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LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCES OF TEACHER TRAINEES IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT:

his study was explored to find out the language learning strategies and learning style preferences of teacher trainees in learning English as a second language in Chennai. A sample of 400 B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. trainees was selected for the study. Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning and Joy Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire were used for data collection. Data was analyzed by t-test. Results showed that the two most often used language learning strategy of teacher trainees are metacognitive and social strategies and the two most preferred learning styles of teacher trainees are tactile and visual learning styles.

KEYWORDS: Language Learning Strategies, Learning Style Preferences, Teacher Trainees, English as Second Language.

INTRODUCTION

English being the second language of our country is the secondary vehicle for communication. Learning a second language is a step-by-step process. Language learning strategies are the often-conscious steps or behaviors used by language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information (Rigney, 1978; Oxford, 1990). In the second language learning, Language Learning Strategies, have come to be applied to the conscious moves made by the second language learner intended to be useful in either learning or using the second language. According to Oxford (1990), Language Learning Strategies are "specific actions, behaviors, steps or techniques that students often intentionally use to improve their progress in developing second language skills. These strategiescan facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. Language strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability".

At this juncture, it is important to differentiate Language Learning Strategies from Learning Styles. Learning Styles are the learner's natural habitual or preferred mode of absorbing, processing and retaining aspects of the target language. Reid defines Perceptual Learning Style as "the variations among learners in using one or more senses to understand, organize, and retain experience" (Reid, 1987). Learning Styles along with Language Learning Strategies help in the better language learning outcome. In order to do that, they must be well aware of methods or techniques or approaches that help them in learning effectively. This research work is conceived to identify the Language Learning Strategies and preferred Learning Styles of teacher trainees from various Teacher Training Institutes in Chennai.

SAMPLE

The sample consisted of 400 teacher trainees (B.Ed./D.El.Ed) from various Teacher Training Institutes in Chennai.

Tool 1: Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Rebecca Oxford

The SILL version 7.0 is a self-report instrument devised by Rebecca Oxford which assesses the frequency with which the learners use for English language learning. This version comprising of 50 statements is for learners of English as a Second Language. The inventory covers six types of Language Learning Strategies - Memory (statements 1-9), Cognitive (statements 10-23), Compensation (statements 24-29), Metacognitive (statements 30-38), Affective (statements 39-44) and Social (statements 45-50) strategies. The first three types of strategies - Memory, Cognitive, and Compensation - are collectively termed as Direct Strategies while the remaining three strategies - Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies are termed as Indirect Strategies. The SILL is evaluated on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1-5 for all the 50 items. The number indicates how often the strategies are used by the learner. The scores are categorized as High (ranging from 3.5 to 5.0), Medium (ranging from 2.5 to 3.4) and Low (ranging from 1.0 to 2.4).

Tool 2: Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ) by Joy Reid

The PLSPQ developed by Joy Reid for non-native speakers was used to study the preferred Learning Styles of the learners. It is the first learning style measure used widely in the ESL/EFL field. This questionnaire consists of 30 statements in random order for six learning style preferences with five statements on each learning style - Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile, Group and Individual. This questionnaire is a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Reid set cut off points for Learning Style and classified them as Major (ranging from 38-50), Minor (ranging from 25- 37) and Negligible (ranging from 0-24) Learning Styles.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

 H_01 : There is no significant difference between B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. teacher trainees in using the following language learning strategies - memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social.

Language Learning Strategies	Course	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	
Momony	B.Ed.	200	2.744	0.7234	0.096	0.923	
Memory	D.El.Ed.	200	2.738	0.6543	0.090	0.923	
Cognitive	B.Ed.	200	3.120	0.6775	0.274	0.784	
Cognitive	D.El.Ed.	200	3.137	0.5955	0.274	0.764	
Componentian	B.Ed.	200	2.984	0.7594	0.384	0.701	
Compensation	D.El.Ed.	200	3.045	2.1197	0.304	0.701	
Metacognitive	B.Ed.	200	3.902	2.5450	1.655	0.099	
ivietacognitive	D.El.Ed.	200	3.590	0.7803	1.000	0.099	
Affortivo	B.Ed.	200	2.990	1.6460	1 150	0.247	
Affective	D.El.Ed.	200	2.839	0.8000	1.159	0.247	
Social	B.Ed.	200	3.376	0.9417	0.546	0.231	
Social	D.El.Ed.	200	3.267	0.8653	0.346	0.231	

Table 1: Language Learning Strategies of B.Ed. & D.El.Ed. Teacher Trainees

Table-1 shows that there is no significant difference between B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. teacher trainees in using language learning strategies since the p-values are greater than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis-1 is accepted.

 H_02 : There is no significant difference between male and female teacher trainees in using the following language learning strategies - memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social.

Language Learning Strategies Gender N Mean t-value p-value Male 110 2.658 0.7767 Memory 1.363 0.175 Female 290 2.772 0.6512 Male 110 2.983 3.184 Cognitive 2.846 0.005* Female 290 3.184 0.6219 Male 110 2.957 0.8038 Compensation 0.445 0.657 Female 290 3.037 1.8019 3.910 Male 110 3.3733 Metacognitive 1.073 0.284 3.683 290 0.7791 Female 2.778 0.8999 Male 110 Affective 1.298 0.195 2.966 Female 290 1.4138 Male 110 3.137 0.8966 Social 2.528 0.012* 0.8996 Female 290 3.392

Table 2: Language Learning Strategies of B.Ed. & D.El.Ed. Teacher Trainees based on Gender

Table-2 depicts that there is a significant difference between male and female teacher trainees in using cognitive strategy since the p-value is lesser than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis-2 is rejected for the cognitive strategy. From the mean scores, it is evident that the female D.El.Ed. teacher trainees are better at using memory, and social strategies than male teacher trainees.

H₀3: There is no significant difference between rural and urban pre-service teachers in using the following language learning strategies - memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social.

Language Learning Strategies	Nativity	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	
Memory	Rural	261	2.769	0.6637	1.109	0, 268	
Ivierior y	Urban	139	2.688	0.7334	1.109	0.200	
Cognitive	Rural	261	3.124	0.6533	0.210	0.024	
Cognitive	Urban	139	3.138	0.6075	0.210	0.834	
Componentian	Rural	261	3.088	1.8969	1.266	0.206	
Compensation	Urban	139	2.877	0.7109	1.200	0.206	
Motacognitivo	Rural	261	3.813	2.2577	0.977	0.329	
Metacognitive	Urban	139	3.619	0.8127	0.977	0.329	
Affective	Rural	261	2.891	0.8681	0.501	0.617	
Affective	Urban	139	2.959	1.8502	0.501	0.017	
Social	Rural	261	3.328	0.9088	0.200	0.842	
Social	Urban	139	3.309	0.9003	0.200	0.042	

Table 3: Language Learning Strategies of B.Ed. & D.El.Ed. Teacher Trainees based on Nativity

Table-3 evident that there is no significant difference between rural and urban teacher trainees in using language learning strategies since the p-value is greater than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis-3 is accepted.

 H_04 : There is no significant difference in the teacher trainees studying in various types of colleges in their usage of the following language learning strategy - memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social.

Table 4: Language Learning Strategies of B.Ed. & D.El.Ed. Teacher Trainees based on Management Type

Strategies	Source of Variation	Df	SS	MS	F	p-value	
	Between	2	6.257	3.128			
Memory	Within	397	183.078	0.461	6.784	0.001*	
	Total	399	189.334				
	Between	2	2.514	1.257			
Cognitive	Within	397	159.412	0.402	3.130	0.045	
-	Total	399	161.926				
	Between	2	15.033	7.516			
Compensation	Within	397	994.260	2.504	3.001	0.051	
	Total	399	1009.293				
Metacognitive	Between	2	1.101	0.551			
ivietacognitive	Within	397	1418.732	3.574	0.154	0.857	
	Total	399	1419.833				
	Between	2	18.980	9.490			
Affective	Within	397	649.796	1.637	5.798	0.003*	
	Total	399	668.776				
	Between	2	4.236	2.118			
Social	Within	397	322.405	0.812	2.608	0.075	
	Total	399	326.641				

Table-4 reveals that there is a significant difference between the teacher trainees studying in government, aided and self-financing colleges in using memory and affective strategies since the p-value is lesser than 0.05. Hence the following post-hoc tests were conducted for memory and affective strategies.

Table 5: Post- Hoc Test for the Visual, and Group Style of Teacher Trainees' Studying in Government, Aided and Self-Financing Institutions

Language Learning Strategies	Management Type	N	Mean	Management Type	N	Mean	p-value
	Government	102	2.759	Aided	116	2.916	0.152
Memory	Aided	116	2.916	Self-Financing	182	2.619	0.000*
	Government	102	2.759	Self-Financing	182	2.619	0.239
	Government	102	3.036	Aided	116	3.684	0.779
Affective	Aided	116	3.684	Self-Financing	182	3.741	0.034*
	Government	102	3.036	Self-Financing	182	3.741	0.002*

Table-5 shows that there is a significant difference between teacher trainees studying in aided and self-financing institutions in using their memory strategy. There is also a significant difference between teacher trainees studying in aided and self-financing institutions & government and self-financing institutions in using their affective strategy. Hence the null hypothesis-4 is rejected for memory and affective strategies.

H₀5: There is no significant difference between B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. teacher trainees in using the following learning style preferences in English language learning - visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group and individual.

Course Style Ν Mean SD t-value p-value B.Ed. 200 26.77 6.496 4.508 0.000* Visual D.El.Ed. 200 23.98 5.866 B.Ed. 200 24.54 6.631 Auditory 0.716 0.474 D.El.Ed. 200 25.01 6.494 B.Ed. 200 24.51 6.422 Kinesthetic 1.227 0.221 D.El.Ed. 200 25.25 5.616 24.59 5.530 B.Ed. 200 Tactile 3.059 0.002* D.El.Ed. 200 26.38 6.155 B.Ed. 200 23.50 6.343 0.000* Group 5.516 7.122 D.El.Ed. 200 27.22 200 23.58 6.452 B.Ed. Individual 1.207 0.228 D.El.Ed. 200 22.82 6.141

Table 6: Learning Style Preferences of B.Ed. & D.El.Ed. Teacher Trainees

Table-6 depicts that there is a significant difference between B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. teacher trainees in the visual, tactile and group learning styles since the p-values are lesser than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis-5 is rejected for the visual, tactile and group learning styles. From the mean scores, it is evident that the B.Ed. teacher trainees prefer visual and individual learning styles while D.El.Ed. teacher trainees prefer tactile and group learning styles.

H₀6: There is no significant difference between male and female teacher trainees in using the following Learning style preferences in English language learning - visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group and individual.

	_						
Style	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	
Vioual	Male	110	25.40	6.222	0.040	0.0/1	
Visual	Female	290	25.37	6.391	0.049	0.961	
Auditon	Male	110	23.38	6.398	2.636	0.009*	
Auditory	Female	290	25.30	6.552	2.030	0.009	
Kinesthetic	Male	110	24.67	6.150	0.423	0.673	
Kiriestrietic	Female	290	24.96	6.002	0.423	0.073	
Tactile	Male	110	24.27	5.482	2.543	0.011*	
ractile	Female	290	25.94	6.012	2.043	0.011	
Croup	Male	110	24.04	6.569	2.346	0.019*	
Group	Female	290	25.86	7.087	2.340	0.019	
Landle dale and	Male	110	23.20	6.424	0.000	1.000	
Individual	Female	290	23.20	6.267	0.000	1.000	

Table 7: Learning Style Preferences of B.Ed. & D.El.Ed. Teacher Trainees based on Gender

Table-7 reveals that there is a significant difference between male and female teacher trainees in the auditory, tactile and group learning styles since the p-values are lesser than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis-6 is rejected for the auditory, tactile and group learning styles. From the mean scores, it is evident that female teacher trainees prefer auditory, tactile, and group learning styles than male teacher trainees.

 H_0 7: There is no significant difference between rural and urban teacher trainees in using the following learning style preferences in English language learning - visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group and individual.

Style Nativity N Mean SD t-value p-value Rural 261 25.38 6.322 0.019 0.985 Visual 6.389 Urban 139 25.37 261 24.88 6.691 Rural 0.443 Auditory 0.658 Urban 139 24.58 6.321 5.957 Rural 261 24.89 Kinesthetic 0.040 0.968 139 24.86 6.204 Urban Rural 261 25.48 6.261 Tactile 0.028 0.978 Urban 139 25.50 5.215 Rural 261 25.64 7.420 Group 1.098 0.273 6.086 Urban 139 24.83 Rural 23.16 6.581 261 Individual 0.153 0.878 Urban 139 5.764 23.27

Table 8: Learning Style Preferences of B.Ed. & D.El.Ed. Teacher Trainees based on Nativity

Table-8 evident that there is no significant difference between rural and urban teacher trainees in all the learning styles since the p-value for all the learning styles is greater than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis-7 is accepted.

H₀8: There is no significant difference in the teacher trainees'studying in various types of colleges in their usage of the following learning style preferences in English language learning - visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group and individual.

Table 9: Learning Style Preferences of B.Ed. & D.El.Ed. Teacher Trainees based on Management Type

Style	Source of Variation	Df	SS	MS	F	p-value
	Between	2	127.229	63.614		
Visual	Within	397	15896.521	40.042	1.589	0.205
	Total	399	16023.750			
	Between	2	274.976	137.488		
Auditory	Within	397	16888.774	42.541	3.232	0.045
-	Total	399	17163.750			
	Between	2	183.720	91.860		
Kinesthetic	Within	397	14354.520	36.157	2.541	0.080
	Total	399	14538.240			
	Between	2	338.319	169.159		
Tactile	Within	397	13607.591	34.276	4.935	0.008*
	Total	399	13945.910			
	Between	2	158.845	79.422		
Group	Within	397	19325.315	48.678	1.632	0.197
	Total	399	19484.160			
Individual	Between	2	91.897	45.949		
	Within	397	15756.103	39.688	1.158	0.315
	Total	399	15848.000			

Table-9 shows that there is a significant difference between the teacher trainees from government, aided and self-financing colleges in tactile learning style since p-value is lesser than 0.05. Hence the following post-hoc tests were done for these learning styles.

Table 10: Post- Hoc Test for Visual & Group Style of Teacher Trainees' in Government, Aided & Self-Financing Institutions

Style	ManagementType	N	Mean	ManagementType	N	Mean	P Value
	Government	102	24.00	Aided	116	26.43	0.008*
Tactile	Aided	116	26.43	Self-Financing	182	25.71	0.574
	Government	102	24.00	Self-Financing	182	25.71	0.043*

Table-1 indicates that there is a significant difference between teacher trainees studying in government and aided institutions & also between government and self-financing teacher trainees in using their tactile learning style. Hence the null hypothesis-8 is rejected for Tactile learning style.

The mean value of teacher trainees in tactile learning style is greater for those studying in aided institutions than the mean values of those studying in government and self-financing institutions implying that the teacher trainees from aided institutions learn better through tactile learning style than their counterparts from government and self-financing institutions.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- 1.The two most often used language learning strategy of teacher trainees are metacognitive and social strategies with a mean value of 3.746 and 3.322 respectively.
- 2. The two least often used language learning strategy of teacher trainees are memory and affective strategies with a mean value of 2.741 and 2.915 respectively.
- 3. The two most preferred learning styles of teacher trainees are tactile and visual learning styles with a mean value of 25.48 and 25.38 respectively.
- 4.The two least preferred learning styles of teacher trainees are individual and auditory learning styles with a mean value of 23.20 and 24.78 respectively.
- 5.B.Ed. teacher trainees use more memory, metacognitive, affective and social strategies while D.El.Ed. teacher trainees use more cognitive and compensation strategies than their counterparts.
- 6. Female D.El.Ed. teacher trainees are better at using memory, cognitive, compensation, affective and social while male teacher trainees are better at using metacognitive strategy.
- 7. Teacher trainees from rural area use more memory, compensation, metacognitive, and social strategies while teacher trainees from urban area use more of cognitive and affective strategies.
- 8. Teacher trainees of government institutions use more metacognitive strategy than their counterparts from self-financing and aided institutions.
- $9. Teacher\ trainees\ from\ aided\ institutions\ use\ more\ memory,\ cognitive,\ compensation,\ affective\ and\ social\ strategies\ than\ those\ from\ government\ and\ self-financing\ institutions.$
- 10.B.Ed. teacher trainees prefer visual and individual learning styles while D.El.Ed. teacher trainees prefer auditory, kinesthetic, tactile and group learning styles.
- 11. Male teacher trainees prefer visual learning style while the female teacher trainees prefer auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group learning styles.
- 12. Both male and female teacher trainees prefer individual learning style in learning English as second language as their mean scores are equal.
- 13. Teacher trainees from rural area prefer visual, auditory, kinesthetic & group learning styles while the urban teacher trainees prefer tactile & individual learning styles.
- 14. Teacher trainees of self-financing institutions prefer visual learning style than their counterparts from government and aided institutions.
- 15. Teacher trainees from aided institutions prefer auditory, kinesthetic, tactile and individual learning styles than those from government and self-financing institutions.
- 16. Teacher trainees from government institutions prefer group learning style than those from aided and self-financing institutions.
- 17. There is no significant difference between B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. teacher trainees in using language learning

strategies.

- 18. There is a significant difference between male and female teacher trainees in using cognitive strategy.
- 19. There is no significant difference between rural and urban teacher trainees in using language learning strategies.
- 20. There is a significant difference between teacher trainees studying in aided and self-financing institutions in using their memory strategy.
- 21. There is also a significant difference between teacher trainees studying in aided and self-financing institutions & government and self-financing institutions in using their affective strategy.
- 22. There is a significant difference between B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. teacher trainees in the visual, tactile and group learning styles.
- 23. There is a significant difference between male and female teacher trainees in the auditory, tactile and group learning styles.
- 24. There is no significant difference between rural and urban teacher trainees in all the learning styles.
- 25. There is a significant difference between teacher trainees studying in government and aided institutions & also between government and self-financing teacher trainees in using their tactile learning style.

CONCLUSION

This paper has identified language learning strategies and learning style preferences of teacher trainees in learning English as second language. The results show the most often used language learning strategy and the most preferred learning style of teacher trainees. Good language learners actively involve themselves in the language learning task which is evident from the results. They learn most effectively when the strategy used are closely matched with their preferred learning style. If the learners learning strategies and styles are understood, teaching procedures could be developed for optimal use of the learners' way of learning English as second language.

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