

Learning Strategies of High School Students in English Language Learning
by

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Abstract

This study investigates the learning strategies employed by high school students in English language learning. The analysis revealed that students frequently apply cognitive strategies, such as note-taking, summarizing, and vocabulary practice. Metacognitive strategies, like planning and self-monitoring, are more common among advanced learners. Affective strategies, aimed at managing anxiety, are less utilized, with students adopting techniques like self-encouragement and relaxation exercises. Social strategies, including peer collaboration and teacher support, are actively applied by students. Technological advancements have facilitated strategy adoption, promoting motivation and goal-setting through interactive tools and online communities. However, challenges such as limited access to technology and distractions from educational apps were identified. The findings underscore the importance of a balanced, multi-strategy approach to language learning, emphasizing cognitive engagement, emotional support, and collaborative learning. Teachers play a pivotal role in guiding students toward effective strategy use, ensuring that instructional practices address diverse learning styles and technological inequities.

Keywords: learning strategies, high school students, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, social strategies, English language learning, technology in education

Анотація

У дослідженні детально розглядаються стратегії навчання, які застосовують старшокласники під час вивчення англійської мови. Основну увагу приділено когнітивним, метакогнітивним, афективним та соціальним стратегіям навчання. Метакогнітивні стратегії включають планування навчальної діяльності, самоконтроль та оцінку власного прогресу. Ці стратегії дозволяють учням визначати сильні та слабкі сторони свого навчання та коригувати навчальні цілі. Афективні стратегії спрямовані на подолання тривожності, формування позитивного ставлення до навчання та подолання стресу. Серед таких стратегій виділяються техніки самопідтримки, дихальні вправи та інші методи релаксації, що допомагають учням підтримувати емоційну рівновагу під час навчання. Соціальні стратегії включають взаємодію з однолітками та вчителями під час навчання. Спільне навчання дозволяє учням ділитися знаннями та досвідом, що сприяє розвитку комунікативних навичок та ефективному засвоєнню матеріалу.

Сучасні технології відіграють важливу роль у застосуванні навчальних стратегій. Використання онлайн-платформ, мобільних додатків та інтерактивних інструментів дає змогу учням отримувати доступ до навчальних матеріалів у будь-який час і з будь-якого місця. Застосування таких технологій сприяє індивідуалізації навчання та забезпечує можливість адаптації завдань відповідно до рівня підготовки учня. Водночас існують певні труднощі, пов'язані з обмеженим доступом до технологій або відволіканням уваги під час роботи з освітніми додатками. Це може негативно впливати на продуктивність навчання, що вимагає додаткових заходів з боку вчителів для підтримки концентрації учнів.

Результати дослідження підкреслюють важливість збалансованого підходу до навчання. Ефективне застосування стратегій навчання включає активне використання когнітивних стратегій для опанування нових знань, метакогнітивних стратегій для управління навчальним процесом, афективних стратегій для зниження рівня тривожності та соціальних стратегій для взаємодії та співпраці з іншими учасниками навчального процесу. Викладачі відіграють ключову роль у спрямуванні учнів на ефективне використання стратегій та подолання бар'єрів, пов'язаних із технологічними викликами. Їхня підтримка сприяє створенню комфортного та індивідуалізованого освітнього середовища, орієнтованого на задоволення навчальних потреб учнів.

Ключові слова: стратегії навчання, старшокласники, когнітивні стратегії, метакогнітивні стратегії, афективні стратегії, соціальні стратегії, вивчення англійської мови, технології в освіті

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Introduction

Background and Context.

Attention to learning English is constantly growing, and approaches to its teaching are continuously improving. However, the outcome of learning largely depends on the student themselves, their engagement, level of motivation, and the learning strategies they employ. High school students represent a category of learners who actively plan their future and often associate it with proficiency in foreign languages, particularly English. Therefore, the primary task of a teacher is to thoroughly study these students' learning strategies and identify teaching methods and interaction approaches that make the process of English learning as effective as possible for high school students.

Problem Statement.

This study addresses the theoretical challenge of understanding the language learning strategies used by high school students by focusing on cognitive and sociocultural aspects. While the existing literature provides insights into general language learning strategies, more needs to be known about the specific needs and challenges that high school students face in learning English.

Research questions

This study aims to explore and analyze the learning strategies employed by high school students in English language learning. It aims to assess how modern technological advances impact these strategies and determine teachers' role in guiding and implementing effective learning techniques.

The research questions:

- Which learning strategies – cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social – students employ most frequently in English language learning?
- How the learning strategies students employ most frequently in English language learning contributed to their language acquisition process?
- How can a teacher help a student become more successful in learning English?
- How modern technological advances influence the choice of English language learning strategies?

Research Methods.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach to gather comprehensive data on the subject. The research methods include questionnaire (to collect quantitative data on students' usage of learning strategies and technological tools), survey (to provide qualitative insights into students' behavior and strategy implementation in a natural learning environment), interviews (to gain a deeper understanding of student's experiences and perceptions regarding learning strategies), analysis of existing literature (to contextualize the findings within the broader framework of current research and theoretical perspectives).

The theoretical and practical significance.

This study's theoretical and practical significance lies in its contribution to understanding the role of learning strategies in English language acquisition. The research provides valuable insights into student preferences and decision-making in language learning by investigating which strategies students choose and how they affect their learning processes. This focus on student-selected strategies offers a nuanced perspective on how learners approach language learning tasks, contributing to the broader theoretical knowledge of educational practices and student behavior in language education. The study offers actionable recommendations for educators and policymakers to enhance English language teaching practices. By identifying effective strategies and the impact of technology, the findings can guide the development of more effective teaching methods, better integration of technological tools, and improved support systems for students. The study also helps identify areas where additional training and resources may be needed to support teachers and students in achieving better language learning outcomes.

Literature Review

Diversity of learning strategies of high school students in English language learning

In second language acquisition, high school students exhibit various learning strategies. These strategies can be broadly categorized into cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies, as initially outlined by Oxford [12]. Each student's choice of strategy is influenced by factors such as their learning style, motivation, and the resources available to them. Understanding these strategies' diversity is crucial for educators and students to optimize learning outcomes.

Cognitive strategies refer to students' specific techniques for processing and internalizing language information. These strategies are foundational in second language acquisition because they directly involve working with the foreign language material. Students employ various cognitive strategies, such as repetition, elaboration, note-taking, and imagery, in high school English language learning. Each of these strategies plays a significant role in helping students absorb, retain, and retrieve language knowledge efficiently.

One of the most common cognitive strategies is repetition. High school students often rely on repetition to memorize vocabulary or grammar rules. This method involves reading, writing, or saying a word or phrase multiple times until it becomes ingrained in memory. For instance, students may repeat verb conjugations aloud or write them down in various tenses until they can recall them effortlessly. Although repetition is sometimes criticized for being mechanical, it is an essential building block, especially for memorizing foundational aspects of the language, such as irregular verbs or common phrases [15, p.41].

Another critical cognitive strategy is elaboration, which involves connecting new information to existing knowledge. When students encounter a new vocabulary word, they might relate it to a word they already know in their native language or link it to a personal experience. For example, when learning the English word «sea», a student might remember a family trip to the beach, thereby deepening their understanding of the word's meaning and context. Elaboration helps in retention and makes the learning process more meaningful, as students can integrate the new language into their own lived experiences.

Translation is another common cognitive strategy used by beginner and intermediate learners. High school students often translate words or phrases from English into their native language to confirm understanding. While over-reliance on translation can slow down the process of thinking directly in the target language, it can be a helpful cognitive bridge, especially in the early stages of learning. For instance, students might use bilingual dictionaries or apps to translate new vocabulary. However, advanced learners are encouraged to move away from direct translation and start thinking in English to promote fluency.

Note-taking is a cognitive strategy that allows students to organize and structure the information they are learning. In high school English classes, students might create vocabulary lists, grammar charts, or summaries of reading passages. The physical act of writing helps reinforce learning as students process the material actively. Furthermore, well-organized notes are a valuable resource for review and revision, enabling students to track their progress and revisit challenging topics as needed. Different note-taking methods, such as Cornell notes or mind mapping, allow students to engage with the material in various ways, catering to different learning styles [4].

Linguistic conjecture is a cognitive strategy used in reading and listening comprehension. High school students often come across words or expressions they do not know. Instead of looking up every unfamiliar word, proficient learners use context clues to infer meaning. For example, when encountering the word «thrilled» in a sentence like «She was thrilled to receive the award», a student might deduce that the word has a positive connotation based on the surrounding context. This strategy builds confidence and encourages students to develop problem-solving skills in real-time, which is essential for language fluency.

Imagery and visualization involve creating mental images or associating words with visual aids. When learning new vocabulary, high school students often find it helpful to picture a scene or an object. For example, when learning the word «mountain», students might visualize a tall, snow-capped peak, which helps them recall it more easily later. Additionally, drawing diagrams or sketches in their notes can help students remember complex grammar structures or sentence patterns. Studies have shown that visual learners, in particular, benefit from associating language learning with imagery, as it strengthens their recall and comprehension [16].

A more advanced cognitive strategy that high school students can employ is summarization. It involves condensing larger chunks of text or information into a more manageable form. For instance, after reading a long article or chapter, students summarize the main points in their own words, reinforcing understanding and retention. Summarization helps students focus on the core ideas and improves their ability to express these ideas concisely, a skill vital in language learning and academic success.

Cognitive strategies are diverse and adaptable, offering students multiple ways to engage with the language material. These strategies enable students to process information actively and make connections that facilitate long-term retention and recall. High school students can navigate the complexities of English language learning effectively through repetition, elaboration, translation, note-taking, inferencing, imagery, and summarization. By becoming more aware of and refining their cognitive strategies, students enhance their ability to master the language in a structured and meaningful way.

Metacognitive strategies are higher-order thinking skills that involve planning, monitoring and evaluating the learning process. In the context of high school students learning English, these

strategies enable them to control their learning by setting goals, organizing tasks, tracking progress, and adjusting their approaches when necessary. Metacognitive strategies help learners become more independent and efficient, as they are able to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and make informed decisions to improve their performance.

An essential aspect of effective metacognitive strategies is the development of a growth mindset, a concept popularized by psychologist Carol Dweck [2]. A growth mindset is the belief that abilities, including language skills, can be developed through dedication and hard work. This contrasts with a fixed mindset, where individuals believe their abilities are static and unchangeable. For high school students learning English, cultivating a growth mindset is crucial because it fosters resilience, persistence, and a proactive attitude toward overcoming language-learning challenges.

Planning is one of the core aspects of metacognitive strategies. Before engaging in a language task, high school students often plan how to approach it. For example, when preparing for an English exam, a student might decide to allocate specific time slots to practice reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar. Planning also involves setting both short-term and long-term goals. A student may set a goal of learning ten new vocabulary words each week (a short-term goal) while working toward achieving fluency by the end of the school year (a long-term goal). Having clear, achievable goals helps students stay focused and motivated, providing a sense of direction and purpose.

In addition to planning, time management is essential to metacognitive strategies. High school students must learn to prioritize their language tasks, especially when juggling multiple subjects. Effective time management allows students to dedicate appropriate time to language practice without feeling overwhelmed. For example, they may spend 20 minutes each day reviewing vocabulary or 30 minutes writing short essays. Good time management enhances productivity and reduces stress, as students can better balance language learning with other academic and personal responsibilities.

Monitoring is another key metacognitive strategy that involves observing and assessing one's performance while engaged in learning. High school students who use monitoring strategies pay attention to how well they do in real-time and adjust as necessary. For instance, while practising listening comprehension, students might realize they struggle to understand native speakers in fast-paced conversations [14]. Recognizing this challenge, the student might slow down and focus on specific listening exercises or listen to simplified English podcasts before returning to more complex materials. Monitoring allows students to be more aware of their learning processes and make on-the-spot corrections to avoid frustration or wasted effort. High school students often encounter situations where their initial approach to learning English could yield a different result. For instance, a student may discover that their method of studying vocabulary – memorizing long lists – does not lead to long-term retention. They might use flashcards, mnemonic devices, or

spaced repetition to improve retention. The ability to change strategies when necessary demonstrates flexibility and adaptability, which are key components of successful language learning.

Another significant metacognitive strategy is selecting the right resources and learning techniques. High school students aware of their preferred learning styles can choose the most effective resources and activities to aid their English learning. For example, auditory learners might focus more on listening exercises and podcasts, while visual learners might rely on reading and using visual aids like diagrams or vocabulary charts. By recognizing which resources and techniques work best, students can optimize their study sessions and enhance their overall learning efficiency [19, p.242].

Reflection is another vital component of metacognitive strategies. High school students who reflect on their learning experiences often gain deeper insights into what works for them and what doesn't. Reflection can take many forms, such as writing in a learning journal, discussing challenges with a teacher or peer, or simply taking time to think about what methods were effective in past language tasks. For instance, a student might reflect on why they struggled with a particular grammar exercise and decide to approach it differently next time by focusing on the underlying rules rather than simply memorizing examples. Regular reflection allows students to refine their learning strategies and become more intentional in their approach to language acquisition.

Metacognitive strategies also foster independent learning. High school students develop a sense of autonomy by taking charge of their own learning process. This is especially important in English language learning, as proficiency often requires consistent practice outside the classroom. Students proficient in metacognitive strategies are more likely to seek additional learning opportunities, such as watching English-language movies, reading books, or using language-learning apps in their free time. This proactive approach accelerates their language development and builds lifelong learning skills that extend beyond the classroom.

Affective strategies involve managing emotions, attitudes, and motivation during the learning process. These strategies are crucial for language acquisition, particularly in high school students. Emotions can significantly influence how students engage with language tasks, handle challenges, and sustain their motivation. Therefore, effective strategies help students regulate their emotional states, reduce anxiety, stay motivated, and maintain a positive outlook, which is especially important when learning a foreign language like English.

Managing anxiety is a key aspect of effective strategies. Language learning, particularly speaking in front of others or interacting in a foreign language, can cause anxiety in many high school students. This anxiety can stem from a fear of making mistakes, being judged, or not understanding the material. High levels of anxiety can hinder students' ability to concentrate, process information, and communicate effectively. To counteract this, effective strategies

encourage students to use techniques such as deep breathing, positive self-talk, or even taking short breaks to reduce stress. For example, students might remind themselves that mistakes are a natural part of learning and that each error provides an opportunity for growth.

Another essential effective strategy is fostering a positive attitude toward language learning. High school students often face various external pressures, including academic expectations and peer influences, which can affect their attitude toward learning English. A negative attitude can lead to disinterest or resistance, while a positive attitude can enhance motivation and engagement. To cultivate a positive attitude, students are encouraged to focus on the benefits of learning English – such as future career opportunities, the ability to communicate with people worldwide or access to global media. Teachers and students can work together to create a supportive learning environment where students feel encouraged to express themselves without fear of judgment. For instance, classroom activities emphasizing fun, creativity, and collaboration can help foster a more enjoyable learning experience, improving students' overall attitude toward language acquisition.

Maintaining motivation is another crucial effective strategy. Language learning is a long-term process, and high school students may struggle with sustaining motivation over time, especially when faced with difficult grammar rules, new vocabulary, or complex reading assignments. Affective strategies help students maintain motivation by encouraging them to connect their language-learning efforts with personal interests or long-term goals. For instance, students might stay motivated by listening to English songs they enjoy, watching English-language movies, or following social media content in English. In this way, learning becomes a more engaging and relevant experience. Additionally, by setting personal goals, such as travelling to an English-speaking country or pursuing a career that requires English proficiency, students can remind themselves of the bigger picture, keeping their motivation high even when they encounter setbacks.

Another effective strategy is developing emotional resilience, the ability to bounce back from disappointments or failures. Language learners inevitably encounter difficulties, whether misunderstanding instructions, struggling with pronunciation, or failing to grasp a particular grammar point. Emotional resilience helps students view these setbacks as part of learning rather than personal failures. Teachers can help foster resilience by creating a classroom culture that normalizes mistakes as learning opportunities. For instance, encouraging students to share a mistake they made during the week and what they learned from it can demystify failure and help students develop a healthier relationship with their learning journey.

Affective strategies also involve seeking social support. High school students often benefit from sharing their language-learning experiences with friends, classmates, or family. This can take the form of study groups, where students encourage each other, share tips, and provide emotional support during challenging periods [10]. Knowing that others are experiencing similar difficulties can reduce feelings

of isolation or discouragement. Students who engage in collaborative language-learning activities, such as group projects or peer-to-peer language exchanges, can strengthen their language skills while gaining social and emotional support. This sense of community and shared experience helps reinforce a positive emotional attitude toward learning English.

Social strategies involve interaction with others to enhance the learning process. These strategies are particularly important in language learning, where communication plays a central role. Social strategies help students practice and improve their language skills by engaging with peers, teachers, and native speakers. Students can enhance their understanding of the language and its practical usage through collaboration, asking for feedback, and participating in group activities

An essential social strategy is collaborative learning. Group work and peer interaction allow students to practice English in a supportive, low-pressure environment. Working together on projects, practicing dialogues, or conducting group discussions will enable students to communicate authentically, essential for developing fluency. Collaborative learning also exposes students to different perspectives and approaches to language learning, as each group member may bring unique insights or knowledge. For instance, one student might excel in grammar, while another might have strong pronunciation skills. By working together, they can help each other improve in areas where they are weaker. Additionally, collaborative tasks can make language learning more enjoyable, as they often involve creative problem-solving, discussions, and role-playing, all of which can make the learning experience more dynamic and engaging.

Peer feedback is another effective social strategy. When students give and receive feedback from their classmates, they gain valuable insights into their performance and areas for improvement. High school students can practice giving constructive criticism, enhancing their critical thinking and ability to articulate language-related issues. Moreover, offering feedback helps students consolidate their understanding of English rules and structures, as they must clearly explain their corrections or suggestions.

Language exchange is a social strategy that allows students to practice English with native or proficient speakers. High school students may engage in formal or informal language exchanges through organized school programs or online platforms. Language exchanges provide a unique opportunity for students to immerse themselves in authentic conversations, practicing both speaking and listening skills in a natural context. This type of social interaction helps students improve their language skills and exposes them to cultural aspects of language use, such as idiomatic expressions, slang, and everyday communication styles. For instance, students participating in a language exchange with native speakers may learn colloquial phrases or cultural references not typically covered in classroom settings, enhancing their overall language competence [11].

Teachers' roles in fostering social strategies are crucial. Teachers can create an environment where social interaction is encouraged and structured in a way that promotes language development. By organizing pair work, group discussions, role-plays, and debates, teachers allow students to engage with their peers in English actively. For example, a teacher might design a classroom activity where students must work in pairs to solve a problem or complete a task, requiring them to communicate exclusively in English. Such activities improve students' speaking and listening skills and build their confidence in using the language in real-world contexts. Furthermore, teachers can model effective social strategies by demonstrating how to ask questions, give feedback, or collaborate in a supportive and constructive manner.

Cultural learning through social strategies is another important aspect for high school students learning English. When students converse with native speakers or people from different cultural backgrounds, they know how language reflects cultural values, beliefs, and customs. Understanding the cultural context of language helps students use English more appropriately and effectively in various social situations [13, p.18]. For instance, students might learn about different communication styles, levels of formality, or non-verbal cues, which are crucial for effective cross-cultural communication. Engaging in these social interactions allows students to develop their linguistic skills and intercultural competence, which is increasingly important in today's globalized world.

Cooperative strategies, such as pair and group activities, further support the development of English skills. These activities encourage students to collaborate on language tasks, share ideas, and help each other overcome learning challenges. In a high school, cooperative learning tasks include group projects, joint presentations, or collaborative writing exercises. For example, students could work together to write a short story in English or perform a dialogue in front of the class. Such activities provide valuable practice in using the language in real-world contexts, as students must negotiate meaning, express their thoughts clearly, and work together to achieve a common goal. Moreover, cooperative tasks promote social bonding, making language learning a more enjoyable and interactive experience [5].

Social strategies are integral to the language learning process, as they provide high school students with opportunities to practice their English skills in real-life communication contexts. By interacting with peers, teachers, and native speakers, students can develop their language proficiency while building confidence, gaining feedback, and learning about different cultural perspectives. Social strategies foster collaboration, communication, and a supportive learning environment, all of which contribute to students' overall success in mastering the English language.

Here's the Table 1.1 that systematically organizes the types of learning strategies and their key elements based on the previously discussed sections.

Table 1. Types of learning strategies

Type of Strategy	Elements
Cognitive Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice and repetition of language structures. - Use of mnemonics and memorization techniques. - Application of knowledge through language tasks. - Note-taking and summarizing key concepts. - Developing reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills through active use.
Metacognitive Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting specific learning goals. - Planning and organizing study time. - Monitoring progress and self-evaluating performance. - Adjusting learning strategies based on self-assessment. - Developing a growth mindset to embrace challenges and mistakes.
Affective Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing anxiety through relaxation techniques. - Building self-confidence with positive reinforcement and goal-setting. - Maintaining motivation by linking learning to personal interests. - Practicing self-encouragement and emotional resilience. - Seeking social support to maintain a positive attitude.
Social Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asking questions to clarify understanding. - Collaborative learning with peers (group discussions, projects). - Peer feedback and constructive criticism. - Language exchange with native or proficient speakers. - Engaging in online language-learning communities. - Building a supportive classroom environment.

The diversity of learning strategies employed by high school students reflects the complexity of second language acquisition. Cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies all play vital roles in helping students master English. The effectiveness of each strategy often depends on the individual student, their learning preferences, and the support they receive from teachers and peers. As students become more aware of their own learning styles and needs, they can tailor their strategies to improve language acquisition outcomes.

Cognitive and motivational aspects of high school students which influence the learning strategies

Cognitive aspects of high school students significantly impact their approach to learning English and the strategies they employ. These aspects include cognitive development, prior knowledge, and cognitive styles, which all affect how students process, understand, and apply language information.

At the high school level, students are in a stage of cognitive development characterized by advanced abstract thinking and problem-solving abilities. This developmental stage allows students to engage in more complex language tasks, such as understanding nuanced meanings and making inferences based on context. Cognitive development influences their ability to use strategies like inference and contextual guessing, which are crucial for comprehending and producing language. For example, students might use context clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words in a text, reflecting their advanced cognitive skills.

Students' existing knowledge of language structures, vocabulary, and cultural contexts affects their ability to learn and apply new information. Prior knowledge is a foundation for acquiring new language skills and can facilitate or hinder learning. For instance, students familiar with certain linguistic structures from their native language may find it easier to grasp similar structures in English. Conversely, differences between languages can create challenges requiring targeted learning strategies.

Cognitive styles, such as field dependence or independence, influence how students process information and approach learning tasks. Field-dependent students prefer structured learning environments with clear guidance, while field-independent students excel in situations that allow for more self-direction and exploration. Understanding these styles helps better tailor instructional methods and strategies to suit individual learning preferences. For example, field-dependent students might benefit from more visual aids and step-by-step instructions, while field-independent students may thrive with tasks that encourage independent problem-solving.

Motivation plays a crucial role in determining how students approach learning English and the strategies they choose to employ. Motivational aspects encompass intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and goal-setting, influencing students' engagement and persistence in learning. Intrinsic motivation is the internal drive to learn for personal satisfaction and interest in the subject matter. Students intrinsically motivated to learn English are more likely to engage deeply with the language, explore its nuances, and invest time in practice and improvement. For instance, a student with a genuine interest in English literature may be motivated to read extensively and participate actively in discussions, which enhances their language skills. Extrinsic motivation involves external rewards or pressures, such as grades, recognition, or parental

expectations. High school students often experience extrinsic motivation through academic assessments, teacher feedback, and societal expectations. While extrinsic motivation can effectively encourage students to complete tasks and achieve short-term goals, it may only sometimes sustain long-term interest or engagement in learning English. Therefore, balancing extrinsic rewards with strategies that foster intrinsic motivation is essential for maintaining sustained interest in language learning.

Self-efficacy refers to students' beliefs in their own abilities to succeed in language learning tasks. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to set challenging goals, persevere through difficulties, and use effective learning strategies. For example, a student who believes he can master English grammar rules is more likely to engage in practice exercises and seek help when needed. Conversely, low self-efficacy may lead to avoidance of challenging tasks and reliance on less effective learning strategies.

Setting specific, achievable goals helps students maintain focus and direction in their language learning. Goal-setting involves creating short-term and long-term objectives that guide students' efforts and measure their progress. For example, a student might set a short-term goal to learn and use ten new vocabulary words in sentences and a long-term goal to achieve a certain level of proficiency by the end of the school year. Effective goal-setting enhances motivation by providing clear targets and a sense of accomplishment as students achieve their objectives.

The interplay between cognitive and motivational aspects creates a dynamic learning environment for high school students. Cognitive abilities influence how students approach and process language tasks, while motivational factors drive their engagement and persistence. For instance, students with strong cognitive skills and high motivation will likely use more effective learning strategies, such as advanced problem-solving techniques and sustained practice. Conversely, students who struggle with cognitive challenges or lack motivation may benefit from targeted support to enhance their cognitive skills and foster a more positive attitude towards learning English [7, p.371].

Understanding high school students' cognitive and motivational aspects provides valuable insights into their learning strategies and helps educators design more effective instructional approaches. By addressing cognitive development and motivational factors, teachers can create a supportive learning environment that maximizes students' language acquisition and success in learning English.

Specific needs and challenges that high school students face in learning English

High school students learning English as a second language encounter various specific needs and challenges that influence their language acquisition. These challenges often stem from individual differences in linguistic backgrounds, learning environments, and socio-emotional factors. Understanding these needs is essential for developing targeted strategies to support students' language learning progress.

Motivation plays a central role in the success of high school students learning English. However, maintaining motivation can be challenging due to several factors:

- Lack of intrinsic motivation. Some students may view English learning as a mandatory requirement rather than a personal goal. With an inherent interest in the language, students may be able to stay engaged with the material and put forth the necessary effort to improve their skills. This can result in surface-level learning, where students only focus on passing exams rather than developing a deep understanding of the language.

- External pressures and burnout. High school students are often subject to external pressures from parents, teachers, and societal expectations to perform well academically. This can lead to stress and burnout, especially if students need to catch up on their English language studies. When motivation is driven primarily by external factors, students may become disengaged over time, viewing English as a burden rather than a tool for communication and personal growth [9].

Fostering a learning environment that emphasizes the relevance and enjoyment of English is essential to addressing these motivational challenges. Incorporating topics of interest, interactive learning methods, and real-life applications can help students see the value of acquiring the language beyond the classroom.

Cultural differences can present significant challenges for high school students learning English, particularly when understanding social norms, communication styles, and cultural references. These factors can affect not only how students learn the language but also how they interact in English-speaking environments. Different cultures have distinct communication styles that can affect how students approach learning English. English is rich in idiomatic expressions and cultural references that may be unfamiliar to students from different cultural backgrounds.

High school students are typically under significant pressure to achieve proficiency in English within a limited period. This can create stress, as they may feel they need to learn more quickly to meet the expectations of teachers, parents, or standardized tests. The pace of language acquisition can vary greatly among students, leading some to feel left behind, particularly in large classes where individual attention is limited. High school students are also tasked with learning other subjects, making it difficult to dedicate sufficient time to English language development [8, p.37].

Learning a new language during adolescence can be emotionally challenging. High school students are at a stage in life where social dynamics, self-identity, and peer relationships are highly influential, and learning English may exacerbate feelings of anxiety, self-doubt, or isolation. These emotional factors can only help students' language acquisition if adequately addressed. Many students experience anxiety when asked to speak English in front of their peers, particularly if they fear making mistakes or being misunderstood. This anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviors, such as staying silent in class or not participating in group discussions, which in turn slows their language development. Adolescents often feel pressure to succeed academically and socially, and the fear of failing to meet expectations in English learning can be overwhelming. This fear may cause students to avoid taking risks, such as trying out new vocabulary or grammar structures necessary for language development. Teachers and schools must foster a supportive, risk-free environment to help students overcome these barriers.

While modern technology provides valuable resources for learning English, not all high school students have equal access to these tools. Moreover, even students with access may need more digital literacy skills to effectively use online resources, apps, or software for language learning. Even when students can access digital resources, they may need to learn how to use them effectively to support their English learning. For example, students may engage with online English games or apps focusing on rote memorization without understanding how to apply these skills in real-world contexts. Teachers can play an important role in guiding students to use technology meaningfully by incorporating interactive exercises, podcasts, or online discussion forums into their lessons.

High school students learning English face a variety of specific needs and challenges that influence their language acquisition journey. Recognizing these challenges allows educators to design more targeted interventions and strategies that cater to students' diverse needs. By addressing these barriers, schools can create a more inclusive and effective learning environment that supports every student in their pursuit of English proficiency.

Methodology and Procedure

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the most commonly used learning strategies among high school students in English language learning, a research study was conducted involving 60 students. The study's primary objective was to determine which learning strategies – cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social – students employed most frequently and how they contributed to their language acquisition process. The research employed a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative data from a questionnaire and qualitative insights from interviews. The main instrument for collecting data was a questionnaire designed to identify the learning strategies students used when learning English. The questionnaire contained 40 items, using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (never true of me) to 5 (always true of me), where students rated how often they used each strategy during their English lessons and self-study (Appendix A). The questionnaire aimed to gather a broad overview of which strategies students were most inclined to use and which ones they found the most effective.

To complement the quantitative data from the questionnaire, focus group interviews were conducted with 12 selected students (20% of the sample) representing different levels of English proficiency (beginner, intermediate, and advanced). The interviews provided more detailed insights into the reasons behind their strategic choices and the contexts in which they used them. The questions during the focus groups were open-ended, prompting students to reflect on their English learning experiences. The interviews allowed for a deeper exploration of students' challenges and how they adjusted their strategies based on their proficiency and specific learning contexts. In addition to the questionnaire and interviews, six English classes were observed to see how students employed learning strategies in real time. During these observations, researchers focused on students' strategies during different classroom activities, such as reading, writing, and speaking tasks. The goal was to corroborate self-reported data with classroom behaviour, identifying discrepancies or confirming patterns.

To understand how modern technological advances, influence the choice of English language learning strategies, a study was conducted involving 60 high school students surveyed and observed using various technologies for language learning. The research aimed to evaluate how different technological tools and platforms affect students' selection and application of learning strategies. Students were asked about using various technological tools (e.g., language learning apps, educational software, social media) and how they influenced their learning strategies. The survey included questions about the frequency of use and perceived effectiveness of different technologies. Also, we observed students in their natural learning environments to assess how they integrated technology into their learning routines and the strategies they

employed. We have found that students who frequently used digital language learning platforms demonstrated a higher engagement in cognitive strategies. These platforms offered interactive exercises, quizzes, and gamified elements facilitating active learning. Observations revealed that students using these tools engaged more in activities like practicing vocabulary and grammar exercises. For example, students often used flashcard apps to reinforce new words and participated in online quizzes to test their knowledge.

Results

The data analysis revealed several key trends in the learning strategies used by high school students. Most students reported frequently using cognitive strategies, such as note-taking, summarizing information, and practising new words through repetition (table 2). Around 75% of respondents indicated they relied heavily on writing new vocabulary and grammar rules to internalize them. Many also used strategies like translating English content into their native language to understand complex materials better. Metacognitive strategies were more prevalent among advanced learners. More proficient students (those in the intermediate and advanced levels) were more likely to use metacognitive strategies, including planning their study time, setting language learning goals, and monitoring their progress. About 60% of intermediate and advanced students said they regularly assessed their understanding of the material and adjusted their learning approaches accordingly. These students were also more inclined to take control of their learning by identifying weaknesses and focusing on areas that needed improvement, such as grammar or speaking skills.

Table 2. Results of the Questionnaire

Strategy Type	Percentage of Students Frequently Using (4-5 on Scale)	Implications
Cognitive Strategies	51 students (85%)	Demonstrates that most students actively engage with English through practices like speaking, writing, and analyzing content.
Metacognitive Strategies	33 students (55%)	Shows that fewer students plan and monitor their learning process, indicating room for improvement in self-regulation.

Affective Strategies	27 students (45%)	Fewer students use emotional regulation techniques, showing that anxiety might still be a significant challenge.
Social Strategies	39 students (65%)	Reflects that students often seek help from peers and teachers, but some may struggle to initiate communication with native speakers.

The interviews allowed for a deeper exploration of students' challenges and how they adjusted their strategies based on their proficiency and specific learning contexts. As a result of the survey, we received the following results:

Table 3. Results of the Focus Group Interview

Strategy Type	Percentage of Students Actively Engaging (based on responses)	Implications
Cognitive Strategies	43 students (72%)	Many students mentioned regularly engaging in activities like reading, speaking, and thinking in English.
Metacognitive Strategies	21 students (35%)	Only a few students planned and reflected on their study habits, suggesting limited strategic planning.
Affective Strategies	19 students (31%)	Anxiety in English communication was highlighted, with few students actively managing their emotions in learning.
Social Strategies	33 students (55%)	Most students preferred working with others but were less likely to engage with native speakers outside the classroom.

Observations during English classes confirmed many of the self-reported findings. Students were predominantly engaged in cognitive activities, which involved actively participating in group discussions, writing assignments, and analyzing English texts. Many students were observed discussing their ideas with peers, working through problems collaboratively, and using various learning tools to understand English grammar and vocabulary better. This high level of involvement in cognitive tasks indicates that these strategies are central to their learning process, reflecting a strong preference for interactive and hands-on learning methods.

Metacognitive strategies were less frequently observed. Only a few students demonstrated behaviors such as reflecting on their learning progress, setting specific study goals, or adjusting their study methods based on feedback. For instance, some students would pause to think about their performance during activities and make minor adjustments to their approach. This limited use of metacognitive strategies indicates that many students may need to be more actively engaged in planning and monitoring their own learning processes.

Regarding affective strategies, there were a few instances where students used techniques to manage their anxiety. For example, some students practiced deep breathing before giving presentations or used positive self-talk to boost their confidence. However, these strategies were not widely observed, highlighting a potential area where students might benefit from more support in managing emotions and stress related to language learning.

Social strategies were notably prevalent. Students frequently engaged in collaborative activities, such as working in groups and seeking peer assistance. For example, students often discussed difficult concepts with classmates or asked for help from their teachers during lessons. This extensive use of social strategies underscores the importance of peer interaction and support in their learning experience.

So, the analysis revealed several key trends in the learning strategies used by high school students. Most students reported frequently using cognitive strategies, such as note-taking, summarizing information, and practicing new words through repetition. Around 75% of respondents indicated they relied heavily on writing new vocabulary and grammar rules to internalize them. Many also used strategies like translating English content into their native language to understand complex materials better. Metacognitive strategies were more prevalent among advanced learners. More proficient students (those in the intermediate and advanced levels) were more likely to use metacognitive strategies, including planning their study time, setting language learning goals, and monitoring their progress. About 60% of intermediate and advanced students said they regularly assessed their understanding of the material and adjusted their learning approaches accordingly. These students were also more inclined to take control of their learning by identifying weaknesses and focusing on areas that needed improvement, such as grammar or speaking skills. A significant portion of students (roughly 40%) used effective strategies to cope with the anxiety of speaking English in class. These strategies included self-encouragement, breathing exercises before oral presentations, and seeking relaxation techniques when feeling overwhelmed. Many students expressed that language learning anxiety hindered their ability to speak fluently in front of their classmates, and these strategies helped reduce stress and increase confidence. Social strategies were common in collaborative learning environments. Students reported that social strategies, such as working in pairs or groups and seeking help from teachers

and peers, were beneficial when tackling difficult language concepts. Around 65% of students said they regularly asked for clarification from classmates or engaged in group discussions to improve their speaking and listening skills. Additionally, students appreciated the opportunity to receive feedback from peers, which they found helpful in improving their grammar and pronunciation.

Discussion

The study revealed that high school students employ various strategies when learning English, with a preference for cognitive and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies increased with proficiency, indicating that more experienced learners tend to take greater control of their learning process. Affective strategies, though less frequently reported, played a crucial role in managing language anxiety, particularly in speaking activities. These findings highlight the need for a balanced approach to teaching that encourages using a wide range of strategies adapted to individual learning styles and needs. Moreover, providing opportunities for collaborative learning and addressing language anxiety can significantly enhance the effectiveness of language acquisition among high school students.

Technological tools such as language learning apps, gamified platforms, and interactive software can significantly boost students' motivation. Features like progress tracking, rewards, and interactive challenges make learning more engaging and enjoyable. Providing immediate feedback and visual representations of progress, these tools help students see their improvement in real time, fostering a sense of achievement and encouraging continued effort. Enhanced motivation leads to active participation and persistence in learning tasks [17].

Technology facilitates more effective goal setting by allowing students to set specific, measurable, and achievable objectives. Many educational apps and platforms offer features that let students create personalized learning goals, break them down into manageable tasks, and monitor their progress towards these goals. Setting clear milestones and tracking achievements helps students stay focused and organized, leading to more structured and purposeful learning.

Social media platforms and language exchange communities were linked to a higher application of effective strategies. Students who engaged in online language exchange programs or joined English learning groups on social media were observed using techniques to manage anxiety and increase motivation. For example, students participated in supportive online communities where they received encouragement and feedback, which helped reduce their anxiety about speaking and writing in English.

Despite the positive impacts, some challenges were noted. More reliance on technology led to reduced face-to-face interactions and occasional distractions. For instance, while educational games and apps were engaging, they sometimes diverted students' focus from deeper learning

activities. Additionally, equitable access to technology varied among students, affecting their ability to utilize available resources fully.

Research indicates that modern technological advances substantially impact students' learning strategies. Digital platforms and interactive tools enhance cognitive and metacognitive strategies by providing engaging, personalized, and reflective learning experiences. Social media and collaborative tools foster greater use of social and affective strategies, supporting peer interaction and emotional management. However, challenges such as potential distractions and varying access levels must be addressed to ensure that technology effectively complements traditional learning methods and supports comprehensive language development.

Teachers are key in helping students select and apply appropriate learning strategies. Effective teachers provide strategic guidance by introducing various learning techniques, such as cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and demonstrating how to use them. For instance, teachers might model how to use graphic organizers for organizing information or teach students how to reflect on their learning progress and adjust their study methods accordingly. To accommodate diverse learning styles and needs, teachers employ differentiated instruction. This approach involves tailoring lessons and activities to meet individual students' needs and preferences. By offering a range of activities, such as group work, individual projects, and interactive exercises, teachers ensure that students can engage with the material using strategies that best suit their learning styles.

Teachers are encouraged to actively engage students in the learning process by using active learning techniques that reinforce their understanding of English. Approaches such as group discussions, problem-solving tasks, and role-playing activities can help students apply language skills in practical contexts. These methods foster the use of cognitive strategies, such as analyzing and synthesizing information, and promote collaborative learning. However, it can be assumed that the extent to which these techniques are implemented and their effectiveness require further investigation. Regular and constructive feedback is also essential for the development of effective learning strategies. Through formative feedback provided via assessments, quizzes, and written comments, students can better understand their strengths and areas for improvement. This process enables students to adjust their learning strategies, set realistic goals, and focus on specific areas that need attention.

Teachers encourage students to engage in self-assessment and peer assessment as part of their learning process. Students develop metacognitive awareness by evaluating their own and others' work and learning to identify effective strategies. For example, students might review their essays and provide feedback to peers, which helps them reflect on their writing skills and improve their language proficiency. Teachers promote reflective practices by encouraging students to keep

learning journals or participate in reflection activities. These practices help students evaluate their learning experiences, identify effective strategies, and set goals for future improvement. Reflective practices support metacognitive strategies by fostering self-awareness and continuous learning.

Teachers are instrumental in integrating technology into the English language curriculum. By incorporating digital tools and resources, such as language learning apps, educational software, and online platforms, teachers enhance students' engagement and provide opportunities for practice beyond the classroom. For example, teachers might use interactive quizzes from Kahoot! to review vocabulary or assign online language practice activities as homework. To effectively use technology, teachers engage in professional development and training. Ongoing training helps teachers stay updated on the latest educational technologies and best practices for their integration. Professional development programs may include workshops, webinars, and courses on using educational technology to support learning strategies [18, p.62].

Teachers should encourage students to take ownership of their learning by promoting student autonomy. This involves teaching students how to set personal learning goals, select appropriate strategies, and evaluate their progress. Teachers help students develop self-regulation and metacognitive skills essential for effective language learning by fostering independence. Offering students choices in their learning activities allows them to select strategies that align with their preferences and needs. Teachers might provide options for project topics, types of assignments, or assessment methods. This flexibility empowers students to use strategies that work best for them and enhances their motivation and engagement.

Teachers significantly influence the development and implementation of high school students' English learning strategies through strategic guidance, differentiated instruction, and feedback. By integrating technology into the curriculum, providing professional development, and fostering student autonomy, teachers enhance the effectiveness of learning strategies and support students' language acquisition. Their role is crucial in creating an environment where students can thrive, utilize effective strategies, and achieve their language learning goals.

Conclusion

This research has provided a comprehensive analysis of the learning strategies employed by high school students in acquiring English. The study identified a range of learning strategies utilized by high school students, categorized into cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Each strategy type plays a crucial role in language acquisition. Cognitive strategies such as summarizing, organizing information, and creating mnemonic devices are frequently used by students to enhance their understanding and retention of English. These strategies are effective in helping students internalize language structures and vocabulary. Metacognitive strategies allow for continuous adjustment and improvement in learning methods, leading to more effective language acquisition. Affective strategies such as managing emotions, reducing anxiety, and maintaining motivation are critical for successful language learning. Students who employ effective strategies are more likely to remain engaged and persistent in their studies. Social strategies such as interaction with peers, teachers, and native speakers are essential for practical language use. Social strategies facilitate real-world practice and help students develop fluency through collaborative learning experiences.

The research involved a comprehensive survey, observation, and interviews, which revealed the following key findings. Analysis of the survey data indicated that students predominantly use cognitive and social strategies, with a significant number also employing affective and metacognitive strategies. Technology usage was prevalent among students, impacting their choice of learning strategies. Observations showed that students actively engage with various learning strategies in different contexts. Those who used a combination of cognitive and metacognitive strategies demonstrated better language acquisition than those who relied primarily on a single strategy. Interviews with students and teachers highlighted the importance of personalized learning approaches and the effective use of technology. Teachers noted that students guided in selecting and applying diverse strategies achieved better learning outcomes.

The research highlighted the significant impact of modern technological tools on students' learning strategies. Technology, including language learning apps and interactive software, has increased student engagement by providing dynamic and interactive learning experiences. These tools create a more engaging environment for practice and feedback. Digital resources offer personalized learning experiences that cater to individual needs. This personalization supports the effective application of learning strategies tailored to each student's proficiency level. Technology provides access to a wide range of resources and multimedia content, enriching the learning experience and supplementing traditional materials.

In summary, this research emphasizes the importance of understanding students' strategies for English language learning. By addressing students' diverse needs, leveraging technological advancements, and supporting effective teaching practices, educators can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of language instruction.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire 1

This questionnaire aims to help you reflect on the strategies you use when learning English. Please read each statement carefully and think about how often you use each strategy when learning or practising English.

- **Answer Scale:** Write a number from **1 to 5** in each question's «Answer» column based on how often you use that strategy.
 - 1 = Never or almost never true of me
 - 2 = Usually not true of me
 - 3 = Somewhat true of me
 - 4 = Usually true of me
 - 5 = Always or almost always true of me
- **Be Honest:** There are no right or wrong answers. The goal is to understand your personal learning strategies.
- **Answer All Questions:** Make sure to respond to every question, even if you are unsure about a particular strategy.
- **Time Required:** The questionnaire should take **10-15 minutes** to complete.

No.	Question	Strategy Type	Answer (1-5)
1	I use flashcards or visual aids to remember new vocabulary.	Memory Strategy	
2	I repeat new words several times to remember them.	Memory Strategy	
3	I associate new English words with words in my own language.	Memory Strategy	
4	I use rhymes to help me remember new vocabulary.	Memory Strategy	
5	I write down new words and their meanings in a notebook.	Memory Strategy	
6	I summarize information from texts I read in English.	Cognitive Strategy	
7	I practice speaking English with my classmates outside of class.	Cognitive Strategy	
8	I try to think in English as much as possible.	Cognitive Strategy	

9	I break down sentences into smaller parts to better understand them.	Cognitive Strategy	
10	I underline or highlight important information in English texts.	Cognitive Strategy	
11	I try to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words based on context.	Compensation Strategy	
12	I use gestures or facial expressions to communicate when I don't know the right words in English.	Compensation Strategy	
13	I try to paraphrase when I don't know the exact word in English.	Compensation Strategy	
14	I look for clues in the sentence to figure out the meaning of new words.	Compensation Strategy	
15	I make educated guesses about grammar rules when I'm unsure.	Compensation Strategy	
16	I plan how much time I will spend on studying English each day.	Metacognitive Strategy	
17	I set specific goals for what I want to achieve in learning English.	Metacognitive Strategy	
18	I check my progress regularly to see if I'm improving in English.	Metacognitive Strategy	
19	I look for opportunities outside of class to practice English, such as watching English TV shows or reading books.	Metacognitive Strategy	
20	I pay attention to my mistakes and try to learn from them.	Metacognitive Strategy	
21	I try to relax when I feel anxious about speaking English.	Affective Strategy	
22	I give myself encouragement when I feel nervous about using English.	Affective Strategy	
23	I use breathing exercises or relaxation techniques when I feel stressed about learning English.	Affective Strategy	
24	I tell myself that making mistakes is part of learning English.	Affective Strategy	

25	I reward myself when I make progress in learning English.	Affective Strategy	
26	I ask my teacher for clarification when I don't understand something.	Social Strategy	
27	I practice English with native speakers whenever I get the chance.	Social Strategy	
28	I work in groups or pairs to practice speaking or listening in English.	Social Strategy	
29	I ask my peers to help me when I don't understand something in English class.	Social Strategy	
30	I participate in group discussions in English to improve my speaking skills.	Social Strategy	
31	I visualize the spelling of a word in my mind to help me remember it.	Memory Strategy	
32	I categorize words into groups (like verbs, nouns, adjectives) to help me learn them.	Cognitive Strategy	
33	I take notes during English lessons and review them later.	Cognitive Strategy	
34	I use audio recordings or language apps to practice my listening skills in English.	Cognitive Strategy	
35	I guess the meaning of words I don't know when I hear them in conversations.	Compensation Strategy	
36	I review my study plan for English regularly and make adjustments as needed.	Metacognitive Strategy	
37	I find ways to reduce anxiety before giving a presentation in English.	Affective Strategy	
38	I share my learning experiences with others to exchange tips for learning English.	Social Strategy	
39	I listen to others speak English and imitate their pronunciation.	Cognitive Strategy	
40	I prepare questions in English in advance when I'm about to have a conversation.	Social Strategy	

Focus Group Interview Questionnaire (18 Questions)

1. What strategies do you use to remember new vocabulary in English?
2. How do you approach learning difficult grammar rules in English?
3. Do you practice speaking English outside of the classroom? If so, how?
4. How do you break down complex English texts to understand them better?
5. When studying English, do you focus more on vocabulary, grammar, or listening skills? Why?
6. How do you plan your English study sessions?
7. How do you monitor your progress in English?
8. What specific goals have you set for improving your English?
9. How do you reflect on and correct your mistakes when learning English?
10. Do you adjust your learning strategies if something isn't working? How?
11. How do you deal with anxiety when speaking English in front of others?
12. What do you do to encourage yourself when you feel discouraged about learning English?
13. How do you manage stress during English exams or presentations?
14. How do you stay motivated to keep learning English, especially when it gets challenging?
15. How often do you ask your teacher or classmates for help when you don't understand something in English class?
16. Do you find it helpful to work in pairs or groups when learning English? Why or why not?
17. Do you engage in conversations with native English speakers to improve your language skills? How do these interactions help?
18. How does collaborating with classmates or peers influence your progress in English?