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Abstract
English is one of the most used and learnt languages in the world. There are many strategies identified to predict and understand better English language learning among learners. In a multicultural country like Malaysia, reading comprehension among secondary school students is imperative so that reading itself is enjoyable, fun, and informative. However, considering that English is a second, third, or even a fourth language to these students, it is necessary to understand what language learning strategies they employ when they are reading English texts. This research aimed to identify (1) the dominant language learning strategies employed by Chinese secondary school students and (2) the significance between gender and language learning strategies. A total of forty-seven (N=47) Form 3 students from a private Chinese secondary school in Perak, Malaysia participated in this research. Data was collected quantitatively through the use of a survey questionnaire that was adopted based on Young Learners' Language Strategy Use (Cohen & Oxford, 2002) and Language Strategy Use Survey (Cohen, Oxford & Chi, 2002). Findings revealed that the cognitive strategy was the least dominant strategy employed by secondary school students during English reading comprehension activities. Besides that, there was no significant correlation between gender and language learning strategies among secondary school students. Nevertheless, this research presents a snippet of what teachers and learners could focus on when aiming for more fruitful reading comprehension outcomes in ESL classrooms.
Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Language Learning Strategies, Secondary School Students, Language Strategy Use

Introduction
Learning strategies are techniques that assist in the completion of a learning activity. Learning Strategies are usually conscious and goal-driven, especially in the initial stages of learning a new language. When a learning method becomes familiar via repeated usage, it may be used with some automaticity, although most learners will be able to call the approach to conscious awareness if necessary. Supporting this, Hashim et al (2018) stated that learners who are exposed to learning strategies are more proactive in helping to improve the effectiveness of their own learning. In order to learn a new language, each person comes up with their own

way to do it. Dawi and Hashim (2022) found that in general, it appears that learners' attitudes, abilities, and strategies influence their ability to comprehend language intricacies. Therefore, learners use different language learning strategies to do the tasks and process the new information they get. Language learning strategies are good indicators of how people deal with tasks or problems while learning a new language. It's important for language teachers to know how their students assess the situation, plan, and choose the right skills so that they can understand, learn, or remember new information in the language classroom. Similarly, John et al (2021) summarize language learning strategy as a distinct method of coping with the knowledge that students use to better comprehension, learning, and remembering. Learners who choose their language learning strategies and self-regulate their learnings are good language learners and they improve their language proficiency by employing various language learning strategies as said by Dawi et al (2021) that the good language learners use a wide range of language learning strategies that contributes to their improved proficiency. Learning strategies and techniques are essential in second language learning and teaching for two key reasons. First, by evaluating the techniques second language learners employ during the language acquisition process, we get insight into the metacognitive, cognitive, social, and emotional processes involved in language learning. The second motivation for researching language learning strategies is that less successful language learners can be taught new strategies, allowing them to become better language learners (Grenfell & Harris, 1999). Every learning process necessitates the adaptation of a method or strategy in order to reach the primary goal of learning. Among the most crucial aspects of the learning process are "what" to use for learning and "how" to utilize it. Humans, on the other hand, use a range of techniques while learning a language; some of these strategies are quite beneficial, while others are ineffective. Cohen (2003) characterizes language learning strategies (LLS) as intentionally adopted learning techniques by learners. Language students may read a variety of reading materials. Reading is a cognitive activity in which the reader engages in a dialogue with the author via the text. Reading techniques, on the other hand, are regarded as one of the cognitive psychology aspects that are required for good comprehension. This study discusses Language Learning Strategies in Reading Among Form 3 studentsChinese Secondary School in Malaysia. The research questions are as follows:

1) What are the preferred language learning strategies employed by the students?
2) Is there a significant difference between genders and their preferred language learning strategies?

Literature Review
Language Learning Strategies (LLS)
Individual differences in language learners have been the focus of studies in second language learning since the 1970s hence, Language Learning Strategy (LLS) is considered an essential tool for active, self-directed participation in developing language proficiency. Scholars (O'Malley, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Wenden and Rubin, 1987) have demonstrated that language learners who are more strategic in their efforts, can produce considerable progress in their language learning and use. Additionally, Oxford (1990); Adan and Hashim (2021) defined LLS as "individual learners' unique methods or techniques for facilitating comprehension, retention, retrieval, and application of information for language learning and acquisition". Correspondingly, Ates (2019) described that Introverts prefer quiet study in order to feel at ease, whilst extroverts love to communicate with others and seek out numerous opportunities to improve their language abilities. Language studies are seen to differ

significantly in both their learning paths and their learning outcomes due to differences in their thoughts, socio backgrounds, prior knowledge, self-esteem, and ability. Learning styles, learning strategies, and affective variables, according to Thomas and Janosy (2020), are central to the process because they are ultimately independent and inseparable. Indeed, we all learn differently, and what suits one person may not suit another (Cohen and Henry, 2019; John et al., 2021). Similarly, learners apply different strategies to acquire different language skills such as reading strategies for reading skills.

The importance of teachers in assisting students in choosing appropriate learning strategies cannot be denied and Marashi and Assgar (2019) agreed with this statement by concluding that teachers that utilize good classroom management approaches enable and encourage learners to apply strategies that make learning easier for them in the second language learning process. Thus, learners should be taught and guided to choose and apply suitable language learning strategies from a young age to enable them to develop their choices of strategy and to be good language learners in the future. Several taxonomies for strategy application have been designed to increase students' knowledge and rationale for using strategies and the two most influential are O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) three categories namely metacognitive, cognitive, and social and affective strategies. Cognitive strategies work directly on incoming data, modifying it in ways that help students learn better. Socio-affective strategies engage learners in communication with others and self-talk to control the effect of the gained information while Meta-cognitive strategies require learners to self-manage and reflect on their performance. Following this, Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) is the developed strategy system and according to Ates (2019), this strategy is the most comprehensive inventory of learner strategies to date. The following sections will elaborate on SILL in detail.

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)
Oxford classified SILL into direct and indirect categories, which are further classified into six other subcategories. Indirect strategies support or organize language learning without requiring learners to explicitly participate when learning the target language, whereas direct strategies require learners to explicitly participate when learning the target language. Accordingly, under the direct strategies there are Memorization, Cognitive, and Compensation whereas, under the indirect strategies are Metacognitive, Affective, and Social. Memory strategies known as mnemonics, help learners remember information more efficiently, retrieving and transferring it for future linguistic usage. Constructivism theory explains that learners construct their own learning based on their prior experiences and knowledge (Bada and Olusegun, 2015). mentioned that the core principle of memory strategy is that learners build new knowledge on top of past knowledge by using visual and verbal mental imagery to develop their language proficiency. Learners use cognitive strategies to help them correctly manage the target language by using all of their processes, such as thinking, analysis, and making conclusions. Furthermore, Ali and Razali (2019) mentioned that text comprehension is a complex cognitive function that requires a wide range of language skills thus, cognitive strategies are crucial for reading comprehension. Compensation strategies are to compensate for missing knowledge in the target language by guessing intelligently due to a lack of vocabulary where these strategies help students to use the language despite their limited vocabulary. According to Al-Jarrah (2018) good readers use their experiences and expertise to generate predictions and formulate ideas while reading.

Metacognitive strategies help learners to self-regulate their learning by taking control of their own learning and they are also known as autonomous learners. Supporting this, organismic integration theory by Ryan and Deci (2017) motivational factors influences autonomous learning behaviour through the mediation of self-regulation methods. Affective strategies are techniques that students can use to better control their emotions, attitudes, motivations, and values. Supporting this Amadi (2017) explains that intrinsic motivation motivates students to learn without being rewarded because the desire is natural and comes from inside. Subsequently, Social strategies allow learners to maintain frequent contact with peers or native speakers of the target language in order to improve their language skills. Zhou & Brown (2015) mentioned that theorists investigated the relationship between social and cognitive development and the commonality among their theories is language learning is not regarded as a straightforward process of information transfer from a source, but rather as an active social interaction.

Good Language Learners
There has been an increasing academic interest in putting learners at the center of foreign language learning and teaching effort over the last few decades. Scholars (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1983) have been interested in exploring and identifying a variety of characteristics that distinguish Good Language Learners. Learners not only learn in school but they are still in the learning process when they are engaged in activities that they participated in out of school. Supporting this Muslimin (2018) said that what students do outside of the classroom has a stronger impact on their language skills. It's vital to notice that they actively participate in school tasks as well as some extracurricular activities linked to their interests and hobbies. As a result, it can be stated that learners are learning to be good language learners at every opportunity they have by applying suitable learning strategies. Positive learning strategies such as exploring, planning, constructing the new language system, practicing, searching for meaning, self-monitoring, and critical thinking are the characteristics of good language learners (Griffiths, 2018). Hashim (2018) explained the good language learners' characteristics as drawing on their background knowledge to define their goals and strategies, monitor and evaluate their progress, and, most importantly, solve problems effectively. Additionally, language learners who are able to converse fluently in English and use the language proficiently are deemed good language learners. Therefore, good language learners are known as autonomous learners (Adan, 2021) and they deliberately choose and apply and evaluate appropriate LLS. In language acquisition, motivational perspectives are intrinsically linked to LLS (Han, 2021), thus good language learners are always motivated and have high self-efficacy to enhance their language skills. Thus, good language learners are not worried about making mistakes and, as a result, are willing to learn from them. They also use the learning language frequently and their first language to acquire the target language.

Reading Comprehension in Second Language
Reading skills make up a significant element of the Malaysian educational curriculum, assisting students in promoting various reading practices. Students' performance levels throughout their school lives can be greatly influenced by the acquisition of appropriate reading skills. Chamba and Ramirez-Avila (2021) mentioned that reading and language competency are linked, and it is thought that reading can aid learners in expanding their vocabulary and, as a result, acquiring knowledge in the target language. Cho and Ma (2020) mentioned that reading strategy use was found to be an important factor contributing to

reading comprehension, and influenced learners' long-term reading knowledge gains the most positively. Accordingly, teachers must assign and facilitate a variety of tasks to learners in order for them to practice more useful strategies to improve their reading skills, motivation and beliefs. Teachers can introduce reading strategies constructed by scholars for their learners according to their level of proficiency and age. Amin (2019); McNamara & Scott (2020) believe that teachers can assist students in improving their reading comprehension skills by guiding them through reading strategies such as predicting, affiliating, imagining, inferring, questioning, and summarizing. Empirical studies on the effectiveness of LLS for reading skills by Goyi et al (2021) showed that learners who were more proficient employed the LLS to read more effectively than those who were less proficient. Good readers are engaged with the text and are aware of the techniques they employ to comprehend what they read. Thus, students need to be more aware of their learning strategies and choose the strategies that suit them to enhance their language learning.

Methodology

The research employed a quantitative method using a survey research design. The use of survey was suitable as the research aimed to investigate a trend of the most used strategy for language learning among Form 3 Students in a private Chinese Secondary School in Perak, Malaysia. Furthermore, a purposive sampling was applied with a size of forty-seven participants (N=47) which consisted of eighteen male (N=18) and twenty-nine female (N=29) students. Table 1 shows the participants of this research.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents According to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	18	38.3
Female	29	61.7
Total	**47**	**100.0**

A Likert scale questionnaire consisting of five ordinal points was implemented to identify and study which strategy was used more often than the other. The ordinal points were (1) Never, (2) Rarely, (3) Sometimes, Usually (4), and (5) Always. As for the instrument, the Young Learners' Language Strategy Use (Cohen & Oxford, 2002) and Language Strategy Use Survey (Cohen et al., 2002) forms were used and adopted to gather data among participants. However, based on Oxford's SILL, researchers have geared and adopted six parts in the survey form to fit the research objectives more rigorously. Part A, B, C, D, E and F were classified as Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social strategies respectively. Each part also consisted of only four survey questions which are direct and easily comprehended by research participants. The instrument was verified through peer-checking technique and approved by 2 expert teachers from the Tatau Sebauh district to guarantee its reliability and validity. However, before participants began to access Part A until F, they had to complete a background questionnaire aimed to identify their age, name, gender, and first language. Nonetheless, this part may provide a better understanding of participants' learning behavior which might be useful in the research.

Finally, data were collected using a Google Form link that was distributed among participants. Participants were then given the time between one to two days to complete the survey questions. During the present day, data was analyzed using statistical descriptive analysis with frequency counts. After data was collected, the researchers used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 to analyze the data. The first aim of the study was addressed through ranking which language learning strategy was more dominant than the other by comparing the mean score among the strategies. Next, the second aim of the study was addressed by doing an independent t-test to see the significance between gender and language learning strategies employed by participants. Finally, percentages and rankings were graphically displayed to holistically view the results which were then used to draw conclusions about significant points raised in the study.

Findings & Discussion

From data collected from a questionnaire, students studying in a private Chinese school were asked about the strategies that they used to learn the English language in terms of reading skills. For each aspect of language learning strategy, four questions were asked of the respondents. To ensure reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was measured through SPSS. Having found a high Cronbach's Alpha of 0.915 means the survey had high reliability. Through the survey, the results are presented below:

Table 2
Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Learning Strategies Used

Domain	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Ranking
Memory	47	2.968	1.039	4th
Cognitive	47	3.181	0.941	1st
Compensation	47	3.106	1.032	3rd
Metacognitive	47	2.851	1.052	5th
Affective	47	3.128	1.061	2nd
Social	47	2.692	0.947	6th

From the table above, from the six learning strategies, it can be concluded that cognitive strategy was the most frequently used strategy with the highest mean score of 3.181 while the least used strategy was the social strategy with the lowest mean score of 2.692. Oxford put forth three levels of strategies used where high frequency (range from 3.5-5.0), medium frequency (range from 2.5-4.9), and low frequency (range from 1.0-2.49).

Although the data set has a small sample size, it can be concluded that the students still use language learning strategies with a medium to high frequency. This shows that there is a positive attitude to learning English among students. The results obtained were similar to research conducted by Goyi et al. (2021) and Maulidasari et al. (2021) where they found that their students use the cognitive strategy more. Also, the social strategy was the least used by students which is similar to research by Nair et al. (2021). More often than not, students in this study used cognitive strategies to help them in their reading. This is true with

regards to Malaysian students. Malaysia is a multicultural and multilingual country so, it's not surprising that the cognitive strategy is the most popular language-learning strategy used. Students use their thinking skills such as reading ahead and guessing during their reading to help them find answers to questions quicker which is similar to research conducted by Tomak (2022).

Gender and Language Learning Strategies Used
To answer the second research question, an independent sample t-test was conducted. The results are shown below in Table 3:

Table 3
Results of the independent sample t-test for preferred language learning strategies between genders

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		f	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Memory	Equal variances assumed	9.186	0.004	-1.137	45	0.262	-0.353	0.311	-0.980	0.273
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.290	44.604	0.204	-0.353	0.274	-0.905	0.198
Cognitive	Equal variances assumed	3.842	0.056	-0.081	45	0.936	-0.023	0.285	-0.598	0.552
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.089	44.778	0.930	-0.023	0.260	-0.546	0.500
Compensation	Equal variances assumed	10.890	0.02	0.168	45	0.867	0.053	0.313	-0.578	0.683
	Equal variances not assumed			0.192	44.393	0.849	0.053	0.274	-0.500	0.606
Metacognitive	Equal variances assumed	3.610	0.064	1.198	45	0.237	0.376	0.314	-0.257	1.010
	Equal variances not assumed			1.272	42.714	0.210	0.376	0.296	-0.220	0.973

Affective	Equal variances assumed	3.000	0.090	-0.364	45	0.718	-0.117	0.321	-0.764	0.530
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.392	43.812	0.697	-0.117	0.298	-0.718	0.484
Social	Equal variances assumed	0.652	0.424	1.801	45	0.078	0.500	0.278	-0.060	1.060
	Equal variances not assumed			1.852	339.399	0.071	0.500	0.270	-0.458	1.046

An independent sample t-test was conducted between gender and the language learning strategies. The results showed no significant difference between male and female students in using all six language learning strategies. Students in this research reported that reading was one of the difficult skills to master. They have problems regarding vocabulary, grammar, and sentence organization. The data shows that both male and female students did not have a specific preference for their preferred language learning strategies when it comes to reading. However, teachers play a role to finding the language learning strategy that suits their pupils (Hashim et al., 2018).

Implications and Conclusion

The findings of this study show that there is high usage of language learning strategies used by students to help in their reading. There was no significant difference between males and female with regard to the six language learning strategies. Despite that, the data collected were from a limited number of students and from one age group. Teachers play a huge role in guiding students to master reading skills as it is an important skill for students in this modern era. Thus, teachers should cater to students' preferred language learning strategy and try to use suitable strategies for the given lesson. As a result, language teachers should make an effort to assist less proficient students in improving their reading comprehension by working on certain characteristics of strategic processing. In general, it is assumed that enhancing students' strategic processing is connected to their language skills, instructional methodologies, and psychological characteristics such as attitude and motivation. We focused on a small number of language learning strategies on reading experiences as a dialogic process in this study; however, more research on a larger number of language learning strategies at various grade levels and from various cultural backgrounds may help us better understand L2 reading strategies. It is crucial that research into learning techniques, both in this and other areas, continue since only through greater knowledge of the learning and teaching processes can more language learners attain the degree of success that presently characterizes just a tiny fraction of all students studying a foreign or second language across the world. Future research will look into how to improve the skills of language teachers so they can use learning strategies in the classroom. People who look at different ways teachers are trained in learning strategies instruction could change or improve current models. In addition, studies need to be done to figure out how effective learning strategy instruction is linked to teacher characteristics like how they teach, their attitude and beliefs,

how much and how much training they get in learning strategy instruction, and how long they have been teaching. It could be that effective learning strategy instruction is linked to specific individual teachers. Further study in specific language learning strategies is required to fully realize its potential.

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