Indonesian EFL’s Learning Strategies and Personality Types in Achieving TOEFL Score Above 500

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ABSTRACT

There are many English proficiency exams available, including the TOEIC, TOEFL, and IELTS. TOEFL is one of the most well-known English proficiency tests in Indonesia, which is taken for both academic and professional requirements. The average TOEFL score for Indonesian students is still below the global norm of 500. Based on the problems and the difficulties faced by most of Indonesian learners, this study tries to analyze the learning strategies used by learners who successfully achieve TOEFL scores above 500. This study also delves into the learner's personality types in order to understand the characteristics of each type that affected their learning strategy. The 15 participants are randomly selected from Indonesian EFL students between the ages of 20 to 25. The participants must have taken the TOEFL test and received the score above 500. Both quantitative and qualitative writing are used in this study. The quantitative method used in analysing the data collection, the researchers employed descriptive statistic data analysis in Excel to find out the mean. Two different types of instruments were used to collect the data: Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. The result of this study shows; metacognitive strategy as the dominant strategy utilised by the majority of learners and there are 8 personality types such as; ISTJ, INFT, ISFP, INFJ, ENFJ, ESTJ, ESFJ, and ENFT.

1. INTRODUCTION

These days, being fluent in English is essential. A person needs to have strong language skills in order to master a language other than their first language. An individual with excellent language skills is the one who succeeds at using language for a variety purposes, particularly in communication (Faruq et al., 2021; Shanks et al., 2017). Indonesia has a comparatively low level of English proficiency when compared to other countries. According to English Proficiency Index, Indonesia has rank 51 with the score of 51.58. Compared to other countries in Asia, Indonesia has ranks 13 still lower than Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, India, and Hongkong (Rahayu, 2019; Wahyuni & Umam, 2017). There are many English proficiency exams available, including the TOEIC, TOEFL, and IELTS. TOEFL is one of the most well-known English proficiency tests in Indonesia, which is taken for both academic and professional requirements (Kusirini & Amalia, 2021; Supina, 2018). The average TOEFL score for Indonesian students is still below the global norm of 500, according to IIEF (Indonesian International Education Foundation) demographic statistics from 2015 (Munzaki, 2018). According to previous study learners' difficulties in achieving the required TOEFL score, there are number of factors that causes the learners to fail in achieving the minimum score (Rahman et al., 2021). There are; fewer basic skills in...
answering the TOEFL test, less practice before the exam, and the lack of motivation in studying the four skills of TOEFL test such as listening, speaking, reading and writing (Manan et al., 2020; Syakur & Sabat, 2020). The majority of students use techniques including avoiding the challenging material in favour of easy material, concentrating on challenging questions for a long time, and guessing for the correct answer. Language learning strategies are a deliberate action that learners employ when learning a new language to improve their ability to acquire, store, memorize, and utilise material. It is emphasised that learning strategies are actions the learner deliberately selects, and that it is the aspect of choice that provides the strategies significance in the process of acquiring a new language (Fuad et al., 2020; Gilakjani et al., 2016; Prasetya, 2021). It can be asserted that learners employ techniques to speed up learning, making it more self-directed, efficient, and practical for new language material information (Cahyono & Rahayu, 2020; Yuliani & Hartanto, 2022). Researchers should focus on the learning process rather than the final output when examining the steps that the learners take to acquire a language. In addition to teaching methods, learning styles, and strategies, personality factors of the language learner are a significant influence in Second Language Acquisition (Başar, 2020; Gabilin, 2020; Wong, 2020). Individual differences in personality factors can typically be assigned to an unchanging pattern of traits.

Numerous researches have been conducted to examine the personality types and learning strategies of language learners. Several researchers have examined the relationship between language learners' learning strategies and personalities using difference instrument, and the findings indicated a favourable correlation between the two variables (Al-Dail, 2019; Marpaung, D & Widyananto, 2020). Additionally, the researcher in this study focused primarily on the most common learning strategies employed by EFL students who successfully achieved TOEFL scores above 500 as well as their personality types, which varied in characteristics and influenced on how they chose to manage their learning strategies. Based on the problems and the difficulties faces by most of Indonesia learners, this study tries to analyses the learning strategies used by learners who successfully achieve TOEFL scores above 500. This study also delves into the learner's personality types in order to understand the characteristics of each type that affected their learning strategy. This was done since the problem with the learner's motivation in learning and preparation extended beyond the learner's learning strategy.

2. METHOD

The 15 participants are randomly selected from Indonesian EFL students between the ages of 20 to 25. The participants must have taken the TOEFL test and received the score above 500. The researcher reached out the participants via email and other social media platforms such WhatsApp to get their approval before distributing the questionnaires using Google form. Two different types of instruments were used to collect the data: Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Al-Ahdal & Abduh, 2021; Hashim et al., 2018). The measurement of the questionnaire uses five Likert-scale, the scale 1-5: "never or almost never use it", "do not usually use it", "sometimes use it", "usually use it", and "always or almost use it". Myers Briggs Types Indicator (MBTI) questionnaire for the personality types was provided by 16personalities.com. The researcher used this website to avoid the inaccuracy in determining the result of the participant’s personality types. This tool is a Likert-scale questionnaire that summarises participant preferences on a scale of "never or almost never," "do not typically," "very agree," and "strongly disagree."

Both quantitative and qualitative writing are used in this study. The quantitative method used in analysing the data collection, the researchers employed descriptive statistic data analysis in Excel to find out the mean (Creswell, 2013; Setia, 2016). Three different types of mean scores were employed to determine whether students are using a certain technique. (1) The low use of strategy between 1.0 and 2.4, (2) the medium use between 2.5 and 3.4, and (3) the strong use between 3.5 and 5.0. The distinctive and prominent indicators employed by each personality type to get a TOEFL score above 500 are analysed and described using the qualitative method based on MBTI.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The researcher used two instruments which were delivered to the participants through email and WhatsApp in the form of a Google form, to calculate the study's outcome. The first tool is the SILL questionnaire, which offers a total of 35 questions. From the overall statement, the learners chose the metacognitive strategy most frequently. Furthermore, the results indicate that the learners made up 8 of the 16 MBTI personality types. In contrast, the personality types were obtained from the 16 personalities website.
The Learning Strategies Used by the Learners

There are three kinds of categories in determining the range of the learning strategy usage. They are; the low usage with a mean between 1.0 to 2.4, the medium usage with the mean between 2.5 to 3.4, and the high usage with the mean between 3.5 to 5.0. The mean score of language learning strategy is show in Table 1.

Table 1. The Mean Score of Language Learning Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the result on Table 1, all of the learners with the TOEFL score above 500 are in the category of high learning strategies users. The mean score of each indicator; (1) memory strategy with a mean of 3.6, (2) cognitive strategy with a mean of 4.62, (3) compensation strategy with a mean of 4.4, (4) metacognitive strategy with a mean of 4.67, (5) affective strategy with a mean of 4.3, and (6) social strategy with a mean of 4.0. The highest strategy used by the learners is metacognitive strategy with a mean of 4.67. The lowest strategy used by the learners is memory strategy with a mean of 3.6. Both the highest and the lowest strategy are lies in the high usage category between 3.5 to 5.0.

The MBTI Personality Types by the Learners

There are 16 personality types built from each pole of every 4 dichotomies over the other pole in the opposite. The dichotomy is a kind of division with two different components. In the personality type’s theory, the two components are assumed to become aware of contrary domains of the other components attitude or mental functioning. Dichotomous constructs differ qualitatively and quantitatively from continuous variables. There are four dichotomies of MBTI that consist of Extraversion (E) - Introversion (I), Sensing (S) - intuition (N), questioning (T) – Feeling (F), and Judging (J) – Perceiving (P). The percentage of MBTI result is show in Table 2.

Table 2. The Percentage of MBTI Result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator Types</th>
<th>Learners</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISTJ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFJ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISFP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFP</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENFP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTJ</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESFJ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENFJ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the survey result as show in Table 2, the learners made up 8 types from 16 personality types. There are 8 MBTI types that consist of INFJ (5 learners), INFP (3 learners), ISFP (1 learner), ISTJ (1 learner), ENFJ (1 learner), ENFP (1 learner), ESTJ (2 learners), and ESFJ (1 learner).

Discussion

Learners’ MBTI Types

According to the MBTI theory, each person has unique preferences for what they do on the given tasks. Such as how they focus on it, how they decide, how they reach conclusions, and how they approach and respond on it (Supadi et al., 2020; Wisnu Agung Laksono, 2020). Each of type has its own characteristic and uniqueness, but it is also possible for each of them to share the same characteristic because of the same dichotomies they have. In this study, the learners made up 8 from 16 personality types, there are ISTJ, INFJ, ISFP, INFP, ENFP, ESTJ, ESFJ, and ENFJ. Based on the results, there are MBTI characteristics descriptions for each type. The first type is ISTJ. The dominant function on ISTJ is their sensing ability which leads them to act realistic and practical despite of the distraction from their surroundings. ISTJ types also tend to work steadily in many kinds of environment. The second type is INFP with intuition as their dominant ability. INFJ is the visionary which lead them to be future oriented, they love to prepare and plan everything, specifically for their assignments or
works. Next type is ISFP with feelings as their dominant ability. This type is very considerate towards others feelings because of their sensitiveness and peaceful oriented, it leads them to create harmonious environment and avoid disagreements (Majid, 2017; Supadi et al., 2020). Despite of their introverted dichotomy, ISFP tend to follow their surroundings in learning or working on tasks. In accordance with ISFP, the INFP’s dominant ability is feelings. Although ISFP and INFP have the same dominant ability, yet they have different treatments towards others. If ISFP strive to create harmonious environment and try to avoid disagreements, the INFP tend to withdraw themselves from chaotic or problematic situations. INFP loves to work or learn on the given task alone in peaceful environment. The next type is ENFP with intuition as their dominant ability. As the extroverted with dominant intuition, ENFP loves to work and learn in group and using their ability of influencing others that leads them to be likely chosen as group leader. Next is ESTJ, this type has thinking as their dominant ability. ESTJ loves to learn and work in groups with systematic way according to the procedures and plans. ESTJ tend to force their idea towards others in order to complete their goals and stay in plan. The next type is ESFJ with feelings as their dominant ability. In accordance with their extroverted dichotomy, this type loves to work and learn in groups, follows every procedure, and avoid disagreement to create harmonious environment. The last type is ENFJ with feelings as their dominant ability. In accordance with ENFP which loves to influencing others and being a leader in a group, ENFJ tend to learn and work with others because of their catalyst’s characteristic.

The Frequently Used Aspect in Direct Strategies

There are two categories of learning strategies: direct and indirect, based on the results of the data analysis of the learners’ learning strategies. The cognitive strategy is the most prominent one in direct strategies aspect and the second position from all strategies. Each aspect in direct strategies has its unique characteristic. Cognitive strategy is the most important technique to acquire a new language and is typically the most common strategy employed by language learners (Ali & Anwar, 2021; Vieira et al., 2019). This tactic tends to use repetitive tasks and expression analysis to synthesize all of the new lessons that have been learnt. According to the results, MBTI types such INFP, ISFP, ISTJ, ESTJ, ENFJ, and ESFJ are employing this strategy as their main one in direct strategy (DeVries & Beck, 2020; Ma, L., Guo & Fang, 2021). Both INFPs and ISFPs fall under the same category of dominant introversion, with INFPs having the capacity to acquire foreign languages and ISFPs having the capacity to depend on their surroundings. ISTJ falls under the category of dominantly introverted sensing and has a strong work ethic oriented. The next type is ESTJ, which among those with a predominance of extraverted thinking has the highest level of confidence. Both ENFJ and ESFJ fall under the category of dominant extraversion, however ENFJ is more likely to be academically successful while ESFJ is more likely to be a college education major. According to their traits, this type tends to consistently use the same pattern of cognitive methods.

From all the eight types, the cognitive strategies lie on the scale of ‘Sometimes’ and ‘Usually’ using it. The strong indicator in cognitive strategies they used are practicing the skill of listening using English content in social media, speaking skill with chatting with other English users, reading the English content materials for pleasure and writing skill with using the daily English writing content in messages, notes or report.

The Frequently Used Aspect in Indirect Strategies

Metacognitive, affective, and social strategies are three further types of indirect strategies. If mental processing was the focus of direct strategies, broad management of language learning is the main focus of indirect strategies. According to the findings of data analysis, metacognitive strategies take precedence over all other indirect strategies among learners with TOEFL scores above 500. Learners’ self-control in navigating their way through language learning constitutes a metacognitive approach (Chen, 2021; Han & Ellis, 2019).

The learners frequently employ learning strategies like centering, organizing, planning, and assessing. Six MBTI types—INFJ, ISFP, ISTJ, ENFJ, ESTJ, and ESFJ—have metacognitive as their major indirect strategy, according to the results of the data analysis. The percentage of students that use metacognitive strategies varies between “Usually” and “Always or almost always.” Strong indicators for this form of metacognition include using English in a variety of media, paying closer attention to those who speak it so they can comprehend more and advance their skills, and frequently evaluating on their accomplishments in learning the language.

This strategy worked well for INFJ types, with good academic accomplishment and personality type appearing to be the top results of educational research (Chu et al., 2017; Kamara & Dadhabai, 2022). Some characteristics identified, such as being extremely dedicated to accomplishing their goals, thoughtful, and well-organized, led to INFJs using metacognition as their dominant strategy. In contrast, the type such ENFP, which prefers to experiment with new ideas rather sticking to the same routine, this strategy is not a good fit for them because, according to data analysis result, this type uses social strategy as their primary indirect strategy.
4. CONCLUSION

We may conclude that all of the students who successfully achieve a TOEFL score above 500 are the high users of learning strategies based on the results and discussion presented above. When it comes to studying the English language, each personality is distinctive in its own way. The metacognitive strategy, with a mean score of 4.67 and the highest percentage on the scale of "Always or almost always," is the significant strategy employed by the majority of learners. With a scale of "Usually" to "Always or almost always," this strategy is most prevalent in INFI, ISFP, ISTJ, ENFI, ESTJ, and ESFI types. The learners' personality types and learning strategies are all having an impact on their result scores, most of the learners are using both direct and indirect strategies. Each type tends to practice English for their daily activities using the right and suitable method that match with their personality type. For example, the introverted learners love to do listening, reading, speaking, and writing English using social media and other activities that are not require to work in groups. On the other hand, the extroverted learners love to work and learning English using social activity that require a group of people.

5. REFERENCES


