Exploring the English Learning Strategies of an Indigenous Papuan Student of Indonesia

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Abstract

Language learning strategies are crucial for learning English as a foreign language (EFL). This study sought to reveal language learning strategies used by Daniela, an Indigenous Papuan student, in developing her knowledge and skills in English. To gain this objective, a case study (Kohlbacher, 2006) using an in-depth interview was employed. Collected data were qualitatively analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques. Results of data analysis revealed two main categories of learning strategies used by Daniela in solving her learning problems, namely direct and indirect learning strategies. In direct learning strategies Daniela dealt with memory, cognition, and compensation strategies, while in indirect learning strategies she dealt more with metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Apart from these findings, this study also revealed Daniela's performance in English is mostly influenced by her reading hobby, internal motivation, positive attitude towards English, her personality (diligent and independent), and her dream to become a vocational English teacher. Results of this study may be useful for the head of school to encourage English teachers to provide learners with diverse learning tasks to elicit the use of various learning strategies.

Keywords

good language learner, Indigenous Papuan, qualitative case study

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Introduction

English is one of the international communication channels for Indonesian youth to actively interact with people from different ethnic, cultural, political, and socio-economic backgrounds. Mukminin et al.'s (2015) and Jackson and Stockwell's (1996) findings indicated not only that English is no longer spoken by native speakers only but also non-native speakers,and has even been used in foreign countries as major venues such as the news (Ammon, 2001; Seargeant & Erling, 2011).

In Indonesia, English is extensively taught at almost all educational levels and is one of the nationally tested subjects for high school students as it is regarded as one of the most popular foreign languages (Abrar et al., 2018). Despite the marvelous effort of the Indonesian government to encourage students to master English and prepare them to actively participate in the global community (e.g., making English a compulsory subject for students at all levels of secondary schools, making English a compulsory examination subject in national exams), English remains difficult for approximately two thirds of students in Papua, which is located in the eastern part of Indonesia (Indonesian Law No. 20 of on National Education System, 2003; Lauder, 2008). In Indonesia, the low learning achievement of Indigenous Papuan students, including in English, is longstanding (Asaloei et al., 2020; Butarbutar et al., 2019;

Sianturi et al., 2018; Wea et al., 2020; Werang, 2018; Werang et al., 2017, 2019; Zhang & Sheu, 2012). Papua has annually been labelled as the region with the lowest human development index in Indonesia (Sianturi et al., 2018). Although there are many factors predicting the high or low achievement of Papuan students in English, we believe language learning strategies might be one of the most important predicting variables explaining why most Papuan students are always left behind.

This study sought to explore the language learning strategies, used by an Indigenous Papuan student named Daniela (pseudonym), that have allowed her to excel in speaking English more than her peers. We do hope by the end of this article, the readers are able to appreciate one's effort of changing, even if the change seems very small and meaningless. What Daniela did can be nothing special, but her tireless efforts of making herself smart in English should highly be appreciated. Despite the stereotype that the Indigenous Papuan students continue to be underachieving learners (Herzog & Pittman, 1995; Zaini, 2010), Daniela might be a burning candle for the poorer learners in Papua to pass through the powerlessness towards their success.

Many previous studies have dealt with English learning strategies (e.g., Bayuong et al., 2019; Mandasari & Oktaviani, 2018; Nguyen, 2016; Nguyen & Terry, 2017; Ŝafranj, 2013; Sartika et al., 2019), but we are still encouraged to delve deeper into this subject to address the regional demands of having qualified graduates and qualified English speakers alike. No research, to the best of our knowledge, has empirically explored the English learning strategies used by Indigenous Papuan students. Therefore, we believe that the results of this study may contribute to the existing foreign language literature as it relates to an Indigenous Papuan student within the Indonesian school system context. This study was guided by the following two research questions: (a) what language learning strategies do Daniela use to learn English as a foreign language? and (b) how does she deal with all these different strategies for reading the text, listening, and communicating with others both orally and in writing? To explore the topic, we employed a case study approach (Kohlbacher, 2006).

Literature Review

Understanding Language Learning Strategies

Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) necessitates the capacity to communicate English in a clear and inviting manner (Imaniah & Gunawan, 2017). Imaniah and Gunawan (2017, p. 5) further signified the need for a TEFL educator to motivate students to develop their English skills using teaching-learning materials such as course books, audio-visual aids, and other technology tools and of the teaching-learning strategies such as language games, role playing, and informal exercise.

Teaching-learning strategies are linked to student learning activities and as a result, have a significant impact on student learning experiences. To accommodate students' diversity in talents, skills, and learning styles, teaching-learning strategies should include a variety of the entire class, group, and individual activities that allowed each student to actively participate and achieve some level of success (Imaniah & Gunawan, 2017, p. 5). From this perspective, a teacher's role in teaching students' language learning skills is critical in today's society in order to shape them into being more self-reliant and autonomous and devoted to a life-long learning process (Cribb, 2000; Lee & Oxford, 2008).

O'Malley and Chamot (1993) described language learning strategies as the special thoughts or behaviors that language learners use to acquire, learn, understand, retain, and store new information. In a similar vein, Oxford (2017) described language learning strategies as the language learners' conscious steps and behaviors to enhance the language

acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information. Griffiths (2008) described language learning strategies as the "activities consciously chosen by learners for the purpose of regulating their own language learning" (p. 87). Based on these three definitions, a language learning strategy can be simply defined as a language learner's way of obtaining, storing, remembering, and recalling the knowledge they have learnt to establish effective communication with others.

Types of Language Learning Strategies

There are a variety of strategies to learn a language. Cohen and Weaver (1998) posited that strategies may be various in nature, ranging from the planning of one's learning (metacognitive learning strategy) through using mnemonic devices to learn vocabulary (cognitive learning strategy), and rehearsing what one expects to say (performance strategy) to enhance one's confidence for a language task by means of "self-talk" (affective strategy). Based on the existing language literature, Martinez (1996, p. 105) identified four typologies of language learning strategies. The first typology is cognitive strategies. The learner employs cognitive strategies to gain knowledge and understanding of the linguistic system. The cognitive strategies are usually used by a language learner who is having trouble understanding a text and then proceeds to deduce its meaning from the context. Oxford and Nyikos (1989) pointed out some other cognitive strategies that might be used by a language learner as the following: (a) generalizing, (b) making comparisons between languages, (c) making associations between words, (d) practicing, (e) analyzing, and (f) reasoning.

The second typology is metacognitive strategies. This type of language learning strategy is concerned with how to learn or learning to learn. In this sort of language learning strategy, a language learner is aware of and thinking about the learning process as well as planning, monitoring, and self-evaluating. Setting goals and objectives, planning and organizing language tasks, directed attention, and self-management can be categorized under this language learning strategy (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989).

The third typology is social strategies. This type of language learning strategy includes relying on friends for assistance, taking part in group discussions though not completely understanding what is being discussed, and cooperating with others (Fillmore, 1979). The fourth typology is communication strategies. According to Ellis (1985), "communication strategies are psycholinguistic plans which exist as part of the language user's communicative competence" (p. 182). This typology can be applied to language learner practices such as paraphrasing, evading, restructuring, code-switching, literal translating, and repeating (Ellis, 1985). From this perspective, the communication strategies can be used by learners who emotionally plan the messages to be conveyed. The same thing happens when the learners repeat the same words many times before speaking to others or evade expressions that are unfamiliar to them.

Oxford (1990) outlined the numerous sorts of language learning strategies that a learner might utilize to learn a new language as the following. The first is memorization strategies. The memorization strategies help the learner in remembering and storing all the crucial information gleaned from their study, as well as retrieving and transferring knowledge needed for future language use.

The second type of strategy is cognitive. The cognitive strategies are employed to assist the learner in correctly manipulating the target language or activity through reasoning, analyzing, and conclusion drawing. The use of drills to practice the language and the use of dictionary to find difficult words can be categorized under this label.

The third type of strategy is compensation. The compensation strategies assist the learner in compensating for missing information by speaking and writing in the target

language even if his/her vocabulary is limited. This label can be applied to the use of linguistic clues to guess the meaning or the invention of words to be used as a linguistic clue to guess.

The fourth type of strategy is metacognitive. The metacognitive strategies are used to help the learner in coordinating his or her own learning process by centering, arranging, planning, and assessing it. These strategies assist the learner in keeping track of his/her own language progress.

The fifth type is affective strategies. The affective strategies have greatly affected the learner language learning as they help the learner to control his/her own emotions, attitudes, motivations, and values. The learner, for example, may use laughter to relax and praise to reward his/her own achievement.

The sixth is social strategy. The social strategies help the learner to seek opportunities to communicate and work together with peers or other speakers. In such a way he/she practices his/her skills in speaking the target language. Oxford's (1990) language learning strategies are divided into two main classes, direct and indirect strategies, based on their contribution to process of language learning. The memorization, cognitive, and compensation strategies are under the direct learning strategies, while the rest are categorized under the indirect learning strategies (Hardan, 2013, pp. 1721-1722).

What is crucial to notice here is how language learning strategies are interconnected, both direct and indirect, and how they can help one another. For instance, in social language learning strategies (indirect language learning strategies) a student may seek teachers' and peers' assistance, and this experience may be reinforced when the same student employs a cognitive language learning strategy (direct language learning strategies), such as practicing to repeat what he or she has learned, or integrating what has been learnt into a normal discussion with others.

Based on the taxonomy of language learning strategies, Oxford (1990) developed an instrument called Strategies Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to identify which strategies are most used by EFL students. SILL is available in two versions: version 5.1 is for native English speakers learning a second language, and version 7.0 is for non-native English speakers learning English (Russel, 2010). Many studies have used the SILL (e.g., Al-Khaza'leh, 2019; Ang et al., 2017; Hapsari, 2019; Ismail & Al Khatib, 2013; Lestari & Wahyudin, 2020) as a tool to identify which strategies are frequently used by ESL/EFL learners. All these studies have demonstrated that the SILL is the world's most comprehensive tool for determining language learners' strategy preferences (Goh & Foong, 1997; Green & Oxford, 1995).

The Oxford SILL instrument encompassed four language acquisition abilities (listening, reading, speaking, and writing; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989, p. 292) and looked to be the only language learning instrument that had been tested for reliability and validity (Fithriyah et al., 2019). Its validity is shown by high predictive for language proficiency, learning style, and course grade (Oxford, 1996; Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995; Petrogiannis & Gavriillidou, 2015). The reliability of SILL's instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha reported in various previous research conducted in different countries. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient values in many earlier research was determined to be between .90 and .94 (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990; Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995; Wharton, 2000).

Successful Language Learner

Brown (2000) suggested mastering English as a foreign language is mostly dependent on the learner's own efforts to invest time, effort, and attention in learning the target language. Similarly, Oxford (2017) asserted successful language learners employ language

learning strategies that are tailored to their own goals, needs, and learning stage. Oxford's (1990) study found a strong link between language learning strategies and learner's responsibility in their own learning and self-efficacy.

Sewell (2003) believed that the interest in language learning strategies originated from a desire to understand the characteristics of the good language learner. A good language learner tends to use a wider range of strategies in a greater number of situations that makes him/her smarter than others (Rubin, 1975). Rubin (1975, p. 43) further characterized good language learners as the following: (a) capable of making good guesses: a good language learner is not only capable to gather and store the information needed but also is capable of looking for the clues to meaning and is capable of guessing the strategies to get the most information from each sentence; (b) capable of communicating in many ways: a good language learner is sometimes willing to appear foolish in order to communicate and get his/her messages across; (c) capable of tolerating mistakes: a good language learner is not afraid of making mistakes and therefore, can easily tolerate it when others make mistakes; (d) capable of paying attention to communication: a good language learner is very concerned with what others are talking about; (e) capable of regularly practicing the language: a good language learner will always try out his/her knowledge by making up new sentences, and then bringing his/her newly acquired competence into use; (f) capable of monitoring his/her own language use: a good language learner is capable of controlling his/her own talk, and therefore, he/she is able to keep good communication with others; and (g) capable of understanding what they are talking about: a good language learner may be a good listener, and, therefore, he/she is able to understand the content of speaking.

The Role of Researchers

All the researchers are Indonesian and are interested deeply involving themselves in research focused on school management, students' learning styles and strategies, and educational quality. Seli Marlina Radja Leba is the first author. She graduated with a doctorate in English Education from the State University of Malang, East Java, Indonesia. She has experience with research method, including qualitative research methods. By conducting interviews, she assisted with data collection and analysis. She also helped in the creation of the original draft.

The second author is Ranta Butarbutar. She holds a master's degree in English Education from the State University of Makasar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. She has experience in teaching various subjects at the graduate level, including qualitative research methods in education. She assisted with data collection and analysis.

The third author is Basilius Redan Werang. He graduated with a doctorate in Educational Management from the State University of Malang, East Java, Indonesia. He has experience with research methods, including qualitative research method in education. He assisted with data collection, manuscript's review and editing. He also served as the manuscript's corresponding author.

Method

Study Design

This study, in its very nature, is a case study as it sought to have a comprehensive description of an individual matter or case with the purpose to identify variables, structures, forms, and orders of interaction between the participants in the situation (theoretical purpose) to access the performance of work or progress in development (practical purpose; Mesec as

cited in Starman, 2013). Yin (2003) outlined several considerations of using a case study: (a) the objective of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions, (b) the investigators are unable to manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study, (c) the investigators want to cover contextual conditions they believe are relevant to the phenomenon under study, and (d) the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clear.

Case study research is frequently referred to as qualitative study (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2006). According to Duff (2008), the selection of cases in a qualitative case study is more reliant upon how the topic is known, the nature of the case itself, and the philosophy of investigators. From this viewpoint, the investigators' initial knowledge of the topic will determine which case will be studied from among the cases that have been ongoing (Sanjani, 2020).

We employed a case study approach because of the following two considerations: (a) we aimed to explore a current phenomenon in its natural setting, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context were blurred, and (b) we were able to employ a range of data sources to analyze a current phenomenon within its natural setting (Bogdan & Biklen as cited in Werang et al., 2014a, 2014b). The case in this study was the English learning strategies of an Indigenous Papuan student with the State Agricultural Senior High School in Sota, Merauke, Indonesia, as the context of the study.

Participant

As Dörnyei (2007, p. 126) argued qualitative investigation does not care about how representative the informant is, this study solely focused on one informant, Daniela (pseudonym). Daniela is an Indigenous Papuan student with competence in speaking, reading, listening, and writing English. She was 18 years old at the time of data collection. We believe she was able to provide us with a wealth of information about the phenomenon under investigation, allowing us to learn as much as possible (Dörnyei, 2007).

Daniela was recommended by her school principal and English teachers as the participant because she earned the highest grade in her class from the beginning to the end of the semester. Daniela exemplifies a good language learner by using her language to communicate with others and to manage her affective difficulties to achieve a language learning goal (Griffiths & Inceçay, 2016; Oxford, 2003).

Study Site and Procedure

The site of this study is a state agricultural senior high school in Sota, Merauke, Indonesia. This school is categorized as a sub-urban school. We chose this school due to the following two considerations: (a) this sub-urban school is located at the eastern border of Indonesia with Papua New Guinea, approximately 100 kilometers from Merauke; therefore, some students of this school come from our neighboring country, named Papua New Guinea, and (b) we have no special relationships with the head of the school, teachers, or any of the students at this school, so the possibility of bias can be avoided.

We first discussed face-to-face with the school board, the head of the school, and the English teachers about our study plan and the purpose of the study. After approval from the institution review board (IRB) from the school board and the head of the school, the participant was established with the assistance of the head of the school and the English teachers. Having received recommendations from both the head of the school and the English teachers, we then met Daniela personally to get her consent for the study.

We ethically maintained our position at the study site so the participant did not perceive our presence as an intrusion into her life and studies. We wanted to make the

participant feel comfortable during the interviews and willing to give all the information we need authentically and honestly. As the study aimed at finding the central themes in the life world of the participant and understanding the meaning of what the participant said (Kvale, 1996), we wanted to collect and benefit from all the information we got.

Data Collection

To collect data, a qualitative case study was employed as we attempted to investigate an individual circumstance within its real-life context, and we were able to use a variety of data sources. Case study research incorporates multiple sources of data to provide detailed accounts of complex research phenomena in a real-life context (Morgan et al., 2017). In qualitative research, the most common method of data collection is the interview (Sanjani, 2020). The more flexible and less structured nature of qualitative interviews allows researchers to investigate beyond the question guide about issues that emerge during the interview process (Bryman, 2008).

Qualitative case study collects data from a variety of sources which must be triangulated (Yin, 2003). For this study, three techniques of eliciting data were employed in the order the data needed from different sources were sufficiently and adequately gathered. We employed both general and specific interviews. In the general interview, we focused on Daniela's personal details such as identity, learning beliefs and values, learning motivation, and general learning practices to determine the circumstances of the phenomenon. Meanwhile, in the specific interview, we focused on the information about the Daniela's language learning strategies that were imposed throughout the learning process and how she recreated the facts of her events within the context in which it occurred. From this viewpoint, the context was already framed by the language acquisition tools she had chosen and used up to that point.

Following Moustakas's (1994) assertion concerning the types of interviews, in this study we used topical questions and informal interviewing with a general guided interview protocol. We asked Daniela to discuss and share her English learning strategies experience both inside and outside the classroom. Among many, the following are two example questions we asked: Would you like to share with us your experience of practicing English both orally and in writing? What types of learning strategies did you use to enhance your capability of mastering English both inside and outside the classroom? Each interview lasted between 60 minutes and 90 minutes in Daniela's preferred location and time. The entire process of the interviews was recorded using an audio recording device.

The second technique was field observation. The process of looking at and noting details of people, events, routines, settings, and behaviors is defined as observation (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). We employed field observation to obtain data related to how Daniela interacted and communicated with other people in English. We employed this technique for the following three reasons: (a) it had the potential to reach beyond other techniques that rely heavily or entirely on self-report (Morgan et al., 2017), (b) it provided us with the rich related information and the chance to understand routines and aspects of life in verbal, non-verbal, and physical forms (Clark et al., 2009), and (c) it offered a promising approach for us to seek more understandings of the targeted topic within the state agricultural senior high school setting. This technique was also chosen as it provided us the opportunity to triangulate and complement other kinds of data (Simpson & Tuson, 2003). To ensure that each day's observations were documented, we meticulously documented field notes after living at the study site.

The third technique was documentation. The documents we needed for the study included Daniela's English course grade, as well as her academic performance in other

subjects. We needed these documents to determine Daniela's progress in mastering English and other subjects. These written documents were obtained from both the English and classroom teacher with the prior consent from Daniela.

Data Analysis

Hartley (2004, p. 239) asserted qualitative data collection and analysis are developed together in an iterative process. Data for this study were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, as it was meant to determine the presence of certain words, phrases, themes, or concepts within some qualitative data derived from a single person, named Daniela, using several data collection methods (interviews, field observation, and documentation; Kohlbacher, 2006). In qualitative content analysis, it is not about counting or measuring those patterns or wholes in texts, but about demonstrating the various possibilities of interpretation of multiple connotations (Kracauer, 1952, p. 637).

According to Babbie (2001, p. 309), content analysis is basically a coding process (the process of transforming raw data into a standardized form). Ryan and Bernard (2000) viewed coding as the "heart and soul" of text analysis that requires the investigators to make decisions about the meanings of adjacent units. A content analysis was performed to provide the investigators with a subjective interpretation of the content of text data through a systematic coding and pattern identification process (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278).

To obtain information about Daniela's language learning strategies for improving her English proficiency, we used the classification of language learning strategies proposed by Oxford (1990, p. 8) as follows: (a) memory strategies, such as how an Indigenous Papuan named Daniela remembers language; (b) cognitive strategies, such as knowledge acquisition; (c) compensation strategies, such as how Daniela handles her limited knowledge of language; (d) metacognitive strategies, concerning managing the learning process by monitoring self-mistakes, evaluating tasks, and identifying self-preference and need; (e) affective strategies, concerning Daniela's emotions and feelings; and (f) social strategies, concerning learning by communicating with others such as asking questions for clarification and looking for conversation partners.

Obtained data were immediately analyzed after completing the first interview. Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework of qualitative data analysis, which includes three simultaneous stages (data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification), was adopted to analyze data from the interview. In the first stage, we started data analysis with "data reduction" that aimed to select, focus, simplify, abstract, and transform the raw data transcribed from field-notes and the audio recording devices interview (Miles & Huberman, 1994). We coded the data using the classification proposed by Oxford (1990) and the two cycles given by Saldaña (2013) and Miles and Huberman (1994), the first cycle coding and the second cycle coding respectively. In the first cycle coding we adopted "initial coding" (Saldaña, 2013) to identify Daniela's utterances that pointed to distinct strategies she employed to improve her English proficiency. In the second cycle we adopted "pattern coding" (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to organize the data coded in the initial coding into appropriate themes, sub-themes, and components in accordance with the research questions.

In the second stage of data analysis, "data display" which was designed to attain an organized, compressed assembly of information that allows "conclusion drawing" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 1), all different themes produced in the first stage of analysis were compared in a screen to scrutinize the connections between data. Based on this comparison, we then used the higher-level of themes emerged in this stage as the basis for organizing and presenting the findings of the study.

In the third stage of data analysis, "conclusion drawing" and "verification," we first concluded the findings by stepping back to ponder the meaning of the analyzed data and examining their implications for the research questions. To verify the trustworthiness of the study, we employed the strategy of member checking (Creswell, 2007) by presenting the interview transcriptions to the single participant of this study, named Daniela, and eliciting her feedback. The responses provided by Daniela revealed the transcriptions accurately presented her views as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Daniela's Language Learning Strategies

What language learning strategies does Daniela use to learn English as a foreign language?		How does she deal with all these different strategies for reading the text, listening, and communicating with others both orally and in written?	
Theme	Sub-theme	Components	Sub-components
Indirect learning-strategies	1. Metacognitive strategies	a. Centering learning	o Employing high concentration when reading, writing, listening, and speaking
		b. Planning learning	o Considering and selecting English learning materials o Considering and selecting English learning methods
	2. Social strategies	a. Asking for help	o Asking for friends' assistance o Asking for English teachers' assistance
		b. Practicing with the native speaker	o Working as a part-time visitor guide
	3. Affective strategies	a. Encouraging her own self	o Increasing self-confidence o Daring to take practical risk regardless of the possibility of making mistakes
		b. Handling feelings and attitudes about learning	o Minimizing pressures o Dropping her anxiety
Direct learning-strategies	1. Memory strategies	a. Reviewing well	o Reading the text many times o Listening to Western songs o Writing new vocabularies o Pronouncing difficult words many times
		b. Mechanical	o Playing word guessing games with friends

			technique	○ Using a mini dictionary
			c. Putting new words or phrases in context	○ Using a new word or phrase in a meaningful conversation to memorize the new terms that she picked up on her own while playing word guessing with friends
	2. Cognitive strategies	a. Practicing in natural	○ Trying out new vocabulary in actual conversations ○ Sending and receiving messages
		b. Repeating	○ Repeatedly imitating the pronunciation of Western singers ○ Repeatedly reading the past exam materials before giving the answer ○ Repeatedly listening the past exam materials before giving the answer ○ Repeatedly speaking aloud what she has read
		c. Analyzing and reasoning	○ Applying a rigid way of approaching the English expression tasks. ○ Drawing hypotheses about the meaning of expressions ○ Making new expressions
	3. Compensation strategies	a. Finding the similar meaning	○ Making an intelligent guess about the meaning of a tricky word based on context
		b. Overcoming difficulties	○ Imitating the western facial expressions and gestures when speaking or singing ○ Making a short conversation ○ Asking speaker to slow down

Findings

The study focused on the endeavor of disclosing the English language learning strategies used by an Indigenous Papuan student as a good English language learner among her peers. Two research problems guided the study as the following: "What language learning strategies does Daniela use to learn English as a foreign language?" and "How does she deal with all these different strategies for reading the text, listening, and communicating with others both orally and in written?"

The results showed that Daniela has several strategies for reading, writing, speaking, and listening. She got together with a friend to study or simply have some fun. She took advantage of every opportunity to practice English in her regular activities. She usually started by reading English story books she received from her foreign friends on a regular basis or reading a text provided by her English teacher, writing down what she read on her words list, and then saying what she had read out loud from both the story books and the given texts.

As mentioned, we used the classification of language learning strategies proposed by Oxford (1990). Following the Oxford's (1990) classification, we categorized Daniela's language learning strategies into two main themes and six-sub themes. Based on the most common language learning strategy employed by Daniela, Daniela's language learning strategies in enhancing her English proficiency are exposed narratively as the following.

Indirect Language Learning Strategies

The indirect learning strategies that Daniela used are categorized into three sub-strategies, that are metacognitive, affective, and social learning strategies. The significant results on what indirect learning strategy used by Daniela and how she dealt with this strategy in both practicing her English and communicating with others are the following.

Metacognitive Strategies

The study revealed that Daniela did not rely on memory strategy because she learned more effectively when she applied the metacognitive to plan, select strategies, control, and evaluate the progress of her learning. In her endeavors of implementing the metacognitive learning strategies, Daniela used the target language to construct sentences in written form as she was expected to employ higher order thinking skills when answering her English papers.

The results showed that Daniela used two types of metacognitive strategies within her English learning, namely the use of centering learning and the planning of learning. Daniela understood herself very well and she knew exactly what she was supposed to learn. In centering learning, Daniela paid attention to every single aspect of her learning task. For her, paying careful attention was a price that she had to pay in learning the language. Therefore, she relied highly on her hearing sense and understanding of what she had to listen to exclusively. By applying this strategy, Daniela was able to direct and center her conscious attention on certain language tasks, activities, or materials:

> In a test we cannot ask the speaker to repeat or to make it slow… high concentration and listen carefully is really needed here. Once you blank, you will lose all the information and it will affect much our understanding. (Interview 3: 22D)

> The more I listen, the more words and expressions I get. I pay more attention to the Western singers' pronunciation but, unfortunately, only when I listen to slow music, not high beat music. (Interview 3: 26D)

Another type of metacognitive strategy used by Daniela in improving her understanding in the target language is planning the learning. The interview revealed from that Daniela was able to force her own learning process. Daniela could even find the way of making use of the communication by making famous singers and movie stars as role models for improving and refining her pronunciation.

Social Strategies

The study revealed that Daniela recognized well who she is. She also knew how poor her English proficiency was. Through an asking questions strategy, she did her best to have a better understanding of whatever she previously failed to understand. While talking to native speakers, for example, Daniela often asked them to repeat what they had just said to check if she got it right. Or when she was given a task to read a short story and found it so difficult to understand, Daniela used to ask peers and even her English teachers to explain what the story talked about. She used to engage actively with her peers in a group or through team-work to learn together or to support each other in doing homework: "To remember something is difficult. When I find difficulties, I will see my English teachers at their office and asking something that remains unclear for me. I will also ask for friends' assistance" (Interview 2: 55D).

The study also revealed that Daniela was able to cooperate with her peers and others. Daniela's extrovert personality helped her to plunge more easily into social interaction. In the efforts of making use the cooperating with others strategy, Daniela was actively seeking opportunities to keep her language skills alive as she involved in a conversation with foreigners: "Now I am working as a part-time visitor guide . . . I have the opportunity to meet and talk with native speakers. This job helped me much to find counterparts for speaking English in my daily routines" (Interview 1: 76D).

Affective Strategies

Affective strategies are normally used to help learners manage their feelings, motivation, and attitudes related to language learning. The results showed that Daniela used two types of affective strategies within her English learning, namely self-encouragement and paying attention to what her body and feelings were going to say.

In the self-encouragement strategy, Daniela, rather than getting rid of difficulties, decided to have a slight break when she found something going beyond her capabilities. She never gave up in completing the tasks:

> When I read too long text or another book, it is difficult to understand because some of the texts are written in an old English. I find it so difficult when I read old book that is no longer used today… I just stop for a while but keep it until one day I will read it again.
> I never quit reading a short story. When it becomes so difficult, I would then stop for the time being because it goes beyond my ability.
> I never give up. If I stop reading, it is only because I can't enjoy my reading…
> I always promise to read it again one day. That is what usually happens. (Interview 2: 64D)

In using a paying more attention to what her body and feelings were going to say strategy, the study showed that when Daniela got a complicated task and it was impossible for her to immediately accomplish it, she then postponed it promptly until she felt ready to complete it. She understood well the signals given by her body and feelings.

Direct Language Learning Strategies

The direct learning strategies that Daniela uses are categorized into three sub-components, that are memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. The significant results

on what direct learning strategies used by Daniela and how she dealt with these strategies are the following.

Memory Strategies

From the interview, it was revealed that Daniela used three sorts of memory strategies when she had to cope with collecting and retaining numerous inputs in learning English: reviewing well, applying the mechanical technique, and putting words into context.

In her reviewing well strategy, it was revealed in the interview that Daniela attempted to store new input by remembering or memorizing the new entities in her mind:

> I sometimes read the text many times in order to remember what I have read. I only memorize words until I remember and understand the sentences. […] When I was in junior high school, I only memorized the very basic words. (Interview 1: D)

Daniela stated that she did not plan to memorize things straight throughout her learning, but she could not totally avoid using this strategy in practice. In the effort of implementing the reviewing well strategy, Daniela kept focusing on something she listened to, especially expressions or words that were not familiar, as it helped her to store inputs in her memory. She never felt reluctant to reverse back to a part that she ceased to know. Despite being an effective way for improving her memory, this approach would also be applicable to perceive what her teacher explained during the teaching-learning process. It inferred the reviewing well strategy was deemed as an effective way for an English language learner like Daniela to obtain, process, and then store language knowledge in her memory as well as to recall it for use.

Daniela made use of the reviewing well strategy through reading one passage many times and recognizing all the new words within. Daniela attempted to reread the same text and listen to the same dialog again and again from the tape recorder and radio that was used for the last examination or for understanding the expressions:

> To practice my listening, I use the materials from the past listening examination. When I practice listening, I usually listen to the same materials many times, practice, and practice. At first, I do not look up the subtitles, to guess what all the dialogues are about. I usually remember the expressions that are still new for me. (Interview 1: 25D)

The mechanical technique is another type of memory strategy that Daniela used in adding and broadening her English vocabulary. It was revealed that Daniela used a fun way to learn new English vocabularies and its meaning alike. She had a tricky way of keeping new words in mind by means of playing a fun game, such as domino vocabulary cards and guessing words from a dictionary:

> From the first year of junior high school up to now, I like playing domino vocabulary card with my friends for fun. We play guessing words almost every weekend when we have nothing to do. If I failed to guess the words, I usually open my list of words. (Interview 1: 102D)

The games helped Daniela to store new words in her mind. To better understand the meaning of new words found in the game, she sometimes opened her list of words or her mini

dictionary that she usually used as references to gain more words. By playing the games, she made her learning enjoyable and fun enough to input new words into her memory. Learning the English language while playing the game has been the turning point for Daniela to become a good English Language learner.

Putting new words in context is the last type of memory strategies that Daniela used in adding and broadening her vocabulary mastery. Such a strategy might not have worked well or been effectively employed without a comfortable feeling. In her efforts of implementing the putting words in context strategy successfully, Daniela attempted to link memory and affective strategies by playing guessing the words within the real context of language use

> When I have nothing to do after school, I decide to hang out with my friends. We play a game. I always mention the words and my friends try to guess the meaning of that word. We take a turn. When someone could not guess the meaning of the word, we punished him/her to read the words loudly many times. I got more words that I could use when talking to my friends. (Interview 1: 100D)

By doing this, she was able to create her own way of making the new words stay longer in her memory.

Cognitive Strategies

The result showed that Daniela used several types of cognitive learning strategies within her English learning, namely the use of practicing, receiving, and sending messages, and then, analyzing and reasoning. The use of practicing strategy is very difficult because it is comprised of several activities such as reviewing well, practicing naturalistically, practicing imitating in an isolated room, practicing through assignment, reading the word and sentences loudly many times, and practicing with sounds. Not surprisingly, this kind of strategy can only be carried out successfully by learners with great patience and those who are able to integrate such various activities to reach high proficiency:

> I got many new words, unfamiliar words, and new expressions every day. I usually write these new words and expressions… put it on the wall in front of my bed, so I can reread it loudly before I went to bed. Then, I tried to use these new words and expressions when I talk to my friends. (Interview 1: 83D)

Another way employed by Daniela to practicing her English naturally was receiving and sending message. By doing this, she was able to get the idea quickly. When given a reading task to accomplish, Daniela tried to identify first the types of questions by making her own inferences that included some typical questions that required answers. Having found the key words in the given questions, she started to surf into the reading text and then promptly to skim and scan the passage to answer the questions.

Daniela, as it was expressed from the interview below, was able to make use of her dictionary by looking up the meaning of the words that she never found before:

> I read any text that I could get, very simple short stories… just to get the new word I like to read because the words easy to understand. I read those short stories… I didn't know some words but just moved on reading, ignored the

unfamiliar words without busy thinking of the meaning of every single word… As I grew older, I gained more curiosity… I got curious about the words and then tried to get them from the dictionary. Because I was too lazy sometimes to open the dictionary, so I usually asked my friend. Now I just make use of my dictionary… but only when I need to know the meaning from dictionary. Dictionary is my favorite book. (Interview 2: 316D)

Analyzing and reasoning are the last type of cognitive strategies used by Daniela to understand either the meaning of expressions or even to make new expressions. The study revealed how Daniela tried her best to apply a rigid way of approaching the English expressions tasks. She sometimes found the answer by recognizing the types of questions. From the think-aloud protocol, she was able to identify which questions can be approached using the stated information then finding out the keyword to get the correct answer and which questions need the test taker to make a conclusion from the previous information stated on the passage.

The result revealed Daniela employed a deductive reasoning strategy, including drawing hypotheses about the meaning of the expressions she has just heard or read (a type of logical thinking), in both communicating with others and working on reading comprehension. In doing so, she was able to identify how questions on reading comprehension were usually designed, and finally find a pattern that could help her reach the answer to the questions.

Compensation Strategies

The results showed that Daniela used two types of compensation learning strategies within her English learning, namely the use of guessing intelligently and conquering problems in speaking and writing. The use of finding the similar meaning was the first type of compensation strategy used by Daniela to approach the meaning of a word. The results showed Daniela, in her efforts of understanding the whole reading texts, used the previously gained knowledge as a clue to guess the meaning of every word encountered in the text. She felt lucky when she knew the lexical meaning of the words that can help her determine the closest meaning of the words based on the context:

I sometimes do not really concern the unknown words due to that of what is important for me is that to try to understand the message, the context, or if necessary, I make a prediction. I guess the meaning by following the clue for example. Sometimes I even know the meaning of its word if not in the context… but it doesn't match at all with the context. In this context, the words are completely new for me. Usually, I directly see the sentence where I can find the word. (Interview 2:168D)

In guessing the meaning of a word found in the reading text, she tried to understand the meaning of the word when it was out of context by following the gained knowledge as a clue. In doing so, she finally understood the meaning of the whole reading text that enabled her to get the correct answers for the given questions.

Another type of compensation strategy used by Daniela in approaching the meaning of the words was overcoming difficulties both in speaking and writing. The study revealed Daniela was aware her English was still very poor. When talking to foreigners, she sometimes asked for the help of her friends to provide words or expressions she had not understood yet. If she had no friends around, she used to compensate for her difficulties by

asking the speaker to slow down or even asking the speaker to repeat what he/she has just talked about.

Another method to overcome speaking and writing restrictions is to choose a topic. The study showed how Daniela enjoyed the tasks to make a short conversation or to develop an essay if she was given the possibility to choose the topic. For Daniela, it would be very wise if the English teachers, when giving the tasks, provided some options for students to choose from. In doing so, students can select the topic that is most familiar to them and, in turn, make it easier for them to develop.

Discussion

Learning strategies, among the effective learning tools that enhance the language learning process, are considered the most important techniques used by the language learners to improve their language learning achievement. This study sought to explore the preferred language learning strategies used by an Indigenous Papuan student, named Daniela, that have allowed her to excel in speaking English more than her peers.

The study revealed the most common language learning strategy used by Daniela was a metacognitive strategy followed by cognitive, social, affective, and memory strategies, while a compensation strategy seemed to be the least frequently used. A metacognitive strategy helps language learners to cope, direct, control, and guide their learning actions (Brown et al., 1983). O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p. 8) argued learners without metacognitive strategies are substantially learners without direction or opportunity to plan their learning, monitor their progress, or review their accomplishments and future learning directions. In this study, Daniela was able to manage her own learning process by planning learning, focusing, and monitoring mistakes. Well-planned learning not only forced Daniela to learn on a regular basis but also helped her focus. Monitoring was thought to improve the quality of her work by reducing errors and making fewer mistakes. The finding is consistent with Kausar's (2012) research finding, but it was the least frequently used among Iranian students (Abedini et al., 2011) due to Iranian classrooms being more teacher-centered, with the teacher being the only person who could speak in the class. As a result, students had fewer opportunities to practice their English orally in the classroom by conversing with both their teacher and their peers. This finding is not consistent with Oxford's (1990) claim that though metacognitive strategies are extremely important, the research has shown the learners use these strategies sporadically and with little awareness of their significance.

The second common language learning strategy used by Daniela was a cognitive strategy. Cognitive strategy was used to assist language learners grasp English as foreign language by employing many thinking processes such as reasoning, analysis, and drawing conclusions (Al-Khaza'leh, 2019). In this study, Daniela sought out all the opportunities to make her English come alive, for example, by initiating a conversation with her English teachers and her peers and working as a tour guide so she could directly talk to native speakers. Furthermore, Daniela used the strategy of receiving and sending a message to help her understand exactly what she needed to understand, and she used the dictionary to look up difficult words. Daniela was able to practice such a set of cognitive strategies through both repeatedly reading the reading texts and listening to the radio or tape recorder to better understand the text she has just read or heard. Daniela used Western songs and direct conversation with native speakers from other countries to produce proper pronunciation. The pronunciation of Western singers and native speakers serves as a model for revising her own.

The third common language learning strategy used by Daniela was a social strategy. Learning is not only an individual, but also a social process (Varişoḡlu, 2016). Social strategies are those activities that the learners engage in that expose them to new knowledge

(Stern, 1975). In this study, Daniela's ability to collaborate with others enabled her to actively seek opportunities to preserve her language development. Daniela's method of keeping her English alive included working as a part-time visitor guide and asking for peer and teacher assistance. This finding was supported by Wharton's (2000) research findings, which revealed that most students preferred to correct their mistakes while speaking by asking their teacher or friends. This preference may reflect the teacher's method of teaching in the classroom as well as the teacher's method of encouraging students to actively participate during the teaching-learning process. This finding, however, contradicts Li's (2010) and Kausar's (2012) research findings, which found social strategies were the least used language learning strategies by students.

The fourth common language learning strategy used by Daniela was an effective strategy. Affective strategy played a pivotal role in improving students' ability to learn English as a foreign language by controlling their emotions and feelings toward the learning process (Al-Khaza'leh, 2019). In this study, Daniela was aware of her emotions and feelings when learning English. Daniela understood well what could help her to learn. Being relaxed and encouraging herself by minimizing pressures and dropping her anxiety were Daniela's strategies of handling emotions and feelings. It is interesting to note the affective strategy, for this study, appears to be the third most popular strategy used, whereas in many previous studies (e.g., Lai, 2009; Oxford, 2011) this type of strategy seemed to be the least frequently used.

A memory strategy was the fifth common language learning strategy used by Daniela. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), memory strategy which refers to the process of storing and retrieving information, is one of the most important strategies in learning a second language. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) further perceived language learning strategies as the techniques and tools used by the second language learners to remember and organize samples of the target language. In this study, Daniela admitted she did not intend to memorize things directly in her learning, but she could not leave this strategy. Daniela made use of this strategy by reading one passage many times and recognizing new words. This finding is in line with Rodriguez and Magill's (2016) research findings that a learner prepares to study by previewing the next chapter in their unit, carefully reading the teachers' comment on the past work, and reviewing their notes. The memorization strategy enabled Daniela to express what she has already stored in her mind by repeating many times all the past exam materials (both reading and listening) and practicing it naturalistically.

The least used language learning strategy Daniela employed was the compensation strategy. This strategy relies on linguistic and non-linguistic clues to compensate for missing information and is typically used to minimize knowledge limitations in all language skills (Oxford, 1990, p. 90). Using the previous gained knowledge as a clue, Daniela tries to guess intelligently the meaning of words or expressions encountered in her daily learning activities. This finding is in line with Takeuchi's (1993) research findings that a good language learner is a good and accurate guesser.

Learning English, for Daniela, did not mean staying nicely in her room reviewing, memorizing, and storing all the lessons safely in mind so that she could easily retrieve them when needed. Daniela was able to reach a high proficiency in English by integrating several language learning strategies in her daily activities. This finding is perfectly supported by Oxford's (1996) research findings that successful learners use many strategies in learning a language. Our research revealed Daniela used more effective learning strategies to improve her listening, writing, and speaking. To improve her listening skills, Daniela continued to listen to see if she could grasp the meaning of what she had just heard on the radio. Sometimes she also used the previous exams as listening materials using a tape recorder

many times. She believed the more one listened to English, the better one's listening ability would be.

Daniela realized she had to keep practicing writing every day. When her English teacher asked her to write a short story, she promptly chose an easy topic to write about. In the afternoon, she wrote whatever she had heard and read previously. When she got new words in a book, she wrote those words in her words list. To write well, Daniela argued, one should keep writing, writing, and writing. It would take time, effort, and energy to learn to write quickly.

To improve her speaking ability, Daniela spent much time practicing her speaking with her friends in the boarding house, especially with her friends from PNG. Daniela further emphasized that she was not embarrassed to ask for help. Practice is the crucial factor that may help one to make progress in speaking English successfully. Making mistakes, as Daniela indicated, is very normal in speaking. Therefore, one must learn how to conquer the feeling of being afraid to make mistakes.

The findings indicated a direct link between the use of various learning strategies and the English fluency of an Indigenous Papuan student. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to research their educational situation, paying particular attention to their students, resources, and their personal teaching. By observing students' behavior in class, for instance, teachers can see what language learning strategies students appear to be employing.

This study was limited in both informant and coverage area. Thus, the findings of this study must be strictly interpreted and generalized for the whole area of Papua, Indonesia. To generalize the findings, a more holistic study on English language learning strategies covering all regions and ethnic groups of Papua will be fully recommended. In the future, researchers may repeat the same research design within a wider range of areas and a bigger number of informants to minimize the risk of errors.

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