted in order to achieve a particular purpose of learning. Since the amount of the information to be learnt by the language learners is high, the importance of the Language Learning Strategies is considerably big. Thus, they cannot be observed directly, language learning strategies are determined as the tactics used by the learners to control the learning process in order to understand and retain new infromation more effectively. They contribute to the learning process directly and it underlines the importance of the present topic. However, little is known about the frequency of use and efficiency of each strategy in different aspects of language learning. This question determines the focus of present study.

A considerable amount of academic litreture has been published regarding the problems of language learning strategy use. Most of the research on learning strategies is related to the concept of successful learners. The major contribution to the field was made by Joan Rubin (1975), who brought to attention the learning strategy notion with the publication of her seminal article"What the Good Language Learner Can Teach Us" (Rubin, 1975). According to Rubin startegies are "the techniques or devices that a learner may use to acquire knowledge" (Rubin, 1975, p. 43). These strategies are not equally effective, some strategies allow the language learner to aquire a new language better and faster than others. The effectivness of the learning depends both on the qualities of the strategies, as well as on the range of individual characteristics of the language learner, such as age, motivation, beliefs.

The relationship between the LLS and the learners themselves was studied by Nyikos and Oxford (1990), who argued that even though the teachers use the best ways in teaching, it is the role of the students that learn something actually. Therefore, the main focus needs to be placed on learners. However, little empirical

evidence has been provided to highlight the most frequently used strategies and their impact on foreign language learning.

The object of the present thesis is the language learning strategies as a means of enhancing language acquisition.

The subject of the thesis is the application of the language learning strategies by learners of English as a foreign language.

The thesis is aimed at discussing the application of language learning strategies by learners of English as a foreign language, giving an overview of the reseach findings, accentuating effective strategies and techniques that expedite their language learning.

The tasks of the thesis are as follows:

- Critical assesment of the academic literature;
- Developing the theoretical and conceptual framework to the study
- Analysis of the language larners' use of strategies
- Studying the individual variables of the learners' and their impact on the use of strategies
- Identifying new strategies not mentioned in the relevant academic literature.

Both theoretical and empirical methods are employed in the study, such as analysis and comparison. The qualitative research paradigm is used and a questionnaire is designed in order to answer the main questions of the course paper regarding the effectiveness, impact and types of strategies

The practical value of the study consists in providing relevant evidence proving the effectiveness of language learning strategies.

The thesis is made up of an introduction, three parts, conclusions, resume, references, and an appendix. It tries to empahise the theoretical background of language learning strategies and definition of key terms. The first part deals with the issues of classification, furthermore the part focuses on such aspects of the problem, as the nature of strategies, whether they are active behaviours or just

mental procesess, it provides information about research tool which have been used over the last years to identify, describe, define and classify the strategies.

The second part of the work focuses on the language learner, it is based on questions regarding strategy use and its relationship with general factors, learner variables and successful learning outcomes. It presents the issue of strategy use from the learner's point of view regarding such variables as the age of the learners, motivation and other concept which have an effect on strategy choice.

The third part present the procedure, results and discussion of the empirical investigation, and pedagogical implications.

PART 1

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE PROBLEM OF LEARNING STRATEGIES

1.1.Learning strategies in language acquisition research

THE FIRST PART is based on the theoretical background of language learning strategies. It deals with the issues of definition and classification, and focuses on research findings and research tools which have been used to identify, describe, define and classify the strategies.

Learning strategies are particular thoughts or actions used by the individuals in order to comprehend, learn or retain new information. Learner strategies are conscious or potentially conscious; they constitute the learner's purposeful attempts to absorb information. Learning strategies are defined as behaviours or actions which learners apply in order to facilitate the learning process and make it more efficient, self-directed and enjoyable. This and other definitions draw attention to a major problem – how to identify, describe, and classify these strategies (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978).

For a number of years, a great deal of substantial effort has gone into developing methods, theories and approaches to teaching language, and significantly less attention has been paid to the language acquistion from the learner's perspective, whilst valuable work has been done on the question of how language is developed, learnt and acquired.

From the late 1960s through the early 1970s, a noticeable amount of the language teaching research shifted from teaching methods to the learners themselves and their learning experiences. A concern arose with reference to the way how learners engage in their learning tasks while learning a language. The research had been intended for exploring the similarities among learners, and examine what processes of learning are common or universal (Oxford. 1999).

The aforesaid research interest in the individual variance among learners correlates with classroom teachers' question: why are some learners more successful than others even if they are learning under the same circumstances and experience the same teaching methods in the same classroom? Learning strategies have the potential to impact the process of foreign language learning and it is significant to understand where they are located in the theoretical accounts of how a language is learnt, however, defining and classifying language learning strategies is not an easy task. One of the earliest researchers, Rubin (1975) defined learning strategies as "the techniques which learner may use to acquire knowledge" (Rubin, 1975, p. 43). She determined two kinds of learning strategies: those which contribute directly to learning, and those which contribute indirectly to learning. She divided the direct strategies into six types and the indirect into two (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

Rubin highlighted that, although most individuals learn their first language with success, everyone is successful in learning other languages. A language learning theory has been advanced on the basis of which success in learning other languages can to some extent be aascribed to the strategies used by learners themselves. Alongside other assumptions, methods and approaches in language learning and teaching emerged in order to determine how these theories and methods are significant in understanding learning strategy theory (Dörnyei, 2005).

For a long period of time the Grammar Translation Method was the standard way for student to acquire a knowledge of a language other than their first language. Employing this method students simply learned grammar and vocabulary, and translated from one language into another, however this method does not advocate the opportunity to use language learning strategies to promote learning. Although the importance of the learner's own operations for performing have been presented, for example, in suggestions for how to effortlessly recall vocabulary lists which were common in Grammar Translation classrooms, such suggestions were commenced by the teacher and not by the learners (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

The cognitive perspective of language learning permitted learners to make their attempts to be in charge of their own learning and led to development of learning strategies which might be used by students in order to assist and promote their language learning process. From this view, learners were not translators or passive communicative beings, learners were capable of making positive and useful contributions to the learning. Learners used cognitive processes to give serious thought to their knowledge and understand the new language. This view contributed to research aimed at the recognition of how learners employ strategies to learn a language, different from their first language adequately.

The aim of the researchers was to come to awareness of how strategies applied by successful students could be used by other students to learn a language more successfully. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) explain that if learning is viewed as a cognitive skill than it allows the possibility that the potential of learning a language can be enhanced and strategies used during the language acquisition can be mastered by eveybody without exception. This review that knowledge gained about learning strategies might be available to other students to assist them in learning more efficiently and successfully has led to much of the research and writing on language learning strategies (Maiman & Fröchlich, 2017).

Although a cognitive outlook of language learning strategies proposes the idea that these strategies are teachable, and there are arguments that strategy instruction is an important part of the teacher's role, the teachability of language learning strategies is not universally accepted (Cohen & Macaro, 2013). Possible objectives proposed by Rees-Miller (1993) for lack of success in teaching strategies encompasses the age, educational background, life experience, cognitive styles, learner's beliefs with respect to the way a language is learnt (Oxford, 2017).

1.2. Definition and classification of language learning strategies

Defining Language learning strategies has been a challenging task. One of the earliest investigators in this regard, Rubin (1975) came up with a general

definition of learning strategies as "the techniques or devices which learner may use to acquire knowledge" (Kinginer, 2013). With the aid of observation in classrooms, observing herself, talking to good language learners she recognized seven strategy pecularities of a good language learner:

- guessing/inferring;

- communicating (for example, by means of gestures, etc.);

- managing inhibitions;

- attending to form (for example, by looking for patterns);

- practising (for example, pronunciation);

- monitoring one's own and the speech of others;

- attending to meaning (for example, by attending to context) (Kinginer, 2013).

Almost simultaneously as Rubin published her good learner study, a list of 10 language learning strategies employed by good language learners was generated by Stern (1975). He suspected that good language learners are characterized by positive learning strategies. He specified them as indirect and direct strategies:

- experimenting;

- planning;

- developing the new language into an ordered system;

- revising progressively;

- practising;

- using the language in real conditions;

- self-monitoring;

- developing the target language into a separate reference system;

- learning to think in the target language (Oxford, 2017).

During the same period, in his survey Naiman and his colleagues (1978) also attempted to determine what qualities people known to be good at lanuages transmission. They specified fundamental for successful language learner strategies:

- coming to grips with the language as a system;

- using the language in real communication;

- monitoring the interlanguage;

- coming to terms with the affective demands of language learning;

- coping with ambiguity (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978).

Nonetheless, hardships such as little agreement among these three influential early studies and the inadequacy of theoretical rigour led Macaro to accomplish an all-encompassing definition. He defined characteristics according to:

- location of strategies;

- size, abstractness and relationship to other strategies;

- explicitness of goal orientation;

- transferability.

O'Malley and his colleagues (1985) advanced a taxonomy of their own, recognizing 26 strategies which they separated into three groups:

- metacognitive (being aware of learning);

- cognitive (specific to distinguish learning activities);

- social (relating to cooperation with others) (Cohen & Macaro, 2013).

According to this study, the metacognitive and cognitive categories are equivalent to indirect and direct strategies recognized by Rubin, however, the definition of the social category was a prominent move in the the direction of acknowledging the vital role of strategies in language learning process.

As stated in Oxford's (1990) LLS study, a learning strategy cannot be considered good or bad, it is neutral until the circumstances of its use are modified. A strategy is considered to be advantageous if it meets the particular student's learning style preference to a certain degree, and the student employs the strategy in practical terms and links it with other strategies. Strategies that satisfy these conditions make it faster, much easier, enjoyable and more transfer to new situations, they enable students to become more independent and self-governed (Cohen & Weaves, 2006).

Students are not always acquainted with the power of using learning strategies for learning purposes, but experienced teachers can help their students to develop an awareness of learning strategies and enable them to use a wide range of strategies that make learning more effective (Grenfell & Harris, 2017).

Language learning strategy use is not always promoted by the teachers. When learners are left to their own devices typically they use learning strategies that reflect their learning style. However, teachers can become involved in choosing their styles and trying out some strategies outside of their primary style orientation. This process takes place through strategy instruction. Learning strategies are used and regulated by the learner, and the use of learning strategies is related to student achievement. Research has shown that in light of this association between learning strategy use and favourable learning performances, students who frequently use learning strategies have a high level of being effective as learners (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990).

Oxford (1990) outlined six primary groups of language learning strategies:

- Cognitive strategies which empower students to manipulate the language material in straightforward ways, for example, through reasoning, examination, note-taking to produce knowledge structures, practising in naturalistic settings.

- Metacognitive strategies like the determination of one's own learning style preferences and needs, planning for the task, collecting and organizing materials, desposing the study place, monitoring mistakes, evaluate the success of learning strategy, they are employed for managing the learning process overall. As specified by Purpura (2014), metacognitive strategies substantially affect the cognitive strategy use.

- Memory-related strategies promote the learners' ability to concept one language unit whit another, but do not necessarily involve profound understanding. Memory-related strategies enable students to learn and retrieve information in an orderly arranged chain, while other techniques generate learning retrieval with the assistance of sounds, images, a

combination of sound an images, mechanical means, location (on a page or blackboard). However memory-related strategies are not always positively associated with language proficiency. The application of this type of strategies in a test-taking situation had a significantly negative relationship to the learner's accomplishment in grammar and vocabulary. The reason for this is that memory strategies are often used for memorizing vocabulary and located in basic stages of language learning, but that learners need such strategies much less when their vocabulary and knowledge of structures has expanded.

- Strategies like guessing from the context in listening and reading, using synonyms and try to guess the missing word to aid speaking and writing, using gestures or pause words, are called compensatory strategies. Their task is to enable the learner to compensate the missing knowledge. As stated in Cohen' (1998) study, this type of strategies are used for speaking and writing and are intended only for language use, consequently they cannot be considered as language learning strategies. Nevertheless, Oxford (2011) asserts that compensation strategies, even though they might be used for language use, are used in language acquisition as well.

- Affective strategies, such as identifying one's mood, talking about feelings, rewarding for good performance, and using positive self-talk, have a remarkable effect on language proficiency. However, research is available that has shown the negative effect of this type of strategies, the reason might be that as some students proceeding toward their proficiency, they do not have any use of affective strategies as much as they had before (Oxford, 1990).

- Social strategies which embrace asking questions to get verification, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native-speaking partner and exploring cultural and social norms, help the learner work with others and understand the target language as well as the culture (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986).

Although the six categories used by Oxford and others for language learning strategy research field are widely cited in the academic literature, questions remain in respect of the classification of memory strategies as distinct from cognitive strategies, considering the fact that memory also involves mental or cognitive processing, memory and cognitive strategies might be classed to the same group of strategies (Littlewoo, 1984).

On the contrary, a recommendation was offered by Cohen and Dornyei (2002) regarding the reducing this group to four components:

- cognitive
- metacognitive
- affective
- social

There is, however, a disagreement rgarding the social and affective strategies. As claimed by some researchers these strategies are themselves used as metacognitive ones to govern social interactions, so as a result the strategy categories would be reduced to two groups: cognitive which are used to interact directly with the material to be learnt and metacognitive strategies which are used to control the above mentioned interaction. Thereby, social and effective strategies might be reffered to as a subcategory of metacognitive strategies and memory strategies become a subcategory of cognitive strategies.

If this kind of classification is approved, than it follows that cognitive or metacognitive strategies are of greater importance than others. As reported by O'Malley (1990), learners who do not use metacognitive strategies cannot controll their own learning and the possibility of achieving proficiency is very slight (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978).

It is evident that the ability to control our own learning process is an essential feature of a good learner. On the other hand, there are learners who organize themselves to take books out of the library yet never read them, or learners who plan their schedule but never stick to it, who select learning strategies but never apply them during the learning process. These learners are unlikely to

achieve their goals, although they are aware of a repertoire of metacognitive strategies.

Metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies are interrelated and cannot exist without each other. It is essential that when a learner plans his/her learning it should be followed by actions, meanwhile acting without planning is likely to be ineffective.

An additional problem regarding the classification of learning strategies is that it is often impossible in practice to classify a particular strategy to one group or another, for example, there are strategies such as reading books or listening to songs, and it is hard to determine whether they are metacognitive or cognitive strategies (Macaro, 2001).

Taking everything into account, it is possible to identify the fundamental characteristics of language learning strategies and to integrate them into workable definitions. There are six key features which define language learning strategies and distinguish them from other learner characteristics or learning behaviors particularly learning style, skill and communication strategies.

1.3. The nature of language learning strategies

A key issue in defining Language Learning strategies focuses on their nature. The central point is whether strategies are composed of knowledge, intention, action, or incorporate all three. The questions to be answered connected to this issue are (Muray & Gao, 2011):

- Can we learn and employ the strategy knowledge?
- Does strategy use essentially imply intentionality and consciousness?
- Are strategies observable actions or cognitions bounded to the learner's brain?

On early stages of strategy research Weinstein and Mayer (1986) claimed that learners use strategies with the inteion of achieving a goal, so this usage is intentional. These choices of employing strategies suggest that the appropriate

startegies are selected by the learners in accordance with the context and task which they believe will lead to the best possible result. In a survey conducted by Cohen (2001), researchers in the field of language learning strategies were requested to explain whether they would accept that strategies are goal-oriented, mental activities or not. The outcomes were mixed, the majority of respondents supports the thought that there is a metacognitive component as part of the selection and monitoring the process of strategy use (Muray & Gao, 2011).

Although, researchers in the field of understanding language learning strategies, agreed that they are conscious intentional actions, there are two lines of argument, regarding the level of consciousness and intentionality. In accordance with the first line the strategy use is always conscious, intentional or deliberate act. Considering that strategy use involves the selection of relevant strategies after the assesment of a particular learning task or problem, therefore a certain level of consciousness seems to be crucial. The second line deals with the degree of automaticity when using language learning strategies. Context, task, experience of the learner, among other factors determine the level of automaticity that a strategy may be employed with (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978).

There are researchers who even argue that in order to expand strategy knowledge by the frequent application of LLS in context is needed. Macaro states that only through repeated practice can a particular action become automatic in learning situation. Oxford (2011) with reference to learner autonomy argues that in order to take more control of your learning you need to be able to consciously choose the appropriate startegies. Furthermore, students need to know which strategies are best for specific circumstances or tasks, they need to possess and develop strategy knowledge. O'Malley and Chamot (1994) in their Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) advocate building up declarative strategy knowledge with the aid of explicit strategy training. Strategies when used with different dergree of automacity require less working memory resources (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978).

The research literature provides us with a great variety of alternatives describing the nature of LLS as actions, techniques, behaviours or mental activities. One issue to take into consideration is whether strategies are mere mental processes, observable behaviour or not. Stevick (1994) termed this as the "outside-inside problem" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). If strategies are used with the purpose of achieving a certain goal then meta-cognitions are an essential part of establishing the goal, but if a situation or task demand increases other factors should be taken into account. For example, in group work cognitive strategies will not be adequate. Metacognitive strategies, such as planning and monitoring, as well as affective and social elements demand an approach to solve a given problem or task successfully.

The active nature of strategies was stressed by Rubin (1975). She mentioned that they are what learners do in order to rich a particular goal in the learning process. Although, it needs to be accepted that there is a considerable degree of consensus that strategies are active, not all writers agree on the nature of activity (Семенишин, 2011).

It is this activity component which distinguishes strategies from style, a closely related and frequently cofused concept. This confusion got an early start in the literature, when Stern (1975) developed a list which was comprised of 10 language learning strategies. According to his beliefs this list contains the characteristic of good language learner and he called it "the personal learning style" thereby confusing the concepts of learning style and strategy and contributed to the difficulties with definition (Griffits, 2013).

The key distinction between style and strategies is drawn by Wenden (1991). Styles are 'the learner's characteristic, and unchanging ways of interacting with and responding to the learning environment' (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978). Styles are permanent, whereas strategies are amenable to change. Because of this distinction, strategies are usually expressed by means of verbs (practicing, using), learning styles are commonly expressed with the help of adjectives, such as:

- aural

- visual

- kinaesthetic

  or as nouns, such as:

- convenger

- accommodator

- assimilator

- divenger (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978).

Learning styles and language learning strategies are interrelated, but simultaneously distinc form each other. However, tt is important to mention that strategy choice may be influenced by learning style. For example, it is expectable, that a student who prefers an aural style would choose strategic activities which involve the sense of hearing, convenger might select strategies which synthesise information, etc.

In sum, the concept of language learning strategies received a substantial amount of attention in literature for its crucial role in the process of foreign language learning. When scholars tried to define them, they were focusing on the ways used by the learners to deal with the information they receive. It can be concluded, that language learning strategies have a great potential to contribute to the process of learning, and it is beneficial to understand their importance in foreign language acquisition.

1.4. Research Methods in the Field of Language Learning Strategies

Language Learning strategy research aims to provide reliable insights into the strategy use. Studies have highlighted the strategies used by the "good language learner". Furthermore, the focus of the researchers' attention shifted from the teachers to the individual difference variables including biographical

background and their influence on Language Learning Strategy (LLS) (Wenden & Rubin, 1987).

A great number of problems emerged related to the research concerned with the learning strategies. First of all, strategies are mental activities that cannot be observed directly, therefore LLS research has been dependent on self-report instruments which enabled the researcher to enhance the understanding of LLS use and interpret data better. Ocassionally, learners may encounter difficulties recalling how they approach specific learning tasks or what kind of strategies they employ. Furthermore, the researcher's perspective on language learning strategy use may be prevented by unreliable data. Older learners may be at an advantage as they may be more conscious in planning their learning, drawing on past experiences and transferring strategy knowledge. Younger learners may experience difficulty describing what exactly they were doing to solve the problem (Kinginer, 2013). This is particularly important to take into consideration as past research has been conducted at different levels of age and education. Strategy choice, however, depends not only on learner preferences but also on variables, such as the learning task, setting and level of prior education (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986).

There is a considerable number of quantitative and qualitative research methods available which make the obtainment of information about the LLS use possible. As it was mentioned before, the majority of researchers made use of self-report methods such as written questionnaires, interviews, think aloud protocols, diaries, learning blogs or journals. Observing classes, groups or individual learners while they were performing a task is another popular research method (Lee, 2010).

Of course each method has limitations, but each provides an important part into the research connected to the learning strategy use. While quantitative methods, such as structured self-report questionnaires mainly focus on describing the use of a broad range of determined strategies, qualitative methods such as interviews provide detailed information about learner's individual strategy use including explanations and descriptions of how and why they chose a particular strategy in a given task (Dörnyei, 2001).

Despite the fact that both the qualitative and quantitative methods have their certain drawbacks, combined methodology of data collection has gained support owing to the weaknesses of studies which were aimed at only one part of the strategy employment. Dornyei (2005) regarded himself to be more quantitative oriented. He advocated the cooperation with researchers who used qualitative instruments to guarantee high standards and supplement his quantitative background. There are, however, methods which have been found to be the most frequent (Dufon, 2006):

•Observation. Since the beginning of the LLS research, this method has been used by Naiman and Rubin (1975). They enable researchers to record the use and functioning of strategies in action and in a familiar learning setting. Observational methods are recognized as valuable research tools particularly when they are recorded (Cohen & Weaver, 2006). However, falling back on strategy research without additional data is extremely difficult and may leave many unanswered questions. The majority of strategies are considered to be mainly mental activities and they are difficult to observe. Even highly structured approaches can only deduce behaviours such as note taking or asking for help, but they alone will not be able to provide a comprehensive insight into the LLS use. Additionally, strategies such as reading a book or listening to music that learners use outside of the schools are neglected and can only be observed with the aid of methods such as interviews. In order to gain more elaborate data, observations can be complemented with verbal reports such as thinking aloud while working on tasks (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2001).

•Interview. Detailed information about individual pecularities and preferences, cultural influences that have a considerable impact on strategy use and the learning in general has been obtained from this type of observation. This method enabled researchers to highlight a continuum of techniques. A well planned structured interview allows the interviewer to gain full control during the interview and focus on data collection aimed at answering specific research questions. On the other hand, unstructured interviews provide respondents with the

independenc to depict their strategy use, it offers the opportunity to talk without being constrained.

Even though interview methods have advantages for LLS research there are also some disadvantages. The amount of time required to collect data and study it properly is enormous. The main criticism regarding any forms of self-report method is that the participants not necessarily concentrate on what strategy they choose and why (Oxford, 2017).

• Verbal reports. A number of verbal report methods exist, for example think-aloud or stimulated recall, have been developed to provide a better understanding of what learners think during a specific task. This type of observation provides a detailed picture of the way learners use LLS and how and why they choose a particular strategy to solve the problem which occurs during the learning process. Think-aloud techniques require participants to describe their decision making process and their thoughts while working on a task. They are used in strategy research because of the insight they provide into the processes when solving a problem or task (Dörnyei & Usioda, 2001).

• Self-reported questionnaires. Being the most popular among the methods in LLS research questionnaires have an easy implementation. Self-report questionnaires are particularly valuable in obstaining information about learners' mental activities. Similar to interviews, questionnaires differ in their degree of structure. Some questionnaires such as the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning are provided with a fixed list of strategies. Participants may be asked to provide insight into the frequency with which they use language learning strategies. Learners can also benefit from their participation in answering the questionnaire, as large strategy inventories can raise their awareness of different or new learning strategies and provide them with information to reflect upon their own learning. As questionnaires share many similarities with written interviews they have similar disadvantages, for example learners have to think back, may have forgotten details. There are problems which are unique to questionnaires,

because there may be a misunderstanding in interpreting the items (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2001).

These research methods prevail in LLS research. They have provided comprehensive insights into learners' strategy use in foreign language learning. Each method has its own unique advantages and downsides.

1.5 Instruments applied in language learning strategies research

Studying and classifying language learning strategies is a complicated task and requires detailed research, mainly because only a few of them lend themselves to direct observation, while the vast majority can be deduced from the behaviour of language learners. Numerous principal studies of language learning strategy use employed the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning). It is a self-scoring survey which consists of statements to which learners are asked to respond on a five-point Likert scale alternating from one to five, according to perceived frequency of use (Grenfell & Harris, 2017).

As specified by Green and Oxford (1995) the reliability of the SILL is high, however the validity – the degree to which the content is appropriate – can be demolished, if people do not answer honestly. There are two main reasons why people give dishonest answers: to please the researcher or to make the respondent appear in a more favourable light.

Oxford (1990) admitted, that the SILL might not be appropriate for all students, they may experience difficulties regarding the understanding of what given strategies involve, what's more, there were strategies which were known as key strategies, or were commonly observed using, which are not classified among the strategies menioned in the SILL. These 'missing' strategies are:

- looking up in a dictionary;
- referring to the teacher;
- using the library;
- keeping a notebook;

- listening to radio;

- reading newspapers (Weinstein & Rubin, 1987).

An alternative instrument advanced in order to classify the strategies was the Language Skill Development survey. This survey centers on skills development, as a result, strategy items which relate to more general language learning, such as strategies for learning grammar, were notincorporated.

This instrument is composed of four sections according to the four skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking, and then statements needed to be answered, regarding each skill. The LSD survey consisted of statements, such as:

- I plan in advance what I want to say;

- I plan my writing;

- I try to listen for key words;

- I often make summaries of what I heard or read (Oxford, 2017).

Another tool commonly used by researchers is an interview. Learners are individuals and they have their own ways of learning, during an interview learners can share their thoughts about strategies which help them to expand their knowledge. Another advantage is that the best way to learn and observe something is to ask about it, the researcher can ask back and also can try to understand the body language of the respondent, to realize whether the answer is honest or not (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986).

THE LANGUAGE LEARNER IN LIGHT OF LEARNING STRATEGIES RESEARCH

1.1 General factors and Individual Differences

For about four decades, it has been clear that if the researchers and teachers do not attach equal significance to the variety of concepts called individual differences, the foreign language teaching, even if it is carefully planned and well designed, can neither be considered complete, nor comfirmed to be effective. With the exception of age, these individual pecularities can be classified into two domains:

- *the cognitive domain* of language learning with its two aspects of human learning in general and individual cognitive variables that include language aptitude, style and strategies;
- *the affective domain* with its aspect of learner attitudes and motivation (Dufon, 2006).

Individual learner differences also know as dimensions of permanent features of a person which make him/her unique and distinct from other people, and which appear to be the indicators of success in language learning, do not represent integral constructs. This specifity makes them particularly difficult to identify, describe and classify. In an attempt to categorize these diversity of factors, which may affect FL learning by influencing the learner's strategy choice and use, researchers propose certain criteria (Ellis,1994).

Depending on whether they belong to to the human cognitive domain or affective domain, individual differences can be divided into *personal* and *general* factors. However, there is a distinction between *personal* and *general* factors, which is connected to the range of factor appearance. Personal factors are learner-specific and comprise the ways in which individuals are disposed to approach the task of language learning. These equally include the *cognitive* factors (e.g. individual

learning techniques) and affective features (e.g. attitudes to teachers and materials, learners' comparison of themselves to others in a group) (Rubin, 1975). On the contrary, general factors are characteristics of all language learners and encopass age, aptitude, personality traits cognitive styles and motivation. They significantly affect the choice and use of strategies, for example older learners have the ability to plan and organize their learning while younger students experience difficulties in understanding which strategy they use and why. In fact, both personal and general factors have their social, cognitive, and affective aspects. Social factors, external to the learner, are determined by his/her relationships with other people. Cognitive factors which tend to be internal to the learner, are correlated with problem-solving strategies which he/she typically activates. Affective factors, also learner-internal, are closely linked with emotional reactions to diverse language learning tasks (Ellis, 1994).

Additionally, Ellis (2004) divides individual differences into factors that are *unmodifiable* in the course of language learning (e.g. aptitude, age, sex) and those that are *modifiable* (e.g. learning aims and strategies, attitudes and beliefs, motivation) (Freed, 1995).

Furthermore, individual differences are described in the context of two main types of psychological factors and cognitive variables. The first one comprises learner's psychological and affective responses to the interindividual dimension of foreign language learning. The second indicate learners' organization of their genuine experience of the world, language and language learning, and their learning preferences, or methods using which they perceive, store and use information.

However, the knowledge of these constructs and their role in learner use of strategies for language learning is still very restricted, mainly by reasons of the fact that they are not directly observable. Moreover, learner individual differences (ID) are so interconnected within the processes of language learning and use that it is impossible to entirely isolate one of them in order to compare, interpret and evaluate its impact. (Freed, 1995).

2.2 Successful and unsuccessful language learners

A significant piece of early research, which considerably affected the development of language learning strategies is the "good language learner" study, which was conducted by Rubin (1975). With the help of observation in classrooms, self-observation and by talking to good language learners, she distinguished seven characteristics which according to her distinguished successful language learners from those who face difficulties in achieving proficiency. She stated that those who have a strong desire to communicate, practice, monitor their own and the speech of others can be considered good language learners (Freed, 1995).

The aim of Rubin's (1975) research was to enhance the success of the less successful students by teaching them the strategies of the more successful ones. She noted that variables such as the target language, age, situation and learning style have an impact on the usage and choice of these strategies.

Around the time of publication of the "good language learner", Stern (1975) created a list of ten language learning strategies used by good language learners. According to his view, positive learning strategies such as planning, searching for meaning, etc. are characteristics of successful learners (Dörnyei, 2001).

Another important piece of research was developed by Naiman and his colleagues (1978). They tried to find out what people who are good at learning languages have in common. These strategies were used in real communication (Wakamoto, 2009).

Researchers have been aware that it is essential to learn and observe what unsuccessful language learners do and what learners should do to avoid making mistakes. Vann and Abraham (1987) in their study of two unsuccessful learners, concluded that, although their students actively participated in the learning process and could be considered strategy users, they failed to choose strategies which were appropriate to their tasks. In conclusion, it might be convenient to say that all

learners are equal, but it is not always the case regarding the acquisition of a foreign language. There is a number of variables that affect strategy choice and focus, as well as individual characteristics which influence learner's choice of strategies (Олійник, 2013).

2.4 Motivation

The range of individual variables which have a significant impact on strategy choice is almost unlimited. In recent years, the concern regarding the influence of individual factors on language learning has been strong and motivation is one of the most commonly researched of these individual variables (Dörnyei, 2005). The impact and importance of motivation in language learning has been the focus of attention of many researchers. Brown (2004), for instance, described motivation as the "key to learning". From a human point of view, it would be illogical to disagree that motivation is one of the basic components of successful language learning.

Over the years, researchers tried to approach motivation from different perspectives. One of the distinctions was provided by Gardner and Lambert (1972) who identified two types of motivation:

- integrative (begins from the desire to identify with those who speak the language in a social context);
- instrumental (begins from the desire to benefit practically from acquiring the language, for example, by getting a better job, higher salary etc.) (Wakamoto, 2009).

In research conducted by Garden (1972) using a general measure of motivation, it is stated that motivation, especially integrative, was positively related to achievement (Garden, 1972, pp. 12-14). In a later study he found that students did better on a vocabulary task when they were offered a reward (Gardner, 1985).

Considering some other perspectives, Deci and Ryan (1985) classified motivation as:

- intrinsic – originating from the learner – it is something the learner wants for his/her own satisfaction;
- extrinsic – arising from outside the learner, for example from a teacher or a parent (Deci and Ryan, 1985, p. 64) (Muray & Gao, 2011).

In a study based on the distinction between the two models of motivation integrative versus instrumental and intrinsic versus extrinsic, it has shown itself to be enduring, but they may be oversimplified (Ryan and Deci, 2000) (Macaro, 2001).

Dornyei (2005) rather than describing motivation as an unchanging phenomenon which can be described as integrative/instrumental or intrinsic/extrinsic criteria, presents motivation as dynamic and constantly changing. In his view, language learners are complex individuals whose motivation derives from their vision of themselves, from social pressures, and effects of prior learning experiences (Dörnyei, 2005).

2.4 Age

Like a number of other issues the role of age in language learning is disputable. The controversy centers around whether there exists a critical period for language acquisition and, if that is the case, when it ends. Issues related to the age of students who are speakers of other languages learning a new language have been long. There is awell-known wisdom accroding to which children are better language learners than adults. In one of the recent studies concerning age-related differences in language learning by speakers of other languages, Oyama (1978) discovered that the younger people were when they started learning English the more native-like was their pronunciation (Oyama, 1978). Other studies have shown that, although adults may learn more quickly initially, younger learners are often more successful in the long term (Krashen et al.,1979) (Muray & Gao, 2011).

A variety of possible theories has been made to explain obvious age-related differences in language learning, including the Critical Period Hypothesis. According to Brown (2007), the critical period is "a biologically determined period of life when language can be acquired", in contrast, Dulay (1979) believed that there must be another explanation for observed age-related differences in a language development (Dulay, 1979). For this reason instead of "critical" period the term "sensitive" period has been proposed in order to show that there does not exist a certain period of time after which a language acquisition in impossible, but rather a gradual process within which the level of acquistion of a foreign language becomes variable (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978).

Cognitive variables may be other factors contributing to age-related differences in language development. Krashen (1979) explains the older learners' faster initial progress in terms of their ability to receive more comprehensible input by way of their experiences and knowledge (Naiman & Fröchlich. 1978). According to Ellis (1988), older learners use the knowledge of the rules in order to learn a new language. More mature students can also be expected to have a larger strategy repertoire from which they can choose appropriate learning activities to regulate their learning. In addition, older students might be expected to have better control over their learning, for example by means of planning and evaluating their own learning (Rubin, 1975).

2.5 Beliefs

Beliefs are defined as the psychological state in which a person believes or holds a premise to be true. A great number of researchers tried to investigate learner beliefs in language learning. Over the years, in addition to describing their strategies learners were able to articulate beliefs about language learning and they have an influence how successful the learners are (Johnson, 2008).

There has been an important development in the field of beliefs in language learning. An instrument "Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory" was

developed by Horwitz (1985) as a result of brainstorming session with 25 language teachers, and a list of beliefs was constructed:

- Children learn language more easily than adults.

- Some people are naturally better at learning language than others.

- Women are better than men at learning languages.

- Some languages are easier than others.

- Vocabulary is the most important part of learning a new language.

- Pronunciation is an important part of learning a new language.

- Grammar is the most important part of learning a new language.

- Students who are allowed to make mistakes will have difficulties speaking correctly later (Johnson, 2008).

These items were divided into five belief areas (Dörnyei, 2005):

- aptitude;

- language learning difficulties;

- the nature of language learning;

- strategies;

- motivation.

Although an individual's beliefs are often thought to be a stable individual characteristic, White (1999), according to a study which she conducted, reports that good language learners do not have particular set of beliefs. They believe in themselves as capable of learning. They also believe that the target language is worth learning (Griffits, 2013).

2.6 Aptitude

For a long time the notion of aptitude as a part of successful language learning has been disregarded. The idea that some people are naturally better at any subjects or music, is commonly accepted, yet the possibility of being better at

language learning, or having the ability to learn a language more easily and rapidly than others is not widely accepted (Murray & Gao, 2011).

An instrument specially designed to evaluate language aptitude is called the Modern Language Aptitude Test. It is a study which has been used to select language learning difficulties. Caroll (1981) suggested that aptitude consisted of four areas of ability:

- phonemic coding ability – the ability to identify and remember distinct sounds;
- grammatical sensitivity – the ability to recognize grammatical relationships;
- rote learning ability – the ability to remember linguistic information;
- inductive language learning ability – the ability to infer rules (Murray & Gao, 2011).

Another area that has been investigated was the relationship of aptitude to memory, as well as the possibility that aptitude involves the combination of cognitive abilities. However, a theory has been proposed according to which low aptitude might be compensated by using effective strategies, but this theory remains under-researched.

2.7 Learning style

Learning style significantly contributes to variations in individual learning strategy choice and use. Learning style has a major impact on they way students learn new information and on the types of strategies which they choose. However, this concept should be separated from the concept of learning strategies. Reid (1987) provided a definition of the learning style as individual's natural ways of processing and retaining new information (Wenden & Rubin, 1987).

Dunn (1975) developed the earliest instrument „The Learning Style Inventory" which is aimed at studying learning styles. This study divided learning styles into five domains:

- environmental;
- emotional;
- sociological;
- physiological;
- psychological.

At the same time another instrument „The Learning Style Inventory" was proposed by Kolb (1984). According to this model there are four types of learners:

- converger;
- accommodator;
- assimilator;
- diverger (Muray & Gao, 2011).

One of the first applications of the style concept to language learning was the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire, developed by Reid (1987). This study was based on five modalities: visual (learning by seeing), auditory (learning by hearing), tactile (learning by touching), kinaesthetic (learning by moving) (Murray & Gao, 2011).

Oxford (1990) also contributed to the Learning Style Survey and proposed extra style dimensions, such as: sharper/leveller, global/particular, synthesizing/analytic, deductive/inductive, impulsive/reflective, metaphoric/literal, field dependent/independent and memorization (Oxford, 2017).

Although there have been many attempts over the years to identify and categorize learning styles and to develop inventories, studies that investigate the concept are difficult to find. Though much controversy remains regarding the learning style, it is obvious that every learner has a learning style. Even though it is pointed out that learning style is believed to be a stable learner characteristic, according to Oxford (1990) learning styles can be modified and extended by the

learners themselves. In addition, it is suggested that learners' ability to remain flexible regarding the learning style preference is a characteristic of successful language learners (Muray & Gao, 2011).

Learning Style is considered to be a characteristic of an individual. There is a definition of personality as those aspects of an individual's behaviour, beliefs, action which are typical and distinctive of that person. Learner's personality can affect the strategy choice as well as other variables and differences. It also depends on the personality, how a person relies on strategies, and each personality type affects the individual's achievement, goals and discipline (Бражник, 2009).

2.7.1 The choice of language learning strategies

Strategies are chosen by learners consciously, and it is impossible to oblige them to employ strategies against their will. A variety of factors affect the strategy selection process, for example: Individual factors – strategy choice varies according to personal variables such as motivation, personality, style, age, gender etc (Wenden & Rubin, 1987).

Contextual – learning situation has a strong effect on strategy selection. For example, the choice and the usage of these startegies varies according to whether students are full-time or studying in night classes after work. Purpose – for which students are studying also affects their choice. For example, if students are able to study for their own satisfaction, they will be able to choose strategies which best suit their own individual needs.

According to a number of researchers a goal is required in order to develop a strategic behavior. Goals vary according to the individual and the situation, because an action is strategic when it is related to a goal, and not just a random behaviour which does not have a distinct learning purpose (Dörnyei, 2005).

The goal is the constituent of the learning process which distinguishes strategies from skills, another commonly confused concept. Skills relate to the way a language is employed in the learning process and they are conceptualized in

terms of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These may be divided into skills as: skimming and scanning for reading, fluency and turn-taking for speaking etc. All of these are related to the way a learner uses a language and they have been learnt in order to receive and send information. Language use is the key feature that distinguishes skills from strategies. Whereas strategies are made use of in the learning process, skills are employed to use what we have learnt.

In addition skills may be used as a strategy to promote a learning goal, for example, students may decide to read in order to learn idioms, they can listen in order to improve their pronunciation and use their speaking skills to develop vocabulary.

Although there is a distinction between strategies and skills, and it is suggested that strategies are deliberate and skills are automatic, if we distinguish them according to the goals, we can see that, when we use skills as activities to develop grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary, skills are employed as tools to achieve a goal, so we use them as strategies. In practice the distinction is not always clear but it is important to know that, skills are related to how we use our knowledge and the language and strategies are activities chosen by the learner to achieve a particular goal.

To conclude, skills may be used by the learners for strategiec purpose in order to achieve a goal in language learning, but this involves changes in the basic nature of the skills (Kinginer, 2013).

2.7.2 Self-regulation

Regulation and controll over the learning process is a crucial part of learning a foreign langugage. Learners use strategies to monitor their learning, and this active participation is known to be self-regulation. According to the study conducted by Oxford and Lee (2007), self-regulation is connected to metacognition (i.e. what learners do about learning) and autonomy (learner's responsibility for what they learn and how they learn it). Metacognition is the ability to prepare for learning

and reflect on what has been learnt, to plan and evaluate, make changes where it is necessary. Metacognition is an essential component of self-regulation, because it is impossible for learners to actively participate in their own learning if they are unable to think and reflect on what they have learned (Muray & Gao, 2011).

As well as metacognition, autonomy is an essential component of self-regulation. A learner should take the responsibility for making decisions about what and how to learn, to choose strategies and to use them in order to rich the target goal. Autonomy requires learners to regulate their learning, and they are able to do this if they can think metacognitively.

Language learning strategies are often confused with communication strategies. These are seen by some as two separate expression of language learner behaviour. Brown (2000), for example, clearly differentiates between learning strategies and communication strategies, explaining that 'communication serves as the output modality and learning is the input modality' (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). He suggests that, while a learner applies the same strategies used in learning a language to communicating on that language, there are other communication strategies, such as message abandonment, which do not result in learning. Ellis (1984) argues that it is even possible that successful use of communication strategies may prevent language learning (Naiman & Fröchlich, 1978).

Tarone (1984) implied that by helping students to say what they want or need to say, communication strategies can help to develop language. Even if the communication is not perfect within the framework of grammatical rules or in terms of lexis, the process of using the language for communication can be considered a learning strategy, because it may result in learning. The problem of classifying strategies, as the results of research suggest, that even such strategies as repeating vocabulary, which are intended for learning, do not necessarily result in learning.

The problem of differentiating between communication strategies and learning strategies on the ground of motivation lies in the fact that we cannot determine what motivates a learner, because learners may have a dual motivation

to both learn and communicate, or that learners may learn a language even when the basic motivation is to communicate (Cohen & Macaro, 2013).

Therefore it can be stated that the use of learning strategies is directly related to the learner and it can be considered effective if:

a) the learning strategy is properly correlated with the task;

b) the learning strategy adequately corresponds to the learning style of a particular student;

c) the student uses the learning strategy effectively and combines it with others necessary strategies. (Семенишин, 2011)

PART III

THE EFFECT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

In this part the purpose of the research, the methods, as well as the participants, materials, data collection and analysis are presented. The aim of the given research is to provide information about the strategies used by the EFL language learners and their effect on language acquisition.

This part provides the background information, the research questions, the hypotheses, along with the aims and outline of the research.

3.1 Research questions and hypotheses

The aim of the research was to find out what language learning strategies EFL learners commonly use and the main factors affecting the choice of these strategies. The research gives an insight on the usage of strategies among students in schools in Transcapathia. My aim was to compare what literature states about the usage and choice of strategies, to observe how Language Learning Strategies affect the leaning process and look for „new" strategies that are not mentioned in the literature.

Based on the literature analysis, the research questions were the following: Research question number one: How can language learning strategies be used more effectively?

Research questions number two: Are various language learning strategies equally effective?

Research question number three: Are there non-general or personal strategies which are not mentioned in the academic literature, but are used by learners to develop their skills and learn a foreign language more effectively?

In order to answer the research questions, two hypotheses were stated. Hypothesis number one: Language Learning Strategies directly contribute to the effectiveness of the foreign language learning.

Hypothesis number two: The impact of the learning strategies on the development of different skills is not equal.

The answers of the above research questions are connected to the research findings in Part 3 where a short explanation is given about whether the hypotheses which guided the given study were proven or rejected.

3.1.1 Participants

The survey was conducted among students of schools in Transcarpathia. The number of students who took part in the research was seventy-eight. These students were aged between 15-24. Altogether 57 female and 21 male students filled in the questionnaire. At the time of data collection, most of the participants had studied English for at least 10 years in elementary and secondary schools.

3.1.2 Research instruments

In order to conduct this research, where the aim was to find out which strategies are commonly used by foreign language students, quantitative research paradigm and, in particular, survey research design was employed. A questionnaire was used as a research method. The questionnaire was anonymous and it was provided with detailed explanation of requested actions.

The questions aimed at finding out which language learning strategies are used most commonly and to explore personal strategies which affect the language learning process and outcomes.

The first part included 30 close-ended questions. The respondents were asked to provide their answers on the use of language learning strategies on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from "(1) never or almost never true of me" to "(5)

always or almost always true of me." The questionnaire is based on Oxford's SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) version 7.0, in which strategies are classified into direct and indirect. Furthermore, the first part includes an open-ended question, focusing on other strategies used by the learners in order to learn English.

In the second part of the questionnaire the participants were asked to decide how different factors affect their acquisition of the English language. In order to find out how these factors influence the learning process, a questionnaire was adapted from Horwitz's "The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory", and Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test.

3.1.3 Procedure of the research

The research was conducted at the end of the first semester of the academic year 2020/2021. This research required the participation of students who were willing to take part in the study. The learners were informed about the purpose of the research and asked to respond to the questions without giving their name. The background information included the participants' age and gender. Copies of the questionnaire were sent to the learners to fill in online, and it took approximately 20 minutes.

The learners were asked to read the questions carefully and choose the response which best described what they do in order to learn English.

3.2 Research findings

The questionnaire provides the data obtained from seventy-eight students who learn English as a foreig language. The first part of the questionnaire deals with general information about the participants and the use of different strategies.

Regarding the age of the participants the biggest number of answers came from the age category of 15 and 20, followed the age category of 19-16 . The smallest number of answers came from the age category of 17 and 23.
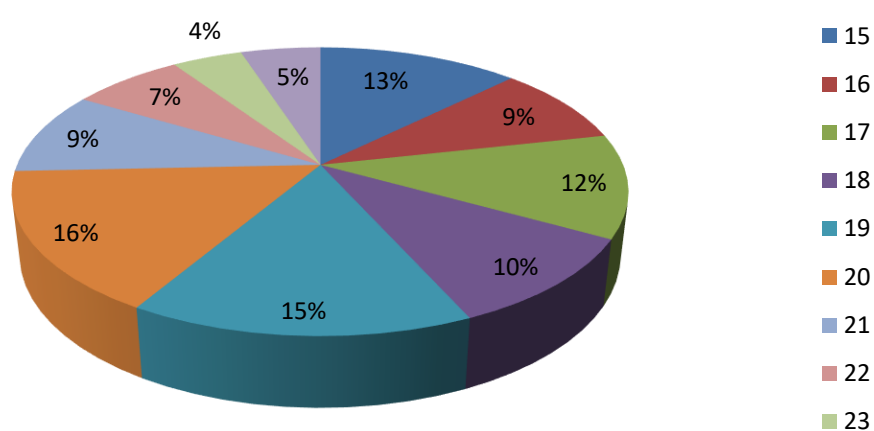
Figure 3.1: The age of the participants

The main part of the questionnaire focused on the strategy use among EFL learners. The questionnaire consists of 30 close-ended questions which are divided into sections, and an open-ended question, where the participants were asked to indicate their own strategies.

The first part consists of six sections according to the types of strategies. Therefore, section A stands for memory strategies, section B for cognitive, section C for compensation strategies. These strategies form the group of

direct strategies. Furthermore, section D stands for metacognitive, section E for affective, and section F for social strategies.

The responders were asked to locate their answers on the use of these strategies on a five-point Likert-scale items from "never or almost never true of me" to "always or almost always true of me".

The second section is aimed at the discussion of the impact of individual variables, namely the motivation and the beliefs of the learners, on the choice of strategies and the language acquistion. The second part consist of two subsections, where the first subsection stands for motivation and the second subsection for beliefs of the learners. The responders were asked to range their answers from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly disagree".

3.2.1 Memory strategies

As it was mentioned before, memory strategies are classified as direct strategies because they directly and explicitly involve the target language. They require the students to mentally process the language.

In the language learning process memory strategies are arranged according to such principles, as arranging the words or things in order to make associations. These associations must be meaningful to the learner. Memory strategies allow learners to store vocabulary and then retrieve it when needed.

There is a wide range of memory strategies students can use in order to aquire a language, for example, placing new words into context, applying images and sounds, semantic mapping, representing sounds in memory, employing action, etc.

The result of the given research show that students frequently rely on memory strategies. For example, for questions 1, "I use English words in a sentence so I can remember them" 53% of the students chose the „Always or almost alwyas true of me" answer.

Respond / Strategy	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost always true of me
I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them	6%	6%	10%	25%	53%
I make a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used	23,5%	18%	13,5	15%	30%
I use rhymes to remember new English words	34%	23%	15,3%	19%	8,7%
I remember the location of the new words on the paper or on the board	7,9%	7,6%	19,2%	30,7%	34,6%
I use flashcards to remember new English words	9,7%	8%	12,3%	20%	50%

Table 3.1: The memory strategies use results

As it can be seen from the results, memory strategies are widely used among students of all ages. They help to store and retrieve information and can be used in a form of a game for younger students and for adults as well. This types of strategies is the most common for visual learners because it is quite helpful to use to expand vocabulary.

3.2.1 Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies are one type of learning strategies that learners use in order to learn more successfully. These include repetition, oraganising new language, summarising meaning, guessing from context, using imagery fo memorisation. All these strategies involve deliberate manipulation of language to improve learning.

This type of strategies serves to support the learner as he/she develops internal procedures that enable him/her to perform complex tasks. For example, cognitive strategies are important in the area of reading comprehension. A self-questioning strategy can be helpful for the learner to understand and analyze what they have read.

The result of the research show that cognitive strategies play an important role in foreig language aqcuisition. This type of strategies, however, is frequently used by adults, since they are trying to use the new material more often. The most commonly used strategy among cognitive strategies was watching English TV-shows and movies, 42% of the responders have chosen the „always or almost always true of me" answer.

Respond / Strategy	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost always true of

					me
I say or write new English words several times	16%	14%	18%	28%	24%
I try to talk like native English speakers	12%	16%	32%	20%	20%
I use English words I know in different ways	12,7%	12,5%	29%	25%	20,8%
I watch English TV-shows and movies	4,2%	7,5%	18,3%	28%	42%
I look for words in my own language that are similiar to new English words	18%	11%	25,5%	17,5	28%

Table 3.2: The cognitive strategy use

3.2.3 Compensation strategies

As it was mentioned before according to researchers this types of strategies cannot be considered strategies for they are used only for speaking and wiriting and are intended for language use.

From the results it can be seen that students rarely use these strategies, because when learning a language only the minority of students are confident enough to use such strategies as reading without looking up each word in a dictionary. However, strategies such as guessing from the context, using gestures and using synonyms are rather popular in language learning.

Respond / Strategy	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost always true of me
To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses	4%	13%	12,5%	41,6%	28%
When I can't think of a word in English, I use use gestures	12,5%	8,3%	16,6%	20,8%	41,8%
If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same	8%	12%	8%	12%	64%
I make up new words if I don't know the right ones in English	32%	12%	24%	20%	8%

	Never or almost never true	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost
I read in English without looking up every new word	20%	32,5%	25%	12%	10,5%

Table 3.3: The compensation strategy use

3.2.4 Metacognitive strategies

When learners use metacognitive strategies they are trying to understand what they are doing and why.

The use of metacognitive strategies allows students to plan, control, and evaluate their learning process that helps them to achieve better learning outcomes. The results demostrate that metacognitive strategies are used more than others and advanced students use this type of strategies with cognitive and compensation strategies.

When a language learner uses metacognitive strategies it indicates that the learner learns not only about the language but tries to understand it and use it as much as possible. Using metacognitive strategies means that the learner is aware of his/her mistakes but he is able to learn from them.

This type of strategies is frequently used because paying attention when someone is speaking or looking for people with whom learners can use the language is the best way to acquire a more native-like pronounciation, expand the vocabulary and use the language in different situation.

The results of the questionnaire show that metacognitive strategies are the most commonly used among foreign language learners and the most effective in becoming a successful language learner.

Respond	Never or almost never true	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost

Strategy	of me				always true of me
I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English	7,8%	7%	23%	12,2%	50%
I notice my English mistakes and use them to do better	9,8%	10,2%	16%	32%	32%
I pay attention when someone speaks English	8%	8%	16%	32%	36%
I look for people I can talk to in English	8%	12%	28%	20%	32%
I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English	6,8%	23%	36%	24%	10,2%

Table 3.4: The metacognitive strategy use

3.2.5 Affective strategies

Affective strategies are learning strategies concerned with controlling positive and negative emotions. Altough, some researchers claim that the relationship between affective strategies and language learning is not clear, in fact the positive environment helps the learning.

The affective strategies may be helpful during an oral performance, when the learner tries to lower the anxiety level. Learners often experience anxiety in speaking the new language, however, they can use progressive relaxation, deep breathing in order to reduce the level of anxiety.

Among the affective strategies, one of the most significant ones is related to self-motivation. This strategy means that the learners encourage themselves to speak, to be motivadet even though they make mistakes, or they can reward themselves when doing well. Althoug, it is really important to regulate the level of the stress and anxiety in language learning, the results show that learners are not always aware of their stress level or they are not able to talk about it.

Respond / Strategy	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost always true of me
I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake	7,8%	7%	23%	12,2%	50%
I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English	18%	15,4%	23%	11,6%	32%
I notice if I am	32%	22%	20%	12%	14%

tense or nervous when I am studying or using English					
I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English	16%	12%	24%	28%	20%
I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English	16%	12%	24%	28%	20%

Table 3.5: The affective strategy use

3.2.6 Social strategies

Social strategies play an important role in foreign language learning. They go hand in hand with communication. Social strategies allow learners to understand and interpret the language, to receive and analyze different opinions, thoughts and to learn about the culture of the English speaking people.

We distinguish between different social strategies, for example, asking for help, asking questions to get verification, talking with a native-speaking partner, and explorind cultural and social norms.

The results of the research were unexpected, because social strategies turned out to be the least frequently used as compared to other strategies. However, the learners who took part in the research answered most of the statements using the option "Somewhat true of me" and "Usually true of me".

It is unusual since language learners are not always ready to communicate with native speakers or sometimes, they are afraid to ask questions, however, the main fuction of the language is to use it for communication.

Respond / Strategy	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost always true of me
If I don't understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down	8%	12%	36%	28%	16%
I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk	16%	24%	12%	20%	28%
I practice English with other students	19,2%	11,5%	36%	20%	13,3%
I ask English speakers for help	15%	15,3%	27%	30,7%	12%
I try to learn about the culture of English speakers	12%	8%	27%	15%	38%

Table 3.6: The social strategy use

3.2.7 Personal strategies

Language learners are known to differ from each other, therefore not all strategies might be appropriate for all students. Some students may have difficulties understanding what strategies they use. Furthermore, there are strategies used by learners which are not included or mentioned in questionnaires because they are not general strategies. Although they are not considered general, these personal strategies affect the language learning.

The research included one open-ended question, where the participants were asked to list strategies that are not mentioned, even though they are considered to be effective in language learning.

The participants of the research mentioned different strategies they use in order to learn English more effectively. These are the following:

- Listening to English music/radio

- Using the social media to learn English

- Watching tutorials, bloggers on Youtube

- Watching movies first in the native language then in English

- Playing English video games

- Taking notes of unfamiliar words with transcription

- Keeping a dictionary

- Writing a wish list in English

- Running an online English course

- Having a penfriend

- Reading English poetry

- Translating and learning English lyrics

- Creating subtitles for English movies/serials/videos

- Searching for information in English (because English books, articles, websites are more reliable)

- I set the phone / map language to English so that I can more easily recognize and learn the words.

- Watching videos on different dialects and repeating the words after the speaker

3.2.8 The effect of Motivation and Beliefs on language acquisition and strategy choice

Motivation is regarded as a key factor in foreign language acquisition. Gardner (1985) defined motivation as a combination of desire and effort to reach a goal in language learning as well as a positive attitude to the learning process (Gardner, 1985). Gardner (1998) determined two types of motivation: integrative and instrumental. The integrative motivation is connected with the learners desire to get a degree, higher salary, pass exams, etc., while the instrumental comprises the learner desire to communicate with the representativ of the target language (Gardner, 1998). The research included two sections of close-ended questions regarding the variables which include motivation. The learners had to range their answers from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly disagree". According to the data obtained from the questionnaires the learners are significantly instrumentally motivated which means that they learn English because it enables them to be successful in life, to travel abroad, to be respected. Only the 40% of the respondents chose response options related to integrative motivation which means that language acquisition enables them to enjoy English music and art, to be an open-minded person, etc. Figure 3.2 presents the research findings on motivation.

Furthermore, the instrumentally motivated respondents tend to use memory related and compensation staregies, on the other hand, integratively motivated learners prefer cognitive and social strategies. They look for opportunities to use the language as much as possible, to talk to native speakers and get to know their culture.
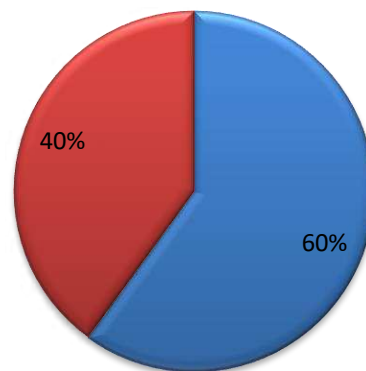
Figure 3.2: Motivation of EFL learners

Another factor that highly influences the foreigng language learning and the strategy choice is the beliefs about the language. Beliefs in general affect our knowledge and life, but when it comes to the language learning they significantly   contribute   to they way a language is learnt and acquired. Some students hold a belief that being successful in language learning requires special skills, on the other hand other people believe that in order to reach a certain level of proficiency, the learners must concentrate only on particular fields of a language, for example on grammar rules, while neglecting the study phonetics, or expand vocabulary without paying attention to the rules, etc.

What is interesting in the obtained data is that even though the academic literature states that younger students cannot be considered better language learners, over 65% of the students hold the belief that younger learners are more successful in language acquisition than older ones. Moreover, 80% percent of the respondents believe that some people have an aptitude for language learning (i.e. they are born with special skills that help them acquire a language faster).

3.3. Summary

Based on the research, it can be concluded that language learning strategies play a key role in foreign language acquisition. It has been proven that all students, regardless of age and proficiency level, use different kind of strategies in order to learn English.

The following research questions were posed at the beginning of the study:

- How can language learning strategies be used most effectively?

- Are language learning strategies equally effective?

- Are there non-general strategies which learners use in order to develop their skills?

As it was mentioned before, the language learning process rarely takes place without the use of certain learning strategies. They enable the learner to store, analyze and retrieve information in order to perform complex tasks. The number of strategies that can be used by the learners to plan, control and evaluate their learning process is unlimited.

Although, there is a wide range of strategies their effectiveness is not equal. According to the results, the most frequently used startegies are the metacognitive and the cognitive ones, and the least frequently used are the compensation strategies.

As it is stated in the literature, there are other strategies besides the traditional ones. These may even include the ones that the learners discovers individually. The given study purpoted to find out what language learning strategies are used by EFL students that are not normally cited in the relevant literature. The participants of the research mentioned the following startegies: taking notes of unfamiliar words, keeping a dictionary, having a penfriend, reading English poetry. The use of the aforementioned strategies proves that learners actively use a variety of these to facilitate the learning process.

To answer the research questions two hypotheses were proven in the given research. In terms of the first hypothesis, the direct effect of the strategies on the learning process was demonstrated on the basis of the obtained responses.

According to the results, strategy use requires the learner to engage with the target language as much as possible by mentally processing it. Learners rely on a variety of startegies such as repeating words several times, watching TV-shows in English, etc. The use of these strategies enhances the development of language skills and indicates the learners' ability for self-regulation and self-evaluation. The second hypothesis regarding the effectiveness of the strategies was proven as well. The impact of different startegies on the learning is not equal.

To sum up, the aim of the research was to highlight the importance of the language learning strategies and provide a detailed description of their use. To better understand the implications of these results, future studies could address a wide range of questions, such as: How can language learning strategies use be trained? How are different strategies used in instructional and non-instructional (naturalistic) settings? Answers to the above mentioned and many other questions can deepen our understanding of the language learning strategies concept.

CONCLUSIONS

Considering the rapid changes in the amount of information to be learned by the learners, the importance of the techniques and approaches also known as the language learning strategies is indisputable. These techniques directly effect the learning process, and are widely used by learners of different proficiency level, either consciously or unconsciously. Despite the significance of the research that had been directed toward presenting general factors which are common for all language learners, little attention has been paid to the frequency of use of particular strategies and their relationship between the quality of foreign language acquisition. This study was aimed to provide information about the relationship of the language learning strategies and the quality of learning process, to assess the effectiveness of these strategies, and to identify personal strategies not mentioned in the academic literature.

The present thesis has three parts. The firts chapter presents an overview of the language learning strategies, and the problem of definition and classifiction. The second part deals with the language learner, general factors and individual differences which have an impact on the choice of particular leraning strategies. The third chapter presents the research which focuses on the way EFL learners use the strategies in order to acquire a language.The purpose of the research was to expand our understanding of the importance of Language Learning Strategies in foreign language learning context. The research was aimed to explore the strategy use preferences and to identify the most and the least frequently used strategies among learners of different levels.

The main objective was to examine how often learners use the learning strategies, whether this affects the level of success or not, and to look for different strategies that were not mentioned in the literature. Oxford's Strategy Inventory of Language Learning questionnaire was used as the basis for the research. The participants included in the study were learners of different proficiency level and age group.

Returning to the hypotheses and questions posed at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that either consciously or unconsciously the learners of a foreign language have to employ techniques in order to rich a goal and learn a foreign language. Based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis in can be concluded that learners of different levels can use the same strategies for different purposes. Those learners, who use the strategies frequently, are more aware of the learning process. Furthermore, results show that the most frequently used strategies are the metacognitive ones followed by cognitive, social and the least frequently used being the compensation strategies.

Additionally, the present study was designed to determine the effect of individual variables of the learners and their impact on strategy choice. The research clearly illustrates that such variables as beliefs about language learning and motivation highly influence the acquisition of a language and the choice of strategies.

It was also shown that there are strategies which are not mentioned in the literature, but learners of all age groups and proficiency level use them in order to comprehend new information and consequently learn a language. These include strategies like using the social media to learn English, reading poetry, running a course, keeping a dictionary, etc. These findings enhance our understanding of the way learners approach foreign language acquisition, and may serve as a base for future studies. Considerably more work will need to be done in the field of Language Learning Strategies to fully demonstrate the types, uses and nature of strategies. Also, it would be interesting to assess the teachability and the usage of strategies in order to enhance language acquisition in the English classroom.

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that Language Learning Strategy concept is an essential aspect in a foreign language acquisition. An extant research has been carried out to identify methods used by successful language learners. The results of this research support the idea that learning strategies promote the learning process, they help the learners to be aware of what and how they learn. It is clear that the use of strategies indicate the success of the acquisition of a foreign language. Moreover, the effectiveness of various strategies is not equal, while the

frequency of use of particular strategies is considerably big, there are less prevalent strategies. It was also shown that the variety of strategies is not limited by the number of strategies posed in the academic literature. Accordingly, it is essential to identify and instruct the strategy use of the learners, but it is impossible without knowledge of variables and factors that influence the strategy choice and use.

РЕЗЮМЕ

Мета кваліфікаційної роботи полягає у вивченні впливу навчальних стратегій на процес засвоєння іноземної мови. У роботі представлено розвиток концептуальних положень галузі починаючи з 1960-х років, коли було запроваджено поняття стратегій вивчення іноземної мови.

Кваліфікаційна робота складається з трьох частин. Перший розділ присвячений вивченню стратегій навчання, а саме появи концепції стратегій вивчення іноземної мови у 1960-х роках, коли ракурс дослідження навчання мови було зміщено: об'єктом дослідження стали учні та стратегії, які вони використовують для досягнення цілей у навчанні. Головною метою означених досліджень є загальні характеристики та індивідуальні відмінності, які мають вплив на вибір стратегій.

Важливо було зрозуміти потенціал стратегій вивчення мови та їх місце у процесі вивчення іноземної мови. Незважаючи на вагомі наукові досягнення, невирішеними залишаються багато питань, пов'язаних із класифікуванням стратегій навчання іноземної мови. Стратегії вивчення мови стали об'єктом багатьох досліджень. Суть досліджень полягала у вивченні стратегій, які застосовуються успішними учнями та можуть бути використані учнями, у яких виникають труднощі із засвоєнням іноземної мови.

Друга частина роботи присвячена вивченню індивідуальних відмінностей учнів у розрізі проблеми стратегій вивчення іноземної мови. Розрізняють особистісні та загальні фактори, які впливають на успішність засвоєння іноземної мови та вибір стратегій вивчення іноземної мови, такі як ставлення до вчителів та навчального матеріалу, та їх вплив на використання стратегій. Наприклад, учні старших класів краще вміють планувати та організовувати своє навчання, тоді як учням молодшого шкільного віку важко зрозуміти, яким чином використовуються стратегії.

У третьому розділі представлено результати вивчення особливостей використання стратегій вивчення іноземної мови учнями угорськомовних шкіл

Закарпатської області. У дослідженні з'ясовано, які зі стратегій є найбільш та найменш використовуваними.

Основна мета дослідження полягала в тому, щоб з'ясувати, як часто учні використовують стратегії навчання, чи впливає це на рівень успішності та виявити стратегії, про які не згадувалося в літературі. Основним методом дослідження є анкетування. У дослідженні було висунуто дві гіпотези. Згідно з першою гіпотезою, стратегії навчання безпосередньо впливають на досягнення. Ця гіпотеза була доведена: учасники, які брали участь у дослідженні, активно використовують різні стратегії для досягнення навчальних цілей. Можна зробити висновок, що учні різного рівня можуть використовувати однакові стратегії для різних цілей. Ті учні, які часто використовують стратегії, більш свідомо сприймають процес навчання.

Згідно з другою гіпотезою, ефективність стратегій не однакова. Результати показують, що найбільш часто використовувані стратегії - це група мета когнітивних стратегій, за якими слідують когнітивні, соціальні та найменш використовувані - стратегії компенсації.

Крім того, згідно з одержаними результатами, учні використовують стратегії, які не згадуються в літературі, але вони широко використовуються учнями різного віку. До них відносяться такі стратегії, як використання соціальних мереж для вивчення англійської мови, читання віршів, участь в онлай курсах, ведення словника тощо.

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APPENDIX

Personal information:
Age: ………
Gender: Male/Female
How long have you been studying English?
………………………………………………

I.Choose the response (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) that indicates how true of you the statement is. Put an "X" to the answer that best describes what you actually do in order to learn English.
1.Never or almost never true of me
2.Usually not true of me
3.Somewhat true of me
4.Usually true of me
5.Always or almost always true of me

PART A

	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost true of me
I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.					
I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.					
I use rhymes to remember new English					

words.					
I use flashcards to remember new English words.					
I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board					

PART B

	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost true of me
I pronounce or write new English words several times.					
I try to talk like native English speakers.					
I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English					
I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English					
I use the English words I					

	know in different ways				

PART C

	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost true of me
I say or write new English words several times					
I try to talk like native English speakers					
I use English words I know in different ways					
I watch English TV-shows and movies					
I look for words in my own language that are similiar to new English words					

PART D

	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost true of me
I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English					

I notice my English mistakes and use them to do better					
I pay attention when someone speak English					
I look for people I can talk to in English					
I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English					

PART E

	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost true of me
I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake					
I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English					
I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English					
I talk to					

	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost true of me
someone else about how I feel when I am learning English					
I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English					

PART F

	Never or almost never true of me	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always or almost true of me
If I don't understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down					
I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk					
I practice English with other students					
I ask for help from English speakers					
I try to learn about the culture of English speakers					

II. List other strategies you use in order to make the learning easier (e.g. keeping a dictionary, wathcing videos, etc.)

…………………………………………………………………………………….
……………………………………………………………………………………….
……………………………………………………………………………………….
……………………………………………………………………………………….
………………………………………………………………

PART 2. Learner Varbiales.

II. Choose the response (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) that indicates how true of you the statement is. Put an "X" to the answer that best describes you.

Motivation	Strognly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Learning English is important in becoming a skilled person					
Knowledge of English can lead to more success and achievement in life					
Others respect me because of my ability to speak English.					
Learning English is important for traveling abroad.					
Learning English allows me					

toenjoy English books, movies, pop music, etc.					
Learning English allows me to keep in touch with foreign acquaintances					
I've decided to learn English as best as I can					
Learning English helps me become a more open-minded person					

Beliefs	Strognly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.					
Some languages are easier than others					
Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating					
Learning a foreign language is mostly a					

matter of learning a lot of new words					
Women are better than men at learning foreign languages					
It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accen					
Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.					
.Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules					
It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign					

language					
Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language					

NYILATKOZAT

Alulírott, Csüri Barbara angol szakos hallgató, kijelentem, hogy a dolgozatomat a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskolán, a Filológia tanszéken készítettem, angol nyelv és irodalom tanári diploma megszerzése végett.

Kijelentem, hogy a dolgozatot más szakon korábban nem védtem meg, saját munkám eredménye, és csak a hivatkozott forrásokat (szakirodalom, eszközök, stb.) használtam fel.

Tudomásul veszem, hogy dolgozatomat a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola könyvtárának Kézirattárában helyezik el