Enhancing Speaking Skills among Malaysian Iban Students Through The use of Language Learning Strategies

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Abstract

Malaysian school students are struggling in mastering English as a second language (ESL). Among those who are struggling in this area are the Iban students, especially those from the suburban and rural areas. The biggest challenge they face is the demand to be proficient in speaking English as the language is widely used in both government and private sectors in the country. Contributing factors such as lack of self-confidence and unfamiliarity with English language have made it more challenging for these students to speak the language fluently. The 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) provided by the United Nations for Malaysia emphasize on quality education by offering equal learning opportunities of all levels of education and vocational training for every citizen which include disable citizens, indigenous people and children in vulnerable situations. The Ibans are recognized by the government of Malaysia as one of the Indigenous people in Sarawak. The SDG2030 agenda will prepare the future Iban generation with relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship. Proficiency in speaking English is one of the main criteria required to apply for these jobs. Therefore, it is important to identify language learning strategies (LLS) used by these students in order to better understand their approach in improving their speaking skills. The research aim to 1) investigate the most frequently used LLS to enhance speaking skills among ESL Form 3 Iban students and 2) analyse if there is any difference between the LLS used by male and female ESL Form 3 Iban students to enhance English speaking skills. 46 ESL lower form Iban students from a secondary school in a suburban area participated in the survey. Language Learning Strategy Use Inventory (LLSI) was used as the instrument for data collection. Findings from this study suggested that social strategies are the most frequently used LLS by ESL Form 3 Iban students among the six strategies to enhance their speaking skills. There is no significance difference in the use of LLS between male and female students despite male students use more LLS than female students where the difference is very small. The study suggests that students should be exposed to these LLS and are encouraged to use them to enhance their speaking skills.

Keywords: Language Learning Strategies, Speaking Skills, ESL, Malaysian Secondary School Students, Iban

Introduction

The Iban community is the largest group in Sarawak. The Ibans in Sarawak are recognized as one of the indigenous groups by the government of Malaysia. According to Bilon and Tugang (2018), the Ibans were believed to be originated from Kalimantan, Indonesia and some migrated to parts of Sarawak through Batang Ai, Kapuas, scattered around Sri Aman,Kapit, Kalaka (Saratok), Mukah, Miri, Betong, Baram, Song and Sarikei. Traditionally, the Ibans live in the longhouse which is mostly located at the rural areas in Sarawak and also well-known for their head hunting tradition, tribal tattoos and also their slogan 'Agi Idup Agi Ngelaban' which simply means 'Still Alive, Still Fighting' (Engkasan & Yamat, 2021). Apart from that, the Ibans are also well-known for their Gawai Dayak a festival celebrated every 1st June as well as their rice wine called 'Tuak' and also their traditional dance called 'Ngajat' (Berinau et. al., 2016).

English is recognized as the second language in Malaysia. For the Ibans, English can be considered as their third language as their first language is Iban, followed by Malay and English. English is an important language to master to quality better jobs in both government and private sectors. English speaking skills is one essential skill needed to qualify for certain job opportunities in some sectors such as engineering, medical, architecture, education and many other sectors. Speaking is a two-way process for people to transfer meaningful information or message by forming and receiving data from other people (Rusli et al., 2018). Speaking skill is vital as good speaking skill will reduce the barrier of communication as well as having a better understanding between people in different setting. In the workplace for example, good speaking skills is essential to achieve good communication. According to Akua (2014), good speaking skills is the fundamental of good communication as it has several benefits such as job satisfaction, boost productivity, reduce conflict, creating relationship among people and utilize the resources more efficient.

STEM careers has become an important career for the new generation. Knowledge and highly qualified human capital has replaced the economy based on commodities and manual labor (Dede, 2010; Jara et al., 2015; Levy & Murnane, 2004; Van Laar , 2020). English is the primary language used in the STEM field as it is widely used by researchers around the world to access and communicate scientific journals and publications (Dini, 2020). Due to the high demand in STEM careers and English as one of the contributing factors to fulfill job opportunities in STEM, the Malaysian education policy has included STEM in schools to prepare the future generation for the challenging job market nowadays. Therefore, it is essential for students to be proficient in English to enable them to do better in their studies by having a better comprehension on the input provided in schools as well as to enable them to compete to fulfill for jobs in the STEM career.

The high demand for English proficiency among Malaysian students requires Malaysian students to be proficient in English language. However, the current scenario is the opposite. The level of English proficiency among these students are still not satisfying, especially their speaking skills. The matter gets worse with students who come from suburban and rural areas in Malaysia especially the Iban students who are mostly lacked proficiency in English language. Engkasan and Yamat (2021) describes the poor result in English subject among the Iban students in a school in a rural area is reflected by their poor achievement in the examination. Thus, when they continue their study to the secondary level, it will affect their

performance in the English subject as well. Despite receiving years of guidance from English language teachers in their schooling years, many Malaysian students, especially the Iban students from the suburban and rural schools are struggling to be proficient in speaking English. With the lack of proficiency in the English language especially in speaking skills, the chances for these Iban students to fill in better job opportunities in the government and private sectors will be reduced due to this disadvantage. According to Ting et al (2017), the lack of proficiency and communication skills among Malaysian graduates are the contributing factor to the rising unemployment rate in Malaysia. Due to the lack of proficiency in the English language, private companies prefer to employ graduates from transactional private universities as they have better command of English (Cheong et al., 2016; Ting et al., 2017).

The ability to be proficient in a second language lies in several factors such as motivation, learning strategies, environment, teaching methods and also the learner as well. What really arouse the interest of researchers in the LLS field is how some learners can master the language better and faster than others. According to Kehing et al (2020), it is an interesting matter how some students have more advanced ability to be proficient in speaking the language better and faster. Language learning strategies are significant factors, which have a major impact in determining the performance of these students in learning a second language or a foreign language.

The research has two aims. First, investigate the most frequently used LLS to enhance speaking skills among ESL Form 3 Iban students. Second, analyse if there is any difference between the LLS used by male and female ESL Form 3 Iban students to enhance English-speaking skills. The following are the research questions

(a) What is the most frequently used LLS to enhance speaking skills among ESL Form 3 Iban students?
(b) Is there any difference in the LLS used by male and female ESL Form 3 Iban students?

Literature Review
Language Learning Strategy

Curiosity on how some learners are able to master a second language better or faster than others had lead to the beginning of the study of language learning strategies which first emerged in the 1970s with early works by Rubin (1975); Stern (1975) who slowly sparked the awareness on the importance of strategies used by learners to learn a new language or a second language (Griffiths, 2004). The study by Rubin in the 1970s had become the fundamental of many other researchers to expand the knowledge in LLS.
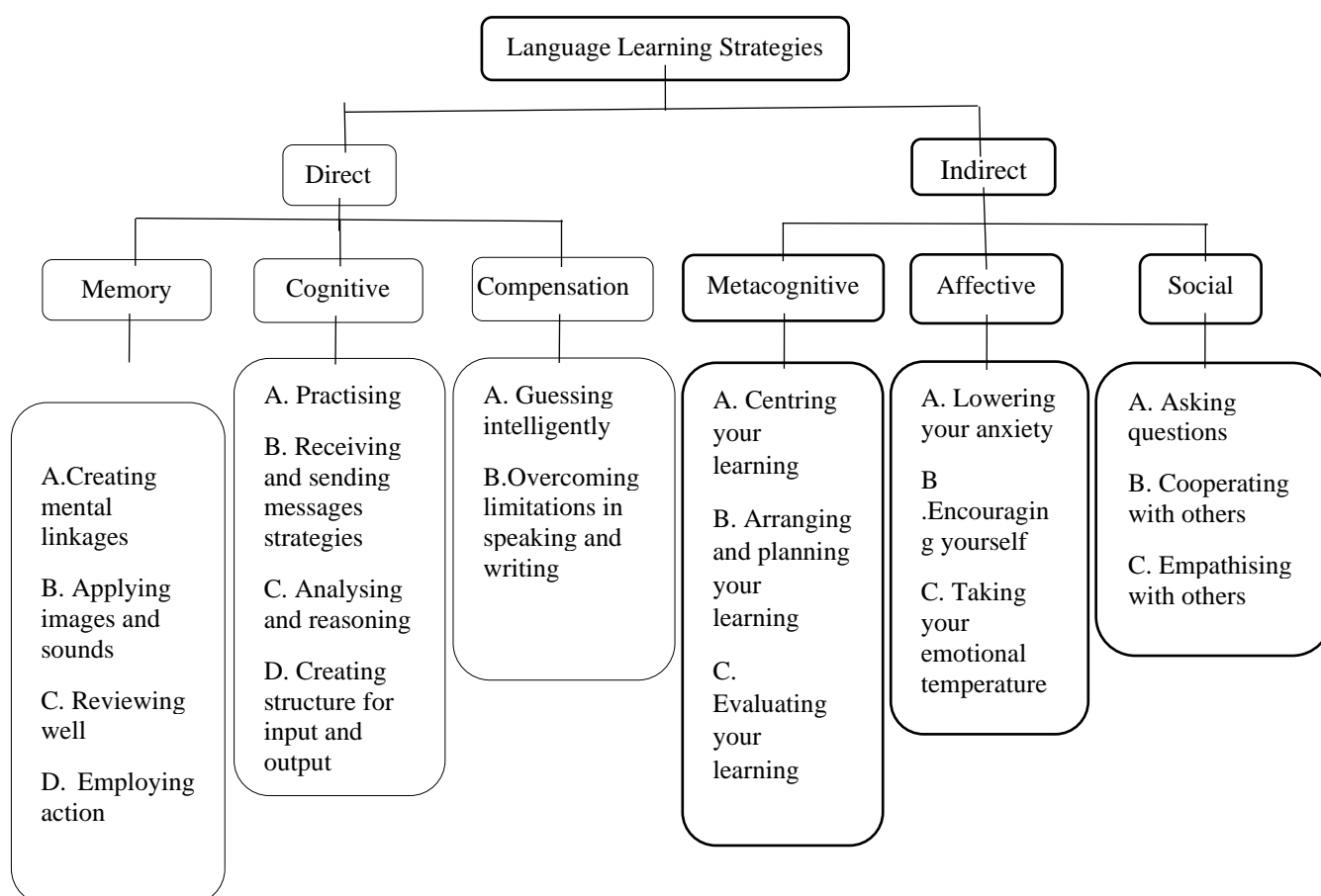
Griffiths (2004) states that Rubin was the person who pioneered this field of LLS in which she defined learning strategy as "the technique or device employed by a learner to acquire knowledge" (p. 43). However, her definition of learning strategy is considered very broad in today's context. Rubin further developed her ideas of learning strategies into two types of learning strategies, first, strategies that contribute directly to the learning and second, strategies that contribute indirectly to the learning.

Griffith (2004) explains that in the same year Rubin started her work on learning strategies in 1975, Stern listed ten LLS, which is famously known as the Good Language Learner concept. Naiman et al (1978) as cited in Zhang (2020) provided a detailed description of the characteristics of good language learners. First, they are highly motivated. Second, they have a positive attitude towards other speakers of the target language. Third, they have a proactive approach and are willing to use the target language for communication purposes. Finally, they are competent in using cognitive strategies. Koleman (2021) stated that the idea

of good language learners which Stern (1975) introduce is to assume that the learning strategies used by successful learners can be distinguished from the less successful learners and therefore the strategies used by successful learners can be used by less successful learners to improve and facilitate learning. Coleman (2021) further describes the introduction of the "good language learner" (GLL) in those years had become the foundation for language learning strategy research.

In 1985, O'Malley et al. introduced a new improved definition of learning strategy, adopted from Rigney (1978) by defining it as "operations or steps employed by a learner to assist acquisition, storage, retrieval or use of information" (Griffiths, 2004). O'Malley and his colleagues expanded the knowledge in learning strategies by introducing a new taxonomy consisting of three categories known as metacognitive (knowing about learning, cognitive (specific to distinct learning activities) and social (Griffiths, 2004).

In the 90s, Oxford advanced the study in LLS by giving a new definition which is " specific actions taken by learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (Oxford, 1990; Koleman, 2021). Oxford (1990) classifies her strategy into two categories, which are direct strategies and indirect strategies. Under the direct strategies, there are three subgroups, which are memory, cognitive, and compensations strategies while under the indirect strategies are metacognitive, affective and social strategies (Figure `1).

With the introduction of LLS to the language-learning field to aid in enhancing academic achievements among students, education has changed its focus from a traditional role in the classroom from a teaching process to a learning process (Al-Khaza'leh, 2020). Apart from that, Al-Khaza'leh (2020) stated that LLS is also a useful tool to raise awareness among weaker learners to enhance their learning and improve their mastery of the target language.

To assess the types of learning strategies used by language learners, a few researchers developed questionnaires or strategy inventories. In 1981, Bialystok was the earliest to develop a questionnaire for LLS which aim to study the extend to the language learners' are engaged in a variety of activities in the use of the four strategies (Oxford and Burry-Stock; Raftari and Alawi, 2012).

Another important and popular instrument in LLS is the Learning Strategy Inventory designed by Chamot et al. in 1986 (Raftari and Alawi, 2012). The questionnaire developed by Chamot and his colleagues in 1987 comprising of five sections which are listening in class, speaking in class, listening and speaking outside class, writing and reading. However, Raftari and Alawi (2012) point out that the weakness of this instrument is Chamot and his colleagues failed to publish related information on the reliability and validity of the instrument.

The Strategy Inventory Language Learning or better known as SILL was developed by Oxford in 1986. This instrument had been undergoing better improvements from year to year. SILL was originally used as an instrument at the Defence Language Institute in Monterey, California to evaluate the frequency of language learning strategy used by the students (Raftari and Alawi, 2012).

One of the most widely used inventory to assess language learning is the Language Strategy Use Survey. Developed by Cohen et al (2002), the inventory serves two purposes which are pedagogical and practical (Dornyei, 2005; Mizumoto, 2018). According to Mizumoto (2018), the Language Strategy Use Survey can provide a list of strategic behaviours consisting of six categories listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary learning, and translation skills where each item is designed to measure only one specific behaviour.

Few research studies related to language learning strategies on ESL Iban learners are done. A study conducted by Ho and Shah (2018) on the Iban ESL Malaysian secondary school students in a school in Kapit, Sarawak revealed that students have fair awareness on reading strategies and use several reading strategies to be proficient readers. Weng et al (2016) also looked at successful language learning strategies used by successful Year 5 English as a second language (ESL) learners and discovered that the students use language-learning strategies moderately in listening, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary and low users of speaking strategy.

Engkasan and Yamat (2021) conducted a study to discover the learning experience among Iban students in a secondary school in a rural area. The findings of their study show that Iban learners have a positive attitude on learning English and using various learning strategies in learning English.

Speaking Skills

Language involves four skills consisting of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Above all the four skills, speaking skills is the most frequent language skill used by people around the world to communicate. In fact, speaking dominates most of our daily life to achieve the purpose of communication. The goal of speaking skills is to communicate through the projection of meaningful sound in order to convey information. The definition of speaking is 35viewed in two different perspectives. First, from the bottom-up perspective, speaking

refers to the production of auditory signals by combining sounds in a systematic way to form meaningful utterances to produce differential verbal responses in a listener (Bygate, 1987; Torky 2006). On the other hand, according to the top-down perspective, "speaking is a two–way process involving a true communication of ideas, information or feelings" (Eckard & Kearny, 1981; Florez, 1999; Howarth, 2001; Torky, 2006). Suminih (2017) defines speaking as a process of expressing through the ability of pronouncing words into organized phrases or sentences on the matter being discussed.

One of the success criteria in studying a language is the ability of the learners to speak the target language (Manurung, 2014). Therefore, to qualify as a good speaker possessing proficient level of speaking skills of a language, the learners should be able to communicate with others to achieve certain goals or to express their opinions, intentions, hopes and viewpoints (Suninih, 2017).

Methodology
Research Design
The research employed a quantitative research design.

Sample
A total of 60 respondents were targeted to participate in this questionnaire but only 46 Form 3 Iban students (M = 16; F = 30), from a suburban secondary school in Kapit, Sarawak responded to the questionnaire. The samples are randomly selected among students between 14 to15 years old, who have been exposed to the target language for nine to eleven years including during their pre-school and primary school education learning ESL. These Form 3 ESL Iban students come from mixed classes with various levels of proficiency in English language.

Research Instrument
In order to collect the intended data, this research used a questionnaire which was adopted from the Cohen et al (2002) Language Learning Strategy Inventory (LLSI) to gain information on the LLS for speaking skills of ESL Iban Form 3 students. LLSI is chosen as the research instrument because it is Use Inventory which was developed by Cohen, Oxford and Chi in 2002 as this inventory is widely used by researchers around the world on studies related to LLS. In a research on "Language Learning Strategies of Vietnamese EFL Freshmen" by Bui and Tuan (2018), the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test of Speaking Strategy Use level is 0.941. Therefore, it shows the reliability of the items as the Cronbach Alpha values for all the items were higher than 0.70, the acceptable level for reliability (Fatin, 2020). Fatin (2020) states the advantage of using the survey is it can elicit demographic data and other information such as attitudes and perception, which is generally hard for other method to measure. In this questionnaire, research participants will be responding to a Likert Scale statements ranging from 1: This strategy doesn't fit for me, 2: I've never used this strategy but I'm interested in it, 3: I have tried this strategy and would use it again, and 4: I use this strategy and I like it. The highest value is 4.00 and the lowest value will be 1.

Data Collection Statistics
The overall frequency was calculated from the primary data gathered from the survey questionnaire. 18 items in the questionnaire were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 26 using descriptive analysis.

The analysis was done by calculating the overall frequency from the data collected from the survey questionnaire. Descriptive analysis was employed to analyse all the 18 items in the questionnaire by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 26.
The highest value is 4.00 and the lowest value will be 1.00.

Data Collection Analysis
Data for this research were collected to investigate the most preferred LLS used by ESL Form 3 Iban students to enhance their speaking skills and analyse if there is any difference between the LLS used by male and female these learners.
The distribution of the survey questionnaire for quantitative data was carried out online using Google Form as the Covid-19 pandemic restricts physical contact with the respondents.
The questionnaire was distributed online through Google Form. The reason for doing this survey online is to avoid physical contact with the participants due to the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide more convenience to the participants to respond to the questionnaire. All 18 items in the questionnaire were provided both in English and Malay to enable participants to understand and respond better to the statements. The respondents were given 2 weeks to complete the questionnaire according to their convenience. Consent forms were also distributed to the respondents together with the survey questionnaire through Google Form. The data from the questionnaire were collected and analysed. The analysis process includes quantifying and presenting the data in means and standard deviation in computed form.

Findings and Discussion
The next section will discuss on the findings of the research based on the research objectives. The first part will present the most frequently used LLS to enhance speaking skills among ESL Form 3 Iban students. The second part will present if there is any difference between the LLS used by male and female ESL Form 3 Iban students to enhance English speaking skills.

The Most Preferable LLS among ESL Form 3 Iban Students
Research question number one focuses on understanding how ESL Form 3 Iban students learn speaking. To do this, the researchers adopted a questionnaire consisting of 18 items specifically on learning speaking skills from the Language Strategy Use Inventory developed

by (Cohen et al., 2002). These 18 questions are classified into 6 categories based on the type of learning strategies. The following table shows the illustration of the learning strategy categories.

Table 1
Representation of Types of Learning Strategy in the Questionnaire

TYPE OF STRATEGY	QUESTION
MEMORY STRATEGIES	1
	13
COGNITIVE STRATEGIES	2
	8
	10
	14
COMPENSATION STRATEGIES	5
	6
	9
	15
	16
	18
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES	3
	7
AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES	12
SOCIAL STRATEGIES	4
	11
	17

The analysis from the following table presents the mean scores and standard deviations based on the response from the research participants. Overall data from Table 2 shows that the most preferable LLS used by ESL Form 3 Iban students is the Indirect strategy from the social strategies with the highest total mean of 2.15 with a standard deviation of 0.928. Despite achieving a total mean of 2.15, this does not reflect that majority of the respondents answer between 1–2 which implied "This strategy doesn't fit for me" and "I've never used this strategy but I'm interested in it". In Item number 4 (Table 3) and 17 (Table 5), the majority of the respondents answered between 2-3 which implied "I've never used this strategy but I'm interested in it" and "I have tried this strategy and would use it again". However, in Item 11 (Table 4), the majority of the respondents answered 1. Due to this reason, the total mean has dropped to 2.15. Based on the 3 items in social strategy. item number 17 which is "Use gestures as a way to try get my meanings across" is the highest strategy used in the social strategy with the total mean of 2.48 with a standard deviation of 0.983, followed by item number 4 which is "Regularly seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers' with the total mean of 2.35 with a standard deviation of 0.924, and lastly item number 11 which is "Encourage others to correct errors in my speaking" with the total mean of 1.63 with a standard deviation of 0.878.

Item 17 has become the most used strategy among the ESL Form 3 Iban students due to some contributing factors. First, using gesture is an alternative way for students to try to communicate when they do not have any idea for the appropriate word or expression especially students with low proficiency. Secondly, using gesture is a way to convey a message

which require integrating both speech and gesture to better explain or escribe something or a situation to the listener. According to Clough and Duff (2020), gesture serves a unique purpose in communication by displaying or demonstrating unique information which is not available in the speech signal. In many cases, apart from using gestures, students often use their native language to keep the communication going on. Oii et al (2021) indicated that students have higher tendency to switch to their mother tongue as it is more comfortable for them particularly when the circumstances allows them to do so especially when communicating to someone who can understand their mother tongue.

Item 4 is the second most used strategy in the social strategy. Despite not having the opportunity to speak face to face with native speakers, their English teacher could be the closest referral to native speakers. English teachers will provide task which will enhance the speaking skills of the learners during English lessons. Other than that, students will also try to speak English with their classmates or friends who have better command in English as a way to improve their speaking skills. In addition, students will also ask questions to teacher and friends about meaning of words or expressions to improve their speaking skills. The social media such as Facebook, Tik Tok and YouTube could serve as a possible tool for students to interact with native speakers. They might not speak to native speakers directed, instead learning by listening to how native speaker communicate in English and imitate them. According to Oii et. al (2021), the lack of practice in speaking English especially outside the classroom is one contributing factor to lack of proficiency in speaking English regardless of years of learning English from primary to lower secondary. In addition, one of the most prominent way for students to learn speaking in school is through interaction with their English teachers. However, majority of the teachers stress more on reading and writing to help students to get better marks in examination. According to Weng et al (2016), limited time spend on speaking skills is due to the teachers focus more on writing skills.

Item 4 has the lowest use among the 3 strategies in social strategy. The reason for this is probably students feel shy to ask their students to correct them in front of others especially in the class which will result to lower motivation to speak English if they are frequently being corrected. It can also lower their confidence and self esteem if being corrected frequently by their English teachers or friends. According to Doyman and Yunus (2020); Mridha (2020); Al Nakhalah (2016); Oii et al (2021) learners who learn English as a foreign language face anxiety when speaking English. Liandika et al (2021) in Oii et al (2021) state that others' attitude on the learners English speaking flow plays an important role in their progress. In order to encourage learners to speak more English, self confidence and and motivation need to be be cultivated regardless of the mistake made by the learners (Muamar et al., 2019; Syafitri et al., 2019; Oii et al., 2021).

Table 2
Usage of Speaking Strategies Among ESL Form 3 Iban Students

Type of Strategy	Item	Statement	Mean	SD
Memory strategies	1	Practice saying new expressions to myself	1.61	0.881
	13	Ask help from my conversation partner.	1.52	0.836
TOTAL			1.57	0.859
Cognitive strategies	2	Practice new grammatical structures in different situations to build my confidence level using them	1.89	0.674
	8	Ask questions as a way to be involved in the conversation.	1.83	0.894
	10	Try topics even when they aren't familiar to me	2.22	0.941
	14	Look for a different way to express the idea, like using a synonym.	1.98	0.715
TOTAL			1.98	0.806
Compensation strategies	5	Initiate conversations in the target language as often as possible.	1.98	0.954
	6	Direct the conversation to familiar topics.	2.08	0.962
	9	Anticipate what will be said on what has been said so far.	1.78	0.841
	15	Use words from my own language, but say them in a way that sounds like words in the target language.	2.11	1.016
	16	Make up new words or guess if I don't know the right ones to use.	2.00	0.730
	18	Switch back to my own language momentarily if I know that the person I'm talking to can understand what is being said.	1.89	0.994
TOTAL			1.97	0.916
Metacognitive strategies	3	Think about how a native speaker might say something and practice saying it that way.	1.80	0.806
	7	Plan out in advance what I want to say.	1.37	0.610
TOTAL			1.56	0.708
Affective strategies	12	Try to figure out and model native speaker's language patterns when requesting, apologizing, or complaining.	1.89	0.737
TOTAL			1.89	0.737
Social strategies	4	Regularly seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers.	2.35	0.924
	11	Encourage others to correct errors in my speaking.	1.63	0.878
	17	Use gestures as a way to try get my meanings across.	2.48	0.983
TOTAL			2.15	0.928

Table 3
Item 4

Strategy	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
This strategy doesn't fit me.	9	19.6	19.6	19.6
I've never used this strategy but am interested in it.	17	37.0	37.0	56.5
I have tried this strategy and would use it again.	15	32.6	32.6	89.1
I use this strategy and I like it.	5	10.9	10.9	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Table 4
Item 11

Strategy	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
This strategy doesn't fit me.	26	56.5	56.5	56.5
I've never used this strategy but am interested in it.	14	30.4	30.4	87.0
I have tried this strategy and would use it again.	3	6.5	6.5	93.5
I use this strategy and I like it.	3	6.5	6.5	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Table 5
Item 17

Strategy	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
This strategy doesn't fit me.	8	17.4	17.4	17.4
I've never used this strategy but am interested in it.	16	34.8	34.8	52.2
I have tried this strategy and would use it again.	14	30.4	30.4	82.6
I use this strategy and I like it.	8	17.4	17.4	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Difference of LLS Used between Male and Female ESL Iban Secondary School Students
Research question number two focuses on analyzing the difference between the LLS used by male and female ESL Form 3 Iban students to enhance their English speaking skills.
To analyse this, a t-test was conducted to determine if there is any difference between the LLS used by male and female learners. The data was gathered from the Language Strategy Use Inventory developed by (Cohen et al., 2002). The researchers set the level of significance at 0.05.
The analysis from the following table presents the mean scores and standard deviations based on gender usage jof language learning strategies.
Table 6 shows that males (M=2.975) have higher mean values than female learners (M=1.889). In terms of the standard deviation value, males (SD=0.814) have lower value than

females (SD=0.967). Lower value of standard deviations indicates that the data of males is less spread out than the data of the females.

Therefore, it can be assumed in terms of frequency of using LLS to enhance speaking skills, male students have higher use of LLS than female students.

A Levene's test was carried out to test the Equality of Variances.

Table 7 presents the Sig. value which is 0.432 and this value is higher than 0.05. From this result, it can be assumed that the variances are equal.

In table 7, the t-test revealed the t-value (t = 0.287), degree of freedom (df = 44), and sig. (2-tailed) = 0.570, which is higher than 0.05. From this result, it can be assumed that the difference of LLS among males and females is significant, in which the standard deviation is almost very similar as presented in Table 7, with male (SD =0.814) and female (SD=0.867). In conclusion, the result suggest that there is no significant difference in LLS used by male and female students. However, male students used more LLS than female students to enhance their speaking skills.

According to Ho & Ng (2016) There have be mixed conclusions on studies related to LLS based on gender. A few studies suggested that there is no significant difference between the use of LLS among male and female students. Ahsanah (2020) in her study on Gender and Age Differences in the Use of Language Learning Strategies by Junior and Senior High School Students in Paciran, East Java, Indonesia reported that there is no significant difference between the LLS used by male and female students. Mahmud and Nur (2018) discovered that there is no significant difference between male and female learners in the use of LLS among students in a senior high school in Makassar, Indonesia.

However, there are a few studies contradict to the theory of male and female learners share equal use of LLS. Numerous studies suggest female use more LLS compared to their opposite gender. Aziz and Shah (2020), state that many researchers in the past such as Oxford et al (1988); Oxford & Nyikos (1989); Green and Oxford (1995); Hong-Nam and Leavell (2006) revealed that female learners have greater use of LLS compared to male learners. It is quite unusual for male learners to surpass female learners in the use of LLS which is the finding of this particular study. There are some possible factors which can influence the finding of this study such as self confidence, motivation, ethnicity, exposure to the target language and awareness on learning strategies.

Table 6
Usage of LLS Among Male and Female ESL Form 3 Iban Learners

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male	16	2.375	0.814	0.204
Female	30	1.889	0.867	0.158

Table 7
Independent samples test

		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
Frequency	Equal variances assumed	1.449	0.432	0.287	44	0.570	0.069	0.264	-0.463	0.602
	Equal variances not assumed			0.263	32.757	0.564	0.069	0.259	-0.459	0.598

According to Hashim, Md. Yunus and Hashim (2018), learning a second language is a difficult task and complex process as it demands lots of courage, effort and handwork for learners to do it. Language learning strategies can be one factor that can influence the proficiency of the learners in a second language. Therefore, teachers in school should create awareness of language learning strategies among students. Introducing language learning strategies to students will help them to improve their proficiency in the target language. Despite promoting learner autonomy in modern education, learning has to start with modelling and demonstrating. Kusin et al (2021) stated that to ensure the success in learners' autonomy, teachers should first be the model or in other words, show the example in using the language learning strategies before deciding to let the students independently choose their learning strategies. In other words, the teachers have to train the students to use language learning strategies to guide them to enhance their language learning. For example, teachers should encourage students to use LLS used by successful students to enhance their learning. Self-confidence is another factor that contributes to the performance of a learner in learning a second language. One way to boost the confidence of learners to be proficient in a second language is through language learning strategies. According to Zimmerman et al. (2006), the learner will feel more confident completing or achieving a task when they employ more strategies.

Implications and Conclusion
The findings from this study will be an essential input for teachers and educators to better understand learners approach language learning and adapt their lessons to improve language learning for learners. It is essential to conduct more research on language learning strategies on ESL Iban learners should be carried out to help those in the suburban and rural areas to improve their proficiency in the English language. Therefore, it is recommended that larger samples of Iban ESL learners to be studied to ensure richer sets of data on the LLS used by ESL Iban learners to learn speaking so that Educator and teachers can benefit from the study too. Engkasan and Yamat (2021) pointed out that English teachers should be an example of Iban ESL learners, in which imitating their teachers, it can enhance their language proficiency.

Apart from that, Engkasan and Yamat (2021) suggested that creating awareness among Iban parents that they should monitor and encourage their children language learning by making sure they polish their speaking and listening skills at home as well as making sure they finish their writing and reading exercise given by the teacher. It is recommended that additional teaching and learning period in school focused on speaking skills to be added. The content for speaking skills can be related to STEM.

The transformation in the workforce has a direct impact on education. The high demand for STEM skills has transform the education system to emphasize on STEM education to prepare the next generation for STEM careers. Fatin (2020) states that future employees need to upgrade their knowledge and competencies to prepare them for the transforming global workforce which demand employees with higher level of knowledge and newer skill sets. English is the primary language used in STEM for knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing. It is also used by the STEM community to communicate. It is essential to enhance communication skills by being a proficient English speaker to enable talented students to convey and communicate their ideas and emotions and to resolve problems and issues (Masuram & Sripada, 2020). According to Oii et al (2021), spoken English function as a platform for learners to improve and succeed in their desired field. This finding may assist ESL educators to boost STEM students' self-monitoring behaviour. Iban learners need to be prepared to be high skill worker equipped with new sets of skills and knowledge to be able to complete in the global workforce and at the same time improve their socioeconomic status by having better income and improvement in quality of life among the Iban community. By understanding the LLS used by ESL Iban learners, teachers can find the best possible way to provide better ways to conduct teaching and learning in class, provide task with activity which stimulate self-learning either by using the strategy that fits the students best or use strategy use by successful learners. Both can work to enhance proficiency of English language. It is suggested that teachers need to understand the importance of LLS and create awareness of LLS either directly or indirectly is one way to prepare students to learn English better. By doing so, they can coordinate their own learning process to improve their mastery of the language.

Numerous PCA's 'Self-Awareness' concept revealed that policy makers need to conduct more training to ensure executions run smoothly. In most countries, English is the language used in STEM for tertiary level. According to Sultana, Nahima & Kahwaji, Huda & Kurup, Premnadh. (2021), several research revealed that countries in the ESL and EFL setting adopted STEM education using English as the Medium of Instruction to improve the English proficiency among learners. Therefore, it is essential for teachers in the primary and secondary level to expose students to LLS which is the self-awareness concept to be able to perform better in STEM education when they reach tertiery level. Hence, it is essential for policy makers to conduct more training for ESL teachers and educators to ensure executions run smoothly. Therefore, these teachers and educators will be equipped with sufficient knowledge to modify their teaching technique according to the learning environment and learners as awareness on LLS. Knowledge in LLS will prepare teachers and educators will enable teachers to prepare better task for learners.

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