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Strategies-Based Instruction and Libyan Adult

EFL Learners: An Action Research Study

Fatma Tarhuni

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Abstract

An area which has gained ground in the field of second language acquisition research for over three decades is the study of language learning strategies (LLS). Learning strategies refer to special actions taken by learners to make learning easier, faster, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations (Oxford, 1990, 2003, 2011). The favourable results of many intervention studies have provided a strong indication that the use of LLS is likely to lead to achievement in the foreign language and also contribute to learner autonomy.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the outcome of providing Libyan adult learners of English with formal training in the use of LLS. This training took the form of strategies-based instruction (SBI) within a collaborative action research framework. The research examines the contribution that SBI might offer the learners in relation to the development of all four language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and the development of learner autonomy. The impact of SBI on teacher roles and professionalism was also part of the investigation.

The investigation as a case study relied on 61 student participants from three different levels of proficiency: elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. To implement the SBI approach, all three classes followed the four phases of *the Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment Model* which was specifically designed for the current investigation. The model, which adopted a multi-method approach to data collection, was implemented with the collaboration of three different class teachers.

Findings of the study revealed that the SBI intervention helped raise both the teachers' and students' awareness of LLS. The programme increased students' overall strategy use and had an impact on their learning efforts and language skill improvement. The development of learner autonomy (closely associated with an increase in metacognitive and social awareness) was a major outcome of the study. Results also showed that the study had an impact on the three participant teachers in terms of professional development having implemented SBI for the first time and also as a result of their collaboration in action research. A construct of teacher beliefs was revealed and attitude change particularly towards learner autonomy was also noticed among the teachers.

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List of Abbreviations

AR	Action Research
CALLA	Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach
CAR	Collaborative Action Research
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English As A Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
FCE	First Certificate in English
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
KET	Key English Test
L2	Second Language
LLS	Language Learning Strategies
PET	Preliminary English Test
SBI	Strategies-Based Instruction
SBIA	Strategies-Based Instructional And Assessment Model
SILL	Strategy Inventory For Language Learning
SLA	Second Language Aqcuisition

1 Introduction and Background to Study

This chapter begins by presenting the macro context of the study (a historical background of the Libyan educational framework of English language learning and teaching). Sections 1.2 and 1.3 explain the nature of the problem and my personal experience with language learning strategies and how it relates to the current research followed by an overview of the research study (the micro context). The main aims and research questions are identified in section 1.4 while the significance of the study is presented in section 1.5. The chapter concludes with an outline of how the thesis is organised in section 1.6. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 1.1:

Table 1.1: Contents of Chapter 1

1.1   A Historical Account of EFL Learning and Teaching in Libya

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1.1 A Historical Account of EFL Learning and Teaching in Libya

English was taught as a foreign language in Libya from the mid-1950s to the mid-1980s. It was a compulsory component within the Libyan national curriculum and was taught from the age of 10 (revised to age 12 in the early 80s) until the completion of secondary school at age 17. At university level, it was taught for four academic years for English majors and was an obligatory module across the different disciplines of sciences and humanities (Elmabruk, 2008). During this period, and particularly in the 1980s, the grammar-translation method was the most widely implemented of methodologies in both schools and universities (Saleh, 2002; Ali, 2008; Al-dabbus, 2008). The core elements of English language teaching (ELT) at the time were grammar and reading comprehension. Lessons were characterized by the memorization of long lists of vocabulary translated into Arabic; oral drills and reading aloud focused on

correct grammar and pronunciation; and the use of Arabic as the main means of instruction and communication amongst teachers and students (Alhmali, 2007; Orafi and Borg, 2009; Shiba, 2011).

However, in 1986 teaching English was completely banned from schools and universities across the country. This was part of an Arabization campaign following the political tensions between Libya and both America and Britain. The aim of the campaign was to eliminate any western influence including the teaching and learning of foreign languages (Elmabruk, 2008). The elimination of English language teaching and learning, which lasted for almost a decade, had a significant impact on the Libyan educational system. Not only did it affect a whole generation of learners who graduated with hardly any knowledge of English, but it also affected the English language teachers and inspectors who were either left unemployed or obliged to take alternative teaching jobs (Alhmali, 2007; Orafi and Borg, 2009).

After the change in foreign affairs between Libya and the west, and having deteriorated for many years, English language teaching began to regain its status in the mid-1990s. It was then that educationalists and policy makers realized the need to reincorporate English into the Libyan national curriculum (Elmabruk, 2008). In 1999/2000 a new curriculum based on communicative principles which integrated cultural aspects of the English language was introduced across Libyan schools and universities for the first time (Sawani, 2006; Orafi and Borg, 2009). This represented a significant shift in teaching methodology and materials, and in the underlying assumptions about English language teaching and learning. It not only demanded a major change in teachers' roles and practices but also in their beliefs and attitudes (Alhmali, 2007).

After a period of English language disuse, and being accustomed to old methodologies and old materials, teachers found it difficult to accept change and were struggling to cope with the demands of the new curriculum (Culture Corner, 2004; General People's Committee of Education, 2008). To address this challenge, Libyan educationalists ran teacher training programmes which aimed to help teachers grasp the principles of communicative language teaching and adapt to their new roles (AbouJaafar, 2003; Elmabruk, 2008; Orafi and Borg, 2009). However, these programmes initially brought little success due to engrained teaching techniques and habits which needed time to be replaced, and due to the influence of contextual factors such as class size, resources, and learner expectations (Sawani, 2006). The learners' cultural backgrounds and previous

learning experiences had led them to expect a very different classroom practice and they found it difficult to embrace the techniques and procedures teachers had been trained to employ (General People's Committee of Education, 2008). Eventually it was realized that experienced English teachers and new teacher graduates required longer periods of training and students needed time to adapt to the innovation before the new curriculum would start taking effect (Orafi and Borg, 2009).

On the other hand, during this period, there had been a simultaneous rapid spread of private language centres and summer schools which promote learning English as a foreign language and which embrace the tenets of innovative and state-of-the-art language teaching methodologies (Sawani, 2006). Economic factors have led to an increase in motivation and to a change in attitude of Libyan students towards learning English with many students targeting posts in emerging foreign companies, tourist agencies, and in the oil sector in Libya, all of which require highly-qualified staff with a strong command of English (Alhmali, 2007). The British Council and the American Embassy in Libya have supported Libyan initiatives in ELT provision by launching high quality English teaching programmes, and university preparation and student exchange programmes.

1.2   Nature of the Problem and Development of Research Interest

Although ELT in Libya has undergone substantial changes, particularly through the introduction of the principles of communicative language teaching, many classrooms are still characterized by teachers' dominance and control, and by learners' obedience and passivity (Saleh, 2002; Orafi and Borg, 2009). As a result, Libyan students do not typically demonstrate much learner autonomy and can seem unprepared for learning the skills and strategies of success. Features of uncertainty, shyness, reliance on teachers, resistance to answering and the habit of not asking for clarification can still be observed and are more common among university adult students than in other EFL settings such as private language schools and centres (Sawani, 2006). Students tend to view their teachers as the sole source of learning and some make little or no effort to discover their own pathways to success and when provided with opportunities to learn independently they show signs of reluctance and lack interest and motivation (Saleh, 2002; Alhmali, 2007; Rajendran, 2010). During my time of teaching in Libya, I became aware of such classroom characteristics. This led to the realisation that, the development of

autonomous learning and the introduction of language learning strategies within the context of ELT provision in Libya represent a significant challenge.

It is often a researcher's involvement in certain educational contexts, academic interest in a particular field of study or personal background that guide decisions about a research topic or direction (Flick, 2002). My personal experience as a language learner and later lecturer and language teacher in TEFL contexts in Libya have inspired my interest in language learning strategies and strategies-based instruction. Having personally used strategies as a learner and having introduced them to my students as an EFL teacher, I wanted to achieve more in this area from both learner and teacher perspectives. While studying towards my MA degree in applied linguistics (2002-2005) I ventured to learn more about LLS, their definitions, classifications and studies that encouraged the use of LLS. I was influenced by the work of language researchers (Oxford, 1990; Cohen, 1998; Chamot et al, 1999) who were able to show the positive outcomes of integrating LLS into the contents of course materials and basing the language instruction in the class room on the encouragement of strategy use. Moreover, the scarcity of research on language learning strategies of Libyan learners encouraged me to consider whether the delivery of a course which used LLS in my own teaching context (teaching adult EFL learners in Libya) would provide similar results to those reported in previous studies (see Appendix A for further information on my teaching context and development of research interest). From a teaching perspective, currently many English language teachers are not aware of SBI as a learner-centred approach to foreign language learning in Libya (perhaps due to the lack of its inclusion in any university course modules). Involving a number of teachers in the process is not only expected to raise their awareness of LLS but also might help highlight SBI's potential in English language teaching provision in this country.

1.3 Research Overview

Language learning strategies (LLS) may be defined as: "actions taken by second and foreign language learners to control and improve their own learning." (Oxford, 1990: ix). The study of LLS has been a significant focus in the field of foreign language acquisition research for over 30 years (Grenfell and Macaro, 2007; Oxford, 2011). Research on LLS has varied from descriptive studies that have identified characteristics of 'the good language learner' (Rubin, 1975; Naiman et al, 1996) and compared the strategies of more effective and less effective language learners (Vandergrift, 1997;

Chamotand Al-Dinary, 1998), to interventionist studies that have sought to teach LLS and measure their effects on students (Rasekh and Ranjbari, 2003; Dreyer and Nel, 2003; Nakatani, 2005).

Several investigations have suggested that the use of LLS leads to achievement in the foreign language and also contributes to learner autonomy in language learning (Little, 1994; Cohen, 1998; Hsiao and Oxford, 2002). Hassan et al (2005: 4) argue that: "There is sufficient research evidence to support claims that training language learners to use strategies is effective." Generally, there seems to be a consensus among strategy researchers that the strategy training movement rests on the belief that there is a causal relationship between strategy use and success in language learning (McIntyre, and Noels, 1996; Hsiao and Oxford, 2002; Grenfell and Macaro, 2007)

Strategy training can follow a number of strategy instruction models or frameworks. According to Cohen (1998: 81) "Strategies-based instruction is a learner-centred approach to teaching that extends classroom strategy training to include both explicit and implicit integration of strategies into the course content". *Strategies-based instruction* (SBI) is the approach adopted in the current study; the framework used, and specifically designed for this research, is the *Strategies-based Instructional and Assessment* (SBIA) model. A major part of the study was to assess the impact of this approach on the language learners; however, teachers played an important role in explaining, modelling, and demonstrating the use of strategies in addition to guiding and monitoring the students during practice. In order for them to do so, developing their expertise for integrating LLS into classroom instruction was required as part of the study. Thus, the impact of SBI on them as teachers was also investigated. This study takes the form of action research and the SBIA model is used for both instruction/training and research purposes.

The research draws on an action research study carried out between June 2008 and August 2010 during which I worked as a temporary English language teacher in collaboration with three other Libyan teachers. The work took place in 'the Foreign Languages Centre' of a post-graduate institution in Tripoli in Libya during which data for the research was gathered through several methods and tools. As a project which has been implemented within a Libyan context, it is important to note that all the research work which took place in Libya was completed before the onset of political unrest in February 2011. All research procedures including seeking access to the site and consent

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from participants and carrying out the different phases of the research study were performed and completed between 2008 and 2010.

1.4   Significance of the Study

Strategies-based instruction is a learner-centred approach which encourages learners to become less dependent on their teachers and more reliant on their own efforts to learn the language. In the context of Libya, where the study took place, this is important due to the prevailing teacher-directed culture of teaching and learning. This research study is significant because it aims to examine the contribution that learner-centred, strategies-based instruction might offer Libyan learners in EFL classrooms. The SBIA model which was specifically developed for the study and which formed the main research framework in the intervention, had never previously been implemented in this context.

The study is expected to contribute to the theory and development of learner autonomy, an approach not commonly encouraged in Libya. Explicit strategy training can help students take responsibility for their own language development by encouraging them to utilize a broad range of strategies throughout the language learning process. The research findings are hoped to shed light on the ways in which establishing strategy repertoires in Libyan adult learners can help to foster learner autonomy.

Applying an action research framework in a language teaching/learning community where this type of research is not traditionally used contributes significantly to the development of research methodology within the Libyan context. Through this study, collaborative action research has been introduced to practitioners as a viable approach for investigating educational problems. This method of research will not only enrich my own personal experience as a language teacher but also help to develop the understanding of the participant teachers. Within this co-teaching co-researching framework together we can learn how it is possible to address our common areas of concern with the aim of improving practice in both learning and teaching. Furthermore, the dissemination of this project through this PhD thesis may encourage other teachers as well as fellow researchers in Libya to conduct action research investigations when tackling relevant educational problems.

The study also serves to empower the participating teachers' expertise with regards to learner-centred approaches. The teachers played a key role in the implementation of this project and it is hoped that their direct hands-on engagement allows them to closely

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realize the effects this research brought about. Furthermore, results of the research are expected to help us view teachers not only as language instructors but also as learner trainers. The teacher preparation sessions on how to implement strategies-based instruction, can be seen as a form of in-service training, thus, adding to the teachers' teaching experiences and raising their awareness of the value of LLS and how they can be introduced into adult English language learning contexts. With the new set of responsibilities the teachers embraced, this intervention is hoped to influence their perspectives, attitudes and decisions on how best to manage their teaching-learning contexts. Hopefully, they may consider putting similar strategy instructional approaches to practice in future. In addition, the teacher preparation sessions can be further developed and used in similar contexts for both research and educational purposes.

1.5   Research Aims and Questions

The study firstly aims to investigate whether strategies-based instruction has an impact on students' language achievement and whether it can help promote learner autonomy within an adult English language learning context in Libya. Secondly, it aims to investigate whether SBI has an effect on teacher roles and professionalism within this same context. The main questions the research addresses are:

- Can explicit teaching of language learning strategies and their applications (through SBI) enhance students' *efforts* to learn and use English more effectively? And will it help improve their *performance* in language tasks?

- Can SBI encourage learners to take responsibility for their own language learning thus contributing to the development of learner autonomy?

- Can SBI help promote professional development and role-change of language teachers?

1.6   Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into ten chapters (see figure 1.1).

Chapter 1 →	Introduction and Background to Study
Chapter 2 →	Language Learning Strategies
Chapter 3 →	Learner Autonomy
Chapter 4 →	Strategy Training

Chapters 2–4 → Literature Review

Chapter 5 →	Research Methodology
Chapter 6 →	Research Design, Implementation and Data Analysis
Chapter 7 →	Impact of SBI on the Language Learners: LLS and Language Achievement
Chapter 8 →	Impact of SBI on the Language Learners: Fostering Learner Autonomy
Chapter 9 →	Impact of SBI on the Language Teachers

Chapters 7–9 → Findings and Discussion

| Chapter 10 → | Research Conclusions and Implications |

Figure 1.1: Organisation of the Thesis

After an introduction to the study in chapter one, chapters two, three and four present a critical literature review of the relevant concepts and perspectives that characterise the research study. The literature review is concerned with three main strands. Chapter two gives an account of LLS, their background and definitions, their importance and classifications, and finally some theoretical fundamentals underlying the concept of LLS. The second strand which is presented in chapter three links the concept of LLS with learner autonomy and discusses its importance in EFL contexts. Definitions of

learner autonomy and methods of measuring autonomy are also discussed in this chapter. Chapter four focuses on the final strand of the literature review and provides an explanation of strategy training and strategies-based instruction. This chapter also discusses the types, models and goals of strategy training as well as the role of the language teacher in strategy training.

The theoretical information provided throughout these three chapters informs the research methodology and research design described in chapters five and six of the thesis. Chapter five provides an account of the research setting, participants, and process in addition to the research ethics considered in the study. This chapter also explains the framework of the study and some of the methods used for investigating language learning strategies. Chapter six provides an outline of how the research data were collected by preparing for the Strategies-based Instruction (SBI) and developing and implementing the Strategies-based Instructional and Assessment (SBIA) model. Explanation of how the data were organised and analysed is also presented in this chapter.

Chapters seven and eight together present the findings and discussion of the thesis related to the impact of SBI on the student participants; firstly, with a focus on LLS and language achievement and secondly, in relation to learner autonomy. These two chapters are relevant to the study in terms of addressing the first two research questions stated in section 1.3 of this chapter.

The findings relevant to addressing research question three of the study are presented in chapter nine of the thesis. This chapter offers some insights on the impact of the SBI intervention on the teacher participants in terms of their roles, attitudes and professionalism. Some of the data presented here are supportive and complementary of many of the findings discussed in the previous two chapters.

In the final chapter, chapter ten, findings are summarised and conclusions are drawn, pedagogical implications of the study are set out and discussed, significance and limitations of the research acknowledged and recommendations are made for further research.

2   Language Learning Strategies

Chapter two along with chapters three and four review the three main areas of literature consulted during the study and explain how each area is relevant to the current investigation. This chapter introduces the key concepts in the area of LLS, including definitions, classifications and theoretical fundamentals of LLS as well as the importance of LLS in foreign language settings. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1: Contents of Chapter 2

2.1   Introduction to Language Learning Strategies

2.2   Definitions of Language Learning Strategies

2.3   Classifications of Language Learning Strategies

2.4   Theoretical Fundamentals of Language Learning Strategies

2.5   Importance of Language Learning Strategies in FL Contexts

2.6   Conclusion

2.1   Introduction to Language Learning Strategies

The word 'strategy' is originally derived from the ancient Greek term *strategia* meaning generalship or the art of military command (Oxford, 1990). Within this context it involves the manoeuvring and deployment of troops and equipment for the purpose of overcoming an opponent in a planned campaign. It embraces the characteristics of long-term/systematic planning, deliberate/conscious adapting and monitoring, and movement toward gaining competitive advantage/position or accomplishing defined goals and objectives. Away from combat and competitive settings, Oxford (1990: 8) believes that "...the strategy concept has been applied to clearly non-adversarial situations, where it has come to mean a plan, step or conscious action toward achievement of an objective".

In the field of education, learning strategies are understood as "...any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information." (Wenden and Rubin, 1987: 19). The early definitions from the educational literature (see section 2.2) reflect the roots of learning strategies in cognitive

science, essentially assuming that human beings process information and that all types of learning, regardless of the content and the context, involve such information processing. Therefore, learning strategies are used in learning science, mathematics, history, languages and other subjects, both in classroom settings and in more informal learning environments.

Having been widely recognized throughout educational contexts in general, learning strategies became the primary concern of researchers from the field of second language acquisition (Chamot, 2005; Chen, 2007; Al-Buainain, 2010). Although LLS have been formally identified only recently over the last thirty years, such strategies have actually been used for thousands of years. Oxford (1990: 1) notes:

> One well-known example is the mnemonic or memory devices used in ancient times to help storytellers remember their lines. Throughout history, the best language students have used strategies, ranging from naturalistic language practice techniques to analytic, rule-based strategies.

The studies of Rubin (1975), Stern (1975) and Naimen et al (1975) on good language learners have marked the beginnings of research involving language learners and LLS. These early researchers tended to make lists of strategies and features presumed to be essential for all "good foreign language learners". For example, good language learners make effective use of guessing, have a desire to communicate, use all opportunities to practice (Rubin, 1975), think in the target language and address the affective aspects of language acquisition (Naiman et al, 1975). Other lists of strategies used by good language learners are made by Reiss (1985), Ramirez (1986) and more recently Rubin and Thompson (1994).

The underlying aim of creating such profiles for successful language learners is to develop methods for teaching the less successful learners these same strategies. However, in reflecting upon these early studies it was found that they suffered from a number of weaknesses. One limitation is that they focused on providing lists of strategies (mostly broad and long) with few attempts to provide classifications and taxonomies for these strategies. This could be due to a lack of a theoretical framework which describes the effect of strategies on language learning. Furthermore, these lists as criticised by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Graham (1997) do not necessarily represent specific strategies but rather general characteristics. It is also argued that the type of strategies identified as used by good language learners have not been effective

for all language learners (Cohen and Aphek, 1981) while it was found that unsuccessful learners also use strategies reported by good language learners (Abraham and Vann, 1987). Another limitation is that these lists were exploratory and highly speculative and therefore were in need of verification, modification or refutation (Stem, 1975). Moreover it was, noticed that such early research relied on observation schemes for collecting data on learning strategies. However, observation was only limited to strategies that were overtly seen in the classroom (Rubin, 1975; Stem, 1975; Naiman et al, 1975). For other covert learning strategies there was a need for alternative research methods such as the use of introspection in the form of think-aloud protocols (Hosenfeld, 1976). A key observation by Cook (1991) is that these studies only described what good language learners are aware of. However, there are other strategies which might have contributed to these learners' language learning which they are unaware of and accordingly unable to report on.

Despite these limitations, it can be argued that this line of descriptive research inspired further subsequent descriptive research which aimed to identify the differences between successful and less successful language learners (Chamot and Kupper, 1989) and grouped strategies into comprehensive taxonomies (O'Malley et al, 1985; Rubin, 1987; and Oxford, 1990). Most importantly, however, these studies encouraged researchers in the field to venture beyond descriptive research and accordingly began taking the form of intervention projects. A major aim of interventions was to investigate and highlight the benefits of teaching learners how to apply foreign LLS to the different language skills such as the skills of reading and writing (McDonough, 1995); listening comprehension (Mendelsohn, 1994) and to the skill of speaking (Dadour and Robbins, 1996). Perhaps one of the most important of these interventionist studies was the one conducted at 'The University of Minnesota' under the responsibility of Cohen, Weaver and Tao-Yan Li (Cohen, 1998: 107-156). Their study looked at the impact that formal SBI has on learners in university level foreign language classrooms, with a particular focus on the skill of speaking. The results indicated that integrating strategies instruction into the language course was beneficial to students. So far, research has shown the most effective strategy instruction to be woven into regular, everyday L2 teaching, although other ways of approaching strategy instruction are possible (Oxford and Leaver, 1996; Nunan, 1997; Chamot, 2005).

The current study builds on existing research into LLS as both the descriptive and the interventionist studies reported here have stimulated and informed much of the research

work. For example, think-aloud protocols as recommended by Hosenfeld (1976) are used in the form of verbal reports as a method of data collection in the study. Furthermore, this study aimed to investigate the impact of SBI on EFL learners by focusing on the application of LLS across all four language skills; thus, taking the form of an interventional project similar to other interventions (O'Malley and Chamot 1990; Cohen et al, 1998).

2.2 Definitions of Language Learning Strategies

Within foreign language education, a number of definitions of LLS have been used by key figures in the field. Ellis (1985: 164) defines learning strategies as:

> the internal processes which account for how the learner accumulates new L2 rules and automatizes existing ones by attending to input and by simplifying through the use of existing knowledge.

Ellis's definition highlights the importance of learners' background knowledge as a means to establishing new knowledge; however, he assumes that strategies are internal implying that they cannot be seen. His assumption might be seen as a limitation to the definition of strategies which included overt actions (Weinstein and Mayer, 1986; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Suggesting that they can be behavioural as well as mental, Weinstein and Mayer (1986: 315) define strategies as both "...behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning which are intended to influence the learner's encoding process.". The definition of LLS proposed for this study builds on the concept that strategies are both internal and behavioural as informed by this last definition.

Other definitions account for the social aspect of language. For example, Faerch and Kasper (1983: 67) define a learning strategy as "... an attempt to develop linguistic and socio-linguistic competence in the target language and to incorporate these into one's inter-language competence.". This definition implies that strategies are not only tools used to develop one's linguistic ability but also develop a language needed for communicating with others in a social setting.

Further definitions focus on the impact of strategy-use on learning. For example, Richards and Schmidt (2002: 301) refer to language learning strategies as "...the ways in which learners attempt to work out the meanings and uses, grammatical rules, and the

aspects of the language they are learning". Meanwhile, Rubin (1987: 22) states that language learning strategies generally "...contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and they affect learning directly". More specifically, she adds that "English language learning strategies, like general learning strategies, include those techniques that learners use to remember what they have learned – their storage and retrieval of new information." (Rubin, 1987: 22). O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 1) also stress that effective learners use a variety of different strategies and techniques in order to solve problems that they face while acquiring or producing the language. They define LLS as "The special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information". These last three definitions of LLS, in particular, are relevant to this research study as they suggest that the selection of strategies directly influences the way learners learn a target language (Rubin, 1987; Richard and Schmidt 2002) and help resolve linguistic difficulties during language acquisition (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). In line with this, the research reported here aims to explore the impact LLS have on the student participants' learning process and whether the direct application of LLS might enhance students' efforts to learn English and whether this might help improve their performance in language tasks as stated in question one of the study (see section 1.5 in the previous chapter).

The notions of *consciousness and intention* have been linked to several definitions of learning strategies. For example, Cohen (1990: 5) defines learning strategies as: "Learning processes which are consciously selected by the learners". He adds that "...these are moves which the learner is at least partially aware of, even if full attention is not being given to them". Similarly, Oxford (1992/1993: 18) states that:

> Language learning strategies are specific actions, behaviors,
> steps, or techniques students use, often consciously, to improve
> their progress in developing L2 skills.

Meanwhile, Richards and Platt (1992: 209) believe that learning strategies are:

> Intentional behaviors and thoughts used by learners during
> learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or
> remember new information.

These definitions imply a sense of awareness (consciousness) by the learners, of their learning strategies during the learning process. In addition, they suggest that the element of choice (intention) is important because this is what gives a strategy its special

characteristics. It can be argued that such awareness and choice are essential features of autonomous learning which is a key aspect of this research study and can be summed up in Hsiao and Oxford's (2002: 372) definition:

> Strategies are the L2 learner's tool kit for active, conscious, purposeful, and attentive learning and they pave the way toward greater proficiency, learner autonomy and self-regulation.

Drawing on some of the concepts embedded in the definitions mentioned in this section, the following working definition of LLS was proposed for this research study and is illustrated in figure 2.1:

An umbrella term to include both overt and covert strategies

Language learning strategies are the

tools *(actions or thoughts)*

*and the **intentional plans***

Implies a level of consciousness and choice

One of the main goals of strategy use

which learners exploit to

facilitate/ improve *language learning*

*tasks and help develop **learner autonomy**.*

Another important goal of strategy use

Figure 2.1: Definition of LLS for the Research Study (Source: original)

The term *tools* is used in the definition to encompass both behavioural and mental (overt and covert) strategies building on the definitions of Weinstein and Mayer (1986) and O'Malley and Chamot (1990). In line with the definitions of Cohen (1990), Oxford (1992) and Richards and Platt (1992), the term *plans* in the study's definition is used to demonstrate deliberation and is therefore, described as *intentional* to highlight that there is a level of awareness and choice on the part of the learners when using strategies. Due to the wide range of strategies, there is no specific mention or description of one particular strategy in this definition, but rather a reference to the general goal strategies serve which is facilitation and improvement in learning during language tasks (Rubin, 1987; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990) and development of learner autonomy (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002). The mention of facilitation here might imply the difficulty of language

tasks, in other words, learners may use strategies when a task is challenging or becomes challenging, and cannot simply be accomplished automatically. For instance, a learner who needs to learn a list of vocabulary items might decide to draw a picture to remember each word, because he/she knows that this helps him/her to remember, which is an example of the learning strategy 'using graphic organizers'.

2.3   Classifications of Language Learning Strategies

As a researcher undertaking a language learning strategies-related project, acknowledging the various types and classifications of LLS is essential. The aim of this is to help provide a foundation upon which different sets of strategies, applicable to all four language skills, can be examined and accordingly selected to be part of the design of the SBI programme.

Ellis (1985: 188) describes the attempt to identify the different learning strategies at work in language learning as stumbling blindfold around a room to find a hidden object. The focus of attention for some language researchers has been on the production process of learning English whereas, others focused on the reception process. Therefore, it is believed that the mapping of strategies into a tight conceptual framework is bound to be arbitrary to some extent. Learners may use one set of strategies to perform a task, or they may use a mixture of strategies which is difficult to fit into any of the existing categories. Dornyei (2005) argues against the lack of a clear-cut classification of individual strategies; as memory strategies and cognitive strategies, according to him, clearly overlap.

Given the lack of consensus on the categorization of learning strategies, over two dozen language strategy classification systems can be identified and divided into several groups in accordance with what each system prioritizes. There are systems related to successful language learners, (Rubin, 1975); systems based on different styles or types of learners, (Sutter, 1989); systems based on psychological functions, (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990); and others related to separate language skills, goals, and functions, (Cohen, 2003). For some language researchers, the existence of these different strategy classifications indicates a major problem in the research area of language learning strategies, because there is not a coherent, well-accepted system for describing them (Dornyei, 2005). For the purpose of reaching theoretical depth and gaining thorough

insights into the area of LLS, considerable efforts to achieve uniformity of strategy classifications are required.

However, it can be argued that mapping LLS into a single uniform system is likely to be impossible given the nature and complexity of strategies at work. Most of the attempts to classify LLS reflect more or less the same categorizations or provide ones that are closely interrelated. Even if characterised by drastic differences, diversity is viewed as an advantage rather than a weakness as it allows room for researchers with different perspectives to advocate and select the classification which is most relevant to their research areas. This was the case in the current study where Oxford's (1990) classification was selected as the most suitable for the chosen context due to the wide-range of LLS in this system and the applicability of these strategies to different language skills. In addition, different classifications of learner strategies have helped in developing different tools to assess learner strategies. For example, Oxford's (1990) classification for learning strategy use was used in developing the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), a widely used instrument of data collection.

As an example of a LLS classification, O'Malley et al (1985: 582-584) divide language learning strategies into three main categories as shown in figure 2.2. Their system does not include the type of influence these strategies have on the language learning process; whether it is direct or indirect. It clearly separates meta-cognitive from cognitive strategies but merges the social and affective aspects into one strategy type; socio-affective strategies.

Language Learning Strategies

Meta-cognitive Strategies	Cognitive Strategies	Socio-affective Strategies
Advance organizers	Repetition	Co-operating with others
Directed attention	Translation	Asking questions for clarification
Selective attention	Grouping	Self-talk and Self-reinforcement
Self-management	Imagery	
Functional planning	Key word	
Self- monitoring	Contextualization	
Self-evaluation	Note taking,	

Figure 2.2: Classifications of Language Learning Strategies (O'Malley et al, 1985)

Rubin, who pioneered much of the work in the field of strategies, makes a distinction between strategies contributing directly to learning and those contributing indirectly to

learning. According to Rubin (1987) there are three types of strategies used by learners which are further divided as illustrated by figure 2.3. Although Rubin's classification adds another type of strategies; communication strategies (not found in O'Malley et al classification above), it does not include any affective strategies.

Language Learning Strategies

Learning Strategies

These contribute directly to the development of the language system and are of two main types

Communication Strategies

These focus on the process of participating in a conversation and getting meaning across or clarifying what the speaker intended.

Social Strategies

These contribute indirectly to learning and provide learners with opportunities to be exposed to and practise their linguistic *knowledge*

Cognitive Learning Strategies
Deductive reasoning
Practice
Monitoring

Meta-cognitiveLearning Strategies
Planning
Prioritizing
Setting goals
Self-management

Figure 2.3: Classifications of Language Learning Strategies (Rubin, 1987)

Sharing the concept of direct and indirect contribution to language learning with Rubin (1987), Oxford (1990: 14-21) divides language learning strategies into two major classes: Direct and Indirect. Under the direct class, *memory strategies* are those used for storage of information; *cognitive strategies* are the mental actions learners take to make sense of their learning; and *compensation strategies* help learners to overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication. Under the indirect class, *Metacognitive strategies* help learners to regulate their learning while *affective strategies* are concerned with the learner's emotional requirements such as confidence. *Social strategies* lead to increased interaction with the target language. Figure 2.4 shows Oxford's (1990: 17) Strategy System divided into two classes, six groups and nineteen sets.

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

DIRECT STRATEGIES   INDIRECT STRATEGIES

I. Memory
Strategies
- A. Creating mental linkages
- B. Applying images and sounds
- C. Reviewing well
- D. Employing action

I. Meta-cognitive
Strategies
- A. Creating your learning
- B. Arranging and planning your learning
- C. Evaluating your learning

II. Cognitive
Strategies
- A. Practicing
- B. Receiving and sending messages
- C. Analyzing and reasoning
- D. Creating structure for input & output

II. Affective
Strategies
- A. Lowering your anxiety
- B. Encouraging yourself
- C. Taking your emotional temperature

III. Compensation
Strategies
- A. Guessing intelligently
- B. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing

III. Social
Strategies
- A. Asking questions
- B. Cooperating with others
- C. Empathizing with others

Figure 2.4: Classifications of Language Learning Strategies (Oxford, 1990)

Oxford's (1990) classification is more comprehensive compared to the other strategy systems. Ellis (1994: 541) admits that "the organisation of specific strategies into a hierarchy of levels and the breadth of the taxonomy is impressive". It is a systematic and wide-ranging scheme for learning strategy use and includes memory and compensation strategies in addition to other previously existing strategy types in the literature. Because every strategy and every strategy group is applicable to each of the four language skills; listening, reading, speaking, and writing, it is the most relevant to this research and is the one used as a reference for this research study.

Based on the diverse functions of each class of LLS, teaching learners to use them was expected to have different impacts. Oxford's findings (1990) suggest that encouraging learners to use direct strategies helps them improve their *efforts* in learning and affects their *performance* in language tasks. On the other hand, providing learners with a set of indirect strategies to use, particularly meta-cognitive strategies, is helpful in developing independent learning. Accordingly, the participant students of the study received training in both classes of strategies with the aim of

exploring whether Oxford's conclusions can be simulated by addressing the first two research questions stated in section 1.5 of the thesis. All six groups but not all nineteen sets of strategies were used in this study.

2.4   Theoretical Fundamentals of Language Learning Strategies

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003: 22) argue that the "Use of multiple paradigms contributes to greater understanding of the phenomenon under study.". For the purpose of this study, in order to gain a deeper insight into how LLS work and how they are applied in the field of second language acquisition (SLA), it is vital to recognise the contributions of different theoretical perspectives and models of learning.

According to Oxford and Schramm (2007: 47) LLS can be examined from two broad perspectives: the psychological and the sociocultural. They believe that "The difference lies in the focus, individual versus group." From the psychological perspective, they define a strategy of a second language learner as being "a specific plan, action, behaviour, step, or technique that individual learners, use with some degree of consciousness, to improve their progress in developing skills in a second or foreign language.". From a sociocultural perspective, i.e. one which starts with society not the individual, they define an L2 learner strategy as "being a learner's socially mediated plan or action to meet a goal, which is related directly or indirectly to L2 learning." (Oxford and Schramm, 2007: 48).

Within the field of SLA, the psychological and sociocultural perspectives have been described as 'incommensurable' (Zuengler and Miller, 2006: 35). However, it is also proposed that these two perspectives could be merged into a single framework (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2000). This research study is in favour of the latter view. At first glance the two perspectives might seem as two ends of a spectrum when it comes to underpinning the notion of LLS. This might be the case in theory; however, practically speaking, it might seem almost impossible to separate the two. In a language learning classroom, a learner is one amongst a number of learners whereby several factors such as the nature of tasks, interaction patterns and other factors dictate the type of LLS a learner might exploit at a specific time or in a particular situation. Concurrent with Oxford and Schramm's (2007: 49) argument: "an ongoing psychological-versus-sociocultural paradigm war is unnecessary and could deny opportunities for synergy that might lead to more powerful and useful theory and research on learner strategies.".

In accordance with this belief, research studies investigating LLS were conducted based on psychological *and* sociocultural approaches (Lan and Oxford, 2003; Oxford et al, 2005). As it is expected for the student participants of this study to use LLS both individually and in collaboration with others, both paradigms are relevant to this research.

Chamot et al (1999: 157) use the terms 'cognitive learning models' and 'social or social-cognitive models' to refer to the two major domains of learning theory which they argue provide a rationale for learning strategies instruction. Cognitive models of learning indicate that learning is an active, dynamic process in which learners select information from their environment, store and organize the information, and retrieve and use the information when necessary (Chamot and O'Malley, 1994). Cognitive theorists distinguish between *declarative knowledge* (what we can declare i.e. factual) or *procedural knowledge* (what we know how to do i.e. behavioural). Declarative knowledge is defined more fully by Oxford and Schramm (2007: 50) "as conscious, fact-oriented, effortful knowledge of static, discrete data points or facts." and "knowledge that is unconscious, automatic, habitual, effortless, and implicit" is known as procedural knowledge.

Some of the most relevant and widely applied cognitive models are: information processing theory and schema theory. Information processing theory suggests that new L2 knowledge goes through a process whereby declarative knowledge gradually transforms to procedural knowledge. Oxford (2011: 49) explains the stages of cognitive information processing in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Stages in Cognitive Information Processes (Adapted from Oxford, 2011: 47)

Stages in cognitive information processing: New L2 knowledge, moving from declarative to procedural knowledge	
Stage	**Characteristics of this stage**
1. **Declarative knowledge stage**	Learner encounters new L2 information. Knowledge is *static, conscious, effortful, halting, nonhabitual, and expressible in words.*
2. **Associative stage**	*Practice* of the new L2 information occurs. Learner combines it in new ways and thereby strengthening and expanding the schemata. The

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		new L2 becomes increasingly familiar and much easier to use. It is becoming partly proceduralized.
3.	**Procedural knowledge stage**	Knowledge of the new L2 information is *unconscious, effortless, automatic, habitual, and tacit (difficult to express in words)*. It is fully proceduralized.

The knowledge of strategies can be similar to L2 knowledge itself when it moves from declarative to procedural knowledge through practice by the learner via formal instruction (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 216) assert that: "Learning strategies are represented in cognitive theory as complex cognitive skills that follow the same general rules as do other forms of procedural knowledge."

Schema theory, as another cognitive model of learning, suggests that learning occurs as we try to understand and organise new learning experiences in light of relevant existing information (Anderson, 1984). This pre-existing knowledge is organised in the form of mental structures known as *schemata*. For example, a learner can have a *schema* on what will happen in a train station or a grocery shop. Strategies for activating prior knowledge help assist L2 learners in learning new information (Cummins, 1996) making this theory relevant to the research reported here. As adults, the student participants of this study were expected to utilise their pre-existing knowledge during the process of their language learning. For example, having a schema allows for the use of strategies like 'making predictions' equivalent to 'guessing intelligently' in Oxford's (1990) classification which is a LLS used in the study.

It could be argued that cognitive theories can be useful in describing learner strategies that occur in the human mind such as Oxford's (1990) cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and memory strategies. However, some strategies including social strategies, affective strategies, and compensation strategies (Oxford, 1990) the manifestations of which are sometimes behavioural rather than intellectual are better described from other perspectives such as what Chamot et al (1999) call 'social or social-cognitive models'. Chamot et al (1999: 159) believe that "learning does not take place in vacuum, factors other than the learner's thoughts, or cognitions, can affect learning." In relation to this view, social-cognitive learning theories highlight the importance of the social nature of learning and as such are relevant in discussing some of the findings of this study.

One of the most widely cited social-cognitive models of learning is that of Vygotsky (1962, 1978, and 1979) also known as the *dialogic model* (Oxford and Schramm, 2007). Vygotsky's theory suggests that learning occurs through mediated dialogues with a 'more capable other' e.g. a parent, a teacher or even an advanced peer. Learners can develop mature thinking by seeking the help of teachers or other experts, or when the support needed to accomplish a learning task is provided to them by others more proficient. The 'self-regulation strategy development model' of Graham and Harris (1996) is based on aspects of Vygotsky's theory. Their model suggests that learning takes place in a group with learners collaborating their efforts with others until they are ready to work on their own. This movement from social to individual is akin to Vygotsky's view on transformation from 'other-regulation' to 'self-regulation'. These models were referred to when addressing research question three of the study (see section 1.5, p.7).

Affective aspects of learning have long been considered important by many researchers. Stern (1983: 386) mentions that "the affective component contributes at least as much as and often more...than cognitive skills.". Because learning a new language can be, challenging, demanding, and potentially stressful, learners' emotions, beliefs, and attitudes can have an impact on their L2 learning process. Oxford (2011) has consistently emphasized the significance of the affective dimension, along with the cognitive and social dimensions in her research in the field of L2 learning and considers it an essential component in her '*S*trategic *S*elf-*R*egulation (S^2R) model'. She argues that few L2 researchers have explored affective strategies in sufficient depth and therefore stresses the need to use affective learning strategies to help deal with learner anxiety, low self-esteem, low motivation, and poor attitude. In keeping with Oxford's (2011) S^2R model, affective strategies for lowering anxiety and self-encouragement were integrated into the design of the programme in order to investigate the extent to which emotional components affect L2 learning, in the Libyan setting.

It could be argued that despite the seemingly diverse concepts underlying the perspectives outlined in this section, they are in fact complementary rather than contradictory. Although each perspective has its significant contribution that the other perspectives may not address, many of their underlying aspects are interrelated. For example, "Affect interacts closely with cognition at many learning stages, and this is particularly true in L2 learning" (Oxford, 2011: 61). In Chamot and O'Malley's (1987, 1994) Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) based on

information-processing theory, social aspects such as the need for the teacher's guidance and support in learning are not excluded. Oxford and Schramm (2007: 47) state that: "The L2 field will understand strategies in more encompassing, more useful ways only when multiple views are honored". The research data from this study was analysed and discussed with reference to the theoretical models of learning reviewed in this section; the utility and robustness of competing models, as explanations for student learning, were examined in the context of Libyan adult learners of English. Because "These models support both the importance of learning strategies and the goal of helping students become independent learners." (Chamot et al, 1999: 157) they are relevant to this study and help shed light onto how the participants responded to the SBI programme.

2.5   Importance of Language Learning Strategies in FL Contexts

Developing the English language proficiency of foreign language students to enable them to participate effectively in English classes and master the language independently outside the classroom has long been a major focus of language researchers. Taking this into account, approaches that emphasize *how* learners need to learn the language have emerged. Oxford (1990: 5) claims that:

> Interest has been shifting from a limited focus on merely **what** students learn or acquire to an expanded focus that also includes **how** students gain language.

In other words, it is not only the product or outcome of language learning that is important but the process or means by which language learning occurs is becoming prominently significant. Such expansion and reallocation of interest has stimulated much research on how LLS play a major role in the process of language learning which is relevant to research question one of this study (see section 1.5, p.7).

There seems to be a consensus among strategy researchers that strategy use is associated with L2 development in general and that "there appears to be little doubt that the use of learning strategies tends to facilitate language learning." (McIntyre and Noels, 1996: 374). For example, it is argued that language learners who have a storehouse of strategies to use when learning becomes difficult, and who learn to consciously monitor their own learning, benefit more than students who do not have such strategies (Chamot and O'Malley, 1994), and those who are capable of using a wide variety of language

learning strategies appropriately can improve their language skills (Fedderhlodt, 1997). This position is also shared by Cohen (2003: 280) who argues:

> if learners have a well-functioning repertoire, then these strategies will facilitate the language learning process by promoting successful and efficient completion of language learning tasks, as well as by allowing the learners to develop their own individualized approaches to learning.

More specifically, it has been suggested that different strategies can help learners in various ways. For example, cognitive strategies, such as analyzing, understanding and recalling information are important functions in the process of becoming competent in using the target language. Social strategies, on the other hand, such as asking questions, asking native speakers to correct their pronunciation, and cooperating with peers provide increased interaction and more emphatic understanding. These are qualities necessary to reach socio-linguistic/communicative competence (Oxford, 1990; Fedderhlodt, 1997). These assumptions, highlighting the importance of LLS in language learning, are referred to in the design of the current study in relation to research question one (see section 1.5, p7). The students participating in the doctoral study reported here were encouraged to use a range of strategies with the aim of experiencing some of the important effects of LLS as emphasised in this section.

A key question for this research study (see research question two in section 1.5, p.7) was whether encouraging learners to use LLS will help them to take responsibility for their own language learning thus contributing to the development of learner autonomy which is defined by Holec, (1981: 3) as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning". Several researchers believe that LLS are important in developing learner independence. Oxford (1990: 1) for example, states that LLS "...are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement.". She adds (1990: 10): "Self-direction is particularly important for language learners, because they will not always have the teacher around to guide them as they use the language outside the classroom.". In the same way, Little (1994: 86) argues that: "...it is essential to the development of autonomy that learners become aware of themselves as learners.". He believes that those learners, who are aware of the learning strategies they instinctively use and are capable of evaluating how effective those strategies are for them, are in fact autonomous. This self-awareness and reflection on the learning process itself, and the ability to guide it, is referred to as 'meta-cognition' which is commonly distinguished from the direct processing of the language

known as 'cognition'. Meta-cognitive strategies including planning, monitoring, and evaluating language learning play a key role in developing meta-cognition necessary for learner autonomy (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990) and are one of the strategies that the participant students were encouraged to use in this study in order to explore autonomy in relation to the second research question of the thesis.

2.6   Conclusion

This chapter first introduced the concept of learning strategies in general educational and foreign language learning settings and discussed how it developed from descriptive research to interventionist studies. It then dealt with defining and classifying LLS. In view of the variable perspectives of the subject matter, it is quite natural that a wide spectrum of definitions and taxonomies has emerged over the years. Language learning strategies have been defined (Cohen, 1990; Oxford, 1992; Stern, 1992) and classified (O'Malley et al, 1985; Wenden and Rubin, 1987; Ellis, 1994) in different ways according to the purposes they serve. However, Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of LLS is one of the most widely recognised in the literature and the one used as a guiding framework for this research study. The chapter also explored some of the theoretical underpinnings of LLS and highlighted the importance of examining LLS within multiple perspectives such as the psychological and sociocultural perspectives to gain clearer insights into LLS. The importance of LLS in FL learning contexts was discussed in relation to the first two research questions of the doctoral study reported here.

3   Learner Autonomy

The second strand in the literature review as presented in this chapter considers the concept of learner autonomy and how LLS can help promote independent learning in foreign language (FL) learners. The chapter begins with definitions of autonomy and then highlights the importance of autonomous learning in FL contexts. It finally discusses the relation between autonomy and language learning strategies and considers how autonomy can be measured. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Contents of Chapter 3

3.1   Defining Learner Autonomy

3.2   Importance of Autonomous Learning in FL Contexts

3.3   Language Learning Strategies and Autonomy

3.4   Measuring Autonomy

3.5   Conclusion

3.1   Defining Learner Autonomy

Like LLS, learner autonomy has been a major area of interest in the field of SLA for more than 30 years (Ushioda, 2011; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012). Despite its long history, the concept of learner autonomy itself has never been easily defined. The difficulty of defining the term, Benson (2006) argues, stems from two basic assumptions that "there are degrees of autonomy" (Nunan, 1997: 172) and that "the behavior of autonomous learners can take numerous different forms, depending on their age, how far they have progressed with their learning, what they perceive their immediate learning needs to be, and so on" (Little, 1991: 4). Furthermore, what makes the task of defining learner autonomy more challenging is firstly, the fact that researchers use different terminology like 'self-direction' and 'independence' (Candy, 1991; Sheerin, 1991) to mean what is generally defined as autonomy. Secondly, the number of concepts the word autonomy encapsulates are various. For example, according to Benson and Voller (1997: 1) the term autonomy has come to be used in at least five different ways:

- for *situations* in which learners study entirely on their own;
- for a set of *skills* which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
- for an inborn *capacity* which is suppressed by institutional education;

- for the exercise of learners' *responsibility* for their own learning;
- for the *right* of learners to determine the direction of their own learning.

Therefore, it can be said that the complexity of the term 'learner autonomy' has caused the pertinent literature to host a considerable number of perceptions and various definitions.

Examples of early definitions which have reconceptualised the role of learners in the learning process are those of Henri Holec and Phil Benson. Holec, (1981: 3) defines autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning". He explains that autonomous learners have the ability to make all the decisions related to their learning: from determining objectives and defining the content to selecting methods, monitoring and evaluating what has been learnt. Benson (2001: 2) also sees autonomy as "the capacity to take control over one's own learning. Learners who lack autonomy are capable of developing it given appropriate conditions and preparation.". In agreement with this same concept, Dam (1990: 17) believes that: "learner autonomy is characterised by a readiness to take charge of one's own learning in the service of one's needs and purposes.". Meanwhile, Little (1991: 4) sees autonomy as "a capacity - for detachment, critical reflection, decision making, and independent action." and therefore learner autonomy appears to involve a variety of self-regulatory skills that might be developed through practice. These definitions are relevant to this study because they highlight the assertion that learners should take learning into their own hands and can develop autonomy within a certain context through certain preparation which in the case of this research is a foreign language context where 'strategies-based instruction' has been implemented.

Also with a focus on learner responsibility, Holec (1981: 3) describes autonomous learners as those who "assume responsibility for determining the purpose, content, rhythm and method of their learning, monitoring its progress and evaluating its outcomes.". Meanwhile Dickinson (1987: 11) defines autonomy as: "the situation in which learners are totally responsible for all of the decisions concerned with learning and the implementation of those decisions.". Similarly, Little (2004: 1) asserts that autonomous learners "exercise that responsibility through their involvement in all aspects of the learning process – planning, implementing, evaluating.". However, it can be argued that although the focus in most of these definitions is on the leaner, they by no means imply that teachers relinquish their control over the learning process and become redundant. It is believed that it still remains the responsibility of the teacher to

encourage, support and assist learners in becoming autonomous. This is why Esch (1996: 37) specifically clarifies that "Autonomy is not self-instruction/learning without a teacher; it does not mean that intervention or initiative on the part of a teacher is banned.". Yet in the context of this study (explored to address research question two), student perceptions of teacher roles in Libya, in which most learners were expected to view their teachers as the sole sources of knowledge, might have an effect on learner autonomy. The learners' previous learning experiences might lead them to expect a very different classroom practice where it can be difficult for them to claim responsibility for their own learning.

Meanwhile, it is argued that there is a 'social aspect' to learner autonomy in which learners may assume control over learning situations by calling on their ability to interact with others in the learning process (Benson, 2001, 2011). Other definitions in the literature include that of Dam (1995: 1) who also thinks autonomy "entails a capacity and willingness to act independently and in co-operation with others, as a socially responsible person.". In this sense, autonomous learners are seen as those who are willing to learn in collaboration with others and not just work on their own and like other culture-bound human capacities; it develops in interaction with others (Allwright, 1990; Little, 2004; Palfreyman, 2003).The social aspect of autonomy is relevant to the study as the student participants were expected to use some of the strategies, social strategies in particular, in collaboration with their teachers, classmates and potentially outside the classroom with their work colleagues or family members. These definitions seem to align with the underlying principles of Vygotsky's (1979) social-cognitive (dialogic) model of learning and the 'self-regulation strategy development model' of Graham and Harris (1996) which both suggest that learning occurs in collaboration with others until learners are ready to learn on their own (see section 2.4 in previous chapter).

In an attempt to explicate some of the misconceptions about the definition of autonomous language learning, Esch (1996: 37) explains that autonomy "is not something teachers do to learners" indicating that readiness on the part of the learners is essential. In other words, learners will not develop autonomy if they refuse it as a concept or resist any of its underlying principles. This brings us once again to the notion of 'the willingness to learn' mentioned above (Allwright, 1990; Little, 2004) and more recently in the literature (Paiva, 2011).

Moreover, Esch (1996: 37) asserts that autonomy "is not a steady state achieved by learners once and for all.". This highlights the importance of understanding that autonomy cannot be developed rapidly which means that teachers and researchers must accept that it is a gradual process that requires time. As Paiva, (2006 cited in Paiva, 2011: 63) argues "It is not a state, but a non-linear process, which undergoes periods of stability, variability, and adaptability.".

Given the plethora of definitions in the literature and the tendency for different researchers to define autonomy from different perspectives, it is understandable to conclude that autonomy "is not a single easily identifiable behaviour" (Esch, 1996: 37) but "a multidimensional capacity that will take different forms for different individuals, and even for the same individual in different contexts or at different times." (Benson 2001: 47). However, for the purpose of this research and in light of this study's focus (the development of LLS through SBI) a more specific description of learner autonomy is needed. The figure below illustrates this definition:

Drawing on (Esch, 1996; Pavia, 2006, 2011), autonomy is not a static process.

Drawing on (Dam, 1995; Esch, 1996; Little, 2004; Paiva, 2011) the learner's willingness is key to the development of autonomy.

SBI as the instructional approach used in the study corresponds to Benson's mention of 'appropriate conditions and preparation' in his definition of autonomy (Benson, 2001:2). It refers to providing the learners with the opportunity to practice and discover appropriate LLS.

This highlights the social aspect of autonomy, drawing on (Allwright 1990; Dam, 1995; Little, 2004).

Autonomy is the gradual process in which language learners willingly explore and develop a range of direct and indirect LLS through SBI allowing them to take charge of their own language learning. It refers to the language learner's readiness and ability to use LLS both independently and with others and experience the effect of this strategy use both inside the classroom and outside it.

The aspects of planning, implementing, evaluating, critical reflection and decision making, mentioned in the definitions of Little (1991; 2004) refer to *metacognitive* strategies; one of the indirect LLS used in the study and in this definition

Drawing on (Holec,, 1981; Dam, 1990;Benson, 2001), this refers to the notion of control in the development of learner autonomy.

This illustrates that learner autonomy is not just classroom-restricted but should continue beyond the classroom which in this research study is a major aim of encouraging the use of LLS.

Figure 3.1: The Study's Definition of Learner Autonomy (Source: Original)

The 'effect' mentioned in the definition above can be manifested in a number of learner characteristics. These include the development of learner awareness of themselves as learners and of the learning process, motivation and confidence amongst other

characteristics which are used in this particular study as indicators of autonomy as will be explained in section 3.4 of this chapter (see also section 6.2.4.2 in chapter six).

3.2   Importance of Autonomy in FL Contexts

The concept of learner autonomy was for a long time "associated with a radical restructuring of language pedagogy" that involved "the rejection of the traditional classroom and the introduction of wholly new ways of working" (Allwright, 1988: 35). The reconstruction of traditional language classrooms and language courses around the world has underlined the growing interest in autonomy in recent years. Benson (2011) suggests that the ways in which the practice of teaching and learning are organized have an important influence on the development of autonomy among learners. With innovations like self- access centres, computer-based modes of teaching and learning, and learner-centred approaches that focus on the learners, learner autonomy has, without doubt, become an invigorating concept in the field of language education over the last three decades. There is now a considerable body of research within this field which supports the contention that autonomy and self-direction are beneficial to second language acquisition and foreign language learning in particular (Barfield and Brown, 2007; Lamb and Reinders, 2008; Pemberton et al, 2009; Benson 2011). Benson (2001: 2) states that "autonomy is a legitimate and desirable goal of language education." In agreement, Scharle and Szabó (2000: 4) believe that: "Some degree of autonomy is also essential to successful language learning.".

To demonstrate why autonomy is significant in foreign language learning, a number of arguments are presented here. Firstly, it is often assumed that in foreign language learning contexts, language teachers can provide all the necessary input. However, the actual learning of the language will only occur if the language learner is ready to learn. This implies that learners need to realise and accept that success in language learning relies as much on them as learners as it does on their teachers (Camilleri, 1997). This realisation requires learners to be actively involved in the learning process; and this active involvement can be exercised in a number of ways and eventually contribute to the development of learner autonomy as shown in figure 3.2 below:
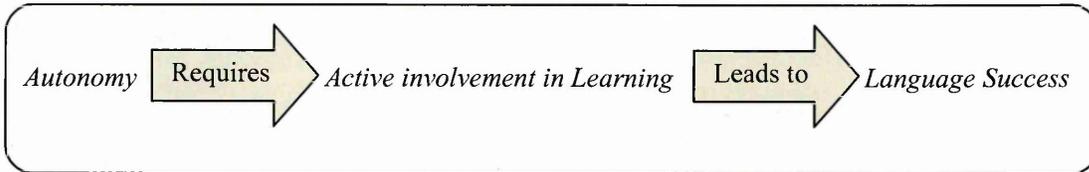
Figure 3.2: Autonomy and Active Involvement in Learning

Secondly, autonomy is known by many researchers in the field as the learner's ability to take control of their own learning (Holec, 1981; Dam, 1990; Benson, 2001). There is evidence in research studies to support the claim that "increasing the level of learner control will increase the level of self-determination, thereby increasing overall motivation", (Chan 2001: 506). Learner motivation is a prerequisite for all types of learning including second language learning, (Scharle and Szabó, 2000; Paiva 2011). According to Chamot et al (1999: 176), "Motivation affects how hard students are willing to work on a task, how much they will persevere when they are challenged, and how much satisfaction they feel when they accomplish a learning task.". See figure 3.3.
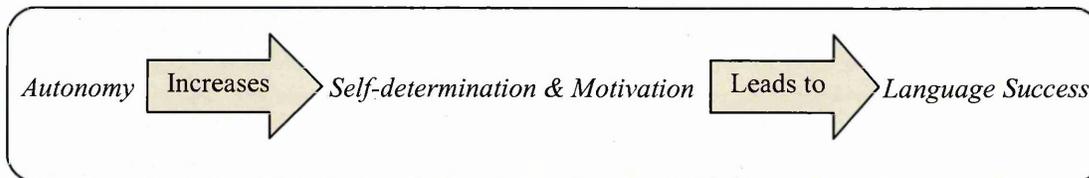
Figure 3.3: Autonomy and Motivation

Additionally, in order to contribute to the development of learner autonomy in language classrooms, it is crucial that students are involved in making decisions about their own learning (Sinclair, 2008; Benson, 2011). Consequently, if students are involved in decision making processes regarding their own language competence "they are likely to be more enthusiastic about learning" (Littlejohn, 1985: 258) thus, language learning can be more focused and purposeful for them (Dam, 1995; Camilleri, 1997; Chan, 2001; 2003) which once again implies the association between motivation, autonomy and language success. See figure 3.4.
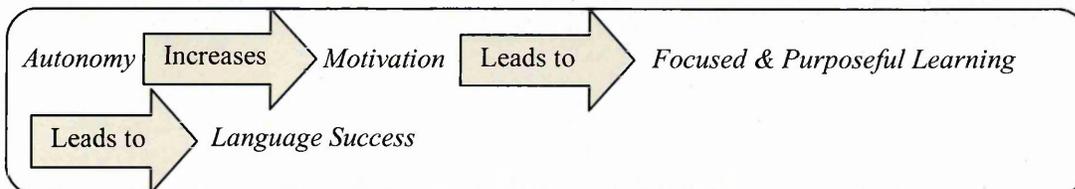
Figure 3.4: Autonomy and Purposeful Learning

Language learning depends vitally on language use i.e. we can learn to read only by reading, and to speak only by speaking and so on. This reflects the notion of 'experiential learning' which emphasises the significance of immediate experience for learning and aims at integrating theoretical and practical elements of learning (Kohlb, 1984; Van Lier, 1996; Kohonen, 2001, 2003). It is presumed that the development of autonomy in formal language learning requires learners' immediate use of the target language as a medium of classroom communication, channel of learning, and tool for reflection (Dam, 1995; Little, 2007). Little, (1990: 8) says: "If learners are to be efficient communicators in their target language, they must be autonomous to the extent of having sufficient independence, self-reliance, and self-confidence to fulfil the variety of social, psychological and discourse roles in which they will be cast.". See figure 3.5.
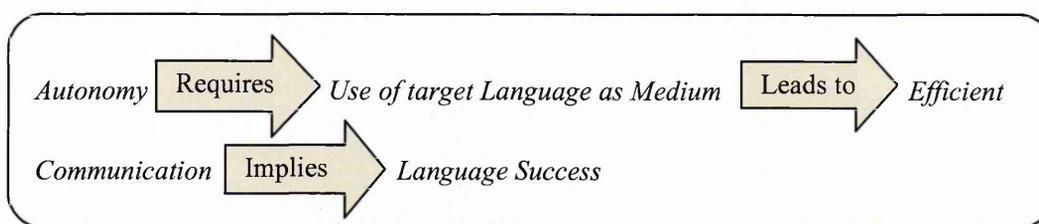
Figure 3.5: Autonomy and Communication

According to Little (1991), the development of autonomy in language learning is governed by three basic pedagogical principles:

- *Learner involvement* – engaging learners to share responsibility for the learning process.
- *Appropriate target language use* – using the target language as the principal medium of language learning.
- *Learner reflection* – helping learners to think critically when they plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their learning.

The first two of Little's (1991) principles concur with some of the assumptions discussed and illustrated above (see figures 3.2 and 3.5). The notion that learner autonomy entails reflective involvement in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating learning seems to coincide with Chamot's et al (1999) 'Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning' which consists of similar metacognitive processes:

- planning,
- monitoring,
- problem solving,
- evaluating. (Chamot et al, 1999: 11).

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Again the metacognitive processes mentioned here are referred to in this study as metacognitive strategies, which in addition to other types of strategies, were integrated into the design of the programme. To sum up, it is suggested that autonomous learning may be more effective than non-autonomous learning. In other words, the development of autonomy implies better language learning (Benson, 2001, 2011).

Having acknowledged the importance of autonomy in language learning, an issue that cannot escape discussion is the construction of teacher professionalism in the process. Within institutional contexts, a realisation of learner autonomy requires teachers' acceptance of transferring roles through restructuring classroom management and relationship structures. It implies not only a change in learner roles but also a change in teacher roles; a change which Dam (1990: 34) believes "is not easy but which is better regarded as a challenge than a problem." This reshaping of teacher and learner roles has been conducive to a radical change in the distribution of power and authority that has characterised traditional classrooms. Traditionally, teachers are viewed as authority figures known by their roles of instructor, director, manager, judge, leader, evaluator, controller, and even doctor, who must cure the ignorance of the students (Oxford, 1990, 2011) which is also a common belief among some Libyan learners (Saleh, 2002). Developing autonomy entails some deviation from such traditional roles. As learners begin to take charge of their own learning, the teacher can play the role of facilitator, supporter, consultant, guide, and inspector. This is explored in the current study with reference to research question three (see section 1.5, p.7).

Dam (1990) states a number of conditions to realise such role change: the teacher should respect unconditionally the terms in which the learner formulates his/her awareness and maturing conception of the process of language learning and the conditions on which it takes place. There must be a willingness on the part of the teacher to trust the learner's conceptions and intentions as well as a firm belief in the learner's ability to be in charge of his own learning, (Dam, 1990). Scharle and Szabó (2000: 5) suggest that this role change "should be gradual, rather than abrupt and dramatic.". They argue that people oppose change for various reasons such as fear of uncertainties, risks or losing authority which was expected from both teacher and student participants of this study. In the context of this study, the aspect of role change is not only associated with autonomy but with the delivery of SBI as an instructional approach. As with developing autonomy, SBI requires the teacher and student

participants to reshape the roles they traditionally play. This will be discussed in further detail in section 4.6 in the next chapter.

Learner autonomy is not only required within classroom settings but must be exercised in other contexts as well and independent of the guidance and prompting of the classroom teacher. Scharle and Szabó (2000: 4) believe that: "No matter how much students learn through lessons, there is always plenty more they will need to learn, by practice on their own.". The continually changing needs of learners over time require them to re-experience learning in different situations in which they will need to be able to study on their own. Therefore, "The best way to prepare for this task is to help them become more autonomous." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 4) which according to Oxford (1990: 10) "is particularly important for language learners, because they will not always have the teacher around to guide them as they use the language outside the classroom.". One way to achieve this is by employing a number of language learning strategies which is the focus of section 3.3 below.

3.3   Language Learning Strategies and Autonomy

Over the last few decades, a clear shift of focus has taken place from teachers and teacher-centred instructional approaches to learners and learner-centred instructional modes of learning (Hismanoğlu, 2000). These trends can be traced to the recognition that learning begins with the learners taking greater responsibility for their own learning. Learner-centred approaches in the field of language education all share the primary goal of helping learners become 'better' language learners. Some of these approaches such as 'strategy training' tend to view the development of autonomy as an integral part of this goal. Cohen (1998: 67) for example, argues that:

> Strategy training, i.e. explicitly teaching students how to apply language learning and language use strategies, can enhance students' efforts to reach language program goals because it encourages students to find their own pathways to success, and thus it promotes learner autonomy and self-direction.

By incorporating Strategies-based instruction (SBI) as a learner-centred approach to language education this research study partly aims to investigate Cohen's (1998) claims for the promotion of learner autonomy through SBI within a Libyan context. When students come to the language classroom, they bring with them learning experiences and habits formed in their previous learning contexts which in the Libyan situation are

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mostly teacher-centred. Students do not have the choice to fully control their own learning and therefore lack the ability to exercise this control (Alhmali, 2007). Strategies-based instruction as a language educational programme aims to foster learner autonomy through the cultivation of learning strategies alongside the teaching of the language. It involves training students in the use of a wide range of strategies to prepare them for more independent learning.

Wenden (1985) acknowledges the importance of utilizing effective learning strategies to promote learner autonomy as she sees it as one of the primary goals of language teaching. For example, based on Oxford's (1990: 17) Strategy System (see figure 2.4 in chapter two), learners can be offered opportunities to explore and experiment with the metacognitive strategy 'evaluating your learning'. Students can learn to determine their own learning progress with aid and guidance from their teachers instead of total reliance on them for evaluation. Many self-assessment tools, like the use of rubrics and scales which represent varying levels of achievement, can help learners take more control for their learning by developing a set of appropriate strategies suitable to their learning styles and preferences. It could be argued that unless students are given the opportunity to self-evaluate, they may never be aware of their own strategy use and in effect aware of their own learning process. As Little (1990: 12-13) observes:

> It is essential to the development of autonomy that learners
> become aware of themselves as learners–aware, for example, of
> the learning techniques they instinctively favour and capable of
> judging how effective those techniques are.

Wenden (1991) argues that learners who acquire the ability to use strategies flexibly, appropriately, and independently are, in effect, autonomous. In line with these arguments, autonomy was becoming more allied with learning strategies towards the 1990s than it was with any other language educational concept. Researchers on learning strategies (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Wenden, 1991; Cohen, 1998, 2003) and, more recently, others who were interested in strategy training (Macaro, 2001; Harris, 2003, Rubin, et al 2007) began to incorporate insights from the field of autonomy. For example, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) believe that as well as learning strategies being facilitative tools they are intentional on the part of the learner. In other words, a learner's use of LLS presupposes his/her willingness to do so. The concept of willingness here implies control from the learner which according to many definitions of autonomy (Dam, 1990; Benson, 2001) is an essential component in its development.

Another goal of strategy use is to affect the learner's motivational or affective state. Affective variables and motivation are deemed to be crucial factors "in the learner's ability to overcome occasional setbacks or minor mistakes in the process of learning a second [or foreign] language" (Taroneand Yule, 1989: 139). In the context of this study, 'affective strategies', one of the indirect strategies in Oxford's taxonomy (see figure 2.4, in the previous chapter), were included as part of the programme design and were precisely aimed at overcoming similar language difficulties and enhancing learner motivation. Again, the interrelation between motivation and autonomy has been demonstrated in the literature (Chamot et al, 1999; Chan, 2001). In addition, Ridley (1997) states that, one of the aims of training learners to use strategies is to improve their metacognitive knowledge in a dynamic way that increases their ability to reflect on their own language learning and overcome problems (characteristics of an autonomous learner).

In summary, *Raising learner self-awareness, intention/willingness to learn, motivation* and *improving learner metacognition* as mentioned above are some of the features recognised throughout the literature and associated with LLS and strategy training (see section 4.2 in next chapter for a distinction between learner development and learner training and justifications for using the term learner training in this study). It is these same features and attributes that have characterised autonomous learners and defined learner autonomy, a capacity this study aims to explore amongst Libyan adult learners of EFL.

3.4   Measuring Autonomy

Identifying the role of SBI as a promoter of autonomy is one of the main objectives relevant to this study. According to Benson (2001: 54) "If we aim to help learners to become more autonomous, we should at least have some way of judging that we have been successful.". Therefore, for research purposes, measuring the student participants' autonomy was required.

If we accept that autonomy can be defined and described in terms of various aspects of learner control, then hypothetically we should be able to measure the extent to which a learner is autonomous, possibly with the help of a standard or reliable method/instrument of measurement. However, in practice, measuring autonomy is quite problematic. Benson (2001) makes us aware of some of the difficulties it poses. Firstly, based on the concept that autonomy is a multidimensional construct, there is little evidence to suggest that there

is a particular combination of learner behaviours that construct autonomy. In other words there is no standard list of behaviours upon which we can conclude that a learner is autonomous. It is argued that although autonomous learners can be identified by their behaviour, this can take numerous different forms and autonomy can manifest itself in many different ways (Little, 1991). Secondly, if autonomy was to be measured based on task performance, there is the danger of situations where learners can exercise behaviours or as Breen and Mann (1997: 141) say "put on the mask of autonomous behaviour" only to please their teachers. A potential method to overcome this is to observe performance in its natural context of learning. However, even using this method does not come without its problems. Learners may not display autonomous behaviour at the time of observation; therefore, it is not reasonable to suggest that the absence of autonomous behaviour indicates the absence of autonomy.

Moreover, Holec (1988: 8) believes that a learner makes use of his ability to be autonomous "only if he so wishes and is permitted to do so by the material, social and psychological constraints to which he is subjected." In other words, if learners are to exercise whatever capacities for autonomy they have, they must not only be willing to do so but also be given the opportunity within the institutional context of learning and by means of the demands of the learning task. A final problem is to do with the nature of the acquisition of autonomy as a developmental and gradual process rather than a static one which can be realised once and for all. Nunan (1997: 192) suggests that autonomy is not an "all-or-nothing concept" but a matter of degree and people do not develop it overnight but rather go through a slow, gradual process (Paiva, 2011). Based on this, Scharle and Szabó (2000) suggest a three-phase developmental model of autonomy: 'raising awareness', 'changing attitudes' and 'transferring roles', and clarify that "the transition from one phase to another is not some momentous event that may be announced as an achievement." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 9). Little (1991: 5) believes that: "the learner who displays a high degree of autonomy in one area may be non-autonomous in another." which is why autonomy is often thought of "as attitudes that students may possess to varying degrees." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 5).

However, Benson (2001: 54) argues that "the fact that measurement of autonomy is problematic does not necessarily mean that we should not attempt to measure it." There have been numerous attempts in the literature to measure autonomy. For example, one of the early efforts was made by Guglielmino (1977) who developed the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) which was designed to assess the extent to which

individuals perceive themselves to possess skills and attitudes frequently associated with self-directedness in learning. More recently, other researchers in the field of language acquisition constructed questionnaires to investigate the students' readiness for autonomy in language learning (Cottrell, 1995; Chan et al, 2002) but for the purpose of this research study, two ways were identified as indicators of learner autonomy:

1) Language learning strategies   **2)** Learner qualities and characteristics (learner profiles)

Firstly in relation to LLS, Dickinson (1993: 330) in an interview about aspects of autonomous learning states that autonomous learners:

> are people who can and do select and implement appropriate learning strategies, often consciously...And they can monitor their own use of learning strategies...they are able to identify strategies that are not working for them, that are not appropriate, and use others. They have a relatively rich repertoire of strategies, and have the confidence to ditch those that are not effective and try something else.

Benson (2001: 80) also argues: "Since the conscious use of learning strategies implies control over learning management, taxonomies of strategies may be a logical place to begin a description of the behaviours involved in autonomous learning." Oxford's taxonomy (1990) and Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) based on this taxonomy are widely recognised in the literature. Benson (2001: 84) notes that the SILL has been utilised in 40 to 50 major studies and suggests that the last three sections of the SILL (related to learners' use of indirect strategies) might be used to assess learners' amount of control over their own learning. As Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) make strong claims for the SILL's reliability and validity, the SILL is used in this study for identifying the strategies most commonly used by the students and an indication of learner autonomy.

The second method used to measure autonomy is known as 'learner profiling' via a list of behaviours associated with autonomous learners. It may not be possible to directly observe learners' autonomous behaviour but Benson (2001: 188) argues "we can observe the exercise of this capacity in various aspects of learning. Measuring gains in autonomy, therefore, involves identifying behaviours associated with control and judging the extent to which learners display them.". Dickinson (1993: 330) is of a similar opinion when he says: "I see autonomy very much as an attitude to language learning which may not necessarily have many external, observable features. But, in terms of that attitude, I think of autonomous learners as people who are characterized in a number of ways.". In an

attempt to profile the autonomous learner, Candy (1991) lists more than 100 competencies grouped under 13 headings. Candy believes that the learner capable of autonomous learning will characteristically:

- be methodical and disciplined
- be logical and analytical
- be reflective and self-aware
- demonstrate curiosity, openness and motivation
- be flexible
- be interdependent and interpersonally competent
- be persistent and responsible
- be venturesome and creative
- show confidence and have a positive self-concept
- be independent and self-sufficient
- have developed information seeking and retrieval skills
- have knowledge about, and skill at, learning processes
- develop and use criteria for evaluating (Candy, 1991: 159-66).

Lists like that of Candy's (1991) can be utilised in studies on learner autonomy. They can be developed or adapted to suit particular contexts or serve different research purposes, as was the case in the current study (see section 6.2.4.2 in chapter six).

3.5   Conclusion

This chapter discussed a critical concept in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) which is learner autonomy. As Little (1991: 2) asserts, the concept of learner autonomy has gained momentum and has become a 'buzz word' within the context of language learning. However, the relevant literature is riddled with various synonyms and innumerable definitions for it as shown in section 3.1. Despite the misconceptions associated with the term, autonomous learning is by no means a teacherless form of learning. Most commonly it has been defined as the learner's ability to take control of her/his own learning (Holec, 2003; Benson, 2011). Section 3.2 provided a discussion on how learner autonomy is vital to foreign language learning as shown in the literature (Little, 2004; Benson, 2011; Paiva, 2011) while section 3.3 discussed the importance of utilizing effective learning strategies to promote learner autonomy (Wenden 1991; Cohen 1998, 2003). Finally, measuring learner autonomy seems to have met considerable difficulties in implementation (Benson, 2000) as discussed in section 3.4. However, various attempts to do so including the use of 'LLS' and 'learner profiling' as indicators have been discussed here and considered as a means to measuring autonomy in this particular study.

4   Strategy Training

The third chapter of the literature review focuses on strategy training. An in-depth explanation is presented on the teachability of LLS, the need for strategy training, its types, models and goals with a specific focus on strategies-based instruction (SBI) as the programme implemented in this research study. The roles EFL teachers may assume in strategy training contexts, and the constraints that may affect strategy training are also outlined in this chapter. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1: Contents of Chapter 4

4.1   Teaching Language Learning Strategies

4.2   Strategy Training and Learner Development

4.3   Types of Strategy Training

4.3.1   Explicit Strategy Training

4.3.2   Integrated Strategy Training

4.3.3   Strategies-Based Instruction

4.4   Models of Strategy Training

4.5   Goals of Strategy Training

4.6   Strategies-Based Instruction and Professional Development

4.7   Constraints on Effective Strategy Training

4.7.1   Resource-Related Factors

4.7.2   Methodology-Related Factors

4.7.3   Learner-Related Factors

4.8   Conclusion

4.1 Teaching Language Learning Strategies

Acknowledging the importance of LLS in language learning (see section 2.5 in chapter two) raises the question of whether LLS can be taught. Early studies around the concept of the "good language learner" provided lists of strategies and features presumed to be used by successful foreign language learners (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975; Naimen et al, 1975). These early researchers argued that it is possible to help the less successful language learners by teaching them some of the good language learners' tricks. Their claims triggered research on the 'teachability' of LLS leading to an increasing number of intervention studies. Such studies aimed to investigate the effect of teaching learning strategies on raising learners' awareness of strategies, fostering learners' use of strategies, and improving their language skills. The favourable results of such studies have influenced the focus and conduct of the research reported here. This research aims to examine the contribution that formal strategies-based instruction might offer Libyan adult English language learners in relation to the development of all four language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and the development of learner autonomy (see research questions one and two in 1.5, p.7). In addition, it investigates whether the adoption of SBI by EFL teachers in Libya affects the roles they play in the classroom and the attitudes they develop towards SBI and learner autonomy (see research question three in 1.5).

Examples of intervention studies carried out in different cultural contexts revealed a plethora of mixed research results in relation to the effect learning strategies have on developing the receptive skills of reading and listening, and the productive skills of speaking and writing.

To teach reading strategies to Indian EFL learners, Pani (2004) used mental modelling, i.e. modelling the mental processes while reading a text, and found it successful. However, White's (2006) study, revealed no effect after training Japanese EFL university students to use strategies on their performance on a multiple-choice reading test. Ozeki (2000) found improvement in the listening abilities of female EFL Japanese college students who were taught to use listening strategies that were unfamiliar to them. Chen's (2005) study, meanwhile, suggested a number of factors that seemed to prevent Taiwanese EFL learners from using listening comprehension strategies successfully. These included the learners' listening habits, information processing

capacities, affective status, language proficiency, strategic competence, language learning beliefs, and the nature of the listening material.

Cohen's et al (1998) study showed a positive impact for the explicit teaching of speaking strategies on the EFL participants' speaking ability; while Rossiter (2002) reported that teaching affective strategies had no influence on the participants speaking performance. Bergman (1991) provided English language learners with training in metacognitive strategies and found that it improved their writing ability and metacognitive knowledge. Sasaki (2000) on the other hand, concluded that though strategy instruction affected students' strategy use, it did not improve their writing performance.

Although not all of the above studies have shown positive outcomes regarding the teachability of LLS, most of them have emphasized the importance of accounting for a number of factors and constraints when interpreting the findings. These constraints which can shape and influence the outcome of certain studies, include: the learners' cultural backgrounds, their language proficiency level, teachers' attitudes and experience, the type of strategy teaching conducted (implicit or explicit), the length of the study (short-term or long-term), the teaching material, and the reliability of measurement instruments. Some of the factors mentioned here were taken into account during the training of the learners and teachers and in the interpretation and discussion of the results.

Generally however, in view of the literature on LLS, the majority of intervention studies seem to suggest that LLS can be taught and can be effective in improving learners' language skills and strategy use as well as raising both teachers' and learners' awareness of LLS (Carrier, 2003; Rasekh and Ranjbari, 2003; Dreyer and Nel, 2003; Nakatani, 2005). Thus, this study makes use of this assumption and attempts to build on the concept of 'teachability' of LLS when attempting to implement a SBI programme in an EFL learning context.

4.2   Strategy Training and Learner Development

Cohen (1998:65) argues that: "The underlying premise is that language learning will be facilitated if students become aware of the range of possible strategies that they can consciously select during language learning" questions raised here, however, would be

how can we make learners aware of the strategies they can use? and if this is possible, would it lead to success in language learning?

Rees-Miller (1993) claims that there is no empirical evidence for a causal relationship between strategy awareness and language success and argues that some characteristics associated with successful learning cannot be defined as specific behaviours and may therefore be unteachable. On the other hand, several research and intervention studies over the years (Chamot and Rubi, 1994; Cohen, 1998; Kinoshita, 2003; Cohen and Macaro, 2007; Oxford, 2011) have demonstrated that there is a correlation between strategy use and improved language learning performance.

In response to the question above, raising learners' awareness of strategy use is possible by a) providing instruction programmes where language learners are taught how to use strategies and b) introducing approaches where learning strategies are included in the language classroom. Such programmes and approaches have been referred to by researchers in the field as 'strategy training', 'learner training', 'strategy instruction', and 'learning-to-learn training'. Although these terms have been used throughout the literature to refer to the same thing, the term 'strategy training' is the most commonly used and is used within this chapter.

The literature also presents a distinction between 'learner training' and 'learner development'. For example, Sheerin (1997: 56-60) favours the term 'learner development' as she believes that training "implies the imparting of a defined set of skills and it also implies something that is done by someone to someone else". Nevertheless, a mutual goal of all learner development approaches is to help learners become 'better' language learners, which is an underlying goal of SBI (the programme carried out in this study). Moreover, SBI tends to view the development of learner autonomy as an integral part of this goal. Although SBI prompted the use of LLS, as a programme, it was integrated into the contents of the learners' actual course at the chosen institution rather than presenting it as a separate programme. This was aimed to help provide a natural flow to the language provision allowing learners to experiment with LLS while learning English. In addition it was hoped the programme will help increase awareness of themselves as learners and encourage learner responsibility, which might be seen as pre-requisites of developing learner autonomy. This concurs with Benson (2001: 143) who holds that "there is general agreement that learner development activities should not be separated from language learning activities".

Moreover, the learners were not enforced to participate in the programme thus implying a level of choice and willingness on their part; they were offered practice opportunities to develop their language learning and learner autonomy (highlighting the notion of experiential learning). Therefore the term 'strategy training' is used in this study in a broad sense referring to SBI as an instructional programme; implying both teachabilty and development.

4.3   Types of Strategy Training

Language researchers and teachers have different views about how to carry out training and how best to present LLS. Oxford (1990: 201) believes that: "…learners who receive strategy training generally learn better than those who do not, and that certain techniques for such training are more beneficial than others." While some prefer to directly and explicitly teach LLS, others leave them implicit (Kinoshita, 2003). Integrating LLS into the core material may appeal to some researchers and teachers; others choose to have them separated as extra-curricular material (Cohen, 1998). The level of explicitness of training and the level of integration into the curriculum and language material differs from one strategy training programme to another.

4.3.1   Explicit Strategy Training

An example of explicit training is *awareness training programmes* also known as awareness-raising, consciousness-raising, or familiarization training (Cohen, 1990). This may serve as an introduction to strategy use in which learners grasp the wide-ranging applications of LLS and see the value of learner autonomy. Oxford (1990: 20) defines awareness training as a programme in which "participants become aware and familiar with the general idea of language learning strategies and the way such strategies can help them accomplish various language tasks". In addition to being presented explicitly, awareness training programmes are normally presented separately from the regular language classroom instruction and can take the form of lectures, talks/discussions, and workshops. Some teachers may prefer to give isolated lectures and discussions which do not take time away from their classroom language instruction and so such programmes would be convenient. For some students these one-off independent sessions are sufficient to encourage strategy use as they provide practical examples and hands-on activities which elicit the use of different strategies. O'Malley

and Chamot (1990) meanwhile argue that others may think that the practice time is limited and is, therefore, inadequate to reinforce the use of the strategies. These learners may also find it difficult to transfer the strategies to other tasks and across other language skills as they are not associated with the specific language tasks which they perform in their own classrooms.

4.3.2   Integrated Strategy Training

An example of integrated strategy training is through the use of *strategy-embedded textbooks* such as some of the EFL publications of Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, MacMillan, and others. Here the strategies, or the way of introducing them, can either be implicit or explicit. However, the most common approach is implicit strategy instruction where students are not directly informed of the names, purpose, or value of any LLS but rather work through materials and activities that are designed to elicit the use of strategies. An example of this would be textbook rubrics i.e. specific instructions before, during, or after a lesson aiming to indirectly encourage learners to use appropriate strategies (Kinoshita, 2003). However, in this situation Cohen (1998: 79) argues that strategy training may not actually occur as the strategies are not explained, modelled, or reinforced by the teacher or by the textbook itself.

4.3.3   Strategies-Based Instruction

An approach which occupies a middle position by merging the features of the two previous training programmes is *Strategies-based instruction (SBI)*. This approach is the focus of the current research study. Figure 4.1 below shows the differences between the three training programmes.

Awareness training	Strategies-based Instruction	Strategy-embedded Textbooks
-Explicit teaching of strategies -No integration in class material	-Explicit teaching of strategies -Integrated in class material	-Integrated in class material but could be explicit or remain implicit depending on teacher's intention and expertise

Figure 4.1: Strategy Training Programmes

According to Cohen (1998: 114):

> Strategies-based instruction (SBI) is a learner-centred approach to teaching that has two major components: (1) students are

explicitly taught how, when, and why strategies can be used to facilitate language learning tasks, and (2) strategies are integrated into everyday class materials.

Strategies-based instruction highlights the fact that the focus is shifted from the teachers to the learners. It is learner-centred because the learners are learning how to take action into their own hands and share the responsibility with their teachers. As an approach, it supports the concepts of integration and explicit instruction of strategies which are advocated by other language researchers including Graham (1997: 169) who believes:

> Language learning strategy training needs to be integrated into students' regular classes if they are going to appreciate their relevance for language learning tasks; students need to constantly monitor and evaluate the strategies they develop and use; they need to be aware of the nature, function and importance of such strategies.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 184) also argue that:

> Strategy training should be direct in addition to being embedded. In other words, students should be appraised of the goals of strategy instruction and should be made aware of the strategies they are being taught.

As an approach encouraged by a number of researchers in the field, SBI is the training programme adopted in the current study. The two features of explicit teaching of strategies and the integration into class material are essential in this programme and are reflected in its design and implementation. The general goal of SBI is to help foreign language students become more aware of the ways in which they learn most effectively; ways in which they can enhance their own comprehension and production of the target language; and ways in which they can continue to learn on their own and communicate in the target language after they leave the language classroom (Cohen et al, 1998). This goal is concurrent with the first two research questions of the study (see section 1.5). In addition, the teachers and their willingness to incorporate approaches such as SBI into their language classrooms are vital to achieving the goals of SBI. Hence, pedagogical implications in relation to teacher development, professionalism and role change are expected (see research question three, section 1.5 and section 4.6 of this chapter).

4.4   Models of Strategy Training

O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 187) argue that: "…instructional models and materials are helpful in illustrating the ways in which research findings can be converted into practical

classroom activities.". In line with this, a number of researchers have proposed different models for language learning strategy instruction (Pressley et al 1992; Chamot et al., 1999; Graham and Harris, 2003; Harris, 2003). The majority of instructional models have evolved around the goal of raising learners' awareness of the value of strategies and encouraging them to utilize strategies for the purpose of developing their language learning and proficiency. Amongst the most widely recognized models are those of O'Malley and Chamot (1990); Oxford (1990); and Grenfell and Harris (1999). Features of these models inspired the development of the *Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment Model* (SBIA) devised for the current study and used to gather data from the setting in Libya.

The O'Malley and Chamot (1990) Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) model is a five-phase instructional framework based on the explicit instruction of strategies and the development of meta-cognitive knowledge. Strategies instruction is integrated into everyday class activities rather than presented in separate strategies lessons. The five phases of the model are identified in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2: CALLA Model (Adapted from Harris, 2003)

CALLA Model O'Malley & Chamot (1990)
Preparation: Teacher identifies students' current learning strategies for familiar tasks.
Presentation: Teacher demonstrates, names the new strategy, and explains how and when to use it.
Practice: Students practice using the new strategy; in subsequent strategy practice, teacher gives reminders to encourage independent strategy use.
Evaluation: Students self-evaluate their own strategy use immediately after practice.
Expansion: Students transfer strategies to new tasks, combine strategies into clusters, develop a repertoire of preferred strategies.

O'Malley and Chamot's CALLA model allows teachers and students to revisit and flexibly move between phases as required. Figure 4.2 illustrates the recursive nature of the model.

CALLA Instructional Sequence:

PREPARATION

PRESENTATION

PRACTICE

EXPANSION

EVALUATION

CALLA's Five Recursive Phases
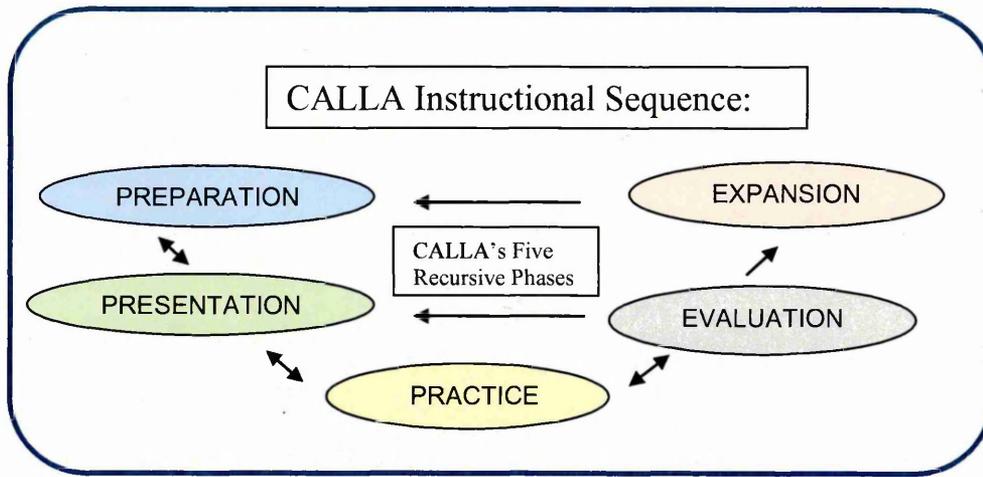
Figure 4.2: CALLA Instructional Sequence (Chamot et al, 1999)

Working through the five phases of the framework enables the gradual progression and transition from teacher direction to learner independence by sharing responsibilities (Chamot et al, 1999: 45). This process is shown in figure 4.3.

Teacher Responsibility

Preparation
Activate Background Knowledge
Presentation
Explain
Model

Attend
Participate

Practice
Prompt Strategies
Give Feedback

Apply Strategies
with Guidance

Evaluation
Assess Strategies
Expansion
Support
Transfer

Assess Strategies

Use Strategies Independently
Transfer Strategies to New Tasks

Student Responsibility

Figure 4.3: Framework for Strategies Instruction (Chamot et al, 1999)

Oxford (1990), meanwhile, suggests an eight-step training programme; the first five steps deal with planning and preparation while the last three steps involve conducting, evaluating, and revising the strategy training (see Table 4.3 below). Oxford's model assumes that learners' current strategies have already been assessed through instruments such as questionnaires, strategy checklists, discussions, interviews, or self-report and think-aloud procedures. The eight steps are then followed through, possibly

simultaneously or in a different order, and are felt to be especially useful for long-term strategy training, (Oxford, 1990: 203).

Steps 3 and 6 in Oxford's model particularly focus on how strategy training should be presented and approached i.e. both integrated and informed (explicit), which are the two underlying features of SBI (see section 4.3.3 above on SBI). Meanwhile, O'Malley and Chamot's model while including similar steps of preparation, presentation and practice do not overtly highlight whether the training should be integrated or explicit. Furthermore, although in O'Malley and Chamot's model, support is offered by the teacher, as part of the expansion phase (see figure 4.3 above), Oxford (1990) in her model specifically highlights the consideration of motivational issues amongst learners. This also might draw attention to other learner-related factors that might influence the conduct of strategy training.

Table 4.3: Oxford's Strategy Training Model (1990)

Oxford's (1990) Strategy Training Model
1. Determine the learners' needs and the time available.
2. Select strategies well.
3. Consider integration of strategy training.
4. Consider motivational issues.
5. Prepare materials and activities.
6. Conduct "completely informed training".
7. Evaluate the strategy training.
8. Revise the strategy training

The Grenfell and Harris (1999) model, shown in figure 4.4, is a six-step cycle, which like the two models mentioned above, starts with the identification of strategies already used by the learners before familiarizing them with new strategies through modeling and discussions of the value of strategies. However, unlike the other two models the practice phase seems to be more intensive as learners are encouraged to make personal action plans to develop their independent learning through both general and focused practice. The final step of the cycle is to evaluate the success of the action planning.
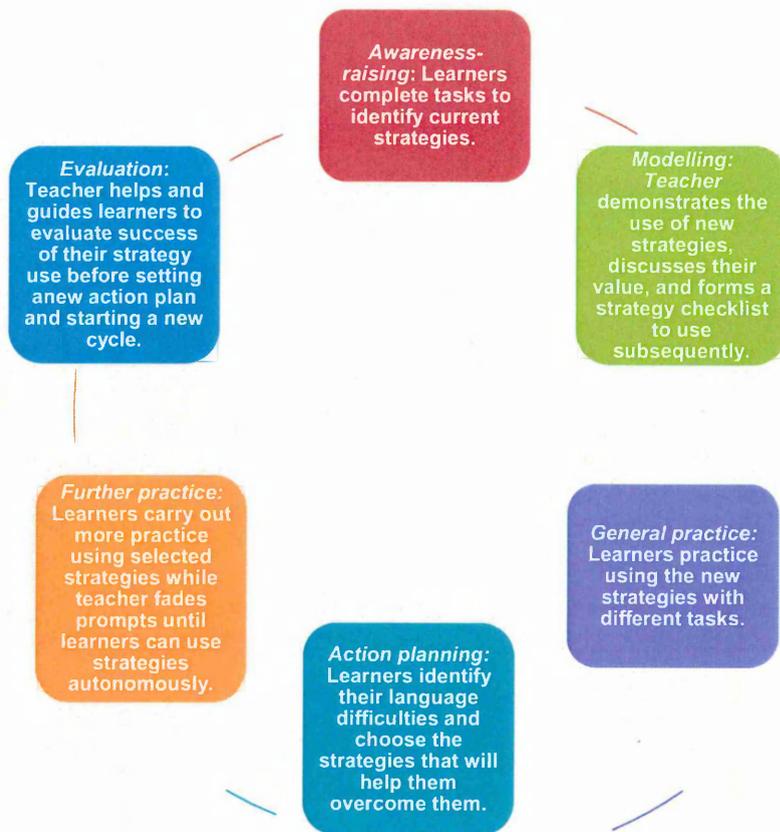
Figure 4.4: Strategy Training Model of Grenfell and Harris (1999), (Adapted from Harris, 2003)

The three teaching frameworks reviewed above all involve the use of steps or phases. The SBIA model designed for the current study is also a phased model and was formulated to suit the research context (see phases in Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Phases of the SBIA Model (Source: original)

Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment Model (SBIA)
Phase 1 **Strategy Identification Phase** Data Collection Methods: SILL, SILL Reflection Sessions, Language Tasks + Verbal Reports
Phase 2 **Strategy Training Phase** Teacher Roles: explaining, describing and modeling LLS Learner Roles: practice applying LLS to all four Language skills

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Phase 3 **Strategy Assessment Phase** Data Collection Methods: SILL, SILL Reflection Sessions, Language Tasks + Verbal Reports
Phase 4 **Strategy Transfer and Autonomous Phase** Data Collection Methods: Semi-structured Interview and Questionnaire
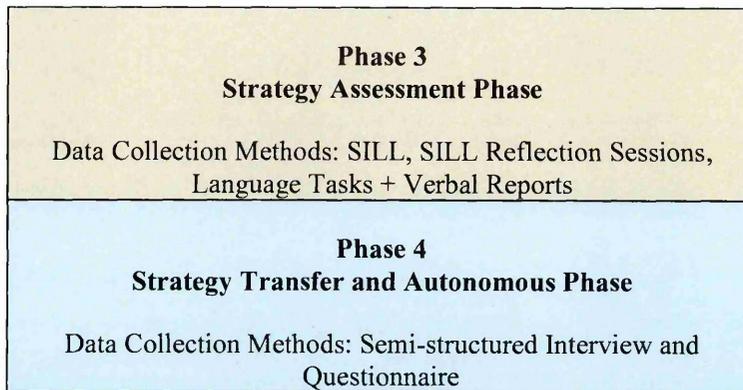
The three teaching frameworks reviewed in this section begin with the identification of learners' current use of LLS before proceeding to a practice phase in which teachers normally model the use of strategies. Similarly, the SBIA model begins with an identification phase followed by a training and practice phase. The current research draws on Oxford's suggestions of using a number of assessment tools to gather information about the learners' current use of strategies prior to any training. These include Oxford's (1990) SILL (see Appendix C for a full version of the SILL), discussions (SILL reflection sessions), and verbal reports which were administrated during *phase 1* of the SBIA model on a pre-test basis. These instruments were used again in *phase 3* after the training had taken place and their results were compared with those carried out in *phase 1* of the study.

The three frameworks conclude with an evaluation of how well the strategies have worked and encouraged further use of strategy training with language tasks in future. Similarly, the SBIA model integrates an assessment phase (*phase 3*) in order to assess students' use of strategies and the impact on their performance, and a transfer phase (*phase 4*) to investigate the development of autonomy. It is worth noting that the purpose of each phase of the SBIA model was twofold; it helped yield information that fed into the training programme itself, and also informed the research work. The SBIA model and its implementation will be discussed in further detail in chapter six (see section 6.2 and Table 6.3)

4.5   Goals of Strategy Training

Whichever strategy training programme is adopted and whichever strategy instructional model or framework is chosen, it is important to realize that the underlying goals of such programmes and frameworks are more or less the same. Oxford (1990: 201) states:

The general goals of such training are to help make language learning more meaningful, to encourage a collaborative spirit between learner and teacher, to learn about options for language learning, and to learn and practice strategies that facilitate self-reliance.

The current study selected SBI as an approach to delivering strategies to a group of Libyan adult learners of English in order to investigate whether some of the goals identified by Oxford (and others) are attainable. While strategy training aims to achieve a number of goals, the ones relevant to this research are:

- Raising learner awareness of strategy-use
- Emphasizing the effectiveness of LLS
- Encouraging learner autonomy
- Encouraging collaboration between teachers and learners

One goal of strategy training is to raise learners' awareness of strategy-use; in other words to help learners become more conscious of the LLS they are using and the ones they are not using. Most learners do not recognize that they are already using strategies; therefore, it is essential to start off the training by collecting information about learners' current strategy use and raising their awareness of this. Most strategy training programmes include this as an initial step before any consequent steps occur (Chamot, 2005; Cohen, 1998; Grenfell and Harris, 1999). For this study, awareness-raising was aimed for at the beginning of the programme through using various instruments during phase 1 of the SBIA model (see section 6.2.1).

A further aim of strategy training is to highlight the effectiveness of LLS. This can be achieved through lectures and sessions where the teacher models the new strategy. However, learners may not be able to appreciate what strategies can do for them if they are not given the opportunity to learn and practise a wide range of LLS and to apply them to different language tasks. Therefore, a key element of strategy training is to provide such practice opportunities. Grenfell and Harris (1999) amongst others recognize this need and include a practice stage as part of their model for LLS instruction. The training must also ensure that the systematic practice involves reinforcement, self-monitoring and self-evaluation of the learners' strategy use (Chamot et al, 1999). This can be as simple as continually asking learners questions such as *did the strategy work? Did it help you and how?* Or devoting whole sessions on teaching learners how to monitor and evaluate their own use of strategies. Phase 2 of the SBIA

model was mainly concerned with the provision of adequate practice opportunities to the learners (see section 6.2.2).

A major goal of strategy training is to promote leaner autonomy. Benson (2001: 2) defines autonomy as: "the capacity to take control over one's own learning". Learners may become autonomous in language learning by taking more responsibility for the learning process itself. Secondly, learners may become autonomous through strategy training by selecting their own strategies spontaneously without continued prompting from their language teacher. Wenden (1991) argues that learners who acquire the ability to use strategies flexibly, appropriately, and independently are, in effect, autonomous. In addition, attitudes where learners are passive and reliant on their teachers need to change otherwise; efforts to train learners to rely on themselves will fail (Oxford, 1990, 2011). This research study explores whether SBI can encourage learners to take responsibility for their own language learning and whether this will contribute to the development of learner autonomy (see research question two in section 1.5, p.7).

While learners are starting to become more involved in their own learning, teachers are starting to adapt to their roles of facilitating, guiding, and coaching. To help sustain these new roles, strategy training must include the encouragement of collaborative relationships between the learners and their teachers and therefore prompt a move away from established classroom roles i.e. authoritative (on the part of the teacher) versus teacher-dependant roles (on the part of the learner). This collaboration was encouraged throughout the implementation of phase 2 of the SBIA model which was designed to achieve a gradual transition from traditional teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness.

4.6 Strategies-Based Instruction and Professional Development

Effective strategy training and SBI relies heavily on the teacher's experience. It is not only the learners who need to learn how to learn, but the teachers need to learn how to facilitate the learning process (Oxford, 1990). Given the results of an empirical study conducted by Nyikos (1996: 109) the teachers themselves may require strategy training in order to utilize the materials appropriately. O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 155) agree with this when they state: "In our own teacher training efforts, we discovered that teachers need considerable exposure to the concept of learning strategies". They added that constant practice in designing and providing learning strategy instruction is

required if they were to incorporate strategy training in their classrooms. FL teachers need to be aware of the applications of strategies and how to encourage extensive strategy use in their classes. This can be achieved by designing development programmes which could be anything from awareness-raising workshops and lectures; attending presentations, colloquia, and workshops at professional strategy training conferences; to in-service SBI seminars. Researchers including O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990) and Cohen (1998) believe that these can be organized on a short-term and one-off basis; or a long-term and in-service basis. The latter option could be the most efficient in terms of providing extensive training for classroom teachers on how to conduct their own strategy training for students and how to incorporate strategies into everyday class activities and class material. The training also includes how to gain a better understanding of their students' needs and how to utilize different strategies to suit the learning task at hand.

Furthermore, the focus on training learners in the applications of LLS and the encouragement of learner responsibility implies a change in the role of a class teacher. It is a fundamental transfer from the familiar roles of instructor, manager, director, controller, and leader to being a guide, facilitator, coach, consultant, advisor, diagnostician, co-communicator, and coordinator. However, this does not mean the shift in the teachers' set of roles diminishes the need for teachers or undermines any of their responsibilities. Cohen (1998: 97) states that:

> It is important to realize that an emphasis on learner strategies and more learner responsibility in the classroom does not in any way put teachers out of work. It may, on the other hand, free teachers to focus more attention on successfully supporting their students' learning.

Meanwhile, Oxford (1990: 10) argues that teachers must understand that their managerial and instructional methods need not be entirely discarded but become less dominant as: "Their Status is no longer based on hierarchical authority, but on the quality and importance of their relationship with learners." On the one hand, this role change might be well-received by teachers and can be seen as a support which can strengthen their roles and make them more varied and creative. Other teachers may react differently towards this prospect. Because the chosen programme for this study (SBI) implies a role change for teachers, it was important, therefore, that the research design addressed this. The teacher participants were asked during the teacher pre-SBI and post-SBI interviews about their attitudes towards this change. It was also important to

understand the teachers' views and perceptions on role change because the SBI was implemented within a collaborative action research framework.

Cohen's (1998) Styles and Strategies-Based Instruction (SSBI) model represents a useful example of role change in the midst of a typical strategy training and SBI context. It is based on the teacher's adoption of different functions in order to help students learn to use learning strategies appropriate to their own learning styles. The role of the teacher in Cohen's view is to act as *a change agent* and as Cohen (1998: 97) puts it: "...a facilitator of learning, whose role is to help their students to become more independent, more responsible for their own learning. In this role the teachers become partners in the learning process.". Figure 4.5 shows the different roles teachers might assume in strategy training and SBI as suggested by Cohen (1998: 99).
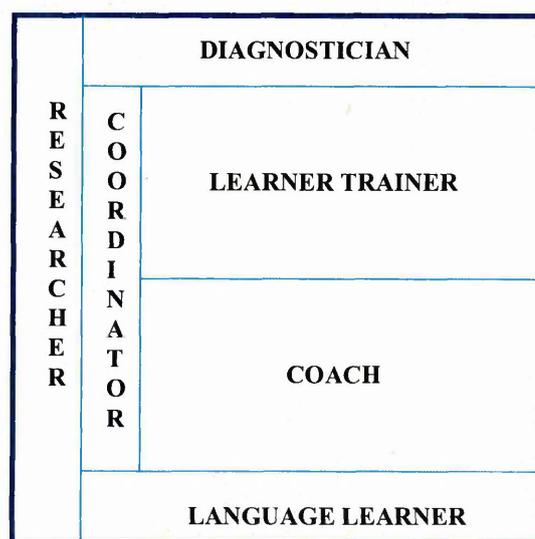
Figure 4.5: Teacher as Change Agent (Cohen, 1998: 99)

Teachers as *diagnosticians* help students to identify their current strategies so as to improve their choice and utilization of these and other strategies. Teachers as *learner trainers* train students how to use learning strategies by presenting these in class whether implicitly, explicitly or both. As *coaches* they supervise students' study plans and monitor any difficulties they encounter; and as *coordinators* they provide ongoing guidance on students' progress. Teachers as *language learners* share their own learning experiences and thinking processes with their students, while *teachers* assume the role of researchers by gathering data, keeping records, and analyzing data during all the other roles (Cohen, 1998). With reference to research question three (see section 1.5),

the study aims to explore whether some of the roles suggested by Cohen's (1998) SSBI model are assumed by the teachers throughout the different phases of the intervention.

Cohen (1998: 102) states that: "There are obviously educational policies and planning consequences at the program and classroom levels if strategies-based instruction is adopted. Teachers will need to be trained first and foremost.". It is therefore crucial to consider what available teacher training opportunities there are before embarking on any SBI programmes. One possible drawback to implementing the programme in Libya might be the lack of local expertise for training teachers. The unavailability or scarcity of professional teacher strategy trainers in the use of LLS is likely to affect tendencies to take on such initiatives and adopt strategy training programmes altogether. Consequently, one of the key requirements of this research study was to identify whether SBI will help develop the teachers' expertise for integrating LLS into classroom instruction. The teachers were provided with the necessary teaching skills for SBI through several preparation sessions delivered by the researcher before and during the language courses. These were mainly practical and hands-on activities to help the teachers to actively experiment with the LLS to be taught and how best to introduce them in their classes. In addition to offering the classroom teachers new spheres of activity, the teacher preparation programme aimed to help them embrace the new teaching roles and capacities required for SBI.

4.7   Constraints on Effective Strategy Training

Having critically reviewed the literature on strategy training, it must be acknowledged that the diverse findings of several research studies are due to a number of factors. These factors can be expected to have an impact on how effective FL strategy training can be. For example, Chen (2005) held the factors of proficiency level; learner beliefs; and language material accountable for the participants' unsuccessful use of listening comprehension strategies. Oxford and Crookall (1989: 414) emphasize the need to consider such factors when carrying out strategy instruction. It was therefore important that a number of factors and their potential impact on the effectiveness of SBI were considered as part of the research project. For purposes of this study, these factors are grouped into resource-related, methodology-related and learner-related factors, and some examples from each group are discussed below.

Some of these factors, including proficiency level, learner beliefs, attitudes, motivation and time constraints were taken into account in the analysis and interpretation of the research findings and reference to them is embedded throughout the three discussion chapters (see chapters 7, 8 and 9 of the thesis). Other factors like gender and age, for example, were beyond the scope of this study and were therefore recommended for future research (see section 10.5 in the final chapter of the thesis).

4.7.1   Resource-Related Factors

These include the availability of material, the nature of tasks used for practice, the number of strategies to be taught and the instruments used for measuring strategy use.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 157) believe that the success of strategy instruction depends significantly on the availability of appropriate materials and that teaching FL learning strategies becomes more difficult if teachers lack the materials appropriate to their classrooms. There is always the possibility that LLS are already incorporated into the curriculum material, so it is up to the teacher to highlight these strategies as they go through the course, while giving clear examples and applications of how such LLS may be used in learning. It is suggested that textbooks should be carefully analyzed to see whether they already include LLS or LLS training (Lessard-Clouston, 1997: 5) and that strategy training should include explanations, handouts, activities, brainstorming, and materials for reference and home study (Oxford, 1994: 4). This was the case for the material used in the SBI of this study. The course books chosen by the institution for the three different levels were closely studied and all strategies therein were highlighted so as to be explicitly taught in class. In addition other material was supplemented to cover a wider range of strategies applications.

Selecting appropriate tasks and activities for strategy training and SBI is significant. Chamot et al (1999: 43) advise on using appropriately challenging tasks; they claim: "If the task is too easy, students will not need strategies, but if it is too difficult, even appropriate strategies may not lead to success.". Hall (1997: 4) states that it is important for the FL teacher to provide a range of tasks to match varied learning styles as what may work out for one learner may not for another. Oxford, (1989: 244) also argues that learners respond to the different tasks using different strategies and some strategies are useful only for certain tasks. The tasks used for the SBI of this study were selected based on a number of guidelines such as: highlighting which strategies are most

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appropriate for which tasks, and which are likely to be more successful in particular contexts; and determining the specifications of the tasks used and the time required for performing them depending on learners' language proficiency levels and the skill areas of strategy instruction.

Furthermore, the number of strategies to be taught should be carefully considered. It is argued that although learners need to be trained in various strategies to develop their strategic repertoire, they might find it difficult to learn and employ a large number of strategies (Chamot, 1994: 334). In the current study, the number of strategies was selected to suit the time available to the student participants to practise using them during phase 2 of the study (Strategy Training Phase). These were balanced equally across the four language skills (see Table 6.4 in chapter six).

Finally, teachers need to use reliable instruments for measuring strategy use and the language skill performance. For the current study, a multi-method approach was adopted in order to produce a range of qualitative and quantitative data, promoting richness and reliability in the data (see chapter six for details of data collection instruments).

4.7.2   Methodology-Related Factors

This set of factors is related to teaching approach; the type of instruction; the language of instruction; and the duration of instruction.

Breen et al (2001: 472) argue that:

> any innovation in classroom practice from the adoption of a new
> technique or textbook to the implementation of a new curriculum
> has to be accommodated within the teacher's own framework of
> teaching principles.

As Strategies-based Instruction had not been practised by any of the three teacher participants in this study, it was important to be aware of any potential conflict between the teachers' teaching methodologies and SBI. Therefore their teaching principles were investigated during the pre-SBI interviews.

Strategy training can be influenced by the type of instruction adopted whether that is explicit or implicit; integrated or separate (see section 4.3 of this chapter). Strategies-based instruction, as the training programme adopted in the current study, supports the

explicit integrated strategy training approach advocated by many researchers in the field (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Graham, 1997; Cohen, 1998).

In terms of the language of instruction, explaining strategies and their applications in the foreign language at the early stages of teaching them could be quite challenging (Chamot, 1994: 333). O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 160) suggest that students of low language proficiency levels may not be capable of understanding the language associated with strategy instruction easily. In such cases, teachers may decide to use the learners' native language, given that all learners and their teacher share that same language, to introduce LLS, (Chamot et al, 1999). As the participant students, the teachers, and I all spoke Arabic as our first language, it was agreed from the outset to use it whenever necessary when explaining the applications of strategies and particularly with the lower proficiency level students.

Time constraints including the duration of the strategy instruction may have an impact on its effectiveness. Oxford (1994: 4) argues that training should, if possible, be integrated into regular FL activities over a long period of time rather than taught as a short intervention. Along the same lines Rubin (1990: 284) posits that "strategy learning requires continual and extensive training if it is to become part of a student's tool kit.". It can be argued that the introduction of strategy training or SBI in the classroom might be time-consuming; however, as LLS are intended to facilitate and enhance learner's learning, the learners are expected to move through the curriculum more expediently. This should therefore, make up for the outlay of time in training them (Cohen, 1998). Chamot (1994: 344) states that estimating the amount of time required for having students ready for independently employing the strategies they have been taught is an issue that needs to be decided on an individual basis. The duration of the SBI programme of this study was 8 weeks for all three levels (elementary, pre-intermediate, and intermediate) during which the students were given practice opportunities to apply a range of LLS to many language tasks as part of their daily lessons.

4.7.3 Learner-Related Factors

Learner-related factors for example include variables such as learner beliefs and attitudes, motivation, learners' cultural backgrounds, learners' proficiency levels, age and gender.

A glance at the literature of LLS is enough to show that a wide range of studies have been carried out with learners from different countries and from diverse cultural backgrounds. The findings of such research investigations show that differences in strategy use have been found across cultures, (Wharton, 2000; Olivares-Cuhat, 2002; Griffiths, 2003).

With regards to language proficiency level, O'Malley et al (1985), who investigated learning strategies used by beginning and intermediate students, found that intermediate students tended to use more meta-cognitive strategies than those with beginning level proficiency. Other studies suggest that females are superior to, or at least very different from, males in many social skills with females showing a greater social orientation. These findings show more frequent strategy use by females than males, especially social learning strategies (techniques involving at least one other person) (Ehrman and Oxford, 1989; Green and Oxford, 1995; Mohamed Amin, 2000).

4.8   Conclusion

Most relevant to this research study is an extensive discussion of strategy training and strategies-based instruction. This chapter has shown the importance of training learners in the applications of LLS within FL learning contexts explaining the goals of such training programmes and the roles EFL teachers may play. In addition, several models of strategy instruction have been explored (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; and Grenfell and Harris, 1999) the features of which inspired the design of the 'Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment SBIA model' used in this investigation. In conclusion, several constraints expected to have an impact on the effectiveness of FL strategy training have been considered. These include resource-related, methodology-related and learner-related factors.

5 Research Methodology

Chapter five opens with a discussion of philosophical views and the chosen research paradigm. Section 5.2 discusses 'action research' as the framework of the study. The chapter also provides an account of where the study took place; who participated in the study; and the approach taken to the ethical considerations raised by the project. Sections 5.6 and 5.7 present an overview of the research design and some of the most widely used methods of research on language learning strategies before presenting a summary of the whole chapter in section 5.8. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1: Contents of Chapter 5	
5.1	Paradigmatic Nature of the Study: Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology
5.2	Action Research: the Framework of the Study
5.3	The Research Context
5.4	The Research Sample
5.5	Ethical Considerations
5.5.1	Beneficence
5.5.2	Non-malfeasance
5.5.3	Informed Consent
5.5.4	Anonymity/confidentiality
5.6	The Research Design
5.7	The Research Methods
5.7.1	Interviews
5.7.2	Questionnaires
5.7.3	Verbal Reports
5.7.4	Learner Diaries and Journals
5.7.5	The Validity, Reliability/Trustworthiness of the Research Data
5.7.6	Generalizability and Transferability
5.7.7	Personal Bias and Objectivity
5.8	Conclusion

5.1 Paradigmatic Nature of the Study: Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology

It is significant to understand the philosophical worldview when conducting any research. Research or inquiry paradigms guide how we make decisions and carry out research investigations. Guba and Lincoln (1994: 105) define a paradigm as a "basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator". According to Guba (1990), paradigms can be characterised through their: *ontology 'What is reality?'*, *epistemology 'How do you know something?'* and *methodology 'How do you go about finding out?'*. It is commonly argued that an interrelationship exists between the ontological stance adopted by the researcher, the researcher's view of the epistemology, and the methodology and methods used (Gray, 2009). Hence, these parameters create a holistic view of how we view knowledge; how we see ourselves in relation to this knowledge and the methodological strategies we use to discover it.

Beynon-Davies (2002: 559) claims that ontology is "That branch of philosophy concerned with theories of realities". Crotty (2003: 10) describes ontology as "the study of being. It is concerned with 'what is', with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such". In other words, is there a 'real' objective world out there, or is reality constructed through human relationships? Accordingly, objectivism and constructionism are two different ontological positions that are concerned with the nature of social realities (Bryman, 2008).

Within objectivism, reality is thought to exist independently of our knowledge of it (Crotty, 2003). Based on this position, the factors that affect foreign language learning exist independently of what actors (learners, teachers, researchers) believe is the reality of it. On the other hand, constructionism does not believe that the world exists independently of our knowledge of it, but rather reality is socially and discursively constructed by human actors (Bryman, 2008). In line with this position, issues that are related to the foreign language classroom setting and its development lies within the perceptions, thoughts and feelings of key actors involved. Hence, ontological claim for this research involves both parties.

Epistemology is about 'how we know things' (Bernard, 2000; Crotty, 2003). It considers views about the most appropriate ways of enquiring into the nature of the world. Bryman (2008: 13) describes epistemology as concerning "the questions of what is or what should be regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline". There is a range

of epistemologies; however, there are three key epistemology positions underlying social science research: positivism interpretivism and realism (Flowers, 2009).

Positivism advocates that the principles and procedures of natural sciences can be used in social reality (Bryman, 2008). It is presumed that the social world exists objectively and externally and that knowledge is valid only if it is based on observations of this external reality (Blaikie, 2000; Saunders et al, 2009); hence, it should be empirically-based, rational and objective. Positivist researchers seek quantitative measures relying on surveys and experiments and statistical methods of analysis to test theory and provide material for the development of a generalisable law (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2009).

In contrast to positivism, interpretivism presumes a respect for the differences between the subject matters of social and natural sciences and, therefore, the social scientist should understand the subjective meaning of social action (Blaikie, 1993; Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006; Bryman, 2008). Interpretive researchers use qualitative methods to describe and interpret the daily lives of people through understanding their thoughts and feelings, as well as how they communicate, verbally and non-verbally (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008). Hence, differing and multiple interpretations of meaning are often reached because it is socially constructed and constantly re-constructed through individuals' experiences, memories and expectations. Since interpretive research is based on assumptions, inductive reasoning and is highly contextual and subjective, it is not widely generalisable (Saunders et al, 2007).

Realism, emerged as an alternative to positivist and interpretive research, hence, it takes aspects from both epistemological positions. In line with intepretivism, realism recognises the difference between natural and social sciences and that social reality is pre-interpreted. In common with positivist positions, realists, hold that science must be based upon values of reason, truth and validity and should therefore focus purely on facts, gathered through direct observation and experience (Blaikie, 1993). Thus, the underlying principle of realism is that real structures exist independent of human consciousness; however, that knowledge is socially created (Saunders et al, 2009).

This research study adopted a realist position and concurs with Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) who describe the realist research, from an organisational perspective, as an enquiry into the mechanisms and structures that underlie institutional forms and practices (the foreign language classroom at the chosen institution Libya), how these

emerge over time (from the beginning of the 8-week course to the end of it), how they might empower and constrain social actors (teachers, students and the action researchers), and how such forms may be critiqued and changed (encouraging the use of SBI as part of future language provision). Moreover, it is believed that realist paradigms take the view that researching from different angles and at multiple levels will all contribute to understanding since reality can exist on multiple levels (Chia, 2002). This view justifies the use of a mixed-method approach to data collection when conducting this research study

The identification of the form and nature of reality 'ontology' and the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known 'epistemology' is interconnected with 'methodology' Guba and Lincoln (1990). Methodology refers to how an enquirer goes about finding out knowledge and carrying out their research. It is the researcher's strategic approach, rather than their techniques and data analysis. Regarding the types of research design and strategies adopted, Hair et al (1995) distinguish between two main types of research: confirmatory and exploratory research. They suggest that confirmatory studies are those seeking to test and confirm a prespecified relationship, whereas exploratory studies are those which define possible relationships in only the most general form and then allow multivariate techniques to estimate a relationship.

This study can be described as a confirmatory piece of research. It is generally believed that training language learners to use strategies is effective and that there is a causal relationship between strategy use and success in language learning (Hassan et al, 2005; Hsiao and Oxford, 2002; Grenfell and Macaro, 2007). This research study aims to test the impact of an instructional programme (SBI) which develops the strategy repertoires of a group of English language learners in an original context in Libya. In other words, would the delivery of a course which used LLS provide similar results to those reported in previous studies? Furthermore, the student participants of the study are expected to already use a set of language learning strategies (subconsciously) but the research generally aims to raise the learners' awareness of these strategies and highlight the impact of strategy use on learner achievement. Moreover, most learners are bound to possess some form of learner autonomy to varying degrees but this research emphasises the relationship between autonomy and strategy use already well-established in the literature (O'Malley and Chamot 1990; Wenden 1991; Cohen 1998, 2003). Finally, introducing SBI as a teaching approach was expected to have its pedagogical

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implications. In other words, the programme was hoped to positively influence the teacher participants' professionalism as an outcome of the collaborative research conducted and teacher training undertaken during the study.

To achieve the study's aims and to address the research questions, case study strategy is adopted. Case study is a strategy that involves detailed investigation, often gathering data over time, about one or more organizations or groups within organizations (Robson, 2002). According to Yin (2009: 18), case study is defined as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context". One of the main advantages of using a case study approach is that it allows the researcher to deal with the specific details of complex social situations (Denscombe, 2010) and understand social processes in their organizational context (Dooley, 2002). It is usually used to build up a rich perspective of an entity, using different kinds of data and gathering different views, perceptions, experiences and/or ideas of diverse individuals relating to the case (Creswell, 2009; Yin, 2009).

Furthermore, a case study approach allows the use of different research techniques. Although Denscombe (2010) claims that as a method it is used in qualitative research far more than in quantitative research, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is well established in case studies (Dooley, 2002; Yin, 2009). Collecting data through multi-methods and from multiple sources lend rigour to research (Creswell, 2009). Yin (2009: 11) states that "the case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence: documents, artefacts, interviews, questionnaires and observations".

In this research study, the case study as a research methodology was adopted because it has the potential to guarantee the collection of sufficient information to allow the study's objectives to be achieved and help address its questions. In addition, as the research context required more than one data collection method (combining quantitative and qualitative data); the case study approach satisfies that requirement. Finally, case studies are by definition conducted in real world settings, and thus have a high degree of realism (Robson, 2002); hence the choice of it as a methodology is compatible with the chosen epistemological paradigm of the study.

There are several research methodologies which are related to case studies. These include:

- Experiment, or controlled experiment, which is characterized by measuring the effects of manipulating one variable on another variable and that subjects are assigned to treatments by random (Robson, 2002).

- Survey, which is the "collection of standardized information from a specific population, or some sample from one, usually, but not necessarily by means of a questionnaire or interview" (Robson, 2002).

- Ethnographic studies are considered a specialized type of case studies with focus on cultural practices or long duration studies with large amounts of participant-observer data (Klein and Myers, 1999).

- Action research, with its purpose to "influence or change some aspect of whatever is the focus of the research" (Robson, 2002), is closely related to case study. More strictly, a case study is purely observational while action research is focused on and involved in the change process. This doctoral research was conducted within an action research framework. This is explained in detail in section 5.2 of this chapter.

In conclusion, the doctoral research reported here is a confirmatory case study within a realist paradigm. The study was carried out using an action research framework and adopted a multi-methods approach to data collection (combination of quantitative and qualitative data).

5.2   Action Research: the Framework of the Study

Action Research (AR) represents a growing field in educational settings. Its chief distinguishing attribute is recognising the pragmatic requirements of educational practitioners for organized reflective inquiry into classroom instruction (Hopkins, 1985; Reason and Bradbury, 2001). It is a systematic form of enquiry designed to empower and involve all participants in the educational process (teachers, learners and other parties) with the means to improve the practices conducted within the educational experience (Elliott, 1991; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). With attention placed on the role of the teacher in strategy instruction (Cohen 1998; Grenfell and Harris 1999), significant queries concerning how strategy instruction models and approaches are actually implemented and incorporated into existing practice are raised. The development of LLS research methods to include action research approaches has helped provide answers to these queries.

Benson (2001: 187) states that: "In the classical action research model, the researcher first investigates the effects of existing practice and then investigates the effects of the same practice when one variable is changed." For the research reported here, the English language learning context of the Libyan learner participants was investigated prior to the introduction of SBI and again after implementation. In this respect, it can be claimed that the project is a classical action research model. McNiff (2002) identifies a number of basic steps of an AR process which she believes constitute an action plan. These are shown in table 5.2 and are considered the guidelines for the research reported here.

Table 5.2: Action Research Guidelines for the Research Study

McNiff (2002:12) states:	This research study involved:
We review our current practice,	Reviewing my professional context: Teacher of English as a foreign language teaching Libyan adult learners.
identify an aspect that we want to investigate,	Noticing a lack of LLS use among these learners. Asking what effect using LLS will have on them. Identifying potential impact; language improvement and learner autonomy.
imagine a way forward,	Exploring ways to encourage learners to use LLS. Considering different approaches, models and frameworks of teaching LLS.
try it out,	Implementing SBI as a chosen approach to training learners in the use of LLS during their learning of English.
and take stock of what happens.	Gathering data and documenting it.
We modify what we are doing in the light of what we have found, and continue working in this new way (try another option if the new way of working is not right).	Given the results of this study, questioning whether the participant teachers and I wish to continue implementing SBI in our future teaching contexts.

Action research makes use of a systematic cyclical approach of planning, taking action, observation, evaluation, and critical reflection prior to planning the next cycle (O'Brien, 2001; McNiff, 2002). The iterative nature of AR and the practicality of its principles and procedures as well as it being a holistic approach which allows the use of several research tools all serve to confirm that using it as a method of research could best contribute to achieving the goals this study aims for. Figure 5.1 illustrates how the stages of the action research cycle proposed for this research study correspond with the four phases of the SBIA model in addition to the research activities conducted before and after the implementation of the SBI model.
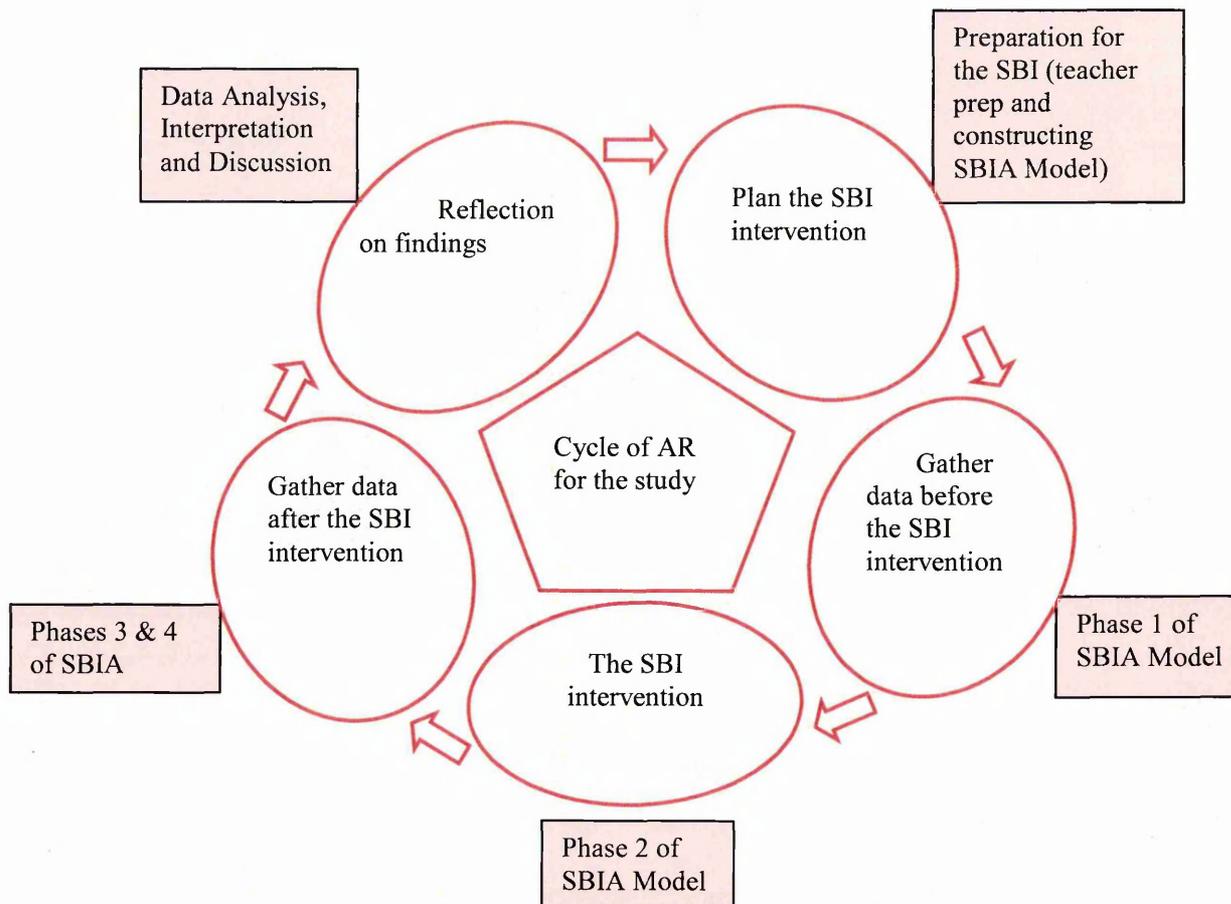
Figure 5.1:Action Research Cycle of Research Study

Benson (2001: 186) claims that: "Action research is an ideal approach and is likely to be most successful when it addresses specific questions." Hoping to realize the success mentioned by Benson, this research endeavour aims to address all three research questions. The first two questions, related to the learners; firstly, aim to find out whether SBI leads to language learning improvement (in terms of efforts and performance) and secondly, to see whether SBI is conducive to learner autonomy. Benson (2001: 2) argues that: "the best research on autonomy is often not research concerned with 'grand theory', but action research conducted by practising teachers on the specific conditions of teaching and learning". Research question 3, aims to explore the impact of SBI on the teacher participants. Moreover, implementing this research study within an action research framework is expected to have an influence on the teacher participants' practices and professional roles.

Strategies-based instruction as an approach entails that language learning strategies LLS are integrated into the core teaching material; in other words the learners are trained in the applications of LLS while learning the skills of English as a foreign language. For

this reason it seemed reasonable to consider AR as a process of enquiry through which regular instruction and data collection can be integrated. Hence, my roles as a teacher and researcher were intertwined; I was involved in teaching and implementing the phases of the research project simultaneously. Benson, (2001: 182) supports this when he asserts: "In language education, the action researcher is often a teacher acting in the role of teacher-researcher". As an ex-employee at the site of enquiry, I was considered a practitioner, and situating the study within an AR framework allowed me as a researcher to focus on the effects of my direct actions of practice as an English language instructor delivering a SBI programme.

Action research is normally implemented within a participatory community with the goal of improving the performance quality of the community or an area of concern (Hult and Lennung, 1980; Reason and Bradbury, 2001). It is a collaborative method for testing new ideas, addressing identified problems and implementing action for change. It involves direct participation in a dynamic research process, while monitoring and evaluating the effects of the researcher's actions with the aim of improving practice (Sagor, 1992; Checkland and Holwell, 1998). In relation to this study, it is argued that collaborative action research is a particularly effective method of enquiry for 'learner strategy research' since it is essentially participatory, and can involve different combinations of researchers and teachers working as pairs or groups enquiring into a common research problem (Burns, 1999).

The SBI intervention reported here engaged three Libyan teachers and can therefore be described as collaborative action research. However, a concern that could be raised is the issue of power and control in the context of the study where I as the external expert (providing knowledge on AR) am expected to collaborate with the classroom teachers. White et al (2007: 114) point out that:

> In this type of collaboration it is important that teachers
> participate as equal partners in the research endeavour, rather
> than as individuals who merely agree to carry out the plans of
> the researchers

It is believed that the relationship must be handled sensitively in order obtain a sense of equality in participation (Richardson, 1994) and that the role of the external expert "must change from the top-down provider of information to that of facilitator who establishes an atmosphere that is conducive to conversation in which all participants share their expertise." (Richardson, 1994: 198).

In this study, the teachers were partners in the CAR because they participated in the delivery of the SBI programme and in administrating the data collection methods (see section 5.5.3 of this chapter for ethical considerations). In other words their roles were intertwined. During the everyday lessons of teaching students to acquire the four skills of the language, LLS were used as the means of facilitating the learning. This was referred to in this study as 'training' to distinguish it from the actual 'teaching' of the language (see section 6.2.2.1). In addition to the roles of teacher/trainer, the participant teachers undertook the role of 'researcher' which involved gathering data during the different phases of the research project. These roles were carried out concurrently

Finally, it can be acknowledged that AR is not widely practised in Libya and accordingly a further contribution of this study is to develop new methodologies in this context. Two out of the three participant teachers had not previously performed any form of AR. The third teacher was familiar with AR as part of the requirements of a teacher-training course she previously undertook. Besides that one instant she had never practised AR during her teaching career. Therefore, conducting this project within an AR framework is hoped to encourage its use within the Libyan context.

5.3 The Research Context

The case study took place at the *Foreign Languages Centre* of a postgraduate institution in Tripoli in Libya. The centre is part of the institution and not only offers a wide range of English language courses to its own postgraduate students but to the general public as well. The English courses include academic, general, and English for specific purposes in addition to preparation classes for Cambridge ESOL Examinations such as, KET, PET, FCE, and IELTS. For the general English courses the centre operates five levels: beginner, elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate. The Foreign Languages Centre is a typical provider of English as a foreign language to adults in Libya. Having previously worked in more than four different foreign language centres both across Tripoli and Zawia, I believe that the chosen centre is very similar as a setting to the others in terms of the teaching system, the class sizes, and the teaching curricula. However, its selection was also pragmatic in that as an ex-employee at the Foreign Languages Centre, I am familiar with the setting and also access to the site was easily negotiated.

The teaching system at the research setting, the foreign languages centre, entails that two teachers share two groups of the same proficiency level. Every day there are two periods of teaching, each an hour and 45 minutes long. The pairs of teachers teach one group each and then exchange groups after a half-hour break between the two periods. Class size does not exceed 12 students in each class. The centre provides morning, afternoon and evening classes, five days a week; Sundays through Thursdays. The study was conducted with evening classes. The table below shows how the evening classes are scheduled between the teacher partners.

Period Level and Groups		Period 1 4.00 pm-5.45 pm	Break 5.45 pm- 6.15 pm	Period 2 6.15 pm -8.00 pm
Elementary/pre-intermediate/ intermediate/ upper-intermediate	Group A Approx. 12 students	Teacher 1	30 mins	Teacher 2
	Group B Approx. 12 students	Teacher 2	30 mins	Teacher 1

In terms of the syllabi, the institution relied on a variety of general English course books for adults (Student and work books) from different publishers including, Oxford University Press (e.g. New Headway and New English File), and MacMillan (e.g. Inside Out and Breakthrough Plus) supplemented by materials from Cambridge University Press (e.g. The English Vocabulary in Use series and the English Grammar in Use series). The course books used during the implementation of the study were: New English File, levels Elementary, pre-intermediate and Intermediate: Student's Book/ Workbook, by Clive Oxenden, Christina Latham-Koenig, published in 2006. The teaching methodology followed at the centre was mainly established around the principles of communicative language teaching.

5.4   The Research Sample

The investigation relied on a total population of 61 students from three different classes of learners representing three different levels of proficiency: elementary level (22 students); pre-intermediate level (19 students); and intermediate level (20 students). Several studies (Green and Oxford, 1995; Bruen, 2001; Fan, 2003) indicate that the level of proficiency has a major effect on the strategies that students use. For this study, three different levels of learning proficiency were used in order to utilize a wider array of strategies and determine any differences in strategy use between the classes. The

participants in the study were adult learners undertaking 10-week general English courses at the Foreign Languages Centre. They were all Libyan with Arabic as their first language and they were of mixed gender; 25 female students and 36 male students. Their ages were from 22 to 36 and none of the students had previously received any form of strategies-based instruction. Two students from the elementary level class left the institution after they had completed their course, which meant that only 59 students participated in phase 4 of the programme.

The teacher participants included two female teachers, teaching the elementary and the pre-intermediate level classes, and one male teacher, teaching the intermediate level class. All three teachers were Libyan nationals with between 3 to 6 years of teaching experience. None of the teachers received any training in the applications of LLS or SBI and while one of the teachers was familiar with action research, the other two teachers had not previously performed it during their teaching practice.

5.5   Ethical Considerations

The research study reported here was undertaken in accordance with a set of common standards of good practice. These were derived from the Declaration of Helsinki and the ESRC Research Ethics Framework and together they represent the ethical guiding principles used at Sheffield Hallam University (Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Policies and procedures, 2009 and 2012). The standards represent four categories which are: beneficence, non-malfeasance, informed consent and anonymity/ confidentiality. The following section discusses the ethical dimensions of the research project within this four-fold ethical framework and illustrates adherence to the research to all four categories.

5.5.1 Beneficence

All research participants including students and teachers were informed of the study's expected benefits (Punch, 1998). It was made clear that my main concern as a researcher is in the interest of the participants. All students were equally involved in the research project as there were no control and experimental groups. Therefore, any potential benefits were expected to affect all the students. This also applied to the teacher participants who were considered fellow researchers investigating a common interest in a collaborative action research endeavour. The research findings were expected to shed

light on the ways in which establishing strategy repertoires in Libyan adult learners can help to improve their language achievement and foster learner autonomy. In addition, the research study was expected to have an influence on the teacher participants' practices, and potentially on language education policies in Libya.

5.5.2 Non-malfeasance

Another ethical principle that needed consideration was non-malfeasance. Regarding this, I made every effort to make sure the institution and the participants were not exploited (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) or harmed (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992; Crang and Cook, 2007) and that they were not in any way deceived or misled in terms of who I was or what I was setting out to achieve (Bryman, 2008). My identity as a researcher gathering data for a PhD study was revealed to the institution and all participants. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995, 2007) highlight the significance of impression management and considering potential impact on fellow researchers; therefore, it was important to portray a positive image and leave a good impression as a PhD student and a researcher for future researchers who might wish to pursue research at the setting. Validation and ensuring that voice was fairly represented (Mason, 2002; Robson, 1993, 2002) was vital in the study. This was achieved by sharing the research data with all participants. For example students were shown the results of the SILL questionnaire, the strategy-based tasks and phase-4 questionnaire. In the case of the interviews, both teachers and students were invited to revise and amend the interview transcripts. This applied to the student verbal reports and student quotes from the SILL reflection sessions as well.

Another issue to consider in compliance with non-malfeasance was to ensure that the study did not disrupt the regular flow of the original course programme or obstruct the completion of the curriculum. In relation to this, a main concern of the participant teachers' was that this intervention might take up a lot of their class time and thus the prescribed curriculum would not be completed on time. Their worry was about the effect this might have on their achievement reports as teachers at the institution. However, this was resolved at the outset and carefully prepared timetables and lesson outlines were shown and discussed with the teachers for reassurance. It was also explained that they have the right to express their opinions clearly and openly if any problematic issues arose during the implementation of the study and that such issues would be discussed and addressed professionally if and when they occur.

5.5.3 Informed Consent

Prior to any research investigation, there is a need to obtain approval from the research setting and research subjects (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Robson, 2002). For this study once the appropriate setting for the research was identified, access to the institution's Foreign Languages Centre, (and thus to the student and teacher participants) was negotiated. Having worked as a part-time EFL teacher at the centre of the chosen institution, no difficulties were encountered when seeking access to the setting. My involvement with the centre as a practitioner-researcher was discussed with and approved by the Head of the Foreign Languages Centre.

Following this, an important first step was to make it clear to both students and teachers that their participation in the study is voluntary and that their refusal to participate would have no adverse consequences on their (academic progress in the case of the students) and (teaching practices in the case of the teachers). They were also informed that they have the right to withdraw at any time and withhold any information (Oppenheim, 1992; Vaus, 2001).

The Research Ethics Framework of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) (2005:1) states that: "…research staff and subjects must be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research…" In line with that, I can confirm that I clearly explained to the institution and to all participants; students and teachers, the purpose of the research, the research process, the feedback they would receive, and that the collected data would be disseminated through my PhD thesis; potential conference papers and presentations; and other research publications.

Before embarking on the intended programme, I provided a statement for the students of each class (delivered both orally and as written hand-outs) to explain what the research study involved, clarify participant rights and obtain consent. This researcher statement clearly indicated that the students' consent is inferred from their participation in the data collection methods. (See Appendix B for researcher's statement and an explanation of the research study and participant rights and consent.)

The students' permission to take part was sought and willingly given by all 61 students during the first week of project implementation. During this week there were further talks on the research details, the strategy training they were expected to undergo and the data collection methods to be used including questionnaires, interviews and verbal

protocols. The students' actual participation in the research instruments (completing and returning the questionnaires, performing the language tasks while recording verbal reports, participating in the reflection sessions and attending the interviews) confirmed their consent in this study. Furthermore, for each of these instruments mentioned here, a cover sheet/statement was provided explaining the aim of it, what it involved and once again clearly indicating that consent is inferred from participating in that particular instrument.

One of the difficulties of the study was to always be alert to ethical considerations when it came to informing the student participants of their roles in the study and in performing any tasks whether it was for research purposes (for data collection) or for fulfilling part of the course requirements. In many cases the language tasks served both purposes. This was due to the nature of action research as the method of enquiry in this study which involves data collection during the normal teaching/learning process. All the students were aware that they would be clearly informed of the purpose of any task or test.

Prior to obtaining consent from the three prospective teacher participants it was important for them to understand the purpose of the research study and the nature and extent of their participation. Accordingly, they were provided with an overview of the project to be implemented. The nature of training they were expected to receive with regards to awareness-raising of the value of LLS and the phases of the SBIA model to be executed were generally discussed with each of the teachers. As a Collaborative Action Research (CAR) project it was important not only to explain to the teachers the theoretical foundations and practical procedures of CAR but also to treat them as equal partners (co-teachers/co-researchers) in the planned intervention (White et al, 2007). Further contact with each of the teachers was made when the project implementation was due and fieldwork arrangements were finalized.

The first formal point of contact with each of the class teachers was two weeks before the beginning of each course. At that time each teacher was provided with a written form of the pre-SBI teacher interview which all three teachers opted to answer electronically on the computers at the institution. The cover sheet of the pre-SBI interview, in addition to instructions on the interview, clearly stated my identity and some details on the whole study and its aims. It was also an invitation for the teachers' participation as co-researchers. Some bullet points explaining their formal rights as

participants and a check list confirming their understanding of research details were provided (see cover sheet of the pre-SBI interview in Appendix L).

The three class teachers agreed to participate in the study voluntarily. Each of the teachers willingly participated in a pre-SBI and post-SBI interview as well as in the preparation sessions and delivery of SBI. The teachers' commitments and busy schedules were highly respected and meetings and interviews were arranged to fit into their daily timetables. Ethically, my colleagues' clear understanding of their exact roles in the research study was extremely important. Therefore, prior to the implementation of each phase of the SBIA model, their exact roles and involvement were explained in further detail and their consent was confirmed once again.

Note that the process explained above and the steps involved were performed with each of the class teachers on a one-to-one level as the language courses for each of the three proficiency levels ran at different times (see Table 5.4 in this chapter).

5.5.4 Anonymity/confidentiality

It was important to ensure that the institution and the research participants clearly understood their right to anonymity (Oppenheim, 1992; Vaus, 2001). During the implementation of the project, the students were asked to write their names on the questionnaire sheets and in the case of verbal reporting and in the interviews their names were also known to the researcher. However, they were clearly told that the purpose of this was either for further discussions in class; for validation; or simply to inform them of their results. In the writing up of the thesis their names would not be revealed and any data that would allow individuals to be identified would not be reported unless consent is given by them. This condition also applied to the teachers and the institution in general. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality during the reporting of the data, the students were referred to as follows:

Table 5.3: Student Participants' Codes and References

The elementary class level students as:	*ES1, ES2, and ES3 up to ES22*
The pre-intermediate class level students as:	*PS1, PS2, and PS3 up to PS19*
The intermediate class level students as:	*IS1, IS2, and IS3 up to IS20*

In presenting extracts from the students' responses in the SILL reflection sessions, verbal reports and in the interviews, for purposes of clarity, each extract is identifiable by an ID code. The first letter in the code stands for the learner level; E for elementary, P for pre-intermediate and I for intermediate. The second letter S stands for student and the third number stands for the student's number in the class (assigned randomly and at the start of the programme and not according to alphabetical order). IS18, for example, denotes student number 18 from the intermediate level class.

The teachers were associated with the class level they were teaching e.g. the elementary teacher, the pre-intermediate teacher, the intermediate teacher, and since there were other teachers teaching the same proficiency level at the institution, their identities as individuals would not be revealed. However, for ease of report they were referred to by using pseudonyms instead of their real names; Salma (the elementary class teacher), Mariam (the pre-intermediate class teacher) and Mohamed (the intermediate class teacher). Regarding the anonymity of the chosen institution, although it has been mentioned that I have previously worked at the Foreign Languages Centre of the institution, it remains unrecognizable as I have also worked as an EFL teacher at several other language centres across Tripoli.

5.6   The Research Design

To implement the strategies-based instruction approach, all three classes followed the four phases of *the Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment Model (SBIA)* over a period of 8 weeks (see details of the model and its four phases presented in chapter six). This model was specifically designed for the current investigation and was implemented with the collaboration of three class teachers each teaching a different level of learners. The study took the form of collaborative action research (CAR) as it is a particularly effective approach for learner strategy research (Burns, 1999; Benson, 2001).CAR allowed the participant practitioners to collaborate in the delivery of the curriculum as well as in the research process. Each of the class teachers was provided with the necessary teaching skills for this approach through several preparation sessions I delivered myself. The teacher preparation and SBIA model were implemented with the classes consecutively rather than simultaneously i.e. at different start and end dates. All three teachers were interviewed before the commencement of the study and on completion of the study. Table 5.4 shows the timelines of the research cycle.

Research Cycle			
	Elementary Level	**Pre-intermediate Level**	**Intermediate Level**
Actual course duration	8 weeks *	10 weeks	10 weeks
Start of course	5th July 2008	5th Dec 2009	27th Feb 2010
End of course	27th Aug 2008 30th& 31st Aug exam days	10th Feb 2010 13th&14th Feb exam days	5th May 2010 8th& 9th May exam days
Duration for SBI study	8 weeks	8 weeks	8weeks
Number of participant teachers in CAR and SBI preparation sessions and SBI delivery	1	1	1
Teachers participating in pre-SBI interview and post-SBI interview And dates of interviews	1 Pre-SBI Inter: 22nd June 2008 Post-SBI Inter:8th Nov 2009	1 Pre-SBI Inter: 23^{rd}Nov 2009 Post-SBI Inter:16th May 2010	1 Pre-SBI Inter: 14th Feb 2010 Post-SBI Inter: 8th Aug 2010
Teacher preparation sessions	2 weeks before the start of course & throughout the 8-week study	2 weeks before the start of course & throughout the 8-week study	2 weeks before the start of course & throughout the 8-week study
Implementation of phase 1 of SBIA (SILL1, SILL1 Reflection Sessions, Language Tasks1 + Verbal Reports1)	During week 1 of 8-week study	During week 1 of 8-week study	During week 1 of 8-week study
Number of students participating in phase 1 of SBIA	22	19	20
Implementation of phase 2 of SBIA	During weeks 2-7 of 8-week study	During weeks 2-7 of 8-week study	During weeks 2-7 of 8-week study
Number of students participating in phase 2 of SBIA	22	19	20
Implementation of phase 3 of SBIA (SILL2, SILL2 Reflection Sessions, Language Tasks2 + Verbal Reports2)	During week 8 of 8-week study	During week 8 of 8-week study	During week 8 of 8-week study
Number of students participating in phase 3 of SBIA	22	19	20
Implementation of phase 4 of SBIA * (Semi-structured Interview and Questionnaire)	After participant students had taken two new courses; the next two levels up which are: Pre-intermediate and Intermediate	After participant students had taken new course; the next level up which is: Intermediate	After participant students had taken new course; the next level up which is: Upper-Intermediate
Implementation dates for phase 4	5th & 7th Nov 2009	13th & 15th May 2010	5th & 7th Aug 2010
Number of students participating in the Interview	6	6	6
Number of students participating in phase 4 questionnaire	20*	19	20
Notes	*The pre-intermediate and intermediate level classes each had a 10-week course whereas the elementary level for administrative reasons only had 8 weeks of duration. For this reason implementing the phases of the SBIA with the pre-intermediate and intermediate level classes did not start until week three to ensure that all three level classes were allowed equal periods for carrying out the phases. *The first three phases were performed during the eight-week period whereas phase 4; Strategy Transfer and Autonomous Learning Phase was implemented after the course had ended. *Two students from the elementary level class withdrew after they had completed their course. They were no longer students at the institution. This meant that only the 20 remaining students took part in phase 4 which was not carried out during the period of that course.		

Table 5.4: Research Cycle and Timelines of Phases of SBIA Model

5.7   The Research Methods

Over the last 30 years, language researchers have been on the quest of providing and developing instruments and methods that will help gather data on LLS and capture a thorough understanding of learners' strategy use (Cohen and Macaro, 2007). These research tools include interviews, questionnaires, verbal reports, and diaries and journals.

5.7.1   Interviews

A qualitative data collection technique which can be effectively used to describe learner strategies is interviews. Generally, Gay and Airasian (2003: 209) define the interview as "a purposeful interaction between two or more people focused on one person trying to get information from the other person" more specifically, Gass and Mackey (2007: 148) describe interviews as "another survey-based method of eliciting L2 data".

Interviews are "probably the most widely employed method in qualitative research" (Bryman, 2008: 436) and are of three different types depending on "the rigidity with regard to presentational structure" (Berg, 2009: 104). At one end of the spectrum is the structured interview which consists of a specific set of questions which are to be answered in a set order. Because questions are often fixed in nature with set response categories the answers can be coded and processed quickly. Hence, this type of interview can be used with quantitative research (Denscombe, 2010). Unstructured interviews, placed at the other end of the spectrum, require respondents to answer and discuss the given questions openly through conversation with minimal guidance from the interviewer (Bryman, 2008).

Half way on the spectrum are semi-structured interviews which are the most commonly used in educational research. These consist of questions which allow room for elaboration on the part of the interviewee and allow interviewers to "probe far beyond the answers to their prepared standardized questions." (Berg, 2009: 107) and move from the specific questions to wider issues according to the way the interview proceeds (Denscombe, 2010). A structured interview was used with the teachers before SBI including yes/no type questions (see Pre-SBI teacher Interview in Appendix M). The other type of interview chosen for the research reported here, with both student and teacher participants after the implementation of SBI was semi-structured interviews. The data generated from the student interviews were mainly used (in addition to other data sets) to address the first

two research questions while data from the teacher interviews were mainly used to address research question three of the study (see section 1.5). Details of the interviews used in the study will be discussed in chapter six (see section 6.2.4.1).

5.7.2 Questionnaires

One of the most efficient and frequently used instruments of investigating LLS is through questionnaires. Nunan (1992: 143) believes that questionnaires enable the researcher to collect data that are more amenable to quantification than discourse data such as freeform field notes. While not providing detailed information on individual learners as would interviews, questionnaires have potential for testing and generating hypotheses because they can be used to collect data on large numbers of language learners. They can also be administered within a short period of time and can be statistically analysed because of their structured form (Bell, 1999/2010).

Oxford's (1990: 293-300) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), as documented in the literature, is probably one of the most well-known questionnaires of learner strategy assessment. There are two versions of the SILL: one version is for native speakers of English (80 items) and another, which was used in this study, is for EFL/ESL learners (50 items) (see Appendix C for details of this inventory). Each item represents a certain strategy and is in the form of a statement saying "I do..." e.g. "I say or write new English words several times". As pointed out by Cohen (1998: 117), "These strategies are not linked to any specific task, but rather represent strategies that the learner could use throughout the language learning process". Students respond on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never or almost never true of me) to 5 (Always or almost always true of me). The students' self-ratings indicate frequency of use of strategy type along each category, six in all (based on Oxford's LLS classification of direct and indirect strategies). In other words, the SILL allows teachers and students to understand which groups of strategies they use the most in learning English: (1)'high usage' (3.5–5.0), (2) 'medium usage' (2.5–3.4), and (3) 'low usage' (1.0–2.4) (Oxford, 1990: 293-300). The underlying assumption associated with the SILL is as Cohen (1998: 121) asserted: "more reported use of all strategies included in the questionnaire is inherently more beneficial for language learning than less reported use of them".

The SILL was used in this study at different points of time and for different purposes: at the beginning of the SBI programme to identify the students' strategy use (diagnostic

purpose) and at the end of the SBI programme to identify any increase of strategy use after training students in the applications of LLS (assessment/evaluative purpose) (see chapter six sections 6.2.1.1 and 6.2.3.1). The SILL was also used as an indicator for learner autonomy; drawing on Dickinson (1993) and Benson (2001) (see section 3.4 in chapter three).

In addition to the SILL, another questionnaire was specifically devised and administrated during the last phase of the SBI programme, the Strategy Transfer and Autonomous Phase. Cohen (1998: 28) argues that: "Sometimes the data from semi-structured and unstructured instruments can be used effectively to identify dimensions that can then be used profitably in structured interviews and questionnaires." This was the case in the current study during phase 4 of the SBI programme. A semi-structured interview was initially devised and administered with 18 student participants out of a total of 59 students (6 from each class level). However, it was found that data from the interviews revealed elements that could be used to construct a questionnaire. Although the decision to construct and use a questionnaire was not planned for, it was seen a rational choice during the investigation. The rationale behind this was to administer an instrument that could uniformly be used with all student participants with no exclusion and to obtain quantitative data that could support data from the interviews. Furthermore, the questionnaire (the post-SBI questionnaire) allowed for the integration of some questions which were specifically used to indicate learner autonomy in order to help address research question three of the study. Further details on the post-SBI questionnaire used in phase 4 of the programme will be provided in chapter six (see section 6.2.4.2).

5.7.3 Verbal Reports

Verbal reports have been found to be very efficient in capturing a deeper insight into learners' LLS and were therefore chosen for data collection in this research study. Cohen, (1998:34) strongly argues that: "verbal report measures provide a more viable - perhaps the most viable - means of obtaining empirical evidence as to strategy use than do other means." Anderson and Vandergrift (1996: 18) concur with the argument stating that verbal reports provide a "window into the often hidden processes that language learners use to accomplish their purposes in the second language."

Verbal reports, also known in the literature as think-aloud protocols (Chamot, 2004), are generally used to investigate what learners do when they are performing language

activities in order to develop some understanding of their mental processing. Verbal protocols have been used widely in psychological research, and were originally grounded in information processing approaches to cognition (Ericsson and Simon, 1980/1984/1993). According to Ericsson and Simon (1980) verbal reports or what they refer to as 'verbalization' is of two types: concurrent verbalization (equivalent to introspective verbalization) and retrospective verbalization. With introspective verbal reports learners are instructed to perform a language activity and asked to describe their thoughts before and while working on it (Ericsson, 2006). This type of protocol is commonly used with reading and writing activities. Because introspective verbal reporting involves a spoken response during the performance of the task, they are not appropriate for use with listening or speaking tasks. To avoid conflict with the communicative nature of such activities, retrospective verbal reports can be used. With these, learners are asked to think back at what they did to help them perform language tasks. Retrospective protocols attempt to tap information available in the learners' short term memory (Jourdenais, 2001). As the focus of the study involved investigating learner strategy use in all four language skills, both introspective and retrospective verbal protocols were used.

Verbal protocols involve intervention on the part of the researcher/teacher as they may prompt with open-ended questions such as: "How are you going to approach this task? What are you thinking right now? Why did you stop at this moment?" In addition to note-taking, recording the verbal reports is recommended to capture all data provided. Recordings are then analysed for evidence of learning strategies.

Like any other research tool, verbal reports have their shortcomings. For example, learners may not report truthfully and provide responses that reflect what should be done rather than what they actually do to please the researcher or to give a good impression about their abilities. To prevent this, at the beginning and throughout the different stages of the SBI programme learners were reminded of the significance of their candid responses not just with verbal reports but with all the other research tools used. Another disadvantage of verbal report is the process of interrupting students (by questions and prompts from researcher) to report on their thoughts which may change the nature of the thinking and give rise to strategic processing which otherwise might not occur (O'Malley et al, 1989) however, this did not raise any problems with the student participants of this study. In other cases learners may not remember their thinking processes especially when using retrospective reports. Cohen (1998) points out that the bulk of forgetting occurs

right after the mental event. Therefore, the data from the immediate retrospection may be more complete than the data from delayed retrospection. For this reason, immediate retrospection was used in the context of this study as it was thought that students will be more likely to remember and to report accurately if little time has elapsed.

Despite these limitations, research has demonstrated that verbal reports are a valuable and a thoroughly reliable source of information about cognitive processes if they are elicited with care and interpreted with full understanding of the circumstances under which they were obtained (Pressley and Afflerbach, 1995). And for the research reported here, verbal reports were not intended to replace other research methods but rather complement them as all methods have their strengths and limitations (Cohen, 1998).

5.7.4 Learner Diaries and Journals

In an effort to collect data on LLS over a period of time, researchers have explored the use of learner diaries and journals. While diaries are described as 'first-person journals' (Bailey and Ochsner, 1983), journals involve the reception of comments and feedback from the reader also known in the field of SLA as dialogue journals. Both tools involve learners' written descriptions about their own learning experiences and their approaches to solving language problems (see, for example, Carson and Longhini, 2002).

As with other self-descriptive techniques, learners may provide inaccurate descriptions of their learning strategies or may claim to use strategies that they actually do not use. Yet, they can be used as a way to help students develop autonomy by raising awareness of their own learning processes and strategies (Rubin, 2003). Therefore, learner diaries were initially proposed to be used as an instrument of data collection to serve a dual purpose: gathering data on LLS and contributing to the development of learner autonomy.

During the implementation of the SBI programme with the first group of students (Elementary level class), some students were asked to keep diaries in which they would write down notes (even in their first language, Arabic) about their language learning progress reflecting any strategies they use independently. These were to be collected and analysed. Despite the encouragement to try them out, learners were not excited or confident about using them. Generally, Libyan learners are not accustomed to using learner diaries as tools for learning. So this instrument was eliminated on the basis of student unfamiliarity with it for cultural reasons. Furthermore, the lack of using diaries

during the students' previous learning experiences meant considerable efforts were to be exerted into training the learners in its use. O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 91) point out that: "Most data collection techniques for investigating learning strategies do not require prior training of informants" they add that: "part of the problem of obtaining adequate samples of strategies with diaries may be incomplete training of the informant so that the person is uncertain what to report, how often to report, and how much to report."

There was also the fact that the use of diaries was thought to be too time-consuming for the students given that they already had other commitments towards the course they were undertaking at the time of the research. Nevertheless, as Grenfell and Harris (1999: 54) have so aptly stated: "We work with what we can get, which, despite the limitations, provides food for thought". Accordingly, another data collection tool was needed to complete the gathering of data of the final phase of the SBI programme with the elementary level students and also with the other two classes. Hence, a semi-structured interview and a questionnaire were constructed and administrated (see sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2 above).

5.7.5 The Validity, Reliability/ Trustworthiness of the Research Data

In order to overcome the limitations and disadvantages of each data collection method, I chose to adopt more than one method following a mixed-method approach to data collection. Johnson et al (2007: 129) define the mixed methods approach as:

> An intellectual and practical synthesis based on qualitative and quantitative research. It...offers a powerful third paradigm choice that often will provide the most informative, complete, balanced and useful research results.

Pursuing this approach was believed to help provide adequate information on LLS and learner autonomy and accordingly construct a stronger foundation of data. Cohen et al (2000: 112) note that such a technique attempts to map out, or explain more fully, the richness or complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint, and in so doing, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data. Therefore, applying quantitative (SILL and post-SBI questionnaire) and qualitative measures (verbal reports, SILL discussions and semi-structured interviews with both learners and teachers) to this study provide an effective way to reinforce the credibility of the research findings and strengthen the internal validity of this research study. Many researchers like Sapsford

and Jupp (1996) agree with this approach to data collection; they see it as a process of establishing the truthfulness of an event or result by cross-checking with other sources. Hopkins (1993: 155) asserts that: "Each data source gives information of a different type which usually serves to complement and provide a check on the others". Furthermore, validity of findings is likely to be enhanced by counteracting and neutralising inherent biases in methods and other sources and capitalising on inherent method strengths (Green et al, 1989; Creswell, 2009). In this multi-method approach to research design, qualitative and quantitative findings complemented and clarified each other (Bryman, 2008) to minimise threats to validity.

With regards to the quantitative data, Oxford's (1990: 293-300) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), as documented in the literature, is probably one of the most well-known questionnaires of learner strategy assessment. As an instrument which has been checked for reliability and validated (Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995), it has been used in many research studies all around the world (see Cohen, Weaver and Li, 1998; Wharton, 2000; Olivares-Cuhat, 2002).

In order to test whether there was a significant difference between the students' scores in Tasks 1 and their scores in Tasks 2, across the four skills; t-test was calculated. The traditionally accepted P-value for something to be significant is $P < 0.05$. So if there is less than a 5% chance that two sets of scores came from the same group, then it is considered a significant difference between the two sets.

5.7.6 Generalizability and Transferability

Generalizability refers to the extent to which findings from a study apply to a wider population while transferability refers to the different contexts and situations where we believe or speculate our results are most likely to be relevant and applicable.

There can be no claims for the generalizability and transferability of the findings from this research due to its nature as a case study which is context-bound. In other words the sample is not random; the study describes the impact of SBI on Libyan EFL learners in a specific context. Moreover, the small number of participants limits its transferability. The sample size of 61 (*59) students cannot be considered representative of the whole Libyan student population. Due to time and access constraints, it was based on only three EFL classrooms in a foreign languages centre in Tripoli, Libya. As such its

findings may not apply in other EFL contexts (e.g. schools and universities) or where the target language is for other purposes such as ESP/EAP. To be more confident about the generalizability of the findings, future research would need to involve a larger sample and within other EFL contexts.

Nevertheless, the results obtained from the sample in this study can provide some useful insights in encouraging the use of language learning strategies among EFL Libyan learners in similar contexts. This study's findings can indicate similar trends for other EFL classrooms on a case-by-case basis because of its internal generalization (Lynch, 1996; Mason, 2002). Internal generalization was achieved through the multi-method approach to data collection and interpretation of the data and also the careful description of the context in which the students were operating (Lynch, 1996). I attempted to provide a conscientious representation of the research and its interpretations in order to maximize the accuracy of any transfer and replication attempts.

Another potential limit to the study's transferability is that only three teachers participated in the CAR and in delivering the SBI programme to the selected class students. Although this might seem like a limitation to the study, it was a step towards encouraging more teachers to participate in similar programmes and apply action research as a method of enquiry.

Furthermore, the fact that the study is an action research project limits the extent to which claims to generalizability could be considered appropriate. For example, Vockell and Asher (1996: 10) believe that action research "is more concerned with specific classes and programs and less concerned with generalized conclusions about other classes and programs." However, it can be argued that the power of AR is not in its generalizability but in the relevance of the findings to the researchers and all other participants of the study so long as there is a productive outcome or a solution to a certain problem (Mills, 2011). An AR project in the form of a planned intervention can be implemented in another context, not necessarily with the aim of achieving similar results, but potentially to understand the new context or to draw comparisons between the two contexts.

It might be worth noting that the data collection for this study was not affected by the events in Libya (revolution against Gaddafi regime) as that part of the research cycle was completed before the events from February 2011. Nevertheless, consideration must still be given as to whether the end result of this work could/could not be implemented

in similar contexts (with other case studies) in future due to the political change Libya is expected to undergo following 2011. According to my knowledge, and based on recent contact with staff members in the chosen institution, it can be said that no substantial changes have taken place regarding the English language teaching system in terms of the taught courses, class sizes, the set curricula, the time allocated for teaching, and the distribution of teachers to classes. In response to whether there would be any significant changes to any of their policies regarding ELT in current times or in the near future, they believe that change (if any) is part of their regular improvement programmes and not necessarily related to government impositions/proposals. Therefore, drawing on the findings of this research study in an attempt to implement it in similar scenarios is plausible.

5.7.7 Personal Bias and Objectivity

Objectivity remains difficult to maintain in any piece of research despite the method of enquiry used. However, it is a particular challenge in relation to qualitative data and action research given the direct and intimate involvement with the research participants (Mills, 2011). Because I was also the co-teacher of the selected classes and worked closely with the student participants, the impact I had on the study must be acknowledged. Although every effort was made to remind the students to give their true and honest perceptions in the implementations of the research instruments used, the validity of the students' views and perceptions cannot be altogether established; there is always a concern about the effect of 'pleasing the teacher'.

The issue of researcher expectancy and enthusiasm towards the intervention must also be acknowledged. When designing and co-teaching the course, I was keen for it to be a success, and both the students and the co-teachers were aware of my expectancy of SBI as they were informed of its aims and what was hoped to be achieved. The nature of the programme entailed the students and teachers' practice with the different sets of strategies along with explanation of the purpose and significance of each strategy. It required them to be constantly reminded of these, which may have seemed to appear as over-enthusiasm rather than for research purposes.

Another difficulty was to always be alert to ethical considerations when informing the participants of their roles in the study and whether performing a task was for research

purposes (for data collection) or for fulfilling part of the course requirements, particularly as many of the language tasks served both purposes.

A step towards minimizing personal bias in the findings was to ensure that the AR project was conducted in a systematic and disciplined manner. For example, the intervention was carefully planned and all methods and instruments were identified from the outset. In addition, it was important to draw a clear cut line between what has been identified as the research questions and what beliefs and presuppositions I might hold. Moreover, the role of the three class teachers as co-researchers helped reduce personal impact when collecting the research data.

5.8   Conclusion

This chapter began by presenting an overview of the paradigmatic nature of the study. Section 5.2 discussed how action research, as a systematic form of enquiry designed to improve educational practices (Elliott, 1991; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006), was the research approach chosen to conduct the research programme. Following this, an overview of the research context, sample, and research ethics considered in the study were provided. The research design was then presented in section 5.6 of the chapter. Finally, some of the methods used to gather data on LLS have been critically reviewed. For example, Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was believed to be appropriate for gathering data on LLS in addition to the use of verbal report, a semi-structured interview and a post-course questionnaire.

6 Research Design, Implementation and Approaches to Data Analysis

The chapter provides an outline of how the research data was collected by preparing for the Strategies-based Instruction (SBI) and developing the Strategies-based Instructional and Assessment (SBIA) model. Implementing the four phases of the SBIA model and the data collection methods is discussed in section 6.2 of the chapter. The chapter concludes with an explanation of how the data were organised and analysed. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 6.1:

Table 6.1: Contents of Chapter 6	
6.1	Preparing for the Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI)
6.1.1	The Researcher's Preparation for the SBI
6.1.2	Developing the Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment (SBIA) Model
6.1.3	Preparation of the Strategy Training Material
6.1.4	Teacher Preparation and SBI
6.2	Implementing the (SBIA) Model
6.2.1	Phase One: Strategy Identification
6.2.1.1	Administrating the SILL 1 and SILL 1 Reflection Sessions
6.2.1.2	Tasks 1 and Verbal Reports 1
6.2.2	Phase Two: Strategy Training
6.2.2.1	The Teacher's Role
6.2.2.2	The Student's Role
6.2.3	Phase Three: Strategy Assessment
6.2.3.1	Administering the SILL 2 and SILL 2 Reflection Sessions
6.2.3.2	Tasks 2 and Verbal Reports 2
6.2.3.3	Student Strategy Reflection Form
6.2.4	Phase Four: Strategy Transfer and Autonomous Learning
6.2.4.1	The Post-SBI Interview
6.2.4.2	The Post-SBI Questionnaire
6.3	Data Organisation and Analysis Overview
6.3.1	Data Organisation and Analysis of Qualitative Data
6.3.1.1	Content Analysis
6.3.1.2	Approaches to Content Analysis
6.3.1.3	Phases of Content Analysis
6.3.2	Data Organisation and Analysis of Quantitative Data
6.4	Conclusion

6.1 Preparing for the Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI) Programme

Before embarking on the SBI programme, and having personally prepared for the intervention, several actions were taken. Firstly, a model of delivery was constructed. This was known in the study as the Strategies-based Instructional and Assessment Model (SBIA). It was a phased model used to systematically gather data for the research study while delivering the course content. Secondly, materials for both teaching and data collection were developed. Finally, preparing for the SBI involved developing each of the participant teachers' skills in order to deliver the intended programme in collaboration with myself.

6.1.1 The Researcher's Preparation for the SBI Programme

In terms of personal preparation for the SBI to be carried out in Libya, no form of formal training was undertaken. However, I did not set off at random but rather equipped myself with several actions:

- I carried out extensive reading about the theoretical and research contexts in which strategy training has developed. This was twofold as it served research purposes as well as self-training. It helped provide me with a strong foundation upon which I was able to examine different sets of LLS at work and descriptions of some actual strategy training projects showing how strategy training exercises can be incorporated into regular classroom activities. Consulting this literature largely fed into my literature review chapters and also presented me with an array of practical suggestions of how to develop an instructional and data collection model to be used in this study.

- I wanted to intersperse the theoretical underpinnings of strategy training with the practical applications, so I accessed and watched a number of online lessons conducted by teachers who have either undergone strategy training programmes or who regularly provide SBI in their classrooms. These were especially helpful in providing demonstrations of explicit strategy instruction for students in authentic teaching/learning contexts. They enabled me to plan and construct my own lessons and presentations for both the students and teachers participating in the study. An example of such type of lessons can be found at:
  http://www.carla.umn.edu/strategies/video/strategies.html

- For practical exercises, I referred to the suggestions put forth by Oxford (1990: 311-330) Chamot et al (1999) and Scharle and Sazbo (2000). Using and adapting some of this material was very beneficial to the material preparation stage of the study.

- Having experimented with SBI in my teaching in the past, the idea of how to embed strategies into the existing curriculum is not entirely new to me. For the current study, I managed to obtain the course material to be used early on. I studied the material and highlighted all the strategies relevant to the SBI. Further activities from external material were embedded throughout the student textbooks and exercise books.

- In terms of research skills and knowledge of data collection methods, these were previously acquired whilst studying towards my Master's degree. However, I enhanced my knowledge of how to conduct research methods, particularly interviews, during a qualitative research module offered by Sheffield Hallam University as one of the modules for postgraduate and research students.

Despite not participating in any training programmes, following these steps has greatly assisted in the management of the research process and the implementation of the SBI intervention.

6.1.2 Developing the Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment (SBIA) Model

Several instructional models of LLS in second language contexts have been developed over the last two decades to guide the implementation of training programmes. For the current research, I devised my own model which was not only a strategy instructional model used to instruct learners in the use of strategies, but also a tool that was used as the main method of investigation at the English language learning setting in Libya. Its structure and features are similar to some of the instructional models reviewed in chapter four (see section 4.3 for strategy models of Oxford, 1990; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Grenfell and Harris, 1999) but it was adapted to clearly define the actions to be carried out according to a specific order of implementation.

The model, which I simply named the Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment (SBIA) Model, comprises of four main phases (see figure 6.1).The phases were carefully assembled to suit the teaching-learning context in which my colleagues (the three participating teachers) and I were to be working. It was devised to help achieve the aims

of the study in a sequential manner, addressing the key questions of the research. It should be stressed here that the purpose of each phase of the SBIA model was twofold. There was the original purpose of the phase (explained in detail in Table 6.3 of this chapter) in addition to the research purpose behind it which was gathering the data for measurement and analysis.

1. Strategy Identification Phase
- SILL 1 and SILL 1 Refelection Sessions
- Tasks 1 and Verbal Reports 1

2. Strategy Training Phase
- Student's Role
- Teacher's Role

3. Strategy Assessment Phase
- SILL 2 and SILL 2 Refelection Sessions
- Tasks 2 and Verbal Reports 2

4. Strategy Transfer and Autonomous Learning Phase
- Post-SBI Interveiw
- Post-SBI Questionnaire

Figure 6.1: Phases of the SBIA Model

The SBIA model suggests a multi-method approach to data collection and analysis as each of its four phases encompasses a number of tools and techniques of measurement and data collection. It utilizes Oxford's (1989) Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL) on a pre/post testing basis in phases 1 and 3 of the SBIA model. In addition, a number of language tasks across all four skills were performed by the student participants and used in combination with verbal protocols. These were also used on a pre/post testing basis in phases 1 and 3. Finally, a semi-structured post-SBI interview and a Post-SBI questionnaire were used in phase 4 of the model.

6.1.3   Preparation of Strategy Training Material

The course books selected for the courses consisted of modules which were to be completed within a specific timeframe and it was therefore important to have well-organised material ready to be used by the students in phase 2, the Strategy Training

Phase, of the SBIA. This would allow students opportunities to practice with a wide range of LLS without falling behind in the prescribed curriculum. The course materials for the three participant classes were therefore obtained from the institution before the courses started so that existing LLS could be identified and additional LLS embedded throughout the curriculum. The material was carefully prepared by tailoring the strategies to particular tasks and maintaining a balance in the number of strategies to be used with each of the four skills. This strategy–embedded and strategy–oriented material was also used with the teachers during their preparation sessions and the strategy-based tasks were discussed with the teachers as they themselves were to be directly engaged in explaining and modelling the strategies used for performing them. The tasks used in phases 1 and 3 for pre-post testing purposes were carefully selected and developed to allow room for verbal reporting. In addition to developing the teaching material, preparing the data collection material for the SBI programme was essential. This involved making copies of Oxford's SILL used in phases 1 and 3 and constructing a post-SBI interview and post-SBI questionnaire used in phase 4 of the SBIA model.

6.1.4   Teacher Preparation and SBI

For this research study, I was paired with three participant teachers teaching three different levels and at different course dates. The teacher participants included two female teachers (Salma and Mariam) and one male (Mohamed), all three of whom were Libyan nationals (see table 6.2 below).

Table 6.2: Teaching Timetable at the Foreign Languages Centre

Level and Groups / Period	Period	Period 1 4.00 pm-5.45 pm	Break 5.45 pm-6.15 pm	Period 2 6.15 pm -8.00 pm
Elementary 22 students 05/07/08 to 27/08/08	Group A 11 students	Fatma		Salma
	Group B 11 students	Salma*		Fatma
Pre-intermediate 19 students 05/12/09 to 10/02/10	Group A 9 students	Fatma		Mariam
	Group B 10 students	Mariam*		Fatma
Intermediate 20 students 27/02/10 to 05/05/10	Group A 10 students	Fatma		Mohamed
	Group B 10 students	Mohamed*		Fatma

* To ensure anonymity/ confidentiality, teachers' names apart from mine (Fatma) are pseudonyms

During the different periods of time each of the three teacher participants and I were involved in delivering the prescribed curriculum while implementing SBI by following the four phases of the SBIA Model. The different phases of the model included the actual training of the learners in the applications of LLS as well as gathering data needed for this research study via questionnaires, verbal reports, discussions and interviews.

Teacher preparation began with a pre-SBI interview focused on three key themes: knowledge and perceptions of LLS and SBI in general; teaching principles/ methodologies; and action research (see Appendix M for teacher pre-SBI interview along with general overview of my research actions and a consent checklist). A total of 40 hours of preparation time was dedicated to each of the three teachers on a one-to-one basis. This started two weeks before the commencement of each course and continued throughout each of the eight-week courses (before classes and during break times). As well as raising awareness of LLS and their classifications, particularly Oxford's (1990) strategy system, the teachers were trained in how to deliver SBI following the SBIA model and using the strategies-embedded material specifically designed for the study. Teacher meetings for feedback, reflection, and the exchange of ideas about specific aspects of the presented lessons were an essential part of the sessions.

The teachers' collaboration was highest in phase 2, the Strategy Training Phase, of the SBIA model when their participation was on a daily basis and involved providing learners with a broad range of strategies across the four language skills. For this, the teachers were offered practice sessions in how to introduce, explain and model the different LLS and how to monitor students' use of them. Their roles in the other three phases involved the supervision of students when performing the strategy-based tasks 1 and 2 and verbal reporting across the different language skills and their assistance in the administration of the data collection tools Oxford's (1990) SILL, the interview and the questionnaire). The participating teachers were shown how and when these tools would be administrated across the different phases. The scoring and data analyses were shared with the teachers for information and feedback but were primarily my responsibility as the lead researcher of the study reported here.

The pre-SBI interview indicated that two of the three teachers were not familiar with action research and that none of the three had previously carried out collaborative action research (CAR). Therefore, a discussion of what action research involves, the participatory roles they would play when performing CAR, and the effect it would have

on their current practices was essential. This was woven into the core training and preparation sessions the teachers received. The three teachers were interviewed again after the end of each course (see Appendix N for post-SBI teacher interview) in order to gain an insight into what they had achieved from the SBI programme and from AR as a method of enquiry, as well as their perceptions on the impact of the programme on student learning, in general and in relation to learner autonomy, in particular.

6.2 Implementing the Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment (SBIA) Model

The research study was not comparative as there were no control and comparative groups i.e. the SBI programme was presented to all student participants. Three classes of learners of three different levels followed the phases of the SBIA model as part of the requirements of the SBI programme. Each of these classes participated at different times. The first of these classes was the elementary level with 22 Libyan adult students whose language course began in July 2008. The pre-intermediate level with 19 students started their language course in December 2009 while the intermediate level with 20 Libyan students started their course in February 2010. All 19 pre-intermediate students and all 20 intermediate students completed the four phases of the SBIA model. However, for the elementary level, 22 students completed the first three phases while only 20 students participated in phase 4 (see notes in Table 5.4 in previous chapter).

Implementing the SBIA model started with the elementary level class and was considered the first trial of the research as it served to test out methods, data collection tools and techniques. The first three phases of the model were carried out with no problems encountered. For phase 4, learner diaries/journals were initially intended to be used as tools that can encourage autonomous learning and contribute informative data to this aspect of the research project. Despite the encouragement of collaborating teachers and me to try them out, learners were not excited or confident about using them. Generally, Libyan learners are not accustomed to using learner diaries as tools for learning and therefore they were disregarded as a research tool. In line with the collaborative nature of the research framework of AR, this decision was reached after discussion with both the teacher and students. Nonetheless, in order to measure the learners' autonomous language learning during phase 4, a substitute instrument was required. Accordingly, a semi-structured interview and a questionnaire were developed and used with all three class levels.

The SBI programme was interwoven into the original language course contents i.e. the phases of the SBIA were not implemented separately from the everyday lessons. However, phase 4, the Strategy Transfer and Autonomous Learning Phase, was an exception to this as it was performed after the student participants had had the chance to take at least a full course following the SBI course they had undertaken with me and the collaborating teachers. The purpose of this was to give the students a chance to use the LLS they learnt during the SBI study in another course, at another class level. This in turn made most of the questions of the phase 4 post-SBI interview and questionnaire more relevant and applicable to their learning conditions. Had the participants not taken another course, some of the interview and questionnaire questions would have seemed impractical and unreasonable (see Appendices H and J for these two instruments). Table 6.3 shows the phases of the SBIA model and provides a brief account of methods of data collection. A detailed explanation of what each phase involved and how the different data collection methods and assessment techniques were administered during the four phases is provided below.

Table 6.3: The Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment Model

The Strategies-Based Instructional and Assessment Model	
Phase	**Assessment Techniques and Data Collection Methods**
1 Strategy Identification Phase	SILL 1: This inventory was used as a key source of data and analysis on a pre-test basis to diagnose the language learning strategies the students were already using i.e. to measure their frequency of use.
	SILL 1 Reflection Session: Feedback on each student's score was given during a reflection session which included a brief talk with the class on their use or lack of use of both direct and indirect strategies. Students raised important views about strategy use during this session. Data form this session was used as a supportive set of data when reporting the findings.
	Tasks 1/Verbal Reports 1 across the four Language Skills: These were also key sources of data and analysis. Students were required to perform a number of tasks in listening, speaking, reading, and writing while verbally reporting what they did to complete the tasks. All Tasks 1 were scored and later compared with the scores of Tasks 2. Data obtained from verbal reports 1 were analysed to identify any strategy use.
2 Strategy	Teacher's Role encompassed a variety of actions including, describing and explaining the importance of learning strategies, modelling and demonstrating the use of strategies, guiding and monitoring the students during practice. Meetings, discussions, and practical training were part of the teacher preparation sessions.

Training Phase	Student's Role involved using new strategies with different tasks and enhancing the use of any old strategies through focused practice. Various strategies are woven into the course material and students are taught *how, where* and *why* to use them.	
3 Assessment Phase	SILL 2: Here the inventory was used on a post-test basis to measure any enhancement in using those same strategies achieved as a result of the SBI. It was also used to determine the development of any new strategies.	
	SILL 2 Reflection Session: Once again this was a key part of data collection and analysis. A reflection session was held in which students raised important points of discussion about their use of strategies *after* the strategy training phase and comparisons between the results of SILL1 and SILL2 were highlighted. Data form this session was used as a supportive set of data when reporting the findings.	
	Tasks 2/Verbal Reports 2 across the four Language Skills: These were used as key sources of data and analysis to assess any potential improvement in the learners' language proficiency in all four skills. Similar to Tasks 1, verbal reports were used along with the tasks. Results of Tasks 2 were compared with those obtained in Tasks1 as were the verbal reports. Students also completed some strategy reflection forms to measure their own perceptions of the extent to which LLS helped them complete the tasks. These were for students' personal record and were not used as a research tool.	
4 Transfer and Autonomous Learning Phase	The main aim of this phase was to investigate whether students were able to use LLS independently, select strategies that they thought were useful and effective for them, tailor the strategies to the requirements of the language tasks, and actively transfer strategies to new tasks. For data collection at this phase 18 students were interviewed and then all 59 students completed a questionnaire. Both instruments were used to assess the overall impact of the SBI on the students but mainly to measure their control over language learning through their use of LLS and provide indications of learner autonomy.	

6.2.1 Phase One: Strategy Identification

This phase involved identifying students' current learning strategies (research purpose) and raising students' awareness of their strategy use (the SBI programme's purpose) through three main activities. The first was completing the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning SILL (Oxford, 1990) referred to at this phase as SILL 1. Secondly, a reflection session with the student participants took place after administering SILL 1 for feedback. The third method for collecting data involved performing a number of tasks across the four language skills while verbally reporting student actions. All tasks and verbal reports here were known as Tasks 1 and Verbal Reports 1. This phase was carried out during the first week of the eight-week study. No form of strategies-based instruction was introduced during this phase.

6.2.1.1 Administrating the SILL 1 and SILL 1 Reflection Sessions

The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford, 1990) is a 50-item standardized measure used to collect and analyse information about large numbers of language learners. This version of the SILL (for speakers of other languages learning English) represents a set of strategies for language learning across skills and is used to measure the frequency of strategy-use through students' self-ratings on a scale from 1-5 (see Appendix C for details of this inventory). The inventory is divided into six parts to represent the six groups of Oxford's strategy system namely: cognitive, memory, compensation, affective, social, and meta-cognitive strategies and because "The strategies are not task-specific" they "can be used by the learners at any given time throughout their language learning processes." (Cohen, 1998: 117)

For this study, the SILL was administrated on a pre/post-test basis during phases 1 and 3 of the SBIA Model. They were referred to as SILL 1 and SILL 2. The aim of using the SILL 1 in phase 1 was to identify and diagnose the language learning strategies the students were already using and assign some level of frequency to the students' use of those strategies. Once completed, the SILL 1 data helped furnish a composite score for each category of strategy. A reporting scale was used to identify which groups of strategies the student participants use the most in learning English: (1) "high usage" (3.5–5.0), (2) "medium usage" (2.5–3.4), and (3) "low usage" (1.0–2.4).

Feedback on each student's score was given during a reflection session (referred to at this phase as SILL 1 reflection session) which included a brief talk with the class on their use or lack of use of both direct and indirect strategies. The students raised important views about their strategy use and other important aspects related to their language learning. As the sessions were in the form of an open class discussion with students voluntarily stating their views, not all students provided oral feedback. However, the qualitative data that was collected was sufficient to be a part of data collection and analysis and used to enrich data from the SILL and other research findings.

6.2.1.2 Tasks 1 and Verbal Reports 1

During this phase of the SBIA, students were required to perform a number of tasks in listening, speaking, reading and writing on a pre-test basis i.e. before they were trained

in the use of LLS. The scores of these were collected to be compared with the scores of Tasks 2 in phase 3. However, comparing the results of Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 is not sufficient on its own to provide evidence that any occurring improvement in the task scores is a result of strategy use. For this reason the students were asked to reflect on their actions when performing these tasks in order to identify any strategies they were using and acknowledge any impact the use of these strategies had on their task performance. This was done via verbal reporting. Cohen (1987: 38) asserts that: "The collecting of verbal report data is still beneficial in that it provides direct evidence of processes that are otherwise invisible".

Students were required to provide verbal reports by answering teachers' questions asked either during or immediately after performing the task. All students' verbal reports were audio recorded, transcribed and analysed. At this stage, the students had not yet received any form of strategy training and were still unfamiliar with strategy names or classifications, therefore, the questions for the verbal reporting were quite general. Tasks 1 (for all three learner levels) consisted of two activities A and B. Each activity was scored out of 100. See Appendix E for Tasks 1 performed with the four language skills across the three learner levels and some samples of verbal reports 1 in Appendix G.

The difference between the SILL questionnaire and the verbal reports is that when completing the SILL students were not actually doing any task at the same time (they thought about what they would do in different situations throughout their whole language learning experience). Therefore, the SILL served as a source of more distanced, generalised self-observation. On the other hand, students in the verbal reports reported what they did in relation to the set task (before, during or immediately after the task) so these served as a stream of spontaneously provided description.

6.2.2   Phase Two: Strategy Training

The idea behind this phase was to familiarize the students with LLS through repeated use and to reinforce their ability to use them when performing different language tasks (both the research and the programme's purpose). It was at this phase that the strategies-based instruction formally commenced and was conducted over a period of six weeks (weeks 2-7). It involved raising the students' awareness of the value of using LLS,

introducing new LLS, and reinforcing the ones already in use as reported by the students. For this phase, both teachers and students had their roles to perform.

6.2.2.1   The Teacher's Role

It was the teachers' responsibility to introduce the strategies in class. During this phase, my colleagues and I described, modelled and gave examples of potentially useful strategies, tried to elicit additional examples from students based on the their own learning experiences, and encouraged the students to experiment with a broad range of strategies while monitoring their progress.

In the actual introduction and teaching of LLS in class, each of the class teachers and I started by highlighting the importance of strategies in language learning by giving a brief introductory discussion to the lessons where particular strategies were integrated. These discussions were focused on how these LLS can help the learners obtain linguistic information, overcome their learning difficulties, and provide them with opportunities to take responsibility for their learning. For the elementary level students such discussions had to be as simple as possible and using the L1 (Arabic) for explanation was often required. Once the students were fully aware of the effectiveness of the LLS, the teachers and I would then give students clear examples and start modelling how such LLS could be used in learning all the different language skills. Again the teacher might point out which strategies were most appropriate for which tasks, and which were likely to be more successful in particular contexts. Although recommendations on use of strategies were made by the teachers, emphasis on awareness of individual student preferences was essential. Allowing the students to make their own choices was an important step for stimulating a creative attitude toward the learning process and thus preparing for learner autonomy. Furthermore, allowing the students to talk openly to the teacher about their achievements and the mistakes and difficulties they might face when using the strategies was also necessary during practice not to forget the provision of continuous practice opportunities.

6.2.2.2 The Student's Role

The students were provided with regular practice opportunities for using LLS across the four skills as part of their regular lessons. These were presented on a daily basis during weeks 2-7 of the eight-week study. The strategies were embedded throughout the

contents of the course books and were based on Oxford's strategy classification system (1990) of direct and indirect strategies (see figure 2.4, p.17). This system is suitable for the current study because it is comprehensive, detailed, and it involves utilizing LLS across all four skills. The impact of each class of strategies was expected to be different, therefore, the students received training in both direct and indirect strategies and their subdivisions. Table 6.4 shows some of the strategies which were used with each skill and indicates the group and set of strategies to which they belong based on Oxford's (1990) strategy system.

Table 6.4: Language Learning Strategies used with the Four Language Skills during Phase 2

LLS / L Skill	Strategy	Strategy Set	Strategy Group
Listening	-Using key words -Structured reviewing	-Applying images and sounds -Reviewing well	Memory
	-Taking notes/ highlighting	-Creating structure for input and output	Cognitive
	-Using clues	-Guessing intelligently	Compensation
	-Paying attention/ overviewing and linking with already known material	-Centring your learning	Meta-cognitive
	-Developing cultural understanding/ becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings	-Empathizing with others	Social
	- Making positive statements/ taking risks wisely	-Encouraging yourself	Affective
Speaking	-Using imagery/ semantic mapping/ using keywords/	-Creating mental linkages	Memory
	-Repeating recognizing and using formulas and patterns -Using resources for receiving and sending messages	-Practising -Receiving and sending messages	Cognitive
	-Using mime or gesture/ using a circumlocution or synonym	-Overcoming limitations in speaking	Compensation
	Paying attention/ overviewing and linking with already known material -Identifying the purpose of the task	-Centring your learning -Arranging and planning your learning	Meta-cognitive
	-Cooperating with peers and proficient users of English -Developing cultural understanding/ becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings	-Cooperating with others -Empathizing with others	Social
	- Making positive statements/ taking risks wisely	-Encouraging yourself	Affective
Reading	-Using imagery/ semantic mapping/ using keywords/	-Creating mental linkages	Memory
	-Recognizing and using formulas and patterns -Using resources for receiving messages Analyzing contrastively	-Practising -Receiving and sending messages -Analyzing and reasoning	Cognitive
	Using clues	-Guessing intelligently	Compensation

	Paying attention/ overviewing and linking with already known material -Identifying the purpose of a L task/ seeking practice opportunities	-Centring your learning -Arranging and planning your learning	Meta-cognitive
	-Developing cultural understanding/ becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings	-Empathizing with others	Social
	- Making positive statements/ taking risks wisely	-Encouraging yourself	Affective
Writing	-Placing new words into a context/ using keywords	-Creating mental linkages	Memory
	-Recognizing and using formulas and patterns -Transferring	-Practising -Analyzing and reasoning	Cognitive
	-Selecting the topic/ using a circumlocution or synonym	-Overcoming limitations in writing	Compensation
	-Overviewing and linking with already known material -Identifying the purpose of a L task	-Centring your learning -Arranging and planning your learning	Meta-cognitive
	-Developing cultural understanding/ becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings	-Empathizing with others	Social
	- Making positive statements/ taking risks wisely	-Encouraging yourself	Affective

6.2.3   Phase Three: Strategy Assessment

.This phase was concerned with assessing the impact of strategy-use on the performance of the students and was carried out during week 8 of the 8-week study. The same strategy assessment techniques used in phase 1 were used again and referred to as SILL 2, SILL Reflection Sessions 2, Tasks 2 and Verbal Reports 2. The results of each were systematically compared to those obtained from SILL 1, Reflection Sessions 1, Tasks 1 and Verbal Reports 1. A simple reflection tool measuring how the students perceive their use of strategies during their performance of the tasks was used as a follow-on activity.

6.2.3.1   Administrating the SILL 2and SILL 2 Reflection Sessions

The SILL, referred to in this phase as SILL 2, was used to measure the effect phase 2, the Strategy Training Phase, had on the students' strategy-use. It was intended to measure any further use in the strategies they previously reported using in the SILL 1 and also to determine any development of new strategies i.e. those which were reported in the SILL 1 to have never or almost never been used.

The students were given their results in the SILL 2 and another reflection session was held (referred to at this phase as SILL 2 reflection session). During this session, students

raised important points of discussion about their language learning, autonomy and stated their views about the differences in their use of strategies after the strategy training phase. Comparisons between the results of SILL 1 and SILL 2 were highlighted. Data from this session was used as a supportive set of data when reporting the findings.

6.2.3.2 Tasks 2 and Verbal Reports 2

Similar to Tasks 1, Tasks 2 were also performed with all four language skills and were of two sections (A and B) and each section was scored out of 100. Again students were required to verbally report on their actions whilst performing the tasks; these were referred to as verbal reports 2. The questions for the verbal reporting in this phase were more specific in terms of strategy terminology as following phase 2, the strategy training phase, the students were expected to be familiar with strategy names and classes. To capture a full account of students' answers, all student verbal reports were audio recorded with their consent. See Appendix E for Tasks 2 performed with the four language skills across the three learner levels and some samples of verbal reports 2 in Appendix G.

The student verbal reports 1 and 2 associated with Tasks 1 and 2 were analysed for evidence of any LLS which the learners employed. The LLS revealed by verbal reports 1 and 2 were categorised in order to compare and highlight any differences in student strategy-use before and after phase 2; the strategy training phase.

6.2.3.3 Student Strategy Reflection Form

The verbal reports used with Tasks 1 and 2 were the main tool for extracting data and providing evidence of the learners' strategy-use and associating any overall improvement from Tasks 1 to Tasks 2 with LLS use. Although students were given their transcribed verbal reports, these were difficult to understand at a glance as they were quite extensive and subject to further analysis. Therefore, the collaborating teachers and I thought (again within the principles of CAR) that it was important to provide the students with a simple and straightforward tool which they can keep as a general record of their strategy use during the tasks. Once the students had completed Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 they were given their scores and asked to individually reflect on and compare the scores of each set of tasks for all four language skills. The students were then

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required to rate themselves on a scale from 1-3 on a strategy reflection form which serves as an overall self-report (see table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Strategy Reflection Form

> 1. I think that using language learning strategies (LLS) helped me complete the task successfully.☐
> 2. I think that using LLS helped me complete the task to some extent.☐
> 3. I think that using LLS did not help me complete the task at all.☐

This form was used to measure the students' own perceptions of the extent to which LLS helped them complete the tasks. The students completed a separate form for each of the four skills and were asked to keep these with their task scores for their own record. As the SBIA model served a dual purpose, this tool was part of the teaching/training side of the model and not for research purposes; hence, this data set was not used when reporting the findings of the thesis.

6.2.4 Phase Four: Strategy Transfer and Autonomous Learning

Having had practice using and applying LLS to various language tasks, it was important at this stage of the study to identify whether the student participants had established a strategy repertoire from which they could select direct or indirect strategies to tackle new tasks and achieve their language goals. Therefore, the aim of this phase was to assess the students' abilities to independently utilise LLS and transfer them to new language tasks as required without the guidance of their teachers, and to check whether the students are continuing to use the strategies they practised with when the SBI programme was carried out. Measuring the student participants' control over language learning through their use of LLS was used in this study to provide an indication of. learner autonomy thus addressing the second research question as stated in section 1.5 in chapter one of the thesis.

Although the last three sections of Oxford's SILL were used to measure learner autonomy (Benson, 2001), a further instrument was needed to specifically acknowledge the student's development of autonomy. To gather data during this phase of the study a semi-structured interview followed by a questionnaire were used. Both instruments were used to assess the overall impact of the SBI on the student participants but each of

them was devised to include questions that integrated a list of qualities and characteristics that were seen to be associated with autonomous learning behaviour. The participants were asked to report on whether they had acquired such qualities or not.

Gathering data for phase 4 did not occur immediately after the first three phases of the SBIA model. This was to give the learners a chance to transfer the strategies they had learnt to contexts other than the one they had been trained in. Therefore, the student participants had embarked on new courses (the following proficiency level) with new teachers. Initially, only semi-structured interviews were to be used with a sample of students from each class level. However, in order to gather broader data and involve all the student participants without exclusion, it was subsequently decided to use a questionnaire with all the students from all three levels of proficiency. These were carried out during two days; specifically Thursdays and Saturdays when students did not have lessons, (see table 5.4 in previous chapter). Using a combination of methods provided a stronger foundation for the data. Bell (1999: 135) stresses that interviews can generate rich material and "can often put flesh on the bones of questionnaire responses", which enhances the breadth and scope of research. Youngman (1982: 37) also asserts that "interviews... can also be used to add extra power to the basic questionnaire method". The questions for both interview and questionnaire were based around the same concepts and asked in a similar sequence.

6.2.4.1 The Post-SBI Interview

For the final phase of the SBIA model, semi-structured interviewing was considered suitable for the purpose of this study as it provides rich in-depth responses, and challenges the interviewees by probing deeper into their experiences, perceptions and attitudes on a number of issues relevant to the research. Parsons (1984: 80) believes that semi-structured interviews enable the researcher "considerable flexibility over the range and order of questions within a loosely defined framework".

The post-SBI interview consisted of 22 open-ended questions and was divided into three parts distinguished by three different colours (see full interview schedule in Appendix H). The aim of the first part (questions 1-3 and question 22) was to measure the learners' perceptions of the overall impact of SBI; the second part (questions 4-16) aimed to measure the learners' awareness of their strategy use; and the final part

(questions 17-21) aimed to measure the learners' perceptions of effect strategy use has on the learners.

Out of the sample of 59 students (initially 61; two students from elementary class did not take part in phase 4) 18 students were randomly selected for interview (9 male and 9 female students). Six participants were drawn from each class level and interviewed individually (see Table 6.6 for student participant codes and gender).

Table 6.6: Student Participants in Phase Four Post-SBI Interview

Student participants from **Elementary** levelin post-SBI interview Interview Date: 5th Nov 2009	Student participants from **Pre-intermediate** level in post-SBI interview Interview Date: 13th May 2010	Student participants from **Intermediate** level in post-SBI interview Interview Date: 5th Aug 2010
ES6=F ES7=M ES8=F ES10=F ES12=M ES18=M	PS3=M PS5=M PS10=F PS11=F PS12=M PS15=F	IS1=M IS5=F IS7=M IS12=F IS13=M IS16=F

The three participant teachers were present with the students' consent during each of these interviews. As co-researchers (a key principle of CAR), the teachers took part in data collection during all the previous phases; phase 4 was no exception. In order to put the interviewees at ease, and to obtain in-depth data, respondents were given the choice of speaking in English or Arabic and all interviews were audio recorded. The interviews conducted in Arabic were transcribed in Arabic first to avoid any possible violation of meaning had they been translated directly from the recordings; these, were subsequently translated by myself into English. Both the Arabic and English versions were returned to the interviewees for checking; the aim of this was to validate participant voices and clarify any issues that might have been misunderstood or misinterpreted. Out of the 18 interviewees 12 made no changes to the interview transcripts and were happy that their voices were being presented as they intended. Two of the other six made grammatical corrections to some mistakes they had made. The other four wished to elaborate some of their answers (see Appendix I for an example interview transcript).

6.2.4.2 The Post-SBI Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 25 questions ranging between yes/no to multiple choice questions. It was constructed based on the interview questions, and some of the student responses. As with the interview schedule, the questionnaire was of three parts distinguished by three different colours (see full questionnaire form in Appendix J). Questions 1-4 and 24-25 aimed to measure the learners' perceptions of the overall impact of SBI and were used as an introduction and conclusion to the questionnaire. The aim of questions 5-17 was to measure the learners' awareness of their strategy use while questions 18-23 aimed to measure the learners' perceptions of the effect of strategy use on them as learners.

Drawing on some of the behaviours listed in Candy's (1991) learner profile of autonomous learners (see section 3.4 in chapter three) and other characteristics extracted from several definitions of learner autonomy, a number of learner qualities and characteristics grouped into 7 sets have been identified as the building blocks of autonomy in this research study. These were specifically integrated into the design of the post-SBI questionnaire (used in phase 4 of the study) to measure autonomy (see part 2 and part 3, of the questionnaire in Appendix J). The following table lists the 7 sets, demonstrates how they have been supported in relevant literature and indicates the relevant sections in the post-SBI questionnaire:

Table 6.7: Qualities and Characteristics of Autonomous Learners

Qualities and Characteristics	Claims from Literature	Corresponding Questions from Post-SBI Questionnaire
• **Awareness of the learning process (of themselves as learners)**	Developing autonomy requires conscious awareness of the learning process (Sinclair, 2000) it rests on the pedagogical claim that in formal educational contexts, reflectivity and *self-awareness* produce better learning (Pintrich, 2000).	Questionnaire: Part Two, Questions 5-17
• **Efforts and performance**	Autonomous learners are those who accept the idea that their own *efforts* are crucial to progress in learning, and behave accordingly (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 3) Leaner autonomy is the ability to take personal or "self regulated" responsibility for learning and it is widely theorized to predict academic *performance* (Benson and Voller, 1997)	Questionnaire: Part Three, Questions 20, 21 and Question 22, a and b

• **Motivation** • **Self-confidence**	"*Motivation* is a prerequisite for learning and responsibility development alike" (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 7) "*Self-confidence* contributes to the development of responsibility in its own right... the effect works the other way as well: a feeling of responsibility and independence brings a sense of well-being and confidence" (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 7)	Questionnaire: Part Three, Question 22, c and d
• **Responsibility** • **Reliance on teachers** • **Reliance on peers**	Autonomous learners are those who explicitly accept *responsibility* for their own learning (Little, 1991). "Learners are autonomous in the sense that they act *independently of the teacher*, not waiting to be told what to do." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 4) "Promoting cooperation in the class room affects learner attitude in several ways. It encourages the learners to *rely on each other* (and consequently on themselves as well) and not only on the teacher." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 8)	Questionnaire: Part Three, Question 22, e, f and g
• **Identifying learning needs** • **Goal Setting** • **Solution Provision** • **Decision-Making**	*Setting targets* for themselves, autonomous learners are more likely to consider these targets as their own and feel responsible for reaching them." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 8) One of the skills autonomous learners should develop is *problem solving* (Chamot et al, 1999:11). "In order to foster learner autonomy, we clearly need to ...encourage learners to take an active part in *making decisions* about their learning." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 4)	Questionnaire: Part Three, Question 23, a, b, c and d
• **Managing And Organizing Learning** • **Creating Learning Opportunities** • **Exploiting LL Resources**	Learners' ability to *manage* their learning processes indicates that they are in control their own learning behaviours (Borkowski et al., 1987). Autonomous learners are those who "make an effort to use available *opportunities* to their benefit, including classroom *activities* and homework." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 3)	Questionnaire: Part Three, Question 23, e, f, and g
• **Monitoring and Self-Evaluation** • **Self-Assessment**	The autonomous learner ... shares in *monitoring progress and evaluating* the extent to which learning is achieved (Schunk, 2005). Effective autonomous learners are consciously involved with *self-assessment* and recognize its importance. (Dickinson, 1993: 331)	Questionnaire: Part Three, Question 23, h and i

These learner characteristics were also identified in the students' verbal reports and in their responses to some of the questions of the post-SBI interview.

6.3   Data Organisation and Analysis Overview

Most studies evaluating the effect of strategy training on FL learners have relied on quantitative data such as improvements in learners' test scores following the completion of a strategy training programme (Grenfell and Macaro, 2007). However, such quantitative measures on their own provide an incomplete picture and must therefore be supplemented by qualitative methods (Chen, 2007). Qualitative data from sources such as learners' verbal reports on their strategy use help interpret the results of test scores thus, providing more depth and breadth to research data sets. This also applies to the use of questionnaires complemented by the use of interviews.

The data collected during this study included both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data were generated from the verbal reports 1 and 2 associated with Tasks 1 and 2, the semi-structured interview; in addition to data from the SILL reflection sessions, the teacher interviews and field notes. Quantitative data emerged from the SILL questionnaire (SILLS 1 and 2), the student scores of the language tasks (Tasks 1 and 2), and the student phase 4 Post-SBI questionnaire. All instruments were designed to elicit information related to LLS and learner autonomy, implementation of the SBI programme and student and teacher perceptions and attitudes towards strategy use and learner autonomy. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative data have been analysed, presented and discussed in an interactive way (Marton, 1986). According to Cohen et al (2007) all the relevant data from various data streams including interviews, observations, questionnaires etc. should be presented in order "to provide a collective answer to the research questions" (Cohen et al, 2007: 448). They believe this approach is effective in presenting and organising data because it "returns the reader to the driving concerns of the research" (Cohen et al, 2007: 468). It is argued that this mixed approach enables the reader to see the connection between the research questions and the data (Jang et al, 2008: 223). In terms of data analysis which is defined as "the reduction of copious amounts of written data to manageable and comprehensible proportions" (Cohen et al, 2007: 475), the qualitative and quantitative data, gathered during this study, were analysed differently.

6.3.1 Data Organisation and Analysis of Qualitative Data

For analytic purposes most qualitative researchers arrive at a point where their data has to be organised in some kind of systematic way (Woods, 2006). For the qualitative set of data, content analysis was used. All qualitative data sets including student quotes from SILL reflection sessions, verbal reports, student interviews, teacher interviews and field notes form teacher preparation sessions were analysed in the same way.

6.3.1.1 Content Analysis

Content analysis is one of the conventional methods for analysing a range of qualitative material (Flick, 2002; Shields and Twycross, 2008). It is a research method for making inferences from data by systematically and objectively describing phenomena and identifying specified characteristics or messages, with the purpose of providing knowledge, new insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action (Holisti, 1968; Krippendorff, 1980; Sandelowski, 1995; Mayring, 2000).

It was originally used as a method for analysing newspaper and magazine articles, and advertisements and political speeches in the 19th century (Harwood and Garry, 2003) but is now used to analyse other forms of data such as that obtained from interviews, focus groups and observational field notes (Kondracki and Wellman, 2002; Shields and Twycross, 2008). During the last few decades, its use has shown steady growth in various fields and across many research studies (Neundorf, 2002).

One of the major benefits of content analysis is its flexibility in terms of research design and analysis of text data (Cavanagh, 1997; Harwood and Garry, 2003). Through content analysis, data is examined intensely with the aim of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of content-related categories that represent similar meanings (Weber, 1990; Cavanagh, 1997). The purpose of this systematic classification process of coding and categorisation is to build up a model or a conceptual system/map that allows the researcher to test theoretical issues in order to enhance understanding of the data (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). Flick (2002: 192-193) maintains that Mayring's (2000) qualitative content analysis procedure "seems clear, less ambiguous and easier to handle than other methods of data analysis",

Although content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique, the analysis process has been little discussed in literature (Shields and Twycross, 2008), perhaps

because content analysis has in the past been criticised for being an overly simple method (Elo, and Kyngäs, 2008). However, some researchers believe that it is much more than a naive technique that results in a simplistic description of data (Cavanagh 1997) and that it is possible to attain simplistic results by using any method whatsoever if skills of analysis are lacking (Weber, 1990). Others go as far as arguing that it is more complex and difficult than quantitative analysis because it is less standardized and formulaic (Polit and Beck, 2004). The truth is, content analysis does not proceed in a linear fashion and due to its flexibility there are no simple guidelines for data analysis. Each research inquiry is distinctive because the process mainly depends on the researcher's skills, insights, analytic abilities and style (Hoskins and Mariano, 2004). The assumption that content analysis is an easy method can mislead researchers, and unexpected difficulties may arise during the analysing process (Glaser, 1978). According to Neundorf (2002), content analysis is as easy or as difficult as the researcher determines it to be. Researchers must be able to determine what variations are most appropriate for their particular problems (Weber, 1990), which makes the analysis process all the more challenging and interesting.

In addition, content analysis as a method is often criticised for risk of researcher bias (Shields and Twycross, 2008). However, two main strategies to minimise this risk and enhance objectivity and validity haven been suggested by several researchers (see Mayring, 2000). The first is to have another researcher, experienced in the coding system, analyse the data and then compare the categories/themes emerging from their analysis with those found by the first researcher. If there is sufficient agreement between the two researchers, the content analysis can be said to be valid. However, there has been some debate about seeking agreement (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004) because each researcher interprets the data according to their subjective perspective and co-researchers could come up with an alternative interpretation (Sandelowski, 1995) which makes the process quite challenging. A second strategy is to compare the emerging categories/themes with the findings of previous research studies in the area under investigation. Authentic citations could be used to increase the trustworthiness of the research and to point out to readers from where or from what kinds of original data categories are formulated (Patton, 1990; Sandelowski, 1993). The second strategy was the one followed in the research reported here in order to indicate that the findings of this study may reflect an accurate picture of reality and add weight to the arguments presented. However, this strategy was used with caution as there are various opinions

about the suitable amount of authentic citation. It is argued that if there are more citations than authorial text, then the analysis process might be incomplete (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

6.3.1.2 Approaches to Content Analysis

There are two major approaches to content analysis, namely; conventional content analysis and directed content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). These two approaches are more commonly known as inductive and deductive or as Mayring (2000) refers to them: inductive category development and deductive category application. In this study, the concepts 'inductive' versus 'deductive' are used. Both approaches are used to interpret meaning from the content of text data (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) and describe the phenomenon in a conceptual form (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). However, the main difference between the two is in the categorisation process (concept formation) and the origins of the categories or concepts. In inductive content analysis, categories are derived directly from the content of text data (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Elo, and Kyngäs, 2008). By working through the material, tentative categories are first identified, further revised and finally reduced to main categories (Mayring, 2000). On the other hand, deductive content analysis is carried out on the basis of former knowledge. In other words, it begins with an earlier theory or relevant research findings as guidance for tentative categories (Mayring, 2000; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

While the inductive approach is recommended if there is not enough prior knowledge about the phenomenon or if this knowledge is fragmented (Lauri and Kyngäs, 2005), the deductive approach is suitable if the purpose of the study is theory testing (Kyngäs and Vanhanen, 1999). In the case of this study, an inductive approach was carried out as it was deemed suitable for the phenomenon under study. The purpose of the study was not to test any particular theory but to investigate the impact of an instructional programme that had not been previously implemented in the chosen context in Libya. The aim was to examine how SBI affected Libyan adult learners and teachers of EFL in that context.

6.3.1.3 Phases of Content Analysis

An enormous amount of work is required during the process of content analysis (Polit and Beck, 2004); however, in order to organise the process, three main phases, drawing

on (Elo, and Kyngäs, 2008) were followed in this study. These are: 1) preparation, 2) organising and 3) reporting and analysing process and the results. Elo, and Kyngäs (2008) illustrate how both the inductive and deductive approaches are similar in the preparation phase and quite different in the other two phases (see figure 6.2 below).
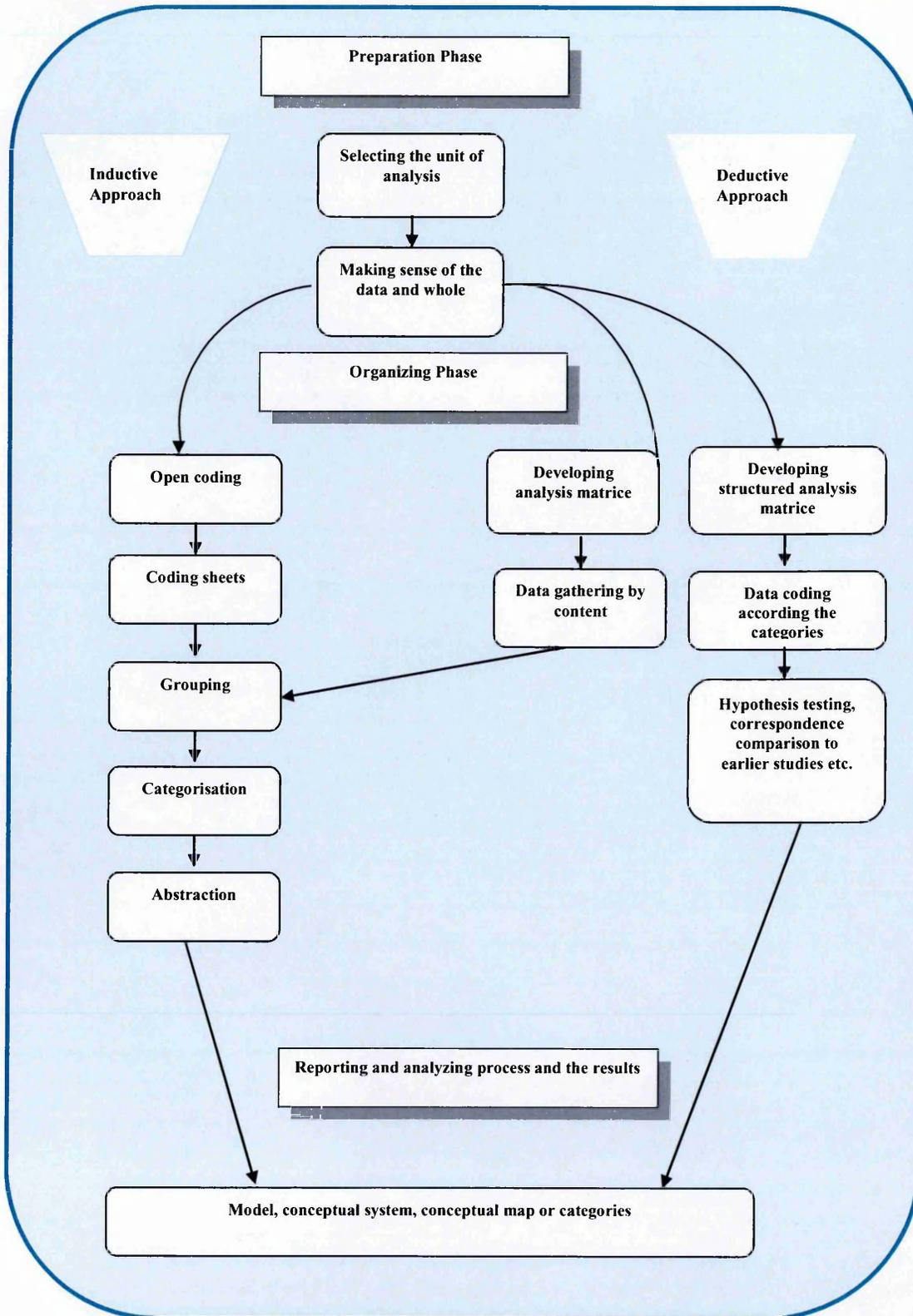
Figure 6.2: Phases of Content Analysis (Elo, and Kyngäs, 2008)

As an inductive approach was chosen for this research study, the three phases were carried out as follows:

1. Preparation Phase

It is argued that the most difficult of stages when conducting content analysis is simply getting started (Elo, and Kyngäs, 2008). This is quite normal as the sheer quantity of qualitative data can be overwhelming and may often lead researchers to believe that it cannot be managed. The difficulty also arises from the fact that narrative material is generally not linear and researchers at the initial stage possess several, seemingly unconnected, pieces of information (Backman and Kyngäs, 1998). Paragraphs from transcribed interviews may contain elements relating to several categories (Dey, 1993; Polit and Beck, 2004) and many interesting points that are not related to the topic under study often come up when analysing the data. Therefore, the beginning of the categorization phase is often seen as chaotic. Tolerance of feeling uncertain is required (Glaser, 1978) and researchers should allow themselves simply to read through each interview as many times as necessary to apprehend its essential features, without feeling pressured to move forward analytically (Sandelowski, 1995).

For this study, the preparation phase began by transcribing the verbal reports collected during phases 1 and 3 and the transcripts of the student phase 4 Post-SBI interviews in addition to the notes taken during the SILL discussion sessions and the transcripts of the teachers' interviews. Transcriptions were then checked for accuracy followed by preliminary reflections on the raw data by examining the transcripts and making notes of first impressions, thoughts, and initial analysis. The purpose of reading all data repeatedly is to achieve immersion and obtain a sense of the whole (Tesch, 1990). This involved a 'first reduction' i.e. eliminating irrelevant and recurring material while highlighting points of importance, parts of text that appear to capture key thoughts or concepts and particular extracts as deemed appropriate to answering the research questions. Woods (2006) refers to this as 'primary analysis which he believes begins almost immediately and frequently takes place at the same time as data collection.

2. Organising Phase

This phase involved a 'second reduction' or what Woods (2006) calls 'category and concept formation'. This process began with open coding which means that as many notes and headings as necessary were written down in the margins to describe all

aspects of the content while reading it (Burnard, 1991, 1996; Hsieh and Shannon 2005). The headings were then collected from the margins on to coding sheets (Cole 1988, Downe-Wamboldt 1992, Dey, 1993) and categories were freely generated at this stage by grouping similar relevant material under certain categories (Burnard, 1991). The beginning of the categorization phase is often described as chaotic, because at that point the researcher possesses several, seemingly unconnected, pieces of information (Backman and Kynga¨s, 1998). Therefore, it is necessary to reduce the number of categories by collapsing those that are similar or dissimilar into broader higher order categories (Burnard, 1991, Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, Dey, 1993).

Successful content analysis requires that the researcher can analyse and simplify the data and form categories that reflect the subject of study in a reliable manner (Kynga and Vanhanen, 1999). Credibility of research findings also deals with how well the categories cover the data (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004). Therefore, it was necessary to be prepared to go back to the data repeatedly to check the reliability of the categories while keeping the research questions in mind at all times. Accordingly, the following main categories were selected:

- Increase in Overall Strategy Use
- Development of Strategic Awareness
- Enhancement in Learning Efforts
- Improvement in Performance of Language Tasks
- Development in Learner Autonomy
- Development of Metacognitive Awareness
- Development of Social Awareness
- Change in Teacher Roles and Professionalism
- Change of Attitudes of both Learners and Teachers

Because this process of categorisation, as Shields and Twycross (2008) describe, is 'labour intensive' computer software packages such as QSR NVivo are available to help with data management (Gerbic and Stacey, 2005); however, the researcher still has to code the data. Shields and Twycross (2008) recommend that the novice researcher should perform a manual content analysis, which is the approach I chose to take in my analysis of the data for practical reasons and convenience. The following steps were carried out:

I selected a different coloured highlighter for each category. I went through the data and highlighted the text that fits into each category. I then performed a manual cut and paste to collate all the data pertaining to each category, ensuring that I could recognise where each piece of data came from (e.g. ES6, phase 4 post-SBI interview, 5th of Nov 2009). The following illustration shows an example of how coding through highlighting was performed on one of the teacher interview transcripts (see more examples of the way qualitative data was coded and analysed in Appendix P).
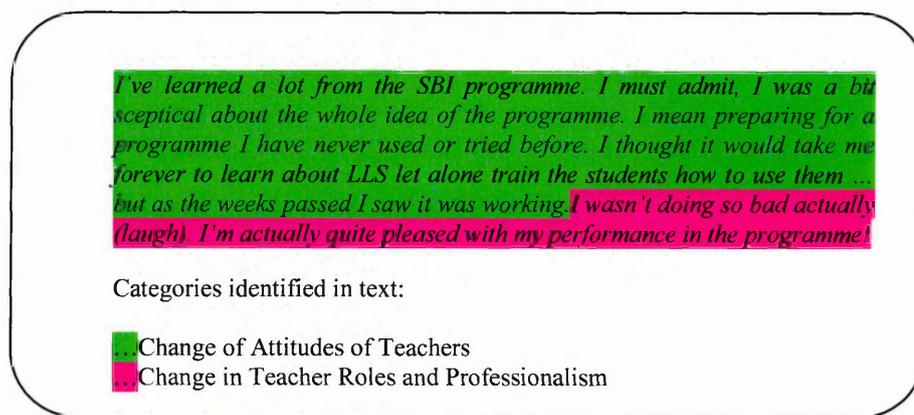
Figure 6.3: Example of Coding on Qualitative Data

3. Reporting and analysing process and the results

The final phase of content analysis is to present the findings and results in a way that pertains to the categories, addresses the research questions and describes the phenomenon under study. Reporting the study and presenting its results can be challenging, therefore, care should be taken during the process because "If qualitative data are compressed too much, the very point of maintaining the integrity of narrative materials during the analysis phase becomes lost. If the conclusions are merely summarized without including numerous supporting excerpts, the richness of the original data disappears." (Elo, and Kyngäs, 2008: 113).

The data was presented by using examples of narrative i.e. extracts from the data to illustrate the chosen categories. The qualitative data sets were supported by drawing on the quantitative data sets based on their concurrence. Appendices and tables were used to demonstrate links between the data and results. Additionally, authentic citations were interwoven into the reporting of the results in order to highlight any contrast or agreement between the findings of the research reported here and other research studies, based on their antecedents or consequences.

The student verbal reports 1 and 2 associated with Tasks 1 and 2 yielded two types of data: insights into students' strategy use (what strategies they were using while performing the tasks) and student perceptions and feedback on their strategy use (why the strategies used helped/did not help and how). The first set of data was used to show any change in strategy use from Tasks 1 to Tasks 2 (Has students' strategy-use increased or decreased?) and the second set of data extracted from the verbal reports was used to correlate any gain in task performance with reported strategy use.

SILL reflection feedback and student post-SBI interviews revealed data similar to that generated from the verbal reports in addition to various student attitudes and perceptions indicative of learner autonomy, metacognitive awareness, and social awareness.

Data from the teacher interviews (pre/post-SBI) and feedback during the preparation sessions were mainly used to address research question 3 of the study (see section 1.5) in addition to supporting the data that addressed the first two research questions. The findings were used to show any change in teacher attitudes, roles and professionalism in relation to SBI, action research and autonomy.

6.3.2   Data Organisation and Analysis of Quantitative Data

The results obtained from the SILL (both the SILL1 and SILL2) were calculated according to Oxford's (1989) instructions of using the SILL. For each question, the students were required to rate themselves on a scale of 1-5; these were then added and the averages were calculated. Oxford (1989) provides a key for understanding the averages as shown in the table below:

Table 6.8: Key to Understanding Averages of SILL Results (Oxford, 1989)

High	Always or almost always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
Low	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

To show the frequency of strategy usage, descriptive statistics were calculated primarily to determine, based on the means obtained, whether the participants were low, medium or high strategy users. The data from the SILL 1 and SILL 2 were then compared in tables and charts to show the students' use in all six groups of strategies and to identify

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any differences in the participants' LLS use before the *strategy training phase* and after it (see Appendix D for SILL results of all student participants in all three class levels). To give a clearer indication of the students' strategy use, the rank order of the learning strategies was calculated using the weight interval in addition to using the mean (see Table 7.4 in the next chapter for rank order of LLS from SILL 1 to SILL 2 for the three class levels).

As for Tasks 1 and 2 which were of two sections A and B, each task was scored out of 100; these were added and divided by 2 before the average (mean) was calculated (see Appendix F for the results of all the students in Tasks 1 and 2 for each class level). The mean scores were used in this study to discuss the data presented in chapter seven of this study. In section 7.3.1 the raw means were used to provide an indication of the students' language development and improvement in task performance across the four language skills.

In order to test whether there was a significant difference between the students' scores in Tasks 1 and their scores in Tasks 2, across the four skills; t-test was calculated using Microsoft Excel Software. As the means for Tasks 1 (performed before SBI) and Tasks 2 (performed after SBI) were for the same student participants (across the three classes), a paired t-test was used for each individual class of learners, i.e. 3 separate paired t-tests were performed. In addition, because students' task scores are almost unpredictable, a two-tailed t-test was used. Using a one-tailed P-value assumes you already know before you even see the values which set of task scores should be higher and which should be lower (see Appendix F for results of the T-tests applied to Tasks 1 and 2). The results show, based on the P-Value (P < 0.05), that there was a highly significant difference between students' scores in Tasks 1 and 2 across all four language skills and across all three class levels which suggests an improvement in their language performance. The table below presents the probability values for all three language classes as calculated from the T-test.

Table 6.9: T-test Results for all Three Class Levels

T-Tests Results for **Elementary** Class Level										
Listening Tasks 1	Listening Tasks 2		Speaking Tasks 1	Speaking Task 2		Reading Tasks 1	Reading Task 2		Writing Tasks 1	Writing Task 2
P Value: 1.57001E-15			P Value: 8.39306E-17			P Value: 2.71954E-16			P Value: 1.76606E-15	
T-Test Results for **Pre-intermediate** Class Level										
Listening Tasks 1	Listening Tasks 2		Speaking Tasks 1	Speaking Task 2		Reading Tasks 1	Reading Task 2		Writing Tasks 1	Writing Task 2
P Value: 1.60539E-09			P Value: 4.85652E-08			P Value: 3.09309E-10			P Value: 7.01439E-10	
T-Tests Results for **Intermediate** Class Level										
Listening Tasks 1	Listening Tasks 2		Speaking Tasks 1	Speaking Task 2		Reading Tasks 1	Reading Task 2		Writing Tasks 1	Writing Task 2
P Value: 5.00659E-09			P Value: 5.00659E-09			P Value: 3.81824E-07			P Value: 7.94244E-09	

The other instrument which generated quantitative data was the post-SBI questionnaire used in phase 4 of the programme. It consisted of 25 questions divided into three main parts. The number of participants in this instrument was 59 students in total: 20 students from the elementary class, 19 from pre-intermediate and 20 from the intermediate class. The numerical data generated from phase 4 post-SBI questionnaire were organised in the form of tables and in chart form (bar charts and pie charts used in chapters 7 and 8 of the thesis). Data from the tables and charts were used in the discussion chapters to support the findings from the semi-structured (post-SBI) interview and other data sets used in the study (see Appendix K for results of post-SBI questionnaire across the three class levels).

6.4   Conclusion

The chapter presented and discussed the different stages of data collection carried out during the research study. Preparation for the SBI involved enhancing my own personal skills as a researcher and a teacher; developing materials for both teaching and data collection and developing each of the participant teachers' skills in order to deliver the intended programme in collaboration with myself.

In terms of implementation, details of each of the data collection methods used during the four phases of the SBIA model were provided in section 6.2. These included

instruments used with the students on a pre/post-test basis like the SILL and the SILL reflection sessions, as well as verbal reports used with language tasks. A post-SBI student interview and questionnaire were devised and used in phase 4 of the SBIA model. Pre-SBI and post-SBI teacher interviews were administrated with the three teacher participants, before the implementation of the intervention and on completion. How the data were organised, analysed (via content analysis, descriptive statistics and t-test) and reported was explained in section 6.3 of this chapter.

7 Impact of SBI on the Language Learners: *Language Learning Strategies and Language Achievement*

A main aim of this research study was to investigate the impact of SBI on Libyan adult learners of EFL during an eight-week SBI programme in which, participants were trained in the use of a range of LLS while learning English as a foreign language. From a learner perspective, the first two research questions were identified for the study. Chapter seven presents and discusses data from the study which relates to the first research question as stated in section 1.5:

- Can explicit teaching of language learning strategies (through SBI) and their applications enhance students' *efforts* to learn and use English more effectively? And will it help improve their *performance* in language tasks?

Findings related to the second research question (see section 1.5) are discussed in chapter eight of the thesis. This chapter is divided into six main sections. Section 7.1 discusses ways in which the SBI programme influenced the students' overall strategy use. Section 7.2 focuses on the impact of the programme on learner awareness and motivation. The impact of the programme on language performance is discussed in section 7.3 of this chapter and section 7.4 deals with emerging findings related to the students' perceptions and attitude to SBI and to language learning. The chapter concludes with a summary in section 7.6. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 7.1:

Table 7.1: Contents of Chapter 7	
7.1	Overall Strategy Use
7.1.1	Findings and Results before SBI
7.1.2	Findings and Results after SBI
7.2	Awareness Raising and Language Learning Strategies
7.2.1	Levels of Consciousness and SBI
7.2.2	Strategies-based Instruction and Student Efforts
7.3	Language Development and Language Learning Strategies
7.3.1	Improvement in Student Performance
7.3.2	Strategies-based Instruction and Student Performance
7.3.2.1	The Effect of Learner Confidence and Motivation
7.4	Changes in Student Beliefs s and Attitudes
7.4.1	Changes of Beliefs
7.4.2	Changes of Attitudes
7.4.2.1	Attitude Change towards EFL Learning
7.4.2.2	Attitude Change towards LLS and SBI
7.5	Conclusion

7.1 Overall Strategy Use

One of the main findings of the research study was the change in the student participants' overall strategy use. The overall strategy use of the three different levels of learners (elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate) was measured at two different points in time: before the implementation of the SBI programme and after it. It was found that there was an increase in the frequency of the students' strategy use after the SBI programme as indicated by the results of the strategy inventory for language learning (SILL) (see Appendix D for results of the SILL 1 and SILL 2 across the three learner levels, Table 7.5 and figure 7.1 of this chapter). Students' statements in the SILL reflection sessions and students' verbal reports used with the language tasks seem to support this finding (see Appendices E and F for verbal reports during Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 across the three learner levels). However, in order to show whether the SBI programme influenced this change in strategy use, data from the post-SBI questionnaire and the student interviews are also presented and discussed here. Note that any student quote, presented here or in chapter eight, ending with an asterisk (*) shows it has been translated from Arabic.

7.1.1 Findings and Results before SBI

The results of the SILL 1 (administrated before SBI) showed that all students across the three different learner levels were already using LLS (from all six strategy groups) with pre-intermediate and intermediate students demonstrating a higher overall strategy use than the elementary students. This suggests that strategy use is linked to increasing proficiency which aligns with O'Malley's et al (1985) findings, who investigated learning strategies used by beginning and intermediate students. They found that intermediate students used more strategies than those with beginning level proficiency.

To show the frequency of students' strategy usage, descriptive statistics showing the mean scores across the three learner levels were used. These were calculated according to Oxford's (1990) scale of usage to mainly show whether the students were low, medium or high users of strategies (see Table 7.2).

Table 7.2 SILL 1 Frequency of Strategy Use across the Three Learner Levels

☐ **Direct Strategies** ▨ **Indirect Strategies**
Scale of Usage: L=1.0-2.4; M=2.5-3.4; H=3.5-5 (Oxford 1990).

SILL 1 Strategy Group	Mean Scores of Elementary Level	Mean Scores of Pre-intermediate Level	Mean Scores of Intermediate Level
Memory	3.19	3.25	3.38
Cognitive	3.13	3.22	3.34
Compensation	3.39	3.51	3.67
Metacognitive	3.88	3.97	4.15
Affective	3.12	2.75	2.79
Social	3.17	3.38	3.39

The results indicate that only metacognitive (for all three learner levels) and compensation (for pre-intermediate and intermediate) strategies fell in the high range in comparison with all the other strategies which were of medium use. Interestingly none of the strategy groups were in the low range. It was expected at this stage, having not yet been exposed to any form of training in the use of LLS, that students' use across the different strategy groups would start off quite low and would then potentially improve after the training. In addition to using the mean scores, the rank order of the learning strategies was calculated using the weight interval in order to give a clearer indication of the students' strategy use (see Table 7.3 below).

Table 7.3: Rank Order of LLS in SILL 1

☐ **Direct Strategies** ▨ **Indirect Strategies**	Elementary Level Rank Order of LLS (%)	Pre-intermediate Rank Order of LLS (%)	Intermediate Level Rank Order of LLS (%)
Strategy Group	SILL 1	SILL 1	SILL 1
Memory Strategies	64 %	65 %	67.5 %
Cognitive Strategies	62.5 %	64.5 %	67 %
Compensation Strategies	68 %	70%	73.5 %
Metacognitive Strategies	77.5 %	79.5 %	83 %
Affective Strategies	62.5 %	55 %	56 %
Social Strategies	63.5 %	67.5 %	68 %

It was revealed that before the SBI, *metacognitive strategies* were the ones found to be chiefly used by the students. Across the three different learner levels, the percentages showed that metacognitive strategies had the highest percentage with 77.5 per cent for

elementary learners, 79.5per cent for pre-intermediate learners and 83 per cent for intermediate learners. Again these figures show a steady increase which is parallel to the learners' proficiency level indicating a link between strategy use and proficiency. This was noticed with all the other strategy groups apart from affective strategies in which the elementary level students demonstrated the highest percentage of usage.

The verbal report of one of the intermediate students in listening Task1 illustrates this student's preference for metacognitive strategies more than any other group of strategies:

> *I tried to focus very closely on what she was saying*(paying attention). *I couldn't understand what she was saying; she was speaking very fast* (self-monitoring). {IS5, Verbal Report 1}

Other interventionist studies have revealed similar results with regards to metacognitive strategies being favoured by learners (Paiva, 1997; Nisbet, 2002; Abu Shmias, 2003; Liu, 2004; Riazi, 2007; Al-Buainain, 2010). Metacognitive strategies provide a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process (Oxford, 1990). These involve exercising control over learners' language learning through paying attention, organising, planning, seeking practice opportunities, monitoring and evaluating. The student participants' answers to the SILL1 showed that they were already familiar with the need to manage their learning processes. Among the most used metacognitive strategies as stated in the SILL were strategy items 32 and 38: (paying attention when someone is speaking English) and (thinking about their progress in learning English), and among the less used ones, particularly among the elementary level students was: (planning schedules to study English) (see Appendix C for a full version of the SILL). In the SILL1 reflection sessions, students ES4, PS10 and IS13 all mentioned the importance of monitoring their progress and their weakness in planning ahead on many occasions in all four language skills. A possible explanation of the uneven strategy use among the students (i.e. the preference to use some strategies over others) is that there are strategies, such as the strategy of planning, which might require the assistance of a teacher in order to acquire and develop whereas a strategy like reflection on learning progress can be self-developed and potentially utilised throughout their education not just during their learning of English.

The data from this research study suggest that metacognitive strategies are essential for successful language learning regardless of the language programme students are enrolled on. For example, although the student participants of this study were not

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English majors, the results still show a high frequency use of metacognitive strategies. This is inconsistent with Al-Buainain's (2010) study which suggested that, typically, only learners majoring in English programmes (at university levels) have a strong instrumental motivation for learning English and as such tend to use metacognitive strategies widely. Al-Buainain (2010) speculated that, unlike learners who might enrol in a foreign language for fun or self-advancement or because a language course was required, English majors learn English to advance their academic and professional lives; metacognitive strategies such as efficient planning and self-monitoring of one's learning progress, therefore, are instrumental in achieving student goals. The fact that student participants of this study were found to be using these strategies although they were not English majors could be due to the intensive learning setting of their language learning programme. An intermediate level student claimed:

> *There is a lot to learn and the course is too short so I think we*
> *need to find different ways to learn English. We have to know*
> *our goals and pay attention to our mistakes and learn from*
> *them.* {IS12, SILL 1Reflection Session}

This student's extract shows her realisation that 'goal setting' and 'monitoring progress' (both metacognitive strategies) is vital to fit the course requirements. Students PS7 and ES14 also spoke of the need to pay attention to speakers of English and monitor their own progress, indicating that they were already in control of focusing and evaluating their own learning behaviours.

Compensation strategies which enable learners to make up for limitations in knowledge during the comprehension or production of the target language (Oxford, 1990) ranked the second out of the six strategy groups with 68 per cent for elementary students, 70 per cent for pre-intermediate students and 73.5 per cent for intermediate students. Other EFL studies, too, report compensation strategies, along with metacognitive strategies, as the most frequently used strategies by adult EFL learners (Oh, 1992; Yang, 1994; Wharton, 2000).

The SILL revealed that strategy items 24 and 28 (making guesses to understand unfamiliar words in English and guessing what the other person will say next in English) were the most frequently used by the students. As adults, the student participants of this study are expected to utilise their pre-existing knowledge during the process of their language learning. For example, having a schema allows for the use of strategies like 'guessing intelligently' suggesting that schema theory (Anderson, 1984)

might account for learner's selection of certain strategies. The verbal reports of one of the pre-intermediate students in listening Tasks 1 concur with the results of the SILL and highlight the importance of referring to Schema theory for a possible explanation.

> *I can hear that the place is a restaurant...so I know they are talking about food and drinking....I can guess that one of the people is going to order his meal so I try to guess some things he might say...like bread...fish...salad...some water or juice...then in the end he has to pay for the meal so he will ask for the cheque and he will see how much...so they might talk about money.* {PS11, Verbal Report 1}

This student, aided by having a schema on what happens in a restaurant, was able to guess in advance what words and expressions might occur in this context and following a certain order of events, hence making use of the compensation strategy 'guessing intelligently'.

Another intermediate student reported how he used the compensation strategy 'using clues' which was the tone of voice of the speaker:

> *I can feel from his voice that he is angry so I know what he will say next is not something nice.* {IS3, Verbal Report 1}

In addition, some of the students' accounts from the SILL1 reflection sessions seem to confirm their tendency to use other compensation strategies. For example PS7 commented:

> *When I do not know a word or I cannot remember it, I try to think of a word that is similar to it. I always do this in writing and sometimes when I am speaking*

IS13, meanwhile, said:

> *I think my face expressions and also when I move my shoulders and hands that sometimes helps a lot when I do not know what to say.*

This data illustrates the students' use of synonyms and gesture which according to Oxford (1990) belong to the strategy set of 'overcoming limitations in speaking and writing'.

Generally, the elementary level students appeared to use compensation strategies less frequently than the other two class levels. This was contrary to expectation as it was anticipated that the lower level learners would use compensation strategies more due to

the difficulty in producing the language (i.e. they would resort to the use of gestures or use a word or phrase that has equivalent meaning to the target word). Clearly, this was not the case here. This finding contrasts with that of Riazi's (2007) who in his study on university students found that freshmen used compensation strategies more than sophomores. Although there was no clear indication for the reason of this outcome, it might be argued that higher level students were encouraged by their teachers to use these strategies in prior learning experiences. In support of this potential interpretation, IS16 in the verbal report stated:

> *"My teacher tell me to do this if I not know about how to say something...I always try to find very close meaning"* {IS16, Verbal Report 1}

Another student said:

> *I can do it...I know how to do this from before.* {IS5, Verbal Report 1}

Out of the six strategy groups, results showed that *affective strategies* were the least favoured by the students ranking 62.5 per cent for elementary learners, 55 per cent for pre-intermediate learners and 56 per cent for intermediate learners. Similar results where affective strategies were found to be the least frequently used were reported by Abu Shmias (2003) and Al-Buainain (2010), both implemented with Arab learners suggesting that cultural reasons might account for such similar results. In particular, in the present study, strategy item 43 in the SILL: (writing down their feelings in a language learning diary) was reported as never or almost never true of the students in all three class levels. It might be worth noting here that as diary writing is not part of the Libyan culture, it is perhaps not surprising that the majority of students reported that they did not use them.

Nevertheless, despite their low frequency the mean scores of the SILL1 indicated a medium use of affective strategies with (3.12) for elementary learners, (2.75) for pre-intermediate learners and (2.79) for intermediate learners (see Oxford's (1990) scale of usage in Table 7.2 above). Among affective strategies, strategy items 39 and 40 of the SILL: (relaxing whenever they felt afraid of using English) and (encouraging themselves to speak English despite the fear of making a mistake) were both said to be more frequently used. However, a number of the elementary students in the SILL1 reflection session stated that despite efforts to relax when they were uncertain about speaking English, their fears of making a mistake often kept them from trying. For example,

student ES15 said: "*I cannot say all words correct so I be quiet*" and student ES9 explained: "*I not know how to pronounce many words...I always afraid to make mistake*". Learners will vary with respect to their willingness to take risks in language learning activities, particularly if there is a strong requirement to perform in a group, and the data from this study suggests that anxiety may have an effect on students' use of particular strategies. Horwitz et al (1986) found through a survey and support group discussion that foreign language anxiety has a number of concrete manifestations. The findings of their study suggest that anxiety has a particularly acute role in the case of conversation in the target language. The authors state that, "Anxious students feel deep anxiety when asked to risk revealing themselves by speaking a foreign language in the presence of the others" (1986: 129).

The next least favoured strategies among the students were *cognitive strategies* (see table 7.2 above). This finding conflicts with the findings of other intervention studies where cognitive strategies were found to be frequently used alongside metacognitive strategies (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Al-Buainain, 2010).

Cognitive strategies involve and require the learners' active seeking out of opportunities to practice English. Among the most widely used as stated in the SILL was strategy item 19: (I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English) whereas strategy item 22, (I try not to translate word-for-word.) was said to be used less, implying that Libyan learners do have a tendency to translate into Arabic. This was also evident from some of the statements in the SILL reflection session when student ES9 admitted: "*I always like to know meaning of word in Arabic*" although he further comments on a potential drawback of using it: "*.....sometimes it takes long long time and makes me very slowly specially in reading*", a disadvantage which has also been pointed out by Oxford (1990).

As with metacognitive and memory strategies, it was found that the pre-intermediate and intermediate students used cognitive strategies more frequently than the elementary students. One explanation might be that those higher level students looked for more opportunities to practice the language because they were aware of their needs; or at least their needs have become clearer to them having previously studied English prior to their current language level. Therefore, they were found to 'use English words they knew in different ways', 'watch TV shows and movies spoken in English' and 'start conversations in English' (see strategy items 13, 14 and 15 in Appendix C) more than

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the lower proficiency level students. Also word-for word (verbatim) translation, a frequent occurrence among the elementary students, was found to be less used by the other two higher levels presumably because they have realised that direct translation into Arabic is not always helpful and might prevent understanding (Chamot et al, 1999).

Surprisingly, *memory strategies* were not as frequently used as metacognitive strategies amongst the three learner levels. It might be expected that memory strategies would indicate a higher level of frequency and that learners would have a stronger preference for using them. This would be in keeping with the common assumption that instructional delivery systems typically employed in Libya (as in many Arab countries; see Al-Buainain, 2010) are frequently didactic and emphasise rote memorisation. As such, rote memorization is very prevalent among Libyan students and was expected to influence their choice of strategies. However, the results here show this expectation to be untrue of these student participants and might suggest that this traditional way of learning might have been enforced on them and not necessarily a method they would opt for willingly. Similar results have been revealed by a number of studies including some which have been implemented with Arab learners (e.g. Wharton, 2000; Al-Otaibi, 2004; Al-Buainain, 2010). These also contradict this assumption, suggesting that memory strategies are not as highly used as predicted. Also looking at the strategy items of the SILL (part A items 1-9, see Appendix C) on an item-by-item basis, it is evident that the least-used memory strategies are not related to rote memorisation; rather they are items like using rhymes, creating a mental image and acting out new English words (strategy items 5, 6 and 7 of SILL part A). These are less popular among the learners and therefore not used as much or at all. For example, the majority of students reported that they do not use flash cards to learn English as they have never been taught how to do so. Once again, like with some metacognitive strategies, this finding reflects the need for a teacher to encourage the use of particular strategies.

In respect of *social strategies*, it was recognised through the SILL1 that students in the advanced levels (pre-intermediate and intermediate) used social strategies such as working with others, asking for help and cooperating with peers more frequently than the elementary students. This could be attributable to the assumption that increased proficiency led to increased confidence which allowed the learners to interact with others by practicing their English language knowledge. Moreover, as revealed by the SILL1 reflection sessions, the learners' awareness of the importance of English language learning in the last few years in Libya has driven them in the direction of

interactive learning in order to develop greater linguistic fluency. This was evident in IS17's quote:

> *I think it is very important for me to talk a lot with my classmates and also my friends so I can improve my language....I want to speak English properly because English is very important in Libya today.*

The high sense of confidence in learning English and the urgent need to promote communicative skills could be contributors to the students' use of social strategies. Phillips' (1991) study of Asian ESL students also found that they used social strategies more than affective and memory strategies.

As for the elementary level students, 19 out of 22 agreed in the SILL1 reflection session that they were not encouraged much to work in pairs or in groups in their previous English language learning experiences (i.e. in secondary school, in university). This was likely to have affected their lower use of social strategies compared to the other two levels. Other reasons could be learner anxiety as understood from this elementary level student's statement:

> *I feel very shy when I speak in front of my teacher and friends ...I like to work on my own better.* {ES17, SILL1 Reflection Session}

Another elementary level learner, similarly voiced:

> *I cannot help it but I get very uncomfortable when the teacher asks me to work in a group.* * {ES12, SILL1 Reflection Session}

These viewpoints suggest a fear of self-revelation which may interfere with their abilities to profit from situations of authentic interaction such as employing social language strategies.

7.1.2 Findings and Results after SBI

The findings reported in section 7.1.1 above, relate to the students strategy use before the implementation of the SBI programme. At the end of the SBI programme, after the students had received training in the use of LLS during phase 2 of the SBIA model, changes in the students' overall strategy use were identified through the post-test administration of the SILL2. This revealed a significant improvement in the use of all six groups of strategies among all three learner levels.

Almost all the strategies moved further up Oxford's (1990) scale from Medium to High with the exception of affective strategies which remained at Medium level. Table 7.4 and the three graphs shown in figure 7.1 reveal a very similar pattern of results. In other words, the results of the SILL2 indicate that the rank order of the six strategy groups is quite similar to that of the SILL1 in the sense that both metacognitive and compensation strategies were still occupying the highest positions on the frequency scale and affective strategies remaining last. This was true of all three learner levels.

Table 7.4: Rank Order of LLS from SILL 1 to SILL 2

☐ **Direct Strategies** ☐ **Indirect Strategies**	Elementary Level Rank Order of LLS (%)		Pre-intermediate Rank Order of LLS (%)		Intermediate Level Rank Order of LLS (%)	
Strategy Group	SILL 1	SILL 2	SILL 1	SILL 2	SILL 1	SILL 2
Memory Strategies	64 %	72 %	65 %	68.5 %	67.5 %	72 %
Cognitive Strategies	62.5 %	72.5 %	64.5 %	72 %	67 %	72 %
Compensation Strategies	68 %	76.5 %	70%	78 %	73.5 %	79 %
Metacognitive Strategies	77.5 %	86 %	79.5 %	87 %	83 %	88 %
Affective Strategies	62.5 %	70 %	55 %	61 %	56 %	60 %
Social Strategies	63.5 %	75 %	67.5 %	76 %	68 %	75 %

Elementary Level Students
Strategy Group Overall Average in SILL1 and SILL2

Pre-intermediate Level Students
Strategy Group Overall Average in SILL1 and SILL2

Intermediate Level Students
Strategy Group Overall Average in SILL1 and SILL2
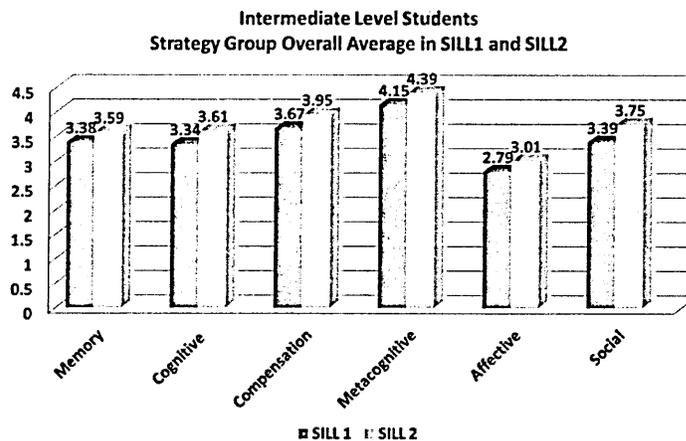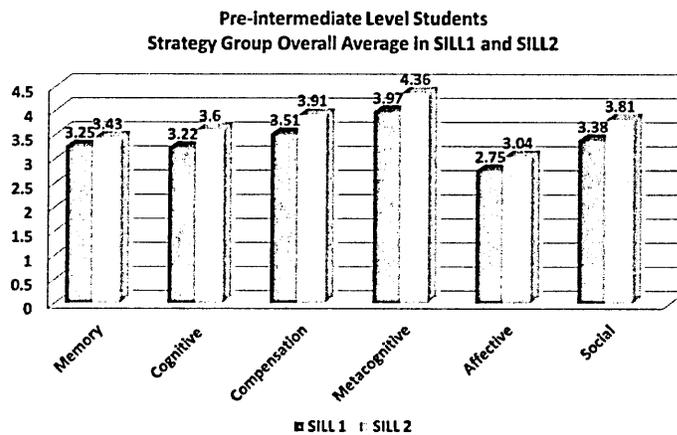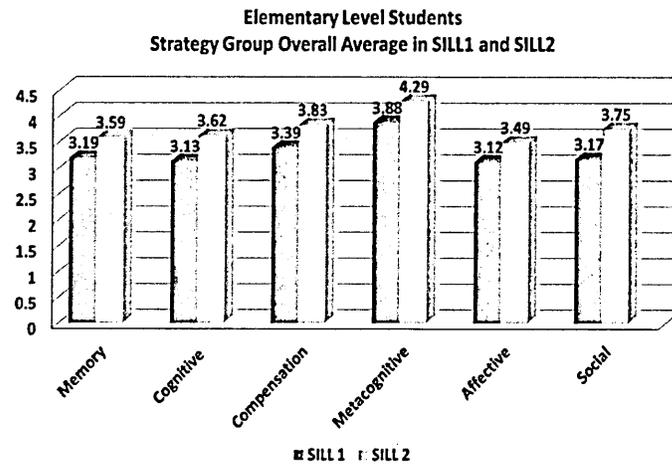
Figure 7.1 Strategy Group Overall Averages in SILL1 & SILL2
Scale of Usage: L=1.0-2.4; M=2.5-3.4; H=3.5-5 (Oxford 1989).

However, it was found that for the pre-intermediate and intermediate students, the use of affective strategies did not increase from the SILL1 to the SILL2 as much as it did for the elementary students whose mean score changed from 3.12 in the SILL1 to 3.49 in the SILL2. This indicates perhaps, that as learners reached a more advanced level, they had less need for affective strategies. Some of the students' statements during the SILL2

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reflection seem to back up this speculation. The majority of students (particularly from the advanced levels) confidently believed they no longer needed tools to help them control their emotions while learning English but would always consider using them if certain situations required so. Most of them agreed that they had overcome the stage where they are afraid of making mistakes. This was also true of some of the elementary students after the SBI as one of the elementary students ES8 voiced a similar belief in the SILL2 reflection session:

> *... in learning a language the more you make mistakes the better for you and everyone else it is. I don't think affective strategies will help me anymore.* *

Some students who felt negatively towards using affective strategies reported that they still felt anxious despite using self-encouraging self-assuring methods. Several students from all three levels talked about their preference to use strategies other than affective ones. For example, student IS5 said:

> *I do not think I need them as much as I need other strategies like analysing, organising or planning.*

While ES3 stated:

> *I prefer using social strategies because I feel more comfortable when I am in a group* *.

Student ES5 concurred:

> *I agree with him. I think working with classmates can be less embarrassing when you make mistakes. Using affective strategies sometimes doesn't help me to overcome nervousness but social ones do, especially cooperating with others* *

These last two quotes from the elementary learners regarding their preference of social strategies over affective strategies may also help explain the noticeable increase of frequency in the use of social strategies among this class level as revealed by the results of the SILL. It was found that the means and percentages of the elementary learners rose from 3.17 (63.5 per cent) before SBI to 3.75 (75per cent) at the end of the programme. Some of the students' verbal reports also suggested a wider use of social strategies after the SBI. This was apparent in the following verbal report associated with Tasks 2:

> *When I talked with my friends that helped me understand the meaning of some word I don't know and I tell them words that*

they don't know. So we cooperate on this part and discussed our
personal experience together and compared {PS2, Verbal Report 2}

In line with this particular finding, several studies (Green and Oxford, 1995; Bruen, 2001; Fan, 2003) indicate that the level of proficiency has a major effect on the strategies that students use. For example, some strategies used by beginning level language learners are used less often by the same learners when they reach intermediate level classes, probably because they have had to develop new strategies to meet the requirements of more challenging language tasks.

Furthermore, the students' participation in the programme training might have influenced changes in student strategy preferences. For example, teaching the students social strategies required encouraging a lot of pair and group work during tasks, a technique the elementary students in particular were not accustomed to. It was also noticed that strategy preference not only changed from strategy group to strategy group but also from strategy to strategy within the same group. For example, planning ahead as one of the metacognitive strategies that was not used much by the learners at the beginning of the course was one of the preferred ones by the end of term as reported by the majority of students. They were able to prepare studying timetables for themselves and were excited about using them in future. ES8 said:

> *I really think the strategy of planning is useful to me especially*
> *in writing. Before, my writing was always a mess, lots of ideas*
> *here and there and no organization. Now it's different.* *

The students' verbal reports associated with Tasks 2 show a wider use of strategies across all the strategy groups with all four language skills. An example of this is:

> *Now I know that I have to do a number of steps before the task,*
> *during and also after the task. For example, I predict what to*
> *expect from the task. I select the words or phrases I only need, I*
> *use my background knowledge and make conclusions. In the end*
> *I check goals I set at the beginning and see if the strategies I*
> *used worked or not. I think this is more effective.* {IS7, Verbal
> Report 2}

It is evident from this data that the strategies used and mentioned by the learners in the verbal reports were all taught in the SBI programme with the exception of a few students' like IS7 (who was already using some strategies before the training). After the SBI the students were referring to the strategies by their names; for example, student IS5 mentioned: *"...strategies like analysing, organising or planning"* the same technical names which were used throughout the SBI programme. These two outcomes

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suggest that the improved strategy use of these students might reasonably reflect the nature of the training they received in the SBI programme. Furthermore, tracking the interviews of IS7, ES18, PS11, it is clear that they welcomed the wide range of strategies they were introduced to during the SBI programme which they believed had expanded their strategy repertoire. For example ES18 said:

> *I never expected myself to know this number of strategies...they are so many and I am using most of the ones we learned in the lessons.*

While IS7 noted:

> *Now I know a lot of strategies I did not know before...I think this is great for me!*

PS11, furthermore, explains why he is using more strategies:

> *All the strategies I learned in this course have affected my learning... for me using them has really paid off... that's why I am using them more and more.*

Similarly IS12 asserted:

> *Each time I find a strategy helpful I use it again and I try to use new ones.*

To sum up, the findings discussed thus far might be interpreted in light of the SBI programme the student participants received in which they were not only introduced to LLS but also practised these strategies repeatedly (in phase 2 of the SBIA model). Even more, they were encouraged to use them independently. This led to the expansion of their repertoire of strategies (see section 8.1.2 in the next chapter) and in turn, provided them with more choices to select from and helped them use new strategies that they had not known before. Furthermore, it was found that these students having experienced the payoff gained by using LLS, tended to use strategies more. On the basis of the results it can be concluded that SBI seemed to have an effect on the improvement of strategy use and hence agrees with many other studies in the literature which have achieved similar results (see Abu Shmias, 2003 and Al-Buainain, 2010).

7.2 Awareness Raising and Language Learning Strategies

A major finding emerging from the study is the influence of the SBI intervention on students' awareness. For the purpose of this chapter, two types of awareness are

identified: *strategic awareness* and *learning awareness*. Strategic awareness (discussed in this section and in section 7.2.1) is used to refer to the learners' awareness of LLS and of their strategy use whereas learning awareness (mentioned in sections 7.2.2 and 7.3.2 and discussed further in chapter 8) is used to refer to the learners' awareness of their *efforts* and *performance* in learning English.

In section 7.1 of this chapter it was reported that students across the three different learner levels were already using LLS from all six strategy groups. However, it was also noted that the student participants' overall strategy use before the SBI was marked by a lack of strategic awareness. The reflection sessions following the SILL1 revealed that none of the students were aware that they were using LLS. In answer to the question: "Did any of you know that you are using language learning strategies?" students ES5, ES14, PS10, PS7, IS17, IS13 all clearly agreed that they did not. ES10 elaborated: *"I don't know that making guesses called strategy."* while IS5 commented:

> *It is interesting to know that all these things...I mean these steps*
> *I am using is called strategies.*

A possible interpretation of this finding would be that the majority of these students might have encountered the use of LLS in their previous learning experiences; however, the nature of instruction could have been implicit i.e. there was no mention of strategy types, names or when and where these could be used, which might account for their initial unawareness of strategy use. Perhaps LLS are already incorporated into curriculum material they have previously used and these were not highlighted or reinforced as they would be in explicit strategy instruction. For example, a specific language task might indirectly urge them to use certain strategies but without overt explanation. There is support for this in previous research studies. Oxford and Leaver (1996), for example, refer to 'Blind' strategy instruction when discussing research which shows learners are unlikely to transfer to other tasks the strategies practiced through 'blind' strategy instruction even if the learners successfully use the embedded learning strategy in the immediate task (Oxford and Leaver, 1996: 232).

What is more, there is always the possibility that the students' strategic unawareness is a reflection of the teachers' unawareness of strategies or of their integration within text books. As Oxford (1990: 201) argues it is not only "learners who need to learn how to learn...teachers need to learn how to facilitate the process". Additionally, it might be interesting to presume that these students could have been implicitly exposed to or

resorted to strategy use not only in learning EFL but also when learning their L1 or during any other educational experience in general. These assumptions, although not verified as part of this research study, might still account for the students' high use of metacognitive strategies and medium use of all the other strategy groups rather than a low usage even before the SBI intervention. It is thus essential to this study to attempt to identify whether the SBI programme helped raise the student participants' strategic awareness.

Across the three class levels, all 59 students as reflected in statement1.e.of the post-SBI questionnaire (see Appendix K) believed that it was participation in the SBI course that had made them aware of their previous use of strategies. This was emphasised by some students at interview, as illustrated by the following example extracts:

> IS16: *"This course has made me know that I have already been using strategies during all my language classes"*

> PS3: *"The tasks that I did showed me that sometimes I am using strategies I just don't know it.*

> ES10: *"When we first started, I did not know I was using strategies, but now I know I am using a lot of them"*

Strategic awareness not only involves acknowledging prior use of LLS but also establishing a knowledgebase about LLS (old and new strategies) and becoming aware of their importance in learning. Students' responses to statement 1.a. in the post-SBI questionnaire (see Appendix K) show that all 59 students across the three learner levels believed that the SBI course has broadened their knowledge of LLS. Student IS13 spoke of enhancing his knowledge of strategies during his interview:

> *I have learned a lot about strategies...I did not know how to use them and where to use them before but now I know many many strategies.*

Student PS3 meanwhile, referred to the way SBI had changed him. He explained:

> *First, in this course I learned all about strategies. In the past I did not know anything about them. Now I know their names, their types and what they can do for me.*

This student's account reflects both his knowledge of strategies and his appreciation of their value. He further adds:

I learned that when I use them they make the task easier for me.

Similarly student ES6, reflecting on the value of strategies, stated:

> *In this course we practised using many types of strategies and I*
> *think that they are all useful.* *

These final two student extracts on the perceived value of LLS support the responses to statement 2.b. from the post-SBI questionnaire (see Appendix K) which showed that all 20 elementary, all 19 pre-intermediate and all 20 intermediate student participants thought LLS supported and facilitated their language learning.

Some of the students' appreciation of the use of strategies was more specifically associated with their language skills. Student PS11 recalled:

> *I used to listen very closely to every single word and I still do*
> *not know what I am looking for. Now with strategies I am a*
> *better listener and I am more focused.*

Student ES6 also reported:

> *Using strategies has helped me become organised especially in*
> *writing. My writing skill has improved because I know how to*
> *use planning and now I can also evaluate my work and use some*
> *of the marking techniques you and my other teacher used with*
> *us. I can use it on my own writing.* *

The way learners compare their experience in the four language skills prior to and after the programme seems to reflect their perceived value of LLS. For example students ES10, PS3, and IS12 noted that they lacked awareness of strategies that could be used with listening and speaking in the past and that SBI made a difference. Student ES7, meanwhile, reported with regards to reading:

> *After completing the eight-week training, I feel that I now pay*
> *more attention to strategies, especially when I am reading.* *

These findings concur with Dadour and Robbins' (1996) study in which they found that training students in the use of strategies has an impact not only on their use of strategies but also on their knowledge about strategies and their perceived value of strategies.

Knowledge about strategies can be discussed in light of cognitive theories. A key goal of cognitive information processing theory is to transform declarative knowledge (conscious and effortful) into procedural knowledge (unconscious and automatic) (Anderson, 1995). Within this study, by providing SBI; the learners were encouraged to

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be aware of their existing strategies and new strategies they can choose to use. By repeatedly applying the strategies, the learners were expected to use them with less effort and awareness and the learning strategies would become gradually proceduralised. At the procedural knowledge stage, due to becoming automatic and habitual, strategies are known as 'processes' (Cohen, 1998) or 'habits' (Oxford, 2011). However, because strategies by definition must be somewhat conscious (Cohen, 1990; Stern, 1992), there is a need to bring back automatized strategies to attention when needed (Macaro, 2006).The diagram below depicts key elements in this process and shows how strategies are seen in light of cognitive theories.

Practice and Transformation

- Conscious, effortful use of strategies

  Declarative Knowledge

- Repeated application of strategies

- Unconscious, effortless use of strategies

  Procedural Knowledge

Declarative Knowledge

- Reactivation of unconscious strategies making them conscious again
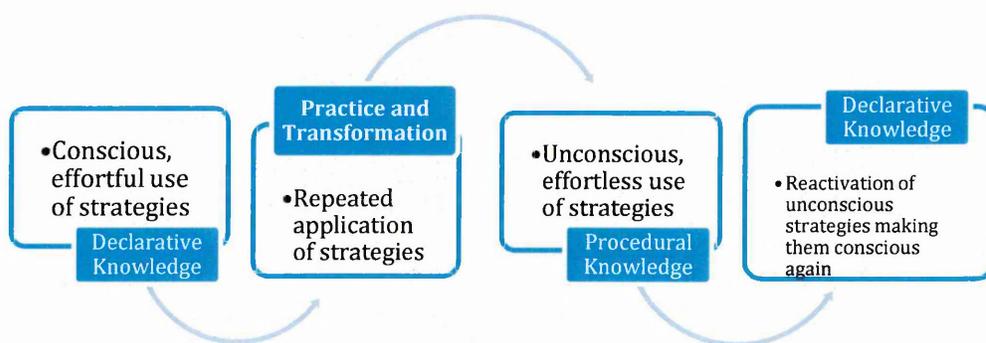
Figure 7.2: Strategies in Cognitive Theory (Source: Original based on cognitive models of learning)

In this study nearly three quarters of the students across the three learner levels reported that they use LLS consciously indicating that they are at the stage of declarative knowledge. It seems that presenting the strategies explicitly and giving them names helped increase the students' declarative knowledge about strategies, thereby enabling students to identify and report the use of strategies in the verbal reports associated with Tasks 2 and in the interviews. For example, in her verbal report associated with Task2, studentIS9 referred to a number of strategies she was using by name:

I remember that I try to predict what the speakers might say before I listen...I then used this same strategy in reading...I looked at the title and quickly read the subtitles and tried to guess what sort of words might be used...that was really useful for me it helped me understand the text better and faster. So I used many strategies actually, I guessed intelligently, I monitored my progress. Oh and yes I summarised, as well. {IS9, Verbal Report 2}

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Student IS12, meanwhile, claimed:

> *Before the course, I don't know the name of this one or that one*
> *for example, cognitive strategies or...or...memory*
> *strategies...but now I have learned all the names and...and I*
> *know which one to use.*

These students' extracts imply that they are applying *effort* in using LLS which, again, is an indicator of declarative knowledge of strategies. Yet knowing what a strategy is called, which group it belongs to, its value and exerting effort into applying it (declarative knowledge) may not necessarily transform into (procedural knowledge). However, this was expected to be achieved through modelling and through the repeated application of the strategies with various language tasks. Relevant to this, it was found that the SBI intervention provided all of the student participants with opportunities to practise a wide range of LLS as seen from their responses to statement 1.c. in the post-SBI questionnaire (see Appendix K). One might anticipate here that given these practice opportunities the majority of students would be using strategies with less or no effort by the end of the SBI programme. Nevertheless, the results of the post-SBI questionnaire showed that only 4 students of the total sample use LLS subconsciously while the majority of them, 43 students, are conscious of their use of LLS. Meanwhile, 12 students declared that they use LLS both consciously and subconsciously. Despite this, it is difficult to verify at what stage of knowledge the student participants' strategies were in relation to declarative and procedural knowledge.

If it is to be accepted that the majority of students are aware of their strategy use (declarative knowledge) then a possible explanation for this is that the training programme was not long enough to allow for the students' strategies to become proceduralised knowledge (i.e. due to its length the programme provided limited practice opportunities). On the other hand, there is the case where strategies might have become procedural knowledge (automatic and effortless) but a certain requirement may have forced them to move back to the stage of declarative knowledge. This does appear plausible as this is a training programme where the students were constantly asked and reminded about their use of strategies. This last assumption appears to be emphasised by an intermediate student's answer to question 3 in the post-SBI phase 4 interview: "Do you use LLS consciously or subconsciously? In other words, are you always aware of yourself when using LLS?" The student replied:

I noticed that I am not conscious about them all the time
...sometimes I use them automatically so I do not realize that
this is a strategy unless my teacher wants me to talk about what
I did. *{IS16, Post-SBI Interview}

One of the pre-intermediate students also explained:

Sometimes I am aware that I am using them and sometimes I am
not. But if I need to reflect on myself or my teacher asks me then
I know that I am. *{PS5, Post-SBI Interview}

In line with these finding and assumptions, it might be useful to look at this knowledge formulation as a recurring cyclical process rather than a linear one. Thus figure 7.2 above highlights the need to bring a former strategy back into action as a strategy as recommended by Oxford (2011: 53).

7.2.1 Levels of Consciousness and SBI

To gain a better understanding of the students' consciousness of strategies and how the SBI programme influenced it, it might be useful to view consciousness as consisting of stages or levels. For example, Schmidt (1994) divides consciousness into four aspects: awareness, attention, intentionality and control. To this list, Oxford and Leaver (1996) add a further aspect, lack of consciousness (see figure 7.3 below). The findings of the present study can be discussed within this five-fold model.
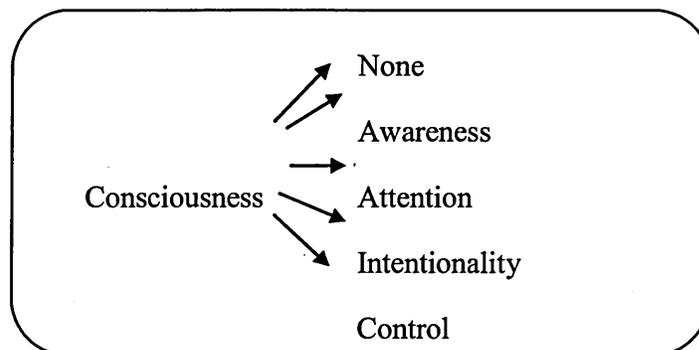
Figure 7.3 Levels of Consciousness (adapted from Schmidt, 1994 and Oxford and Leaver, 1996)

At the beginning of the SBI programme and prior to any training in the use of LLS, there was a lack of any consciousness of strategies among the students. The students were then familiarised with the concept of LLS through SBI thus raising their strategic awareness. At this stage the students became aware of strategies they were already using and were introduced to new ones. If the impact of the SBI programme implemented in this study stopped at this level, the programme might be considered 'awareness training', the purpose of which is to familiarise participants with the general idea of

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language learning strategies without having to use them in actual, on-the-spot language tasks (Oxford, 1990: 202).

However, the participants' awareness was heightened through repeated practice with LLS helping them to pay attention to their own strategy use and also to that of others, thus their consciousness moved to another level: attention. At this level the students for example were able to recognise where, when and with whom they use LLS as well as paying attention to frequency of strategy use inside and outside of the classroom. Results of the post-SBI questionnaire support this claim as it was found that the students use LLS in various situations. For example, responses to statement 14 (see Appendix K) showed that 27 students out of the total of 59 participants use LLS when watching TV, 53 students use LLS with difficult language tasks and 43 use LLS with their classmates. Responses to statement 15of the post-SBI questionnaire (see Appendix K) revealed that 34 students out of the total of 59 participants tend to use LLS more inside the classroom, 11 students tend to use LLS more outside the classroom whereas the remaining 14 students tend to use LLS equally inside and outside the classroom. These situations among others seem to stimulate attention to their strategy use.

The next level of the five-fold model shown in figure 7.3 is intentionality. At this level SBI helps students become intentional in improving their own strategies by making the commitment and taking steps to improve their strategy use (Oxford and Leaver, 1996: 231). Students have shown signs of reaching this level as observed by the three participating teachers. Mohamed, the Inter-mediate class teacher, in the post-teacher interview affirmed:

> *I did not think the students would bother to improve their strategies but in fact I have noticed that many of them are always trying...it is clear that they want to make the most of their experience with strategies.*

Salma, the Elementary class teacher, made a similar observation:

> *I could see that a lot of the students were making an effort to perfect their strategies and make them better especially the ones they already know.*

According to Oxford and Leaver (1996: 236) "Awareness, attention and intentionality are not enough to create a proficient skilful user of a learning strategy. Control is also necessary." They believe that control involves the ability to evaluate the success of using a certain strategy and the ability to transfer it to other relevant situations. These

two abilities seem to have been acquired by the participant students based on their responses in the post-SBI questionnaire. Around 90 per cent of the participants agreed they were able to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy when using it with a language task whereas 8.4 per cent thought they were able to transfer LLS they knew to new tasks. In answer to question7 in the interview (Can you evaluate how effective a strategy is for you? What do you do if it does not work out for you?), ES10 said:

> *Yes...yes... if I can do the exercise and find solutions and answer the questions it means the strategy is a good and effective...if this one is not good I try another one if I can remember it.*

StudentIS7, meanwhile, claimed:

> *Yes, I know when a strategy is useful when it helps me finish my task and reach my goal... if it does not work I use different one.*

This qualitative data corroborates data from the questionnaire. Furthermore, the data suggests that students were able to use a different strategy if one strategy did not work effectively with a language task, 53 students (90%) of the global sample of students reported this in the post-SBI questionnaire. In addition, 52 students (88%) of students believed that they were able to use a combination of strategies with English language tasks.

It could be suggested that the ability to use a different strategy when one does not work out, and the ability to use a combination of strategies, in addition to those abilities referred to by Oxford and Leaver (1996: 236) also demonstrate that learners are at the level of control and have broadened their strategy repertoires. Research suggests that there is no single strategy pattern used by effective language learners (e.g. Oxford, 1990; Chamot and O'Malley 1994; Cohen 1998). In fact, successful language learners use an array of strategies, matching those strategies to their own learning style and personality and to the demands of the task in the context of cultural influences. Optimal learners find ways to tailor their strategy use to their individual needs and requirements; they develop combinations of strategies that work for them (Oxford, 1990). This is similar to Ehrman et al.'s (2003) conclusion that less able learners often use strategies in a random, unconnected, and uncontrolled manner, while more effective learners use a well- orchestrated set of strategies (i.e. a set of interlocking, related, and mutually supportive strategies).

In conclusion, it can be said that the students have experienced all five levels of the five-fold model of consciousness suggested by Schmidt (1994) and Oxford and Leaver (1996). Following phase 1 of the programme, strategy awareness sessions were embedded throughout the lessons based on the students' preliminary lack of strategic awareness. These served as both introductory and foundation blocks upon which the practice sessions could then be established. The students were encouraged to pay attention to their strategy use both in class and out of class. They were shown how to evaluate the effectiveness of each strategy they were trained to use, how to use a substitute strategy, how to use more than one and how to transfer the strategies they learnt to new language tasks. It is these exact characteristics that the student participants seem to have obtained to varying degrees as a result of the SBI programme. In terms of the, the ultimate level of consciousness (control), results of the post-SBI questionnaire showed that the 51 out of 59 students believed that they were able to transfer LLS to new learning situations.

7.2.2 Strategies-based Instruction and Student Efforts

Closely related to these findings is the effect of the SBI programme on the students' efforts in learning English and one of the research questions for this study asks:

- Can explicit teaching of language learning strategies and their applications enhance students' *efforts* to learn and use English more effectively?

In the post-SBI teacher interviews, the three participant teachers' highlighted the change in student efforts in learning English. Mariam, the Pre-intermediate teacher, reported:

> *There was a difference from the beginning to the end of the course in the students' behaviour... their efforts to learn and use the language were gradually increasing.*

Salma, meanwhile, noted:

> *I've noticed that the students seem to be putting more effort into learning...I felt that most of them enjoyed the programme that's why they were making more effort.*

However, these teacher extracts do not confirm that the SBI programme is directly accountable for the increase in the students' efforts despite Salma's personal assumption that the students' enjoyment of the programme led to their enhanced efforts. Other potential reasons like the normal growth of the learner over the period of the language

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programme (learner maturation) or motivational factors could account for the increase in efforts. However, results of the post-SBI questionnaire demonstrated that 54 students across the three learner levels claimed that using LLS in various situations has helped them increase their efforts in learning English, 18 of which said that the effect was *great* while 36 students believed that LLS had *some* effect on their efforts to learn English (see figure 7.4).
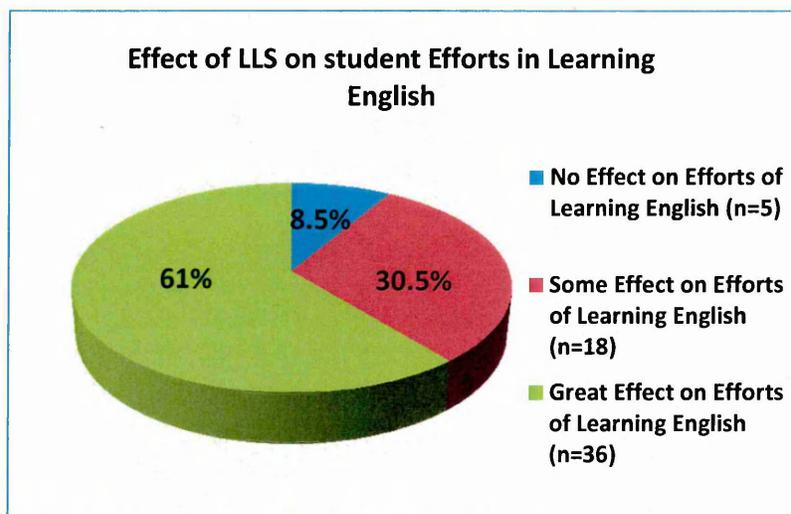
Figure 7.4: Effects of LLS on Student Efforts in Learning English across the Three Learner Levels

Moreover, some of the students' accounts in the interviews associate the increase in their efforts with the use of LLS. A number of possible interpretations for this data could be identified. First, the increase in students' efforts might be an outcome of the increased knowledge about strategies as emphasised by student ES10's reflection:

> *Because I now know more strategies and when and how to use them, I am making more efforts to learn English.*

In addition, the students started to work harder to learn and use English because they became more aware that strategies were valuable and they were accessible tools for effective learning. Student PS11 said:

> *There are lots of strategies to use. Each time I use a new strategy and see how it is helpful for me I feel like I want to do more tasks and learn more and more.*

While student ES6 claimed:

> *I am excited about using English everywhere I go, at home, with my friends and family and sometimes even at work. I*

realised after the programme that I can use any strategy I like
*whichever is suitable and helpful for the situation.**

Furthermore, it could be because the students felt that they were making an effort to use LLS they were making an effort to learn English. This is clear from student IS5's statement:

> *Yes, I do think that my efforts to learn have increased in this*
> *course because I am trying very hard and doing my best to use*
> *all the different strategies that we learned.*

In an attempt to clarify why they were working harder student ES12 justified:

> *Because I want to discover what these strategies can do for me,*
> *I working harder than before.*

Student IS16 explained:

> *There is a lot going on...we are developing our English skills*
> *and learning new strategies everyday so I have to put a lot of*
> *work in ...more than usual actually.**

This data indicates that the students were making more efforts either to experience the payoff of using strategies or because of the requirements of the SBI programme as a language course.

Whichever the reason, and however the SBI programme influenced the students, one general conclusion can be reached and that is that the student participants became aware they were exerting greater efforts into learning and using English. Students' consciousness of their efforts as language learners can also be compatible with the intentionality level of the five-fold model of consciousness mentioned above. Here, therefore, SBI seems to have helped the students become intentional in improving their language learning in addition to improving their strategy use. Thus, it can be said that the SBI programme which was based on the explicit teaching of LLS has helped increase the students' efforts in learning and using English. While there are no specific studies on the impact of strategy instruction on student effort, studies which refer to students becoming more active, more autonomous and more self-directed relate to this area. This will be considered further in Chapter 8 on autonomy.

7.3   Language Development and Language Learning Strategies

The second part of research question one of this study (stated in 1.5, p.7) aims to find out whether explicit teaching of LLS and their applications will help improve students' performance in language tasks. It asks:

- And will it (explicit teaching of LLS and their applications) help improve their *performance* in language tasks?

7.3.1   Improvement in Student Performance

To measure the students' improvement in the target language, results were obtained from student performance in Tasks 1 (pre-test) administered before the SBI programme and Tasks 2 (post-test) administered after the SBI across all four language skills. The average (mean) scores were calculated and a t-test was performed to measure the significance of the quantitative data. The t-tests showed a highly significant difference between the students' Task 1 and Tasks 2 scores (already provided and in section 6.3.2 in previous chapter). The findings comparing the results of Tasks 1 with those of Tasks 2 showed that the highest improvement was associated with the skill of reading for the elementary level students (increasing from 66 to 80). In comparison with the other language skills, the skill of speaking saw the lowest improvement for this class of learners; only increasing from 62 to 73 (see figure 7.5 below).
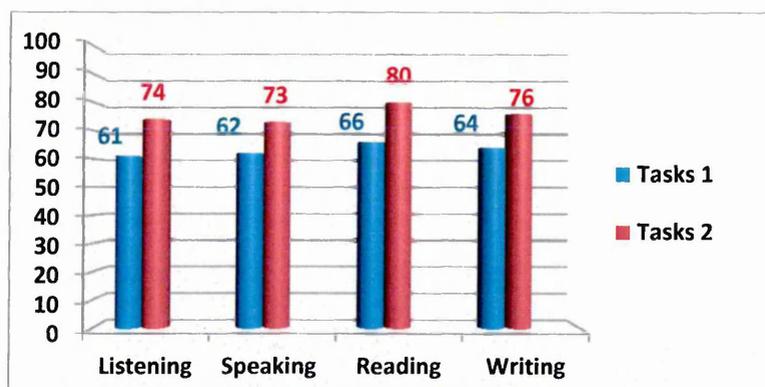
Figure 7.5: Elementary Students' Results of Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 across Language Skills (Raw Means of Task Scores out of 100)

The data suggests that this result reflects the learners' increased confidence in relation to reading. ES20 reported: *"I do not feel nervous when I am reading....I like reading a lot in the class and in the home"*. On the other hand, it was noticed that some of the learners' sense of confidence in using the target language in speaking and oral activities

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was not as high as that of the learners' in the more advanced levels. This might be due to learner maturation as learner confidence is likely to increase with the development of language proficiency. From the qualitative data, this low sense of confidence amongst the elementary level learners, particularly in speaking activities, appeared to be partly due to a lack of sufficient vocabulary. ES9 explained: "*I still not know lot of word to say what I want.*" some of the learners, meanwhile, saw their pronunciation skills as a hindrance to speaking in English, ES15 admitted: "*I cannot say all words correct so I be quiet*" while ES9 commented: "*I not know how to pronounce many words…I always afraid to make mistake*". Other students reported they were shy in the presence of others suggesting that learner anxiety has an impact on students' development of certain language skills.

For the other two class levels (pre-intermediate and intermediate) the skill of reading did not improve as much as it did for the elementary level learners suggesting that proficiency level might contribute to differences in skill improvement. The skills of listening and writing saw a slightly higher improvement for these two groups of learners (see figures 7.6 and 7.7 below).
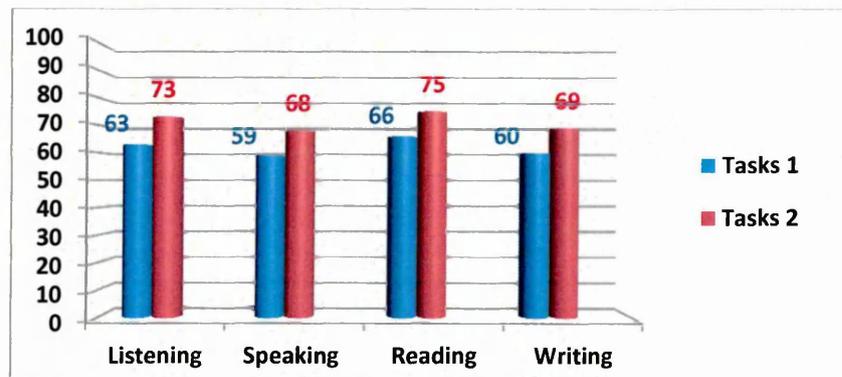
Figure 7.6: Pre-intermediate Students' Results of Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 across Language Skills (Raw Means of Task Scores out of 100)
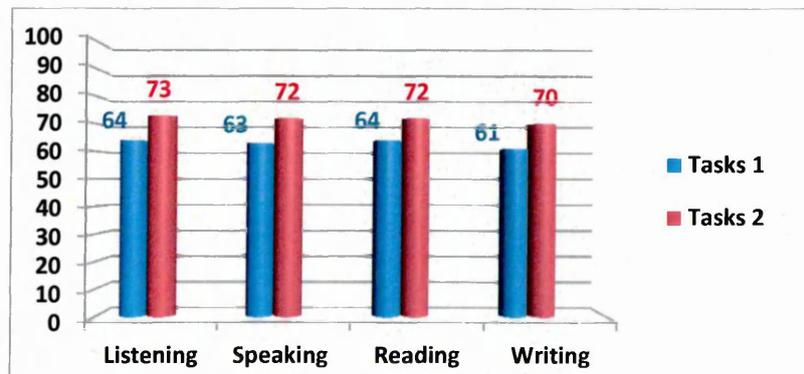
Figure 7.7: Intermediate Students' Results of Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 across Language Skills (Raw Means of Task Scores out of 100)

The improvement in the skills of listening and writing of these two levels of learners was also captured during student interviews. With the exception of PS5 who claimed: *"I am not good at listening..."* All the other pre-intermediate and intermediate students highlighted their improvement in the skills of listening and writing. For example, PS11 reported: *"...I am a better listener and I am more focused"* andIS7 observed: *"My writing skill is much better than it was before."*. Although these student Excerpts seem to imply that their strategy use might be accountable for their success in these skills, there might be other factors. One explanation is that progression (as they are higher in proficiency level than the elementary class students) is related to the extent of their vocabulary knowledge which suggests that natural progression in skill-building is associated with proficiency level.

Nevertheless, because the data does not reveal a significant difference between the overall scores of the students in the tasks, or a significant difference or similarity between the three learner levels, it is hard to extract a particular pattern or provide a justification for it based on the data. The difference in improvement across the four language skills could merely be due to learner differences in acquiring the language skills during the eight-week programme.

7.3.2 Strategies-Based Instruction and Student Performance

It was evident, based on the data presented and discussed so far, that the majority of the students' performance in all four language skills had improved. However this study aimed to identify whether SBI (as a programme which encourages the explicit teaching of LLS) has any role in such language improvement. In order to address this more specific question, the following data analysis was conducted following a sequence of queries:

- *Did the students use any LLS during their performance in Tasks 1 and Tasks 2?*
- *If so, was there any change in the students' strategy-use from Tasks 1 to Tasks 2?*
- *Did the SBI intervention influence this change in strategy-use?*

These three consecutive questions had to be addressed before answering the ultimate question:

- *Did the students' use of LLS have a role in language task improvement?*

Answers to the first three questions were provided in sections 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 of this chapter where students' verbal reports during Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 indicated a use of

LLS with a more extensive use of LLS during Tasks 2. The increase in the participant students' strategy use from Tasks 1 to Tasks 2 suggests an expansion in their strategy repertoires. This change in strategy use based on the research data analysis and discussion was found to be attributable to the training the students received in the applications of LLS in phase 2 of the SBI programme.

Furthermore, comparing the students' verbal reports of Tasks 2 with the verbal reports of Tasks 1 revealed not only improvement in their strategy use but also an awareness of how their strategy use had affected their performance in the language skills. For example, table 7.2 below compares IS7's verbal reports when performing Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 in listening

Table 7.2 Verbal Reports of IS7 in Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 in Listening

Verbal report: Tasks 1 in Listening	Verbal report: Tasks 2 in Listening
I don't know...I didn't hear very well...her speaking is very very fast for me...I only understand a few words... even in the second time, nothing...I don't know what I am doing really I just answer the questions like that.	*The words that I did not catch the first time, I concentrate and wait for them in the next listening because I know exactly when they are coming....like...(word) so I used selective listening. I didn't hear it in the beginning but then I did. In this question I decided to predict based on my knowledge. I could guess some of the words like here I knew he was going to say (word) and he did you can tell from what he is talking about. I think I did well in that task because I used all of these steps. It felt quite easy.*

This student's verbal report in Task 2 reflects a deeper awareness of how he should approach the listening task effectively in comparison with Task 1 where he repeatedly declared that he did not hear the speaker because she was speaking quickly and he was not sure about what and how well he was doing.

The results of the post-SBI questionnaire support these findings as it was revealed that all 59 students across the three learner levels reported that using LLS in various situations had helped them improve their performance in learning English. And while 23 (39%) of the students said that LLS had *some* effect on their performance in learning English, 36 (61%) students believed that LLS had a *great* effect on their performance in

learning English (see figure 7.8 and appendix K for students' responses to statements 21 and 22 b).
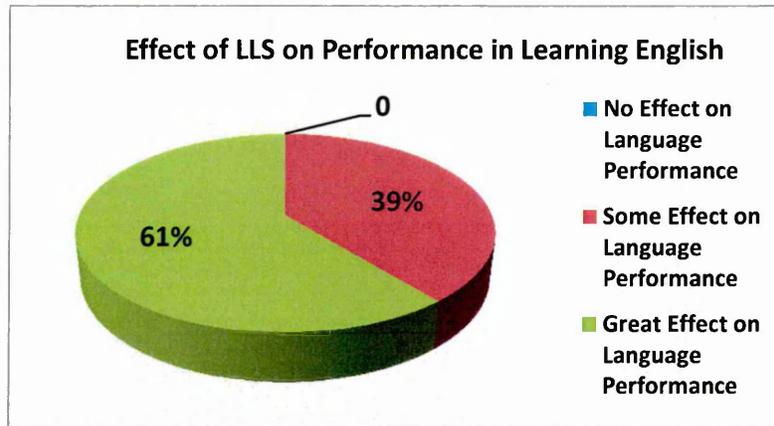
Figure 7.8: Effect of LLS on Performance in Learning English across the Three Learner Levels

The participant teachers also noticed a change in the students' language learning performance. For example Mariam, the pre-intermediate class teacher, commented:

> *There was a difference from the beginning to the end of the course in the students' behaviour. Their performance was much better.*

Students from the three learner levels reported improvements in the four language skills during interview. For example, ES5 described how her speed in reading had changed and saw this as an indication of improvement in her reading ability. PS10 similarly explains:

> *The strategies I learned have made me a better reader. I am faster, I understand more and I find the answers more quickly. I enjoy reading a lot and the course has encouraged me to do even better.*

Other students explicitly linked perceived improvements in their writing skills to the use of strategies like IS7 who said:

> *My writing skill is much better than it was before. I think it is more structured and neat because I know what to do and which strategies work the best for me.*

ES6 noticed a similar improvement in her performance and asserted:

> *Using strategies has helped me become organised especially in writing. My writing skill has improved because I know how to use planning and now I can also evaluate my work and use some of the marking techniques you and my other teacher use with us. I can use it on my own writing.**

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Improvements in the skills of listening and speaking were also linked to strategy-use. PS11 reported:

> *I used to listen very closely to every single word and I still do not know what I am looking for. Now_with strategies I am a better listener and I am more focused*

While IS13 said:

> *After this course ... I look at myself as a different learner. I used to be a passive learner rather than active in all the skills especially in speaking and now I'm amazed that I have done well and improved my language because of using strategies.*

This data illustrates the students' awareness of improvements in their language skills, and of the nature of these improvements. The majority of interviewees clearly stated that their strategy use was responsible for their improvement in the different language skills.

In addition to data obtained from the interviews and verbal reports, results of the post-SBI questionnaire demonstrated how using LLS helped the students improve their language skills (see Appendix K for students' responses to statement 18 in part three of the post-SBI questionnaire). The results, which represent the student perceptions of the improvement in their language skills rather than actual improvement, are illustrated in figure 7.9 below.
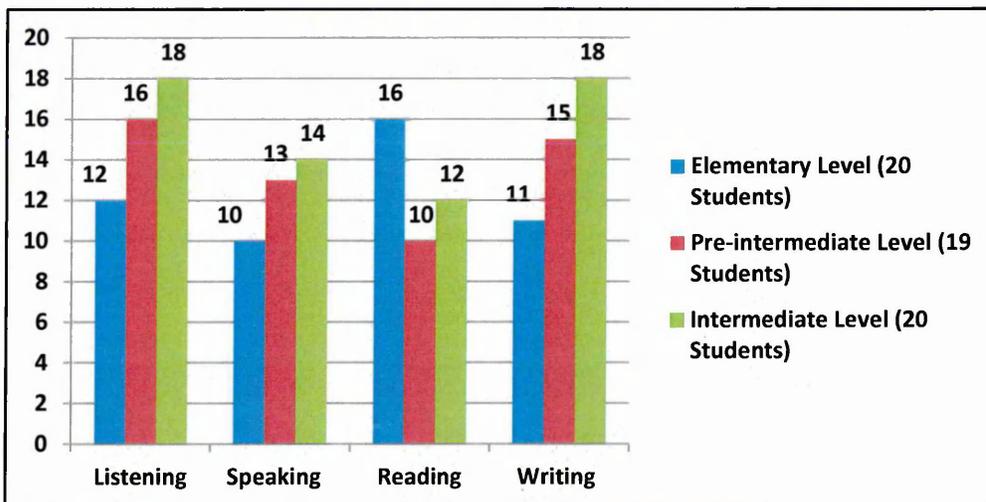
Figure 7.9: Effects of Strategy Use on Improving the Four Language Skills across the Three Learner Levels

The figure shows that 16 out of 20 of the elementary level students believed that using LLS helped them improve their reading skill while only half of them responded that

using LLS helped them improve their speaking skill. The student perceptions on their strategy improvement are consistent with the results comparing Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 for this level of learners which showed the highest improvement associated with the skill of reading and the lowest improvement in speaking (see figure 7.5 of this section).

As for the other two class levels, it was also found that 16 and 15 of the pre-intermediate and 18 of intermediate level students believed that using LLS helped them improve their listening and writing skills. On the other hand, only 10 pre-intermediate and 12 intermediate students saw that the improvement in their reading skill was due to using LLS. Once again this result is consistent with the results comparing Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 for these two level of learners (see figures 7.6 and 7.7 of this section). This agreement between the two different sets of results strengthens the overall outcome and could suggest a correlation between student perceptions on strategy use and improved language learning performance.

7.3.2.1 The Effect of Learner Confidence and Motivation

Having recognised an improvement in the students' language performance across the four skills as a result of strategy-use, it was important to acknowledge other factors that might have contributed to this improvement. Confidence (used in this context to mean self-efficacy) and motivation were two factors which seemed to be prominent among the students and which were thought to have had an impact on the students' language performance. For example, an increase in some of the learners' confidence could be interpreted from ES12's comment: *"...I'm not shy any more...I am more sure about myself now. I noticed this when we do speaking in class."* Motivation was also clear from what PS11 explained: *"... I feel like I want to do more tasks and learn more and more."* Both confidence and motivation, meanwhile, were relevant to ES6's observation:

> *I used to be very nervous about speaking in English. I speak only when I have to. Now I always like to participate in speaking activities because I find them very enjoyable*.*

These student quotes highlight the importance of motivation and learner confidence in learning a foreign language. Many researchers have stressed the importance of these features in the literature of language learning. O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 160), for example, state that: "Motivation is probably the most important characteristic that

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students bring to a learning task". It is not only the initial spark that learners need to start a task or programme of study but also embraces the maintenance of desire over time (Oxford, 2011: 72). Chamot et al (1999: 62) define self-efficacy or task-based confidence as learners' beliefs about their abilities to accomplish a task. They exemplify that self-efficacious learners gain confidence about solving a problem if they have developed an approach to problem solving that has worked in the past (Chamot et al, 1999: 62).

Through the study, it was found that there was an interrelationship between the attributes of confidence and motivation and the students' use of LLS. This was suggested, firstly, by the teacher participants' observations. Salma, the elementary class teacher, for example, noted:

> *Towards the end of the course I noticed that some of the students seemed quite confident in their performance in different language skills. I think this is normal in any class because they gradually get used to everything and they gain more language knowledge and input, but then I noticed when they do use strategies their confidence shows a bit more. I can remember when they were doing their second tasks; Tasks 2, [ES6] for example was writing with more confidence. She knew what she was doing and what strategies she was planning to use. I also remember that this same student was participating more in oral activities although she was not very fluent but I think she seemed no longer conserved like she was at the beginning of the course.*

Salma's observation includes reference to other factors that might affect learner performance and learner confidence such as the gradual and natural learner growth over time due to the students' exposure to and the processing of the language input. In addition to the students' adjustment with their surroundings (learning context) Salma observed that the student's use of strategies enhanced their confidence. Meanwhile, regarding motivation, Mohamed, the intermediate class teacher, recalls one student's increasing enthusiasm specifically in writing and also associated this with his use of strategies:

> *I could see that [IS7] was getting more and more excited about writing. He seemed quite motivated to do more and use more of the strategies he learned. I think this affected his marks. He was one of the excellent students in my class.*

Secondly, it was noticed that the students themselves connected their confidence and motivation with their strategy use when they reported that these had enhanced when they felt satisfied with the effectiveness of LLS. For example, PS10 explained:

> *The strategies I learned have made me a better reader. I am faster, I understand more and I find the answers more quickly. I enjoy reading a lot and the course has encouraged me to do even better.*

PS11, meanwhile, observed:

> *There are lots of strategies to use. Each time I use a new strategy and see how it is helpful for me I feel like I want to do more tasks and learn more and more.*

ES6 also expressed a similar viewpoint:

> *Yes, strategies have helped me a lot, especially social strategies. In the beginning I learned to speak with my classmates and then gradually I enjoyed speaking in groups and in front of others.**

This data appears to demonstrate a relationship between students' confidence and motivation for language learning and their use of strategies. Consequently, this reflects the impact of the SBI course in developing learner characteristics that are essential to foreign language learning. This is congruent with O'Malley and Chamot's (1990: 160) belief that:

> Students who have experienced success in learning have developed confidence in their own ability to learn. They are therefore likely to approach new learning tasks with a higher degree of motivation than students who, because they have not been successful in the past, may have developed a negative attitude toward their ability to learn.

Results of the post-SBI questionnaire provided further evidence that confidence and motivation were interrelated with the students' use of LLS. It was found that 42 out of 59 of the students across the three learner levels claimed that using LLS in various situations has helped them feel motivated to learn English as reflected by their answers to statement 22.c. of the post-SBI questionnaire [Using LLS in various situations has helped me feel motivated to learn English]. In answer to statement 22.d. of the post-SBI questionnaire [Using LLS in various situations has helped me feel confident about my language learning] 47 out of 59 of the students responded that using LLS in various situations has helped them feel confident about their language learning.

Data gathered from the teacher interviews, student interviews and the post-SBI questionnaire are consistent with previous accounts in the research literature. Strategies have been closely associated with motivation and particularly with a sense of self-efficacy leading to expectations of successful learning (Zimmerman and Pons, 1990; Chamot et al 1996) Chamot et al (1999; 62) believe that an individual's level of confidence is correlated with frequency of strategy use based on studies of elementary through college-level students who reported a greater frequency of strategy use and perceived themselves as more confident in their language learning abilities.

In conclusion, the data presented and discussed within this section provides a deeper understanding of the strategic activity (encouraged by the SBI programme) and its potential to impact on language learning. The results of the language tasks and the verbal reports were indicative of the students' strategy use which increased after the SBI in Tasks 2. This increase might suggest that the learners' use of LLS has enhanced their performance in all four language skills. As such, the data from this study tends to support existing research findings. Chamot and Rubin (1994) cited a number of research studies showing a causal link between language learning performance and the use of LLS. The findings are also consistent with Benson's (2001: 145) argument that "the balance of evidence suggests that strategy training can lead to improvement in learning performance given the right circumstances"

7.4   Changes in Student Beliefs and Attitudes

Attitude is found to be closely linked to a person's beliefs and values and can either promote or discourage the choices made in all realms of activity, whether academic or informal. Gardner (1985) points out, that attitude is an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual's beliefs or opinions about the referent. Kara (2009) stated that attitudes towards learning besides opinions and beliefs have an obvious influence on students' behaviours and consequently on their performance. It is argued that those students who possess positive beliefs about language learning have a tendency to increase more positive attitudes towards language learning. Conversely, negative beliefs may lead to class anxiety, low cognitive achievement, and negative attitudes (Victori and Lockhart, 1995).

Based on the data analysis, the impact of the SBI was not only manifested in improvements in the overall strategy use of the students and improvements in their language skills but also in changes in some of the students' beliefs as well as change in

their attitudes. This finding emerged during the investigation and was consdidered relevant to the study due to the relationship beteween learner beliefs and strategy-use.

7.4.1 Changes of Beliefs

Data obtained from the students' interviews and post-SBI questionnaires indicated that the programme contributed to a change in their beliefs and conceptualisations about learning in general and about independent language skills specifically. For instance, IS5 acknowledged the help of the SBI programme in correcting some misconceptions she believed she had about learning English and helped her acquire new perceptions. She reported:

> *I used to think that memorizing by heart was the best way to learn and achieve high grades. This is what I used to do in school and in university. Most of the time I do not understand what I am memorising so I forget it very quickly. But now I think that using strategies is better for learning English. I understand what I am learning, I don't forget what I am learning and it is also different and fun.*

PS11 thought the programme had changed her idea about listening as a process and how best to approach it:

> *Before I would listen word by word and this was very difficult especially if the speaker is very fast. I never know what I am looking for. I never get good marks in listening. Now I know that I have to do a number of steps before the task, during and also after the task...I think this is more effective.*

ES12 reported that SBI had led to him approaching reading differently:

> *I don't read in the same way anymore. Sometimes you need to find the main idea and sometimes you only need to scan for certain words. I think it all depends on the task.*

There were changes in the students' perceptions about themselves as learners due to the use of LLS. IS13reported:

> *After this course ... I look at myself as a different learner. I used to be a passive learner rather than active in all the skills especially in speaking and now I'm amazed that I have done well and improved my language because of using strategies.*

ES6 noticed a similar change:

*This course has helped show me my own capabilities and that I
can learn in many different ways**

Just as strategy-use seems to have affected learner beliefs, learner beliefs about their own achievement attributes may affect strategy use. For example, learners who perceive themselves as incompetent may be disinclined to attempt the use of any strategies. This was the case for PS5 whose perception about his listening ability affected his view about strategies. He claims:

> *I am not good at listening and I don't think that strategies help
> me very much. Some work well but most of them I just can't get
> them right.**

It is important to acknowledge the interrelation between different factors when understanding learner beliefs. For example, a learner's cultural and educational background can be responsible for formulating certain learner beliefs about dependence/independence and passive/active modes of learning. It is generally believed that learners who are accustomed to teacher-centred teaching patterns may have little or no acceptance of responsibility for their own learning because they believe that knowledge should be transmitted by the teacher rather than discovered by the learner (Oxford, 1990; Chamot et al, 1999). The student participants of this study were expected to have similar beliefs based on their previous learning experiences and it was postulated that few of them would be willing to change such perceptions. However, it was found the SBI programme did influence their views on role-change. The intervention helped the student participants reshape their beliefs about their roles as learners and about the teachers' roles. This is clearly expressed in PS12's statement at interview:

> *I used to see my teacher as manager of the class; whatever she
> say we must listen and we always do what she tell us. In this
> course, I am allowed to say my opinions about how the best way
> I can learn and what works better for me. I felt that my teacher
> and me like colleagues not boss and employee.*

A similar view was reported by ES7:

> *In the past our teachers used to always tell us that the learner
> has the biggest role in the learning experience...I never used to
> believe them...I thought it was the other way round and the
> teacher had the biggest role. Now that I have learned how to use
> strategies, I think I know what they mean.**

This qualitative data adds more depth to the quantitative results that reflected the students' views on teacher/learner roles. Only one student out of the 59 who participated

in the post-SBI questionnaire believed that the teacher should be the centre of all class activities, making all decisions and controlling all aspects of learning. The other students thought that the teacher should act as a guide, facilitator, or demonstrator and the learner takes responsibility for his/her own learning. However, no one believed that the learner should be the centre of all class activities, making all decisions and controlling all aspects of learning (see Appendix K). Two thirds of the students (66%) stated in the post-SBI questionnaire that the SBI course has completely changed their view of the learner and teacher roles while just under a third believed that the SBI course had partly changed their view of the learner and teacher roles. Only a few students (3) believed that the programme had not changed their view at all.

Oxford (1990: 201) stresses the need to alter learners' beliefs about learning and role change if they are to take advantage of the strategies they acquire in strategy training. As such, positive beliefs towards the use of LLS were encouraged and nurtured throughout the training during the different phases of the SBIA model of this study. These might have helped prepare the student participants for the active and interactive roles they were expected to play in the SBI programme. In addition, it might be that the training the students received in the actual use of LLS helped foster change of learner perceptions. Certainly their practice in the use of LLS seems to have helped them understand themselves as learners; their capabilities and their weaknesses and strengths.

7.4.2   Changes of Attitudes

In addition to providing a great deal of information about the students' change of beliefs, the student interviews and post-SBI questionnaire also showed that there was a change in the students' attitudes towards EFL learning and also towards LLS and SBI.

7.4.2.1   Attitude Change towards EFL Learning

Jones et al (1987: 56) argue that changing students' attitudes about their own abilities should be a major objective of strategy training. Students should be taught that their failures may not necessarily be due to lack of ability or to laziness but rather due to lack of effective strategies. It can be suggested from the data that some learners developed a positive attitude towards EFL learning, in general, due to their involvement in the SBI programme and their experience with strategy use. This is evident in PS15's view who felt that the use of strategies had enhanced his liking of learning the language:

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"I like learning English but now I like it even better because I am using strategies."

A positive attitude was also expressed byIS1:

"I feel like I am enjoying English learning more than I did in my other courses"

This finding seems to differ from those obtained in a study investigating Libyan secondary school students' attitudes towards learning English in which the participants showed negative attitudes towards learning English (Zainol Abidin, et al, 2012). This might suggest that contextual factors might play a role in how attitudes can be shaped and reshaped. The fact that at secondary schools in Libya English is an obligatory subject as opposed to the context of the study where the learners came to study English of their own accord, might have brought about these different results. Furthermore, the type of programme offered to the learners and the tasks involved are assumed to have an effect

There were also positive attitudes towards specific language skills. For instance, one student talked about how he used to find listening very annoying in the past and how that had positively changed. Similarly, ES6 reported develop a positive feeling towards speaking. She pointed out:

I used to be very nervous about speaking in English. I speak only when I have to. Now I always like to participate in speaking activities because I find them very enjoyable*.

In response to whether strategy use had an impact on her attitude change towards speaking, ES6 said:

Yes, strategies have helped me a lot, especially social strategies. In the beginning I learned to speak with my classmates and then gradually I enjoyed speaking in groups and in front of others.*

With regards to the reading skill PS10 explained:

The strategies I learned have made me a better reader. I am faster, I understand more and I find the answers more quickly. I enjoy reading a lot and the course has encouraged me to do even better.

One might argue that the students who had a satisfying experience in the SBI programme tended to develop relatively positive attitudes towards EFL learning. Furthermore, the last extract by PS10 seems to imply that positive attitudes are

conducive to increased motivation. This concurs with O'Mally and Chamot's (1990: 161) views on learners' attitudes towards strategies: "Once students begin to experience some success in using strategies, their attitudes about their own abilities may change, thus increasing their motivation."

7.4.2.2   Attitude Change towards LLS and SBI

It was noticed that there was a change in the students' attitudes towards LLS as apparent in these students' answers in the interviews. PS11 responded:

> *The first time our teachers told us about strategies I thought they were going to be a lot of extra work for me so I sort of hated them. I think I have changed my mind now...they are not that bad!"*

ES8 said:

> *In the beginning I never thought I would be able to use strategies very well. Now that I have practised and practised using them I think they are very useful.*

This change of attitude towards LLS could be ascribed to the students' acknowledgment of the value of the strategies they used during the programme. Some students developed a liking for SBI as a programme. For example IS7 reported:

> *When we first started this course I thought it was going to be very confusing for me because there was going to be too much going on...learning English skills, learning strategies and a lot of practise in class and at home. Now that we have finished the course it isn't as bad as I thought it would be. In fact I enjoyed SBI and I liked practising and using all the different strategies.*

IS1 explained that his liking of the SBI course was due to it being different from any other courses he had undertaken. On the other hand, a few students maintained a relatively negative attitude towards SBI. ES10 reported:

> *The course was quite stressful for me...I found it difficult to do everything that the teachers asked us to do...it was just too much.*

For other students, learning the target strategies at various points of the programme proved frustrating. For example, PS5 commented on the difficulty in using the strategy of selective attention during listening:

*I am not good at selective attention. I try to listen very carefully
but I can never select the right answers**.

ES18 referred to his frustration when attempting highlighting strategy during reading:

*I get really annoyed because I can never get it right...I always
seem to highlight all the wrong words...my colleagues say it is
really useful but for me it just doesn't work!*

Despite these negative reports, the majority of students were appreciative of the SBI programme. These findings tend to confirm the results of the post-SBI questionnaire in which 53 of the participant students out of a total of 59 agreed that the overall impact the SBI programme has left on them was positive while the remaining six students stated that the programme had a partly negative and partly positive impact.
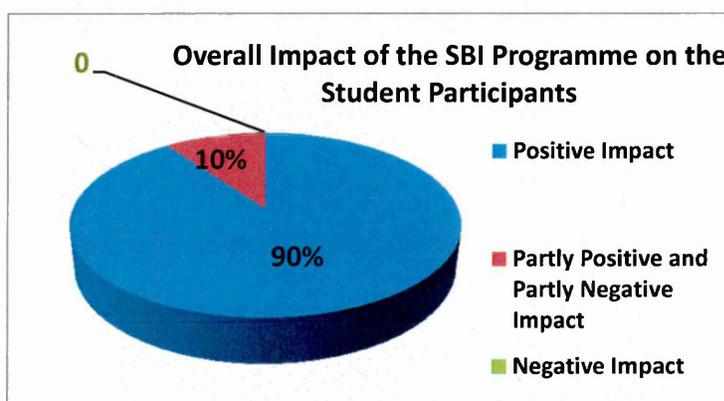
Figure 7.10: Overall Impact of SBI on Student Participants

Furthermore, attitudes are also defined as: "...responses oriented towards approaching or avoiding" (Wenden, 1998: 52). In line with that, the students were asked whether they would recommend the SBI course to other learners. In terms of cascading SBI as an approach to second language learning, 51 of the students said they would recommend SBI to other students (others were undecided).

In summary, it can be argued that an SBI programme can shape/reshape learners' beliefs about English language learning, about themselves as learners and about role change. Moreover, SBI can also have an impact on attitude change towards English and towards LLS and SBI itself.

7.5   Conclusion

This chapter presented and discussed research findings which were relevant to addressing the first research question of the study (see 1.5). During phase 1 of the SBIA

model, results of the SILL 1 and the SILL 1 reflection sessions showed that students were already using LLS, however, there was a lack of awareness of their strategy use. The students' overall strategy use changed after phase 2 of the SBIA model, in which learners received training in the use of LLS from the two classes of direct and indirect strategies. An increase in the frequency of strategy use, showing strategies to be highly used by the learners, was identified. The impact of the SBI programme on enhancing learner efforts and improving language skills was also discussed in sections 7.2.2 and 7.3 of this chapter. Students' raised awareness was a key finding as well as attitude change and reshaping of their beliefs about learning English in general and about role-change and SBI in particular.

This chapter focuses on the presentation and discussion of the findings obtained and the issues that emerged from the study in light of the second research question as stated in section 1.3 of the thesis which is related to the development of learner autonomy.

- Can SBI encourage learners to take responsibility for their own language learning, thus contributing to the development of learner autonomy?

This chapter is divided into five main sections. Section 8.1 discusses how strategy use helped foster learner autonomy in the language learners. Section 8.2 focuses on the impact of the programme on improving the learners' meta-cognition while the effect of the programme on enhancing social interaction and awareness is discussed in section 8.3 of this chapter. Section 8.4 deals with emerging findings related to the students' attitude change towards autonomous learning. The chapter is finally concluded with a summary of its main sections in section 8.5. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 8.1:

Table 8.1: Contents of Chapter 8

8.1   Language Learning Strategies and Learner Autonomy

8.1.1 Consciousness and Strategy Use

8.1.2 Expansion of Learners' Repertoires of LLS

8.1.3 Monitoring and Evaluating Strategy Use

8.1.4 Strategy Transfer

8.2   Improvement in Meta-cognition

8.3   Enhancing Social Interaction (awareness)

8.3.1 Learner Responsibility

8.3.2 Role of Teachers: Modelling Strategy Use and Scaffolding

8.3.3 Role of peers: Practice Opportunities

8.4   Student's Attitude Change towards Autonomous Learning

8.4.1 The Beliefs and Ideas Components (Cognitive)

8.4.2 The Like or Dislike Component (Affective)

8.4.3 The Object Component (Behavioural)

8.5   Conclusion

8.1   Language Learning Strategies and Learner Autonomy

As discussed in chapter three (see section 3.4), there are many indications of an autonomous learner but for the current study two main indicators, which were found to be intrinsically interrelated, included: firstly, the student participants' use of LLS and secondly, their demonstration of several behaviours and characteristics (learner profile) associated with autonomous learning. The focus of this section is to discuss autonomous learning in relation to LLS whereas autonomous learner characteristics (see Table 6.7 in chapter six) will be discussed in several places across the last three sections (8.2-8.4) of this chapter as illustrated in figure 8.1 below:
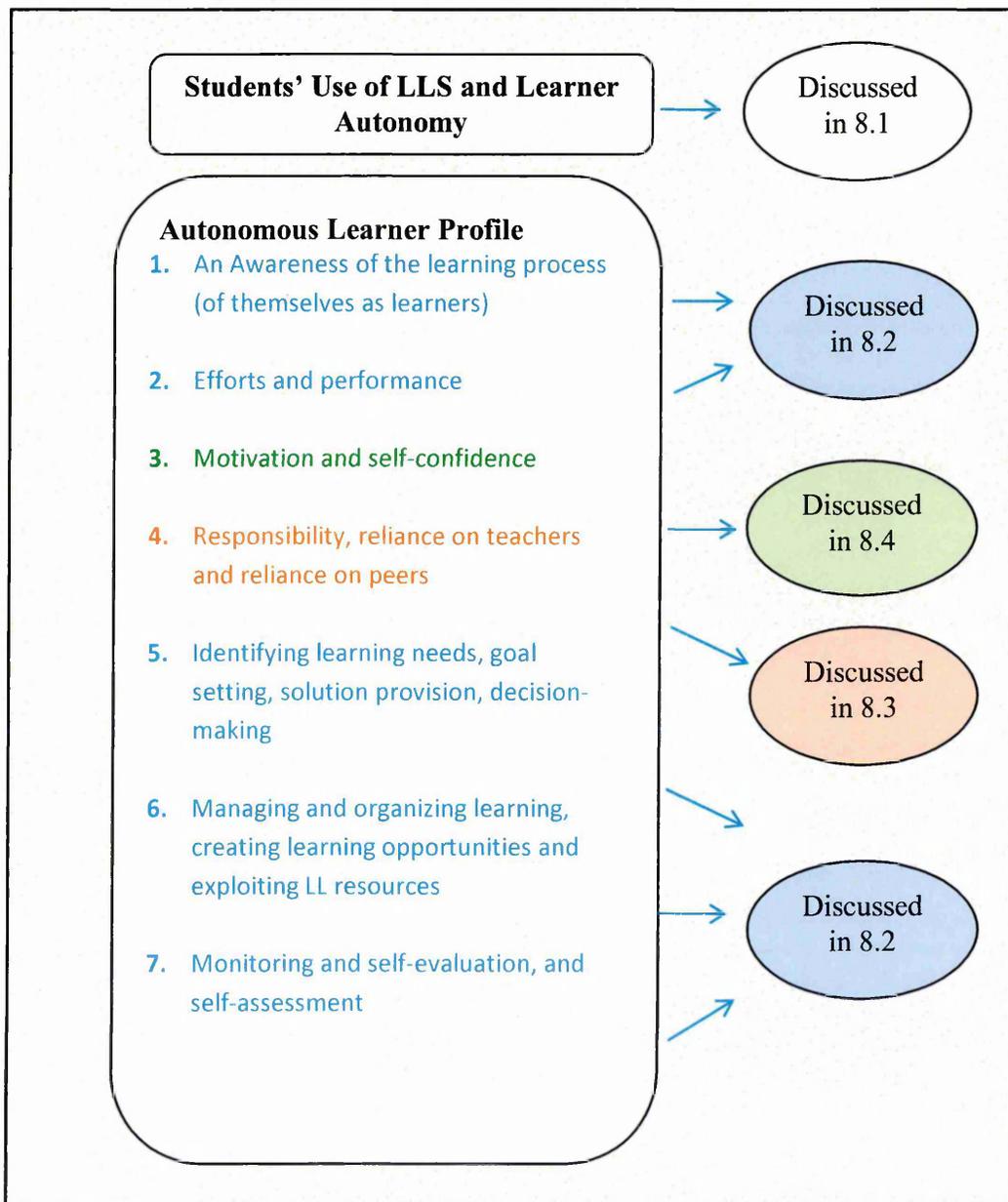
Figure 8.1: Framework for the Study's Indications of Learner Autonomy

On examining and analysing the qualitative and quantitative data gathered following the four phases of the SBIA model, it became clear that LLS are important elements in the realisation of learner autonomy. Findings were indicative of several aspects of autonomous learning which included:

- Consciousness and strategy use
- Expansion of learners' repertoires of LLS
- Monitoring and evaluating strategy use
- Strategy transfer

8.1.1   Consciousness and Strategy Use

The notion of consciousness is closely related to the definition of learning strategies. The concept of learning strategy is dependent on the assumption that learners consciously engage in activities to achieve certain goals and learning strategies can be regarded as broadly conceived intentional directions and learning techniques (Stern, 1992; Cohen, 2003). In the context of this study, the students' awareness of their strategy use is vital to the development of learner autonomy as it implies a level of control over their learning process (Schmidt 1994) (see section 7.2.1).

The data gathered before phase 2 of the SBIA model (via SILL1, SILL1 reflection sessions and Verbal Reports 1) showed that the student participants were already using LLS with mostly medium frequency (see section 7.1). Because the student participants' use of LLS is indicative of their control over their learning processes, it can be argued that a degree of autonomy was already present amongst the learners even before they received any form of training in the use of LLS. However, an overall realisation was that students were unaware of their autonomy during phase 1 of the SBIA. One postulation might be that because the student participants were unaware of their strategy use at this stage; they were also unaware of their autonomy. One elementary level student commented:

> *I don't know that this actions is called strategy. I do it all the*
> *time, before and now when I study at home and in the class with*
> *my friends...I learn to do it by myself but I never concentrate on*
> *this.* {ES5, SILL 1 Reflection Session}

This student's quote suggests an unawareness of strategy use despite her frequent use of strategies when studying at home and in the classroom both on her own and with her

classmates. She refers to her independent application of strategies which demonstrates control over her learning, thus a level of autonomy; nonetheless, she was not conscious of it. Another intermediate student talked about how the SBI course helped raise his consciousness of his autonomy:

> *I think I have always been quite independent or errr...autonomy...I mean autonomous but it was never clear to me until this course. I now see that the things that I have been doing are helpful. I used them before and have improved them in the course and I will use them in the future.* {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

Many of the students across the three learner levels expressed similar views in which they explicitly correlated their unconsciousness of strategy use with their unconsciousness of their own learning autonomy, particularly during phase 1 of the intervention:

> *I sometimes use many of these steps mentioned in the questionnaire not only in the class but when I do my homework but I never noticed myself before.* {PS17, SILL 1 Reflection Session}

> *In some situations, I feel that I have to do a plan or find a way that will help me do the exercise better or make it easy for myself, easy to remember or understand. But when I do this, I think I do it naturally; more like a reflex for that situation. I know that I can do this on my own I just never realised it in the past.* {IS12, SILL 1 Reflection Session}

The students tendency to use expressions like *'until this course'*, *'before'* and *'in the past'* in the aforementioned extracts refers to their unawareness prior to that point in time which was phase 1 of the SBIA model. However, following the four phases of the SBIA model, the student participants' consciousness of their strategy use (strategic awareness) increased (see also discussion in section 7.2). As illustrated by figure 8.2, results of the post-SBI questionnaire administrated in phase 4 of the SBIA model showed that over two-thirds of the students believed that they use LLS consciously. Only 4 students believed that their use of LLS is subconscious while 12 out of 59 students said they use LLS both consciously and subconsciously.

Conscious and Subconscious Use of LLS

- ■ I use LLS consciously (n=43)
- ■ I use LLS subconsciously (n=4)
- ■ I use LLS both consciously and subconsciously (n=12)

73%
7%
20%
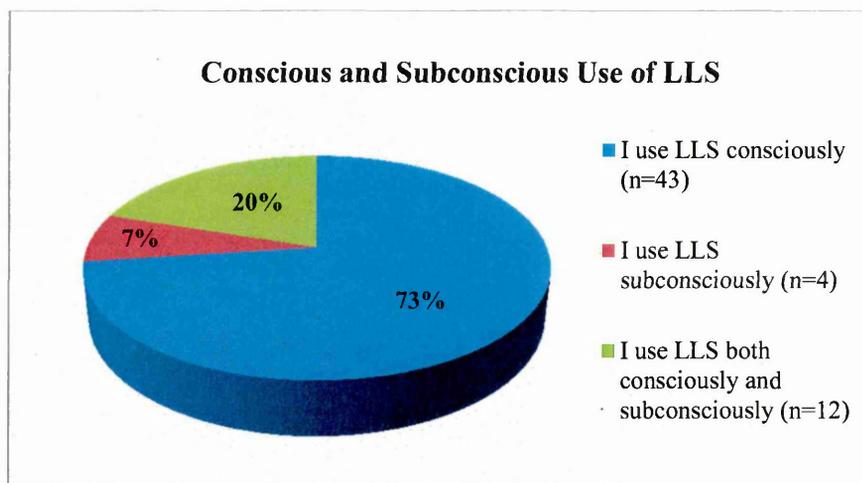
Figure 8.2: Consciousness of Strategy Use

Students' responses in the post-SBI interview seemed to closely support the results of the questionnaire. For example, one of the elementary level students said that he was conscious of his strategy use:

> *I think I know myself when I am using strategies. I try to remember the ones that would help me the most with the exercise.* *{ES6, Post-SBI Interview}

While another pre-intermediate student presumed that his strategy use was both conscious and subconscious:

> *Sometimes I aware of myself when I use strategies. But sometimes not sure…I am not sure…but maybe I am using it and I don't know this until after finishing to answer the questions.* {PS10, Post-SBI Interview}

In relation to this study, it was important to identify whether the increased awareness in strategy use was related to learner autonomy. From the SILL reflection sessions and the post-SBI interviews it was found that the students tended to overtly link their strategic awareness with their awareness of learner autonomy as a concept:

> *My use of language strategies has made me understand what autonomy is all about.* {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

> *When I use them I understand that I have more self-control over my learning. I know what direction I should go in if I want to complete a task. I think that means self-direction and independence, doesn't it?* {IS5, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

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In addition, students linked their strategic awareness with an awareness of their own learner autonomy:

> *Yes my use of strategies makes me feel that I am in charge* {IS12, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

> *I am conscious that I am using strategies now so I think I can sense that I am an autonomous learner.** {ES7, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I realise that I am in control of my learning every time I use strategies in my homework and even in the classroom. I couldn't have this feeling before I knew all about strategies and how to use them properly.* {PS11, Post-SBI Interview}

> *Now that I know that I am using learning strategies, I can feel my independence.* "* {ES6, Post-SBI Interview}

These last student quotes clearly show that their attainment of a sense of autonomy is recent to them. These students' use of time indicators like: *'now'* and *'before'* once again seems to point to the impact of the SBI programme as a contributor to their raised awareness of learner autonomy.

To sum up, the qualitative data reported thus far highlights the importance of learner awareness in relation to learner autonomy which might lead to the conclusion that an essential aspect of autonomous learning is that the learner develops awareness of language and learning. In support of this argument, Dam (1996: 2) asserts that: 'It is essential that an autonomous learner is stimulated to evolve an awareness of the aims and processes of learning and is capable of critical reflection'. Moreover, the data suggests that developing awareness might not come naturally to most learners; it is the result of conscious effort and practice which in the context of this study was encouraged through the different phases of the SBIA model. For example, Phase 1: *the Strategy Identification Phase* of the SBIA model was committed to raising students' awareness of their strategy use. Students' comments gathered from the SILL 1 reflection sessions and later in the post-SBI interview indicated that this particular aim was achieved. In addition, it was found that the students associated their raised awareness of their strategy use with awareness of their control over learning and of their independence.

8.1.2 Expansion of learners' Repertoires of LLS

The SBI programme did not stop at the level of raising students' awareness of their strategy use (via phase 1) which led to their awareness of learner autonomy, it extended to include Phase 2: *the Strategy Training Phase*, which allowed students practice opportunities to use a wider range of strategies. The student role involved using new strategies, direct and indirect, with different tasks and enhancing the use of any old strategies through focused practice. The teacher role involved modelling and demonstrating the use of strategies as well as guiding and monitoring the students during practice.

Following phase 2 of the SBIA model, there was a noticeable increase in the use of all six groups of LLS among all three learner levels (see section 7.1.2). The LLS which were used with medium frequency before phase 2 were found to be used with high frequency after this phase. The findings discussed in chapter seven suggested that the training the learners received in the use of LLS helped expand the students' repertoires of strategies and in turn, provided them with more choices to select from and helped them use new strategies that they had not known before. It is argued that learners' heightened awareness of the possible range of strategies from which they can choose to help them learn the target language most efficiently can help develop their responsibility of their own learning leading to the development of learner autonomy (Cohen, 2003; Oxford, 2011).

However, what is more important than being aware of strategy options is the learner's actual ability to use the strategies in various language learning situations. Dickinson (1993:330) maintains that autonomous learners "are people who can and do select and implement appropriate learning strategies". Results of the post-SBI questionnaire showed that none of the students believed that they were unable to use LLS. While 27 out of a total of 59 students considered themselves moderate users of LLS, 32 of them thought they could use LLS confidently. Similar results were reflected by students' responses to the post-SBI student interview where one student commented:

> *I think I am able to use the strategies that I need easily now. Well, I think much better than before anyway.* {ES12, Post-SBI Interview}

Another student stated:

*What happened is my confident in my ability to choose the
strategy and use it is gone up. In the beginning, I am little bit
err...not able and not sure, but now I know what to do and what
I can do with them [strategies].* {IS3, SILL 2 Reflection session}

These student quotes suggest an improvement in their abilities to use LLS and an
increase in their confidence in the selection and application of LLS. The students' use of
time indicators like *'now, before, in the beginning'* show a sense of comparison between
two different phases of their learning; presumably before Phase 2 and after it.

Furthermore, the students' ability in strategy use extended to their ability to use a
combination of strategies with a given task. This was apparent upon comparing some of
the students' verbal reports in tasks 2 with those of tasks 1.

Table 8.2: Verbal Report 1 and Verbal Report 2 Showing Combined Strategy Use

Verbal Report 1 (collected in phase 1 of SBIA) for IS5 in listening Task 1	Verbal Report 2 (collected in phase 3 of SBIA) for IS5 in listening Task 2
I tried to focus very closely on what she was saying(paying attention). *I couldn't understand what she was saying; she was speaking very fast*(self-monitoring).	*I started by understanding what I need to do in this task* (identifying the purpose of a language task). *She is giving her talk in three main ideas* (summarising). *I decided that I am going to circle all the words that I think are important* (highlighting). *I could guess what some of the words are like 'relocate' because I know what 're' means; it means again* (guessing intelligently using linguistic clues). *I don't know what 'frustrated' means but I could guess that it is something to do with anger because he sounded so upset and nervous when he was speaking* (guessing intelligently using other clues; tone of voice). *...but then I thought that won't work so I decided not to do that* (self-monitoring). *I asked [x] when we compared our answers for the meaning of it* (asking for clarification).

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Verbal reports 2 for this student and other students across the three learner levels showed a more extensive use of strategies in phase 3 of the SBIA model when they were asked to report their thoughts and actions with Tasks 2. This might suggest that students before phase 2 of the SBIA had less knowledge of LLS and the students who reported they used LLS before phase 2 could only use a few LLS, in many cases just one or two strategies.

Also in support of this finding, results of the post-SBI questionnaire show that 88 per cent (52 out of 59) of the students thought they were able to use a combination of strategies (two or more with the same task) as shown in figure 8.3.
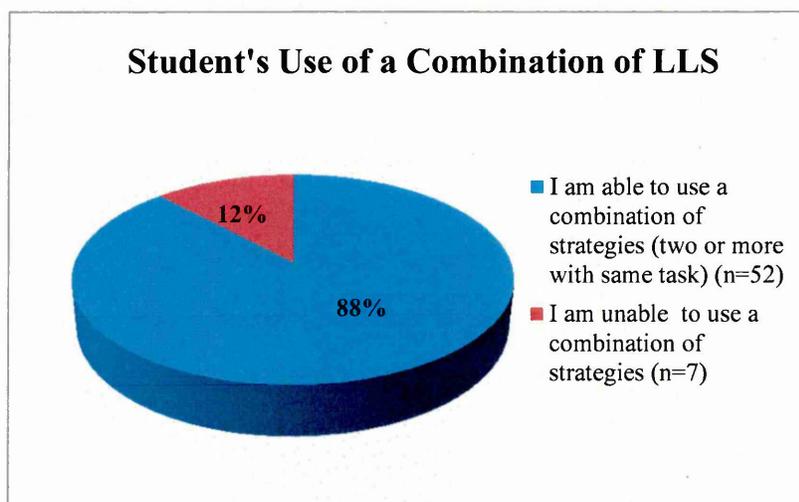
Figure 8.3: Combined Strategy Use

Students' ability to select LLS and use them confidently in addition to their ability to use a combination of them might be due to the training they received through SBI (during phase 2) in which they were trained in the use of a range of LLS across all four language skills. This training helped expand their strategy repertoires allowing them to assume greater control over their language learning and develop their learner autonomy further.

8.1.3 Monitoring and Evaluating Strategy Use

According to Dickinson (1993) a main aspect of autonomous learners is the ability to monitor their use of LLS and identify strategies that are not effective or appropriate for the task and try others that are. The student participants of this study were able to demonstrate this aspect as proved by their verbal reports 2:

I first tried that but I could see that it wasn't working well so I just thought I'd guess the meaning from similar words I know like... {IS5, Verbal Report 2}

Yes, I think waiting until I listen to everything he said is helpful; it worked... {ES12, Verbal Report 2}

Also in keeping with Dickinson's (1993) statement above, it was found that the student participants themselves believed they were able to monitor their own use of strategies as revealed by their statements in both the post-SBI questionnaire and the interview. Results of the post-SBI questionnaire showed that 53 out of 59 students believed that they were able to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy when used with a language task. In addition, 53 students claimed that they were able to use a different strategy if they found that one strategy does not work effectively with a language task. In the interview, one pre-intermediate student claimed:

I think I am good at knowing what works well for me and what doesn't. I've done lots of practice and I discovered the ones [strategies] that work for me for example in listening and reading. {PS15, Post-SBI Interview}

Another intermediate student explained:

It's important to pay attention and ehm...monitor the strategies you think which will be good and suitable for the task otherwise you waste a lot of time. That's what I think anyway. {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

A possible explanation for the students' development of this aspect of learning could be due to the type of training they received during the programme. Two of the metacognitive strategies the learners were trained to use in phase 2 were: Self-Monitoring and Self-Evaluation which belong to the strategy set 'Evaluating Your Learning'. The aim of these strategies is to aid learners in checking their language performance and while the first strategy involves noticing and learning from errors, the other concerns evaluating overall progress (Oxford, 1990). It is likely that the learners started applying these strategies not only to their language performance in general but more specifically to their strategy use. Furthermore part of the training in phase 2 involved developing their abilities to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their strategy use after practising with the LLS. This took the form of focusing on teacher modelling, feedback activities and peer work in which students either observed strategy monitoring and evaluating in action or they shared their experience with strategy monitoring and evaluating with each other.

8.1.4 Strategy Transfer

The transfer of LLS to other tasks is a hallmark of learner autonomy. It can be argued that students become independent strategy users only when they are able to apply a strategy learned from one type of task to other types and to identify appropriate learning strategies for solving many different types of problems. Students' verbal reports 2 clearly demonstrated the students' ability to transfer LLS to tasks 2 which were new to them. For example this intermediate student demonstrated his ability to use a range of strategies appropriately tailored to the to the reading task's demands:

> *I remember that I try to predict what the speakers might say before I listen...I then used this same strategy in reading...I looked at the title and quickly read the subtitles and tried to guess what sort of words might be used...that was really useful for me it helped me understand the text better and faster.* {IS9, Verbal Report 2}

In the post-SBI questionnaire, 51 out of 59 of the student participants believed they were able to transfer LLS they knew to new tasks as illustrated by figure 8.4:
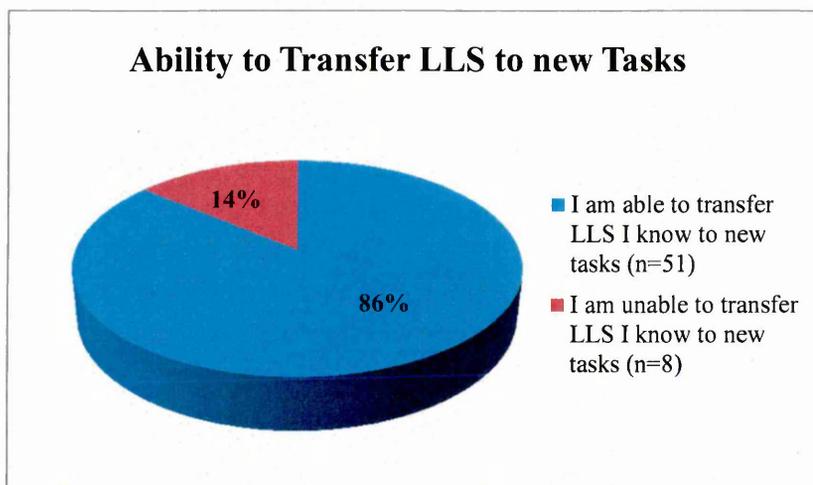
Figure 8.4: Strategy Transfer

The students also spoke of their ability to transfer strategies in the post-SBI interview. For example, one intermediate learner explained:

> *I believe I am capable of using the strategies that I learned with different tasks that we didn't do in the classroom. One time, I was reading a business e-mail which my manager asked me to write a summary about; like a report. Normally I would go straight to the dictionary and translate it word by word but this*

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*time I tried to guess most of the meanings from context; so I
used inference. Then, I tried to think of many synonyms related
to the topic which I could then use to write this report. When it
was ready, I was really happy with it actually.* {IS13, Post-SBI
Interview}

Another pre-intermediate learner mentioned how she transferred her use of several
strategies she learned in class during the SBI programme to a learning situation with her
English-speaking neighbour:

*We have our neighbour who live in my street. She is from
Scotland and her husband and children is Libyan. So I made
little meeting with her to do some speaking and listening.
Anyway, I used some techniques you teached me like trying to
understand about her culture so I listen very carefully and pay
attention very much. Then I tell her about anything similar in my
culture like dress and food. Also I try to use many actions and
signs with my face and hands and use lot of words different
words to tell her the meaning I want.* {PS12, Post-SBI Interview}

These student extracts are illustrative of the students' abilities to transfer strategies to
new learning situations. The students indicated that they used several strategies
including cognitive strategies: *inference,* metacognitive: *paying attention,* social:
developing cultural understanding and compensation strategies: *using gesture and
synonyms.* Benson (2007: 26) refers to out-of-class learning as one of the modes of
autonomy beyond the classroom. Several studies have shown that students tend to
engage in out-of-class learning activities more frequently than their teachers know
(Joshi, 2011).

It is likely that raising the student's awareness of strategy transfer during phase 2 of the
SBIA model might have helped them to be on the lookout for transfer opportunities.
This is clearly in agreement with Scharle and Szabó's, (2000: 10) belief that: "the
conscious realisation of what strategies are applied in a given activity may increase the
chances of transfer to other tasks." During phase 2 there had to be a limit to the number
of LLS presented to the students, given the time constraints. However, part of the
students' training included talking directly to them about the process of transfer. After
demonstrating the use of the strategy, allowing learners to apply and practice using the
strategy and evaluating its effectiveness, students were asked to think of other situations
which they thought they would find the strategies they had used useful. The students
were given the opportunity to discuss and decide how the learning strategy might be

used in the new context, thereby enhancing their realisation of the importance of transferring strategies to new language tasks. This process proved to be effective as perceived by the learners themselves:

> *I think because during practice you always reminded us to think of other situations where we could use the same strategies; I think that helped.* {ES1, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

In addition, data analysis revealed that the most frequent situations in which 90 per cent (n=53) of the students reported they used LLS (see responses to question 14 of post-SBI questionnaire in Appendix K) were: 'when doing class work both alone and with colleagues', 'when encouraged by their teacher' and 'with difficult tasks'. These findings here, in particular, seem to summarise the core meaning of a strategy which is:

- A strategy can be used both alone and with others which points to the social aspects of learning and there is a clear acknowledgement of the role of the teacher as a promoter of strategy use through scaffolding, monitoring and so on (see further discussion on this in section 8.3 of this chapter).

- A strategy is a facilitative learning tool used when learning becomes difficult (Oxford, 2011).

Perhaps the students' awareness of when and where strategies could be used might have helped strengthen their ability to transfer strategies to other language tasks besides the ones presented in class.

In conclusion of section 8.1, the descriptive results from the student post-SBI questionnaires and interviews, the student verbal reports and the feedback from the SILL reflection sessions demonstrated the importance of the relationship between LLS and learner autonomy. This finding accords with Paiva (2011: 63) who argues that "Autonomous learners...use effective learning strategies." and Wenden (1991: 163) who describes the autonomous learner as the "one who has acquired the strategies and knowledge to take some (if not yet all) responsibility for her language learning and is willing and self-confident enough to do so". This is presumably due to the assumption that by definition, language learning strategy use involves some degree of consciousness, awareness, and intentionality (Wenden, 1987; Stern, 1992; Cohen, 2003).

Phase 1 of the SBIA model allowed learners the opportunity to become aware of their strategy use and accordingly their autonomy which tends to reflect the argument that "in order to help learners to assume greater control over their own learning it is important to help them to become aware of and identify the strategies that they already use or could potentially use" (Holmes and Ramos, 1991: 198). A simple illustration that might be descriptive of the findings of phase 1 of the SBIA is shown in figure 8.5 below:

Phase 1	unawareness of strategy use + unawareness of learner autonomy
→	preliminary awareness of strategy use + preliminary awareness of learner autonomy
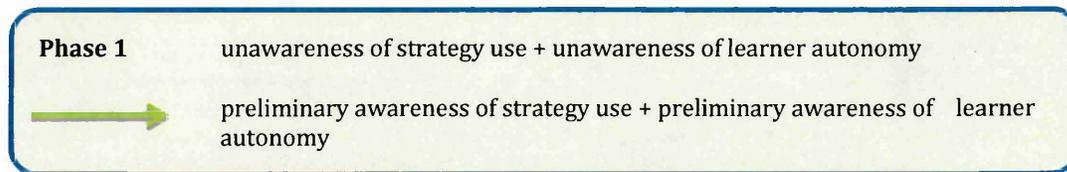
Figure 8.5: Description of Phase 1 Findings

The results of this phase strengthen the view that SBI can produce desirable effects conducive of awareness of learner autonomy thereby lending support to the value of consciousness-raising in strategy instruction (Nakatani, 2005).

Phase 2 of the SBIA model created opportunities for learners to practise the target strategies as described in figure 8.6:

Phase 2	focused practice in the use of new strategies and old strategies with the help and guidance of the class teachers
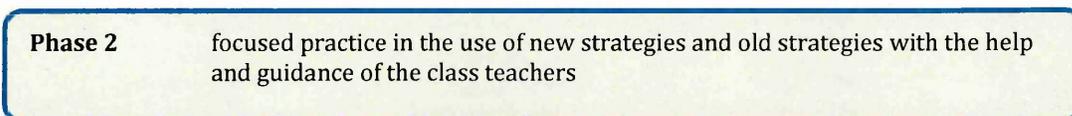
Figure 8.6: Description of Phase 2

Considering that phase 2 was the input phase, it was vital in building up to the end results of the SBI programme. This phase helped the learners develop the necessary capacity and willingness to take on more responsibility for their own learning through their hands-on practice with a range of direct and indirect LLS. The significance of phase 2 could be seen in the way learners compared their learning experience during the programme prior to and after this phase of training. The effect of phase 2 on the student participants was assessed during phases 3 and 4 of the SBIA model which is illustrated in figure 8.7:

Phase 3 & Phase 4	ability to use a wider range of LLS + ability to monitor strategy use + ability to transfer strategies to new language learning situations
→	enhancing awareness of learner autonomy +reinforcing previous autonomous behaviour + fostering new autonomous behaviour.
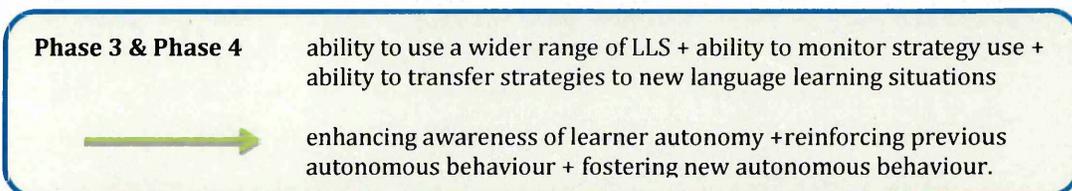
Figure 8.7: Description of Phases 3 & 4 Findings

The findings obtained show that SBI can assist the process of evolving autonomy. In order to gain control over their own learning students need to understand their own learning processes; they need to be proactive in managing and directing their own learning and they need to be able to make informed choices about their learning paths. Such aspects of control require learners to develop their ability to use and be consciously aware of effective language learning strategies. The study therefore, supports the views of researchers who argue that it is necessary to introduce strategy training into plans to develop learner autonomy (Harris et al, 2001; Lamb and Reinders, 2008; Benson, 2011; Oxford, 2011).

8.2   Improvement in Metacognition

This section discusses the findings related to the student participants' demonstration of several characteristics and behaviours used in this study as indicators of learner autonomy (see figure 8.1 of this chapter). It was found that these distinctive elements, which were closely interrelated, contributed to the improvement of students' metacognition or what is also referred to as metacognitive awareness.

Researchers assert that metacognition refers to higher order thinking which involves active control over the cognitive processes engaged in learning (Livingston, 1997). Meanwhile, Wenden (1999: 436) distinguishes between metacognitive strategies and metacognitive knowledge as components of metacognition and refers to the former as "general skills through which learners manage, direct, regulate, and guide their learning" while the latter refers to "information learners acquire about their learning". Drawing on Wenden (1999), the two components of metacognition are discussed here with evidence from the different data sets as to how these elements were exemplified by the learners.

In terms of metacognitive strategies, the findings of this study suggest that strategy use reported by the learners indicated a high preference for metacognitive strategies (see results of the SILL and verbal reports in chapter seven). Metacognitive strategies are those procedures used by students to think about their learning in general, to plan their individual approach and strategy use, to monitor their performance, and to evaluate their progress (Nunan, 1996; Oxford, 2011). These aspects of learning, generated by the use of metacognitive strategies, are conducive to learner autonomy which is probably why 56 out of the 59 student participants believed that metacognitive strategies made them

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feel independent. Students' responses in the post-SBI interview supported this finding. To take a few examples, some students reported:

> *When I use this kind of strategy, like planning how I want to learn or understanding the purpose of tasks, it makes me organised and I feel responsibility.* {PS8, Verbal Report 2}

> *For example, when me and my friend looking for more opportunity to practice English, it is a good thing to know that we can rely on ourselves even outside of the classroom and not just here in the centre.* {IS5, Post-SBI Interview}

These students provided examples of their use of metacognitive strategies such as arranging and planning their learning through identifying the purpose of a task and also seeking opportunities beyond the classroom to learn. Thus, their responses suggest a potential causal relationship between metacognitive strategy use and autonomy. Furthermore, in keeping with Anderson (2002: 2) the selection and use of LLS is vital to the development of learner metacognition as "the metacognitive ability to select and use particular strategies in a given context for a specific purpose means that the learner can think and make conscious decisions about the learning process".

The other component of metacognition is metacognitive knowledge which according to Flavell (1976: 232) is "knowledge concerning one's own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them". Wenden (2001) claims that metacognitive knowledge is essential for successful language learning because students' understanding of themselves and the tasks they engage in directly impact on all their decisions about learning. The following five sets of learner characteristics were believed to contribute to the growth of students' metacognitive knowledge.

1. Developing students' awareness of the learning process and of themselves as learners
2. Enhancing efforts and performance
3. Identifying learning needs, goal setting, solution provision and decision-making
4. Managing and organizing learning, creating learning opportunities and exploiting LL resources
5. Monitoring and self-evaluation, and self-assessment

1. Developing students' awareness of the learning process and of themselves as learners

An essential aspect of autonomous learning is that the learners develop awareness of their language learning (Dam, 1995; Scharle and Szabó, 2000). Moreover, Breen and Mann (1997: 134) suggest that autonomous learners have a robust sense of self and are able to step back from what they are doing and reflect upon it. The findings from the SILL reflection sessions, the student post-SBI interviews and some statements form the verbal reports showed that the students developed awareness of both the learning process and of themselves as learners. Awareness of the learning process was evident from the following student excerpts:

> *I think I realise now that the learning process is not just about the teacher merely explaining rules and we listen and accept and that's it. No, I should take the opportunity and use my teacher's knowledge to discuss what I want to do and how to reach my goals. The teacher is there to help me to do many things.* {IS7, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I think I notice myself when I am learning. I mean I notice what I do; what are the steps that I following; what is the best way to do things so that my learning is better.* {ES5, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

> *Before, I never think about my learning. I don't know; it is maybe in the background. Now, I bring it into my attention. I think because I know myself that I am using strategy like how to plan and how to use my knowledge from before or how to work with my classmates and correct each other's' mistakes, all of this I think helped.* {PS10, Post-SBI Interview}

> *When I reflect on the exercise that I am doing, I think that means I'm reflecting on my learning as well because all of the different exercises we do in the classroom or at home for homework these are my learning.* * {ES7, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

The learners here are demonstrating that they are able to understand their own learning processes, to make informed choices about their learning paths and to be proactive in managing and directing their own learning. All of these aspects reflect degrees of control over learning, thereby demonstrating that "awareness and reflection are essential for the development of responsibility." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 10) and confirming Paiva's (2011: 63) argument that "Autonomous learners...reflect about their learning".

In terms of the students' awareness of themselves as learners, the following students stated:

> *I am able to know what is my weakness and strong points, what are the skills I enjoy the most.* {PS14, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

> *When I do this I can see where I am as a learner; am I improving or am I in the same place?* {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I can see now that I am good at some things and not so bad at other things and very very bad at another thing...for example, I don't have a clear goals for how to improving my English skills. Sometimes I notice my English mistakes and sometimes I don't or I forget them...* {PS11, SILL 1 Reflection Session}

This finding might raise queries as to whether developing awareness comes naturally to learners or whether it is the result of conscious effort and practice. The students' comments and responses seem to suggest that their raised awareness of their learning and of themselves was attributable to their participation in the SBI programme and that the training they received in phase 2 and the different tools they used throughout the different phases might have assisted the process of developing learning awareness.

2. Enhancing efforts and performance

The findings thus far have shown the students' awareness of their learning and of themselves as learners in general; however, more specifically the learners have demonstrated their consciousness of their increased efforts and enhanced performance which is also part of their learning process. These aspects have already been discussed in chapter seven of the thesis (see sections 7.2.2 and 7.3.1) where findings revealed that 91.5 per cent of the students (n=54) reported that their strategy use has helped increase their efforts of learning English and all 59 students believed that their use of LLS has helped improve their performance in learning English.

With specific reference to learner autonomy, it is believed that autonomous learners show initiative (Schunk, 2005) and that "Learners behave responsibly as they are consciously making an effort to contribute to their learning" (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 4). The learners from all three class levels have demonstrated that they were exerting efforts to develop their language learning which in effect made them feel responsible for their own learning. According to (Dam 1990, 1995) autonomy grows as a result of learners' never ending effort to understand the *why*, the *what* and the *how* of their

learning which was, as the findings suggest, achieved by the student participants through their use of LLS. Students' perception of LLS as the effective way to approach language tasks has already been identified (see section 7.3 in the previous chapter) as a main contributor to their enhanced performance. It is believed that learners' knowledge about their learning affects the way and the outcome of their learning.

3. Identifying learning needs, goal setting, solution provision and decision-making

The student participants talked about the importance of identifying their learning needs and goal setting as part of the SBI programme. For example one student explained:

> *Many things are clear to me now. This course make me aware of what I need. I want to most of all to improve my speaking and listening because one day I will need to meet with business providers in my company who speaks English and I need to welcome them and give them a tour in my company and maybe even invite them to dinner. And also my company maybe will send me outside to do course in engineering. So I think it is important to know what you want so you know the right direction where to go. I think the same when I do any task inside the class it is important for me to understand what I need from it.* {PS15, Post-SBI Interview}

Identifying the purpose of learning in general and language tasks in particular, was one of the metacognitive strategies taught during phase 2 of the SBIA. Some students seemed to have grasped the ability to apply this to their learning, as one student stated:

> *I learned how to set a purpose for my reading before I begin. When I know what is my goal then it is easier for me to know what I need to do and which strategy to use.** {ES9, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

Hence, it can be argued that providing students with opportunities to define and practise how to set their own personal learning goals both short and long-term goals was an essential step towards learner independence. It gave the learners a growing sense of accomplishment and maintained their drive to learn on their own.

Additionally, learner autonomy is based on the idea that if students are involved in decision making processes regarding their own language competence, "they are likely to be more enthusiastic about learning" (Littlejohn, 1985: 258) and learning can be more focused and purposeful for them (Dam, 1995; Camilleri, 1997; Chan, 2003). Also, one of the characteristics of an autonomous learner is the ability to overcome problems

(Ridley, 1997). It was found that some of the students developed the ability to take decisions and provide solutions to difficult situations:

> *Although to make my own decisions feels a little bit strange for me but, I tried it with small tasks and then with tasks at home and I think it is useful for me. I mean, I am adult so I do it in my own life so it should be OK to do it in my learning as well.* {IS12, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

> *I decided here that I will highlight all the important words. Then I will try to guess the meaning of it from the text altogether. Because I decided this, I know that this will help with my problem with reading.* {IS9, Verbal Report 2}

Results of the Post-SBI questionnaire revealed that the majority of learners had developed these four abilities as a result of their strategy use as shown in the figure below:
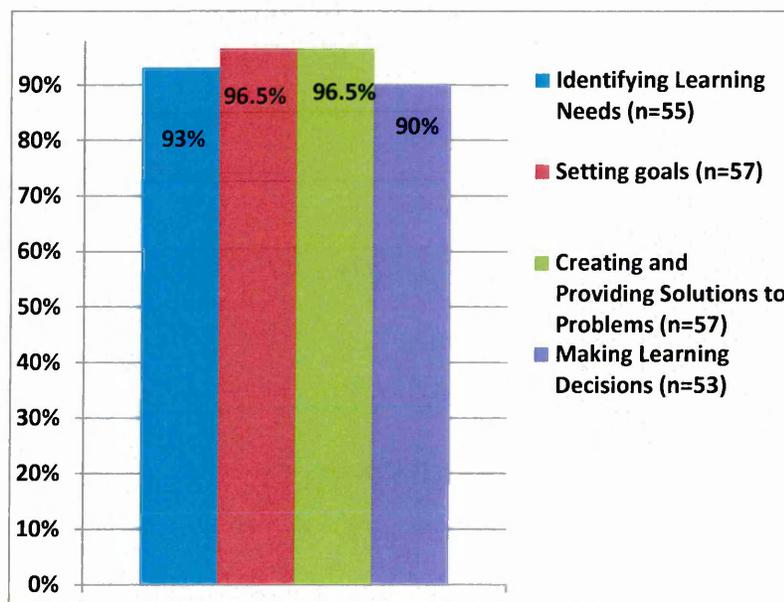
Figure 8.8: Strategy Use and Autonomous Learning Characteristics-1

4. Managing and organizing learning, creating learning opportunities and exploiting language learning resources

It was found that the student participants of this study were able to demonstrate their ability to perform all three actions stated here including, managing and organising learning, creating learning opportunities and exploiting language learning resources. The class teachers during different points of the programme confirmed that the students were showing clear signs of their ability to manage their learning. Mariam, the pre-

intermediate class teacher, provided an example of one student who told her about how he had set up a weekly timetable for different activities that he thought would help him improve his English, particularly his listening skill, such as listening to BBC channel news for 30-45 minutes every day. She mentioned that the student believed that organising his learning in this way has proved productive for him and that because he was able to establish a routine for himself he is making better use of his time {notes taken during preparation sessions}. In the Post-SBI questionnaire, results showed that 95 per cent (n=56) of the students believed that their use of LLS assisted them in managing and organising their learning (see figure 8.9 below). These findings demonstrated the students' need to manage their learning processes and indicated that they were in control of focusing and evaluating their own learning behaviours inherent in most definitions of metacognition (Borkowski et al, 1987) and of autonomy (Joshi, 2011; Paiva, 2011).

Creating learning opportunities and exploiting language learning resources were also evident from the results of the post-SBI questionnaire in which a majority of students believed that using LLS in various situations had helped them in managing and organising their learning (see figure 8.9 below).
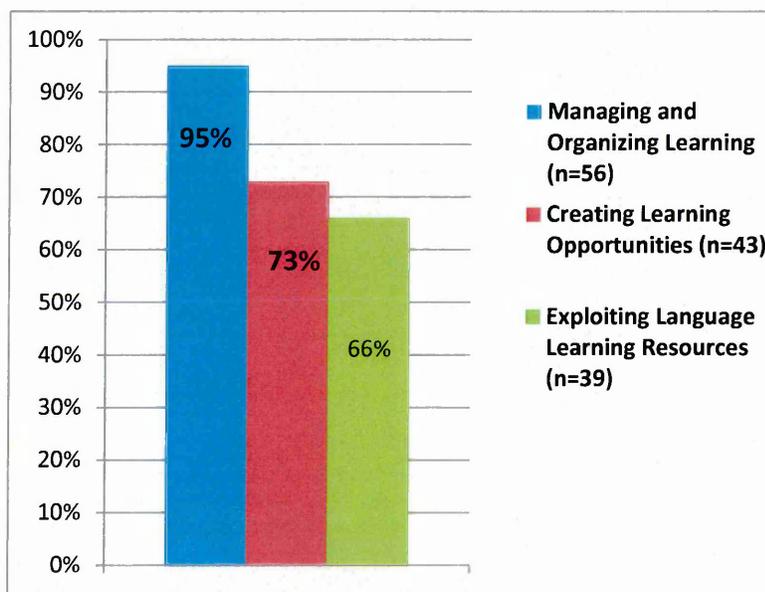
Figure 8.9: Strategy Use and Autonomous Learning Characteristics-2

Based on the students' responses in the post-SBI interview, seeking learning opportunities and exploiting resources were found to be related to their use of strategies outside the classroom. Using strategies beyond the classroom runs parallel with learner

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autonomy development. Elsen and St. John (2007: 34) argue that "It complements a learner's aim to use the knowledge and skills acquired in one context flexibly to reach a greater variety of goals in another". However, it seems that only a few students were able to extend their classroom behaviour including their strategy use to their social communities. Results of the post-SBI show that only 18.5 per cent of the students believed they tended to use LLS more outside the classroom while the majority had a tendency to use LLS more inside the classroom. This might suggest a discrepancy with the finding related to the students' ability of strategy transfer. In section 8.1.4 of this chapter, it was shown that 86 per cent of the students believed that they were able to transfer their strategy use to new tasks (see figure 8.4 in this chapter) but it seems that most of the tasks were in-class activities. Nevertheless, it might be argued here that not all learners get to the point where English is a part of their lives and a means of communication in order for them to achieve an ideal level of autonomy in relation to language learning. On the other hand, there were a few students that reported on strategy use outside of the classroom when seeking opportunities for further learning. For example, the following student spoke of the need to create learning opportunities:

I feel like I wasn't making the most of learning opportunities and different situations around me. We have some foreign staff in our company and my friend [...] and I decided to go and have a chat with them and we told them the truth. We told them that we are trying to improve our spoken English so I thought of talking to them about what we would do in our EID day after the month of Ramadan or after Hajj. And we asked them to tell us some details about Christmas. I think we all enjoyed the discussion so much and [...] and I learned quite a lot that day
{IS5, Post-SBI Interview}

And in terms of exploiting language learning resources, one of the pre-intermediate students mentioned:

I tried to go onto some website that teacher [Mariam] and you suggested for us and there are some I know them from before. I did some listening which I want to improve because I am very weak in listening so I tried to use some strategies like activate my background knowledge and make logical guessing. I started with the lower levels and then moved up. It was good because you can save your results and see how you improve next time. I even told my friend about this website. {PS3, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

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Interestingly, it was found that capitalising on learning opportunities and taking advantage of resources closely associates with the students' ability to transfer LLS to new tasks. For example, the students above demonstrated their ability to use the social strategy 'empathising with others' and 'understanding cultural differences' when they sought the opportunity of interacting with their English speaking work colleagues. Meanwhile, the strategies of 'activating background knowledge' and 'guessing intelligently' were employed when one of the students used web-based resources for learning purposes.

5. Monitoring and self-evaluation, and self-assessment

It is argued that by monitoring and evaluating their learning, learners develop their metacognitive capacities through "their ability to reflect on the learning process, the forms of the target language, and the uses to which the target language can be put at end." Little et al (2002: 31). These characteristics are known to be typical of autonomous learners (Schunk, 2005). In addition, a lot of importance has been attached to the role of self-assessment as this process raises students' awareness and encourages them to think critically and reflect on their own competence (Benson, 2001, 2011). During the SILL 1 reflection sessions, students' comments indicated that these aspects of learning might be difficult to develop especially self-assessment. Again this might be due to learner expectations based on previous learning experiences, where this role was exclusive to teachers. The following student excerpts exemplify this:

> *How I will correct myself if I don't know the answer to many questions.* {ES18, SILL 1 Reflection Session}

> *I think it is my teacher's job to assess our work. This has always been the case for me.* {PS4, SILL 1 Reflection Session}

A further interpretation might be that learners' understanding of assessment is merely restricted to marking homework, tests and class work and that their limited knowledge of the language cannot allow them to perform this. Moreover, some learners might not realise that the development of self-assessment occurs with learner maturation in which learners start to gradually recognise their weaknesses and areas of most frequent errors. Dickinson (1993: 331) argues that "All learners involve themselves in self-assessment to some degree, but I think effective autonomous learners are consciously involved with it and recognize its importance".

Metacognition has been shown to be related to students' developmental maturation including their ability to monitor and correct errors (Brown, 1987). In phase 1 after students completed the SILL 1, some students started to show signs of their ability to reflect on their weaknesses and strengths which is part of monitoring progress, as can be shown from this student's comment:

I can see now that I am good at some things and not so bad at other things and very very bad at another thing...for example, I don't have a clear goals for how to improving my English skills. Sometimes I notice my English mistakes and sometimes I don't or I forget them. {PS11, SILL 1 Reflection Session}

Other students, referred to guidance from their teachers who encouraged them during training to learn to determine their own learning progress instead of total reliance on them for evaluation. Additionally, it is likely that because students were monitoring their use of strategies during different language tasks throughout the phases of the SBIA model, they developed the ability to monitor their progress in general. Results of the post-SBI questionnaire show that more than two-thirds of the students thought that using LLS in various situations helped develop their ability to monitor and self-evaluate their learning progress and just under two-thirds of the students thought the same about their development of self-assessment (see figure 8.10 below).
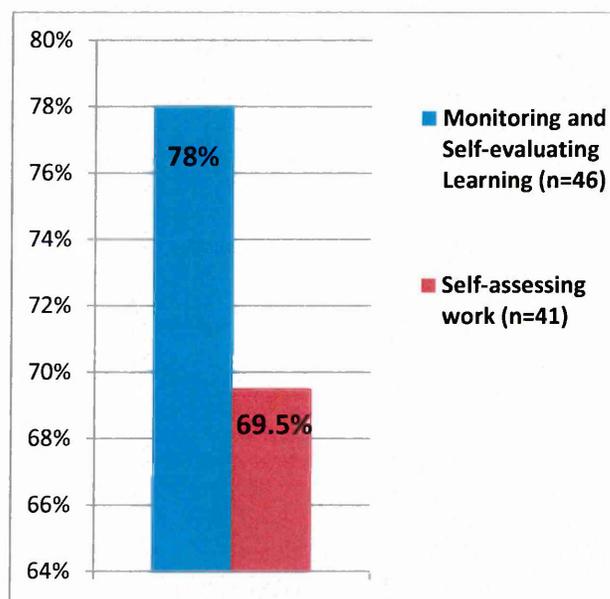
Figure 8.10: Strategy Use and Autonomous Learning Characteristics-3

To sum up, it was found that enhanced metacognition appears to lead to more autonomy through use of more efficient strategies particularly metacognitive strategies and

improved metacognitive knowledge. The latter involves improved self-awareness during the process of learning beginning with identifying learning needs and making decisions to monitoring learning and self-evaluation. Thus, I argue that metacognition, autonomy and learning interact with each other and that the dynamism of this interaction might be impaired if metacognition is not enhanced.

8.3   Enhancing Social Interaction (Awareness)

Learner autonomy has repeatedly been associated with social and collaborative learning (Benson, 1996; Camilleri, 1997). One of the findings of this study reflected this particular assumption and three social aspects of learning, which were found to be related to autonomy, are discussed here. These are: 1) learner responsibility, 2) role of teachers and 3) reliance on peers.

8.3.1   Learner Responsibility

It is often argued that learners take their first step towards autonomy when they recognize that they are responsible for their own learning (Little, et al. 2002). Fernandes et al (1990: 101) argue that:

> In their everyday lives adults are required to make choices and
> decisions regarding their lives, accept responsibility and learn to
> do things for themselves. However, language learners in the
> classroom often tend to revert to the traditional role of pupil,
> who expects to be told what to do.

This is probably why some learners have become teacher-dependent and often feel that the responsibility for any learning and progress lies with the teacher alone. One reason for this may be because foreign language learners possess relatively limited control over the language. In this sense, they are not independent of external support, such as teacher input. Consequently what the teachers do and how they conduct their classes is likely to impact on the prospect and practice of autonomous learning (Ng Kwei, 1999). However, teachers can provide all the necessary circumstances and input; but learning can happen only if learners are willing to contribute, and only if they do (Joshi, 2011).

There is little doubt that the shift of responsibility from teachers to learners is attributable to changes in the learning approach. In the case of the current study, adopting a learner-centred approach such as SBI may have been conducive to a change

in the distribution of power and authority in the traditional classroom. Interestingly, the results of the post-SBI questionnaire revealed that almost all the respondents (58 out of 59 students) believed that the learner takes responsibility for his/her own learning and the teacher should act as a guide, facilitator, or demonstrator (see figure 8.11 in this chapter). This result suggests that the student participants seemed to have grasped the core meaning of autonomy which is the need for learners to develop a sense of responsibility (Scharle and Szabó, 2000) and that 'learner autonomy' does not mean teachers become redundant, abdicating their control over what is transpiring in the language learning process. In fact, Dam (2003: 135) argues 'it is largely the teachers' responsibility to develop learner autonomy' (to be discussed further in section 9.2.2 in chapter nine).

8.3.2   Role of Teachers: Modelling Strategy Use and Scaffolding

An important factor that was generally highlighted by both the students and the teachers during the programme was the importance of modelling strategy use which pertains to one of many roles that the teacher plays when implementing SBI. With regards to teacher modelling of strategy use, the following students stated:

> *If I didn't see my teacher doing it, I don't think I would be able to do it.* {ES14, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

> *It was good to see the teacher do it first, and then we can try it.* {ES12, Post-SBI Interview}

Meanwhile, one of the class teachers commented:

> *I think that when we provided clear examples of the strategies and applied them directly to the language tasks; I think that made all the difference. {Mohamed, Post-SBI Teacher Interview}*

In the context of this study, the roles of modelling how to use strategies and scaffolding guidance were critical in the L2 learning process and in the research programme. These teacher roles were performed by the participant teachers and myself when delivering SBI during phase 2 of the SBIA model. However, it is important for teachers to be aware of how much support they need to offer and understand the extent to which scaffolding is provided. Excess-provision of scaffolding might adversely affect learning thus, impeding the development of learner autonomy. For example, Al-dabbus (2008) asserts that the concept of 'scaffolding' was misinterpreted and accordingly misused by

some EFL teachers in Libya through providing students with more scaffolding than they need. Therefore, towards the end of phase 2 of the SBIA model and once students had received the necessary training in the application of LLS, it was necessary for the each of the class teachers and myself to establish a balance between help and independence. In other words, as the students became less dependent on their teachers, less support was needed and eventually scaffolding could be removed. The learners were then allowed the freedom to decide which strategies to adopt or reject. Providing learners with genuine choice is crucial to the development of learner autonomy (Esch, 1996: 39).

In light of this observation, Vygotsky's (1978) learning model might seem a relevant choice for explaining how learning occurs as a result of the support offered to the learners by the teacher as 'the capable other'. Vygotsky (1978) and some of his followers (see Williams and Burden, 1997) draw attention to the social context within which learning takes place and stress the value of mediated learning which takes place in the "zone of proximal development.". The zone of proximal development refers to the transfer from the assisted to the actual ability of a student to accomplish any given task. Smith (1983) concurs with this Vygotskian view when he points out that the relationship between learners and teachers will change, develop and eventually decline, since dependency of learner on teacher should gradually decrease which is probably why, during the final phase of the programme, 52 out of 59 students believed that using LLS in various situations has helped them become less reliant on their teacher.

8.3.3   Role of peers: Practice Opportunities

Another factor which appeared to have role in fostering learner autonomy within a social context was the importance of practice opportunities. Some students explained:

> *I think there was a lot of chances for us to try them in the class and the teacher always shows us how to do that.* {PS10, Post-SBI Interview}

> *Every day, every time we have exercise we try new strategy or some old ones and then we discuss them together. That was very help for me.* {IS16, Post-SBI Interview}

During phase 4 of the SBIA model, 56 out of a total of 59 students (95%) believed that using LLS in various situations has helped them feel responsible about their language learning as elicited by the post-SBI questionnaire

Furthermore, as the student participants of the study were trained in the use of social strategies it was interesting to see that social aspects of learning (collaboration and negotiating on thinking and learning), as emphasised by Vygotsky, were developed among these Libyan adult learners of English. Also, based on its underlying principles, the Graham and Harris (1996) model supports the use of social strategies (e.g. cooperating with others) as well as individual strategies (e.g. goal-setting and monitoring progress) which were encouraged as part of the SBI programme reported here and were shown to have been used by the student participants.

Group work or one-to-one interaction also creates opportunities for feedback from peers and interaction. However, not all learner levels showed interest in participating in these group activities. A possible explanation for that was the effect of their previous learning experience which might have contributed to the lack of social awareness in the classroom context. Several elementary level learners at the beginning of the programme stated that their previous teachers never encouraged much peer interaction and others never encountered any peer interaction patterns before as this was their first time in a language classroom (within this particular setting). This last reflection might be the reason why this level of learners reported low frequency use of social strategies (mean=3.17), during phase 1 of the SBIA model, compared to other two class levels. Many of the elementary level students expressed, during the SILL 1 reflection sessions, their discomfort with certain interactive patterns in the classroom, for example, student-to-class interaction patterns:

> *I feel very shy when I speak in front of my teacher and friends*
> *...I like to work on my own better.* {ES17, SILL1 Reflection Session}

And student-to-students interaction patterns:

> *I cannot help it but I get very uncomfortable when the teacher*
> *asks me to work in a group.* *{ES12, SILL1 reflection Session}

However, as discussed in chapter seven (see section 7.1.2) there was a noticeable increase in the elementary level students' social strategies after the strategy training in comparison with the other two class levels. By the end of the programme their attitudes changed which might suggest a change in their level of social awareness. These are some of the students' statements gathered during phases 3 and 4 of the SBIA model:

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When I talked with my friends that helped me understand the meaning of some word I don't know and I tell them words that they don't know. {PS2, Verbal Report 2}

Yes, together we remember each other about different ideas to talk about. {ES10, Verbal Report 2}

It wasn't very clear at first but when I checked it and discuss it with [PS11] it became more clear. {PS10, Verbal Report 2}

If the teacher didn't ask us to check with my friends I mean with each other, I would never think that is OK. {IS7, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

The teacher encourages us to work together in pairs or in teams so we do a lot of speaking and also listening. It's a great way of learning. {IS7, Post-SBI Interview}

[IS13] told me how to highlight the key words in the text and we discussed and guessed the meaning of many words and phrases. {IS2, Verbal Report 2}

Many times before, I do all exercises by myself and give it to my teacher to mark it straight away. I never discuss anything with my classmates. Now I know that is very useful and we learn many things together. We compare our answers and opinions about many things. It is important I think. {PS10, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

These student excerpts show how the SBI programme seems to have provided students with more opportunities to interact with each other and share ideas about how to go about the different language tasks. In this sense, the student participants not only used social strategies (e.g. 'cooperating with peers and proficient users of English' 'developing cultural understanding' and 'becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings') both inside and outside the classroom, but made use of social strategies as a means to using other strategies. Having learners share successful strategies with their peers is an important part of learner training (Tyacke, 1991). Increased student-student interaction where negotiation of meaning took place might explain the students' feeling that hints mentioned by peers helped them.

In summary, learning a foreign language is an interactive, social process and "As social beings our independence is always balanced by dependence, our essential condition is one of interdependence" (Little 1990: 7). The findings highlighted the importance of teacher modelling, scaffolding and the provision of practice opportunities whereby

learners were able to interact with peers (making use of social strategies and others). These factors were encouraged by the implementation of the SBI programme which helped gradually transfer the responsibility of learning from the teachers to the learners as well as enhance social awareness among the student participants.

8.4   Student's Attitude Change towards Autonomous Learning

Another important aspect that seemed to interact with enhanced metacognition and raised social awareness in the process of fostering learner autonomy, during this study was learner attitude. Eagly and Chaiken (1993: 1) define attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour." They state that psychological tendency refers to a state which is internal to the person whereas evaluating refers to all classes of evaluative responding, whether overt or covert, cognitive, affective or behavioural (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993: 2). In light of this definition, attitudes have three main components:

(1) A knowledge about the object; the beliefs and ideas components (Cognitive).

(2) A feeling about the object; the like or dislike component (Affective).

(3) A tendency-towards-action; the action component (Behavioural).

(See also Zainol Abidin, et al, 2012).

The data gathered from the study unveiled the presence of each of these components among the student participants demonstrating the effect of learner attitudes in promoting autonomous learning.

8.4.1   The Beliefs and Ideas Components (Cognitive)

Autonomous language learning may be supported by a particular set of beliefs or behaviours. The beliefs learners hold may either contribute to or impede the development of their potential for autonomy (Cotterall, 1995). It is argued that "learners need to undergo a considerable transformation of their beliefs about language and their role as learners in order to be able to undertake independent learning effectively" (Kelly 1996: 94). Due to the fact that this study dealt with adult learners, it was vital to expect the existence of rooted beliefs which might be difficult to be transformed.

It was evident from the student interviews that previous learning experiences have an effect on learners' current perceptions of their roles and those of their teachers. To take some examples, students across the three learner level asserted:

> *We grew up to believe that we have to listen to our teacher all the time otherwise we will not succeed in our exams and we will be left behind. I think sometimes we still think in that way.* {IS7, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I used to see my teacher as manager of the class; whatever she say we must listen and we always do what she tell us.* {ES8, Post-SBI Interview}

> *We can never say what we think about our learning. If you think a method works good for you then you can do it silently on your own but you mustn't tell the teacher or even in university your lecturer that she was wrong about a certain method or how you feel about it. It's just disrespectful.* {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I don't remember any teacher at school or at college asking us what we think about the course and how it is presented to us and what we want to learn from it or what is the best way to learn.* {PS11, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I think the system in Libya has always been that we have no opinion in how things are done. It's the teacher's job to show us step by step what is important and what is not especially in relation to tests and exams.* {IS5, Post-SBI Interview}

This finding is supported by Alhmali (2007: 66) who asserts that: "In Libya, teachers are seen as the sources of appropriate knowledge and skills and their task is to impart these successfully to the students so that they can be recalled under examination conditions." He adds that such a system is likely to develop its own attitudes towards learning and that the idea of teachers seeking to enable students to develop attitudes is foreign in Libya (Alhmali, 2007: 66).

In light of such an observation and because the attitudes of learners are crucial to the successful implementation of learner autonomy, it was important to find out whether there were any changes to the student participants' beliefs as a result of their participation in the SBI programme. There was evidence to show that there was a change in their beliefs in relation to learner and teacher roles as demonstrated by the following student excerpts:

I used to see my teacher as manager of the class; whatever she say we must listen and we always do what she tell us. In this course, I am allowed to say my opinions about how the best way I can learn and what works better for me. I felt that my teacher and me like colleagues not boss and employee. {ES8, Post-SBI Interview}

I never thought I could make my own decisions about learning. I thought that my teachers needed to do that as they always knew better than the learners. But now I can see that no one knows what I need more than me...and also our teachers are there not just to help us prepare for the exam. * {ES6, Post-SBI Interview}

What has happened is that we are used to the methods of when we were studying at school and also at university; everything depends on the teacher. I think I've changed my opinion about that now. I can take my own steps without the teacher always holding my hand and leading me. Well, it is important that she does that in the beginning but then I need to rely on myself a bit more and decide when I need my teacher and when I don't. I think because in the end I can't take my teacher with me everywhere like home or when I travel (laugh). {IS7, Post-SBI Interview}

I've learned something very important which is that my teacher and classmates can help me with learning the subject itself I mean the content of the curriculum but the way and what I need to do to learn effectively is up to me. It's not about how much I get in the exam it's about what I have learned. {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

When we were younger, we were often told to rely on ourselves like not letting anyone help us with the homework especially our parents. Now I understand that independence does not actually mean working alone and not letting anyone help you; it's about taking the decision about how you learn best and with who. {PS3, Post-SBI Interview}

The findings show that the learners started to realise that the teacher is not only a sole source of knowledge but a manager and a counsellor that is able to guide and direct learners towards the most likely paths available to them and clarify the probable consequences of following any particular path. In addition, they started to realise that the teacher is there to create an atmosphere that is no longer threatened by examination pressure. There were several key words and phrases used by the students (e.g. *'I used to'*, *'But now'*, *'I've changed my opinion about that now'*, *'I've learned'*) which clearly

indicate a recent change in their beliefs. In support of this data, the post-SBI questionnaire revealed that 98 per cent of the respondents (58 students) believed that the teacher should act as a guide, facilitator, or demonstrator and the learner takes responsibility for his/her own learning (see figure 8.11). No student respondents believed that the learner should control all aspects of learning independent of teacher support and guidance (see earlier discussion in 8.3 on interdependence in light of Vytosky's theory)

Teacher and Learner Roles in the FL classroom

2%

98%

■ I believe the teacher should be the centre of all class activities, making all decisions and controlling all aspects of learning(n=1)

■ I believe the learner should be the centre of all class activities, making all decisions and controlling all aspects of learning (n=0)

■ I believe the teacher should act as a guide, facilitator, or demonstrator and the learner takes responsibility for his/her own learning (n=58)

Figure 8.11: Beliefs on Teacher and Learner Roles

Changes to deeply held beliefs do not occur readily; however, the most important and encouraging aspects of the mind-set framework is the possibility that the learner mind-sets may be open to pedagogic intervention (Blackwell et al., 2007) as was the case in the context of this study. It was evident from the data that the student participants did not need intensive restructuring of their beliefs about learner and teacher roles. Two factors stood out as main contributors to this result: 1) students' use of LLS during the SBI programme and 2) their readiness for learner autonomy.

Students' Use of LLS

Having experimented with classroom activities, in which they applied LLS, the majority of the students believed that this allowed them to take responsibility for their learning. Consequently, they became open-minded about roles in the classroom and what they

should achieve in their learning process. The following student extracts demonstrate this point:

> *Using strategies has showed me that I can do many things. I have different jobs to do like setting my goals, observing myself when I am learning, deciding when I need my friends to learn better and lots of other things.* {PS3, Post-SBI Interview}

> *When I practised with strategies I slowly started to think differently about what I can do. Many things I normally would expect from my teacher, I can do them myself, like thinking about my targets, planning my learning. It's like the teacher is not the manger anymore; I think we share this duty now.* * {IS16, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I have tried many techniques in the classroom and used many strategies so I know how to reach my goals. It's not the teacher who controls everything; I have control as well in my learning.* {IS7, Post-SBI Interview}

> *Yes I'm happy to decide what I need from a course and I what is less important for me or how to perform things in the class. Before maybe, I would leave that to the teacher or the centre to decide, but if I am allowed to do that, why not?* {PS3, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

Students' Readiness for Learner Autonomy

Despite the learning habits infused by their previous instructional system i.e. a strictly teacher-centralised and a formal and highly prescriptive educational system, it was found that the majority of the learners came to these English classes in the hope of a more autonomous and stimulating system. This conclusion is evident from some of the students' views during the post-SBI phase 4 interviews in which they showed readiness for a new approach that stimulates independent learning:

> *I am open for any suggestion from my teacher or anyone that can help me to control my studying of English.* {1S12, Post-SBI Interview}

> *This course meets my needs. I want to be independent and know how to learn English better.* {PS11, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I think everyone not just me. I don't know but this is what I think. I think we all want to be more independent when we learn. We are adults it shouldn't be difficult for us. I think when we*

come to a course like this one; we know what we want so all we
need is some direction. {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

It is presumable that part of the success in changing the students' beliefs towards autonomy, during the SBI programme, is that some of the students already possessed an innate inclination towards a new approach to learning; an approach that would allow them more independence. On a similar note, other students responded:

> *No one show us how to be autonomous but I think I can be*
> *autonomous if I want to; I just have to know how to do that.*
> {ES12, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I believe I am ready for it [autonomy] even if I did not realise*
> *that before but I am ready.* {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

Perhaps, what is surprising is that these students, as it seems from their statements, highlighted what Nunan (1996: 13) believes that "some degree of autonomy can be fostered in learners regardless of the extent to which they are naturally predisposed to the notion". Furthermore, these findings might suggest that it is in fact the 'educational contexts' in Libya that are responsible for Libyan learners learning styles and beliefs rather than the learners themselves. Certain contexts may not necessarily reflect the roles that learners would like to adopt which may give us reason to question the typical stereotype of the "passive Libyan student". There seems to be a theoretical assumption of Libyan learners that they are passive learners but this is probably applicable to learners of certain contexts (secondary schools and universities, perhaps) and evidently not to the learners of the context under investigation (Foreign Languages Centre). This coincides with Little's (1990: 10) belief that there are environmental (contextual) conditions and constraints that define the limits of achieving learner autonomy.

8.4.2   The Like or Dislike Component (Affective)

Another component of learner attitude is the learner's emotional condition towards a certain entity. The basis for learner autonomy is that the learner accepts responsibility for his or her learning, which is likely to have affective implications not just cognitive ones. It entails at once a feeling of like or dislike from the learner towards autonomous learning as an approach. The development of the capacity to reflect on the content and process of learning, which underlies autonomy, might be welcomed with positivity and acceptance or negativity and rejection. The majority of students during this study generally expressed positive feelings towards autonomy as reflected by their statements

in the SILL 2 reflection sessions and also in the post-SBI interviews. Examples of these are:

I prefer things this way; how we learned them in this course. I enjoyed how I did things differently. {IS1, Post-SBI Interview}

I feel that I am stronger learner and can do more even away from my classroom. {PS15, Post-SBI Interview}

I've learned that using strategies and being more responsible will help me carry on learning even when my teacher is not there. And I think that is necessary, so I'm satisfied with my experience. {IS12, Post-SBI Interview}

It makes me feel happy when I do things in my way; I mean the way I think works best for me. I am in control and I know what I'm doing. Yeah, it feels good. {P11, Post-SBI Interview}

It might be argued that because the students were given the chance to experience the outcome of autonomy, they were able to establish and develop a psychological association with it as a capacity which is probably what helped convey these positive feelings.

On the other hand, there were a few learners who did not share these feelings:

I think I've done OK, but I still like it when my teacher tells me and shows me everything; I feel more confident.* {PS5, Post-SBI Interview}

I don't know, I can be quite unsure without my teacher directing me and supervision. Sometimes, I feel that I need her with me all the time or I'll be lost and confused. I don't know that's my feeling. {ES7, Post-SBI Interview}

These student quotes suggest that there are learners who will not readily accept autonomous language learning and will express a level of discomfort or insecurity towards autonomy which may be due to traditional learning practices and cultural traits (Al-Zahrani, 2008). However, this does not necessarily mean that those who are less ready are not capable of autonomy. It may in fact lead to a discussion on the nature of achieving autonomy. In light of gradualist approaches, achieving autonomy is a gradual process that does not occur overnight and is not taken as a starting point as viewed in radical versions of autonomy (Little, 2000; Alford, 2007). It should be recognised that fostering autonomy is a timely process similar to gaining responsibility from childhood

to adulthood. In this vein, Candy (1991: 124) argues that autonomy "takes a long time to develop, and simply removing the barriers to a person's ability to think and behave in certain ways may not allow him or her to break away from old habits or old ways of thinking". Nunan (1997: 192) suggests that autonomy is not an "all-or-nothing concept" but a matter of degree. Furthermore, any developmental model of autonomy which fails to account for differing levels of autonomy at different times and across different domains of learning can be misleading (Benson, 2001, 2011). In the case of the current study, the duration of the course (8 weeks) might be considered an important factor accountable for some of the learners' feelings of disfavour (see section 4.7.2 on time constraints). While this period allowed the majority of the learners to reach a certain level of emotional consent towards autonomy, others were not quite there suggesting that some learners might require a longer time. Therefore, programmes aimed at promoting learner autonomy should account for the time needed to yield favorable feelings.

8.4.3   The Action Component (Behavioural)

A last component of attitude which complements the other two components (beliefs and feelings) is learner behaviour. This component of attitude deals with the way a learner behaves and reacts in particular learning situations (Zainol Abidin, 2012) and is often found to be closely related to the cognitive component. In other words, beliefs often provoke a tendency towards action. For example, McDonough (1995: 9) points out that our beliefs "form the basis for our personal decisions as to how to proceed" while Kara (2009) presumes that opinions and beliefs have an obvious influence on students' behaviours and consequently on their performance.

During phases 3 and 4 of the SBIA, students reported about activities that revealed the development of a more autonomous approach to their language learning, as evident from their verbal reports 2, feedback provided in the SILL 2 reflection sessions and post- SBI interviews. To take a few examples:

> *Before my English teacher is everything. I just listen and obey*
> *him. So I am not rely on myself. Now, I don't think that*
> *anymore. So I'm doing as much as possible independent. My*
> *teacher is there if I need her but I think it is important for me to*
> *put my aims and goals and make most of decisions and plan how*
> *to reach it.* {ES2, SILL 2 Reflection Session}

Many examples of student excerpts embedded throughout the discussion of section 8.4 demonstrate how students' beliefs on autonomy were reflected in their behaviour (see also sections 8.2 and 8.3 of this chapter for further examples).

Students' tendency towards action does not only ensue from their beliefs about autonomy but also requires 'willingness' on the part of the learner. In other words, no matter how positive learners' beliefs about autonomy might appear to be, if learners are not willing to be autonomous, they simply will not be autonomous. Littlewood (1996) argues that autonomy depends on two main components: ability (discussed in 8.1 of this chapter) and willingness which "depends on having both the motivation and the confidence to take responsibility for the choices required." (Littlewood, 1996: 428). Therefore, 'motivation' and 'confidence' might be seen as prerequisites of autonomous behaviour and are closely linked to the behavioural component of learner attitudes. These two aspects were investigated during the study as they were considered indicators of learner autonomy (see Table 6.7 in chapter six) and questions related to them were integrated into the post-SBI questionnaire.

Motivation

A psychological variable often associated with autonomy and attitudes is motivation (Palfreyman, 2003). Riley (1996: 155) asserts that beliefs about a language and how it is learned may shape or at least affect learners' motivation and accordingly their behaviour in the process of learning that language. It was found that two-thirds of the students (42 out of 59) responded in the post-SBI questionnaire that their use of LLS in various situations has helped them feel motivated to learn English (see figure 8.13). It is argued that learner motivation depends on a variety of factors including how learners perceive their own achievement (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003). For example, some students reported:

> *The strategies I learned have made me a better reader. I am faster, I understand more and I find the answers more quickly. I enjoy reading a lot and the course has encouraged me to do even better.* {IS5, Post-SBI Interview}

> *There are lots of strategies to use. Each time I use a new strategy and see how it is helpful for me I feel like I want to do more tasks and learn more and more.* {PS3, Post-SBI Interview}

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It seems that some of the students associated their enhanced motivation with their strategy use when they felt satisfied with the effectiveness of LLS (see section 7.3.2.1, p155). These student excerpts also show the effect of motivation on their efforts to learn English, demonstrating the impact of SBI on learners' efforts (see research question 1 in 1.5). Another possible reason as to why the respondents believed that their level of motivation has risen because of their strategy use is their enhanced level of control over their learning. There is evidence in research studies to support the claim that "increasing the level of learner control will increase the level of self-determination, thereby increasing overall motivation in the development of learner autonomy" (Chan, 2001: 506). For this reason, motivation is believed to be a necessary condition of learner autonomy (Paiva, 2011).

Self-confidence

With regards to learner self-confidence, data collected during phases 3 and 4 of the SBI model revealed that there was noticeable change in the students' confidence towards autonomous learning. Three main contributors were identified, namely: the direct effect of autonomy on the students, their use of LLS and the role of the teacher.

The following student excerpts reflect how their understanding of the outcome of autonomy has a role not only in shaping their attitudes towards autonomous learning but in building and enhancing their confidence as well.

> *I can now understand why it [learner autonomy] is important. I am a much stronger learner of English and I think I will always be a strong learner even away from classroom.* {IS13, Post-SBI Interview}

> *It took some time for me to accept everything. It wasn't easy you know but I am happy with my progress and I feel confident in myself because I can do lots of things on my own.* {PS11, Post-SBI Interview}

It seems that once the learners understood how and why all the extra involvement in and responsibility for their own learning was going to optimise their investment of time and effort they were less confounded by it all. It is often believed that some learners reject autonomous language learning until they experience its advantages and start to feel comfortable with it (Holec, 1981); hence, it is essential that learners perceive immediate practical applications (Cranstone and Baird, 1988).

In the same vein, the majority of the students explained that their participation in the SBI programme has helped provide them with opportunities to experience the advantages of autonomous learning and gradually feel confident in directing their own language learning to some degree. This according to them was due to their use of LLS:

> *Yes, the SBI course give me chance to use different strategies and step by step I getting better. Now I feel I can use many of them and this make confidence in myself.* {PS15, Post-SBI Interview}

> *I have learned how to use many strategies...all of that helped me because now I know that I have these tools so I am not afraid that I cannot do a task properly. I just have to think which are the best ones to use.* {ES12, Post-SBI Interview}

In support of this finding, the post-SBI questionnaire showed that 80% (47 out of 59) of the students believed that using LLS in various situations has helped them feel confident about their language learning (see figure 8.12 below).
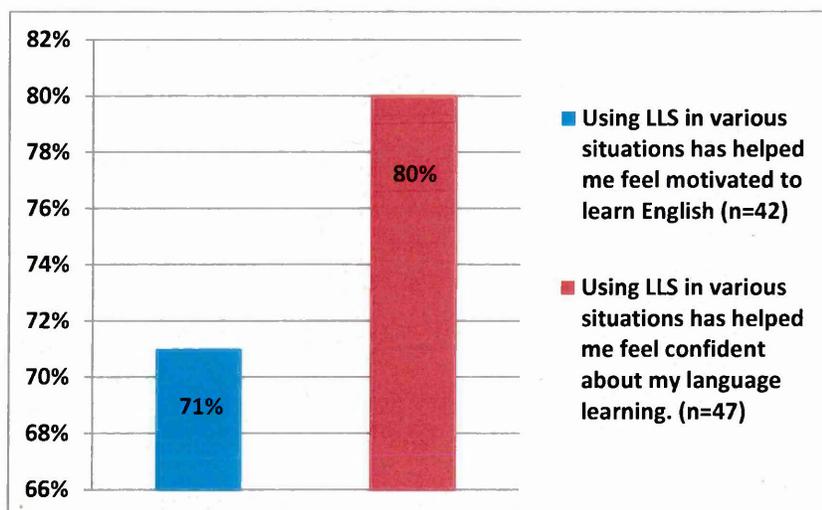
Figure 8.12: Effect of Strategy Use on Learner Motivation and Confidence

Another factor that enhanced students' confidence as evident from the SILL reflection sessions and the interviews was the role of the teacher.

> *I think because the teacher gave us the choice and believed we can do it, I started to believe I can as well.* {PS10, Post-SBI Interview}

> *The continuous teacher support was very important for me; it helped me be confident.* {IS7, Post-SBI Interview}

I sometimes feel unsure of what I'm doing, but my teacher always reminds me that I am doing well and that I will improve with time. I think that works! {PS3, Post-SBI Interview}

In line with this finding, Elsen and St. John (2007: 19) assert that: "If a teacher manages to engage the learners and succeeds in boosting and building their confidence, there will be a firm base for the learners to explore and extend the boundaries of their autonomy." This shows that a teacher's role to develop a system of psychological support to help students become more successful autonomous learners is necessary.

In conclusion, it may well be the case that SBI is conducive to learner autonomy, given certain changes in learners' attitudes (beliefs, feelings and behaviours). Generally speaking, the student participants developed an affirmative attitude towards autonomy by the end of the programme. Several important factors were assumed to be responsible for the students' attitude change. Students' practice with LLS and their readiness for a new approach that stimulates independent learning was shown to effect the students' beliefs whereas experiencing the outcome of autonomy had an impact on their feelings. Autonomous behaviour in the students was stimulated by their beliefs and their willingness (motivation and confidence), which once again was associated with the students' use of LLS, the outcome of autonomy in addition to the role of the teacher. A matrix of how these factors and aspects are interrelated is shown in figure 8.13 below.
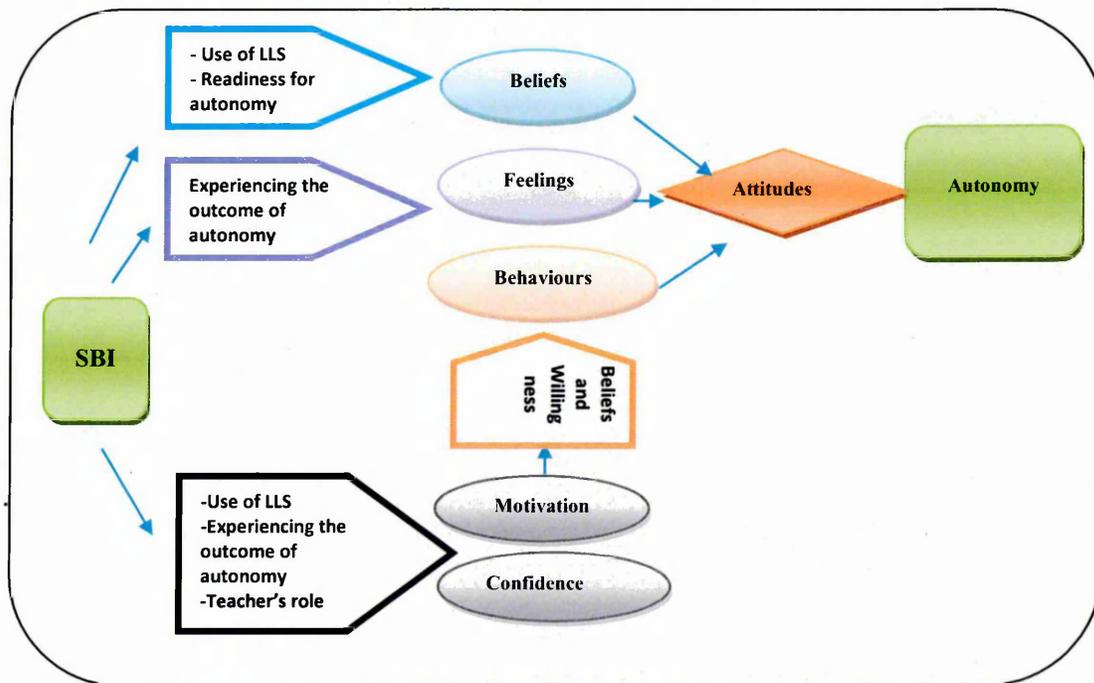
Figure 8.13: Learner Attitudes and Learner Autonomy

8.5   Conclusion

One of the aims of this research study was to find out if SBI as an instructional programme will help promote autonomy in learners so that they can continue their language development and take increasing responsibility for their learning (see research question two in section 1.5, p.7). Based on the research findings and in light of the arguments stated in this chapter, it can be suggested that SBI had a role in fostering autonomy in the majority of the adult learners of English in the chosen Libyan EFL context.

The student participants in this study generally demonstrated reasonable levels of autonomy (discussed in section 8.1), good metacognitive awareness (discussed in section 8.2) and appropriate use of social strategies/social aspects of learning conducive to social awareness (discussed in section 8.3). The SBI programme also had an impact on the students' attitudes (beliefs, feelings and behaviour) towards autonomy (discussed in section 8.4) as well as enhancing their confidence and motivation indicating autonomous behaviour.

A main focus of this research study was examining the impact of SBI on Libyan adult learners of English (see research questions in section 1.5, p.7). However, the intervention involved the participation of three EFL class teachers who combined their efforts with the researcher in collaborative action research (CAR) to deliver the SBI programme. Data collected from the pre and post-SBI programme teacher interviews (see Appendices L and N for the interview questions and Appendices M and O for samples of the interviews), in addition to informal conversation and field notes taken during the teacher preparation sessions were found to be significant and relevant to the research study. Together with other findings in the study, this data helps provide a comprehensive picture of SBI as an instructional programme.

Therefore, it was thought worthwhile to include a chapter that explores the experience of the SBI programme from the three participant teachers' perspectives and discusses the impact the programme had on the teachers. The analysis and interpretation of the data (through content analysis) aims to show the teacher participants' engagement in, knowledge of and orientation with the SBI programme which are discussed within three broad dimensions: professional development, role change and teacher beliefs and attitude change. Part of the data presented and discussed here also aims to support some of the findings discussed in the previous two chapters related to the impact of the SBI on the learners. The contents of this chapter are presented in Table 9.1:

Table 9.1: Contents of Chapter 9
9.1   Professional Development
9.1.1   Strategies-based Instruction and Teacher Training
9.1.2.   Strategies-based Instruction and Teacher Development
9.1.3   Action Research and Teacher Development
9.2   Role Change
9.2.1   The Teachers as Change Agents
9.2.2   The Teachers' Roles in Promoting Learner Autonomy
9.3   Teacher Beliefs and Attitude Change
9.3.1   Attitude Change because of the SBI Programme
9.3.2   Attitude Change because of Role Change and Action Research
9.3.3   Teacher Beliefs of Learner Autonomy
9.3.4   Teacher Beliefs and Attitude Change due to the Effect of SBI on the Learners
9.4   Conclusion

9.1   Professional Development

The professional development of the teacher participants of this study can be discussed within the scope of *teacher training* versus *teacher development*. Richards and Farrell (2005:3-4) differentiate between the two: "Training refers to activities directly focused on a teacher's present responsibilities and is typically aimed at short-term and immediate goals." An example of this is the preparation for taking on a new assignment or preparation for an intervention. On the other hand "Development generally refers to general growth not focused on a specific job. It serves a longer-term goal and seeks to facilitate growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and of themselves" (Richards and Farrell 2005: 3-4). Collaborating with peers with the aim of addressing an educational concern or improving a problematic/ underdeveloped area is one source of teacher development.

The intervention implemented as part of the research reported here can be considered both teacher training and teacher development, with a particular focus on what Richards and Farrell (2005) refer to as short-term and long-term goals. The fact that there was forty hours of dedicated time to teaching the teachers how to implement SBI in their immediate teaching contexts makes this a training initiative. The purpose of training the teachers was twofold: first it was provided as a means of assisting me with the implementation of SBI with three different classes (short-term goals); second, to involve the teachers in a CAR project and SBI project and experience the effects of these approaches (long-term-goals). This last purpose in particular, due to its expected effect on the teachers' teaching in general, might mark it as a development programme.

9.1.1   Strategies-based Instruction and Teacher Training

The SBI programme as a training initiative followed from the concept that effective strategy training and SBI rely heavily on the teacher's experience (see discussion and implications in section 4.6 in chapter four) O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 154-55) not only emphasize the need for convincing teachers of the effectiveness of strategy instruction, but also the need for training them in how to incorporate strategy instruction into their classrooms, and developing their understanding and skills of how to deliver strategy instruction effectively to learners. The more familiar the teacher is with the applications of strategies, the more effective the instructional programme can be (Chamot, 1994: 333).

Based on the results of the pre-SBI teacher interviews, all three teacher participants had not received any special training in how to conduct strategies-based instruction prior to the current intervention. However, Salma, the elementary class teacher, indicated working with her students on strategies such as activating their background knowledge and inferencing. Meanwhile, Mohamed, the intermediate class teacher, reported encouraging his students on a few occasions to use the strategy of preparing flash cards to assist in their learning of vocabulary for speaking, but he never reinforced it and is therefore unaware of the students' recurrent use of flashcards. Apart from these few encounters, all three class teachers stated that they had never explicitly or formally taught LLS through modelling and demonstrating their use, or monitoring the students during practice.

For the current study, the three participant class teachers committed to attending the strategy preparation sessions. These sessions were specifically designed to train the teachers and show them how to conduct SBI themselves following the SBIA model specifically designed for this study. Following the intervention, it was found that all three teachers acknowledged that participating in this programme enhanced their understanding of LLS and their applications. For example, Mohamed explained:

> *I've learned so much...I've learned all about strategies; their
> types like direct and indirect; their names; how to model them
> and present them in class and which ones are useful for each
> skill.* {Post-SBI interview, response to first part of question 1 (8/08/2010)}

Meanwhile Salma, in addition to raising her awareness of the value of strategies and their applications, also mentioned how the SBI programme allowed her to explicitly teach strategies:

> *I think the most important thing is I now know all about LLS. I
> know how they are used and why they can be useful for learners.
> I think the course books we are using already have strategies in
> them but I've never focused on them or presented them in the
> way we have in this programme.* {Post-SBI interview, response to first
> part of question 1(08/11/2009)}

This finding suggests that the SBI programme has been successful in achieving an important aspect which is teacher awareness of LLS because as Nyikos (1996: 109) argues "without such awareness, it is impossible for teachers to assist their students overtly in improving strategy use"

Mariam, the pre-intermediate class teacher spoke of her experience with the SBIA model:

> *I learned so much from the SBIA model. Each phase teaches you to do something different. First, how to find out what language strategies the learners could be using, then how to train them in using the strategies and finally to find out whether there is a difference or not. I think the model made the whole programme organised and manageable. I've learned that teaching strategies doesn't have to be random; it can be really systematic and step by step.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 6 (16/05/2010)}

These responses showed that the programme was in some way a learning experience for the teachers. This demonstrates that the provision of SBI in addition to strategy awareness requires a number of skills which the three participant teachers initially lacked and later developed through the preparation sessions. These included the ability to identify and diagnose students' current use of strategies, teach and practically model the new strategies, and to develop and present the strategy materials appropriately.

Furthermore, there was a realization among the teachers of the association of strategies with learner autonomy. The teachers mentioned their awareness of how LLS helped encourage autonomy in the learners. Although Salma had previously encouraged autonomous learning as revealed by the pre-SBI interview, she had not particularly exploited LLS to develop this ability in her students. However, she acknowledged that the preparation sessions helped orient her interest in developing autonomy through the use of LLS. Mohamed in respect to learner autonomy stated:

> *I've learned how to step back and allow the learners to learn on their own and in cooperation with each other. It's because when you give them the tools and teach them how to use them, they can then carry on independently.* {Post-SBI interview, response to first part of question 1 (08/08/2010)}

Meanwhile, Mariam mentioned that the strategies which helped her students to manage and organise their learning represent according to her: "the main ingredients for independent learning". These teacher quotes which acknowledge how the students' use of LLS has contributed to learner autonomy; seem to support some of the findings discussed in chapter eight of the thesis (see section 8.1).

Finally, it can be argued that convincing teachers of the value of SBI as an instructional programme in the abstract would have been insufficient. However, to have them actually engaging and reflecting on the programme has appeared to be a particularly powerful means. It allowed them to directly experience the outcome of the programme

and gain practical knowledge in the applications of LLS. This is apparent in Salma's extract:

> *I am glad that I had the chance to be practically involved in this programme. If I did not teach the strategies myself I may not have felt the benefits of the programme.* {Field notes from preparation session *(12/08/2008)*}.

Mohamed also holds a similar view:

> *I learned a lot from the preparation sessions because they were mostly hands-on. I think it was important to actually be able to practice teaching the strategies to the student* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 5 *(08/08/2010)*}

Meanwhile, Mariam reflected:

> *I might change one thing about the programme which is I would like to do it for a longer time; more than eight weeks. That way I think the students have a better chance of using the strategies they have learnt in more situations and they are more likely to stick with them for longer.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 10 *(16/05/2010)*}

Mariam's reflection demonstrates that her direct involvement with the programme has enabled her to draw conclusions and suggestions which she believes might further enhance the programme. Her reflection agrees with Oxford's (1994) argument that training should continue over a long period of time rather than be offered as a short intervention. These findings seem to suggest that the teachers' direct engagement with the programme was rewarding; it has allowed them to understand it more thoroughly and, as in Mariam's case, think about situations where it might be more effective.

9.1.2 Strategies-based Instruction and Teacher Development

In light of the research findings, the SBI programme might be seen not only as teacher in-service training which develops teacher skills for the immediate context but also a programme promoting teacher development in general. The three participant teachers emphasised a crucial assumption about the notion of teacher development which is that teachers are generally motivated to pursue their professional development once they begin their careers. In this regard Mariam explained:

> *I think it is really good to take new teaching assignments. And for me taking part in this project is a new assignment for me. It*

has helped me gain new knowledge... {Post-SBI interview, response to question 12 (16/05/2010)}

And during the preparation sessions, she mentioned:

> *I always think about doing this but there's just no time! Maybe the last time I was part of a project was in university.* {Field notes from preparation session (06/01/2010)}.

In the same vein, Salma voiced the belief that:

> *As teachers we are always expected to maintain high professional standards. For this you need to regularly review and evaluate your teaching skills in order to meet any changes in your teaching and learning contexts and also the changing needs of the institution. But with time you fall behind on this; I mean you don't improve your skills as often as you want to and your workload is always your excuse. I gained a lot from the programme for now and for the future as well.* {Field notes from preparation session (21/07/2008)}.

Mohamed similarly commented:

> *I rarely get a chance to attend teaching seminars and conferences about teaching development. So this programme is a great opportunity; a practical opportunity where I can directly apply new ideas to my own teaching context.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 2 (08/08/2010)}

The participant teachers' views illustrate the need for ongoing teacher development once formal training is over through the provision of opportunities such as the SBI programme. However, they also indicate that either time constraints, the burdens of their jobs or lack of opportunities have prevented them from such initiatives. Their views imply that having teacher development opportunities provided in their immediate contexts (e.g. at the institution as was the case with the current intervention) rather than having to attend them in other places seems valuable to them.

Furthermore, the intervention might be considered a means of familiarizing teachers with new teaching approaches. Mariam spoke of her increased awareness of learner-centred approaches as opposed to teacher-centred approaches which were the most widely practised in her own educational context:

> *I am now more aware of learner-centred approaches like SBI and what they are all about... It's quite hard to deviate from what we are used to. Ever since we started school our teachers have been the centre of everything. In some cases we might even be punished if we suggest anything to the teacher. It sounds*

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strange now when I talk about it but that's the reality. Nowadays, most teachers, especially English language teachers realize that times have changed and so teaching methodology has to change with it. I think newer generations of teachers will find it easier than us to practice learner-centred methods because they are being taught that way...maybe...I don't know... {Field notes from preparation session (02/02/2010)}.

Mariam's account signifies how challenging it is for teachers of her generation to utilise learner-centred approaches given their educational backgrounds. Despite this, Mariam in response to whether she will implement learner-centred approaches in future agrees with both Salma and Mohamed that having directly experienced it; she will consider many of its features. This finding suggests that although the teachers might not entirely adopt a learner-centred approach such as SBI they might incorporate some concepts of such approaches in their teaching.

Mutual sharing of knowledge and teaching expertise is a valuable source of teacher development (Richards and Farrell, 2005). In line with this, all three teachers accentuated the significance of knowledge-sharing between them and myself as a co-teacher during the preparation sessions of SBI and throughout the different phases of the study. For example, Mohamed explained:

> *I enjoyed our daily meetings and discussions...they have been very interesting and fruitful. I learned so much.* {Informal conversation (05/05/2010)}

Salma and Mariam described some differences between the sharing of knowledge they experienced during the SBI programme and knowledge-sharing they had previously encountered:

> *Although I normally share a class with another teacher but all we would discuss is the curriculum itself; how we will divide the lessons between us; who gets to do which tests and most importantly the timelines... will we finish on time? That was our main concern. We hardly ever exchange ideas about how best to deliver a certain lesson or talk about our teaching experiences. I think this time it was different.*(Salma){Field notes from preparation session (16/08/2008)}.
> *This project gave me the chance to share my ideas with you as my teaching partner and also listen to your ideas. In the past we did sometimes do this during our break but it was never part of a daily routine or anything. I've learned a lot from this project especially how to collaborate with other teachers.*(Mariam){Post-SBI interview, response to question 1 (16/05/2010)}

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These teacher accounts illustrate the teachers' appreciation of collaboration amongst teachers which appears to have played a significant part in their participation in collaborative action research. Although their responses suggest that they have previously, co-taught they elaborated that it was the element of teacher-knowledge exchange that has made their experience with SBI different from past experience. This was further illustrated by their positive answers to question 16 in the post-SBI interview about whether they would be willing to collaborate with other teachers again to which all three teachers confidently agreed they would.

9.1.3   Action Research and Teacher Development

The teachers spoke of professional development as a result of implementing action research (AR) as a method of research. The pre-SBI teacher interview showed that two out of the three participant teachers had not previously performed any form of AR. The third teacher, Salma, was familiar with AR as part of the requirements of a teacher-training course she previously undertook. However, besides that one instance, Salma mentioned that she had never practised AR again during her teaching career until the current programme. In the post-SBI interview she lists what she thought was useful about AR:

> *I know what action research is because I performed it once before but I've never actually practised it again and quite extensively until now really ... so I liked the parts where we were doing the SILL and the last questionnaire and also the verbal reports. I think it's really useful to find out what the learners are doing, what they are thinking and how they are using the strategies we taught them or even ones they already know by using all these research tools.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 13 (08/11/2009)}

The general aims of action research as a method of research was explained to the teachers as part of their preparation sessions. However, it was interesting to find that the teachers had experienced and discovered the outcome of action research themselves. This could be due to their direct hands-on experience with it as a method of research. Mariam voiced her view in this regard:

> *I personally think that it is effective on a teacher level and also the institution level. I mean when we provide them with the information and data we have found about the students or a learning problem in the classroom or about our teaching methodology, we are actually presenting them with new information that can help to solve problems in the future, or even to improve things.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 13 (16/05/2010)}

Mariam's personal reflection agrees with some of the general underpinnings of AR in the literature where for example, action research is known as an inquiry process that balances problem solving actions with data-driven analysis or research to understand underlying causes enabling future predictions about personal and organizational change (Reason and Bradbury, 2001).Classroom action research is productive as a result of teachers being so close to students on a day-to-day basis. Their personal inquiry from their own perspectives can make an important contribution to knowledge about teaching and learning (Johnson and Chen, 1992).

Mohamed also expressed similar thoughts on the effect of action research and showed appreciation of its potential of being a collaborative effort:

> *I've learned that action research allows you to make a difference in your educational context both on your own and especially with other teachers who have the same educational concerns as you.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 13 (08/08/2010)}

Mohamed's statement concurs with Burns (1999:12) who states that a goal of collaborative action research is "to bring about change in social situations as the result of group problem solving and collaboration." The teachers also recognised that there was a need for an outside expert to help raise their awareness of AR and encourage them to experiment with it:

> *It's not really complicated like I thought it would be...when you first said action research.... I thought to myself oh no, what is this; it doesn't sound easy...but all it needed or all we need as teachers is a push really in the right direction.* (Mariam){Field notes from preparation session (16/01/2010)}.

> *I think it's good to have someone like you to come and show us this method and what it involves and what the outcomes are....not just explaining about it but giving us the chance to do it.* (Mohamed){Field notes from preparation session (27/03/2010)}.

In line with these teacher assertions, Richardson, (1994:191) argues that:

> The collaborative process appears to be a very useful form of staff development for teacher inquiry. While teachers may be interested in participating in such a process, they may find it difficult to initiate. An important function of the outside facilitator, then, is that of motivating a group of teachers to participate in such a process, and providing and arranging for the initial structure of the group dialogues.

However, it seems that the teachers were under the impression that once they have become aware of AR as a process of inquiry and a reflective practice, they will then be able to conduct AR with or without the help of an external facilitator. Findings also revealed that all three teachers believed that they would carry out AR in the future, based on their realisation that teachers can play a vital role in their own professional development through action research as a teacher-led initiative. Mohamed said:

> *If I didn't try it out myself, I would never think of doing action research.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 14 (08/08/2010)}

Similarly, Mariam commented:

> *Yes, I think I would or maybe my institution might want me to... But even if they didn't, I'd probably try it again anyway. I think experiencing it myself in a collaborative way and not just seeing someone perform it has made the difference for me. This has made me confident that I can do it in future on my own or with my colleagues.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 14 (16/05/2010)}

Once again, a possible explanation for these teacher reactions might be that their actual participation rather than being observers of others practising AR has helped enhance their confidence in using this method of enquiry in their future practices. Therefore, it can be argued here that you do not need to wait for action research to be supported and encouraged at the institutional level but it can be performed and encouraged through teachers' own individual efforts. In addition, all three teachers expressed their inclination to recommend AR to other teachers. Mohamed went beyond recommendation to potentially presenting a workshop on AR:

> *I'd be happy to tell all my colleagues about my personal experience with action research and maybe even present a workshop for them if they are interested.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 15 (08/08/2010)}

While not claiming generalizability on the basis of three teachers, it can be assumed that a benefit and outcome of this type of professional development is that it has resulted in a small number of Libyan EFL teachers who might promote action research and potentially provide assistance in the use of AR to colleagues at their institutions, through staff development workshops and presentations.

9.2   Role Change

In strategy training and SBI, the FL strategy instructor is required to embrace a variety of roles including those of a facilitator, coach, consultant, advisor, diagnostician, co-communicator, and coordinator (Oxford, 1990). Such a requirement reflects the critical

need for teacher training to involve development and reorientation of teacher roles. For the current study, the three participant class teachers committed to attending the strategy preparation sessions which were partly designed to raise the teachers' awareness of the various roles they would embrace when conducting SBI following the four phases of the SBIA model.

9.2.1 The Teachers as Change Agents

Cohen's (1998) view on the role of the teacher in SBI is relevant to the current research study (see section 4.6). It was found that the different roles suggested by Cohen's (1998) Styles and Strategies-Based Instruction (SSBI) model (see figure 4.5 Teacher as a Change Agent in chapter four) were embraced by myself and the collaborating teachers of this study. These teacher roles include: researcher, diagnostician, language learner, learner trainer, coach, and coordinator (Cohen, 1998).

Firstly, because the SBI was carried out as part of a research study within an action research framework, the first and overall role the teachers and I embraced was that of a *researcher*. Mohamed acknowledged his role as a researcher:

> *It's nice to know that you're not just teaching but researching and making a difference.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 13 (08/08/2010)}

All four phases of the SBIA model included methods of research and data collection ranging from the use of questionnaires and follow-up discussions to verbal protocols and interviews in which all three participant teachers collaborated. Thus, it can be argued that there was role change as a result of collaborating with me within CAR.

Part of the responsibilities of being a researcher during the SBI programme involved identifying which strategies the students were already using by administrating the SILL followed by the SILL discussions as well as verbal report during task performance. In doing so, the teachers undertook the role of a *diagnostician* on which Mariam commented:

> *In the first stage we gathered information about the students' strategy use and then again at the end of the programme to see how they did and what was different.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 17(08/11/2009)}

Salma was also aware of this role:

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> *...so I liked the parts where we were doing the SILL ...and also the verbal reports. I think it's really useful to find out what the learners are doing, what they are thinking and how they are using the strategies we taught them or even ones they already know by using all these tools.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 13 (08/11/2009)}

The remaining roles of a language learner, learner trainer, coach, and coordinator were also embraced by the researcher and the participant teachers throughout the different phases of the SBIA model but mostly, during phase 2.The participant teachers talked about the roles they played during the intervention in the post-SBI interviews. For example, Salma spoke of her roles as a *language learner* and *learner trainer*:

> *Yes, it was quite different from what I normally do...which is to plan the lesson and teach the language skills. Also monitor students during tasks and manage the classroom in general ... In the SBI programme, I was teaching the language and learning all about strategies at the same time and how to deliver them in class. I was training the students how to use strategies by modelling and giving examples to show them how they work. This is completely new to me, I've never done it before.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 17(08/11/2009)}

Meanwhile Mariam, in answer to the same question, recognised her roles as a *learner trainer* and *coach:*

> *Mmm...(silence). In each stage of the SBI, I had different responsibilities so yes my roles were different as well... In the second stage, when we were training them, I think there was much more guiding and scaffolding involved in my approach during the programme. For example, I remember that I would model the strategy, then let them try it themselves with some guidance and directing here and there when needed.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 17 (16/05/2010)}

Mohamed spoke of his role as a coordinator in the SBI programme, which is one of the six roles suggested by Cohen (1998); he reported:

> *I like that my coordinating skills are a lot clearer to me. Because I'm following the phases of the SBIA model, everything is organised and planned so that we can fit everything into the lessons. I needed to monitor a bit more because I had to see how the students' were doing in the actual language tasks and then what strategies they were using to help perform those tasks. And then if they needed support and coaching I would provide that.* {Post-SBI interview, response to 17(08/08/2010)}

In light of these teacher excerpts, it would seem that the SBI programme was successful in raising the participant teachers' awareness of the various roles they played during the

implementation of its different stages. Their realisation of role change in strategy training corresponds quite well to the concept behind Cohen's (1998) "Teacher as Change Agent" illustration.

9.2.2   The Teachers' Roles in Promoting Learner Autonomy

It is believed that "the ability to behave autonomously for students is dependent upon their teacher creating a classroom culture where autonomy is accepted" (Barfield *et al.* 2001:3).Hence, one of the teachers' roles in the study was to create and maintain a learning environment in which learners can be autonomous. However, the participant teachers could not be expected to develop a sense of autonomy in the learners unless they had themselves experienced this during teacher training. It is often the case that most teachers have had little prior experience of developing autonomy as learners and most teacher education courses do not cover the topic in detail (Balcikanli, 2010). The participant class teachers revealed their views with regards to this matter. Mohamed stated:

> *During my study asan English language teacher I have never been taught how to make my students autonomous…or even the importance of that. This is why it's quite hard to do it now. I think if we were trained as teachers in this before, this would be easier and more natural to me.* {Field notes from preparation session (28/03/2010)}.

The same conception underlies Salma's words in the following quotation:

> *We were shown in our courses how to manage our classrooms, how to plan our lessons, and so on but this is for when we graduate and start work. We never used any of these skills when we were learning..or..or how to teach our students how to use them.* {Field notes from preparation session (13/08/2008)}.

These teacher encounters suggest that foreign language teachers in Libya might find it challenging to create an autonomous classroom without any previous autonomy-oriented awareness or training. As far as the teachers' teacher training is concerned, it involved equipping the teacher trainees with techniques such as classroom management and lesson planning which aimed to encourage teacher independence. However, no emphasis was placed on fostering such skills in them as learners or on how to help develop autonomy in their students in future. Furthermore, the participant teachers' lack of awareness of autonomous learning throughout their own education might be a result of the prevalence of teacher-centred approaches to learning in Libya whereby students

were brought up to exclusively 'rely on' their teachers. This might have had an effect on weakening any potential for independent learning. In this regard Mariam commented:

> *I'll be honest with you...I don't think I've ever been autonomous myself especially inside the classroom. I have always seen my teachers as the main source of information and we rely on them for everything. I don't know..erm..I don't remember my teachers at school and university teaching us any of these skills. We have a well-known proverb in Arabic (قائد الشئ لا يعطيه) which translates to erm..what..what you do not have, you cannot give (laughs). I think this is what is happening here.* {Field notes from preparation session (23/12/2009)}.

Concurrent to this research finding, Little (1995) argues that:

> Learner autonomy depends on teacher autonomy in two senses:
>
> -It is unreasonable to expect teachers to foster the growth of autonomy in their learners if they themselves do not know what it is to be an autonomous learner.
>
> -In determining the initiatives they take in their classrooms, teachers must be able to apply to their teaching those same reflective and self-managing processes that they apply to their learning (Little, 1995: 175).

Little's first assertion directly coincides with Mariam's line: *"what you do not have, you cannot give"* suggesting that the lack of experience in a certain area (in this case autonomy) will naturally hinder the promotion of it in others. Meanwhile, Little's second conclusion corresponds with the implication that teacher trainers in Libya might wish to consider incorporating elements in teacher preparation courses whereby language teachers are made aware of the importance and necessity of learner autonomy in their own learning contexts and also in their future classrooms. While not claiming generalisation, these teacher views give an indication of what might be surmounted among EFL teaching cadres in Libya before a culture of autonomy may be cultivated.

Work on learner autonomy in language learning focuses not only on classroom practice (Dam, 1995), but also on out-of-class learning (Benson; 2009). Despite not previously being formally trained in autonomy, Salma managed to develop her own autonomy mainly in out-of-class situations. She recalled her attempt in the programme to transfer her personal experience to the learners:

> *..but there are a few situations where I have been autonomous in the past but not at school; mostly at home when I used to do my homework. And during this programme I have tried to remember*

them and tell the students about them. {Field notes from preparation session (13/08/2008)}.

Furthermore, Salma explained in the Pre-SBI interview that she had encouraged forms of learner autonomy in the past on a personal effort basis:

> *Yes. I encourage them to use dictionaries, CD ROMs and provide them with readers.* {Pre-SBI interview, response to question 1 (22/06/2008)}

> *I sometimes encourage my students to find sources of information at home such as watching English-speaking channels on TV or the internet. Or finding friends on-line to practise their communication skills...but this is something I do on my own...I mean it is not part of the curriculum.* {Pre-SBI interview, response to question 1 (22/06/2008)}

This finding accords with one of Dickinson's (1992) methods of how teachers can help promote autonomy in their learners which is to share with them something of their knowledge about language learning so as to raise the learners' awareness of "what to expect from the language learning task and how they should react to problems that erect barriers to learning." (Dickinson 1992: 2).

With regards to the teachers' roles in promoting autonomy in the language learners, it can be concluded that the lack of key training in this area, has made encouraging autonomy challenging but not impossible. The participant teachers of this study seemed to have the readiness to allow the students to learn more independently as Mohamed remarked:

> *I've learned how to step back and allow the learners to learn on their own.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 1 (08/08/2010)}

In the same way, Mariam asserted:

> *I think with students learning more and more strategies and using them more often, we as teachers are sort of forced to let go gradually.* {Field notes from preparation session (23/12/2009)}.

These teacher remarks suggest that the SBI programme has not only involved learning on the part of the learners but also on the part of the teachers in terms of reshaping the roles they had to play to suit the applications of the programme. Mohamed states this in the post-SBI interview:

> *I think I look at the roles I play a bit differently. Although I've always aimed to be less controlling and dominating but I've*

actually been able to practise that more in this programme. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 17(08/08/2010)}

9.3   Teacher Beliefs and Attitude Change

It can be argued that teachers' practices are influenced by their beliefs. Levitt (2001: 1-2) argues that: "If teachers' beliefs are incompatible with the philosophy of science education reform, a gap develops between the intended principles of reform and the implemented principle of reform, potentially prohibiting essential change." Similarly in ELT, if curriculum innovations such as the introduction of LLS through SBI are in conflict with teachers' beliefs, they are less likely to be adopted in the classroom. To avoid such conflict, it was essential in this research study to ensure that the participant teachers were aware of strategies' potential positive outcome and that they could see the process of teaching strategies to learners as a significant part of language education. Thus, they would take part in the proposed SBI programme.

The three teachers' interest in being trained in the applications of strategies was confirmed when their consent to participating in the SBI project was initially sought. The pre-SBI teacher interviews also aimed to find out whether the teachers were interested in learning about LLS and how they could be taught. All three teachers expressed their interest and their preference for a practical source of information about LLS such as a workshop where hands-on activities are provided rather than learning about LLS from theoretical sources such as hand outs and books. Accordingly, teacher preparation sessions were developed to meet this purpose. Another aim of these sessions was to develop the attitudes of the teachers, so they would be interested in learning about LLS and would be content and ready to integrate them into the regular English language programmes. This was essential to ensure that the participating teachers were engaged with and committed to the delivery of LLS during the SBI programme.

The most notable changes occurred with the teachers as reported in the post-SBI interview. Although many issues were reflected and identified in teachers' meetings and informal conversations during the sessions, the teacher perceptions during the interviews were particularly relevant to this study. Teacher responses showed positive attitude change regarding the SBI programme in general, due to its effect on their own teaching practice and its impact on the students.

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9.3.1 Attitude Change due to the SBI Programme

The teachers' responses in the post-SBI interview showed that the SBI intervention was not only a learning experience for them but also a programme that prompted significant attitude change, which Mariam the pre-intermediate class teacher was not afraid to acknowledge:

> *I've learned a lot from the SBI programme. I must admit, I was a bit sceptical about the whole idea of the programme. I mean preparing for a programme I have never used or tried before. I thought it would take me forever to learn about LLS let alone train the students how to use them ... but as the weeks passed I saw it was working. I wasn't doing so bad actually..(laugh). I'm actually quite pleased with my performance in the programme!"* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 1 (16/05/2010)}

Mariam's attitude changed from being doubtful to being satisfied despite early fears of the workload, unfamiliarity with the programme, time issues and teaching competence. However, having seen how the programme was effective, Mariam started regaining her confidence.

Salma also said that she has a positive orientation towards SBI and spoke favourably of SBI and its suggested principles:

> *I enjoyed it because it was more centred around the learners than around us as teachers. I am glad that we are helping them and presenting them with learning tools that they would eventually use on their own and not just rely on us.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 1 (08/11/2009)}

Meanwhile Mohamed mentioned that he enjoyed the change brought about by the SBI programme:

> *I liked it because it was different from what I usually do.* {Field notes from preparation session(28/03/2010)}.

The teachers showed signs of attitude change in the direction of increased confidence and motivation. For example, Mohamed explained:

> *My confidence as a teacher has grown maybe because I was feeling more sure of myself and confident about what I had to do each time.* {Post-SBI interview, response to second part of question 1 (08/08/2010)}

Mariam also asserted:

> *I feel that I am getting more and more motivated. With each new session I am starting to understand what the programme involves and how we are going to go about it as teachers. I look forward to each lesson with all the different activities.* {Field notes from preparation session (23/12/2009)}

Again the teacher's increasing confidence and motivation might be down to their understanding of the programme's applications. This might demonstrate the importance of teacher training in SBI not only to obtain competence in implementing this approach but to influence teacher attitudes during implementation as the latter is as vital.

The enthusiastic engagement of the three participant teachers was apparent throughout the different phases of the study. However, there were moments of uncertainty particularly in relation to allocation of time to the various tasks within the lessons, a concern which seemed to be perpetuated by the teachers at the beginning of the programme and during the preparation sessions. In this regard Mohamed revealed:

> *I think I always had worries about time. At many points and in many of the lessons I would always think that I won't finish according to the planned lesson. But that is probably because I wasn't confident about what I was doing but then that fear started to go away little by little as the course went on. I became more confident about staging the lesson and coordinating the tasks so that they suited the time limits.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 3 *(08/08/2010)*}

Despite their initial apprehension of whether the study would delay their delivery of the original language courses, they were happy to find that the SBI programme did not obstruct the flow of the course but was successfully interwoven into the contents of the course materials. In line with this, Mohamed stated:

> *When we first started the preparation sessions I had fears that it would. But then when we started the actual teaching I saw that it blended quite well. It felt that it was part of the curriculum all along.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 4 *(08/08/2010)*}

Mohamed refers to an important factor that might have contributed to the smooth flow of the programme: the fact that SBI was integrated with the original course contents. It is likely that because the strategy training was not intrusive in nature with regards to its requirements; it helped gradually eliminate periods of uncertainty among the teachers hence, raising the teachers' confidence about the SBI programme in general and more specifically about their abilities and skills as teacher participants in the programme. Mariam also commented on having the SBI integrated into regular language tasks and activities:

Each time a new strategy is presented it is given in context and part of a lesson and an activity that I'm teaching them anyway...so yeah...emmm...it doesn't feel like an extra thing really. {Field notes from preparation session (22/12/2009)}

Concurrent to these teacher quotes, Oxford (1994) touches on the importance of integration in her own research and argues that it is an essential principle to the success of strategy training. Wenden's "Guidelines for strategy training" (1991: 107) advocate integrated strategy instruction, explaining that "when training is contextualised in this way, the relevance of the strategy is emphasized.". Also on referring back to the different ways of presenting strategy training as discussed in chapter four (see section 4.3), this finding demonstrates how embedding strategy training rather than delivering it separately can be successful. This applies to SBI as an instructional approach.

9.3.2 Attitude Change due to Role Change and Action Research

Strategy training and strategies-based instruction (SBI) imply reorientation of teachers' roles. Such role change may cause teachers to have negative attitudes towards the value of strategy training which can hinder the appropriate delivery of strategies to learners (Oxford, 1990). Before the intervention, the participant teachers were asked during the pre-SBI interview how they would feel if they were asked to become less controlling and dominating in class and take on new roles as part of the requirements of the study. One potential attitude was that this role change might put the teachers out of their comfort zone and lead them to believe that their status is being challenged and their normal functions undermined. However, as revealed by the teacher pre-SBI interview, all three teachers were prepared for this role change and ready to embrace any challenges it may bring about. Mariam in the post-SBI interview admitted to fighting the temptation of teacher dominance:

I remember that I struggled a little bit in the beginning to let go of control. It's probably because the students are used to it and I'm used to dominating all or most of the learning process. But I was aware that the success of the programme relied on changing my responsibilities and also my views about what I should and shouldn't do in class. I was keen to practice to change my attitude and I believe I gradually did. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 17 (16/05/2010)}

Mohamed attested to positive attitude change when he spoke about the roles he embraced during SBI:

I'm happy that I had the chance to perform all these different roles like trainer and coach and coordinator because they have made me realise that teaching English has more to it than just directing the class or controlling the learning and the learners. Our students can do a lot more than we think they can we just have to give them the choice. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 17 (08/08/2010)}

Prior to the research, it was thought that the three participant teachers would reveal different attitudes and show characteristics of resistance or discomfort at the start of the programme and possibly throughout. The teachers' readiness and inclination for change might have led to their effective undertaking of the different roles during the phases of the SBI programme and their realisation of such roles within the SBI programme has encouraged them to look at the responsibilities of an EFL teacher quite differently.

In addition to boosting the teachers' professional development and changing the roles they played in the classroom, action research had an effect on the teacher's attitudes. For example, Mohamed made his positive attitude clear when he said:

It's a nice feeling...It's nice to feel that you're not just teaching but researching and making a difference. I think that's what made the SBI programme enjoyable for me. It makes me love teaching even more. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 13 (08/08/2010)}

On similar grounds, Salma commented:

I actually enjoyed the programme even more because it was action research. I am happy because I am doing something useful for me and the place I work for. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 13 (08/11/2009)}

These teacher extracts demonstrate a sense of achievement and satisfaction amongst the teachers based on the realisation that they have in some way contributed to knowledge and that their implementation of action research can help improve the current teaching situation and can present to their educational institution evidence of the need for change.

9.3.3 Teacher Beliefs of Learner Autonomy

Findings of the study seem to suggest that the three participant teachers formulated some views on learner autonomy and on the involvement of students in their own learning processes. These teacher beliefs were found to coincide with most of the theoretical definitions of autonomy in the literature (Barfield and Brown, 2007; Benson,

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2011) in which responsibility lies with the learner. For example, the teachers developed the belief that students should be placed at the centre of learning practices and agreed with (Dickinson, 1987; Little, 1991; Sinclair, 2008) that students should be involved in decision making, setting goals and objectives, and managing and organising learning if they are provided with the appropriate tools which in this case were the provision of LLS. However, in practice it requires a strong belief on the part of the teacher in the learner's ability to be in charge of their own learning. The teacher participants of this study believed they were ready to pass onto the students some responsibilities and choices; they were willing to give their students some control over learning and adjust their own teaching methods in accordance with such change (see section 9.1.1). They also believed that these steps would not be feasible if the learners themselves were not ready for this responsibility. Mohamed for example commented:

> *It's good to see that most of them want to be more responsible*
> *and independent otherwise all our efforts would not work!*

Salma explained that she believed that some of the students were already willing to take responsibility for their language learning; hence they were ready for learner autonomy but added that their experience with LLS has possibly helped put this realisation into perspective for them. In agreement about the effect of LLS, Mariam commented.

> *Yes, I think when they use strategies; they feel that they are*
> *doing something on their own and with their peers.... Which I*
> *think is what some of them want to do really- doing more on*
> *their own and with each other rather than with me most of the*
> *time.* {Field notes from preparation session (23/12/2009)}

To this end, learners' readiness for learner autonomy is complementary to teachers' readiness for encouraging learner autonomy. In addition, learners' readiness for learner autonomy might be closely related to motivation. It is likely that because most of the student participants who have joined the foreign languages centre at the selected institution have done so on their own accord, they are quite motivated and accordingly more ready for autonomy. In other words, they had motives to study the language willingly rather than it being compulsory and this I believe might have paved the way for independence in language learning.

One concern however, which could be sensed from the teachers' views, was their uncertainty that language learners in different contexts would have the same degree of readiness when it came to learner autonomy. In relation to this Salma said:

Meanwhile, Mohamed expressed that learners in other classroom settings might not accept learner autonomy simply because they do not want to change what they are used to in their traditional classrooms were they are mostly being spoon fed the knowledge of the language.

These teacher speculations might have some truth to them in the Libyan reality or in any reality for that matter, as learner differences are always expected to exist and vary from one context to another and within certain conditions. However, it is assumed that most language centres and private language schools in Libya accommodate students who have different expectations from what they had been traditionally accustomed to during their school days. Hence, teacher and learner roles can be viewed quite differently and the inclination to change is most likely to be present among such language learners.

Generally speaking, there was an indication for a preference for a more autonomous learning process although other studies investigating teachers' perspectives on learner autonomy (Chan, 2003; Özdere, 2005) seem to contradict this finding. One interpretation for the differences across research studies might be due to the effect of practice on teacher perspectives, because convincing teachers of the value learner autonomy in the abstract might be insufficient. Smith and Erdogan (2008: 86) argue that "Enabling teachers…to actually experience ways of promoting learner autonomy appears to be particularly powerful" especially if "such experience is explicitly linked to an action research orientation" (Smith and Erdogan, 2008: 86). The fact that the teachers of this study participated in an AR SBI programme, which based on the findings, helped foster some degree of learner autonomy might have contributed to the change in some of the teacher beliefs on learner autonomy.

9.3.4 Teacher Beliefs and Attitude Change due to the Effect of SBI on the Learners

The teachers were asked about their views in relation to the effect of the programme on the student participants. Mariam spoke of raising the students' awareness of LLS and their use:

I think the most important thing is that they have a wide selection
of strategies to use when they need them which have probably

always been there under the surface but they just didn't realize it. I myself as a teacher actually didn't realize it. So I personally think that bringing LLS into the light for them to use in class and in future was the most important thing. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 8 (16/05/2010)}

In answer to the same question, Salma also acknowledged a similar effect on the students:

Yes, I think the students learned a lot from the programme. Usually my students would go away from the class having learnt mainly new language content. This time it's different. In addition to gaining new knowledge of the language they were given new tools which they could use to help them learn the language and enjoy learning it. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 8 (08/11/2009)}

Other teacher responses suggest that the SBI programme has had an explicit impact on the learners' language skills. There have been notable proficiency gains made by the students in reading as noted by Salma the elementary class teacher; an observation that coincides with the results discussed in chapter seven:

They have improved in some of their skills especially reading I've noticed. They used skimming and scanning more, they're deducting meanings from contexts; they're activating their previous knowledge more widely; yes; using dictionaries independently...yes lots of strategies which I think have helped with improving all of their skills but reading the most I think. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 8 (08/11/2009)}

The writing skill of the intermediate students has improved due to their use of strategies in accordance with Mohamed's observation:

For example, some students' writing became better and by the end of the course they were using most of the strategies to plan and organise their writing tasks. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 8 (08/08/2010)}

These findings tend to support the results of the SILL, the student interviews and the questionnaire which show similarities regarding the improvement of reading of the elementary students and writing of the intermediate students as presented and discussed in seven (see section 7.3.1).

Furthermore, for learners to develop an awareness of their responsibility for learning and a practical knowledge of how to go about their learning is without doubt beneficial not only in this English language learning context but in other learning contexts

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throughout their lives. This common goal of independence and learner autonomy has been called for by several researchers in the field (Dickinson, 1992; Dam, 1995; Benson, 2001) and is believed to have developed in the student participants of this study as suggested by Mohamed's' comment below:

> *But what stood out for me is that they were day by day becoming more and more independent and responsible about their learning. The more I stood back the more they were doing things on their own. And also very often with each other when they were asking each other questions or peer correcting. I believe that this is a really good thing for them even in the future.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 8 (08/08/2010)}

These teacher reflections align with Oxford's (1990) belief that, if students take more responsibility and become quite aware of how they are going about a particular language task then more learning occurs and both teachers and learners feel satisfied of the success they have achieved.

Mohamed also shed light on the social aspect of language learning when observing the students' interaction with each other as encouraged by their use of social strategies. His observation supports the findings of encouraging autonomy and raising learners' social awareness discussed in the previous chapter (see section 8.3).

The teachers were asked whether they noticed any attitude changes in the students during the SBI programme. Their responses mainly suggest that the programme was successful in generating a degree of enthusiasm and confidence amongst the student participants. For example, Mohamed responded:

> *Yes, I could see that the majority of the students were more confident overall. I think it's a normal result of independence. You start to believe in your own abilities. As they were doing more things on their own when they were using many strategies, they were becoming more confident. Also some of them seemed excited when performing certain language activities. And they looked like they were enjoying the tasks more. I hope that they have gone away from the course with this attitude. It's good...yeah...it's good.* {Post-SBI interview, response to question 9 (08/08/2010)}

Mariam also noted some changes from the beginning of the course to the end in the direction of enhanced confidence and enthusiasm amongst the students:

> *I noticed an attitude change from the first half of the course when they were doing (Tasks 1) to the second half. In (Tasks 1)*

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most of the students seemed wary of them especially that they had to verbally report what they were doing and this also for them is a new technique. When we came to doing (Tasks 2) with them I noticed that they were enjoying them a bit more and they were more confident during the verbal reporting as well maybe because they knew more strategies by then and knew how to talk about them. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 9 (16/05/2010)}

Having seen how the programme positively affected the students' knowledge of LLS, language performance, and attitudes was one reason for the teachers' own attitude change towards the SBI programme. Mohamed stated:

I actually liked it because of its effect on the students. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 12 (08/08/2010)}

Mohamed saw this as a substantial reason for recommending the SBI programme to other teachers of EFL in Libya. Mariam also expressed how her attitude towards the programme changed as a result of its impact on the learners:

When I saw that the students had actually learned from the programme I started to believe that the programme is really working. The students were able to perform the tasks that they were given; they were practicing with most of the strategies we presented and modelled in class for them. Yeah, it went smoother than I thought it would. {Field notes from preparation session (22/12/2009)}

Attitude change was identified from Salma's comment due to the general effect of SBI:

I am very impressed with this SBI programme mainly because of the change I have noticed in the students. And to be honest, I am also a bit surprised because I didn't expect it to be quite successful. I thought that we would have more problems with the students and that they would not stop complaining about the programme and that most of them will drop out of the programme mid-way, but no one did! This shows that they generally liked it maybe because they realised how useful strategies are for them and that it is not at all difficult to learn to apply them. I think I was gradually enjoying it day by day and there was less fear of it turning out to be a failure. {Post-SBI interview, response to question 8 (08/11/2009)}

Having observed a positive impact on the learners, which according to Mariam and Salma was contrary to expectation, was one of the reasons for the gradual change in their own stances as teacher participants in the programme. These comments express strong sentiments among the three participant teachers and give an indication (while not claiming generalisability) that attitude change among teachers is closely associated with the direct impact of the programme on the learners.

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9.4   Conclusion

Although this research is mainly concerned with investigating the impact of SBI on Libyan adult learners of EFL, the intervention had an impact on the participating teachers as well. This chapter presented the teacher participants' views on their engagement in, knowledge of and orientation towards the SBI programme. It set off by showing how SBI was viewed as a teacher training initiative and more generally a valuable opportunity for professional development. Professional development was also achieved due to the teachers' participation in collaborative action research. Change in teacher roles as well as teacher attitudes were experienced as a result of their assistance in the implementation of SBI, CAR and in accordance with promoting learner autonomy. The participant teachers expressed their beliefs in the involvement of students in the learning process and in some of the factors that might be considered as obstacles in developing learner autonomy in EFL settings in Libya.

10   Research Conclusions and Implications

This chapter summarises the major research findings and conclusions as well as the pedagogical implications of the research. It discusses the contribution and significance and the limitations of the study. The future research directions are also identified followed by reflections on personal development and final thoughts on the study. The contents of chapter ten are presented in Table 10.1:

Table 10.1: Contents of Chapter 10

10.1   Summary of Findings and Research Conclusions

10.2   Pedagogical Implications

10.3   Contribution and Significance

10.4   Limitations of the Study

10.4.1 Time Constraints

10.4.2 Issues with the Theoretical Underpinnings of CAR

10.5   Recommendations and Future Research Directions

10.6   Reflections on Personal Development

10.7   Final Thoughts

10.1   Summary of Findings and Research Conclusions

Having explored and discussed the major issues the results of this case study have presented, there are sufficient grounds to generally conclude that the implementation of SBI within this EFL learning context in Libya has made a difference. The findings suggest that most of the learners were cooperative during the implementation of the four phases of the SBIA model which involved both their practice in the use of LLS and their participation in all the different research methods of data collection. Their expressed appreciation of the programme as a whole was a sign of positive impact. The three teachers who had a major role in this collaborative action research also expressed their enthusiasm as participants in the study and their positivity towards SBI despite a few concerns.

The impact of SBI as the instructional programme implemented in this study can be summarised in the major findings listed and discussed below:

1. Increase in Overall Strategy Use and Awareness of Language Learning Strategies
2. Impact of Strategy Use on Learning Efforts and Language Skill Improvement
3. Development of Learner Autonomy
4. Development of Metacognitive Awareness
5. Development of Social Awareness
6. Change in Teacher Roles and Professionalism
7. Change of Attitudes of both Learners and Teachers

1.   Increase in Overall Strategy Use and Awareness of Language Learning Strategies

Results of both quantitative and qualitative research tools revealed that students already employed various LLS both direct (cognitive, memory and compensation strategies) and indirect (metacognitive, affective and social strategies) in their process of language learning. The results of the SILL1 showed that the students used LLS with high to medium frequency. For all three learner levels, metacognitive followed by compensation strategies were reported to be the most frequently used while affective strategies were the least frequent among them. The elementary level learners demonstrated a lower use of social strategies than the pre-intermediate and intermediate students due to their initial lack of social awareness within the FL classroom setting.

After the SBI programme, there was a noticeable increase in the learners' overall strategy use in all six strategy groups as reflected in the results of the SILL2. The patterns of strategy use i.e. the order of ranking of the six strategy groups was quite similar after the SBI intervention with metacognitive and compensation strategies still ranking the highest and affective strategies remaining last. There was an exception of the social strategies of the elementary level learners which saw a great increase from SILL1 (63.5 per cent) to SILL2 (75 per cent) thus moving higher in the order of ranking. These findings suggest that the training programme the students received in the applications of the six groups of strategies broadened their strategy repertoires by reinforcing strategies they already used in the past and introducing new strategies to them.

The findings of this study also point out that students, before SBI, were unaware of the LLS they were already using and the benefits of using these strategies in learning English. Only a few students felt that learning these strategies might not always benefit

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them or that their use is merely restricted to the language classroom as they rarely used English in their daily lives. However, the majority of student participants felt that the discovery, or sharpened awareness, of their individual LLS and the development of their strategy repertoires was the most important result. To this end, this finding concurs with Chamot and O'Malley (1987: 240) who argue that: "Strategies can be taught. Students who are taught to use strategies and are provided with sufficient practice in using them will learn more effectively than students who have had no experience with the language learning strategies.". Thus, it can be concluded that making learners aware of LLS they are already using and others available to them may be considered as stimulation of their proximal development.

2. Impact of Strategy Use on Learning Efforts and Language Skill Improvement

The findings of the study reveal that SBI had an impact on the students' efforts to learn English. The SBI programme which encouraged the use of LLS helped the students to invest more time and effort into language learning. It seems that students developed more realistic expectations and felt empowered for achieving their goals. Students' consciousness of their efforts as language learners might be compatible with the intentionality level of the five-fold model of consciousness (Schmidt, 1994). Their explicit use of LLS seems to have helped them become intentional in improving their language learning in addition to improving their strategy use.

Results also showed that there was gain in task performance of the learners as related to reported strategy use. When comparing the results of Tasks 1 with those of Tasks 2 across the three class levels a clear increase in all four language skills was identified. The elementary level students showed the highest of improvement associated with the skill of reading whereas the skill of speaking has seen the lowest of improvement in comparison with the other skills. This finding might suggest the impact of factors such as learner anxiety and lack of confidence due to their low level of proficiency. There was no significant difference in improvement across the four skills for the pre-intermediate and intermediate level students but the skills of listening and writing saw a slightly higher increase then speaking and reading, this might be due to individual learner preferences or again it is likely that proficiency level influenced skill improvement.

Based on the results of Tasks 1 and 2, no specific pattern could be identified in the skill improvement of the students across the three class levels. In addition, the increase in the

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results from Tasks 1 to Tasks 2 could not be relied on solely as evidence that skill improvement was due to the students' use of LLS. Therefore, the results were supported by evidence from the students' verbal reports designed to accompany Tasks 1 and 2 when being performed. Verbal reports yielded insights about students' strategy use and its association with language skill improvement. This finding was supported by students' responses in the post-SBI interview.

3. Development of Learner Autonomy

A major outcome of the SBI intervention was the development of learner autonomy among the student participants. In the context of this study, autonomy was measured via two main methods: students use of LLS and meeting a specified learner profile (a list of seven sets of learner characteristics and behaviours). The findings revealed that there was no significant difference across the three learner levels in relation to attaining a level of autonomy. The majority believed that SBI had a direct role in stimulating them towards autonomous activity through their use of various strategies both inside and outside the classroom. Additionally, the SBI helped reinforce some of the autonomous behaviours the students were already performing and raised their awareness of the importance of others learner characteristics. Some of the learners believed that they already were autonomous to some degree; however, SBI has helped enhance their learner autonomy and made them more aware of it while others believed that learners are bound to become autonomous but SBI has made the process much more systematic and directed. These findings suggest that spontaneous development of learner autonomy is usually a prolonged process, while the assisted procedure through learner-centred approaches like SBI is evidently much more effective.

It is believed that learner autonomy is promoted through the provision of circumstances and contexts for language learners which allow them to take charge-at least temporarily-of the whole or part of their language learning programme. Such programmes are more likely to help rather than prevent learners from exercising their autonomy (Esch, 1996: 37). In line with this belief, the findings of this case study set an example of the value and utility of using SBI to promote learner autonomy in EFL learners in Libya within the given context.

In addition, the findings have led to the conclusion that autonomy in learning is a process and not a product (Paiva, 2011) that many EFL students seek today. Autonomy requires understanding one's own strengths and weaknesses and accumulating a diverse

set of resources that will maximize exposure and improvements in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In this sense, people do not develop it overnight but rather go through gradual process. Based on this, Scharle and Szabó (2000) suggest a three-phase developmental model of autonomy: 'raising awareness', 'changing attitudes' and 'transferring roles', and clarify that "the transition from one phase to another is not some momentous event that may be announced as an achievement." (Scharle and Szabó, 2000: 9). In the context of the study, the student participants showed evidence of reaching all three phases of the aforementioned development model towards their achievement of a level of autonomy.

4. Development of Metacognitive Awareness

A key outcome of the SBI programme can be depicted as incorporating the two components of metacognition, as stated by Wenden (1996) which are: metacognitive strategies and metacognitive knowledge.

The student participants' use of LLS particularly metacognitive strategies were reflected in their verbal reports 1 and, more extensively, verbal reports 2. They spoke of metacognitive strategies in the SILL reflection sessions and in the post-SBI questionnaire where 95 per cent of the students believed that the strategies that made them feel independent the most are, were in fact, metacognitive strategies. The students' responses in the post-SBI interview supported these findings. The use of meta-cognitive strategies presumably led to an improvement in their meta-cognition which helped them develop a self-directed approach to learning English as a foreign language. Through this approach they were able to set their own goals, plan how to achieve them with the available resources, and monitor as well as evaluate their progress over time. Literature on learning strategies reported increments in metacognitive awareness (Yang, 1999; Zhang, 2008)

The function of metacognitive knowledge was demonstrated by the student participants' development of several abilities which were also used in this study as indicators of learner autonomy. The importance of metacognitive knowledge in language learning has been widely recognised (Cotterall, 1995). Findings suggested that the SBI programme helped raise students' awareness of the learning process and of themselves as learners and enhanced their readiness to take charge of their own learning which accordingly empowered them to exert more efforts into their learning. Moreover, the students' perception of LLS as the effective way to approach language tasks was

identified as a main contributor to their enhanced performance. Dam (1996: 2) argues that "It is essential that an autonomous learner is stimulated to evolve an awareness of the aims and processes of learning and is capable of critical reflection". It is also argued that "Achieving LA [learner autonomy] requires capitalising on learning opportunities beyond the classroom and developing strategies for doing so." (Elsen and St. John, 2007: 34). Some of the students demonstrated the development of this ability which extended to their work places and social communities. Other students did not create learning opportunities beyond the classroom and identified their lack of using English outside their classroom as the main reason. Additionally, the autonomous learner shares in monitoring progress and evaluating the extent to which learning is achieved (Schunk, 2005). The student participants of this study also appeared familiar with the need to manage their learning processes and indicated that they were in control of focusing and evaluating their own learning behaviours inherent in most definitions of metacognition (Borkowski et al., 1987).

The findings obtained in this study support the views of Chamot and O'Malley (1994: 372) who suggest that metacognition may be the major factor in determining the effectiveness of individuals' attempts to learn a foreign language, and explicit metacognitive knowledge about task characteristics and appropriate strategies for task solution is a major determiner of language learning effectiveness.

Thus, I might argue that the student participants of this study in this particular context exemplify what Wenden (1991: 15) refers to as independent learners, which according to her are the those who have developed the learning strategies, the knowledge about learning, and the attitudes that allow them to use these skills and knowledge confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher. Therefore, they are in effect autonomous.

5. Development of Social Awareness

It was found that students' development of social awareness was achieved during this study. Learner autonomy has often been associated with social and collaborative learning (Benson, 1996, 2001, 2011; Camilleri, 1997). The students' social awareness was discussed in relation to three key aspects: learner responsibility, the role of the teacher and the role of peers.

Little et al (2002: 31) underline that the learner's potential to act independently can only be developed if "Learners take their first steps towards autonomy when they begin to accept responsibility for their own learning". The learners were found to have understood the importance of taking charge of ones' learning through shared responsibility with their teachers. The gradual transition of responsibility from teachers to learners was interpreted on the basis of Vygotskian views on mediated learning which might give us reason to reconsider the nature of power relations and the type of interaction between the learner and the provider of assistance in foreign language learning.

Palfreyman (2003: 4) asserts that "Independence from a teacher is often taken as an observable sign of autonomy". Although the student participants, perceived themselves as less reliant on their teachers towards the end of the programme, they did not deny the teachers' role in scaffolding learning before they were finally given the chance to select and apply their own LLS. It was found that the role of the teacher was crucial in creating from the beginning an atmosphere of trust and confidence within which learners felt free to exercise their judgement and pursue their interests.

Findings suggest that the students drew on the importance of practice opportunities which allowed them to use social strategies and enhance social aspects of learning (collaboration, negotiating on thinking and learning and feedback from peers). Some of the elementary students' reported that they were uncomfortable with group work and one-to-one interaction due to the impact of previous learning experiences and therefore showed low frequency use of social strategies. However, there was a noticeable increase in the elementary level students' social strategies after the strategy training which again might refer to the role of the teaching in providing that social classroom atmosphere and encourage interdependence inherent in most definitions of autonomous learners (Candy, 1991)

In summary, the findings suggest that in autonomous learning, the learner, the teacher and peers are partners in the learning process. While the teacher has the responsibility for providing an environment that helps students learn how to learn, learners should accept the responsibility of experimenting, taking risks, taking decisions, collaborating with peers and adjusting to the role change brought about by learner-centred approaches such as SBI.

6. Change in Teacher Roles and Professionalism

The aforementioned conclusions discussed the impact of SBI on the language learners as participants in the study. Regarding the impact of SBI on the language teachers being partners in this collaborative action research study, several conclusions were drawn.

The study relied on the teachers and their willingness to incorporate approaches such as SBI into their language classrooms. Having not participated in a similar instructional programme, it was expected that the participant teachers would show signs of rejection towards SBI thus affecting its implementation. Interestingly, one of the major concerns that the teachers had were not to do with the SBI programme but with time issues as the SBI programme was integrated into the original language course and there were preliminary worries that this might impede the completion of the course. Nonetheless, with the implementation of the programme these concerns soon dispersed.

An overall conclusion that might be drawn in terms of the impact of SBI on the participant teachers is that it was perhaps a learning venture for them and an opportunity to pursue professional development. It might not only have been an opportunity of awareness-raising of the value of LLS, but also an opportunity of teaching methodology gain and familiarizing them with new approaches to teacher development. The teachers' role in SBI was a very essential one. It was interesting to find that the participant teachers realised that the aspect of role change does not in any way put teachers out of work or undermine their positions as many of them may incorrectly believe. It may, on the other hand, free teachers to focus on supporting their students' abilities to learn English effectively by embracing the new roles of facilitator, coach and coordinator.

The research finds also suggest that professional development was achieved as a result of action research and collaborative teaching, hence broadening the teachers' research methodology knowledge base. Despite initial unfamiliarity with AR, positive orientation towards using collaborative action research was attained both during the project and for the future. The teachers reached an understanding that action research is a teacher-led initiative and can be practised at any time of their careers.

The teachers obtained new experience with regards to autonomous learning. There was a realization among the teachers that they had received minimal encouragement during their own educational endeavours (as language learners or teacher-trainees) regarding the promotion of learner autonomy in their language classrooms. Although these

findings cannot be generalised, the study has provided some insights into teacher perspectives concerning the development of autonomy in language learners. The teachers thought that SBI was an appropriate instructional programme for developing students' autonomy. However, they were in agreement with each other about the existence of certain influential difficulties and challenges which could impede teachers' proper implementation of this approach in EFL settings in Libya. Although they may not have experienced any difficulties with this study's group of student participants in terms of their readiness for learner autonomy, they believed that other learners in other contexts might not be as willing to change traditional classroom roles. Similar difficulties and challenges were reported in the findings of recent research on implementing approaches which encourage learner autonomy in non-Western contexts (see Zainol Abidin, et al, 2012; Orafi and Borg, 2009; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012)

Overall, the findings seem to suggest that the SBI programme had an impact on the participant teachers, implying that teachers in Libya should be provided with opportunities to pursue professional development through action research and experience new approaches to teaching including SBI and other programmes that encourage the use of LLS and promote learner autonomy.

It can be argued that teacher practices and perceptions are critically important as they have the potential to influence the effectiveness of the teaching/learning process within any chosen instructional programme. Therefore, strategy training is especially necessary for both foreign language learners and teachers alike. McDonough (1999:13) on the effectiveness of strategy training argues that "the latest research is showing that, in certain circumstances and modes, particularly when incorporated into the teacher's normal classroom behaviour, and thus involving teacher training as well as learner training, success is demonstrable.".

7.   Change of Attitudes of both Teachers and Learners

The SBI programme also had an impact on the students' attitudes (beliefs, feelings and behaviours) towards autonomy and as a consequence instilled their confidence resulting in better performance across the four language skills while their increased motivation enhanced their efforts in learning. This finding in particular demonstrates the interrelation between learner autonomy, improved performance and enhanced efforts thus addressing research questions one and two simultaneously. Although it is not possible to generalise based on the small sample size of this study, one potential

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conclusion is that the Libyan learners of EFL might not be conditioned by a pattern of cultural forces that are not harmonious to learner autonomy after all. Stereotypes about particular groups may not correspond to the actual modern 'vernacular' culture (Watkins and Biggs, 1996; Palfreyman, 2003). The experience of the Libyan students of this study could be quite similar to that of a sample of Korean university students, who were found to be aware of the value of autonomy and were receptive to innovative study methods despite their prolonged exposure to traditional learning practices and cultural traits (Finch, 2002). Littlewood (1996) also discusses students' stated beliefs which seem to contradict with common stereotypes of East Asian students as passive and dependent on authority.

Learner beliefs on autonomy and their readiness for a new approach that stimulates independent learning have proven to be effective. The student participants of this study seem to have grasped the implications underlined in Chamot's et al (1999: 35) statement that:

> ...for strategies instruction to have an impact, students must first believe they are capable of becoming independent learners. They also must believe that what causes their success or failure is the use of effective or ineffective strategies, not luck or innate ability alone.

As for attitudes of the teacher participants, all three teachers were positive about their active engagement with the SBI programme. Despite no discrepancy between the SBI programme and the set curriculum, time was a point of concern for the teachers. However, this was found to be related to confidence in the implementation of the programme, an attribute which increased over the course of the programme as did teacher motivation. Apart from occasional uncertainty and insecurity, there was a notable positive attitude feeling among the teachers, in general, which in part stemmed from witnessing the progressive effects SBI had on the learners. For example, proficiency gains made by the students particularly in the skills of reading and writing were noted by their teachers. Seeing some signs of learner attitude change, and that the learners have become more autonomous has also motivated the teachers to engage in the programme and consider implementing it in future. Applying a learner-centred approach instead of a teacher-centred approach as well as embracing several roles has not only added to their teaching methodology experience but stimulated positive attitude change which might be attributable to the teachers' readiness for change.

In conclusion to the discussion of findings, it is believed that the interaction between all the findings discussed above was the ultimate interpretation for the positive results obtained in this study. The findings tend to concur with those of several others in the area of LLS. In view of the literature on LLS, the majority of interventionist studies (Fujiware's, 1990; Bergman, 1991; Dadour and Robbins, 1996; Carrier's, 2001; Rasekh and Ranjbari, 2003; Dreyer and Nel's, 2003; Nakatani, 2005) seem to suggest that LLS can be taught and can be effective in improving learners' language skills and strategy use as well as raising both teachers' and learners' awareness of LLS and autonomy.

Figure 10.1 illustrates how the findings of the study are interrelated and signifies which of the findings addressed the three key research questions stated in section 1.3.
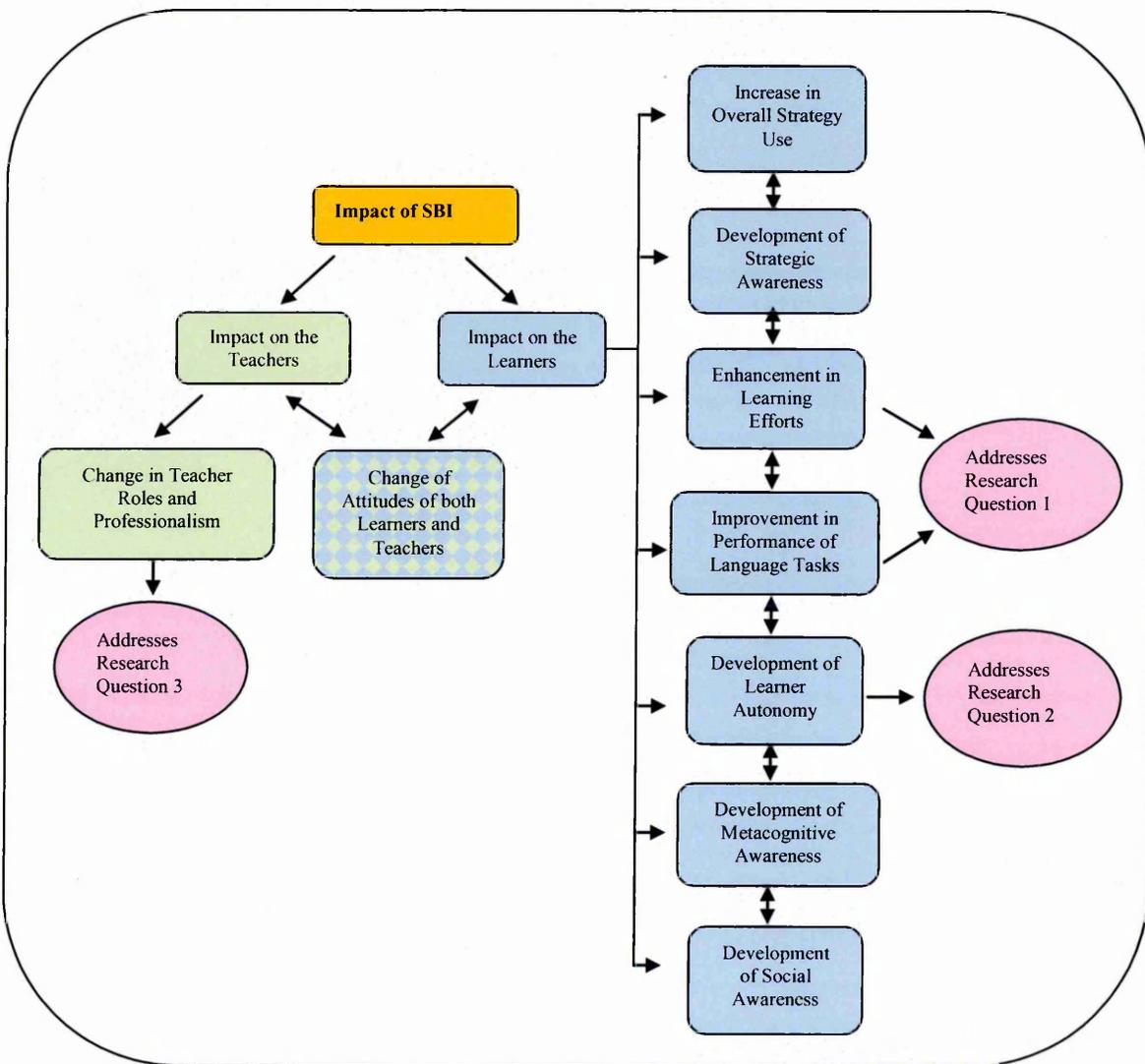
10.1: Interrelation between the Key Research Findings

10.2 Pedagogical Implications

The research findings suggest that students not only profit from activating strategies that they are already using, but from expanding their range of strategies. Hence, an important implication of this study is the need to provide EFL students in Libya with further opportunities to use a wide variety of strategies in order to raise learners' awareness of developing their strategic competence. Students should be made aware that a wider repertoire of LLS and higher frequency of their use are both critical in learning language effectively.

In order to encourage EFL learners to employ LLS, language teachers should raise students' awareness about LLS and their usefulness. Greater student awareness about LLS might help them to become more self-confident and successful language learners. Teachers need to create an input-rich environment inside and outside the classroom by providing a variety of activities that stimulate the use of LLS. The research implies a shift from teacher-centred approaches to learner-centred approaches such as SBI. The classroom teacher needs to be a facilitator who encourages students' active participation in the learning process and helps learners equip themselves with knowledge, skills and competencies that will enable them to take responsibility for their learning.

The study implies that language learning strategies are teachable. The attempt to teach Libyan EFL learners to use language learning strategies through SBI has produced positive results. It has allowed students to become more aware of their preferred learning strategies and helped them become more responsible for meeting their own objectives. Such objectives can be achieved when students are trained in strategy use so that they become more independent and effective. Thus, the research indicates a need for more strategy training and instructional programmes within foreign language settings in Libya, in line with Chamot and O'Malley (1987: 240) who argue that: "Strategies can be taught. Students who are taught to use strategies and are provided with sufficient practice in using them will learn more effectively than students who have had no experience with language learning strategies."

Practical actions can be taken by teachers in language classrooms in terms of integrating explicit and implicit strategy instruction into the regular lessons, however; future teacher education programmes will be required in order to provide trainee teachers with the skills to implement strategy training and develop autonomy in the learners. Richards and Farrell (2005:1) believe that "opportunities for in-service training are crucial to the

long-term development of teachers as well as for the long-term success of the programs in which they work". It is therefore hoped, as a result of this study and the planned intervention, that foreign language institutions in Libya today recognize the significance of empowering EFL teachers in both government and private language schools through in-service training in different approaches to teaching development including action research. In addition, attending and participating in teacher development programmes like awareness-raising workshops, strategy training conferences and seminars can also help equip language teachers with the necessary tools to deliver strategy instruction to their students.

In terms of curriculum development, this eight-week intervention suggests that it is possible to integrate strategy-based instruction into the normal curriculum. However, in order to yield optimal results, it may be desirable to incorporate SBI into curricula on a long-term basis. Curriculum developers in Libya might benefit from the findings of this study which might help them to design various materials which promote language learning strategies at different educational levels. Furthermore, there is a potential need to develop materials that encourage learner autonomy. For example language course books could be structured to include elements that encourage learners to rely on their own competencies without the continuous need for teacher assistance. Cotterall (2000) directly addresses the issue of incorporating autonomy into language courses, and suggests that the course should incorporate discussion and practice with strategies known to facilitate task performance and that it should promote reflection on learning (Cotterall, 2000: 111-12).

10.3   Contribution of the study

The main contributions this study makes can be summarised as follows:

- The study provides information which will help both teachers and researchers of EFL gain a clearer perspective on the role SBI might have in learning English.
- Foreign language policy makers and curriculum and programme administrators in Libya may wish to consider elements of this research study when discussing the development of pedagogy and provision. For example, as well as explicitly raising learners awareness of strategy use, features of autonomous learning might be integrated, highlighted and encouraged as part of EFL course contents.

- Teacher training institutions in Libya may wish to reconsider language teacher roles in light of the research findings. Specific undergraduate and postgraduate university modules might include a focus on learner-centred approaches as opposed to the traditional teacher-centred approaches to language learning in addition to developing teacher autonomy.

- The research may inform the development of in-service strategy training programmes, seminars, workshops and a variety of approaches to help teachers implement and design SBI and strategy training programmes as well as help foster autonomy in Libyan EFL learners.

- The Action Research framework may encourage the development of research policy and practice within the Libyan context.

10.4 Limitations of the study

Limitations to the study may be identified in relation to time constraints and issues with the theoretical underpinnings of collaborative action research (CAR).

10.4.1 Time Constraints

One of the first concerns of the participant teachers was whether the SBI programme would intervene with the flow and completion of the original course. Although it was found (as revealed by teachers' answers to Q6 in post-SBI interview) that it did not obstruct or affect the completion of the course it was, at times, very challenging to fit all the requirements of the course work alongside the requirements of the intervention into one lesson. Time constraints also had an effect on the number of strategies that were used i.e. these were limited to around six strategies per skill. A wider range of strategies could have been taught if the focus of the study was on one language skill, but given that all four language skills were the focus, there had to be a limit on the number of strategies used.

Another disadvantage due to being a co-teacher is the teaching overload I had. Sharing full teaching responsibility of the classes with the other three participant teachers was difficult in terms of putting extra pressure on me. There was also the concern that the demands made on the teachers' time and efforts may have an effect on their motivation which may in turn effect their participation in the implementation of the phases.

Although they had the right to withdraw from the programme at any time, fortunately they managed to complete the phases of the study until the end.

Balancing the time slots/intervals between phases of the SBIA model was quite a challenge. One of the requirements was to perform phase 4 after the courses were over. Having a gap between the implementation of the first three phases of the SBIA model and phase 4 posed a problem in that there was no guarantee that all students will complete the study. This was the case for the elementary level participants. Two students had dropped out of the course at the centre and were therefore unavailable to continue the final phase of the study making the number of student participants 59 instead of 61 in the phase 4 post-SBI questionnaire.

10.4.2 Issues with the Theoretical Underpinnings of CAR

Although this is a CAR case study, implying that the participant teachers should be equal partners with the researcher on every single level of the project, there were some exceptions. As this is a PhD research study, and for reasons of research rights, responsibility and ownership, it was important that the data gathered was analysed and discussed by me and not influenced by any other sources. While the three teachers participated in the delivery of the SBI programme and in administrating the data collection methods, they had no actual role in the analysis of the data results. However, the results of the analysis were shared with the teachers.

Furthermore, it was crucial for me to be clear about how the participant teachers' comments, views and perspectives were to be used in the study. On the one hand, they were partners in the CAR but on the other they were also subjects in the study in the sense that:

- The teachers were approached by me when I sought their consent to participate in the study.
- They were a source of information relevant to the research study that is why they were interviewed before and after the implementation of the SBI programme.
- The study did have an impact on the teachers as well as the students hence the dedicated chapter: the impact of SBI on the language teachers.

10.5 Recommendations and Future Research Directions

This research study is an attempt to share the results of how action research works in an EFL classroom in Libya. In terms of recommendation for research methodology, it is hoped that the findings may provide some insights for language researchers who are interested in experimenting with similar ideas in different language classrooms. Therefore, more case studies in different contexts need to be conducted so that the results can be shared to inspire ingenious ways of implementing action research. In addition to using action research for gathering data on LLS, suggestions for future replications may also include a more longitudinal approach to data collection. Such studies can take the form of ethnographic studies and rely on other methods of inquiry in addition to interviews and questionnaires such as observation which was not particularly used in this study.

The responses obtained in this investigation (i.e. from the questionnaires and interviews) might serve as a basis for a more refined set of questions to be used in constructing and developing future interviews and questionnaires for both language learners and language teachers. Additionally, there is potential for the expansion of the SBIA model. The model, while presenting a possible framework for quantitative and qualitative evaluation of strategy training, does not provide a finite number of phases. New phases may be added to the model as they emerge from further research. Also, the model may be expanded outwardly to add more data collection techniques and instruments should the phases need to be further subdivided.

While this research study might be replicated in similar scenarios, the feasibility and findings from this study's methods can be challenged by other EFL researchers in both similar and different contexts. More research is needed on the use of language learning strategies for Libyan students learning English not only in language institutions but also in schools and universities and also with larger numbers of student participants. There is a need for more comprehensive research on a wide range of variables affecting LLS employed by Libyan learners such as cultural background, learning style, learner beliefs, motivation, attitude, gender, age and previous educational experiences and learning goals.

Due to the important role autonomy has played in this study; an area of future research can be on how autonomy should be fostered in various Libyan educational contexts. More reflection and investigation is needed into the provision of learner-centred

approaches such as SBI or other language programmes where learners share responsibilities with teachers towards language achievement and learner interdependence.

One important future recommendation is to primarily focus on understanding the impact that SBI has on the teachers and implementing this approach with a larger number of teachers as an action research project or a multiple case study. In addition, future research is needed in the area of teacher development in relation to strategy instruction in Libya. Researchers may wish to investigate how certain factors affect strategy instruction approaches. These factors or variables might include the amount and type of teacher preparation or training in strategy instruction both pre-service and/or in-service, and years of teaching experience and length of time teaching learning strategies. Similarly, teacher characteristics such as attitude, teacher beliefs and teaching methodology and approaches might have an impact on strategy instruction.

10.6   Reflections on Personal Development

Undertaking this study has been one of the most challenging yet rewarding experiences in my professional life. As a teacher of English as a foreign language, I have grown professionally as well as personally through experimenting with both action research as a method of research and SBI as an instructional approach.

I had been a language teacher for just over six years before setting out on this research endeavour. However, during that time I had never *systematically* recorded my thoughts on my classroom experience. Practising action research has enabled me to further my understanding of many of the familiar events and observations in my language classroom. I was able to reframe the familiar while confirming my current practice. I have come to realize that understanding is not possible without the conscious effort of reflection. Therefore, it was interesting to evaluate my own teaching practice in the light of my findings. Moreover, although I have co-taught with other teachers in the past, being part of a collaborative action research project has helped me to practise co-teaching with more effectiveness.

Prior to commencing fieldwork, I was apprehensive whether or not I had adequate knowledge to properly implement SBI. However, being the programme developer and understanding the rationale behind it gave me a great sense of ownership when

implementing it. In addition as an EFL teacher, I was very familiar with the course materials and class activities. This made it easier to tailor the activities and incorporate new learning activities to suit the needs of the SBI programme. Furthermore, the cyclical nature of action research gave me the confidence to keep trying even if certain research attempts do not go according to plan.

Another reflection is that I felt empowered to be able to promote learner autonomy through SBI although a lot remains to be learnt in relation to fostering learner autonomy. Prior to this research, I have rarely and minimally encouraged autonomous learning among my students assuming that they could acquire this easily once they have left the language classroom. However, having implemented a learner-centred approach such as SBI has made me aware that it is possible to help learners initiate the process from the language classroom and enable them to build the first milestones towards autonomy.

Part of the satisfaction in accomplishing this research work is a result of having empowered a small number of Libyan teachers on two levels: a pedagogical level; by implementing SBI and a research methodology level; by practising collaborative action research. This has had an impact on their professional development.

Although I cannot officially claim to be a teacher trainer, the requirements of implementing the SBI programme obliged me to take on such a role. The skills I have used and acquired throughout the teacher preparation sessions can be further developed in future prompting new professional directions in terms of my career.

During the conduction of this study I have not only developed my thinking through the investigation of multiple theories and areas of research but also developed my research methodology skills by applying both quantitative and qualitative research. I had the opportunity to undertake a module (Qualitative Research) at Sheffield Hallam university in which I learnt about how to conduct interviews. This was most favourable to my study.

Overall, I can say that my doctoral research has been part of my on-going journey of self-growth and professional development and I am proud to share this personal learning experience. I tend to agree with Mcniff (2002) that as researchers we should aim to show not only the actions of our research, but also the learning involved as this adds to the authenticity of the research.

10.7 Final Thoughts

As this academic research endeavour comes to an end, I have come to realise how interesting and meaningful it has been. My study has covered some significant areas of research relevant to current foreign language learning and teaching practice. These include: language learning strategies, strategy training and learner autonomy, all of which have been under-researched in Libya.

The study has implemented strategies-based instruction as a learner-centred instructional approach in an EFL context in Libya and investigated the impact it has had in this context. As such, it has identified the increasing emphasis on learner empowerment and the need for further implementation of learner-centred approaches. The results have shown that Libyan adult learners of English can become aware of LLS already in use and exploit others made available to them through SBI. The learners have also shown signs of learner autonomy in the process.

In addition, the study has helped boost the professional confidence of the participating teachers, which in turn is hoped to foster better practice and encourage more EFL teachers to consider implementing SBI in their classrooms. EFL teachers who are on the quest for more effective instructional approaches may wish to integrate explicit strategy instructions into the regular lessons. Because, the study has demonstrated that the role of the teacher in strategy training is essential, there is a heightened need for the development of language teacher expertise in this area. Furthermore, this research study was an attempt to share the results of how 'Action Research' works in an EFL classroom in Libya; thus, providing some insights for fellow researchers and language practitioners who are interested in experimenting with similar ideas and research methods in their classrooms.

Finally, not only has this research study extended and deepened knowledge and understanding in the chosen areas of research, it has also offered some practical implications for curriculum developers and foreign language practitioners. Any attempt to encourage the implementation of SBI in other EFL contexts in Libya would be ineffective unless backed up with practical experience. It is hoped that the findings of this study can help support such an initiative and provide language researchers, practitioners and curriculum developers with the knowledge to gauge the relative influence and importance of language learning strategies in learners' language learning process.

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Appendix A

My Teaching Context and Development of Research Interest

My English language teaching career started as a lecturer at Zawia University (previously known as the Seventh of April University) in Libya from 1999-2001. During this time I was involved in teaching English for academic purposes (EAP), teaching grammar and general English and designing and teaching technical English courses (English for biology and statistics students). I then joined Azzawia Oil Refining Company and worked in the training and development department from 2001-2005 as a TESOL tutor. I taught general English language courses (beginners to advanced levels). I designed and taught courses for secretaries and engineers and delivered preparation courses for the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (KET, PET, FCE, CAE & IELTS). From 2004-2007, I worked at the foreign languages centre at the Academy of Graduate Studies in Tripoli, Libya doing similar courses to those at the oil company in addition to working in language labs teaching phonetics and phonology. I have mainly taught adult learners of English; however whilst doing my MA, I have gained experience in working with young learners; ages 6-10 years.

My interest in LLS is based on my own use of them during my education as an undergraduate student studying English as a foreign language (not knowing, then, that they were referred to as LLS, I would call them tools, techniques, tricks or games). Having practised with strategies during my own education, and having directly acknowledged their benefits on my learning process, gave me an incentive as a teacher to try to offer my students ways of improving their learning by using their learning potential of applying LLS. The scarcity of research on language learning strategies of Libyan learners also encouraged me to investigate the topic and devote considerable effort to the difficulties and success encountered by Libyan adult learners. I therefore, wondered whether designing and delivering an SBI course to a group of adult learners of English in Libya (my own teaching context) would provide similar results. Furthermore, I wanted to find out whether SBI was conducive to autonomous foreign language learning i.e. whether encouraging and training the learners to use LLS would result in fostering learner autonomy. I was fortunate to be sponsored to study for a PhD degree through which I was able to research the issues that have always been of interest to me.

Appendix B

Researcher's Statement at Chosen Research Site: Explanation of the Research Study and Participant Rights and Consent

You are all invited to consider participating in this research study. The aim of the study is to investigate the impact of Strategies-Based Instruction on Libyan adult learners of English as a foreign language. The study will take the form of action research. This means your other teacher and I will be delivering the original language course and collecting data at the same time. We will call this course 'the SBI programme'.

Participating in this study is strictly voluntary. That means you do not have to be part of the study if you do not wish to. Your decision to participate in the study will not in any way affect your course grades. Data collection will be carried out in phases and using different methods. If you choose to participate you will be invited to complete a number of questionnaires both at the beginning of the programme and at the end. Also throughout the programme, you will perform some language tasks while verbally reporting your actions and finally some participants will be interviewed. In the different types of data collection methods, it would be appreciated if you express your views and feelings honestly and answer all questions truthfully.

As for your rights as a participant, all of the information collected will be confidential and will only be used for research purposes. Your identity will be anonymous and no one besides, me as the researcher, will know your name. Whenever data from this study is published your name will not be used. If you participate and wish to withdraw from participation you can do so at any point in the programme and again this will not affect your course grades.

If you choose to participate in the data collection methods, it will be understood that you have voluntarily agreed to participate in the research study as a whole. And this will stand as your consent.

Thank you

Fatma Tarhuni

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

R. Oxford, 1989

This questionnaire is designed to find out about your use of language learning strategies while you are learning English. Remember, your answers will not affect your grades in any way. Please answer the questions truthfully as this will help in the research process.

The questionnaire has six parts A through F. It has 50 questions. To answer each question you need to choose from 1 to 5 from the options below.

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

Part A (Memory strategies)

1. I think of relationships between things I already know and new things I learn in English. ____
2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them. ____
3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word. ____
4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used. ____
5. I use rhymes to remember new English words. ____
6. I use flash cards to remember new English words. ____
7. I physically act out new English words. ____
8. I review English lessons often. ____
9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, on a street sign. ____

Part B (Cognitive strategies)

10. I say or write English words several times. ____
11. I try to talk like native English speakers. ____
12. I practice the sounds of English. ____
13. I use the English words I know in different ways. ____
14. I start conversations in English. ____
15. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English. ____
16. I read for pleasure in English. ____
17. I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English. ____
18. I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully. ____
19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English. ____
20. I try to find patterns in English. ____
21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand. ____
22. I try not to translate word-for-word. ____
23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English. ____

Part C (Compensation strategies)

24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses. _____
25. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures. _____
26. I make up new words if I do not know that right ones in English. _____
27. I read English without looking up every new word. _____
28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in English. _____
29. If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing. _____

Part D (Metacognitive strategies)

30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English. _____
31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better. _____
32. I pay attention when someone is speaking English. _____
33. I try to find out how to be a better learner of English. _____
34. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English. _____
35. I look for people I can talk to in English. _____
36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English. _____
37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills. _____
38. I think about my progress in learning English. _____

Part E (Affective strategies)

39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English. _____
40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making mistakes. _____
41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English. _____
42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English. _____
43. I write down my feelings in a language learning diary. _____
44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English. _____

Part F (Social strategies)

45. If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again. _____
46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk. _____
47. I practice English with other students. _____
48. I ask for help from English speakers. _____
49. I ask questions in English. _____
50. I try to learn about the culture of English speakers. _____

Arabic Version of Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)
R. Oxford, 1989

استبيان حول استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة
نموذج خاص لدارسي اللغة الإنجليزية من الناطقين باللغات الأخرى.

<u>التعليمات</u>

هذا النموذج مُخصص لدارسي اللغةِ الإنجليزيةِ كلُغةٍ ثانيةٍ أو أجنبيةٍ .ستُعرضُ عليكَ عباراتٌ تتعلق باستراتيجيات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية يتعينُ عليك قراءتِها.

أجب إلى أي مدى تنطبق هذه العبارة على حالتك .تذكر أنه لا توجد هناك إجابة صحيحة أو خاطئة بين هذه العبارات، فلذلك لا تقم باختيار إجابة تعتقد بأنها هي الإجابة المثالية، ولا تختر إجابة تعكس ما يفعله الآخرون سواك .حاول الإجابة بعناية وبصدق.

ضع 1-5 (من الخيارات في الاسفل) حول مدى انطباق هذه العبارات على حالتك الخاصة إثناء تعلمك اللغة الإنجليزية.

1 ـ لا تنطبق، أو نادِر جداً ما تنطبق على حالتي
2 ـأحياناً، تنطبق على حالتي
3 ـ إلى حد ما، تنطبقُ على حالَتي.
4 ـ غالباً، ، تنطبقُ على حالتي
5 ـ دائماً تنطبق على حالتي

القسم   A

1. أفكِّر في العلاقات بين ما أعرفه أصلاً والأمور الجديدة التي أتعلمها في الإنجليزية. _____

2. أستعملُ الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة في جملة آي أتذآرها. _____

3. أربُط ما بين صوت الكلمة الإنجليزية الجديدة مع صوره أو رسمة للكلمة لتساعدني على تذآرها. _____

4. أتذكرُ الكلمة الإنجليزية الجديدة من خلال صنع صورة ذهنية لموقف قد تستخدم فيه هذه الكلمة . _____

5. أستخدم الوقع الموسيقي لتذآر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة . _____

6. أستخدمُ بطاقات لكتابة المفردات الجديدة آي أتذآر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة. _____

7. أقوم بتمثيل الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة بشكل حركي. _____

8. أراجع دروس اللغة الإنجليزية بكثرة. _____

9. أتذآر الكلمات أو العبارات الإنجليزية الجديدة عن طريق تذآر موقعها في الصفحة أو على السبورة أو على اللافتات في الشارع. _____

القسم   B

10. أقوم بترديد أو آتابة الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة عدة مرات . _____

11. أحاول التحدث مثل الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية. _____

12. أتمرنُ على نطق أصوات اللغة الإنجليزية. _____

13. أستخدم الكلمات الإنجليزية التي أعرفها بطرق مختلفة. _____

14. أبادر بإجراء محادثات باللغة الإنجليزية. _____

15. أشاهد البرامج التلفزيونية أو أذهب لمشاهدة الأفلام السينمائية الناطقة بالإنجليزية. _____

16. أقرأ الكتب الإنجليزية من أجل التسلية والترفيه. _____

17. أستخدم اللغة الإنجليزية في تدوين الملاحظات والرسائل والمراسلات والتقارير. _____

18. عند قراءتي لنصٍ باللغة الإنجليزية، أقرأه للمرة الأولى بسرعة، والثانية بتمهل وعناية. _____

19. أبحث عن آلمات في اللغة العربية مماثلة لتلك الكلمات الجديدة التي تعلمتها في اللغة الإنجليزية . _____

20. أحاول البحث عن أنماطٍ قواعد في اللغة الإنجليزية . _____

21. أجد معنى الكلمة الإنجليزية عن طريق تقسيمها إلى مقاطع يسهل عليَّ فهمها . _____

22. أحاول تجنب الترجمة الحرفية . _____

23. أقوم بإعداد ملخصات للمعلومات الجديدة التي أسمعها أو أقرأها باللغة الإنجليزية. _____

القسم   C

24. أحاول فهم الكلمات الإنجليزية التي لا أعرفها عن طريق تخمين معانيها. _____

25. عندما لا أجد الكلمات المناسبة إثناء التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية أستعيض عنها بالإشارة. _____

26. أقوم باستخدام آلمات جديدة تعبر عن المعنى المراد إن آنت لا أعرف الكلمات الصحيحة لذلك في اللغة الإنجليزية. _____

27. أقوم بالقراءة باللغة الإنجليزية دون البحث عن معاني جميع الكلمات الجديدة . _____

28. إثناء التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية، أحاول التنبؤ بما سيتحدث به الطرف الآخر . _____

29. إذا لم استطع تذآر آلمة إنجليزية ما، أحاول استخدام كلمة أو عبارة قريبة لها في المعنى. _____

القسم   D

30. أحاول قدر الإمكان إيجاد طرق عدة لاستخدام لغتي الإنجليزية . _____

31. أحاول إدراك أخطائي في اللغة الإنجليزية، آي أتدارآها، وأحسّنَ من مستواي . _____

32. أصغي بانتباه لمن يتحدث باللغة الإنجليزية . _____

33. أحاول أن أجد ما يجعلني متعلماً أفضل للغة الإنجليزية . _____

34. أعد برنامجي الدراسي بحيث يتوفر لدي الوقت اللازم لدراسة اللغة الإنجليزية . _____

35. أبحث عن أشخاص يمكنني التحدث إليهم باللغة الإنجليزية . _____

36. أبحث عن فرص للقراءة باللغة الإنجليزية قدر الإمكان . _____

37. لدي أهداف واضحة لتحسين مهاراتي في اللغة الإنجليزية . _____

38. أفكر بالتقدم الذي أحرزه في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. _____

القسم   E

39. أحاول تهدئة نفسي كلما شعرت بالخوف من استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية . _____

40. أشجع نفسي على التحدث بالإنجليزية حتى لو أنت خائفاً من أن أخطئ. _____

41. أأكافئ نفسي آلما أصبحت أفضل في اللغة الإنجليزية. _____

42. أدرك إن أصابني التوتر خلال دراستي أو استخدامي للغة الإنجليزية . _____

43. أدون مشاعري في مفكرة خاصة بتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية . _____

44. أتحدث إلى شخص آخر عن شعوري عندما أتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. _____

القسم   F

45. إذا لم أفهم بعض ما يُقال باللغة الإنجليزية، أطلب من المتحدث أن يبطء في الحديث أو أن يعيد. _____

46. أطلب من الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية تصحيحي عندما أتحدث. _____

47. أمارس اللغة الإنجليزية مع طلاب الآخرين. _____

48. أطلب المساعدة من الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية. _____

49. أطرح الأسئلة باللغة الإنجليزية. _____

50. أحاول أن أتعلم عن ثقافة الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية. _____

Appendix D
Results of the SILL 1 and SILL 2 across the Three Learner Levels

Elementary Class Level SILL 1 Results						
SILL (1)	Part A Memory	Part B Cognitive	Part C Compensation	Part D Metacognitive	Part E Affective	Part F Social
1	3.88	3.35	4	3.88	3.16	3
2	3.55	3.64	3	4.55	3.5	3.66
3	3.11	3.35	3.66	4.33	3	3.33
4	2.33	3	3.16	3.66	3.5	4.16
5	2.66	3.35	2.83	3.22	2.33	2.16
6	3.33	3.21	4	4.44	3	3.5
7	2.22	2.64	2.33	2	2.16	1.5
8	3.55	3	2.66	3	3	4
9	3.44	3.5	3.83	4.44	3.16	4.16
10	3.88	2.92	3.66	4.11	2.16	4
11	3.11	2.85	3.66	3.22	2.83	3
12	3.22	3.64	2.66	4.55	2.66	3.5
13	3.55	3	4	3.33	2.16	2.5
14	3	3	4	4.33	3.83	2.5
15	2.77	3.28	2.5	4.66	4.16	2.83
16	3.11	3.28	3.66	4.66	2.83	3.66
17	2.88	2.85	3.16	3.88	4	3.33
18	3.88	4.35	4.16	4.88	4.33	4.16
19	4.11	3.92	4.5	4.55	4	3.66
20	2.55	2.71	2.83	3.77	3.66	3
21	3.22	1.92	3.33	3.11	3.16	2.16
22	3	2.28	3	3	2.16	2.13
Mean	3.19	3.13	3.39	3.88	3.12	3.17

Elementary Class Level SILL 2 Results

SILL (2)	Part A Memory	Part B Cognitive	Part C Compensation	Part D Metacognitive	Part E Affective	Part F Social
1	4.11	3.78	4.16	4.55	3.83	3.66
2	3.77	4.14	3.5	4.55	3.83	4.16
3	3.44	3.85	4.16	4.66	3.5	4
4	3.22	3.57	4	4.33	3.66	4.5
5	3	3.71	4	4	3	2.83
6	3.66	3.78	4.16	4.66	3.5	3.66
7	3	3.07	2.83	2.88	3	2
8	3.77	3.57	3.33	3.66	3.16	4.66
9	3.55	3.64	4.16	4.55	3.5	4.5
10	4.11	3.5	4	4.33	2.83	4.5
11	3.66	3.28	4.16	4	3	3.5
12	3.55	3.85	3.5	4.66	3	3.66
13	3.55	3.57	4.33	4.11	2.66	3.33
14	3.55	3.42	4	4.55	4.16	3.33
15	3.33	3.85	3.16	4.88	4.33	4
16	3.88	3.78	3.83	4.77	3.33	4.16
17	3.44	3.57	3.66	4.44	4	4
18	4	4.42	4.33	4.88	4.5	4.5
19	4.33	4.28	4.5	4.77	4.33	4.16
20	3.22	3.57	3.5	4.22	3.66	3.66
21	3.44	2.5	3.5	3.55	3.33	2.66
22	3.55	3	3.66	3.55	2.83	3.16
Mean	3.59	3.62	3.83	4.29	3.49	3.75

Pre-intermediate Class Level SILL 1 Results						
SILL (1)	Part A Memory	Part B Cognitive	Part C Compensation	Part D Metacognitive	Part E Affective	Part F Social
1	3.66	3.92	4	4.55	3	4
2	3.66	3.35	3.66	3.88	3	3.5
3	3.55	3.28	3.16	3.66	2.83	3
4	3.11	3.28	4	4.33	3.16	2.5
5	3.11	3	3.33	3.66	3	3.16
6	3	2.92	3.16	3.33	2.16	3.16
7	3	3.64	3.66	4.11	2.66	3.66
8	2.88	2.64	2.33	3.88	2.16	3.5
9	3.66	3.35	3.66	3.66	3.16	3
10	3.44	3.5	3.83	4.11	3.16	4.16
11	2.88	3	3.16	3.66	2.83	3.33
12	3.33	3.28	3.66	4.33	3	3.66
13	3.66	3	3.66	4.11	2.16	3.5
14	3.55	3	4	4.11	2.16	3.5
15	3.33	3.35	3.66	4.44	3	3.5
16	2.88	3	3.16	4.33	2.66	2.83
17	2.66	3	3.33	3.66	2.33	3.16
18	2.55	2.92	3.16	3.33	2.66	3
19	3.88	3.92	4.16	4.33	3.16	4.16
Mean	3.25	3.22	3.51	3.97	2.75	3.38

SILL (2)	Part A Memory	Part B Cognitive	Part C Compensation	Part D Metacognitive	Part E Affective	Part F Social
1	3.77	4.14	4.16	4.66	3.16	4.16
2	3.66	3.57	4	4.33	3	4
3	3.66	3.64	3.83	4.11	3	3.66
4	3.44	3.35	4.33	4.88	3.33	3.66
5	3.33	3.57	3.83	4.11	3.16	3.66
6	3.22	3.28	3.33	3.88	2.66	3.33
7	3.11	3.78	3.83	4.55	2.83	3.66
8	3	3	3.66	3.88	2.83	3.66
9	3.77	3.57	3.83	3.88	3.16	3.5
10	3.55	3.78	4.16	4.66	3	4.5
11	3	3.5	3.66	4.11	3	3.66
12	3.55	3.42	3.83	4.66	3	3.66
13	3.66	3.35	4.16	4.55	2.83	4.16
14	3.66	3.57	4.33	4.33	2.66	3.66
15	3.55	3.85	4.16	4.66	3.33	4.16
16	3.11	3.64	3.83	4.88	3	3.5
17	3	3.5	3.5	4	3	3.66
18	3.11	3.64	3.66	4	3.16	3.66
19	4.11	4.28	4.33	4.77	3.66	4.5
Mean	3.43	3.60	3.91	4.36	3.04	3.81

Table title: Pre-intermediate Class Level SILL 2 Results

Intermediate Class Level SILL 1 Results						
SILL (1)	Part A Memory	Part B Cognitive	Part C Compensation	Part D Metacognitive	Part E Affective	Part F Social
1	3.55	3	3.33	4	2.16	3
2	3	2.64	2.66	3.88	3	3.66
3	3.55	3.28	4	4.33	2.83	3.5
4	3.88	3.92	4.16	4.55	3.16	4.16
5	3.66	3.64	3.83	4.44	2.66	3.66
6	3	3	3.33	3.88	2.83	3.33
7	3.55	3.28	4.16	4.33	3	2.83
8	3.11	3	3.33	3.77	2.16	3.16
9	3.66	3.35	3.66	4	3	3
10	3.44	3.5	4	4.33	3.16	4.16
11	3.33	3.28	3.66	4	2.83	3.66
12	3.55	3.21	3.33	3.77	2.66	3.33
13	3.33	3.28	3.16	3.88	3	3
14	3.22	2.85	3.33	3.77	2.33	3.16
15	3.44	3.64	4	4.55	2.83	3.5
16	3.11	3	3.66	3.88	2.16	3
17	3.55	3.64	4	4.66	3	3.33
18	3	3	3.16	4	2.83	3
19	3.33	4	4	4.66	3.16	4
20	3.55	3.28	3	3.33	2.83	3
Mean	3.38	3.34	3.673	4.15	2.79	3.39

Intermediate Class Level SILL 2 Results						
SILL (2)	Part A Memory	Part B Cognitive	Part C Compensation	Part D Metacognitive	Part E Affective	Part F Social
1	3.66	3.35	3.83	4.33	2.33	3.66
2	3.33	3	3	4.11	3	4
3	3.88	3.92	4.33	4.44	3.16	3.66
4	4	4.28	4.33	4.55	3.5	4.16
5	3.77	3.85	4	4.77	2.83	4
6	3.11	3.28	3.66	4	3.16	3.5
7	3.77	3.42	4.33	4.55	3.16	3
8	3.44	3.28	3.5	4.11	2.16	3.33
9	3.77	3.85	3.83	4.66	3.16	4
10	3.66	3.64	4.33	4.66	3.33	4.5
11	3.55	3.35	4	4.33	3	4
12	3.66	3.42	3.5	3.88	2.83	3.33
13	3.55	3.64	3.5	4	3.16	3.5
14	3.44	3	3.66	3.88	2.66	3.5
15	3.77	4	4.33	4.88	3.33	4
16	3.44	3.35	3.83	4	2.33	3.66
17	3.77	3.85	4.5	4.88	3.16	3.66
18	3.22	3.35	3.33	4.33	3	3.5
19	3.66	4.35	4.66	4.88	3.5	4.5
20	3.66	3.42	3.5	3.66	3.16	3.33
Mean	3.59	3.61	3.95	4.39	3.01	3.75

Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 and Verbal Report Questions for the Three Learner Levels

Reading Tasks1	Questions for verbal reporting
Activity A Reading part 3 from PET test (match the people with the places) The people on the left all want to go on a day trip. Below you can see details of places to visit. Decide which place would be the most suitable for each person.	
Activity B Reading part 4 from PET test students need to read a long text and answer 5 multiple choice questions. (text is about the effect of colours on people's behaviour)	a. - How are you going to approach this task? -Do you have a certain plan in mind? -What are you going to do? -What are you planning to do? b.
Reading Tasks 2	-How did you try to solve your problems? -What helped you? -How can you solve your problem? c.
Activity A Reading part 3 from PET test (match the people with the presents) You want to buy some Christmas presents for your friends. On the opposite page there are descriptions of eight presents. Decide which present (letters A to H) is most suitable for each person.	-How did you come up with that? -What makes you think so? -What are you thinking about? -Did you find this activity easy or difficult? Why? -What led to that decision? -What do you think you need to do to get better at activities like this?
Activity B Reading part 4 from PET test students need to read a long text and answer 5 multiple choice questions. (text is about The western alphabet)	-There were immediate/ non-prepared prompts which were needed in response to observations of the learner's behaviour. Such as: why did you stop here? What are these lines for? Why are you doing this? Referring to note in the margins of the task sheet.
Writing Tasks 1	
Activity A Your teacher has asked you to write a story. This is the title of the story. *An old friend* Write your story in about 100 words.	
Activity B A friend in your English class called Elena has invited you to her wedding. Write an email to Elena. In your email you should: - congratulate her on her marriage - say how pleased you are to be invited - ask her if there is anything she would like as a present Write 35-45 words.	
Writing Tasks 2	
Activity A This is part of a letter you receive from an English pen friend. We're doing a project on life in the UK at school and I wondered if you could tell me something about a particular festival you celebrate as a family	

You are writing a letter to this pen-friend.
Write the letter in about 100 words.

Activity B Write an e-mail to your friend telling her about your new English course Write 35-45 words.	a. - How are you going to approach this task? -Do you have a certain plan in mind? -What are you going to do? -What are you planning to do? b. -How did you try to solve your problems? -What helped you? -How can you solve your problem? c. -How did you come up with that? -What makes you think so? -What are you thinking about? -Did you find this activity easy or difficult? Why? -What led to that decision? -What do you think you need to do to get better at activities like this? -There were immediate/ non-prepared prompts which were needed in response to observations of the learner's behaviour. Such as: why did you stop here? What are these lines for? Why are you doing this? Referring to note in the margins of the task sheet.

Listening Tasks 1

Activity A

Look at the six questions for this part. You will hear a man called Steve and a woman called Caroline talking about summer jobs. Decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect. If it is correct, select Yes. If it is not correct, select No.

1   Steve hasn't arranged any work for the summer yet.
Yes
No
2   Caroline's work will allow her to have free time during the day.
Yes
No
3   Caroline's work will be located in a city.
Yes
No
4   Caroline found out about the job from the internet.
Yes
No
5   Caroline says that work at music festivals is badly paid.
Yes
No
6   Caroline does not have to pay for her accommodation.
Yes
No

Activity B

Students will hear a radio announcer giving details about a local motor show. For each question, fill in the missing information in the spaces. Write no more than three words and/or a number

Listening Tasks 2

Activity A

Students will hear some information about a summer course for teens. For each question, fill in the missing information in the spaces. Write no more than three words and/or a number.

Activity B

Students will hear a radio announcer giving details about a crime watch show. For each question, fill in the missing information in the spaces. Write no more than three words and/or a number	
Speaking Tasks 1	
Activity A Part 3 of the PET Speaking exam lasts about 3 minutes. The examiner will give you a colour photograph and ask you to talk about it on your own for about 1 minute. (the photo shows a gathering of people at a dinner table eating lunch or breakfast)	
Activity B Part 2 of the PET Speaking exam lasts about 2-3 minutes. The examiner will describe a situation to you and your partner and give you both some visuals. You will have to share your opinions with your partner about the task and try to make a decision. (The picture shows graduation presents that you need to decide with your partner which is the best one for your brother.)	
Speaking Tasks 2	
Activity A Part 3 of the PET Speaking exam lasts about 3 minutes. The examiner will give you a colour photograph and ask you to talk about it on your own for about 1 minute. (the photo shows different means of transportation including train, coach, bus, ferry, bicycle)	a. - How are you going to approach this task? -Do you have a certain plan in mind? -What are you going to do? -What are you planning to do? b. -How did you try to solve your problems? -What helped you?
Activity B Part 2 of the PET Speaking exam lasts about 2-3 minutes. The examiner will describe a situation to you and your partner and give you both some visuals. You will have to share your opinions with your partner about the task and try to make a decision. (Picture has walking equipment e.g. compass, walking boots, umbrella and flask) students need to give their opinions about which is the most important item to take on a walking trip.	-How can you solve your problem? c. -How did you come up with that? -What makes you think so? -What are you thinking about? -Did you find this activity easy or difficult? Why? -What led to that decision? -What do you think you need to do to get better at activities like this? -There were immediate/ non-prepared prompts which were needed in response to observations of the learner's behaviour. Such as: why did you stop here? What are these lines for? Why are you doing this? Referring to note in the margins of the task sheet.

Appendix F

Results of the Three Learner Levels in Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 across the Four Language Skills

Elementary Class Results of Tasks 1 across Skills (Full Mark 100)

Listening Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	70	65
2	70	60
3	60	60
4	60	55
5	60	60
6	60	60
7	55	45
8	50	55
9	70	75
10	45	50
11	55	60
12	75	75
13	55	60
14	60	65
15	65	60
16	70	75
17	60	60
18	60	60
19	75	75
20	60	60
21	55	55
22	60	60
Mean	61	61

Speaking Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	65	60
2	70	75
3	65	60
4	60	60
5	60	60
6	60	60
7	45	50
8	50	50
9	70	75
10	40	45
11	60	55
12	70	75
13	65	65
14	70	65
15	70	75
16	70	75
17	60	60
18	60	55
19	70	75
20	60	60
21	60	55
22	60	65
Mean	62	62.5

Reading Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	75	70
2	70	70
3	65	70
4	60	60
5	60	65
6	60	65
7	50	50
8	55	50
9	80	80
10	55	60
11	70	70
12	75	80
13	60	65
14	65	70
15	65	70
16	75	80
17	60	65
18	65	65
19	75	80
20	70	65
21	55	60
22	60	60
Mean	65	67

Writing Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	65	65
2	70	65
3	60	60
4	60	60
5	65	60
6	65	65
7	45	50
8	50	55
9	75	75
10	55	50
11	65	60
12	75	75
13	60	60
14	65	70
15	70	70
16	75	75
17	60	60
18	60	65
19	75	80
20	65	60
21	65	60
22	60	60
Mean	64	63.5

Elementary Class Results of Tasks 2 across Skills (Full Mark 100)

Listening Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	80	80
2	85	75
3	70	75
4	75	70
5	80	75
6	75	80
7	60	65
8	65	65
9	85	85
10	65	65
11	75	70
12	90	85
13	65	70
14	70	75
15	70	75
16	80	85
17	65	70
18	70	70
19	85	90
20	75	75
21	65	65
22	75	65
Mean	74	74

Speaking Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	75	75
2	80	80
3	70	75
4	65	70
5	70	70
6	70	70
7	55	60
8	60	65
9	80	85
10	55	60
11	70	65
12	80	85
13	70	75
14	80	80
15	80	85
16	85	85
17	70	70
18	70	65
19	85	90
20	70	75
21	70	65
22	75	75
Mean	72	74

Reading Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	85	85
2	85	80
3	80	80
4	80	80
5	80	85
6	80	85
7	65	65
8	65	70
9	90	95
10	70	65
11	80	85
12	90	95
13	80	80
14	85	80
15	85	80
16	95	90
17	70	75
18	75	75
19	90	95
20	85	80
21	70	75
22	75	80
Mean	80	81

Writing Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	80	85
2	85	80
3	70	75
4	70	75
5	70	75
6	75	80
7	65	60
8	65	65
9	85	90
10	65	60
11	75	75
12	85	90
13	80	75
14	80	80
15	80	80
16	85	90
17	70	70
18	75	70
19	90	85
20	75	75
21	70	65
22	75	75
Mean	76	76

Pre-intermediate Class Results of Tasks 1 across Skills (Full Mark 100)

Listening Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	60	65
2	60	70
3	70	60
4	60	60
5	70	60
6	60	60
7	70	70
8	65	65
9	75	70
10	65	55
11	70	60
12	55	60
13	75	75
14	60	70
15	45	55
16	65	65
17	80	70
18	60	55
19	45	40
Mean	63.5	62

Speaking Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	55	60
2	60	65
3	65	60
4	40	50
5	60	60
6	50	65
7	55	65
8	70	70
9	65	75
10	50	55
11	65	70
12	50	65
13	70	70
14	65	65
15	45	40
16	60	70
17	65	60
18	50	55
19	40	55
Mean	57	62

Reading Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	70	70
2	65	65
3	65	70
4	60	65
5	60	65
6	65	65
7	75	70
8	75	70
9	80	75
10	65	65
11	70	65
12	60	65
13	70	75
14	70	70
15	55	55
16	70	70
17	70	75
18	60	65
19	55	50
Mean	66	67

Writing Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	60	65
2	70	65
3	65	60
4	55	55
5	55	60
6	65	50
7	65	70
8	65	70
9	70	70
10	55	50
11	65	60
12	50	60
13	60	60
14	65	70
15	45	45
16	65	55
17	65	60
18	55	55
19	45	45
Mean	60	59

Pre-intermediate Class Results of Tasks 2 across Skills (Full Mark 100)

Listening Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	70	70
2	65	75
3	70	75
4	75	70
5	75	70
6	75	80
7	80	85
8	75	70
9	90	85
10	65	70
11	75	80
12	65	60
13	85	90
14	70	75
15	60	60
16	70	80
17	85	85
18	60	60
19	55	55
Mean	72	73.5

Speaking Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	65	60
2	75	80
3	70	75
4	65	60
5	55	65
6	70	70
7	65	75
8	85	65
9	80	75
10	60	55
11	65	85
12	60	65
13	75	80
14	65	75
15	55	50
16	75	80
17	75	75
18	60	65
19	60	65
Mean	67	69.5

Reading Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	75	80
2	70	80
3	80	80
4	65	75
5	75	75
6	70	80
7	85	90
8	80	80
9	90	85
10	75	70
11	80	85
12	60	80
13	80	85
14	75	80
15	65	60
16	70	80
17	85	75
18	65	65
19	60	60
Mean	74	77

Writing Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	60	75
2	80	80
3	80	75
4	70	60
5	65	65
6	75	65
7	75	70
8	80	85
9	75	80
10	65	60
11	65	75
12	60	60
13	70	75
14	75	80
15	55	60
16	75	55
17	80	70
18	55	65
19	60	55
Mean	69.5	69

Intermediate Class Results of Tasks 1 across Skills (Full Mark 100)

Listening Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	65	70
2	60	70
3	75	80
4	55	45
5	70	60
6	65	60
7	60	65
8	65	60
9	75	70
10	60	55
11	65	60
12	60	60
13	70	65
14	75	80
15	80	70
16	60	60
17	50	55
18	70	60
19	60	60
20	55	60
Mean	65	63

Speaking Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	60	60
2	70	65
3	60	65
4	60	60
5	65	60
6	60	65
7	55	60
8	70	75
9	70	75
10	55	50
11	60	60
12	65	70
13	60	60
14	75	65
15	75	70
16	60	55
17	60	60
18	60	55
19	70	65
20	60	60
Mean	63.5	63

Reading Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	70	65
2	65	65
3	70	70
4	55	50
5	65	60
6	65	65
7	50	60
8	65	70
9	65	60
10	45	55
11	70	65
12	75	65
13	60	60
14	75	70
15	75	65
16	70	70
17	60	55
18	60	65
19	70	65
20	60	60
Mean	65	63

Writing Task 1

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	60	60
2	60	65
3	70	60
4	50	60
5	60	55
6	55	50
7	60	55
8	60	65
9	60	65
10	50	55
11	60	60
12	70	65
13	55	60
14	75	75
15	70	60
16	60	65
17	60	60
18	60	55
19	65	70
20	55	65
Mean	61	61

Intermediate Class Results of Tasks 2 across Skills (Full Mark 100)

Listening Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	75	70
2	75	70
3	80	80
4	55	60
5	75	75
6	75	75
7	80	80
8	75	70
9	75	80
10	70	60
11	75	80
12	70	70
13	75	75
14	80	85
15	85	85
16	75	60
17	60	65
18	65	70
19	65	80
20	70	60
Mean	73	73

Speaking Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	70	75
2	75	80
3	70	65
4	65	60
5	80	65
6	75	75
7	65	70
8	85	80
9	85	75
10	50	65
11	60	60
12	75	70
13	65	70
14	85	75
15	90	80
16	70	65
17	75	65
18	75	70
19	70	75
20	75	70
Mean	73	70.5

Reading Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	75	60
2	80	80
3	70	85
4	60	60
5	70	75
6	75	75
7	70	75
8	80	70
9	70	75
10	60	55
11	65	70
12	85	65
13	70	75
14	85	85
15	90	80
16	75	65
17	70	65
18	65	70
19	80	65
20	65	75
Mean	73	71

Writing Task 2

No.	Activity A	Activity B
1	60	70
2	75	70
3	85	75
4	60	60
5	70	65
6	60	65
7	70	75
8	70	80
9	70	65
10	55	60
11	65	70
12	75	75
13	70	60
14	75	90
15	80	85
16	70	65
17	70	75
18	60	60
19	80	70
20	60	75
Mean	69	70.5

Appendix F Continued

T-Tests for Elementary Class Level

No.	Listening Tasks 1	Listening Tasks 2	Speaking Tasks 1	Speaking Task 2	Reading Tasks 1	Reading Task 2	Writing Tasks 1	Writing Task 2
1	67.5	80	62.5	75	72.5	85	65	82.5
2	65	80	72.5	80	70	82.5	67.5	82.5
3	60	72.5	62.5	72.5	67.5	80	60	72.5
4	57.5	72.5	60	67.5	60	80	60	72.5
5	60	77.5	60	70	62.5	82.5	62.5	72.5
6	60	77.5	60	70	62.5	82.5	65	77.5
7	50	62.5	47.5	57.5	50	65	47.5	62.5
8	52.5	65	50	62.5	52.5	67.5	52.5	65
9	72.5	85	72.5	82.5	80	92.5	75	87.5
10	47.5	65	42.5	57.5	57.5	67.5	52.5	62.5
11	57.5	72.5	57.5	67.5	70	82.5	62.5	75
12	75	87.5	72.5	82.5	77.5	92.5	75	87.5
13	57.5	67.5	65	72.5	62.5	80	60	77.5
14	62.5	72.5	67.5	80	67.5	82.5	67.5	80
15	62.5	72.5	72.5	82.5	67.5	82.5	70	80
16	72.5	82.5	72.5	85	77.5	92.5	75	87.5
17	60	67.5	60	70	62.5	72.5	60	70
18	60	70	57.5	67.5	65	75	62.5	72.5
19	75	87.5	72.5	87.5	77.5	92.5	77.5	87.5
20	60	75	60	72.5	67.5	82.5	62.5	75
21	55	65	57.5	67.5	57.5	72.5	62.5	67.5
22	60	70	62.5	75	60	77.5	60	75
	P Value: 1.57001E-15		P Value: 8.39306E-17		P Value: 2.71954E-16		P Value: 1.76606E-15	

T-tests for Pre-intermediate Class Level

No.	Listening Tasks 1	Listening Tasks 2	Speaking Tasks 1	Speaking Task 2	Reading Tasks 1	Reading Task 2	Writing Tasks 1	Writing Task 2
1	62.5	70	57.5	62.5	70	77.5	62.5	67.5
2	65	70	62.5	77.5	65	75	67.5	80
3	65	72.5	62.5	72.5	67.5	80	62.5	77.5
4	60	72.5	45	62.5	62.5	70	55	65
5	65	72.5	60	60	62.5	75	57.5	65
6	60	77.5	57.5	70	65	75	57.5	70
7	70	82.5	60	70	72.5	87.5	67.5	72.5
8	65	72.5	70	75	72.5	80	67.5	82.5
9	72.5	87.5	70	77.5	77.5	87.5	70	77.5
10	60	67.5	52.5	57.5	65	72.5	52.5	62.5
11	65	77.5	67.5	75	67.5	82.5	62.5	70
12	57.5	62.5	57.5	62.5	62.5	70	55	60
13	75	87.5	70	77.5	72.5	82.5	60	72.5
14	65	72.5	65	70	70	77.5	67.5	77.5
15	50	60	42.5	52.5	55	62.5	45	57.5
16	65	75	65	77.5	70	75	60	65
17	75	85	62.5	75	72.5	80	62.5	75
18	57.5	60	52.5	62.5	62.5	65	55	60
19	42.5	55	47.5	62.5	52.5	60	45	57.5
	P Value: 1.60539E-09		P Value: 4.85652E-08		P Value: 3.09309E-10		P Value: 7.01439E-10	

T-tests for Intermediate Class Level

No.	Listening Tasks 1	Listening Tasks 2	Speaking Tasks 1	Speaking Task 2	Reading Tasks 1	Reading Task 2	Writing Tasks 1	Writing Task 2
1	67.5	72.5	60	72.5	67.5	67.5	60	65
2	65	72.5	67.5	77.5	65	80	62.5	72.5
3	77.5	80	62.5	67.5	70	77.5	65	80
4	50	57.5	60	62.5	52.5	60	55	60
5	65	75	62.5	72.5	62.5	72.5	57.5	67.5
6	62.5	75	62.5	75	65	75	52.5	62.5
7	62.5	80	57.5	67.5	55	72.5	57.5	72.5
8	62.5	72.5	72.5	82.5	67.5	75	62.5	75
9	72.5	77.5	72.5	80	62.5	72.5	62.5	67.5
10	57.5	65	52.5	57.5	50	57.5	52.5	57.5
11	62.5	77.5	60	60	67.5	67.5	60	67.5
12	60	70	67.5	72.5	70	75	67.5	75
13	67.5	75	60	67.5	60	72.5	57.5	65
14	77.5	82.5	70	80	72.5	85	75	82.5
15	75	85	72.5	85	70	85	65	82.5
16	60	67.5	57.5	67.5	70	70	62.5	67.5
17	52.5	62.5	60	70	57.5	67.5	60	72.5
18	65	67.5	57.5	72.5	62.5	67.5	57.5	60
19	60	72.5	67.5	72.5	67.5	72.5	67.5	75
20	57.5	65	60	72.5	60	70	60	67.5
	P Value: 5.00659E-09		P Value: 5.00659E-09		P Value: 3.81824E-07		P Value: 7.94244E-09	

Appendix G
Samples of Verbal Reports during Tasks 1 and Tasks 2 across the Four Language Skills

Verbal Report (PS11): Task 1 in Reading	Verbal Report (PS11): Task 2 in Reading
I read all of these ones (information about the people) and then I read about the places and then think about how to match them together. But it will take a very long time to match them	*I highlight the key words like this (with coloured highlighter)in each description like for Marco her he likes science so the best place for him would be this one (Think Tank) it is all about history of steam engines it is a museum. I don't know the meanings of all the words but I can guess from the whole reading text what some of them mean.*

Verbal Report (IS4): Task 1 in Listening	Verbal Report (IS4): Tasks 2 in Listening
I don't know...I didn't hear very well...her speaking is very very fast for me...I only understand a few words... even in the second time, nothing...I don't know what I am doing really I just answer the questions like that.	*The words that I did not catch the first time, I concentrate and wait for them in the next listening because I know exactly when they are coming....like...(word) so I used selective listening. I didn't hear it in the beginning but then I did. In this question I decided to predict based on my knowledge. I could guess some of the words like here I knew he was going to say (word) and he did you can tell from what he is talking about. I think I did well in that task because I used all of these steps. It felt quite easy.*

Verbal Report (ES8): Task 1 in Speaking	Verbal Report (ES8): Task 2 in Speaking
I don't know how to say this thing here in the picture. I will wait for my friend to say something maybe I will understand what he will be saying.	*I would use gesture if I want my friend to understand me because I don't know the meaning of all these things in the picture. I can use other words with very similar words I know. I also need to activate my background knowledge. Sometimes I can guess what my friend wants to say and I ask my friend about what he thinks about something in the picture so that we can share our opinions.*

Verbal Report (IS3): Task 1 in Writing	Verbal Report (IS3): Task 2 in Writing
I think about many words I know and sentence grammar although I know that I am always making mistakes but I don't know until after I finish and hand in my work	*I first identify the purpose so I know what type of words to use formal or informal. I then start planning my writing by dividing the writing piece into parts introduction and the main part and the conclusion. I use synonyms for the words I don't know. Like here I want to write that in our Eid festival we have to buy sheep and*

Appendix H
Student Post-SBI Semi-Structured Interview for Phase Four

Dear student, the following is a post-SBI interview for which your participation and truthful answers will be highly appreciated. The interview is of three main parts. I will explain the purpose of each part before I begin to ask the questions.

I am going to start with some questions about the SBI Course in general and about the impact it has had on you as an English language learner...

1. Has the SBI course changed you as a learner? How/in what way?
2. What effect has the knowledge of LLS had on you as a learner?
3. Has the SBI course changed your view of what roles the teacher and the learner should have in class? How?

Now, I am going to move on to some questions which are more specific when it comes to your use of LLS...

4. Do you believe you are capable of using LLS?
5. Do you use LLS consciously or subconsciously? In other words, are you always aware of yourself when using LLS?
6. Do you always remember to use LLS when you need them?
7. Can you evaluate how effective a strategy is for you? What do you do if it does not work out for you?
8. Can you use more than one strategy to help you complete the same task?
9. Are you able to use the strategies you have learned with different tasks?
10. What do you do when you are given a very challenging task in class?
11. What do you do when faced with a very challenging task outside of class?
12. In which situations do you see yourself using LLS?
13. Where do you tend to use them more, inside or outside the classroom?
14. Do you think your level of language proficiency has an effect on how frequently you use LLS? Why? /With which language level do you see yourself using them the most?
15. With which language level do you see yourself using them the most?
16. In developing which skill have you used LLS the most?

The next set of questions is to do with the effect strategy use has had on you as an English language learner...

17. How much do LLS boost your effort to learn English?
18. Do you think LLS have an effect on your performance? How?
19. Which of the four skills has LLS helped you improve the most?
20. What have LLS enabled you to do? /In what way have LLS helped you?
21. Out of all the LLS you learned to use which are the ones that make you feel independent in your learning. Can you provide some examples?

I would like to conclude with a question about the SBI Course...

22. What sort of overall impact has the SBI course had on you? And would you recommend it to someone else learning English?

Arabic Version of the Student Post-SBI Semi-Structured Interview for Phase Four

سأبدأ بطرح بعض الأسئلة عن برنامج SBI بشكل عام وعن التأثير الذي كان له عليك كمتعلم لغة إنجليزية...

1- هل غيرك برنامج SBI كمتعلم؟ كيف ؟ وبأي شكل

2- ما تأثير معلوماتك عن إستراتيجيات التعلم, عليك كمتعلم؟

3- هل غير البرنامج رأيك عن أدوار المعلم والمتعلم في الفصل؟ كيف؟

والأن سأطرح أسئلة متعلقة باستخدامك لإستراتيجيات التعلم...

4- هل ترى أنك متمكن من إستراتيجيات التعلم؟

5- هل تستخدم إستراتيجيات التعلم بإرادة منك أو تلقائيا؟ بمعنى هل أنت مدرك لنفسك عند إستخدامها

6- هل دائما تتذكر أن تستخدم إستراتيجيات التعلم كلما احتجتها؟

7- هل تستطيع أن تقيم مدى تأثر الإستراتيجيات عليك؟ ماذا تفعل إذا لم تنجح؟

8- هل يمكن أن تستخدم أكثر من إستراتيجية لإكمال نفس التمرين اللغوي؟

9- هل يمكن أن تستخدم الإستراتيجيات التي تعلمتها مع تمرينات مختلفة؟

10- ماذا تفعل إذا كلفت بتمرين لغوي صعب في الفصل؟

11- ماذا تفعل إذا واجهتك مهمة لغوية صعبة خارج الفصل؟

12- في أي الحالات تستخدم إستراتيجيات التعلم؟

13- متى تستخدمها أكثر, داخل الفصل أو خارجه؟

14- هل تعتقد أن مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية له تأثير على مدى إستخدامك لها؟ لماذا؟

15- في أي مستوى ستستخدمها أكثر؟

16- في تطوير أي مهارة أستخدمت إستراتيجيات التعلم أكثر؟

الأسئلة التالية تتعلق بتأثير إستراتيجيات التعلم عليك كمتعلم...

17- إلى أي مدى تزيد إستراتيجيات التعلم من مجهودك في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟

18- هل لها تأثير على أدائك؟ كيف؟

19- أي المهارات اللغوية الأربعة تحسنت بعد إستخدامك لإستراتيجيات التعلم؟

20- ماذا مكنتك الإستراتيجيات أن تعمل؟ كيف ساعدتك؟

21- من بين كل الإستراتيجيات التي تعلمتها, أيهم جعلتك تشعر بالإستقلالية؟ هل بالإمكان إعطاء مثال؟

أريد أن أختم بسؤال يخص برنامج SBI بشكل عام...

22- ما هو تأثير البرنامج العام عليك؟ وهل تنصح به أخرين يتعلمون اللغة الأنجليزية؟

I am going to start with some questions about the SBI Course in general and what sort of impact it has had on you as an English language learner…

1. Has the SBI course changed you as a learner? How/in what way?

   Yes, it has in many ways. First in this course I learned a lot about strategies. In the past I did not know anything about strategies. Now I know their names, their types and what they can do for me. The tasks that I did have shown me that sometimes I am using strategies I just don't know it. I learned that when I use them they make the task easier for me.

2. What effect has the knowledge of LLS had on you as a learner?

   Using strategies has made me realize that there is a way to learn English even if my teacher is not there.

3. Has the SBI course changed your view of what roles the teacher and the learner should have in class? How?

   In the past our teachers used to always tell us that the learner has the biggest role in the learning experience…I never used to believe them…I thought it was the other way round and the teacher had the biggest role. Now that I have learned how to use strategies, I think I know what they mean.

   Now, I am going to move on to some questions which are more specific when it comes to your use of LLS…

4. Do you believe you are capable of using LLS?

   Yes, I can use them very well.

5. Do you use LLS consciously or subconsciously? In other words, are you always aware of yourself when using LLS?

   Before course, I don't know the name of this one or that one for example, cognitive strategies or …or…memory strategies…. but now I have learned all the names and …and I know which one to use.

6. Do you always remember to use LLS when you need them?

   *Not all the time. Sometimes yes and sometimes no I **don't** remember to use them. **But if I am stuck and a task is really difficult for me I try to remember the ones we learnt in class.***

7. Can you evaluate how effective a strategy is for you? What do you do if it does not work out for you?

   *Yes…yes…if I can do the exercise and find solutions and answer the questions it means the strategy is a good and effective…if this one is not good I try another one **if I can remember it.***

8. Can you use more than one strategy to help you complete the same task?

   Yes, I can do that. For example for listening, first I set a purpose for my listening before I begin the exercise and also I try to activate my background knowledge and also I make prediction and guessing. So I can use all of these together.

9. Are you able to use the strategies you have learned with different tasks?

   Yes I think many of them work very well with different tasks like making inferences I can use it with reading and with listening as well.

10. What do you do when you are given a very challenging task in class?

    Before, I mean before I learnt how to use strategies I would ask my teacher straight away. Now I know that I can ask my classmates because you can learn many things from each other and we can check

11. What do you do when faced with a very challenging task outside of class?

    I think any task I will have will be in speaking because at my work I have some people who are not Arabic and I always wish I can talk with them in English. So if I don't understand I can guessing what they mean or if they don't understand me I can use my face and hands and maybe other words with similar meanings.

12. In which situations do you see yourself using LLS?

    At work and her in the classroom. And sometimes on the internet when I chat with some of my friends.

13. Where do you tend to use them more, inside or outside the classroom?

    I think here more inside the classroom.

14. Do you think your level of language proficiency has an effect on how frequently you use LLS? Why?

    I don't think my level of English is important about using strategies.

15. With which language level do you see yourself using them the most?

    *It is not any difference. I can use them if I am **a** beginner or if I am intermediate, it doesn't matter.*

16. In developing which skill have you used LLS the most?

    I used to be very weak in writing so I think I tried to use many strategies when I did any writing tasks.

    The next set of questions is to do with the effect strategy use has had on you as an English language learner…

17. How much do LLS boost your effort to learn English?

    Yes, I do think that my efforts to learn have increased in this course because I am trying very hard and doing my best to use all the different strategies that we learned.

18. Do you think LLS have an effect on your performance? How?

    Yes, I think so. I can feel that I'm getting better in speaking, in writing, listening yes I think I have improved and I am organised and I know what I want to do. Also when I don't use any strategy, I don't think about my learning but when I do use strategy I think about my learning and what is the best way to do the tasks so I think that is why my performance is better.

19. Which of the four skills has LLS helped you improve the most?

    I think my writing and also maybe my listening. But the most is writing skill.

20. What have LLS enabled you to do? /In what way have LLS helped you?

    Using strategies has helped me become very organised especially in writing. My writing skill has improved because I know how to use planning and….. now I can also evaluate my work and use some of the marking techniques you and my other teacher use with us. I can use it on my own writing.

21. Out of all the LLS you learned to use which are the ones that make you feel independent in your learning. Can you provide some examples?

    I think metacognitive strategies like setting my goals and planning for the task and then I go through what I wrote and evaluate my work if I am happy with it fine if I am not I see where I can make it better and how.

    I would like to conclude with a question about the SBI Course…

22. What sort of overall impact has the SBI course left on you? And would you recommend it to someone else learning English?

    *This course was very useful for me. I think…I thought it was going to be boring or difficult but no actually it was different but I enjoyed it. I would tell my friends at my work about it and also my sister; she is learning English. **She** is pre-intermediate level. I think know**ing** about strategies and how to use them is helpful and also easy.*

Appendix J
Post-SBI Questionnaire

Dear student, the following is a post-SBI questionnaire for which your participation and truthful answers will be highly appreciated. There are three main parts to the questionnaire. The purpose of each part is stated before each set of questions. Please read the statements carefully and circle the letter of the statement that best applies to you. There are no right or wrong answers to the questionnaire. Should you have any queries about the wording or meaning of any of the statements, please ask and I shall do my best to help.

Please note that your identity will not be disclosed and any information submitted will be kept confidential. Subsequently, any published information resulting from this research shall not include personal details that can be used to reveal your identify. Your participation in the research is valued and appreciated.

Thank you for your participation.

Questions 1-4 and 24-25 aim to measure the overall impact of SBI (used as an introduction and conclusion to the questionnaire)

(1) The SBI course has...

a. broadened my knowledge of LLS
b. not broadened my knowledge of LLS
c. given me the opportunity to practise with a wide range of LLS
d. not given me the opportunity to practise with a wide range of LLS
e. made me aware that I am already using LLS
f. made me aware that I am not using LLS at all

(2) My knowledge of LLS has...

a. not made a difference in my language learning experience
b. supported and facilitated my language learning

(3) The SBI course has...   .

a. completely changed my view of the learner and teacher roles
b. partly changed my view of the learner and teacher roles
c. not changed my view of the learner and teacher roles at all

(4) I believe...

a. the teacher should be the centre of all class activities, making all decisions and controlling all aspects of learning
b. the learner should be the centre of all class activities, making all decisions and controlling all aspects of learning
c. the teacher should act as a guide, facilitator, or demonstrator and the learner takes responsibility for his/her own learning

(24) The overall impact the SBI course has left on me is...

a. a negative impact
b. a positive impact
c. a partly negative and partly positive impact

(25) If asked whether I would recommend the SBI course to other learners, my answer is:

a. yes, I would
b. no, I would not
c. I'm not sure

Questions 5-17 aim to measure the learners' awareness of their strategy use

(5) I describe myself as...

a. unable to use LLS
b. a moderate user of LLS
c. a confident user of LLS

(6) I use LLS...

a. consciously
b. subconsciously
c. both consciously and subconsciously

(7) With English language tasks...

a. I always remember to use LLS when I need them
b. I often remember to use LLS when I need them
c. I never remember to use LLS when I need them

(8) When using a certain strategy with a language task I am...

a. able to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy
b. unable to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy

(9) If one strategy does not work effectively with a language task I am...

a. able to use a different one
b. unable to use a different one

(10) With English language tasks, I am....

a. able to use a combination of strategies(two or more with the same task)
b. unable to use a combination of strategies

(11) I believe I am...

a. able to transfer LLS I know to new tasks
b. unable to transfer LLS I know to new tasks

(12) When given a demanding language task by the teacher, I...

a. enjoy the challenge and immediately call on LLS I know
b. enjoy the challenge but do not think of using LLS
c. give up and call on my teacher's help
d. give up and wait for the teacher to offer help

(13) When faced with a demanding language task outside the classroom, I...

a. enjoy the challenge and immediately call on LLS I know
b. enjoy the challenge but do not think of using LLS
c. give up as I do not enjoy demanding tasks

(14) I use LLS...

a. when doing class work both alone and with colleague
b. when doing homework both alone and with colleagues
c. when travelling
d. when watching TV
e. when listening to the radio

f.   when using the internet
g.   when communicating with speakers of English
h.   only when I am alone
i.   when encouraged by my teacher
j.   with my language classmates
k.   with my language teachers
l.   with my work colleagues
m.   with difficult tasks

(15) I tend to use LLS...

a.   more inside the classroom
b.   more outside the classroom
c.   equally inside and outside the classroom

(16) I would use LLS...

a.   more if I am in elementary level
b.   more if I am in pre-intermediate level
c.   more if I am in intermediate level
d.   if I am in any level

(17) I use LLS the most when developing my...

a.   listening skill
b.   speaking skill
c.   reading skill
d.   writing skill

● Questions 18-23 aim to measure the effect strategy use has on the learners

(18) Using LLS has helped me improve my...

a.   listening skill
b.   speaking skill
c.   reading skill
d.   writing skill

(19) The strategies that make me feel independent the most are...

a.   Memory strategies
b.   Cognitive strategies
c.   Compensation strategies
d.   Meta-cognitive strategies
e.   Affective strategies
f.   Social strategies

(20) Using LLS has...

a.   no effect on my efforts of learning English
b.   some effect on my efforts of learning English
c.   a great effect on my efforts of learning English

(21) Using LLS has...

a.   no effect on my performance in learning English
b.   some effect on my performance in learning English
c.   a great effect on my performance in learning English

(22) Using LLS in various situations has helped me...

a. increase my efforts of learning English
b. improve my performance in learning English
c. feel motivated to learn English
d. feel confident about my language learning
e. feel responsible about my language learning
f. become less reliant on my teacher
g. become more reliant on my peers

 (23) Using different LLS in various situations has helped develop my ability to...

a. identify my needs to learn and use English
b. set myself goals and work towards them
c. create/provide solutions to language problems
d. make my own learning decisions
e. manage and organise my learning
f. create opportunities to learn English
g. exploit available language learning resources
h. monitor and self-evaluate my progress
i. self-assess my work

Arabic Version of the Post-SBI Questionnaire

الإسئلة من 1 – 4 و 24 – 25 يهدف إلى قياس مستوى تأثير برنامج SBI.

(1)   برنامج SBI فيه...
• توسيع معرفتي بالإستراتيجيات
• لم يوسع معرفتي بالإستراتيجيات
• أعطاني فرصة للممارسة مع عدد من الإستراتيجيات
• لم يعطيني فرصة للممارسة مع عدد من الإستراتيجيات
• جعلني أكتشف أنني أستعمل الأستراتيجيات
• جعلني أكتشف أنني لا أستعمل الأستراتيجيات

(2)   معرفتي بالإستراتيجيات
• لم يغير في تجربتي في تعلم اللغة
• دعم وسهل عملية تعلم اللغة

(3)   برنامج SBI ....
• غير وجهة نظري بالكامل بخصوص المتعلم ودور المعلم
• غير وجهة نظري جزئيا بخصوص المتعلم ودور المعلم
• لم يغير وجهة نظري بخصوص المتعلم ودور المعلم

(4)   أنا أؤمن أن....
• المعلم يجب أن يكون هو المركز في كل التدريبات بالفصل, يتخذ كل القرارات ويتحكم بكل جوانب التعلم
• المتعلم يجب أن يكون هو المركز في كل التدريبات بالفصل, يتّخذ كل القرارات ويتحكم بكل جوانب التعلم
• المعلم يجب أن يكون كالدليل, مسهل, والمتعلم يتحمل المسؤلية بخصوص عملية التعلم

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(24) التأثير العام لبرنامج SBI ترك بي.
- تأثير إيجابي
- تأثير سلبي
- تأثير جزئي إيجابي وسلبي

(25) إذا ما سؤلت هل تنصح باستخدام برنامج SBI لمتعلمين أخريين, إجابتي ستكون:

- نعم
- لا
- لست، متأكد

الأسئلة 5 – 7 تهدف إلى قياس قدرة المتعلمين بالإحساس باستخدام إستراتيجياتهم

(5) أصف نفسي....
- غير قادر على إستعمال الإستراتيجيات
- متوسط الإستعمال
- واثق من إستعمالها

(6) أنا أستخدم الإستراتيجيات....
- بوعي
- لاشعوريا
- بوعي ولاشعوريا

(7) مع مهام اللغة الإنجليزية
- أتذكر دائما أن أستعمل الإستراتيجيات عند الحاجة
- كثيرا ما أتذكر أن أستعمل الإستراتيجيات عند الحاجة
- لا أتذكر أن أستعملها حتى عند الحاجة لها

(8) عند إستعمال إستراتيجية محددة مع مهمة في اللغة
- أستطيع تقييم تأثير الإستراتجية
- لا أستطيع تقييم تأثيرها

(9) إذا فشلت أحد الإستراتيجيات مع أحد مهام اللغة، أنا
- قادر على إستعمال إستراتيجية ثانية
- لا أستطيع إستعمال غيرها

(10) مع مهام اللغة، أنا
- قادر على استخدام مزيج من الاستراتيجيات (اثنين أو أكثر مع نفس المهمة)
- غير قادر على استخدام مزيج من الاستراتيجيات

(11) أنا أؤمن أنني...
- قادر على نقل الإستراتيجيات التي أعرف لمهام جديدة
- غير قادر على نقل الإستراتيجيات التي أعرف لمهام جديدة

(12) عندما اعطى مهمة اللغة من قبل المعلم، أنا ...
- أستمتع بالتحدي وعلى الفور أستخدم الاستراتيجيات التي أعرفها
- أستمتع بالتحدي لكن لا أفكر في إستخدام الإستراتيجيات
- أستسلم وأستعين بالمعلم
- أستسلم وأنتظر المعلم حتى يعرض المساعدة

(13) عندما اواجه مهمة لغة شاقة خارج الفصول الدراسية، أنا
- أستمتع بالتحدي وعلى الفور أستخدم الاستراتيجيات التي أعرفها
- أستمتع بالتحدي لكن لا أفكر في إستخدام الإستراتيجيات
- أستسلم ولا أطلب أي مهمة أخري

(14) أنا أستعمل الإستراتيجيات في...
- الفصل أثناء التمرين لوحدي أو مع زميلي

- اداء الواجب لوحدي أو مع زميلي
- السفر
- الإستماع الي الراديو
- مشاهدة التلفاز
- عند إستعمال الأنترنت
- عند التحدث مع متكلم باللغة الإنجليزية
- عندما أكون وحدي فقط
- عندما يشجعني المعلم
- مع زملائي في الفصل
- مع معلم اللغة الإنجليزية فقط
- مع زملائي في العمل
- مع المهام الصعبة

(15) أنا أقصد إستعمال الإستراتيجيات عندما اكون...
- داخل الفصل أكثر
- خارج الفصل أكثر
- بالتساوي داخل وخارج الفصل

(16) أستعمل الإستراتيجيات ....
- أكثر إذا كنت في المستوي المبتدئي
- أكثر إذا كنت في المستوي المتوسط
- أكثر إذا كنت في المستوي ما قبل المتوسط
- إذا كنت في أي مستوي

(17) أستعمل الإستراتيجيات أكثر عند تطوير ...
- مهارة الاستماع
- مهارة المحادثة
- مهارة الكتابة
- مهارة القراءة

الأسئلة 18 – 23 تهدف الي قياس التأثير الإستراتيجي علي المتعلم

(18) إستعمال الإستراتيجيات ساعدتني علي تطوير ...
- مهارة الإستماع
- مهارة الكتابة
- مهارة القراءة
- مهارة المحادثة

(19) الإستراتيجية التي تجعلني أحس أنني مستقل هي..
- استراتيجيات الذاكرة
- استراتيجيات المعرفية
- إستراتيجيات التعويض
- إستراتيجيات الفوقية المعرفية
- إستراتيجيات العاطفية
- الإستراتيجيات الاجتماعية

(20) إستعمال الإستراتيجيات فيه...
- لا تأثير على جهودي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية
- بعض التأثير على جهودي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية
- تأثير كبير على جهودي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية

(21) إستعمال الإستراتيجيات فيه...
- لا تأثير على أدائي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية

- بعض التأثير على أدائي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية
- تأثير كبير على أدائي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية

(22) إستخدام الإستراتيجيات في عدة مواضع ساعدني على....

- زيادة جهودي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية
- تحسين أدائي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية
- الشعور بدافع لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية
- الشعور بالثقة حول تعلم للغة الإنجليزية
- الشعور بالمسؤولة عن تعلم للغة الإنجليزية
- أصبحت أقل اعتمادا على أستاذي
- أصبحت أكثر اعتمادا على أقراني

(23) إستخدام الإستراتيجيات في مواضع مختلفة ساعدني في تطوير قدرتي على..

- تحديد احتياجاتي للتعلم واستخدام اللغة الإنجليزية
- ضبط الأهداف لنفسي والعمل تجاههم
- إنشاء / توفير حلول لمشاكل اللغة
- أتخاذ قرارات التعلم الخاصة
- إدارة وتنظيم تعلمي
- خلق فرص لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية
- استغلال الموارد المتاحة لتعلم اللغة
- رصد وتقييم تقدمي
- تقييم عملي الذاتي

Appendix K

Results of Post-SBI Questionnaire across the three Learner Levels

Questionnaire Parts and Questions	Class Level			All Three Levels Total (59 Ss)
	Elementary (20 Ss)	Pre-Intermediate (19 Ss)	Intermediate (20 Ss)	
Part One				
(1) The SBI course has…				
a. broadened my knowledge of LLS	20	19	20	59
b. not broadened my knowledge of LLS	0	0	0	0
c. given me the opportunity to practise with a wide range of LLS	20	19	20	59
d. not given me the opportunity to practise with a wide range of LLS	0	0	0	0
e. made me aware that I am already using LLS	20	19	20	59
f. made me aware that I am not using LLS at all	0	0	0	0
(2) My knowledge of LLS has…				
a. not made a difference in my language learning experience	0	0	0	0
b. supported and facilitated my language learning	20	19	20	59
(3) The SBI course has…				
a. completely changed my view of the learner and teacher roles	13	14	12	39
b. partly changed my view of the learner and teacher roles	6	5	6	17
c. not changed my view of the learner and teacher roles at all	1	0	2	3
(4) I believe…				
a. the teacher should be the centre of all class activities, making all decisions and controlling all aspects of learning	1	0	0	1
b. the learner should be the centre of all class activities, making all decisions and controlling all aspects of learning	0	0	0	0

	58	20	19	19
c. the teacher should act as a guide, facilitator, or demonstrator and the learner takes responsibility for his/her own learning			19	
(24) The overall impact the SBI course has left on me is...				
a. a negative impact	0	0	0	0
b. a positive impact	53	19	16	18
c. a partly negative and partly positive impact	6	1	3	2
(25) If asked whether I would recommend the SBI course to other learners, my answer is:				
a. yes, I would	51	19	15	17
b. no, I would not	0	0	0	0
c. I'm not sure	8	1	4	3
Part Two				
(5) I describe myself as...				
a. unable to use LLS	0	0	0	0
b. a moderate user of LLS	27	8	10	9
c. a confident user of LLS	32	12	9	11
(6) I use LLS...				
a. consciously	43	14	16	13
b. subconsciously	4	2	0	2
c. both consciously and subconsciously	12	4	3	5
(7) With English language tasks...				
a. I always remember to use LLS when I need them	27	10	7	10
b. I often remember to use LLS when I need them	25	9	10	6
c. I never remember to use LLS when I need them	7	1	2	4
(8) When using a certain strategy with a language task I am...				
a. able to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy	53	20	17	16
b. unable to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy	6	0	2	4

(9) If one strategy does not work effectively with a language task I am...				
a. able to use a different one	17	18	18	**53**
b. unable to use a different one	3	1	2	**6**
(10) With English language tasks, I am...				
a. able to use a combination of strategies (two or more with the same task)	16	17	19	**52**
b. unable to use a combination of strategies	4	2	1	**7**
(11) I believe I am...				
a. able to transfer LLS I know to new tasks	17	16	18	**51**
b. unable to transfer LLS I know to new tasks	3	3	2	**8**
(12) When given a demanding language task by the teacher, I...				
a. enjoy the challenge and immediately call on LLS I know	12	16	15	**43**
b. enjoy the challenge but do not think of using LLS	4	2	1	**7**
c. give up and call on my teacher's help	3	1	3	**7**
d. give up and wait for the teacher to offer help	1	0	1	**2**
(13) When faced with a demanding language task outside the classroom, I...				
a. enjoy the challenge and immediately call on LLS I know	13	16	16	**45**
b. enjoy the challenge but do not think of using LLS	4	2	1	**7**
c. give up as I do not enjoy demanding tasks	3	1	3	**7**
(14) I use LLS...				
a. when doing class work both alone and with colleagues	18	17	18	**53**
b. when doing homework both alone and with colleagues	15	13	17	**45**
c. when travelling	5	7	4	**16**
d. when watching TV	8	12	7	**27**
e. when listening to the radio	5	4	4	**13**
f. when using the internet	11	9	7	**27**
g. when communicating with speakers of English	9	9	6	**24**

h. only when I am alone	5	7	4	**16**
i. when encouraged by my teacher	17	18	18	**53**
j. with my language classmates	15	12	16	**43**
k. with my language teachers	16	15	12	**43**
l. with my work colleagues	6	7	2	**15**
m. with difficult tasks	16	18	19	**53**
(15) I tend to use LLS…				
a. more inside the classroom	11	9	14	**34**
b. more outside the classroom	5	3	3	**11**
c. equally inside and outside the classroom	4	7	3	**14**
(16) I would use LLS…				
a. more if I am in elementary level	5	3	3	**11**
b. more if I am in pre-intermediate level	1	3	0	**4**
c. more if I am in intermediate level	3	6	5	**14**
d. if I am in any level	11	7	12	**30**
(17) I use LLS the most when developing my…				
a. listening skill	15	14	17	**46**
b. speaking skill	13	13	14	**40**
c. reading skill	16	11	13	**40**
d. writing skill	12	13	16	**41**

Part Three				
(18) Using LLS has helped me improve my…				
a. listening skill	12	16	18	46
b. speaking skill	10	13	14	37
c. reading skill	16	10	12	38
d. writing skill	11	15	18	44
(19) The strategies that make me feel independent the most are…				
a. Memory strategies	10	8	12	30
b. Cognitive strategies	14	13	12	39
c. Compensation strategies	8	7	6	21
d. Meta-cognitive strategies	17	19	20	56
e. Affective strategies	6	5	5	16
f. Social strategies	10	7	9	26
(20) Using LLS has…				
a. no effect on my efforts of learning English	2	3	0	5
b. some effect on my efforts of learning English	8	6	4	18
c. a great effect on my efforts of learning English	10	10	16	36
(21) Using LLS has…				
a. no effect on my performance in learning English	0	0	0	0
b. some effect on my performance in learning English	11	5	7	23
c. a great effect on my performance in learning English	9	14	13	36
(22) Using LLS in various situations has helped me…				
a. increase my efforts of learning English	18	16	20	54
b. improve my performance in learning English	20	19	20	59
c. feel motivated to learn English	14	13	15	42
d. feel confident about my language learning	16	17	14	47
e. feel responsible about my language learning	17	19	20	56
f. become less reliant on my teacher	16	18	18	52
g. become less reliant on my peers	16	15	16	47
(23) Using different LLS in various situations has helped develop my				

ability to...				
a. identify my needs to learn and use English	19	19	17	55
b. set myself goals and work towards them	20	18	19	57
c. create/provide solutions to language problems	20	19	18	57
d. make my own learning decisions	17	17	19	53
e. manage and organise my learning	17	19	20	56
f. create opportunities to learn English	14	16	13	43
g. exploit available language learning resources	15	14	10	39
h. monitor and self-evaluate my progress	16	16	14	46
i. self-assess my work	14	15	12	41

Appendix L
Teacher Pre-SBI Interview

Dear teacher,

My name is Fatma Abdullah Tarhuni. I am a research student at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK. I am conducting a PhD research study about the impact of strategies-based instruction (SBI) on Libyan EFL learners. This is a learner-centred instructional programme that is integrated with the original language course we will be delivering here at the institution. As you and I will be co-teaching in this language course, I would like to invite you to kindly participate in this study as a co-researcher working within a collaborative action research (CAR) framework.

I believe that the teacher is a main agent in implementing SBI and that his/her understanding and acceptance of the changes brought with this instructional approach is significant. I also believe that the teacher could provide valuable information for this study. Therefore, I would like to invite you to kindly participate in a 'Pre-SBI interview' (attached below) and 'Post-SBI interview' which will be administrated at the end of the course. The data you provide will be of great value and will support this study to achieve the research aims and address the three research questions:

- Can SBI enhance students' *efforts* and help improve their *performance* in language tasks?
- Can SBI encourage learners to take responsibility for their own language learning and contribute to the development of learner autonomy?
- Can SBI help promote professional development and role change of language teachers?

Dear teacher, it is important you understand that:

- Your participation is voluntarily; so you can withdraw at any time or withhold any information you choose.
- Your information will be kept strictly confidential.
- Your identity will be anonymous through the use of Pseudonyms
- Your participation will involve attending preparation sessions to enable you to help deliver the SBI programme and familiarise you with data collection tools to be used.
- As co-researcher a brief summary of the findings of the study will be given to you if you are interested.
- The data collected during this study would only be used for research purposes (my PhD thesis, potential conference papers and presentations and other research publications).
- If you need any more explanations, you can contact me on my Mobile No/e-mail address provided at any time (please see last page of the pre-SBI interview).

Please read this checklist and tick the boxes that apply to you:

I certify that I have been invited to participate in the research conducted by Fatma Abdullah Tarhuni at Sheffield Hallam University in which she is investigating the impact of strategies-based instruction on Libyan adult learners of English. ☐

I certify that Fatma has informed me of the research process and the aims of the research. ☐

I understand that Fatma will provide teacher preparation sessions before the start of the course and throughout the period of the course. ☐

I understand that I will be playing the role of co-researcher gathering data about the learners through the use of several research instruments. ☐

I understand that I will assist in the delivery of the SBI programme in addition to my original role as a co-teacher on this language course. ☐

I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that my withdrawal will not put me at risk in any way. ☐

I understand that I can contact Fatma for any queries or complaints at any time during the preparation time and delivery of SBI either face-to-face or by phone or e-mail. ☐

I understand that the information I may provide will be kept confidential. ☐

I understand that I will be offered a summary of the research findings. ☐

I certify that I would like to voluntarily participate in this study. ☐

Teacher's name:

Date:

Dear teacher, the following is a pre-SBI interview for which your participation and truthful answers will be highly appreciated.

Teacher Pre-SBI Interview

Instructions:

There are two sets of questions; questions related to language learning strategies and others aimed to prepare the setting for the strategy training and the collaborative action research phase. Some are simple yes/no questions while others are information questions which require a little of your time and reflection. Feel free to elaborate on the yes/no questions. (Please write your answers in a different colour).

Part 1: Language Learning Strategies

1. Have you ever encouraged your students to take responsibility for their own language learning? Yes/ No. What special things do you teach them to achieve that?
2. Do you ask your students to use English outside of the classroom? Yes/No
3. Have you ever asked your students how they figured something out (a difficult task for instance)? Yes/No.
4. Have you ever questioned any of your good students about the success behind their performance? Yes/No.
5. Have you questioned any of the less successful students about the difficulties in performing particular tasks? Yes/ No.
6. How do you deal with reluctant learners?
7. Can you think of reasons to account for your students' success and failure in learning English as a foreign language?
8. What do you do to help your students read in English?
9. What do you do to help them listen in English?

10. What special tactics do you teach your students to help them write in English? What do you do to help them speak in English?
11. When asking your students to perform language tasks in pairs or in a team, what do you notice about their attitude?
    Have you ever read or heard someone talk about language learning strategies? Yes/No.
12. If you had to choose from three different sources of information about language learning strategies LLS, which would you choose?
a. A handout with general information about language learning strategies.
b. A book that describes in great detail LLS; their definitions, classifications and so on.
c. A workshop that provides practical examples as well as the theoretical background of language learning strategies.

Part 2: Strategy Training and Research Methods

1. Have you ever performed any form of action research throughout you career? Yes/No.
2. Are you familiar with any concepts of action research in education? Yes/No
3. Have you collaborated with other teachers to teach shared classes? Yes/No.
4. What in your opinion are some of the benefits gained from teaming with other teachers?
5. Have you ever had an observer in your class? If so, what did you learn from the observer about your teaching?
6. What are possible problems about having an observer in your class?
7. Have *you* intentionally asked a colleague to observe you teach a lesson? Yes/No. What were your reasons for that?
8. Have you participated in successful workshops or teacher training sessions? What do you think made them successful?
9. What kinds of follow-up activities can be useful after a workshop?
10. Have you ever written a teaching journal? If so, what are some of its benefits?
11. Have you ever shared a teaching journal and what are some of the benefits?
12. Would you be prepared to set aside time for journal writing?
13. Have you ever asked your students to keep a learning journal? If so, what are some of the advantages of this technique?
14. Have you ever assembled a teaching portfolio? If so, what were some of the benefits of it?

Thank you for your Participation

Fatma Tarhuni

e-mail: fat_19772000@yahoo.com   Mobile No: …………..

Part 1: Language Learning Strategies

1. Have you ever encouraged your students to take responsibility for their own language learning? Yes/ No. *Yes.* What special things do you teach them to achieve that?
Encourage them to use dictionaries, CD ROMs and provide them with readers.

2. Do you ask your students to use English outside of the classroom? Yes/No
Yes.

3. Have you ever asked your students how they figured something out (a difficult task for instance)? Yes/No.
Yes, I occasionally have short discussions with my students especially during their writing tasks.

4. Have you ever questioned any of your good students about the success behind their performance? Yes/No.
Yes, and would share their ideas with the rest of the class. I once had this student who was excellent in writing and when I asked him where he got all his ideas from, he told me that he had an excellent vocabulary book which he relied on. He would find a page in his vocabulary book related to the topic of writing and try to use as many words and expressions as he could from that page.

5. Have you questioned any of the less successful students about the difficulties in performing particular tasks? Yes/ No.
Yes. I normally talk to my students about the difficulties that they encounter. Together we try to find solutions to most of them.

6. How do you deal with reluctant learners?
First I would try to understand the reason behind the student's reluctance. If it's an issue I can resolve, I will try my best to provide the best learning environment for the student.

7. Can you think of reasons to account for your students' success and failure in learning English as a foreign language?
How successful or unsuccessful a student is all depends on how much effort and motivated the student is. A teacher can do his/ her best in the classroom but if a student doesn't want to learn he won't learn no matter how hard you try.

8. What do you do to help your students read in English?
Provide them with readers and encourage them to guess the meanings of unknown vocabulary items instead of using a dictionary. Also, choosing reading texts which students can relate to or are of interest to the students encourages them to want to read.

9. What do you do to help them listen in English?
Ask them to watch 10 minutes of the news every night for homework and give them a task to complete to check if the really understood what they heard. Bring in songs into the classroom. Students enjoy songs; they can be very motivating.

10. What special tactics do you teach your students to help them write in English?
Always give them a model text and elicit the vocabulary and grammatical phrases needed for the writing activity before asking the students to write.

11. What do you do to help them speak in English?
Put them in pairs or groups. It's very intimidating for students to speak in front of the class.

12. When asking your students to perform language tasks in pairs or in a team, what do you notice about their attitude?
Students are more relaxed. They don't feel too pressured because they know if they don't know the answer to a question or don't understand something they can get help from their classmates.

13. Have you ever read or heard someone talk about language learning strategies? Yes/No.
Yes.

14. If you had to choose from three different sources of information about language learning strategies LLS, which would you choose?
a. A handout with general information about language learning strategies.
b. A book that describes in great detail LLS; their definitions, classifications and so on.
c. A workshop that provides practical examples as well as the theoretical background of language learning strategies. *I would choose this one.*

Part 2: Strategy Training and Research Methods

1. Have you ever performed any form of action research throughout you career? Yes/No.
   Yes, right after I took my CELTA course. I was gathering some data for this paper I was writing.

2. Are you familiar with any concepts of action research in education? Yes/No *Yes. To some extent.*

3. Have you collaborated with other teachers to teach shared classes? Yes/No. *Yes. Many times.*

4. What in your opinion are some of the benefits gained from teaming with other teachers?
   All teachers have their strong points and weak points. When you share a class with another teacher, students will gain from the strengths of each teacher and compensate for any shortcomings experienced throughout their course. The exchange of ideas and opinions between the teachers can be very productive.

5. Have you ever had an observer in your class? If so, what did you learn from the observer about your teaching?
   Yes. I received lots of useful notes and tips about time management and lesson planning.

6. What are possible problems about having an observer in your class?
   The teacher and students can become very nervous. The observer may be very critical which may discourage the teacher.

7. Have *you* intentionally asked a colleague to observe you teach a lesson? Yes/No. What were your reasons for that?
   Yes. Just to get her opinion on my teaching style and possible suggestions.

8. Have you participated in successful workshops or teacher training sessions? What do you think made them successful?

    Yes. I think the careful planning and preparation would be the most important.

9. What kinds of follow-up activities can be useful after a workshop?

    If the workshop or training session is for teachers, it is quite difficult to do any follow-up activities unless they are instant. I mean directly after the workshop unless there is a sequence of sessions. In this case one of them can be for allowing teachers to practically apply in front of the attendants what the presenter is recommending in the workshop.

10. Have you ever written a teaching journal? If so, what are some of its benefits? *No.*

11. Have you ever shared a teaching journal and what are some of the benefits? *No.*

12. Would you be prepared to set aside time for journal writing?

    I would love to but unfortunately don't have the time to.

13. Have you ever asked your students to keep a learning journal? If so, what are some of the advantages of this technique? *No*

14. Have you ever assembled a teaching portfolio? If so, what were some of the benefits of it? *I don't have a portfolio but I do have a number of activities, lesson plans, quizzes and exams I have accumulated since I started teaching on my flash drive.*

Thank you for your Participation

Teacher Post-SBI interview

Dear teacher, the following is a post-SBI interview for which your participation and truthful answers will be highly appreciated.

1. What have you gained from the SBI course both on an *experience* level and an *attitude* level?

2. What did you need more of as a teacher on this programme (support, training, etc.)

3. During the implementation of the programme did you notice any problems that needed to be addressed?

4. Did you think/feel that the SBI interfered or conflicted with the original language course?

5. Do you think the time invested in the preparation sessions was sufficient to enable you to implement this programme successfully?

6. The SBIA model was used in this programme for both instruction and data collection. Did you think the order of the phases was right? Did you think the phases complemented each other well?

7. What would you change about the SBIA model?

8. Do you believe the SBI programme affected the students? How?

9. Did you notice any attitude changes in the students during the programme?

10. What changes would you make to the SBI programme as a whole?

11. Do you think you would continue to use SBI in your next courses? Why?

12. Would you recommend it to other teachers? Why?

13. The programme was implemented within an action research framework. What have you gained from action research both on an *experience* level and an *attitude* level?

14. Do you think you would carry out action research again?

15. Would you recommend it to other teachers?

16. Would you be willing to collaborate with other teachers again?

17. Were your roles during this programme any different from your usual roles as a teacher? How?

Thank you for your Participation

Fatma Tarhuni

Appendix O
Sample of Teacher Post-SBI Interview

1. What have you gained from the SBI course both on an *experience* level and an *attitude* level?

I've learned so much...I've learned all about strategies their types like direct and indirect, their names, how to model them and present them in class. I've learned how to step back and allow the learners to learn on their own and in cooperation with each other. It's because when you give them the tools and teach them how to use them, they can then carry on independently. My confidence as a teacher has grown maybe because I was feeling more sure of myself and confident about what I have to do each time.

2. What did you need more of as a teacher on this programme (support, training, etc.)

I think the support and training we received was good really. I was really happy with it all and as I said I learned so much. I rarely get a chance to attend teaching seminars and conferences about teaching development. So this is a great opportunity; a practical opportunity where I can directly apply new ideas to my own teaching context.

3. During the implementation of the programme did you notice any problems that needed to be addressed?

I think I always had worries about time. At many points and in many of the lessons I would always think that I won't finish according to the planned lesson and this will affect the whole course. But that is probably because I wasn't confident about what I was doing but then that fear started to go away little by little as the course went on. I became more confident about staging the lesson and coordinating the tasks so that they suited the time limits.

4. Did you think/feel that the SBI interfered or conflicted with the original language course?

When we first started the preparation sessions I had fears that it would. But then when we started the actual teaching I saw that it blended quite well with the original course. It felt that it was part of the curriculum all along.

5. Do you think the time invested in the preparation sessions was sufficient to enable you to implement this programme successfully?

Yes, it's good that we did a lot of the prep before the course started; otherwise it would have been very difficult for me. I learned a lot from the preparation sessions because they were mostly hands-on. I think it was important to actually be able to practice teaching the strategies to the students and help in the research methods as well.

6. The SBIA model was used in this programme for both instruction and data collection. Did you think the order of the phases was right? Did you think the phases complemented each other well?

The order was right I think we need to find out about what strategies they already know before training them in any new strategies. They we need to assess what they learned and achieved from phases 1 and 2. So yes I think the order is just fine. Yes, they did.

7. What would you change about the SBIA model?

I don't know. Maybe give more time to phase 2 because this was all about training and the more time you give the students the better, especially for practicing all the different strategies.

8. Do you believe the SBI programme affected the students? How?

Yes, I could see that they were doing better in some of the language tasks. For example, some students' writing became better and by the end of the course they were using most of the strategies to plan and organise their writing tasks. But what stood out for me is that they were day by day becoming more and more independent and responsible about their learning. The more I stood back the more they were doing things on their own. And also very often with each other when they were asking each other questions or peer correcting I believe that this is a really good thing for them even in the future.

9. Did you notice any attitude changes in the students during the programme?

Yes, I could see that the majority of the students were more confident overall. I think it's a normal result of independence. You start to believe in your own abilities. As they were doing more things on their own when they were using many strategies, they were becoming more confident. Also some of them seemed excited when performing certain language activities. And they looked like they were enjoying the tasks more. I hope that they have gone away from the course with this attitude. It's good...yeah..it's good.

10. What changes would you make to the SBI programme as a whole?

I think just do it over a longer period. That way we can integrate more strategies into the course contents and reinforce the ones already presented so they will remember them more.

11. Do you think you would continue to use SBI in your next courses? Why?

I might use some parts of it. Yes, why not. I liked a lot of the strategies that we trained the learners. I thought they were very useful for the students. Yes, I think I will teach them again in future.

12. Would you recommend it to other teachers? Why?

I actually liked it because of its effect on the students...so...erm...I think I would recommend it to my colleagues, yes. But who would train the teachers in SBI. I mean you helped and trained me in the programme but who would I recommend for them. I don't know anybody else except (laughs) you.

13. The programme was implemented within an action research framework. What have you gained from action research both on an *experience* level and an *attitude* level?

I've learned that action research allows you to make a difference in your educational context both on your own and especially with other teachers who have the same educational concerns as you. As for my attitude, it's a nice feeling...It's nice to know that you're not just teaching but researching and making a difference. I think that makes me love teaching even more.

14. Do you think you would carry out action research again?

Oh yes, definitely. If I didn't try it out myself, I would never think of doing action research.

15. Would you recommend it to other teachers?

Yes, I would. I'd be happy to tell all my colleagues about my personal experience with action research and maybe even present a workshop for them if they are interested.

16. Would you be willing to collaborate with other teachers again?

Yes, why not. Collaborative action research was really useful for us both. Don't you think?

17. Were your roles during this programme any different from your usual roles as a teacher? How?

I think I look at the roles I play a bit differently. Although I've always aimed to be less controlling and dominating but I've actually been able to practise that more in this programme. I'm happy that I had the chance to perform all these different roles like trainer and coach and coordinator because they have made me realise that teaching English has more to it than just directing the class or controlling the learning and the learners. Our students can do a lot more than we think they can we just have to give them the choice.

I like that my coordinating skills are a lot clearer to me. Because I'm following the phases of the SBIA model, everything is organised and planned so that we can fit everything into the lessons. I needed to monitor a bit more because I had to see how the students' were doing in the actual language tasks and then what strategies they were using to help perform those tasks. And then if they needed support and coaching I would provide that.

Thank you for your Participation

Student PS3: Post-SBI Interview

First, in this course I learned all about strategies. In the past I did not know anything about them. Now I know their names, their types and what they can do for me. I learned that when I use them they make the task easier for me.

🟥 ... Knowledge of strategies

🟨 ... Appreciation of strategy value

Student IS9: Verbal Report 2

I remember that I try to predict what the speakers might say before I listen...I then used this same strategy in reading...I looked at the title and quickly read the subtitles and tried to guess what sort of words might be used...that was really useful for me it helped me understand the text better and faster. So I used many strategies actually, I guessed intelligently, I monitored my progress. Oh and yes I summarised, as well.

🟦 ...Consciousness of strategy use

⬜ ... Use of Compensation strategies

🟩 ... Use of Metacognitive strategies

🟨 ... Appreciation of strategy value

Student PS11: Verbal Report 1

I can hear that the place is a restaurant...so I know they are talking about food and drinking....I can guess that one of the people is going to order his meal so I try to guess some things he might say...like bread...fish...salad...some water or juice...then in the end he has to pay for the meal so he will ask for the cheque and he will see how much...so they might talk about money.

... Use of Schema

...Use of Compensation strategies: Guessing intelligently

Intermediate class teacher: Post-SBI interview

I've learned so much...I've learned all about strategies their types like direct and indirect, their names, how to model them and present them in class. I've learned how to step back and allow the learners to learn on their own and in cooperation with each other. It's because when you give them the tools and teach them how to use them, they can then carry on independently. My confidence as a teacher has grown maybe because I was feeling more sure of myself and confident about what I have to do each time.

...Change of Attitudes of Teachers

...Change in Teacher Roles and Professionalism

...Fostering Learner Autonomy

...Use of Social Strategies