

In the Name of God
The Beneficent, The
Merciful



Shahrood University of Technology

English Language Department

M.Sc. Thesis in Teaching English as Foreign Language

**A Grounded-Theory Study of EFL Teachers' Perceptions of
Strategy Training**

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Dedication

*I dedicate this thesis to my family for nursing me with affections and love and their
dedicated partnership for success in my life*



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Abstract

Lots of studies have been conducted to figure out various numbers of efficient language learning strategies used by successful language learners and the effect of previously theorized strategies on language learners' proficiency. Nevertheless, no study has been carried out on common inappropriate language learning strategies used by language learners, which may deviate them from the right path to learn a second/foreign language. The purpose of this thesis is twofold. It sets out to examine, firstly, the EFL teachers' beliefs and perceptions of common inappropriate language learning strategies used by EFL learners, secondly, the language learning strategies that EFL teachers suggest and implement as alternatives for learners' inappropriate ones. To this end, the data were iteratively collected and analyzed through semi-structured interviews. Thirteen participants of the study were singled out among EFL teachers' of language-learning institutes located in Tehran province who had the experience of English language teaching for at least a period of five. The coding schemes of grounded theory yielded two sets of categories conceptualizing language learners' common inappropriate strategies and teachers' alternative appropriate strategies. The findings indicated that owing to the absence of strategy training in Iran language educational system, there are a wide number of inappropriate language learning strategies, which are being commonly used by language learners. Hence, EFL teachers are required to employ remedial strategy training rather than strategy training in order to correct learners' use of learning strategies. The most common inappropriate learning strategies, which have been used by language learners, as well as teachers' alternative strategies are presented in this thesis.

Keywords: learners, teachers, alternative learning strategies, inappropriate learning strategies

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List of Abbreviations

EFL	English as a foreign language
F/SLL	Foreign/Second Language learner
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
LLS	Language Learning Strategies/strategy
ELL	English Language learner/Learners
TP	Teacher participant

Chapter One:

Introduction

1.1. Overview

During the past few decades, there has been a prominent shift within the field of language teaching and learning with greater attention being paid to learners and learning rather than teachers and teaching. Learner-centered learning aims to develop autonomous and independent learners by putting more responsibility on students' shoulders. It enables them to take full advantage of opportunities to learn a language on their own by employing language learning strategies.

Language learning strategies (henceforth referred to as LLS) refer to the processes and actions, which are consciously employed by foreign/second language learners (F/SLL) in order to learn and use a language (Cohen, 1998; Oxford, 2003). In addition, according to Brown (2007) communication strategies refer to "the employment of verbal and non-verbal mechanisms for the productive communication of information" (p. 137). The application of the two strategies to classroom learning has come to be called as strategy-based instruction (McDonough, 1999; Cohen, 1998); or strategy training.

According to Oxford (2003), there is no good or bad strategy; however, the context in which a strategy is used ascertains whether it is an appropriate or inappropriate strategy. Previous studies indicated that appropriate use of language learning strategies leads to improved L2 proficiency. However, inappropriate use of learning strategies may deviate learners from the path to achieve their goals. Thus, EFL teachers are responsible to teach learners when, where and how to use LLS in order to be in line with their purposes.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Although there has long been a shift from direct instruction of skills to strategy-based instruction in the field of foreign/second language teaching, EFL instruction in Iran still follows the traditional approach. In effect, Iranian foreign language learners are not well aware of the appropriate use of language learning strategies, without which they will have less chance of success. Consequently, a number of inappropriate language learning strategies are being commonly used by foreign language learners.

However, Previous literature on strategy training and language learning strategies have mostly focused on investigating the most effective language learning

strategies used by successful language learners and the positive impact of the strategies on less successful language learners' proficiency. Nonetheless, there has been no study on common inappropriate language learning strategies used by language learners. Thus, the field of foreign language teaching and learning is in urgent need of qualitative studies that figures out common inappropriate language learning strategies among EFL learners and the role of EFL teachers to overcome this setback.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Taking a broad overview of the history of research on language learning strategies, no study has been carried out to investigate inappropriate language learning strategies, which have been commonly used by language learners. However, previous studies are generally conducted on the strategies used by successful language learners (Oxford, 1989, 1990; Politzer, 1983) and the effect of learning strategies on learners' proficiency (Weaver and Li, 1996; Naughton, 2006). Other studies have been carried out to identify different types of language learning strategies (Rubin, 1975; Oxford & Ehrman, 1985; Oxford & Burry Stock, 1995; Cohen, Weaver, and Li, 1995).

Thus, the present study aims at uncovering: (1) Common inappropriate language learning strategies used by foreign language learners; and (2) EFL teachers recommended strategies to be substituted for learners' inappropriate ones. To this end, the following questions direct the study to get to its main purpose:

1. What are the most common inappropriate language learning strategies, which are being used by ELLs?
2. What kind of alternative strategies EFL teachers provide for ELLs?

1.4. Limitations of the Study

Although the study was well-designed by the researcher and the participants were well-selected to reach the objectives of the study, there are some shortcomings that placed some restrictions on the methodology and conclusions. First of all, as it is indicated by previous researchers and stated by the participants of the present study, there are many factors that may affect the use and training of language learning strategies, one of which is place of living (the indicator of family economics and culture of language learners). Therefore, the participants should have been chosen from different cities. However, due to

the time limitation the participants were selected only from Tehran province, while teachers in other cities may have other perspectives towards the issue. Secondly, Owing to the wide variety of language learning strategies, observer effect, time and methodological limitations, the participants might have missed some details out.

1.5. Delimitations of the Study

The researcher found some ways to overcome the existed limitations. First, the participants were selected from different institutes in different regions (both from downtown and uptown areas) to lessen the effect of place of living. Second, owing to the wide number of inappropriate and appropriate LLS, the participants were asked to present the most important and common inappropriate strategies and provide the most efficient and feasible alternative strategies which are applicable to all EFL learners. Further, second round of interviews was designed to give the interviewees the chance to add any missed point or clarify the previously presented points.

1.6. Ethical Issues

The research, which involves human subjects, requires to be based on an ethical standard. The Ethical standards of research make researchers to stick to a set of moral principles, which prevents them to put the participants of studies in a situation in which they might be at the risk of physical and psychological harm as a consequence of participation. The major ethical issues in conducting research are: informed consent, beneficence- not harm, respect for anonymity, confidentiality and respect for privacy.

Informed consent is the most important ethical issue in carrying out a research. According to Armiger (1997), "it means that a person knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently, and in a clear and manifest way, gives his consent"(P.10). In this study, informed and voluntary consent has been obtained freely from the participants. They have been fully informed about the study and its purposes. Additionally, they have been assured that they have the right to withdraw at any time.

Considering the principle of beneficence, Ford and Reutter (1990) argue, "beneficence relates to the benefits of the research, while non-maleficence relates to the potential risks of participation"(p.12). As it is stated by Burns and Grove (2005), "discomfort and harm can be physiological, emotional, social and economic in nature"(p. 5).

Accordingly, the subjects of the present study have been assured that there is no harm in participating in the study. Moreover, they have been informed about the implication of the findings and their beneficence for the development of EFL teaching and learning.

Further, the ethical principles of confidentiality and anonymity are connected to the security of the personal information of the participants. To this end, the participants of the present study have been assured that they will be kept anonymous during the whole process of research and their statements will be presented under fictitious names.

Last but not least, Respecting for privacy is another ethical principle of conducting a research which refers to "the freedom an individual has to determine the time, extent, and general circumstances under which private information will be shared with or withheld from others" (Levin, 1976, p.20). Therefore, the participants choose the time, place and duration of the interviews of their own free will.

Chapter Two:

Review of the Related Literature

In this chapter, I elaborated on the main issues in the literature related to strategy training and learning strategies in general and their effects on different parts of language skills in particular. This part is made up of two sections. The first section outlines the theoretical perspectives in which scholars' ideas and suggestions have been highlighted in terms of the usefulness of strategy training and the role of specific factors in its effectiveness. The second section regards the empirical findings through which the advantages of applying strategy training have been proved as well as the extent such approach has affected different skills of language learners.

2.1. Theoretical Perspectives

2.1.1. Definition

The theory of Strategy Inventory for Language learning was first developed by Oxford (1990) and it was later pinpointed and discussed in further studies such as Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995). Language learners' strategy use has been assessed through this developed theory, which is classified into six categories: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies.

The characteristics of each category of the language learning strategies have been discussed by Cohen, Weaver, and Li (1995). The first category is cognitive strategy in which the EFL learners mostly made use of their prior knowledge to comprehend the targeted language materials, applying different structures and grammar rules to different contexts, classifying vocabulary according to topic. Such activities contribute to their ability to identify, retain, store, or retrieve words, phrases, and other elements of the target language. Metacognitive strategies are evident in several activities such as previewing the language materials, organizing your thought before engaging in productive skills, reflecting on each other's performance, all of which pertain to the learners' efforts to control their learning process in terms of planning, organizing, self-monitoring and assessing, and evaluating the language learning activities. The third category is social strategies include the actions like asking questions for clarification, helping a fellow student complete a task, or cooperating with others which are selected by students to interact with other learners, teacher, or native speakers. Affective strategies are the last category in which the learners' motivation, emotions, and attitudes

are regulated through applying strategies for reducing anxiety, for self-encouragement, and for self-reward.

Concerning language-learning strategies, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) defined strategies as those thoughts and behaviors employed by EFL learners to comprehend, learn, or retain information in a more effective way. By using learning strategies, the learners can have control over their learning process actively. On the other hand, Pressley, Forrest-Pressley, Elliott-Faust, and Miller (1985) looked at learning strategies from different point of view; cognitive processes. They expressed that learners make use of several processes in a natural consequence to carry out a task; learners do it cognitively through memorizing and having potential conscious and control over activities or strategies to enhance their performance. This expression pointed out the definition of learning strategy in the authors' opinion.

In addition, Cohen's (1998) definition of second language learning strategies is the chosen processes by students through which the learned materials are stored, retained, recalled, and applied that ultimately results in enhancement in their learning and use of a second language.

Similarly, the behaviors, techniques, or actions used by learners to facilitate their language learning process have been defined as cognitive strategies (Rubin, 1987). These strategies are applied when the learners encounter specific processing problems. One more strategy defined by Rubin (1990) was metacognitive strategies through which management techniques such as planning, monitoring, evaluating, and modifying are applied by language learners to control their learning process.

In the same line, based on one of the earliest researchers in this field, learning strategies are "the techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge" (Rubin, 1975, p. 43). Furthermore, she assigned different types of strategies into two different categories under which the strategies were contributed directly or indirectly to learning. Clarification/verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning, and practice are those strategies, which have been contributed to learning directly. On the other hand, creating opportunities for practice and production tricks (communication strategies) has been put under the indirect learning strategy category.

Furthermore, O'Malley et al (1985) characterized only learning strategies as the teachable factor among other essential factors playing role in helping language learners to move toward language proficiency by developing their own understandings of the target language and its surrounding culture. The other factors are aptitude, attitude, motivation, personality, general cognitive style.

To narrow down the discussion of learning strategies, Chamot and O'Malley (1994) recommend several stages involved in strategy instruction. The first stage is called preparation under which the learners' awareness of listening strategies and their positive effects on oral text comprehension is raised. Secondly, direct or explicit strategy training is presented to learners. Then, teachers provide opportunities for learners to practice the strategies in different contexts. The fourth stage regards the evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy use by learners themselves. Finally, learners are highly recommended to apply and transfer the learned strategies to new contexts or tasks.

Likewise, advocates of explicit strategy instruction highlighted the high effectiveness of this language teaching instruction since it fosters the students' metacognition and increase their ability to understand their own thinking and learning process (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford & Leaver, 1996). They believed that, in strategy based instruction, students has to go through three stages. In the first stage the students' awareness of their strategies is developed. In the latter stages, the students are presented by the teachers' modeling of strategies, identification of the strategies by name, and providing opportunities for practice and self-evaluation respectively.

Regarding specific condition of learning strategies, Oxford (1989) has presented some principles to be considered so that strategy training is effective. Firstly, directly addressing students' attitudes, beliefs, and stated needs; in other words affective factors; have an essential role in the effectiveness of strategy training. Second, the supporting, harmonic, and related strategies should be chosen. It is also important that such group of strategies should be based on the language task, the learners' goals, and the learners' styles of learning to help the learners to achieve their goals. Another principle is not separating the strategy training from the language learning course and follows such procedure for a long period of time. As the fourth principle, the author emphasized the

explicitness and relatedness of strategy training besides providing authentic materials to be practiced in the shape of varied tasks. Considering such principles help learners to become autonomous learners by becoming able to transfer the learned strategies to new contexts and also evaluate the success of both themselves and the strategy training.

Employing the strategy training in different situations is determined by some useful elements found by Oxford et al. (1990). These elements are providing a communicative approach-based language instruction, a relaxed and warm learning atmosphere, training strategy directly and explicitly in larger groups and implicitly for a small minority of students, following strategy training for longer time, learners' positive reactions towards strategy training, and employing keen strategy trainers in the field.

What's more, based on McDonough's (1999) teaching strategies is more effective when it is integrated into the language-learning course by teachers. In addition, teacher training in the field is the prerequisite of employing strategy-based instruction. The instructors also need to consider that only under certain circumstances and mode, the learners can benefit from such approach effectively.

Hosenfeld (1979) has also considered the instruction of appropriate learning strategies as the main reason of improvement in the performance of good language learners; similarly, instructing inappropriate learning strategies causes poor language learners to experience frequent failures and even the good language learners to experience some degree of weakness in their language proficiency.

For instance, Canale and Swain (1980) noted that being communicatively competent by language learners necessitates their ability to become strategically competent at the first stage. They also emphasized the importance of making learners aware of the appropriate time and the way of using strategies in order to engage in, carry out, and repair communication.

Laviosa (1991a) stated that the learners' knowledge of the language, their individual differences in perceiving the encountered problems, and the learners' ability to select, employ, and manage a variety of strategies properly determines the degree of efficiency or inefficiency of any particular strategy.

Oxford and Burry-stock (1995) defined naturalistic language use as one type of learning strategies which is embedded in activities including speech imitation, TV/radio usage, using familiar words differently, practicing sounds or alphabet, finding ways to use the language, guessing, encouraging oneself, writing in English, skimming, saying or writing repeatedly, finding a different way to say something, trying to concentrate on the speaker, planning goals, making summaries, putting new words into sentences, looking for people to talk with, and reading for pleasure.

2.1.2. Advantages for Learners

In terms of the acquired advantages by language learners through engaging in strategy training, Dickinson (1987) stated that taking responsibility by language learners for their own learning, becoming autonomous, independent, and self-directed learners are the main advantages of using appropriate learning strategies.

In addition, according to Anderson's (1990) claim, learners can build rich and complex schemata by incorporating new information into their own existing schemata, which is fulfilled by making use of learning strategies.

In the same way, from the Oxford and Burry-stock's (1993) point of view, learning strategies which are the steps taken by students to improve their own learning, play essential role in helping EFL learners to catch their main purpose of learning the language. They also considered the frequency of use of language learning strategies as directly relates to the learners' ultimate language performance, regardless of the different ways through which the performance is measured (Oxford & Burry, 1993).

In like manner, according to Cohen (2003), strategy training aims to provide learners with the tools to pinpoint their own strengths and weaknesses in language learning, become familiar to what helps them to learn the language in better way, develop their problem-solving skills, experience different types of familiar and unfamiliar strategies to deal with language tasks, monitor and evaluate their own performance, and finally apply the learned strategies in new learning contexts.

In a broader sense, good language learners apply different learning strategies for their specific characteristics (Rubin, 1975). For example, cognitive strategies are used for associating new information with prior knowledge existing in long-term memory; to

exercise executive control through planning, arranging, focusing, and evaluating the learning process which are all together the bright evidence of using metacognitive strategies; another applicable strategy by language learners is social strategies through which the learners can interact with others and manage discourse; learners also make use of affective strategies to direct their feelings, motivations, and attitudes related to learning; and finally guessing the meanings of unknown words during listening and reading tasks or using circumlocution in speaking and writing by learners to overcome their deficiencies in knowledge of the language are considered as compensation strategies use (Rubin, 1975).

On the same path, based on Oxford's (1989) claim, good language learners manage their own learning process through paying attention, self-evaluating, and self-monitoring which are examples of metacognitive strategies. In addition, applying affective strategies such as anxiety reduction and self-encouragement by the learners lead to control their emotions and attitudes. They also make use of social strategies to learn the language by working with others in terms of asking questions and becoming culturally aware. Another tool of managing their own learning process is using memory strategies such as grouping, imagery, and structured review, to store information in memory and to retrieve it when needed. They practice naturalistically, analyze contrastively, and summarize the new learned materials to show their ability in applying cognitive strategies. Finally, they employ compensatory strategies to overcome their knowledge shortcomings by guessing meanings, using synonyms, or other production tricks to understand the unknown materials.

Finally, Maintaining and transferring strategic knowledge to other tasks by language learners is one of the most recommended way of strategy instruction to be effective (McCormick & Pressley (1997). The authors' mean of strategy maintenance and transfer was applying the instructed strategies in a similar situation, but not identical, to the one in which they first learned that strategies.

2.1.3. Teachers' Role in Strategy Training

The improvement in the use of language learning strategies is done effectively by strategy training (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) which is according to Oxford (1992) mostly fulfilled explicitly rather than implicitly. It has been also argued that strategy

training should be integrated into the language learning courses in order to teach the learners how to use, adapt, evaluate, and transfer a strategy to new situations and tasks.

When implementing strategy instruction in the language classroom, teachers should also adopt new perspectives. As Chamot et al. (1993) suggested that showing positive attitude toward strategy instruction by teachers has essential role in convincing the learners for strategy use. In addition, the students need to be made sure that the goal of strategy instruction is to expand, not replace, their current repertoires of learning strategies. Based on O'Malley and Chamot (1990), before designing strategy instruction and deciding on the length of time needed to be spent on explicit strategy instruction, teachers should take learners' interests and maturity levels into consideration at first. Adjusting strategy guidance to the students' proficiency level and integrating strategy training into lesson plans has been suggested by Oxford (1990). Furthermore, she pinpointed that students would never perceive strategy training as an integral part of language learning rather than additional work unless the teacher integrates strategy instruction with language instruction and includes it in the grading system.

Correspondingly, Duffy (2002) targeted language teachers as the main part of explicit teaching of the strategies through which the learners' comprehension skill is developed due to the learners' control over the process. In contrast, he pointed learning strategies as some controlled techniques by teachers to guide student reading. It was also noted that the intentionality and directness nature of the explicit strategy teaching result in better control of comprehension by the students due to the provided clear and non-ambivalent information about how strategies work (Duffy, 2002).

Regarding the presented suggestions to strategy trainers, Pressley, Borkowski, and O'Sullivan (1984) noted that the maintenance and transfer of strategies to new contexts or tasks are not fulfilled only by blind training procedures by teachers. Based on their arguments, it is obvious that students show high enthusiasm to maintain and transfer the strategies to new tasks if they are provided with the information on the usefulness of the strategy for accomplishing the task or helping them to achieve their goals. In other words, without giving them specific information about the value of strategy instruction, they are not motivated to follow such approach to move on toward their main purpose of language learning (Pressley, Borkowski, & O'Sullivan, 1984). As, Pintrich (1989)

defined three different components of motivation which have especial relationship with the degree of strategy use by EFL learners. The first component has been defined as expectancy in which the learners' beliefs about their ability to perform a task are targeted. The latter one includes students' goals for the task as well as their beliefs about the importance, utility, and interest of the task which is called value component of motivation. The third component has been devoted to the students' emotional reactions to the task targeted as the affective component. Pressley, Borkowski, and O'Sullivan (1984) meant by explicit strategy instruction as increasing the learners metacognitive knowledge in which the what, why, and how of strategy use is clearly presented to the learners which ultimately result in the maintenance and transfer of strategies to other contexts and tasks.

Another suggestion was made by Chamot et al. (1999) suggested EFL teachers to follow strategy instruction initially in the students' first language and then go further by using simple target language to explain the why and how of employing such approach. The last recommended stage is modeling the strategies repeatedly by teachers.

Following the previous recommendations, Macaro's (2001) study regarding the appropriate time of providing EFL learners with strategy-based instruction indicated that beginning level students were unable to understand the why and how to use learning strategies due to their lack of enough L2 proficiency; on the other hand, it was argued that depriving beginners of learning strategies instruction can prevent their language learning enhancement and motivation for further study. Thus, the recommended solution was using first language during strategy training course for beginners in order to make them understood about the process (Macaro, 2001).

In general manner, multiple kinds of strategies have been offered by researchers which should be considered by teachers about the way of conducting strategy training (Wenden and Rubin, 1987). The first strategy proposed by Oxford et al. (1990) is taking into account affective issues such as motivation, beliefs and attitudes; the second one is conducting strategy training by their own rather than referencing the learners to the works done by outside researchers, and also teachers need to be fully trained in terms of strategy training before conducting it (Chamot & Kupper, 1989); next, Wenden (1987) and Oxford (1990) emphasized the importance of integrating strategy training within

regular language instruction over a long duration; Oxford (1990) also recommended teachers to provide complete strategy training in such a way that learners learn the *why* and *how* of strategy usage. Finally, a clear sequence of steps such as identifying and assessing students' current strategies, preparing students for strategy instruction, providing formal strategy instruction (explanation, modeling, practice and integration) and evaluating the success of the instruction have been suggested by O'Malley and Chamot (1990).

Particularly, knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition are two main components necessary for reading strategy instruction, which was identified by Block (1992). The first component related to the type, time, and way of employing strategy. The second one covers the monitoring, planning, and transferring processes; nonetheless, monitoring strategy in terms of problem identification and problem solving was identified as major characteristic of metacognitive strategy use. Generally, the author characterized monitoring in comprehension in three phases: evaluation, action, and checking.

In a similar approach, Sarig (1987) has broken down strategy use in four main groups through working in reading in a second. The first group involves skimming, marking the text, using context, recognizing cognates, and consulting glossaries. These strategies are the subcategories of technical aids. Clarification and simplification have been considered as the second group under which paraphrasing, identifying the grammatical category of words, using inference, and syntactic simplification are done. Keeping the meaning of the passage in mind, using prior knowledge, identifying text structure, anticipating context, discriminating main and subsidiary propositions are encompassed by coherence detection as the third group. Finally, the author introduced monitoring as the last group in which the activities such as consciously changing the plan, varying reading speed, and stating failure to understand a word or clause are fulfilled.

In the case of teaching listening, Mendelson (1994) presented a strategy-based approach in which a good balance of bottom-up and top-down listening strategies were built. Such approach should be applied by teachers in a flexible way to design a

framework for listening instruction that is applied in different kinds of contexts and tasks by learners.

2.2. Empirical Findings

Some scholars discovered the effect of learning strategies on language learners' learning process. For instance, Akbari and Hosseini (2008) investigated a positive correlation between the use of language learning strategies by EFL learners and their multiple intelligences' scores. Likewise, the study of Cohen, Weaver and Li (1996), proved that strategy-based instruction caused significant difference in both the students' degree of performing the taught strategies and the quality of their performance. In addition, Naughton (2006) explored the positive effect of strategy training on language learners' encouragement to engage in those interactions deemed important for language acquisition as identified within both traditional second language acquisition (SLA) and sociocultural research.

Discussing specific condition of following learning strategies, Politzer (1983) explored that the selection of learning strategies by better and more proficient language learners depended on some factors such as their own stage and purpose of learning the language, personality, age, and type of language.

In an extended manner, Oxford (1989) highlighted several necessary factors on which the EFL students' choice of learning strategies is depended. The first and the most important factor is motivation; the more the students are motivated, the more strategies are applied by them. Greater strategy use by females than males was considered as gender factor. The author expressed that students from different countries with different cultural background make use of different types of strategies, which has been named as cultural background. Type of task is another factor under which the strategies are applied based on the nature and purpose of specific tasks. As one other factor, age and the level of proficiency of the learners affects the strategy use in terms of its simplicity or sophistication. Learning style is one more factor through which the students with different learning styles such as analytic style, globally-oriented, and visual styles make use of different types of strategies; however, it is not the case for always. Sometimes students may apply new strategies in spite of its irrelevance to their learning styles.

Specifying one of the required factors in choosing learning strategies, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) found motivation as an important factor in choosing specific kinds of strategies by the language learners and their active involvement in language learning through frequently reflecting on the usefulness of strategy use. Such factor is highly affected by the types of practices to be taught and tested, peer-interaction, overall task requirements, and the institutional environment. In addition, the most variety of the strategies was used by the most motivated learners. One more factor also influenced the selection of language learning strategies is carrier orientation through which learners with different career interests seemed to choose different strategies.

Again, in the area of discussing the role of motivation, Wenden (1987) found that additional strategy training was much successful only in the case of extra language exposure by motivated learners. Students showed positive reactions toward the project of applying strategy training (Yang, 1998). The students initially were taught the learning strategies by the teacher so that the self-direction of the teacher was expanded in this manner. The author explored the advantages of employing strategy training approach as it can lead to raise students' awareness of language learning strategies, the way of assessing their own language proficiency, improve students' use of strategies, help them to set goals, evaluate the process, and finally enable them to become autonomous learners; therefore, the instructor put much effort on facilitating the structure, process, beliefs and strategies necessary for learner autonomy to become a reality.

Considering the relationship between different types of strategies and components of motivation, Pintrich and De Groot (1990) found that applying cognitive strategies such as rehearsal and elaboration, and metacognitive strategies such as planning and monitoring was highly influenced by the expectancy and value components of motivation in EFL college students; whereas a negative relationship between the mentioned strategies and the affective component was concluded by the authors (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). The author also witnessed most cognitively engagement to the course work and attempt to control own thoughts and learning process by those students who were more confident in their ability (i.e. have stronger self-efficacy beliefs. Generally, all kinds of learning strategies were employed by the learners with both expectancy and value components of motivation in the case of finding the course

material interesting and valuable. Yet, the affective component of motivation stopped the learners from persisting at their course work and using cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

In contrast to the positive effective factors in learning strategies, Oxford (1992) identified some problems based on which strategy training may seem to have little effect. Such problems include the short length of strategy training period, the training task inappropriateness in terms of its easiness or difficulty, lack of attention to affective and social strategies that are potentially important to language learning, not incorporating the strategy training into normal language class work, and not assessing properly the learners' current strategy use, learning styles, and needs before starting the strategy training.

Considering the application of different types of learning strategies by language learners, Mullins (1992) found that Thai university EFL students mostly made use of compensation, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies at the first level and then preferred using social, memory, and affective strategies in their language learning process. Another finding of this study was the positive correlation between the proficiency level of the learners and employment of compensation and metacognitive strategies.

Similarly, The language learners' ability to promote their language proficiency, transfer the instructed strategies to other tasks, and retain them for longer time was increased through providing them with the combination of cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Brown & Palincsar, 1982).

Characterizing different types of learning strategies, Oxford and Ehrman (1995) discovered an arrangement of different categories of learning strategies based on their frequency of use. They put compensation strategy in the first place, followed immediately by social strategies and by cognitive strategies. Metacognitive, memory, and affective strategies have put in further places respectively. Among these categories, the use of cognitive strategies was the only category resulted in significant increase in the learners' end-of-training language proficiency through engaging in activities such as using formulas, recombining, practicing authentically, skimming, scanning, using references, taking notes, summarizing, repeating, analyzing, looking for patterns, and

adjusting understanding in light of new information. It is also worth mentioning that high-aptitude learners, with the purpose of persisting in language learning, made use of different types of strategies rather than just relying only on one type of learning strategy until they achieved a goal.

Regarding different levels in which learning strategies were applied, Griffiths (2003) found that higher level students employed learning strategies in much higher degree than the low level ones. In addition, some additional types of strategies were identified which were applied by all students frequently; strategies relating to vocabulary, reading, language system, tolerance of ambiguity, management of feelings and learning, utilization of available resources, and interaction with others.

Similarly, Takeuchi (2003) found that as the learners progressed to higher L2 proficiency level, their use of strategies was shifted. In other words, some degree of adaptation of the perceived difficulty of the task to the use of learning strategies was observed by the author.

To clarify the most applied strategies, Rubin (1975) found looking for practice opportunities, guessing meanings, using patterns, treating the language as a rule system, and communicating often in the language as the most tended strategies by successful learners. She also pointed out that effective language learners do not limit their learning process to only one type of strategy pattern. As Oxford (1990) stated that successful learners match their applied strategies to their own learning style and purpose of language learning; therefore, they develop combinations of strategies to fulfill their individual needs and requirements.

In addition, Ehrman and Oxford (1995) found a specific frequency order of strategy use among 262 English native-speaker government employees studying different foreign languages at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute. Compensation, social, cognitive, metacognitive, memory, and affective strategies were employed by the participants respectively from the most frequent use to the least. Among the mentioned strategies, applying compensation strategy depended on the learners' level of proficiency.

Likewise, Green and Oxford (1995) reported that the more proficient were those learners among whom the more degree of cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, and

social strategies were applied. In addition, the usage degree of memory, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies was more often among females than males.

Another type of strategy use order was found in the Ku's (1997) study in which the most frequently used strategy was compensation strategies followed by cognitive, metacognitive, memory, social, and affective strategies respectively. The author also found two groups as the most strategy users; females and more proficient learners.

Same as the previous findings, the highest frequency use of strategies was attributed to compensation and metacognitive strategies by Bremner (1999), while affective and memory strategies were found as the least frequent ones. It was also found that the most strategy users were the students with high level of proficiency.

Considering the appropriate way of teaching strategies, a seven-phase explicit strategy instruction was advised by Mendelsohn (1994). The advised phases are defining strategy by teachers, modeling the appropriate way of using strategies, guiding students in practicing the strategies, providing learners with appropriate feedback, providing opportunities for practice, helping learners to evaluate the usefulness of their strategy use, and finally making learners to apply strategies in authentic tasks.

In a similar approach, Chamot (1990) characterized the differences between two types of strategy instruction; embedded and direct strategy training. Through embedded instruction, the students are guided to fulfill only those activities required using specific types of strategies. Based on the author's claim, such kind of strategy instruction does not lead the learners to transfer the learned strategies to different contexts. On the other hand, in direct instruction, the students are informed about the usefulness and the appropriate way of applying strategies both in classroom context and outside that particular lesson. Being able to transfer the instructed strategies to other tasks and contexts is the main advantage of direct strategy instruction which consequently lead to strategy maintenance for long time. Therefore, a remarkable distinguishable point between these two kinds of strategy training is making the students able to transfer and generalize the strategies to different contexts.

What's more, Ikeda and Takeuchi (2003) concluded that the students with high proficiency level showed higher frequency of strategy use by involving in strategy-based instruction. The main reason of this fact was the implementation of top-down

processing strategies rather than bottom-up ones through which the low proficiency group of learners could be successful and show improvement. An encouraging finding was that the students' use of learning strategies was retained over time even after the completion of strategy instruction through applying top-down processing strategies.

Discussing the influence of learning strategies on different language skills, teaching language learning strategies to EFL learners had several findings presented by O'Malley and Chamot (1990). The first result was the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary learning strategies only in those students who had not already developed alternative effective strategies. The second result was listening comprehension improvement with the condition of working with accessible texts, considering the students' prior knowledge, and choosing texts not beyond the students' level of proficiency. Another result related to the students' improvement in presenting their oral reports which were comprehensive and well organized. Finally, the authors concluded that outcome of teaching the strategies explicitly was significantly successful.

To narrow down the affected skills, a comparison between the ability of Arabic and Mandarin ESL learners in making use of different reading strategies was done by Abbot (2006). The results indicated that the Mandarin ESL learners highly benefited from breaking a word into smaller parts, scanning, paraphrasing, and matching strategies; while, the Arabic ESL learners mostly made use of skimming, connecting, and inferring strategies. Similarly, Diaz and Laguado (2013) and Ulmi, Sundari and Sukmaantara (2015) found that the use of scanning and skimming techniques contributed to enhancing language learners reading comprehension.

Taking different types of strategies into account, Tang and Moore (1992) also found the difference between the outcome of teaching cognitive and metacognitive strategies during reading task. The main difference was the degree of performance maintenance beyond the end of the treatment which was highly evident in the metacognitive-based strategy instruction (self-monitoring strategies); while the performance gains of the learners instructed through cognitive strategy (title discussion, pre-teaching vocabulary) were not maintained.

In addition, Akyel and Ercetin (2009) concluded that the degree of prior knowledge would influence the EFL learners' applied strategies in comprehending a

text in a sense that the students with high prior knowledge use certain cognitive and metacognitive strategies in high degree; whereas, making use of provided annotations and navigating through the text in order to comprehend it was highly evident among the learners with low prior knowledge.

Dhieb-Henia (2003) also found the positive effect of teaching strategy use to advanced level EFL science students on their reading research articles in their specialty area. The students taught through strategy training in a variety of reading styles were able to operate their learned strategies in different contexts in real-life constraints. The results of this study also emphasized that usefulness of strategy training necessitated choosing appropriate reading materials in terms of content and length, setting time limits for reading tasks, and the need to focus on the reading process.

Alongside the previous studies, Barnett (1988) explored the positive effect of the learners' perception about using a certain strategy and recognition of context on their comprehension improvement. In the final analysis, it was indicated that even those students with the negative perception of strategy use, showed a significant improvement in reading through context by engaging in strategy use instruction.

Equally, Kern (1989) found the positive effect of reading strategy instruction on the language learners' comprehension scores. The author expressed that through involving the learners in such kind of instruction, their ability to infer the meanings of unknown words from context was developed.

Discussing learners' perspectives on improving speaking skill through strategy training, Yang (1999) investigated that the use of all types of learning strategies, especially functional practice strategies, depended highly on the students' self-efficacy beliefs about learning English. In addition, employing formal oral-practice strategies by the students was determined by their beliefs about the value and nature of learning spoken. In such manner, the instructors had to attend to the students' beliefs about second language learning at first, and then go on fulfilling the strategy training programs.

Likewise, the findings of Nakatani's (2005) study revealed a significant improvement in the oral proficiency of those students instructed through strategy training approach. The author observed that through applying such approach, the

students' awareness of oral communication strategies was raised in such a way that they made use of specific oral communication strategies (i.e. maintenance of fluency and negotiation of meaning) to solve their interactional difficulties.

Such like, Dornyei (1995) showed that communication strategies are teachable through focused instruction. S/he also investigated the positive effect of teaching communication strategies on the learners' fluency in a sense that less fluent learners can benefit from using time-gaining filters to become more fluent in their communication skill.

Correspondingly, Imhof (2001) reported a study in which the communication skill of the learners in general and their listening skill in particular were improved through employing a strategy-based instruction in three phases: attention management, asking pre-question, and elaboration. The learners adapted the strategies to their personal needs over time, paid more attention to the process, comprehended the materials in better way, involved in deeper level of processing, and became able to do more reflective assessment.

Considering the importance of listening strategies, Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco (1978) demonstrated the high degree of strategy use by successful learners. They also stated that since having the ability to comprehend oral input is the prerequisite of being communicatively competent, the listening strategies need to be actively chosen, used, and evaluated by language listeners to construct meaning from the oral input successfully. Therefore, the successful learners made use of frequently strategy use in order to become communicatively competent.

It is noteworthy that Osada (2001) ignored overemphasis on bottom-up strategy mostly applied by the Japanese students of English during listening skill. Based on his, the main reason of lack of success in the students was their tending to adopt a mental translation approach to listening. He argued that such procedure prevented the learners from constructing meaning due to processing connected speech on a word-by-word basis; therefore, he took top-down approach as the most effective way of giving the learners the constraints of working memory.

To confirm the previous studies, O'Malley, Chamot, and Kupper (1989) showed bright evidence of applying cognitive strategies by language learners in their listening

task through following several stages includes elaborating, inferencing, predicting, listening to the known (cognates, transfer, grammar), and visualization (when input is auditory only). Furthermore, the learners benefited from open and flexible use of strategies and self-monitoring which were done under metacognitive operations.

Rubin (1994) also proved that the learners' language proficiency, task definition, and background knowledge had significant role in determining the effectiveness of strategy use in listening task.

Similarly, Vandergrift (2002) found that the students' improvement in listening comprehension was highly influenced by the strategy-based approach in which their metacognitive awareness was raised. Applying different strategies such as prediction, monitoring, problem solving, and evaluation resulted in the learners' self-regulation in listening was the bright evident of making use of metacognitive strategies. The author explored two different groups of learners' high interest (elementary school students and university students of French) in welcoming such approach as it provided them with authentic texts. The result was surprising as the two groups targeted same advantages by engaging in strategy-based approach such as their prediction skill enhancement, collaborating with others through monitoring procedure, and importantly building their self-confidence by become enough able to comprehend oral texts.

Moreover, Rubin (1990) found that the students taught through strategy-based instruction showed significant improvement in their video listening comprehension. Thompson and Rubin's (1996) also proved that to help language learners to comprehend oral input, the effective way was providing them with both strategy training and use. Through applying metacognitive and cognitive listening strategies, the ability of the students to comprehend video text was improved due to their increased ability in managing the appropriate way of listening to the oral input (the how of completing such process). The last conclusion of the authors was the improvement of the learners' ability to comprehend oral input by engaging them in systematic listening strategy instruction.

Besides, Thompson and Rubin (1996) conducted a study in which the listening comprehension of the learners was targeted as well. The authors witnessed a significant improvement on a video comprehension by the strategy-instructed students. The main

reason of these students' success was their ability to select and manage the strategies which was bright evident of their metacognitive awareness.

Identically, discrete and video listening ability and note-taking ability of the students instructed by listening strategies were developed over time (Carrier, 2003). The results of this study showed that the students highly benefited from explicit listening strategy instruction provided by the teacher.

Aforementioned, Ozeki (2000) found that the strategy-instructed EFL college students demonstrated a significant improvement in their listening comprehension ability; positive reactions towards strategy training such that the degree of their learning strategy use increased, employed the strategies in different contexts or tasks, and went on following strategy use even after the completion of strategy instruction.

Regarding another language skill, Cohen (1998) indicated that despite the complex relationship of reported strategy use to the learners' performance, the integration of strategy instruction into the language course was beneficial to the students as their speaking skill was improved through strategy-based instruction.

On the other hand, significant gains in the grammatical accuracy of writing skill was observed by Macaro (2001) through engaging students in different types of strategies such as preparation, monitoring, and evaluating which are the subcategories of metacognitive strategy. Other advantages of engaging the students in such process were reported as changing in their approach to writing, becoming autonomous learners by decreasing their reliance on the teacher, using dictionary in a more selective way, and paying more attention to their written work.

2.3. Summary

As the main concern of most of the scholars in the field of language learning is improving the teaching system of institutions, most of the reviewed literatures tried to present the most effective way of achieving such goal. The recommended approach is strategy training. The reviewed related literature mostly highlighted the high usefulness of employing strategy training in language classrooms. In addition, the role of different factors in determining the efficiency and inefficiency of such approach has been characterized. To prove such claims, the empirical findings confirmed that almost about

most of the students showed high degree of improvement in their language proficiency. Particularly, the development of different language skills under the influence of each specific type of learning strategies has been made clear. Yet, all of the mentioned arguments and findings were from researchers' point of view without asking for any teacher's idea about the implementing of strategy training into their teaching courses. Therefore, here in this study we elaborated on the teachers' perspectives on the effectiveness of strategy training and also their suggestions to make such approach better.

Chapter Three:

Methodology

This chapter introduces the research methodology used for this study and how it has guided data collection, analysis and theory development of the study. Firstly, necessary background and fundamental guidelines common in different approaches to grounded theory methodology are provided. Subsequently, the process of data collection, analysis and theory development phases of this study are described. Lastly, the design of the present study is presented.

3.1. General Overview

Grounded theory is one type of qualitative designs which is commonly utilized for studies in the fields of human and social sciences. The emphasis on theory development is the sharp distinction between grounded theory design and those others. Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, the initiators of this method, believed that theory could be developed through qualitative data analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In the following quote, they concisely defined when it is appropriate to use grounded theory to conduct a research:

"If someone wanted to know whether one drug is more effective than another, then a double blind clinical trial would be more appropriate than grounded theory study. However, if someone wanted to know what it was like to be a participant in a drug study [...], then he or she might sensibly engage in a grounded theory project or some other type of qualitative study." (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 40).

Similarly, Briks and Mills (2011) asserted that “ grounded theory results in the generation of new knowledge in the form of theory, therefore area where little is known about a particular topic are most deserving of research effort”(p.16). They added that grounded theory is indicated when:

1. Little is known about the area of study
2. The generation of the theory with explanatory power is a desired outcome.
3. An inherent process is imbedded in the research situation that is likely to be explicated by grounded theory methods (Briks& Mills, 2011, p. 16).

Additionally, Charmaz (2012) identifies certain distinctive features of grounded theory, which distinguish it from other forms of qualitative analysis. These distinctive features are as follows:

1. Provides explicit tools for studying processes.
2. Promotes an openness to all possible theoretical understandings
3. Fosters developing tentative interpretations about the data through coding and categorizing
4. Builds systemic checks and refinements of the researchers' major theoretical categories. (P. 3-4).

Moreover, Charmaz (2012) claims that, “grounded theory gives you tools to answer “why” questions from an interpretive stance” (p. 4). He argues that there are a number of strategies to conduct a grounded theory research, which consists of:

“Coding data from the start of data collection, using comparative methods, writing memos, and conducting theoretical sampling to fill out your emergent theoretical categories and make them robust. Grounded theory involves using comparative methods at all levels of analysis. Thus, grounded theorists compare data with data, data with codes, codes with codes, codes with categories, and their finished analyses with relevant theoretical and research literatures.”

3.1.1. Origin of Grounded Theory

Grounded theory stems from symbolic interactionism, which itself is rooted in pragmatism ideas of James Dewey, Cooley and Mead (Hammersley, 1989). The methodology of grounded theory was originally developed in the 1960s in the United States by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the fields of health and nursing studies.’ The discovery of Grounded Theory’, the influential book by Glaser and Strauss, presents authors’ techniques for studies of patients dying in hospital. However, in later years the two authors developed two distinct schools of thought, the Glaserian approach and the straussian approach.

The Glaserian approach better known as the orthodox grounded theory is based on the writings of Barney Glaser and the Straussian approach is based on Strauss and his colleague Juliet Corbin that differ in important ways (Dey, 1999; Melia, 1996; Stern, 1994). Gerrish and Lacey(2010) recognized these differences in the ‘research topic’, ‘coding and categorizing’, ‘verification’ and ‘the process of generating theory’ (p. 162).

3.1.2. Objectivist and Constructivist Approaches to GTM

There are two main approaches to grounded theory method namely, objectivist approach and constructivist approach. Charmaz (2006) claimed that objectivist grounded theory is rooted in positivist qualitative research which consists of “objective systematic observation and experimentation in an external world” with the aim of discovering and establishing general rules to explain the phenomenon under study in order to make predictions (p.188). Thus, the Objectivist “attends to data as real in and of themselves and does not attend to the process of their production”; consequently, the impact of the context in which the data emerges and the role of the researchers and often participants of the research are eliminated (Charmaz, 2006, p. 131). Similarly, Bryant (2003) and Charmaz (2000) referred to the passive role of the investigator in objectivist and positivist paradigm, which contributes to the emergence of data. In the same line, Holstein and Gubrium (2008) asserted:

“Objectivist versions of grounded theory assume a single reality that a passive, neutral observer discovers through value free inquiry. Assumptions of objectivity and naturalness make data selection, collection, and representation unproblematic; they become givens rather than constructions that occur during the research process, and they shape its outcome...objectivists assume that data are self-evident and speak for themselves. Possibilities of partial, limited or missing data and multiple readings of them remain unseen” (p. 402).

On the contrary, Constructivist grounded theory methodology advocated by Kathy Charmaz emphasizes on the participants own experience and their view of reality. It highlights the subjective role of the investigator and his/her relationship with

participants and how they collaborate to construct meaning. In this approach, the researcher is not just an objective observer, but part of the research process. This approach to grounded theory puts emphasis on how a phenomenon took place and how participants of an inquiry constructed an experience (Charmaz, 2006). She further explains, “Constructivists enter the phenomenon, gain multiple view of it, and locate it in its web of connections and constraints” (Charmaz, 2006, P.187).

Inductive, comparative, open ended approach of Strauss and Glaser, iterative logic of Strauss and dual emphasis on action and meaning involved in pragmatism are those features adopted by constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz,2014). Charmaz (2014) also added that “the constructivist approach treats research as a construction, but acknowledges that it occurs under specific conditions of which we may not be aware and which may not be of our choosing” (p. 13). In the same line, Holstein and Gubrium (2008) explain:

“Rather than assuming that theory emerges from data, constructionists assume that researchers construct categories of the data. Instead of aiming to achieve parsimonious explanations and generalizations devoid of context, constructionists aim for an interpretive understanding of the studied phenomenon that account for context. As opposed to giving priority to the researchers view, constructionists see participants view and voices as integral to the analysis- and its presentation”(p. 402).

3.2. Sampling Procedure and Participants

The main concern of grounded theory is constructing a theory rather than testing it. Thus, in contrast to hypothesis testing researches, grounded theory sample size cannot be determined in advance (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Likewise, Glaser and Strauss (1967) define theoretical sampling as a process of data collection in which the researcher collects, codes and analyses the data simultaneously in order to determine where and how to collect data in order to develop category. Likewise, Charmaz (2012) explains that theoretical sampling is “sampling for development of a theoretical

category, not sampling for population representation.” In the same line, Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) explain:

“Theoretical saturation and theoretical sampling are used together to determine sample size. You use theoretical sampling to select new research participants who are like to refine your theory. You stop sampling when you have reached theoretical saturation and there is no more to be learned” (p. 20).

Moreover, Strauss and Corbin (1998) identified theoretical sampling as a means to “maximize opportunities to discover variations among concepts and to densify categories in terms of their properties and dimensions” (p.201). Indeed, Charmaz (2006) has similarly explained theoretical sampling as a means for:

“Seeking pertinent data to develop your emerging theory. The main purpose of theoretical sampling is to elaborate and refine the categories constituting your theory. You conduct theoretical sampling by sampling to develop the properties of your category (IEs) until no new properties emerge” (p. 96).

Charmaz (2006) distinguishes the difference between initial sampling and theoretical sampling by explaining that “initial sampling in grounded theory is where you start, whereas theoretical sampling is where you go” (p. 100). Further, she explains:

“For initial sampling you establish sampling criteria for people, cases, situations, and settings before you enter the field” while “theoretical sampling pertains only to conceptual and theoretical development; it is not about representing a population or increasing the statistical generalizability of your results” (p. 101)

3.3. Data Collection

One of the most important parts of a research study is the determination of the ways in which the data will be collected in order to meet the research objectives. Martin and Gynnild (2011) identify the major types of data collection sources as:

“Interviews of participants (internet based or mailed surveys, individual interviews, telephone or I: I interview schedules, focus group method); observations (from observer only to full participation in the phenomenon being studied); as well as other written, oral or video resources (documents, chart reviews, library and web based resources, and archival materials)”(p.117).

Grounded theory research studies share some similarities with other qualitative researches one of which is the data collection sources. The data can be gathered through interviews, field observations, documents of all kinds (including diaries, letters, autobiographies, historical accounts, and newspapers and other media materials) and videotapes. Strauss and Corbin (1990) argue that “the data collection procedures involve interviews and observations as well as such other sources as government documents, videotapes, newspapers, letters, and books- anything that may shed light on questions under study”(p. 5). Furthermore, grounded theory can also make use of quantitative data or make a mixture of both (Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

“All is data” is the well-known statement produced by Glaser in the book “the grounded theory perspective” (Glaser, 2001). The statement means:

"Exactly what is going on in the research scene is the data, whatever the source, whether interview, observations, documents, in whatever combination. It is not only what is being told, how it is being told and the conditions of its being told, but also all the data surrounding what is being told. It means what is going on must be figured out exactly what it is to be used for, that is conceptualization, not for accurate description. Data is always as good as far as it goes, and there is always more data to keep correcting the categories with more relevant properties" (p. 145).

3.3.1. Interview

Interviewing is one type of data collection technique. Interviews are conducted in order to give the researcher the chance to answer the research question; therefore, the relationship between research question and the interview is of great importance. Patton (2002) claims that the sequencing of questions is important and proposes to begin the interview primarily with non-controversial questions that are less complex to answer. Kvale (1996) refers to the importance of translating the research questions into “an easy-going colloquial form to generate spontaneous and rich descriptions” (p. 130). However, in grounded theory research study it may be difficult since the initial research question is not clear enough. Therefore, in this theory the early interviews are of a more open-ended nature which gradually becoming more specific when the substantive theories emerge.

Johnson and Christensen (2004) and Patton (2002) identified three types of interviewing including: 1) The informal conversational interview, 2) The general guide approach, and 3) The standardized open-ended interview. Furthermore, Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010) divided interviews into two subcategories: structured interviews and semi-structured or unstructured interviews. They explained structured interviews as one in which the researcher provides a set of questions which are similar for all the participants involved and the researcher do not deviate from those questions. However, qualitative researches are generally flexible and the researcher can make use of either the semi-structured or unstructured interviews (Lodico, Spaulding &Voegtle, 2010).

According to Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010), semi-structured interviews are mostly planned in advance. The researcher makes a list of questions or topics throughout the process of interviewing with all participants. This type of interview is called semi-structured since throughout the process of interviewing the researcher is allowed to omit the questions, change the order of questions or even vary the wording of them. In contrast, unstructured interviews are more conversation like and are more flexible than other types. The researcher simply provides a list of topics and open-ended questions to cover throughout the interview. The interviewee is the director of the interview and the researcher just add additional questions to reach more details about the topic and redirect the flow of the interview.

3.3.1.1. Focus Groups

Briks and Mills (2010) explained focus group as the extended form of interviewing in which the participants are more than one individual person who engages in a discussion and the researcher act as the leader.

3.4. Data Analysis

3.4.1. Theoretical Sensitivity

Theoretical sensitivity is the key concept of grounded theory which Glaser (1992) refers to as “an ability to generate concepts from data and relate them to the normal models of theory in general” (p. 31). Similarly, Gibson and Hartman (2014) state that “theoretical sensitivity is about being able to describe what theory is, know how to construct it and appreciate how it varies”(p.106).Glaser (2004) also mentions that the researchers are required to enter the research setting with few or no predetermined ideas as the first step to gain theoretical sensitivity. Additionally, she identified two crucial characteristics for researchers in order to develop theoretical sensitivity, the two characteristics are:

“First, he or she must have the personal and temperamental bent to maintain analytic distance, tolerate confusion and regression while remaining open, trusting to preconscious processing and to conceptual emergence. Second, he/she must have the ability to develop theoretical insight into the area of research combined with the ability to make something of these insights. He/she must have the ability to conceptualize and organize, make abstract connections, visualize and think multivariately” (Glaser, 2004, p.11).

The central concept of theoretical sensitivity is the notion that data analysis is data driven, that is, no category emerges until it “earns its way” into a theory (Glaser, 2002). Moreover, Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao claim, “Underlying theoretical saturation is the notion of theoretical sensitivity” (2004, p. 1122).They explain that:

“Some categories that are almost always included in a study, such as gender cannot assume a place in the study until data analysis reveals that

the constructs demands to be included. Once this constructs have appeared, sampling must continue until they are saturated” (p. 1122).

3.4.2. Theoretical Coding

Grounded theory uses several techniques for coding the data gathered. Charmaz (2006) explains, “Coding is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain these data. Through coding, you define what is happening in the data and begin to grapple with what it means” (p. 46). Glaser (1978) reminds the researcher to follow the following questions throughout the coding process:

- 1) What is this data a study of?
- 2) What category does this incident indicate?
- 3) What is actually happening in the data?
- 4) “What is the main concern being faced by the participants?” and
- 5) “What accounts for the continual resolving of this concern?”

(Glaser, 2004, p. 13).

The first stage in analyzing data is *open coding* also known as *line-by-line coding*, which aims at coding various incidents into as many categories as they fit (Glaser, 1978). Glaser (2004) explains:

“Open coding occurs prior to the establishment of a core variable [also known as a core category] while selective coding begins after the analyst has established a core variable and codes only in relation to those variables that relate to the core variable. Open coding allows the analyst to see the direction in which to take the study by theoretical sampling (p. 13)”.

Subsequently axial coding is used as the next step for data coding. Strauss and Corbin defined axial coding as “the act of relating categories to subcategories along the lines of their properties and dimensions” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 123). Axial coding aims at adding depth and structure to existing categories. Charmaz (2006) argues that the aim of axial coding is to reassemble the data broken into codes in open coding phase. Goulding (2002) defines axial coding as “moving to a higher level of abstraction and is achieved by specifying relationships and delineating a core category or construct

around which the other concepts revolve. Axial coding is the appreciation of concepts in terms of their dynamic interrelationships” (p. 78).

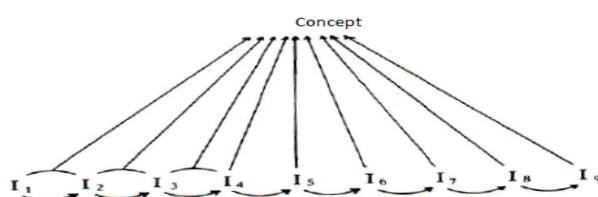
Focused coding also known as selective coding, is the next coding phase, which is more abstract than open coding. Focused codes are applied to several lines or paragraphs in a transcript and require the researcher to choose the most telling codes to represent the interviewee’s voice. Using open codes as a starting point, the process of focused coding helps to verify the adequacy of the initial concepts developed. The focused codes will be applied and therefore 'tested' on further interview, transcripts. Charmaz (2006) explains that GTM coding consists of two main phases:

“1) An initial phase involving naming each word, line or segment of the data followed by 2) a focused, selective phase that uses the most significant or frequent initial coding, you mine early data for analytic ideas to pursue in further data collection and analysis. Initial coding entails a close reading of the data. During initial coding, the purpose is to remain open to all possible theoretical directions indicated by your readings of data. Later you use focused coding to pinpoint and develop the most salient categories in large batches of data. Theoretical integration begins with focused coding and proceeds through all your subsequent analytic steps” (p. 46).

3.4.3. Constant Comparative Method

The Constant comparative method is a data-analytic process whereby any newly collected data is compared with previous data, which was collected earlier in order to find the similarities and differences. Seale (1999) refers to constant comparative as a tool for “developing and refining theoretical categories and their properties” (p. 96). He identifies constant comparison as a four-step process. In the first step of constant comparison, the incidents in data are analyzed and coded in order to form categories so that the categories can be compared. In the second step, the emerged categories and their properties are integrated. In the third step, the theoretical saturation takes place, that is, no new interactions between categories occurs and no new properties of the categories emerge. Lastly, the theory is developed (Seale, 1999).

Bryant and Charmaz (2007) state that “theoretical saturation is achieved through constant comparison of incidents (indicators) in the data to elicit the properties and dimensions of each category (code)” (p.265). Glaser and Strauss (1967), Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Strauss (1987) developed an analyzing model called concept indicator model which indicates the conceptual coding of empirical indicators. The model indicates how the behavioral actions and incidents observed in the words of the informants or documents serve as the empirical indicators of a concept, which is derived by the researcher.



(Glaser, 1978, p. 62).

Figure.3.1. Concept-indicator diagram

3.4.4. Theoretical Saturation

Theoretical saturation refers to one phase of qualitative data analysis in which the researcher continues sampling and analyzing data until he/she find that no more additional data is needed and all concepts in the theory are well-developed. In grounded theory, theoretical saturation occurs as a result of the iterative process of data collection and data analysis and when reached, it signals the end of data collection. Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao (2004) explained theoretical saturation as:

The phase of qualitative data analysis in which the researcher has continued sampling and analyzing data until no new data appear and all concepts in the theory are well-developed. Concepts and linkages between the concepts that form the theory have been verified, and no additional data are needed. No aspects of the theory remain hypothetical (p. 1122).

3.4.5. Developing Categories

After coding interviews transcripts, the researcher can identify several many important issues also known as phenomena and assign them a conceptual label to become a code also known as concept by Strauss and Corbin (1998). There are two ways to name the codes established. When the analyst uses the interviewees' own word for naming a code the code is known as "in-vivo" code (Glaser, 1978); On the contrary, theoretical codes are those codes developed by analyst according to his/her knowledge on substantive area. Those concepts and codes that share similar characteristics can be pulled together into more abstract categories, which can be interlinked and build the basis for a theory (figure. 3.1). These categories should 'earn' their way into an emerging theory (Glaser, 1978).

3.4.6. Developing Core Category

The core or central category is the category, which is the heart of the developed theory and gives a summary of what is happening. All other categories should be related to the core category. In the process of theory development, core category is the final stage to be conducted. According to Goulding (2002) "through the process of coding and abstraction the data are finally subsumed into a higher order or core category which the researcher has to justify as the basis for the emergent theory. The core category pulls together all the strands in order to offer an explanation of the behavior under study" (p. 88).

3.4.6. Theoretical Memoing

Memos are a set of notes that enables the researcher to reflect on the interviews and record his/her thinking processes. It is an ongoing activity, which supports the process of coding and developing categories. Charmaz (2012) identifies memo writing as "the intermediate step between coding and writing the first draft of your manuscript" (p. 9). Glaser (1978) states that memoing is "the bedrock of theory writing, its true product is the writing of theoretical memos. If the analyst skips this stage by going directly from coding or sorting to write – he is not doing grounded theory" (p. 83). Further, Glaser (2004) asserts "memo writing is a continual process that leads naturally to abstraction or ideation" (p. 18).

3.5. Credibility

Credibility of qualitative studies refers to the trustworthiness of the findings. A number of methods have been identified in literature for enhancing the credibility or in other words the internal validity of qualitative researches. According to Riazi (2016):

Credibility “is the qualitative counterpart of internal validity in quantitative research. It refers to the accuracy and truthfulness of the research findings and answers the question of how the researcher has confidently established the findings through the design, analysis, and interpretation of the study and its data... evidence for credibility can be provided by the researcher through data, method, and investigator triangulation”(p.68).

3.5.1. Triangulation

Triangulation refers to the convergence of findings through divergent sources of data (interviews, observations, and documents). Ary et.al. (2013) defines triangulation as “the use of multiple sources of data, multiple observers and/ or multiple methods” (p. 532). Researcher, data, method and theory are four types of triangulation in qualitative research. Researcher triangulation refers to the interpretation and analysis of a number of researchers, particularly with different background, on a same group. Data triangulation involves the distinct data collection sources at different times. Method triangulation involves the use of different methods to conduct the research and the comparison of findings. Lastly, theory triangulation refers to using of a various theories and perspectives in order to explain and interpret findings (Hair et.al, 2015; Riazi, 2016; Gerrish & Lacey, 2010).

3.5.2. Member Checking

Member check is the participants’ feedback on the findings of the research. According to Ary et.al. (2013) member checking refers to the question “do the people who were studied agree with what you have said about them?”(p. 533). When the data collection process reaches its end point, the researcher asks the participants to review the recordings, field notes, interpretations in order avoid miscommunications and add additional useful data missed.

3.6. Design of Study

For this study I adopted constructivist grounded theory methodological approach (Charmaz, 2006) to study EFL teachers' perceptions of strategy training. There are three reasons why I adopted constructivist grounded theory. First, teachers' perceptions and experiences are highly personal and thus they cannot be studied through predefined conceptual frameworks. Therefore, grounded theory is feasible for this research inquiry since the main concern of this methodology is constructing theory rather than testing it. Second, the constructivist grounded theory puts emphasis on how participants of an inquiry construct an experience (Charmaz, 2006) and thus it is best suited for this study, which is based on teachers' experiences. Lastly, it highlights the subjective role of the investigator, his relationship with participants and how they collaborate to construct meaning. Therefore, I could take part in the study and direct the process of the research.

The study took place in Tehran, the capital city of Iran. Five females and eight males participated in the study. All of the participants were singled out among experienced EFL teachers who had language related education and believed in strategy training. The number of participants was thirteen in total, first five of which were selected through purposive sampling to elicit initial codes and the rest of them through theoretical sampling to saturate the initially generated codes. It should be noted that the participants were assured they remain anonymous during the whole process of research. A brief introduction about each of the participants is presented in the table below.

Teacher participants	Gender	Age	Highest level of education	Years of Teaching experience
TP 1	Female	30	PhD In English literature	7
TP2	Female	33	PhD in TEFL	13
TP3	Female	37	PhD in TEFL	12

TP4	Male	32	PhD in TEFL	10
TP5	Female	38	PhD in TEFL	16
TP6	Male	48	PhD in TEFL	25
TP7	Male	56	PhD in TEFL	35
TP8	Male	40	PhD in English Literature	20
TP9	Male	33	PhD in TEFL	10
TP10	Male	39	M.A in TEFL	20
TP 11	Male	35	M.A in English translation	8
TP12	Female	30	B.A in English literature	6
TP13	Male	28	B.A in translation	5

Table.1.Participants' Demographics.

To achieve the purpose of this research study, it was clear that I needed to hear about the participants' experiences on the research question, so with this end in view, this study drew on semi-structured interviews as the single method for data collection. The interviews were conducted in Persian in order to help the participants feel free to share their ideas and experiences and, most important of all, to prevent missing any data. Initially, the topic and objectives of the study were clarified for the participants in order to elicit theoretically-relevant concepts. First-round interviews were conducted with five EFL teachers in two institutes, which were face-to-face interviews of about ten to twenty minutes in duration. Afterwards, the first five data sets were analyzed and some early categories began to emerge. Then, I continued interviewing the participants until

the emerged theoretical categories reached saturation. The interviews were about 15 to 20 minutes in duration each of which were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.

Memo writing was also used to collect participants' reflections, suggestions and ideas during the process of data collection and data analysis. The coding of data began after the interviews were transcribed. The transcripts were read more than three times in order to figure out similarities and differences and to elicit codes and to establish meaningful and uniform categories out of elicited individual categories. Lastly, all the categories were tied together to form a core category. Finally, the participants were asked to review the categories and memos in order to evaluate the credibility of the study. To name the established categories, both in-vivo and theoretical coding techniques were used. In addition, the member checking technique helped me to make sure that I have thoroughly perceived and reported the message the participants intended to convey.

Chapter Four:

Results

This chapter provides a detailed account of the data of the present study, which was collected and analyzed based on the rules and methods of data collection and analysis of grounded theory research design through which some EFL teachers were interviewed to elicit their views on learners' common inappropriate strategies as well as teachers' own alternative strategies. Hence, the analysis of the statements issued by EFL teachers revealed two core categories: **ELLs' inappropriate learning strategies** and **EFL teachers' alternative strategies for learners' inappropriate ones**. Accordingly, this chapter is divided into two main sections, the first of which deals with common inappropriate LLS that have been used by Iranian EFL learners throughout their foreign language learning process, and the second section presents EFL teachers' suggested strategies in order to supersede ELLs' inappropriate ones. The two main categories contain some related subcategories, each of which is elaborated and exemplified as follows.

4.1. English Language Learners' Inappropriate Learning Strategies

Throughout the long history of language learning, learners have continuously attempted to find and employ different types of language learning strategies in order to take the effort out of demanding language learning process. However, owing to learners' poor knowledge of LLS and the way they should be used, some of language learning strategies may have anomalous results rather than the desired ones. Accordingly, the participants of the present study (EFL teachers) presented the most commonly used inappropriate language learning strategies among ELL, which fell into eleven categories, namely **instant production of newly learnt words, employing limited strategies, learning new words in isolation, overuse of dictionaries, atomistic analysis of texts, misuse of dictionaries, memorizing grammar rules, watching movies passively, interest-based learning, mood-based learning and digital/mobile reading**; each category is elaborated as follows.

4.1.1. Instant Production of Newly Learnt Words

Turning receptive knowledge of words into productive knowledge is a gradual process that occurs as the learners are exposed to the words in different situations (Benjamin & Crown, 2013). Nonetheless, ELLs wrongly suppose that vocabulary learning is a one-step process (unknown vocabularies turn instantly productive

vocabularies), which they can go through by looking up the meaning of words in the dictionary. Hence, they make a futile effort to find the meaning of every unknown word they encounter and try to use it instantly in both speeches and writings. However, unlike receptive skills, productive skills take longer time to emerge. On this issue, one of the participants asserted:

There are students who mistakenly think that finding the meaning of a word gives them the ability to use it in either spoken or written form. They use words without knowing their suitable collocations, degree of formality, the state of being written or spoken or even their accurate spelling or pronunciation. They believe that no matter whether it is right or wrong, they should produce the target language until they learn it. Nevertheless, learning process of words consists of several stages, at an early stage of which a word can be comprehended when received through reading or listening, while it cannot be produced. However, with time and practice, knowledge of words deepens and consequently, learners would be able to use the vocabulary words in both writings and speeches. (Teacher participant 5 (henceforth referred to as TP))

Language learners rarely consider the requirements of making a sentence with newly learnt words-in other words, they rush into production while they have not received required information. As Benjamin and Crown (2013) stated, “You must be in control of a lot of information about a word before you are able to use it properly” (p. 29). One of the participants’ comments better elucidate this point:

When learners read a piece of text or listen to an audio file, they are too much obsessed with finding the meaning of every single unfamiliar word right at that moment and, worst of all, they try to apply those newly learnt words immediately, without paying attention to accurate application of the words in different sentences-that is to say, they think that knowing the meaning of a word will suffice to produce it. However, as the raw materials of a food should be flavored with a wide range of spices and takes time to be ready to eat, words need to be combined with

proper collocations and rules and also take time to be ready for accurate, native like production. (TP1)

4.1.2. Employing Limited Strategies

Despite the great diversity of language learning strategies, ELL employ a limited number of strategies for different purposes and in different situations. Indeed, they are not aware of the fact that learning strategies vary based on their purposes, needs and situations and thus they should be adopted accordingly. Supporting this theme, one of the participants points out:

Language learners adopt limited strategies for different language learning purposes. For example, when they encounter an unknown word, using dictionary is the only strategy, which comes to their mind, even if it is an unnecessary word. However, one strategy is not feasible for different learning matters. In order to make use of LLS, firstly, they should clarify their purpose, and then adopt a strategy. For instance, if they intend to read a text, they should decide beforehand whether they are reading to get a general information or specific information; since each purpose requires entirely distinct strategies. (TP8)

Analysis reveals that some learners generalize limited strategies for a variety of learning situations and purposes, even if the strategies are not suitable for the situations and purpose. The problem is rooted in learners' weak knowledge of LLS. Along the same lines, one of the participants presents his experiences as follows:

ELL have poor knowledge of LLS. They generally attempt to improve language skills through a finite number of LLS. For instance, they try to improve their listening skill only through transcribing audio files. However, transcribing strategy will be more helpful for improving speaking or vocabulary skills rather than listening skill; since it is not possible to stop or ask a speaker to repeat a statement while he/she is speaking in real life conversation. An additional example would be continued use of dictionaries, despite the great diversity of strategies for dealing with an unknown word. (TP2)

4.1.3. Learning New Words in Isolation

With the emergence of Grammar translation method, the strategy of memorizing a long list of words has become widespread among language learners. However, recently there has been a shift away from isolated vocabulary learning to contextualized vocabulary learning with the view that exposure to isolated words is unreliable and plays little if any role in vocabulary development. Despite this shift, ELL still prefer to make a long list of words in isolation, which are mostly learned with their L1 lexical equivalent translation. On this issue, one of the participants asserted:

Most of language learners prefer to make a long list of new words with their equivalent translation in Persian. Then, they try hard to memorize the words through continuous repetition. When the words are memorized, they consider those words as learned materials and they go on to make another list of new words. However, memorized words are inefficient and hard to use; since learners would not know where and how to use them. (TP3)

As the results indicated, when learners learn vocabulary words in isolation, they can hardly recall and use the words when needed. Nonetheless, they make futile effort to learn words in isolation or with the help of other isolated words such as synonyms and antonyms and consequently their minds are generally replete with a large number of worthless words. As it is stated by Injeeli (2013) “ words exist in relation with other words; therefore, students need to see words placed with other words to understand their purpose, their place, their function and their particular meaning in the context they occur” (p. 9). Along the same line, one of the participants asserted:

Memorizing long lists of words is not an appropriate way to develop vocabulary knowledge owing to the short time the vocabularies remain in mind and their uselessness when it comes to production. However, language learners are still interested in making vocabulary notebooks, which are replete with isolated words. The words are generally learned through their equivalent L1 translation or synonym and antonym words, which are isolated as well. (TP5)

4.1.4. Overuse of Dictionaries

Although dictionaries have consistently been considered as an essential tool for language learning, overuse of them is not recommended. However, ELLs rely heavily upon dictionaries to overcome all kinds of comprehension barriers made by unfamiliar words. As Hartman (2003) states, “the reason why dictionaries are harmful is that learners use them before attempting an intelligent guess, and consequently never learn how to guess intelligently” (p. 163). Moreover, Day and Bamford (1998) note that “fluent reading is hindered by a reader stopping to use dictionary (p. 93)”. On this issue, one of the participants states:

The problem with ELLs is that without a dictionary, they think of themselves as unarmed soldiers. They mostly try to comprehend texts with permanent use of dictionaries to find the meaning of every single unknown word of the texts. Since, they wrongly believe that comprehension does not take place unless they know the meaning of every single word. However, it is not recommended to use dictionaries unless it is the last resort. (TP6)

As the results showed, most of learners cannot be selective about what unknown words are important for understanding or useful to learn. Therefore, they endeavor to look up every unknown word they come up with. One of the participants better explained this issue:

Overuse of dictionaries may affect fluency, comprehension or speed. However, language learners generally cannot put dictionary aside since they are not able to distinguish between necessary words and unnecessary ones. (TP13)

4.1.5. Atomistic Analysis of Texts

Svensson (1977) introduces a dichotomy for language learners' approaches to content processing of reading texts. He claims that, language learners have an atomistic approach towards texts, in which they are concerned with the separated, individual parts or they have a holistic approach, in which they search for the overall meaning of texts or the their writers' main objectives. However, as the results indicated, learners wrongly

supposethat comprehension is highly dependent on understanding all the contained words and sentences of texts and they consider it as the only approach towards texts comprehension. They rarely pay attention to the overall meaning of texts. Nonetheless, in some cases it is required to adopt a general approach rather than a detailed one. On this issue, one of the participants asserts:

Language learners are too much concerned about knowing every single component of a text, to the point of obsession in my opinion. Therefore, they put considerable time and effort to find the meaning of every single word. Since they believe that, a text can be comprehended only if all its contained words are understood. However, in most cases they should consider texts as a whole rather than break it into separated, unrelated words. Moreover, they should know the fact that language knowledge is not limited to the knowledge of vocabularies, but being able to find ways to comprehend texts, which contain unknown words, structures or information. Therefore, they should learn to be more holistic in some cases by making use of strategies like guessing, ignoring and the likes.

(TP13)

LLs generally are too much concerned with understanding every single particle of texts; since they should feel with certainty that they have full control over every word, structure and idea mentioned in the text in order to comprehend it. Low ambiguity tolerance (AT) was mentioned by EFL teachers to be one reason for ELL atomistic approach towards texts which is defined as the ability to “function rationally and calmly in a situation in which interpretation of all stimuli is not clear” (Chapelle & Roberts, 1986, p. 30). Additionally, Karl Albrecht (1987) claims that, extreme low ambiguity tolerance makes a person a “rectangular thinker”, which refers to a person “with an almost compulsive desire for certainty, structure, and familiarity of ideas and solutions” (p. 107). Along the same lines, one of the participants explains how ambiguity tolerance affects how learners approach towards texts:

When EFL learners intend to improve their reading or listening skills, they generally make use of strategies, which is mostly in line with vocabulary improvement rather than reading and listening. One of the

inappropriate commonly used strategies among ELL is that they put effort into repeating or understanding every single component of sentences they hear or read. This problem is rooted in their low ambiguity tolerance. However, as an EFL learner they should improve their ambiguity tolerance by the use of strategies, which help them to have a more holistic view towards texts and ignore some parts. Since we do not have full mastery even over our mother tongue, but we have the ability to get the gist of the message. (TP2)

4.1.6. Misuse of Dictionaries

Although dictionaries play a crucial role in language learning, language learners are not acutely aware of the appropriate way of consulting dictionaries. They think of it as a tool to be used only to find the meaning of words without paying attention to other lexical features mentioned in the book for each word. Consequently, LLs partial knowledge of words may cause many comprehension or production problems. Supporting this issue, one of the participants comments:

Although EFL learners rely heavily upon dictionary to look up the meaning of every faced unknown word, they cannot use it in an appropriate way. They only look for the meaning of unknown words without paying attention to other mentioned information about the words such as collocations, prepositions, and even all the provided examples. They neither check further definitions nor think of proper use of words in different contexts. Thus, although they know the meanings of piles of words, but when it comes to production, they do not know how to put the words in a sentence properly. (TP11)

As the results showed, Language learners rarely use or better to say rarely know diversity of dictionaries, which can be used as a supplement to general dictionaries. As one of the participants stated:

Bilingual and monolingual general language dictionaries are the most widely used dictionaries among language learners. I have rarely seen any language learner who makes use of other dictionaries like Language activator, which can help them to distinguish the difference between

several similar words or Collocations Dictionary that can help them to find which words come together. (TP11)

4.1.7. Memorizing Grammar Rules

Rote learning (parrot fashion learning) is still the most prevalent strategy among language learners, not only to learn vocabularies but also to memorize grammar rules. They make a futile effort to reread the same grammar rule repeatedly until it sticks in their mind. However, grammar rules can never be mastered, but by practicing and noticing, that is to say, practicing in real contexts and noticing its proper application in authentic samples. Pham (2010) claims that, Even though there are many strategies, which can ease the burden of memorizing all grammar rules, but the challenge arises when it comes to real communication, which we often fail to rise to the challenge if we adopt memorization strategies to learn grammar rules. As one of the participants stated:

ELLs adopt a form-based strategy for mastering grammar rules, that is, they memorize a specific rule, irrespective of the manner and purpose of using it. Consequently, they spend a considerable amount of time to memorize the rules by repetition, but when it comes to application of the rules, they do not know how to use them in different contexts or they make use of limited elementary structures. For example, they spend days to memorize a long list of verb conjugations, but they only use the simple form of verbs in writing or speaking about different subjects and in different contexts. (TP8)

4.1.8. Watching Movies Passively

When there is limited or no opportunity to be in contact with native speakers, watching as many movies as possible would be the best strategy to improve vocabulary, pronunciation and speaking skills. Further, it is a good strategy to get familiar with the most common slangs and phrases being used by native speakers of the target language (Nicholson, 2015). However, when it comes to foreign language learning, principles of watching movies are totally different from that of enjoying our time. Yet, ELLs wrongly suppose that learning takes place just by lying on the sofa in front of the TV and watching the movie. However, when it comes to language learning there is a different story; they need to have active participation. Moreover, they should adopt appropriate

strategies to get the most out of the movie. Supporting this issue, one of the participants stated:

Foreign movies are rich sources, which provide learners with slangs, phrases, colloquial language and idioms that are commonly used by native speakers in their real life. However, language learners wrongly suppose that watching is the only thing they should do to learn a language. They see no difference between watching to learn and watching for fun. However, watching for fun requires passive participation while watching to learn requires active participation. Watching would not lead to learning unless it is purpose-bound.(TP9)

4.1.9. Interest-based Learning

Language learners generally show great interest in specific aspects of language while they are unwilling to learn or practice other aspects. In effect, they mostly lack parallel proficiency. They generally put extra efforts in learning and practicing reading and vocabulary; whereas, they ignore the importance of other indispensable parts of languages such as listening and writing. Consequently, there is generally no balance between their acquired skills and the required skills of the target language. As one of the participants asserted:

If teachers examine their students' knowledge of English language, they would surely witness the fact that many of the students are more proficient in specific skills and less proficient in the rest of them. Since, EFL learners devote most of their time to improve those areas, which they show more interest in. However, language knowledge is not limited to a specific skill or sub skill. In order to be a proficient language knower, they have to put an equal amount of time and effort in learning all language skills and sub skills. (TP2)

As the results indicated, vocabulary and reading are those skills, which get more attention while listening and writing get the least of all. Nonetheless, the components of a language are integrated and cannot be separated from each other. Therefore, language components, including skills and sub-skills, should be considered as a whole, which require equal attention. Along the same lines, one of the participants asserted:

Some advanced ELL or even teacher learners do not have a balanced proficiency in all aspects of the language. They are generally obsessed with specific aspects of language such as vocabulary and reading while marginalizing other aspects, the most prominent example of which is writing. However, language components are not separable. (TP7)

4.1.10. Mood-based Learning

Foreign language learning is a time-consuming and tricky job, which can hardly be achieved without a consistent, daily schedule. More important than establishing a schedule is sticking to it. Nonetheless, for the most part, language learners do not set aside a specific time to study the target language on a regular daily basis. They mostly have an unplanned mood-based learning, that is to say, sometimes they keep studying for long hours without burning out; other times they abandon studying for a long time. One of the participants' statements better elucidates this issue:

Except for those who learn a language for a specific purpose, you can rarely find students with a pre-determined daily schedule. The problem is that whenever they find themselves in the mood, they open their books and start studying; therefore, they may devote an entire day to study and practice English or not even touch their books for days. It is obvious that by following such procedure, they will never reach what they aim to reach. Since mastering a language is a daunting task which would never be carried out unless with a daily plan and most important of all, adhering strictly to the plan. (TP8)

Language learners' constant focus on specific aspects of language makes them weary of learning; thereby their learning process may be disrupted. They generally keep reading for days while do not spend a minute for listening, writing or speaking. However, language learning should be based on a slow but continuous process in all its aspects in order to avoid boredom and learning interruption. As one of the participants stated:

For the most part, Learners' slow progress or failure in foreign language learning is the result of disordered and purposeless learning. They keep learning a specific skill for days, while they do not spend a minute for other skills. As a result, they become bored after a while and stop studying. However, language learning should follow an ongoing uniform program, which involves all skills and sub skills. Putting it differently, there must be a parallel, identical progress in all skills and sub skills, so with this end in view, an equal amount of time should be allocated to all of them. (TP6)

4.1.11. Digital/mobile Reading

Over the past few years, the emergence of handheld digital reading devices such as smart phones, tablets and laptops has increased people's tendency for digital/mobile reading. Likewise, Language learners tend to learn languages with such kind of devices, which are always available everywhere and every time they intend to do so. However, despite the convenience and usefulness of digital devices, they may not be a good tool for reading improvement, particularly when the readers intend to analyze or reread the texts. Hence, printed texts are more preferred over digital texts. As O'Hara and Sellen (1997) assert, annotation, quick navigation and layout are the advantages of reading from paper over reading from online sources which in turn allow readers to “deepen their understanding of the text, extract a sense of its structure, create a plan for writing, cross refer to other documents, and interleave reading and writing” (p. 335). On the superiority of printed texts over digital texts for reading improvement, one of the participants comments:

Recently there has been growing interest in online or digital reading of texts, including magazines, news and eBooks. Digital reading is much more suitable for times when it is done for the purpose of entertainment but not for learning the language of the text; since, Note-taking, annotation, marking and rereading are helpful techniques for reading improvement, which are done much more easily in printed form of texts in comparison to digital texts. (TP12)

Despite the convenience and cost efficiency of eBooks and online texts, they may not be as effective as printed texts when it comes to language learning; since reading with the purpose of foreign language improvement requires intense concentration, which is at a lower level at the time of reading digital texts in comparison to printed texts. As one of the participants reflected:

Due to the convenience and availability of digital devices, ELLs prefer online materials. However, multitasking of digital devices may impede deep comprehension of texts, particularly when it is more than one page. Moreover, the risk of tiring your eyes by screen may decrease the quality and amount of reading.(TP10)

4.2. Teachers' Alternative Strategies for Learners' Inappropriate Ones

Having recognized the most commonly used inappropriate language learning strategies among ELLs, the teachers are responsible to present the most appropriate strategies to be substituted for ELLs' inappropriate ones. Therefore, the participants of the present study suggested some alternative strategies for the inappropriate strategies mentioned in the previous section. The provided strategies fell into ten main categories including: **Classifying unknown words based on importance and purpose, Skimming and scanning, De-isolation of new words, Tech-based learning, Experience-based learning, Reproduction of authentic materials, Disassembling authentic texts, Planning, Watching foreign movies actively, Consulting dictionaries, Paper-based reading.**

4.2.1. Classifying Unknown Words Based on Importance and Purpose

When reading a text or listening to an audio file, you may come upon unknown words or phrases, which are major setbacks for comprehension. Language learners generally know dictionary as a panacea to overcome these setbacks, irrespective to the contexts and situations in which the words occur. However, there is no fixed and predetermined route to foreign language learning, that is, the strategies of language learning, varies from one person to another and from one situation to another. Accordingly, in order to choose the best strategies for finding the meaning of unknown words of texts, teachers suggest students to classify their learning purposes and the importance of the unknown words beforehand. Here, the participants presented

threevocabulary strategies, each of which must be employed based on the importance of unknown words and ELLs' learning goals. **Ignoring redundant words, guessing the meaning of key words, using dictionaries receptively.**

4.2.1.1. Ignoring Redundant words

ELL often come upon words or phrases, of which they do not know the meanings. At these times, most language learners consult a dictionary on impulse irrespective of its necessity. However, Teachers recommended that before consulting a dictionary, determine whether knowing the meaning of the word is necessary or not, if it is not, then ignore it. This does not mean that learning a specific word must be permanently ignored, but this strategy is used for those moments when time matters and there is no room for looking up every single unnecessary word in dictionaries. One of the participants comments better elucidates this strategy:

Language learners should be aware of the fact that they do not necessarily need to know every single word of text. They should distinguish those words, which play the key role from those decorative ones and ignore the second group. Ignoring is one of those helpful strategies, which make language learners a speed-reader when they aim at reading a text for the gist of it. The same is true when it comes to listening. For instance, adjectives can be ignored in some cases.(TP1)

Some ELLs believe that comprehension takes place only in case of having complete mastery over the provided information. However, there are times when they encounter a comprehension barrier and they should have the ability to ignore it without being distracted. To this end, teachers suggested language learners to improve their ambiguity tolerance with the help of ignoring strategy when ignoring does not hurt comprehension. Similarly, Day and Bamford note, “part of fluent and effective reading involves the reader, ignoring unknown words and phrases” (1998, p. 93). Supporting this theme, one of the participants explains how to overcome ambiguity tolerance through ignoring:

For those students who suffer from low ambiguity tolerance in comprehending texts, there are many strategies, which can be substituted for dictionaries in case of encountering unknown words in texts. For instance, when they are reading or listening and they do not know the meaning of a word they can ignore the word and keep reading if it is not a key word.(TP12)

4.2.1.2. Guessing the Meaning of Key Words

When knowing the meaning of an unknown word is crucial to comprehend a text, then learners must find a way to guess the meaning of the word without recourse to a dictionary. To this end, Teachers suggested two types of guessing strategies, namely **morphemic analysis** and **contextual analysis** that are elaborated as follows.

4.2.1.2.1. Contextual Analysis (co-text)

When an unknown word of a text is not negligible, then language learners are required to find a clue from the text in which the word appears. Casuyon, Palacios and Ticao (2001) define contextual clue as “words or group of words surrounding the new word (p. 2)”. They added that this clue might sometimes appear in the form of synonyms, antonyms, names and events that lead us to make a guess at the meaning of an unknown word. Likewise, Teachers suggested this strategy as the best and the easiest way of figuring out the meaning of an unknown word instead of using dictionaries. As one of the participants stated:

I recommend language learners go from known to unknown. For example, every text contains a number of information that students are familiar with; this information includes the words and the topics of the texts that can act as a hint to help LLs to guess the meaning of the targeted unknown phrase or word.(TP3)

Language learners are heavily dependent on dictionaries for finding the meaning of unknown words. As a remedy, teachers have found it effective to guess the meaning of new words based on what comes before and after them. Signal words, Illustrations, examples and linguistic clues are samples of contextual clues, which indirectly help

readers to guess the meaning of unknown words and phrases (Rizvi, 2005). On this issue, one of the participants stated:

I recommend my students not to be highly dictionary-bound to check every single unknown word. With regard to this recommendation, I propose guessing strategy, that is to say, learners must make use of contextual clues or their own logic and common sense in order to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases.(TP3)

4.2.1.2.2. Morphemic Analysis

When context does not provide enough clues to guess the meaning of new words or phrases, morphemic analysis may be a helpful strategy. Morphemic analysis is a guessing strategy with the help of which readers can determine or infer the meaning of words by examining their meaningful parts (prefixes, suffixes, roots, etc.). Although, this strategy is less common and more difficult than guessing from context, it may help learners to find an approximate meaning of unknown keywords. On this issue, one of the participants stated:

Word structure analysis is a good way to guess the meaning of an unknown word. In order to make language learners familiar with this strategy, I explain segments of a word and provide a list of English high-frequency roots, suffixes and prefixes with meaning for them. The generative feature of these segments helps language learners to guess the meaning of a number of words by memorizing the meaning of limited numbers of roots, prefixes and suffixes. (TP4)

When ELL intend to read a text to get the gist of it, it is worthwhile to make use of morphemic analysis strategy, that is to say, decompose words into its base and affixes to guess the nearest meaning. Rizvi (2005) supports this idea by asserting, “The use of prefixes, suffixes and word roots giveclues to the meaning of uncommon words (p. 23)”.As one of the participants stated:

Learners must be equipped with strategies to overcome different barriers made by unfamiliar words. Sometimes being familiar with suffixes, prefixes and the root may suffice to get the overall meaning

of a new word. For example, you encounter the word 'disadvantageous' in a text, which can be broken down into three components, dis+advantage+ous. The prefix dis- indicates negativity and the suffix -ous indicate the state of being adjective, and -advantage- indicates the root of the word. However, this strategy is much more suitable for advanced learners. (TP1)

4.2.1.3. Using Dictionaries Receptively

There are four basic language-learning skills which are classified as receptive (i.e. Listening and reading) and productive (i.e. Speaking and writing). Similarly, dictionary use can be divided into receptive and productive use, which refers to the use of a dictionary for decoding provided information (while reading a text or listening to an oral text) or encoding the information (while speaking or writing a piece of text), respectively. Language teachers mostly try to put comprehension first into instruction; since they generally believe in 'natural' language learning process in which children acquire comprehension skills before they acquire production skills (Asher, 1972). Therefore, they put more emphasis on receptive use of dictionaries in order to expand receptive (passive) vocabularies and, consequently, improve receptive skills. On this issue, one of the participants asserted:

The first thing I do at the beginning of each semester is changing the student's wrong perception regarding learning 10 to 15 words during a month with great quality. Instead, I explain them that it would be better for them to learn a hundred words, 30 of which must be completely mastered and the rest must be kept in their passive memory to be used for reading and listening comprehension; since receptive skills are prior to productive skills. In other words, I recommend them to initially expand their vocabulary and then deepen them with time and practice. (TP1)

Krashen (1983) has argued that "we acquire via comprehensible input, by listening or reading for meaning (p. 43)". Comprehensible input in the form of reading would be highly efficient in acquiring Spelling and vocabulary competence (Krashen, 1989). Accordingly, Language teachers claimed that language learners are required to

put themselves in a print-rich environment in order to be exposed to second/foreign language comprehensible input. For, those with more exposure to a second/foreign language are very likely to be proficient in the target language (Krashen, 1982, 1985). Hence, language learners should be equipped with wide vocabularies in order to be able to read as much text as they can which seems to be the best route to language proficiency. Correspondingly, Teachers mentioned the superiority of quantity of vocabularies over quality when they intend to develop receptive skills. Hence, learners must learn how to use dictionaries receptively. It should be noted that this point does not signify the ignorance of quality, but postponing it to a later time. One of the participants better elucidates this issue:

I always put considerable emphasis on extensive reading. I ask my students to read 30 to 40 pages of a storybook or novel without using a dictionary and give a brief summary of what they read. They are not allowed to exceed the maximum number of four or five key words to check. By doing this, they grasp the point that with the help of five or six words, they would not be able to comprehend fifty pages of a book. Therefore, they understand that if they intend to read texts and listen to target language sources they should have rich vocabulary knowledge, which can be gained by increasing the amount of passive vocabularies and decreasing the quality.(TP3)

4.2.2. Skimming and Scanning

As Cramer (1998) explains, “skimming is an organized search for seeking information about an article, chapter, book, scanning is a hunt, skip and-search technique for locating answers to specific questions”(p. 57). Skimming and scanning are two common strategies suggested by almost all of the participants of the study as two strategies, which speed up and facilitate EFL learners reading skill. In addition, these strategies help language learners to adopt a purpose-bound approach to a reading text. The analysis showed that those readers who make use of these two strategies are readers that are more flexible since they can read according to their purpose and get the information they need quickly without wasting time. On this issue, one of the participants asserted:

I always suggest scanning and skimming as two crucial strategies for a purpose-bound reading, which is suggested when time matters. Skimming involves running your eyes very quickly over chunks of words in order to catch a general idea of the text. I explain them that skimming involves different strategies; for example, in order to read a newspaper, they can read the first paragraph, which contains an overview of information or the headline. On the contrary, scanning is used when they try to find a specific item. If they learn to use these two skills properly, they would be good readers who can have a purpose bound reading. (TP5)

The results indicated, the use of scanning and skimming is like the way we read magazines or newspapers in our mother tongue. When we intend to read a newspaper, firstly we glance through the titles, headlines or the first opening lines to get the gist of the news, which is called skimming, and then if we are willing to get more detail about specific news we go through the lines and read it precisely and that is what we call scanning. As one of the participants put it:

I give a strong consideration to skimming in order to improve students' reading skill. Skimming is a strategy that gives them the ability of answering questions without knowing every single word, recognizing key information from those that are of no use to them. I always cite the example of the way they read newspapers or articles or when they surf the net. They do not read every single sentence of a newspaper or article, but their minds lead them to those parts, which contain valuable information. I also put emphasis on titles, images, and any other part, which can help them to get the meaning and change the way they consider reading as a pile of words. (TP7)

4.2.3. De-isolation of New Words

When it comes to vocabulary learning, there are many methods to improve and expand your vocabulary. Some make a list of words and read them repeatedly; others try to learn them through synonym words or opposites. However, the view that the vocabularies of languages are a set of unrelated elements, and should be acquired haphazardly is naive and outdated; owing to the fact that language is much more than a

string of isolated words and our communicative acts are mostly in the form of sentences or beyond. Teachers are strongly against the way language learners make an ineffective effort to memorize a long list of decontextualized words that is the residue of the grammar translation method. Therefore, they recommended three strategies, namely **Linking**, **Formulaic learning** and **Contextualizing** as alternative strategies for isolated word learning.

4.2.3.1. Linking

The first suggested substitution for isolated word learning is improving vocabulary knowledge with the help of word families, that is, learning words in groups that share common features owing to their associations. Learning words in the form of word families, organizes learners' minds. Additionally, word family knowledge enables language learners to decode large numbers of multisyllabic words and improves 'word recognition' when reading (Rusinski & Heym, 2008, Broun & Oelwein, 2007). Hence, Teachers put forward understanding of word families as one of the key vocabulary building strategies. As one of the participants put it:

Most language learners have a list of isolated vocabularies that they make an effort to memorize the list. One of those strategies, which can be substituted for isolated word learning, is to keep a group of words together that possess common characteristics. For example, they are familiar with the words ease and disease separately but they do not know both of them are members of a word family. Learning word families instead of isolated words would be useful. Following this strategy, can smooth the way for the time-consuming fruitless process of vocabulary memorization.(TP9)

Learning groups of related words, which are similar in structure, combination of letters or sound, would be much more helpful than learning a bunch of unrelated words. By doing this, recalling and recognition of words would be easier. On this issue, one of the participants asserted:

In order to boost vocabulary knowledge; my suggestion is to avoid learning one word at a time. One of the effective ways to substitute for isolated words, is to put them in groups of related words which have

some of the same combinations of sounds or letters. This grouping contains groups of word families like age, cage or homonyms, homophones and the likes. This kind of vocabulary learning strategies not only helps learners to learn the words, but also their similarities and differences which may confuse them and cause trouble. Moreover, in some cases it can help them to guess the meaning of an unknown word similar to a known one. (TP8)

4.2.3.2. Formulaic Language Learning

Formulaic language units are ‘multiword sequenced units’, which are received through the input as discrete elements but stored as a whole in long-term memory (wood, 2002). Researchers have proposed different types of these units, including fixed phrases, idioms, clauses, ‘sentence-building frameworks of words’, proverbs and sayings (Schmitt, 2004, Wood, 2002). Wood asserted that these fixed chunks of language proved to be an important part of language learning, in particular fluent language production; since, “they allow language production to occur while bypassing controlled processing and the constraints of short-term memory capacity” (p. 1). However, it also eases listening process (Schmit & Carter, 2000). Hence, memorization of these multiple lexical units as a single unit instead of discrete unrelated isolated words eases the processing of language production. As one of the participants stated:

When you remember phrases instead of single words, you ensure that you know how to use the word in at least one sentence. For instance, instead of memorizing the word “bunch” it is better to memorize the phrase “a bunch of grapes”. Instead of memorizing the verb “occur”, it is better to memorize “if any problems occur”.(TP11)

Teachers recommended students to make use of lexical chunks invented by native speakers to be fluent in their production. These lexical chunks refer to multi-word chunks of language of varying length. Therefore, the students become more fluent in productive skills, using these pre-assembled chunks made by native speakers. Schmit and Carter (2000) noted the importance of these prefabricated phrases explaining that they are “stored as single wholes and are, as such, instantly available for use without the cognitive load of having to assemble them online as one speaks” (p. 7). Hence

formulaic language learning is an efficient way of reducing mental processing of language production. As TP11 pointed out:

A better approach to vocabulary learning is to learn phrases instead of single words. When language learners read, listen or watch movies they should be sensitive not only to key words, but also to those chunks or lexical phrases they find useful to speak or write. Storing lexical phrases in mind in the form of chunks as a single concept help language learners to build their writing and speaking fluency.(TP11)

4.2.3.3. Contextualizing

Contextualized and decontextualized vocabulary learning is two ways through which language learners can develop their vocabulary knowledge. While contextualized vocabulary learning is at the very foundation of vocabulary improvement, decontextualized vocabularies are of limited value. Contextualized vocabulary acquisition (CVA) involves inferring the meaning of words in a given context, most often a text. Therefore, teachers highly recommended contextualization as one of the most helpful vocabulary learning strategy to replace isolated vocabulary learning. As one of the participants asserted:

Looking up the collocations of words or making use of the provided examples in the dictionary can be considered as some sort of context. In a broader sense, they can examine different meanings of a specific word in different sentences applied in different situations in order to improve both our speaking and writing skills. (TP3)

Learning a new vocabulary word is more than just understanding what the word means. To learn new English words, you must understand them and be able to use the words correctly in both written and spoken forms. Teachers claimed that, making sentences out of new words permits language learners to learn and remember those words easier and with higher accuracy. Moreover, they recommended that, authentic texts are useful language learning material with the help of which ELLs get familiar with proper use of the words in real contexts since,authenticity fosters learners' autonomy. Supporting this issue, one of the participants stated:

Putting vocabulary words into sentences helps language learners to remember the word and truly understand how it is used. This strategy involves active engagement of ELLs whereby they can gain a deeper understanding of the newly learnt words. I suggest them to make different types of sentences with newly learnt words because the learners cannot master any new word until they apply it in different types of contexts such as affirmation, declarative, and interrogative. Furthermore, making use of different resources such as newspapers, Washington posts, audio podcasts, storybooks, and foreign movies are highly recommended to get familiar with different contexts within which the newly learnt words are employed. (TP6)

4.2.4. Tech-based Learning

These days almost all of the people are somehow involved with technology, which constitutes an important part of our everyday life. These Technological innovations not only have facilitated people's lives, but also have contributed to the educational development. Moreover, technology is a silver bullet for foreign language improvement owing to its availability and ease of use. In addition to teaching aids, media and social networks are gifts that technology has brought to language learners, particularly foreign language learners. However, language learners are not well aware of the appropriate use of technology. Therefore, teachers recommended three technology-related strategies as alternative strategies, including **Social media language learning**, **Mass media language learning** and **Speech recording**.

4.2.4.1. Social Media Language Learning (Telecollaboration)

Social media language learning (SMLL) refers to the application of social media channels with the purpose of second/foreign language improvement. This language learning tool enables learners to develop communication and language skills through interaction with each other, generally by means of the internet. Furthermore, it gives them the chance to go beyond borders in the blink of an eye and find native speakers to talk with. By doing so, they will have the chance to participate in actual, real life conversations taking place online, and practice the target language on their own without the help of a teacher. Along the same lines, one of the participants presents:

Language learners can make use of telegram and what's app to talk with their friends and classmates in order to activate what they have already learned, even if it is done with a bit of a show-off. Moreover, they can have online conversations in order to share their language knowledge out of the class environment. Most important of all, they can have conversation with native speakers living at the other end of the world.

(TP1)

Learning a second / foreign language is potentially a challenging and time-consuming job, however in countries like Iran, where the environment is rarely found suitable for inclusion in the language environment, it is much more challenging. Nonetheless, this difficulty has been overcome by the development of technology and the emergence of social network. As one of the participants noted:

The absence of native environment in Iran, imposed some limitations on Iranian language learners. However, social media channels have been able to overcome these limits. It does not matter where you are; you can be in touch with native speakers living all over the world. By doing so, ELLs experience real life conversations. Moreover, native speakers correct them if any mistakes occurs. Tandem is one of the best social media channels, which is specifically designed for language learning.

(TP7)

4.2.4.2. Mass Media Language Learning (MMLL)

In addition to social media, mass media (television, radio, magazines, newspapers, etc.) penetrated so deeply in our everyday lives. Hence, they would be the best tools through which language learning occurs. Along the same line, scholars asserted that language learning must take place in a natural linguistic environment and mass media is assumed to be the best means of natural language learning in a natural context (Smith and Patriann, 2015; Takač, 2008). One of the participants better explains this issue:

The best language learning strategies are those ones that show efficacy for learning, despite convenience and availability. The best samples, which have these characteristics, would be newspapers, TV, Radio,

podcasts, movies, music and the like which provide language learners with authentic samples of the target language. **(TP9)**

The commercialization of language learning books made them to be deceptively attractive for the most part rather than practical in real life and daily affairs. As a result, after years of studying English language, learners turn to a box full of luxury tools, which may very occasionally prove useful. For instance, the topics of language books are generally devoted to the issues such as music, world tourist attractions, sports and the like. However, mass media make LLs familiar with up-to-date words, structures, issues and more importantly daily life matters. As one of the participants stated:

Language learners' minds are obsessed with learning useless, but prestigious aspects of language, which may hardly ever turn out to be useful. In fact, this is the result of using language books, which are generally commercialized rather than need based. Therefore, after years of studying, language learners are so well-versed in less significant issues, but not familiar with the topics that provide their daily needs. To correct this language-learning mistake, I suggest them to devote a considerable amount of time to read or watch authentic mass media such as TV, daily newspapers, movies, monthly magazines. **(TP13)**

In addition, language-learning books are largely out-of-date owing to the long period they go through in order to reach their target audience. Accordingly, due to the up-to-date language and content of mass media, they are far preferable to language books, which grow daily in numbers but not in content. Furthermore, by virtue of the fact that mass media are inextricably interwoven with our everyday lives; they are superior over language books. As one of the participants stated:

Due to the dynamic nature of languages, it is on us to be an up-to-date language learner. This cannot be achieved unless you get involved with present-day books, magazines and movies rather than sticking to language books, which took years to be published. In this case, New Yorkers or readers digest magazines would be good reading suggestions. **(TP10)**

4.2.4.3. Speech Recording

The development of mobile and tablet applications are offering numerous ways to develop language learners' proficiency. Simple and free voice capturing applications provided a chance for language learners to develop oral proficiency by standing in both positions of a listener and speaker autonomously. This strategy provides language learners with the opportunity of figuring out their own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, changing their perspective from a speaker to a listener gives them a good chance to criticize themselves. As one of the participants said:

Pronunciation and grammar mistakes are frequent mistakes made particularly by elementary LLs. However, they can hardly be noticed could not when talking. Language learners wrongly suppose that there is a positive correlation between the amount of speaking and proficiency levels; however, speaking would not be effective as long as it is not associated with error correction. Therefore, in order to be a self-evaluator, I recommend language learners to record their voice when talking, and then listen to it several times in order to find their shortcomings and solutions to the shortcomings. (TP8)

Reading and listening are passive activities while speaking and writing demand active participation. When you are involved in a passive activity, you are only exposed to target language as a receiver of the message. On the contrary, when you are involved in an active activity, you are no longer a mere passive participant but a content creator. To be a producer you need not only a fluent language, but also the ability to organize your thoughts in order to convey them through language. Consequently, speaking is much more challenging than listening. Hence, Teachers recommended language learners to make use of recording strategy to record their speeches in order to find their errors. As one of the participants pointed out:

I suggest my students to record their own voice while speaking, and afterwards, listen to it many times. By doing so, they would be able to find those grammatical, lexical and pronunciation errors which were not noticed at the time of speaking. Moreover, it is a kind of self-correction

strategy, which helps them to avoid those errors in later speaking times.

(TP2)

4.2.5. Experience-based Learning

Knowledge alone is not enough for success in any field; however, an integration of knowledge and experience is required to meet success. Boud, Cohen and Walker (1993) referred to experience as the ‘foundation’ and ‘stimulus’ of learning which is ‘socially’ and ‘culturally’ constructed by learners. Sophocles asserted, “One must learn by doing the thing, for though you think you know it-you have no certainty, until you try”.

Kolb (1984) defines learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience” (p. 41). He claims that experience is where knowledge begins. In other words, he generally refers to experience as the starting point for learning and he refers to instructors as the facilitator of the experiential learning process. On the contrary, experience is not only the starting point of learning, but the end as well and it can also occur in out-of -class environment without teachers' intervention. That is, based on this study, experiential learning refers to the examination and stabilization of a known knowledge by activating it in the real world. Therefore, ELL are required to link their academic knowledge of language to real life and real people in order to make sure they have learnt what they have been taught and stabilize it; with this end in view, teachers suggested two strategies in order to do so, including **Interactional learning** and **Environmental learning**.

4.2.5.1. Interactional Learning

Language learning is the means and communication is the end; therefore, interaction is an indispensable part of foreign language development. However, in our country there is little opportunity for subjects to have conversational exchanges with natives. Hence, teachers suggested that ELLs must seek for any opportunities to learn or activate what they have already learnt. To this end, interaction with friends and families would be the best strategy. Supporting this issue, one of the participants asserted:

Regarding the fact that we do not have the opportunity to be in contact with native speakers in our country, language learners should jump at any chance of speaking with friends or those people they are in contact with. Talking with friends and family members is the only opportunity that they should not lose. (TP13)

4.2.5.2. Environmental Language Learning

A successful language learner is the one who knows how to communicate in different situations. Integrating target language with real life experiences helps them to get familiar with actual use of the target language in concrete situations. Moreover, when ELL connect the language they learned to real world events, retaining and retrieving it would be less demanding. On this issue, one of the participants:

Thinking in L2 in real life help language learners to improve off-the-cuff speaking, that is to say, in different situations they should think and find appropriate ways of expressing their thoughts in L2. (TP11)

Additionally, ELL should be curious about their surroundings. They must be intensely inquisitive to learn a language. Hence, in order to be a successful language learner, careful notice, deep reflection and careful investigation are of crucial importance. Considering this strategy, one of the participants explained:

ELL should be as curious as children who are learning their L1. They are required to look for every situation to learn. For example, in order to improve vocabulary knowledge, they can look around to find things and look for how they can call things in L2. This strategy can help them to learn language in real situations, in which they can memorize and recall the words easier.(TP7)

4.2.6. Reproduction of Authentic Materials

Native speakers produce a language and non-native speakers reproduce it. Hence, second and foreign language learners have not the permission to be creative in generating the target language. However, they should imitate the way natives write and repeat what they orally produce. Accordingly, teachers suggested **imitating authentic writing samples** and **repeating authentic speeches** as two efficient strategies,

which help them to get familiar with proper application of words, grammar rules, structures, pronunciations and the likes in real-world contexts.

4.2.6.1. Imitating Authentic Writing Samples

Imitation is a behavior whereby an individual observes another person, preferably proficient and highly skilled in a certain area, and then mimicking what she/he did. This form of learning has always been thought to play an important role in child's language development. Similarly, foreign/second language learning, particularly writing skill, can be modeled on this learning strategy. Gorrel (1987) note, "Imitation offers a way for unskilled writers to learn form and structure while generating and finding expression for their own ideas" (p. 54). Hence, authentic materials are the best sources, which can be effectively used to promote strong writing skills. As one of the participants stated:

Imitating writing samples written by native speakers is one of the best strategies in order to follow the right principles of writing. Language learners must find at least five samples about the topic they intend to write about and find appropriate structures and phrases that they find them of use. (TP5)

Imitation is the approach in which language learners make full use of literacy, that is, to read masters' writing samples and to write the same way as they did. It should be noted that, what is imitated is not merely the structure and form of the original sample but also the grammatical and rhetorical principles of the sample. Consequently, continuous use of imitation leads to internalization. Hence, when reading authentic materials, ELL are required to pay their full attention to the elements of writings in order to be modeled on. On this issue, one of the participants pointed out:

They should try to detect useful structures, grammars or words in reading articles owing to the fact that readings are writing samples of its author. Therefore, it is a wonderful technique to dramatically improve their writing. (TP12)

4.2.6.2. Repeating Authentic Speeches

Simultaneous repetition (listen and repeat) can be used as a simple but powerful technique to achieve a higher level of accuracy in speaking and listening skills. It helps ELL to get familiar not only with appropriate use of words and structures in sentence, but also with their appropriate pronunciation. Supporting this issue, one of the participants stated:

Simultaneous listening strategy helps language learners to listen and repeat concurrently what native speakers produce in order to improve their speaking and pronunciation. Furthermore, they can memorize those structures, which they find useful for speaking. (TP7)

Simultaneous repetition of audio tracks, preferably authentic ones, is a great way of enhancing speaking and listening skills. Based on the knowledge of the repeater about what is being repeated, this technique is divided into conscious repetition and unconscious repetition that refer to the repetition of an audio track with the level of the repeater and an audio track one level beyond his/her language level (Krashen $i+1$) respectively. The first type deepens prior knowledge while the second type familiarizes learners with new knowledge and help him/her to learn through context, that is, they repeat unknown items to learn. As one of the participants asserted:

I suggest LLs to listen and repeat even if they do not know the meaning of every individual word. This is how children learn language: they hear the words first and deduce the meaning later. It doesn't matter what device they use, they should read and repeat the words out loud until they are set in memory. (TP13)

4.2.7. Disassembling Authentic Texts

In the field of engineering, reverse engineering refers to the process of disassembling something and analyzing its components to see how it was made and how it works, so something like it can be made. Likewise, within the field of language learning and teaching, it is suggested to analyze authentic sources to find out how the target language is produced by native speakers in different contexts, so that it can be more accurately simulated. Reverse language learning strategy can be adopted in order

to analyze different authentic sources, namely articles, subtitles, magazines, etc. in order to get familiar with authentic text components and find out how they are tied together in the form of a text. By doing so, LLs would be able to produce a native-like text. As one of the participants pointed out:

Language learners are generally obsessed with finding out the meaning of unknown words of a text while they ignore other aspects of it. Hence, the text analysis strategy is highly popular among language learners, although they are not acutely aware of the right way of using it. I recommend my students to take two approaches if they intend to make use of authentic materials including magazines, newspapers, films and the like. They should analyze texts and go beyond vocabulary analysis. They should learn to analyze structures, grammatical points, word choice, and tense shifts produced by native speakers so that they can simulate similar text.(TP10)

The analysis of the constituents of a text helps language learners to become familiar with the accurate utilization of them, which is produced by native speakers in different situations and contexts. Listening transcriptions, movie subtitles, reading articles and stories are different types of available texts that can be analyzed with the purpose of simulating their organization, word choice, grammatical structures, etc. However, it should be noted that a text should be understood before being analyzed. Supporting this issue, one of the participants stated:

Textual analysis is a strategy with the help of which ELL have the opportunity to get familiar with the accurate application of different structures, grammars, collocations, slangs, which are used in different types of authentic sources. This analysis would vary from reading articles and stories to listening transcripts and movie subtitles. However, Comprehension is the first step, which should be taken before analyzing texts. When language learners intend to analyze a text, they should consider not only the word choice and their usage, but also grammatical points, punctuations, rhetorical organizations and the likes. (TP4)

As the strategy of memorizing rules of grammar does not work, it is suggested to learn grammatical points within the real contexts. When reading, language learners should give their full attention to the grammatical points of the text and highlight them to use in similar situations later on. For instance, they can find out how and why native speakers make use of tense shifts and do the same when writing or speaking. As one of the participants asserted:

Through reading newspapers, short stories, and journals, students can highlight those grammar points which specify the shift from past tense to present and then to the future. In addition, they can figure out that some events in the past are not merely expressed by simple past, however, present perfect and past perfect are also applicable to express some events occurred in the past. Thus, reading more and more literary texts is an effective way of learning grammar point. However, they should not only rely on one type of text. In other words, they need to practice different texts and passages with different manner of expressions to learn the rules of tense shift better in order to be able to produce language.(TP5)

4.2.8. Planning

The first strategy towards successful language learning is to set a daily appointment with yourself and your library to accelerate the process of language learning drastically. However, ELL learning process is generally based on their moods and interests. One of the participants better explains how to set a daily plan to improve listening skill:

They should devote at least fifteen minutes a day to improve their listening skill based on their proficiency level. Then, they have to increase this time span gradually in order to be more proficient in their listening.(TP.13)

Each language consists of a large number of vocabulary words which cannot be learnt unless with a regular daily schedule. To this end, ELL should set a goal, draw up a schedule, and stick to the schedule to get closer to whatever the end goal is. On this issue, one of the participants stated:

I think the golden rule is, whatever the technique, spend a specific amount of time on language learning every day, rather than an extended session once a week. Try to learn at least three new words daily. After two or three months, you will see the difference.(TP.5)

4.2.9. Watching Foreign Movies Actively

Audiovisual materials are powerful instructional tools due to the rich context they provide for viewers, which facilitate auditory processing (Baltova, 1994). Watching foreign language movies, documentaries and TV programs are an absolutely vital part of any language learners' experience, which increase their exposure to the target foreign language. However, language learners wrongly suppose that they can sit down in front of the TV, and expect to miraculously become fluent in English. Nevertheless, when a movie is considered as a language-learning tool, it has to be studied rather than watched. Accordingly, language teachers asserted that every audio material should be watched more than three times, each time with a specific purpose, for instance developing listening skills, expanding vocabulary knowledge, getting familiar with idiomatic, everyday expressions etc. Therefore, in order to fulfill each purpose they suggested two types of movie strategies, namely **watching without subtitle, listening to dialogues, watching with subtitle.**

4.2.9.1. Watching Without Subtitle

Subtitles of foreign movies distract language learners' attention from the spoken language of the movies and decrease their ear's sensitivity to recognize what was said. Therefore, teachers suggested the strategy of removing the subtitle if watching movies is going to fulfill the purpose of listening improvement rather than learning specific words and structures. This strategy helps language learners to be thirsty for hearing the language. As one of the participants points out:

Watching movies would be so effective in order to make improvements in foreign language since these tools increase learners' exposure to the target language. Even though subtitles are very helpful in order to find and learn unknown words, idioms, slangs or things we may not find anywhere else but they may make your ears lazy to be more concentrated. Therefore, I suggest language learners to ignore subtitles

for the first time if they aim at improving their listening skill. In my view, when learners watch a movie they are thirsty to understand the language of the movie in order to follow storyline, therefore their eagerness would be a motive to recognize the language. However, if they watch the movie with subtitle they would be highly involved with the text and less eager to hear the language. (TP10)

As it is stated by language teachers, subtitles do not permit language learners ears to be enough sensitive to hear the dialogues. Consequently, they would not be involved enough with the spoken language of the movie. Thus, if language learners intend to watch a movie with the purpose of improving foreign language, it should be more than three times and each time for achieving a specific purpose. For instance, if they aim at improving listening skill, in the first place it is suggested to watch it with subtitle to understand enough about the plot and characters; then for the second time remove the subtitle in order to be more concentrated on hearing the language rather than reading it. On this issue, one of the participants asserted:

If LLs watch a foreign movie with the purpose of boosting foreign language, they should watch it more than five times. If it is an unfamiliar movie, for the first time it is better to make use of subtitles in order to get familiar with the gist of the story, plot and characters. Then for the second or third time in order to improve listening skill, they should watch without the help of subtitle; since it causes distraction and by removing it, they would be more concentrated. Lastly, they can add subtitle and watch one more time in order to check new words, structures or accuracy of what they heard.(TP10)

People mostly focus on what they see rather than hear. Accordingly, when they watch a film with subtitles, they prefer to read the subtitle rather than listening to the dialogues. Therefore, in order to improve ELLs' listening skill and decrease the risk of distraction, it is recommended to remove the subtitles of movies. On this issue, one of the participants states:

When watching foreign language movies, ELLs are a reader rather than a listener for the most part. This phenomenon is the result of ELLs'

inclination to trust their eyes rather than their ears. Thus, it is suggested to remove subtitles of the film and watch it repeatedly in order to empower their aural skill. It is better to use this strategy for those films they already have familiarity with. (TP2)

4.2.9.2. Listening to Dialogues

Although watching foreign movies is certainly worthwhile in foreign language learning, the scenes may distract language learners' attention from the language of movie. Therefore, it is suggested to listen to the dialogues of movies rather than watching them in order to eliminate the possibility of distraction. This strategy helps ELL to be more concentrated on the language of the movie and become a better listener. As one of the participants asserted:

Movies scenes sometimes may cause language learners wrongly suppose that they have understood what they heard through language while the comprehension took place by pictures of the movie. In order to sort out this problem, movies should be watched blindly, which means to listen to the movie dialogues with closed eyes as they listen to music. This strategy increases their concentration and develops their listening skill.(TP5)

Illusion of understanding is one of the main disadvantages of visual materials over audio materials. The problem lies in the pictures with the help of which, language learners follow the storyline without knowing the specific structures, words, phrases or idioms used by the actors. This means that movie watchers generally think that they follow the movie storyline with the help of the dialogues, yet it is the scenes, which help them to understand the story. Therefore, in order to prevent this phenomenon, teachers recommended the strategy of listening to video materials rather than watching them, particularly when learners intend to improve listening skill. On this issue, one of the participants points out:

When watching movies with the purpose of language learning the screens may cause a delusion of understanding-that is, you may follow movies story line by guessing from the scenes rather than recognizing and understanding the spoken language. Hence, I recommend my

students to watch the movies two or three times, each time on a special purpose. In order to improve listening skill they have to listen to the movie rather than watching it and try to recognize the dialogues.(TP8)

4.2.9.3. Watching with Subtitle

Watching English-spoken movies, soap operas, and documentaries with subtitles is becoming increasingly popular among ELL. Such an increasing popularity may be related to the fact that “subtitled television programs seem to provide a rich context for foreign language acquisition” (Koolestra & Beentjes, 1999, p. 51). Watching alone will not suffice to improve English language proficiency; however, ELL should transform from passive watchers to active learners. One way of doing this is analyzing subtitles, that is, they should develop their vocabulary knowledge by paying attention to all the contained words and structures used by native speakers. On this issue, one of the participants asserts:

It is one thing to enjoy watching a movie, but watching with the purpose of foreign language learning is quite another. Hence, language learners should watch foreign movies more than two times and analyze the subtitles to find out structures, idioms, slangs and words used by native speakers in real world contexts. This strategy helps them to learn to speak English like a native speaker. (TP5)

The results also indicate that the analysis of subtitles helps ELL to figure out how the words are tied together by native speakers in different contexts. It is worth mentioning that learners have to be careful to choose movies, which are appropriate for language learning. One of the participants better elucidates this point:

ELL must consider how native speakers pull isolated words together to form a sentence. To this end, analyzing movie subtitles is the best strategy. They should watch the movie many times to improve listening skills and lastly analyze the dialogues. It should be noted that they should be selective about what they watch, that is, they should choose dialogue-heavy films. (TP8)

4.2.10. Consulting Dictionaries

If learners look up every unknown word they see or hear, they will spend their whole day with the dictionary in their hand. Hence, they have to be selective and clever enough to single out the right words to check. Along the same lines, one of the participants explains how to be selective in choosing words in order to be checked in the dictionary:

When you read a piece of text and you encounter an unknown word, first try to finish the sentence or better the paragraph. If it seems an important word and you haven't guessed the meaning of the word with the help of guessing strategies, then you can look it up. You can also do the same for the time you hear an unknown word. However, it should be mentioned that, lastly all the words have to be checked very carefully in dictionaries. (TP12)

Dictionary use strategy is not confined to the ability to be selective while encountering a group of unknown words; nevertheless, familiarity with proper use of dictionaries is of crucial importance for foreign and second language learners. ELL should pay attention to different properties of words mentioned in dictionaries in order to make the most of it. On this theme one of the participants explained which properties of words should be considered when using dictionary:

They should know how to check pronunciation, what does transitive and intransitive mean, what does spoken and written mean, how to make use of examples to generate new sentences, which words come together, which syllable is the stressed syllable to name but a few. To this end, they should read the first few pages of every dictionary, which explained how to use the dictionary in excellent detail. (TP3)

To be a good dictionary user, however, it is not enough to know what to use the dictionary for and how to use it. You must also decide which dictionary is the best dictionary to reach the intended purpose. One of the participants explains about different types of dictionaries:

Although general dictionaries are the most usable dictionaries for foreign language improvement, there are many other useful dictionaries and it is a must for all language learners to be familiar with and to use them. The most useful dictionaries which can be used as a supplement to general dictionaries include language activator dictionary, collocation dictionary, phrasal verb dictionary to name but a few. Using these kinds of dictionaries deepen the knowledge of a word and help learners to speak and write more fluently and like a native. (TP7)

4.2.11. Paper-based Reading

Despite the convenience and low cost of digital books, they are not good alternatives for printed texts when the reader intends to learn the language of the texts; since, readers are much more involved with printed texts in comparison with digital texts. On this issue, one of the participants asserted:

If reading is done with the purpose of language learning, digital texts are not as effective as printed texts. In the first place, the light of the screen makes eyes tired and consequently it decreases the amount of reading. Secondly, when you read you should underline and write the points, which deepen learning and decrease the risk of forgetting; hence, reading printed books and texts would be much preferable to electronic versions, owing to the amount of the involvement of the readers with the text, which is higher in printed versions.

Despite all the positive features of e-books they cannot be totally substituted for printed books; since they have specific features of their own. Supporting this theme one of the participants explains the superiority of printed dictionaries over digital dictionaries:

During the time of finding a word and its definition in a printed dictionary, they may encounter and get familiar with a number of unknown words, phrases or idioms, which may rarely happen in digital dictionaries. Therefore, despite the convenience and availability of digital dictionaries it is suggested to give priority to printed dictionaries when available. (TP5)

Chapter Five:

Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, the major findings and discussion of the findings of this study will be presented first. In addition, some pedagogical implications for EFL teachers will be provided. Finally, the recommendations for further research will be provided.

5.1. The Summary of the Findings and Discussion

To speed up and facilitate language-learning process, foreign language learners are required to make use of different language-learning strategies. However, the strategies should be deployed appropriately based on the contexts and the purposes of learning; otherwise, it may lead to learners failure in learning the target language. Hence, EFL teachers have the responsibility of explicit instruction of language learning strategies in order to prevent learners' deviation from the learning path.

Despite the proven efficacy of strategy-based instruction, EFL instruction in Iran still follows the traditional language learning and teaching methods. Consequently, language learners are not well aware of the appropriate use of language learning strategies. As a result, there exist a number of inappropriate language learning strategies, which is being widely used by Iranian foreign language learners. In order to solve this problem, EFL teachers are required to find out the common inappropriate learning strategies which is being used by EFL students, in order to instruct them how, when and where to use these strategies and recommend better strategies to fulfill the purpose.

Therefore, this study investigates EFL teachers' perceptions of strategy training and their alternative appropriate strategies to learners' inappropriate ones, either used or suggested. Accordingly, eleven major inappropriate common language-learning strategies were found based on the results obtained from the study: **instant production of newly learnt words, employing limited strategies, learning new words in isolation, overuse of dictionaries, misuse of dictionaries, atomistic analysis of texts, memorizing grammar rules, watching movies passively, interest-based learning, mood-based learning and digital/mobile reading.** Moreover, ten main categories of alternative appropriate strategies which were provided by EFL teachers include: **classifying unknown words based on importance and purpose, skimming and scanning, de-isolating new words, tech-based learning, experiential learning,**

reproduction of authentic materials, disassembling authentic texts, planning, watching movies actively, consulting dictionaries and paper-based reading.

To begin with learners inappropriate strategies, there is a misconception among language learners that constant production leads to proficiency, irrespective of language knowledge. They believe that knowing the meaning of words suffice for producing the word both in spoken and written sentences. However, language production knowledge is beyond knowing the meaning of words; it requires you to be able to tigh the words together properly based on the context. Therefore, owing to the fact that incorrect production may lead to fossilization, they should receive enough comprehensible input before production.

Secondly, although language learning is a purpose-bound process through which every step of learning should be taken based on purpose and the context of learning, language learners learn a language haphazardly and generally with no discernable point or purpose. They make use of one specific strategy for different purposes and in different situations. However, learning strategies are not generalizable and applicable in all situations and contexts; but they vary based on learners' purposes, needs and situations. Hence, first, they should clarify their purpose; then they should choose and employ the most efficient strategy.

Thirdly, as languages are generally defined as a set of strings of symbols with a set of rules that are specific to it, no word can be learnt in isolation. Nevertheless, learning in isolation is the most commonly used strategy among foreign language learners for vocabulary development.

Though dictionaries have consistently been considered as an indispensable part of language learning, its overuse in any situation and for every word is not recommended. However, language learners take dictionaries as the only available solution to come up with comprehension barriers made by unfamiliar words. They consistently make use of dictionaries for every kind of unfamiliar words and in any situation, while there are many lexical processing strategies (LPS) through which they can come up with an approximate meaning of an unknown word. These kinds of strategies are far more effective than dictionaries in situations when time matters.

Moreover, atomistic analysis of every kind of texts, either written or spoken, is another common inappropriate language learning strategy among foreign language learners. Teachers asserted that although holistic approach is less time consuming and far more effective in a majority of cases, learners put considerable effort into the atomistic analysis of learning materials regardless of the purpose and situation. However, the purpose of reading a text and the context ascertains whether a holistic or atomistic approach should be adopted.

Further, language learners generally consult a dictionary in order to find out the meaning of an unknown word. They look up the definitions of words without paying attention to other features of the words, including pronunciation, part of speech, transitivity, level of formality, etc. which have a significant role in practical application of words. Additionally, language learners hardly ever make use of other kinds of dictionaries like language activator or collocation dictionary which can be used as a supplement for general dictionaries in order to gain a deeper and more native like knowledge of words.

In addition, memorizing is a prevalent language learning strategy, which is adopted by language learners to learn grammar rules. They devote a significant amount of time to memorize the rules by repeating them. However, grammar rules can never be mastered, but by practicing and noticing, that is to say, practicing in real contexts and noticing its proper use in authentic samples produced by native speakers.

Although watching movies are widely known as the best available source, particularly for those who live in a non-native speaking environment, learners are not well aware of the appropriate use of this language learning strategy. They wrongly suppose that lying passively in front of the TV and watching the movie will suffice to make improvements to foreign language knowledge, while this strategy requires an active participation.

Learners put much time and effort into learning a specific part of a language toward which they show higher interest, while they put less time into other aspects. They are generally too much engrossed in receptive skills and less willing to spend any time for productive skills. Consequently, there is no parallel proficiency among language skills and sub skills, that is, they are generally highly skilled in reading and

listening and less skilled in speaking and writing. However, the components of a language are integrated and cannot be separated from each other.

Although planning is a vital component of language teaching and learning, learners rarely follow a daily-preplanned schedule. They mostly have an unplanned mood-based learning that is sometimes abandoned or stop progressing for a long time.

Digital reading is another inappropriate learning strategy that its use is rising day by day among language learners. Despite the efficacy and convenience of digital devices (smart phone, tablet and laptop) for listening improvement, they may not be a good permanent substitution for printed texts. Teachers believed that learners might lose depth in digital reading, particularly when they intend to analyze or reread the text. Likewise, O'Hara and Sellen (1997) pointed to annotation, quick navigation and layout as the advantages of reading from paper over reading from online sources. In the same line, Mangen, Walgermo and Bronnack (2013) found that readers performed better on comprehending printed texts rather than reading the same texts on computer screen.

Having found the most common inappropriate language learning strategies among foreign language learners, we can suggest appropriate strategies to replace learners' inappropriate ones. The first solution to their inappropriate language learning strategies is making them to adjust their applied strategies with their purposes of language learning. In other words, they are made to classify their learning purposes at first and then choose a specific strategy according to their determined purpose of learning. Oxford (1989) supports this by asserting that strategies should be based on the language task, the learners' goals, and the learners' styles of learning. This classification enables language learners to adopt the most appropriate strategy in case of encountering an unknown word based on the context in which the word occurs and the purpose of learners. Ignoring, guessing, scratching the surface and deepening are the suggested appropriate strategies that language learners can employ each one based on their purpose of learning. Rubin (1975) and Oxford (1989) call guessing strategy as one type of compensation strategy through which learners can overcome their language knowledge shortcomings. In the same line, Green and Oxford (1995) reported that those learners who employed more degree of cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, and social strategies demonstrated higher proficiency. Likewise, Bremmer (1999) found that

the highest frequency use of strategies was attributed to compensation and metacognitive strategies. Additionally, Ehrman and Oxford (1995) noted that the use of compensation strategies is dependent on learners' proficiency level.

Almost the entire participants suggested scanning and skimming as two of the most practical strategies by which learners can increase their reading speed and comprehension. Diaz and Laguado (2013) and Ulmi, Sundari and Sukmaantara (2015) found that the use of scanning and skimming techniques contributed to enhancing language learners reading comprehension. Moreover, a study conducted by Abbot (2006) on the comparison between the ability of Arabic and Mandarin ESL learners in making use of different reading strategies indicated that the Mandarin ESL learners, highly benefited from breaking a word into smaller parts, scanning, paraphrasing, and matching strategies; while, the Arabic ESL learners mostly made use of skimming, connecting, and inferring strategies.

Since isolated vocabulary learning is the most widely used inappropriate language learning strategy among foreign language learners, participants of the study suggested some learning strategies, including linking, formulaic learning and contextualizing to replace inefficient use of isolated vocabulary learning. These strategies can facilitate vocabulary learning process, increase its maintenance, ease the burden of retrieving and applying them in practice. Oxford (1989) in her strategy classification system referred to these kinds of strategies as memory strategies through which learners can store information in memory and retrieve it when needed. Despite the high efficacy of memory strategies a study conducted by Mullin (1992) indicated that cognitive, metacognitive and compensation strategies appeared to be Thai EFL university students' preferred options and in addition to memory strategies, social and affective strategies was less preferred.

As technology continues to grow in importance for every individual and become an indispensable part of our lives, it can also be used as a tool to assist language learners and teachers in facilitating language learning. Therefore, participants' of the study provided three types of tech-based language learning strategies, namely, SMLL, mass media and recording as the most efficient ways of language learning. Social media language learning strategy (SMLL) which fits into Oxford's social strategies category

enables learners to interact with each other and with native speakers from all corners of the world. Oxford (1989) claimed that good language learners adopted social strategies to learn the language by interacting and working with others in terms of asking questions and developing cultural understanding. Moreover, Oxford (1989) added that good language learners manage their own learning process through paying attention, self-evaluating, and self-monitoring which are examples of metacognitive strategies. Hence, mass media and recording of our own talk would be samples of metacognitive strategies, which enable language learners to pay attention to authentic texts, as the based comprehensible input, and evaluate their own speaking progress respectively. Further, Block (1992) divided monitoring in comprehension into three phases: evaluation, action, and checking.

It is believed that language learning requires an integration of knowledge and experience in order to meet success. Therefore, participants of the study suggested environmental and interactional learning strategies as two auspicious strategies for naturalistic practice of learned materials, which tie experience to language knowledge through interacting with others and relating their language knowledge to real world events respectively. Accordingly, Oxford (1989) asserted that good language learners practice naturalistically, analyze contrastively, and summarize the new learned materials to show their ability in applying cognitive strategies.

In any field beginners imitate and repeat what the masters of the field do. Likewise, owing to the fact that native speakers are the producers and masters of a language, non-native speakers should model themselves on native speakers and reproduce what they have already produced. Accordingly, the participants of the study suggested two LLSs namely, imitation and repetition in order to achieve a native-like fluency and proficiency in the target language. They suggested that language learners must imitate how native speakers write and repeat what they say. Oxford and Ehrman (1995) mentioned practicing authentically (one of which is repeating (Oxford, 1990)) as an example of cognitive strategies, which was founded as the only category of strategies that led to a significant increase in the learners' end-of-training language proficiency.

In the same line, analyzing the authentic materials, both written and spoken, make language learners aware of the accurate application of language elements and how

they are tied together. Hence, text analysis would be a promising strategy for achieving a native-like fluency. Oxford and Ehrman (1995) identified analyzing as one type of cognitive strategies, which is among the most frequently used language learning strategies by language learners.

Moreover, planning is another suggested strategies through which learners arrange and plan their learning. It indicates how to set a daily schedule in order to achieve language proficiency more efficiently. Cohen, Weaver, and Li (1995) characterized cognitive strategies by a set of activities including planning, organizing, self-monitoring, assessing, and evaluating. Similarly, Rubin (1990, 1975) placed management techniques such as planning, evaluating, modifying and monitoring in metacognitive strategies category, which was employed by good language learners. Further, Pintrich and De Groot (1990) found that applying cognitive strategies such as rehearsal and elaboration, and metacognitive strategies such as planning and monitoring was highly influenced by the expectancy and value components of motivation in EFL college students; whereas a negative relationship between the mentioned strategies and the affective component was concluded by the authors (Pintrich& De Groot, 1990). A study conducted by Mullins (1992) on Thai university EFL students' use of LLS reported that the use of compensation, cognitive and metacognitive strategies was far preferable to social, memory and affective strategies. Additionally, he found that there is a positive correlation between learners' proficiency level and employment of compensation and metacognitive strategies.

Although dictionary use strategy is the most widely used strategy among language learners, they are not well aware of the appropriate use of it. They wrongly suppose that its use is limited to find the meaning of an unknown word. Hence, teachers indicated the appropriate way of consulting a dictionary. They suggested that learners are required to make the most of a dictionary, that is, they must pay attention to every single features of words mentioned in the book, including pronunciation, syllable stress, written or spoken, formal or informal, part of speech, collocations etc. in order to be able to apply them accurately in the right place and form.

Lastly, as declared by the participants of the study despite the increasingly widespread use of digital books among language learners they are not as effective as

printed versions. Therefore, they objected to the replacing of printed texts with digital/online texts. They suggested that printed texts are far more effective in reading improvement than digital; since, readers are much more involved in the former in comparison with the latter.

In sum, due to the time limit in Iran foreign language classrooms, language teachers can adopt remedial strategy training in preference to strategy training. Based on the present study, remedial strategy training refers to the act of figuring out foreign language learners' difficulties in adopting language-learning strategies and providing them with appropriate use of learning strategies.

Another key point of this study is that, learners must clarify their purpose before making any attempt to adopt a strategy. Consequently, when the adopted strategy is in line with the purpose, it would have a positive impact on learning. On the contrary, when the learning strategies are not chosen based on the intended purpose, it may deviate learners from the learning path.

Finally yet importantly, as it is stated by almost all of the participants of the study no learning strategy is generalizable to all students with different personality and individual differences. However, except for learning styles mentioned by Rebecca Oxford there are many other influential factors which severely affect the teaching and using of language learning strategies, including economy, place of living, social status, facilities, the time and place of learning and many other internal (personal) and external (environmental) factors. Accordingly, I introduce a new classification for learning strategies. The new classification is based on the factors, which may affect the utilization and teaching of learning strategies. In this classification, the learning strategies are bifurcated into two groups' namely internally dependent strategies and externally dependent strategies. The former refers to those strategies which are affected by personality differences (within individuals and between individuals) and the latter refers to the strategies affected by external(environmental) factors.

5.3. Pedagogical Implications

This study have attempted to figure out Iranian foreign language learners' inappropriate learning strategies and teachers recommended strategies to be replaced with learners' inappropriate ones. As such, the categories and conceptualizations which

reflect teachers' views, experiences and suggestions on common inappropriate learning strategies and their own alternative strategies have implications for:

- Curriculum developers, syllabus designers and education system to allocate a specific amount of time for strategy training in curriculum in order to prevent the prevalence of inappropriate language learning strategies.
- Language learners since they should learn to be selective about what strategies they use to achieve a specific goal.
- EFL teachers since the findings enables them to get familiar with common inappropriate learning strategies used by learners and look for better strategies to be substituted for inappropriate ones.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Studies

Having explored language learners' common inappropriate language learning strategies and teachers' recommended strategies to be substituted for learners' inappropriate ones, further researches needs to be done into how these strategies can be trained and employed properly. Moreover, further studies are needed to investigate which factors are influential on the emergence of inappropriate language learning strategies.

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چکیده:

در طول تاریخ آموزش زبان مطالعات زیادی برای یافتن موثرترین روشهای یادگیری زبان و تاثیر استفاده از روشهای یادگیری بر مهارت زبانی زبان آموزان انجام شده است. با این وجود هیچ مطالعه ای در زمینه روشهای رایج نامناسب یادگیری زبان که ممکن است زبان آموزان را از مسیر درست یادگیری منحرف کند انجام نشده است. این تحقیق دو هدف را دنبال میکند، در ابتدا به بررسی دیدگاه اساتید زبان در مورد روشهای نامناسب یادگیری زبان توسط زبان آموزان میپردازد و سپس روشهای جایگزین پیشنهادی اساتید را بررسی میکند. بدین منظور داده ها از طریق مصاحبه جمع آوری شده اند. سیزده استاد زبان از میان اساتید زبان موسسات زبان تهران انتخاب شده اند که حداقل پنج سال سابقه تدریس زبان انگلیسی را دارند. پس از بررسی داده های جمع آوری شده دو دسته بندی کلی بدست آمده است که دسته اول شامل روشهای نامناسب یادگیری زبان بین زبان آموزان و دسته دوم روشهای جایگزین پیشنهاد شده توسط اساتید میباشد. نتایج نشان میدهد که خلاء آموزش روشهای یادگیری در سیستم آموزش زبان ایران منجر به رواج روشهای یادگیری نامناسبی بین زبان آموزان شده است. بنابراین اساتید زبان موظف هستند استفاده نامناسب زبان آموزان از روشهای یادگیری را اصلاح کنند. روشهای نامناسب رایج بین زبان آموزان ایرانی و روشهای مناسب جایگزین پیشنهاد شده توسط اساتید در این تحقیق ارائه شده است.

کلید واژه ها: زبان آموزان، اساتید زبان، روشهای یادگیری جایگزین، روشهای یادگیری نامناسب



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