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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH LEARNING: CASE OF SELECTED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BUJUMBURA CITY

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree **"Licence en Langue et Littérature Anglaises"**

Bujumbura, April 2018

DEDICATION

To my family,

I dedicate this work

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present work is the result of the contribution of a number of people to whom I owe more than I can express. My deepest and sincere gratitude goes to Ms. Oda Kayonde, lecturer at the University of Burundi who has voluntarily accepted to supervise this work in spite her multiple responsibilities. I appreciate her excellent availability, kindness and guidance. I am also thankful to Mr. Julius Ayancho who supervised this work at its beginning stage.

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Ange Marie Grâce MUNEZERO

ABSTRACT

This work entitled: “Analysis of students’ strategies in English learning: case of selected public secondary schools in Bujumbura city” was aimed at analyzing how learning strategies are applied by students in their English learning in public secondary schools in general, and in first form arts section, in particular. In fact, several pupils are not aware of strategy use and they sometimes fail to complete a language task. The research investigated the following issues: the learning strategies that are most frequently used by students; the effects of learning strategies on students’ learning and the relationship between students’ strategy use and students’ attitude towards English language learning. For data collection, the researcher used a questionnaire designed for pupils. After data collection, the data were analyzed systematically question by question, using tables. The results showed that compensation strategies, cognitive strategies and memory strategies were mostly used while social strategies and affective strategies were less used. A further finding was that metacognitive strategies were never used. Finally, it has also been proved that learning strategies determined students’ success in English learning. Besides, strategy use was closely related with students’ attitude towards English language learning.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COMESA : Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

D.P.E : Direction Provinciale de l'Enseignement

E.A.C : East African Community

FL : Foreign Language

L2 : Second Language

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CHAPTER I: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

Language allows human beings to express their emotions, thoughts, desires, ideas, and feelings. Nowadays, English is a language which is gaining great importance all over the world. English is, therefore, a tool of communication in many countries in the world in general and in Africa in particular.

Some countries have English as their official language; others are adopting it because of some motives like business. Burundi is among the latter. It has recently changed teaching programs and conceives a program which permits pupils to start learning English from the first year in primary school.

As it is seen in different domains, Burundian government is taking measures to improve the English language because of its importance. Nowadays, it is being taught in primary, secondary, and higher education. The promotion of English is due to many reasons: Burundi is a member of some organizations such as E.A.C and COMESA. In these organs, English is the medium of communication.

1.1. Background to the Study

English language is today the most spoken language in five continents. It is a means of communication among people who use it as their second or foreign language. In Burundi, English has been taught as a foreign language from eighth form in secondary schools and some private schools but it is now being introduced in public primary schools.

In secondary school, both students and teachers should recognize the importance of English. Thus, they had better be aware of English learning strategies since they are not only concerned with how students approach problems encountered during their learning but also give teachers valuable clues

about how their students assess the situation, plan and select appropriate skills so as to understand, learn or remember new input presented in the language classroom.

Learning strategies are conscious or potentially conscious; they represent the students' deliberate attempt to learn. They clearly involve internal mental actions but they may also involve physical actions as well. Learning strategies involve an overall goal, a plan to accomplish that goal, and the steps needed to achieve the goal. A distinguishing is drawn between learning strategies that are: metacognitive strategies that help pupils to regulate their own cognition and to focus, plan and evaluate their progress as they move towards communicative competence. Affective strategies develop the self confidence and dedication needed for learners to involve themselves actively in the language learning process .Social strategies provide increased interaction and more empathetic understanding which will be handy when communicating. Cognitive strategies such as analyzing and memory strategies like the key word technique are very useful for understanding and recalling new information. And finally compensation strategies help learners in overcoming knowledge gaps so that they communicate to the best of their ability.

Moreover, students from secondary schools need to use English learning strategies as a way to improve their learning and performance, that is, the more aware students are of strategy use, the more effective and skillful the students will be. In supporting the importance of English learning strategies, Oxford (1990:1) asserts that:"learning strategies are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self- direct movement which is essential for developing communicative competence".

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Learning strategies have an extremely important role for students learning English .The significant role of learning strategies means that students would encounter difficulties in learning English if they do not use learning strategies in an effective way. It is observed that in some cases, the improper use of learning strategies by first form arts section students from different public secondary schools in Bujumbura city is what hinders them from progressing. However, students need to have the right strategies in order to master English language in the most effective way and in the shortest time now that English is a complex and long term process. Then, the effective use of learning strategies contributes to decide success in English performance.

1.3. Motivation of the Study

My study was conducted in Bujumbura city at different public secondary schools, first form arts section. Then, one could wonder why I chose to conduct my research on students' use of English learning strategies since we have many factors that contribute to students' success in English learning. My answer is clear. It is because learning strategies are the most important among those factors. In fact, they play the deciding role .I was also motivated by the fact that English language learning has been focused by many researchers but no one thought about English learning strategies. I took then this occasion as a good opportunity to do such a research.

1.4. Research Questions

A number of questions have been formulated and these are:

1. What are the learning strategies that are most frequently used?
2. What are the effects of learning strategies on students' learning?
3. How does students' use of learning strategies relate with the students' attitude towards English language learning?

1.5. Research Hypotheses

A number of hypotheses have been formulated and these are:

1. Social, affective and metacognitive strategies are most frequently used by students;
2. Learning strategies determine students' success in English learning;
3. Strategy use is closely related with students' attitude towards English language learning.

1.6. Aims of the Study

The aims of this study are:

1. To explore the learning strategies used to learn English;
2. To investigate students' attitude towards the use of English learning strategies;
3. To study the importance of English learning strategies.

1.7. Significance of the Study

This study would be of benefit for students and policy makers. Thus, it will be helpful to students in particular because it should lead to the raising of students' awareness of strategy use and self-evaluation of learning goals. Policy makers would realize that strategy instruction must be inserted in English teaching programs.

1.8. Scope and Delimitation

The researcher's study is "Analysis of students' strategies in English learning: case of selected public secondary schools in Bujumbura city". The present study is conducted in the city of Bujumbura. Five public secondary schools among twenty-five schools with first form arts section spread throughout Bujumbura city (i.e. 1/5 of the schools) were selected, namely: Lycée du Lac Tanganyika,

Lycée Clarté Notre Dame de Vugizo, Lycée Scheppers Nyakabiga, Lycée Clarté Notre Dame de Rohero and Lycée de la Convivialité. The researcher preferred students from secondary school; students from primary school and university were not involved.

Furthermore, the researcher cannot work on all schools because there are many (i.e. 25 schools).That is why we limited our study to five public secondary schools spread throughout the city of Bujumbura. I chose public not private schools because there are some private schools which are not even recognized by the Ministry of education.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the issues from different scholars who have written on the characteristics of learning strategies, the different classifications of learning strategies and the factors influencing the choice of learning strategies. In this chapter, we are going to deal with the above issues that are related to the focus of this study.

2.1. Definitions of Learning Strategies

The term learning strategies has been defined by many researchers. Wenden and Rubin (1987: 19) define learning strategies as: “any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the students to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval and use of information”.

Other authors such as Nunan (1991: 209) states that: “learning strategies are intentional behavior and thoughts used by students during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information”. In addition, Faerch, Claus and Casper (1963: 67) stress that learning strategy is: “an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language”.

According to Stern (1992:261), the concept of learning strategy is dependent on the assumption that students consciously engage in activities to achieve certain goals and learning strategies can be regarded as broadly conceived intentional directions and learning techniques. Later, Naiman (1978:11) more specifically defined learning strategies as: “behaviors of a student that are intended to influence how the student processes information”.

As far as Tarone (1983:67) is concerned, he defined a language strategy as: “an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language, to incorporate these into one’s interlanguage competence”.

O’ Malley and Chamot (1990:23) defined learning strategies as: “the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn or retain new information”. Oxford (1990:18) states that: “these strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language”. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability.

Finally, Ellis (1994:315) defined learning strategies broadly as: “behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning which are intended to influence how the learner processes information”.

2.2. Characteristics of Learning Strategies

Although the terminology is not always uniform with some writers using the term “learner strategy” (Wenden and Rubin, 1987), others “learning strategies” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990) and still others “language learning strategies” (Oxford, 1990), there are a number of basic characteristics in the generally accepted view of learning strategies:

- First, learning strategies are learner generated, they are steps taken by language learners;
- Second, learning strategies enhance language learning and help develop language competence as reflected in the learner’s skills in listening, speaking, reading or writing the second or foreign language;
- Third, learning strategies may be visible (behaviors, steps, techniques, etc.) or unseen (thoughts, mental processes);
- Fourth, learning strategies involves information and memory (vocabulary knowledge, grammar rules, etc).

Reading the learning strategies literature, it is clear that a number of further aspects of learning strategies are less uniformly accepted .When discussing learning strategies, Oxford(1990) and others such as Wenden and Rubin(1987) note a desire for control and autonomy of learning on the part of the student through learning strategies. Cohen (1998:88) insists that: “only conscious strategies are learning strategies and that there must be a choice involved on the part of the learners”.

Hedge (2000:88) and Macaro (2001:55) have discussed that: “transfer of a strategy from one language or language skill to another is a related goal of learning strategies” Oxford (1990:9) in her teacher-oriented text summarizes her view of learning strategies by listing twelve key features. In addition to the characteristics noted above, she states that learning strategies:

- Expand the role of language teachers;
- Are problem-oriented;
- Involve many aspects, not just the cognitive;
- Can be taught;
- Are flexible;
- Are influenced by a variety of factors.

2.3. Classifications of Learning Strategies

Learning strategies have been identified, described and classified by many scholars (Wenden and Rubin 1987; O’Malley 1990; Oxford 1990; Stern 1992; Ellis 1994, etc.). However, most of these attempts to classify learning strategies reflect more or less the same categorizations of learning strategies without any radical change. In what follows, Rubin’s (1987), Oxford’s (1990), O’Malley’s (1990) and Stern’s (1992) classifications of learning strategies will be handled.

2.3.1. O’Malley Classification of Learning Strategies

O’Malley (1990:582-584) divide learning strategies into three main subcategories: metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective strategies.

Metacognitive Strategies

It can be stated that metacognitive is a term to express executive functions, strategies which require planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one ‘s production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. Among the main metacognitive strategies, it is possible to include advance organizers, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, functional planning, self-monitoring, delayed production and self-evaluation.

Cognitive Strategies

They are more limited to specific learning tasks and they involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself. Repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory, representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, inference are among the most important cognitive strategies.

Socio-affective Strategies

It can be stated that they are related with social-mediating activity and transacting with others. Cooperation and question for clarification are the main socio-affective strategies (Brown1987:93-94).

2.3.2. Rubin’s Classification of Learning Strategies

Rubin (1987:215-222) who pioneered much of the work in the field of strategies makes a distinction between strategies. According to him, there are four types of strategies used by students.

Cognitive Strategies

They refer to the types or operations used in learning or problem-solving that requires direct analysis, transformation or synthesis of learning materials. Rubin (1987:17) identified six main cognitive strategies:

- Clarification/verification;
- Guessing/inductive inference;
- Deductive reasoning;
- Practice;
- Memorization;
- Monitoring.

Metacognitive strategies

These strategies are used to oversee, regulate or self-direct language learning. They involve various process as planning, setting goals and self-management.

Communication Strategies

They are less directly related to language learning since their focus is on the process of participating in a conversation and getting meaning across or clarifying what the speaker intended. Communication strategies are used by speakers when faced with some difficulties due to the fact that their communication means or when confronted with misunderstanding by a co-speaker.

Social Strategies

They are those activities students engage in, which afford them opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge. Although these strategies provide exposure to the target language, they contribute indirectly to learning since they do not lead directly to the obtaining, storing, retrieving and using of language (Wenden and Rubin 1987:23-27).

2.3.3. Oxford's Classification of Learning Strategies

Six major groups of learning strategies have been identified by Oxford (1990:22).

Cognitive Strategies:

Enable the student to understand and produce a new language.

- Practicing (for example, using formulas and patterns);
- Receiving and sending messages (for example, focusing on the main idea of a message and outlining);
- Analyzing and reasoning (for example, analyzing expressions);
- Creating structures for input and output (for example, taking notes).

Metacognitive Strategies:

Allow students to control their own learning through organizing, planning and evaluation and are employed for managing the learning process overall.

- Centering your learning (for example, identifying one's own learning style preferences);
- Arranging and planning your learning (for example, arranging a study schedule, planning for a second language task, setting goals and objectives);
- Evaluating your learning (for example, evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy's self-monitoring, evaluating task success).

Memory-related Strategies:

They help students store and retrieve information in an orderly string.

- Creating mental linkages (for example, placing new words into context, a mental picture of the word itself or the meaning of the word, acronyms);
- Applying images and sounds (for example, representing sounds in memory, rhyming);
- Reviewing well (for example, structured reviewing, flashcards);
- Employing action (for example, body movement, and total physical response, using physical response or sensation).

Compensation Strategies:

They allow students to communicate despite deficiencies in their language knowledge or help the students make up for missing knowledge. Cohen (1998:17) asserted that:" compensations strategies are used for speaking and writing".

- Guessing intelligently (for example, guessing from the context in listening and reading);
- Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing (for example, using synonyms and talking around the missing word to help speaking and writing and strictly for speaking, using gestures or pause words).

Affective Strategies:

They help students gain control over their emotions, attitudes, motivation and values.

- Lowering your anxiety (for example, using music or laughter, using deep breathing or positive self-talk);
- Encouraging yourself (for example, rewarding yourself for good performance);

- Taking your emotional temperature (for example, discussing your feelings with someone else).

Social Strategies:

They help students work with and interact with other people.

- Asking questions (for example, asking for clarification or verification of a confusing point);
- Cooperating with others (for example, asking for help in doing a language task);
- Empathizing with others (for example, developing cultural understanding and exploring cultural and social norms).

2.3.4. Stern's Classification of Learning Strategies

According to Stern (1992:262-266), there are five main learning strategies. These are follows:

- Management and planning strategies;
- Cognitive strategies;
- Communicative-experiential strategies;
- Interpersonal strategies;
- Affective strategies.

Management and Planning Strategies

These are related with the student's intention to direct his own learning .A student can take charge of the development of his own program when he/she is helped by a teacher whose role is that of an adviser and resource person. That is to say that the student must:

- Decide what commitment to make to language learning;
- Set reasonable goals;

- Decide on appropriate methodology, select appropriate resources and monitor progress, evaluate his/her achievement in the light of previously determined goals and expectations (Stern 1992:263).

Cognitive Strategies

They are steps or operations used in learning or problem solving that require direct analysis, transformation or synthesis of learning materials. In the following, some of the cognitive strategies are exhibited:

- Clarification/verification;
- Guessing /inductive inference;
- Deductive reasoning;
- Practice;
- Memorization;
- Monitoring.

Communicative Strategies

Communicative strategies such as circumlocution, gesturing, paraphrase or asking for repetition or explanation are techniques used by students so as to keep a conversation going on. The purpose of using these techniques is to avoid interpreting the flow of communication (Stern 1992:265).

Interpersonal Strategies

Students should monitor their own development and evaluate their own performance. They should be in contact with native speakers and cooperate with them; they must become acquainted with the target culture (Stern 1992:265-266).

Affective Strategies

It is evident that good language learners employ distinct affective strategies. Language learning can be frustrating. In some cases, the feeling of strangeness

can be evoked by the second or foreign language. In some other cases, L2 or foreign language students may have negative feelings about native speakers of second or FL.

Good language learners are more or less conscious of these emotional problems. They try to create associations of positive effect towards second or foreign language and its speakers as well as towards the learning activities involved. Learning training can help students to face up to the emotional difficulties and to overcome them by drawing attention to the potential frustrations or pointing them out as they arise (Stern 1992:266).

By clearly analyzing all the points of view provided by different authors, it is obvious that even if they do not use the same words to classify these learning strategies, they have converged on many points.

2.4. Factors Influencing the Choice of Learning Strategies

Oxford (1990:79) synthesized existing research on how the following factors influence the choice of strategies used among students learning a second or foreign language.

Motivation

More motivated students tend to use more strategies than less motivated students and the particular reason for studying the language (motivational orientation, especially as related to career field) was important in the choice of strategies**.**

Attitudes and Beliefs

These are reported to have a profound effect on the strategies students choose, with negative attitudes and beliefs often causing poor strategy use or lack of orchestration of strategies.

Type of the Task

The nature of the task helps to determine the strategies naturally employed to carry out the task**.**

Age and Second Language Stage

Students from different ages and stages learning a second or foreign language use different strategies with certain strategies often being employed by older or more advanced students.

Learning Style

Learning style (general approach to language learning) often determined the choice of second or foreign language learning strategies .For example, analytic-style students prefer strategies such as contrastive analysis, rule-learning, and dissecting words and phrases, while global students use strategies to find meaning(guessing, scanning, predicting) and to converse without knowing all the words(paraphrasing, gesturing).

Tolerance of Ambiguity

Students who are more tolerant of ambiguity use significantly different learning strategies in some instances that are done by students who are less tolerant of ambiguity.

Gender

Females reported greater overall strategy use than males in many studies (although sometimes males surpassed females in the use of a particular strategy).

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter aims at giving the methods used in the collection of the data. In this chapter, four main points will be discussed namely: the research population, the sampling, the collection of the data and the data analysis procedures.

3.1. Research Population

Students from first form arts section are questioned since the first form arts section is the final class of secondary school in the educational system of Burundi. The choice of the first form arts section students is so important at this level because they may assess themselves for the progress already made in English language. The students are also mature enough after being taught English for years. Moreover, they are reliable subjects since they have to write a national test before graduation, which gives them the right to pass to upper studies.

The researcher chose two schools in Ntahangwa commune (Lycee du Lac Tanganyika, Lycee Clarte Notre Dame de vugizo), two schools in Mukaza commune (Lycee Clarte Notre Dame de Rohero, Lycee Scheppers) and one school in Muha commune (Lycee de la Convivialite).

3.2. Sampling Techniques

The pupils of first form arts section at the upper level of secondary school are taken into account to get data for our research. As far as sampling is concerned, the researcher used the simple random sampling technique. This method is the best one because it allows members of the population to have the same chance of being selected. For this method, the researcher wrote twenty-five public schools with first form arts section (because we have this number of public

schools with first arts section in Bujumbura city), each on a small sheet of paper and folded those pieces of paper. Only five schools were selected as a sample (i.e. she selected 1/5 of the schools).

For pupils, 1/3 of the population was selected following the same selection method used for schools. Thus, fifty pupils were selected from the five schools. In total, fifty informants were involved in this study as shown in this table below:

Table 1: Population and Sample

Visited schools	**Total number of students**	**Sampled students**
Lycée du Lac Tanganyika	18	6
Lycée Clarté Notre Dame de Vugizo	27	9
Lycée Scheppers	36	12
Lycée de la Convivialité	39	13
Lycée clarté Notre Dame de Rohero	30	10
Total	150	50

3.3. Data Collection Procedures

The data collection instrument the researcher used is a questionnaire. Akineza, F.D.F. (2016) defines a questionnaire as “instrument used to collect data, consisting of a set of questions to which the subject responds in writing.” In fact, the researcher preferred a questionnaire because it helps to collect information from a large population within a short period of time. Furthermore, respondents feel free to give frank answers to any question especially when the answers are anonymous. To collect data, the researcher used one common set of questions that was given to students. By the questions given to respondents, the researcher expected to discover what strategies were most frequently used by students and their effects on students’ learning as well as the relationship between students’ use of learning strategies and their attitudes towards English language learning.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

After data have been collected, the next step was their analysis. Then, for a better analysis, we used descriptive statistics by means of frequencies and percentages and the results were presented in tables. I used this method for it shows clearly through tables all the answers given by informants and help the researcher for their interpretation. The results permitted to draw a conclusion and formulate some recommendations.

CHAPTER IV: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.0. Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the collected data. It also seeks to provide answers to the research questions stated earlier. These research questions will be answered with the help of answers from questionnaires.

4.1. Data Presentation

In this section, the data collected are displayed mainly by using tables.

Question 1: What do you do to remember new English words?

Table 2: Presentation of data given by students for question 1

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
I use flashcards	22	44%
I say or write new English words several times	28	56%
Total	50	100%

As it is revealed in the table 2, 22 respondents, that is, 44% said that they use flashcards whereas 28 respondents, that is, 56% responded that they say or write new English words several times. Thus, a good way to memorize items is the utilization of flashcards; mechanical techniques such as: writing the new vocabulary or language devices on cards aid memorization. In fact, this is quite useful as learners can bring the cards with them all the time and review them whenever and wherever they want (Oxford 1990:38). Apart from that, practicing is one of the most important cognitive strategies and students are aware of its importance. Classroom practice is not always enough because not all the students normally participate in class and because there may be students that

even participating a lot during lessons need further practice because their level requires it. In order to practice, learners may utilize the tactic of thinking the word in the new language, on the basis of the object they are seeing or using at that moment, or the thing they are doing. Moreover, if the learner repeats the process from time to time and relates it with other actions or things, the practice of the language will be assured.

Question 2: How often do you think about or plan your learning?

Table 3: Display of data given by students for question 2

Answers	**Frequencies**	**Percentage**
Sometimes	0	0%
Always	0	0%
Never	50	100%
Total	50	100%

The results in the table 3 revealed that 0 respondent out of 50, that is, 0% responded that they sometimes plan their learning, 0 respondent, that is, 0% answered that they always plan their learning and 50 respondents, that is,100% never plan their learning. Metacognitive strategies help students to coordinate the learning process by centering, arranging, planning, and evaluating their learning. Thus, the learning process will be more efficient if students know how to organize themselves and set and plan their own goals and objectives .Additionally, these strategies motivate the learner to practice the new language as much as possible. Furthermore, the use of metacognitive strategies aids the students to deal with their errors, trying to make them learn from them as well as assessing them in a more communicative way rather than a rule-based evaluation. Unluckily, students do not use those strategies as frequently as they should and, if they do, they are not aware of their importance; they just employ them in order to plan their learning and very few learners make use of self-evaluation techniques.

Question 3: What do you do when you don't know how to say a word or phrase in English?

Table 4: Presentation of data given by students for question 3

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
I use gestures	30	60%
I ask a classmate or my teacher	16	32%
I encourage myself even when I am afraid of making mistakes	4	8%
Total	50	100%

From the table 4, I realized that 30 informants out of 50, that is, 60% answered that they use gestures,16 respondents, that is,32% said that they ask questions to their classmates or their teacher and 4 respondents, that is,8% responded that they encourage themselves even when they are afraid of making mistakes. In fact, affective strategies have a powerful influence on language learning because they allow students to manage their feelings. The main factor of this type of strategy is self confidence; if learners' self -esteem is low, it can be easily detected by observing the students' attitude and behavior towards the new language. Moreover, Stern (1987:265) has found that the combination of attitude and motivation influences the maintaining or losing of language skill strongly once the learning process has finished. Making positive statements, rewarding yourself and pushing yourself to take risk is a good way to encourage yourself, something frequently forgotten by students, as a matter of fact, self-encouragement can be even more powerful than support from other people. In addition, the fact of knowing one's feelings about the new language and learning to control them helps language acquisition, keeping away negative emotions. On the other hand, concerning asking questions, the learner can either as for clarification and verification or ask for correction; in both cases, the students get

benefit from the questions which may be asked to teachers, native speakers or to proficient students. Furthermore, by interacting and cooperating with other people, the students improve the four language skills. The learner can cooperate with other fellows or with proficient users. The interaction with other partners usually takes place in class; by contrast, the relation with proficient users occurs outside the classroom. Finally, through the development of cultural understanding, that is," trying to empathize with another person through learning about the culture and trying to understand the other person's relation to that culture" (oxford1990:147) and by becoming aware of other's thoughts and feelings, learners will increase their empathy.

Question 4: What happen to you when you miss a word to use while doing an exposé?

Table 5: Display of data given by students for question 4

Answers	**Frequencies**	**Percentages**
I speak French	27	54%
I keep quiet	23	46%
Total	50	100%

As the results in the table 5 shows, 27 respondents out of 50, that is, 54% answered that they speak French, 23 respondents, that is, 46% responded that they keep quiet. In fact, anxiety is an element in affective strategy. In the same way that a bit of anxiety could help students to reach their goals, too much anxiety obstructs the learning process. An excess of anxiety creates worries, frustrations, doubts, insecurities, and fears in the learner. Thus, employing the Sadequate strategies, the students can learn how to control their anxiety and overcome the possible problems this creates. For this purpose, the use of progressive relaxation, deep breathing or meditation contributes to relaxing the body and mind, as well as the use of music or laugh (Oxford1990:140-141).unluckily, several studies have revealed that these strategies are not

normally used among learners. As a study carried out by Chamot (1990:17) illustrated, just one learner in every 20 learners uses this type of strategies. Apart from that, students may also not know a word when producing a message in the foreign language, and as occurs with guessing, students can compensate language production by paraphrasing the message, using gestures and pointing out, or using synonyms(Oxford1990:48-50)

Question 5: What happens to you when you face an unfamiliar English word while reading an English text?

Table 6: Display of data given by students for question 5

Answers	**Frequencies**	**Percentages**
I guess its meaning	13	34%
I use a dictionary	17	32%
I try to find its meaning by dividing it into parts that I understand	20	34%
Total	50	100%

The results presented in the table 6 showed that, 13 respondents out of 50, that is, 26% use guesses, 17 respondents, that is, 34% use a dictionary and 20 respondents, that is, 40% try to find the meaning of a word by dividing it into parts. So, in order to understand the meaning of a word or expression, and reasoning about the language and its structure, analyzing and reasoning techniques are quite useful. Within these strategies, techniques such as translating and transferring from one language to another, analyzing certain expressions or deducting how the language words may be employed. Nonetheless, students must be careful when translating from one language to another since it does not always work and negative transferences may lead into mistakes and misunderstandings (oxford 1990:46).Besides, all foreign language learners have faced an unknown word either in a written text or in oral conversation. This is a frequent problem in language acquisition; the more

advanced the learner, the few unknown items the student will face. In this situation, students try to guess the meaning of the word considering either linguistic clues or others, as oxford (1990:49-50) suggests. Taking a look at the vocabulary and grammar are useful linguistic clues, as well as paying attention to the context, the situation or the structure of the text.

Question 6: What do you do when you don't hear a word during listening tasks?

Table 7: Presentation of data given by students for question 6

Answers	**Frequencies**	**Percentages**
I relate it to the part of the conversation that I have understood	44	88%
I ask the teacher to replay the tape	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Through the results presented in the table 7, we noticed that 44 respondents out of 50, that is, 88% answered that they relate the word to the part of the conversation that they have understood while 6 informants, that is, 12% responded that they ask the teacher to replay the tape. Thus, memory strategies may imply mental associations in order to memorize new devices by linking them with meaningful things to the learner .In addition, mental linkages are made by means of grouping the words paying attention to the topic, its practical functions, its oppositions and so on, placing them into a context or relating or associating them to other concepts already learned as suggested by O'Malley and Chamot (1990:26).

Question 7: How often do you review English lessons?

Table 8: Display of data given by students for question 7

Answers	**Frequencies**	**Percentages**
Everyday	27	54%
Twice a week	10	20%
Three times a week	13	26%
Total	50	100%

As the table 8 indicates, 27 respondents out of 50, that is, 54% said that they review English lessons everyday, 10 respondents, that is, 20% do it twice a week while 13 respondents, that is, 26% do it three times a week. It is worth mentioning that students had better use memory strategies, since they are considered as powerful tools. An important factor of memorizing is reviewing; it is not enough to look at new language elements once, but doing it frequently in a spiraling way. In other words, revise it periodically until reaching what (oxford 1990:42) calls “over learning” i.e. make the concept as familiar as it becomes natural and automatic.

Question 8: Do you think group works are fruitful in any language task? Yes ( ) No ( ) Explain why

Table 9: Display of data given by students for question 8

Answers	**Frequencies**	**Percentages**
Yes, they allow students to share their strengths and complete the task easily	18	36%
Yes, they contribute to the improvement of elaboration	12	24%
Yes, they allow students to promote their thinking	17	34%
No, they cause laziness	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Looking at the above results presented in the table 9, the researcher realized that 47 respondents out of 50, that is, 94% answered that they like group works whereas 3 respondents, that is, 6% responded that they do not like group works. In fact, social strategies are activities that students engage in to seek opportunities to be exposed to an environment where practice is possible. These strategies are important because language learning always involves other people. It is a form of social behavior. Although, it is crucial to notice that group works sometimes help weaker students to get support from strong students. Indeed, it is worth to mention that the main purpose of language learning is communication and this implies interaction, i.e. contact with other people. This helps learners in two senses: they produce a wide amount of “input” in the language, and provide a feedback about the students’ skills. In addition, this cooperation among learners encourages group spirit and eliminates the competition between students. Among the positive effects of social strategies in language learning, the following ones are found: higher self-esteem, students enjoy the learning process more, increasing of altruism and mutual concern, stronger motivation, more language practice and error feedback, better use of language functions, and encouragement of empathy.

Question 9: Do you think linguistic clues (guesses, synonyms) and reference materials (dictionary, internet) are useful in reading tasks? Yes () No ( ) Explain why?

Table 10: Presentation of data given by students for question 9

Answers	**Frequencies**	**Percentages**
Yes, students manage to decipher new vocabulary or figure out the meaning of a text or a speech	11	22%
Yes, students can solve complex problems and complete difficult tasks independently	13	26%
Yes ,students can look up words they don't know and find target language cultural information	26	52%
No	0	0%
Total	50	100%

According to this table, all the respondents affirmed that linguistic clues and reference materials are useful in reading tasks. Indeed, linguistic clues are problem solving techniques that work at any stage of the learning process and are useful in numerous contexts. Moreover, access information source is especially handy when crucial information does not make sense to the student. However, it can be helpful anytime pupils encounter questions, large or small, whose answers are found in reference materials.

Question 10: Do you think summarizing is helpful for listening tasks?Yes ( ) No ( ) Explain why

Table 11: Presentation of data given by students for question 10

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes, students can remember key concepts by writing down important points	10	20%
Yes, students wouldn’t be able to keep a record of what they hear without notes	40	80%
No	0	0%
Total	50	100%

As shown by the table 11, all the informants agreed on the importance of summarizing during English tasks. In fact, making a mental, oral or written summary guarantees that student understand the gist of a task. It not only helps them judge how well they have understood and completed the task, but also helps them learn more from it.

Question 11: In what way do you improve your English learning?

Table 12: Display of data given by students for question 11

Answers	**Frequencies**	**Percentages**
I talk to someone how I feel while learning English	7	14%
I think about my progress when learning English	5	10%
I think about the relationship between what I already know and new things I learn in English	10	20%
I ask questions related to the acquisition of English	5	10%
I am interested in acquiring more knowledge of English	13	26%
I try to compensate the missing knowledge in English	10	20%
Total	50	100%

As the table 12 reveals, 7 respondents out of 50, that is, 14 % said that they talked to someone how they feel while learning English ; 5 respondents, that is, 10 % answered that they think about their progress when learning English; 10 respondents, that is, 20% said that they think about the relationship between what they already know and new things they learn in English;5 respondents, that is, 10% responded that they ask questions related to the acquisition of English;13 respondents ,that is,26% answered that they are interested in acquiring more in English and 10respondents,that is, 20% responded that they try to compensate the missing knowledge in English. In fact, students' use of learning strategies is closely related to their perception and motivation regarding English language. Oxford (1990:91) found that strategy use was closely related with intrinsic motivation and desire to use language outside the classroom.

4.2 Findings

The objective of this study was to analyze the students' strategies in English learning in public secondary schools in Bujumbura city (i.e. the selected schools). After having analyzed all the data, we are going to see if our research questions have been answered.

Three research questions have been formulated to guide this study, namely:

1. What are the learning strategies that are more frequently used?
2. What are the effects of learning strategies on students' learning?
3. How does students' use of learning strategies relate with the students' attitude towards English?

1. What are the learning strategies that are most frequently used?

It has been proved that most pupils (from the selected schools) prefer to make use of compensation strategies .The table 4 indicates that 60% of pupils make use of gestures when they do not know how to say a word in English. Besides, pupils use French words when they miss words to use while doing speaking tasks (see table 5).Moreover, the table 6 shows that 60% of pupils use guesses and dictionaries to complete reading tasks independently. Indeed, students try to find ways to work around missing knowledge by using guesses, dictionaries and internet.

Furthermore, the table 8 shows that pupils (from the selected schools) make use of memory strategies for they often review English lessons as responded by 54% of our informants. Also, the table 2 indicates that44% of pupils make use of flashcards to remember new English words. Thus, this helps them to store and retrieve information.

The data collected in table 2 indicates that pupils (from the selected schools) use cognitive strategies for they say or write new English words several times as responded by 56% of the informants. In addition, pupils try to find the meaning

of an English word by dividing it into parts that they understand according to 40% of our informants(see table 6).A further finding is that the table 7 indicates that pupils relate an unheard word to the part of the conversation that they understand.

Surprisingly, not many pupils (from the selected schools) are aware of social strategies. This is shown in table 4 where 32% of pupils responded that they ask questions to their classmates or teacher whenever they do not know how to say a word in English. Besides, the data collected (see table 7) indicates that many pupils are afraid of asking questions according to 12% of our informants who confirmed that they ask the teacher to replay the tape.

Moreover, few pupils (from the selected schools) know something about affective strategies which allow them to take risks with the language. However, pupils are afraid of making mistakes as revealed in table 4 where 8% of pupils confirmed that they encourage themselves even when they are afraid of making mistakes. Besides, the table 5 shows that 46% of our informants keep quiet whenever they miss a word to use during speaking tasks.

In addition, pupils (from the selected schools) never use metacognitive strategies since they know nothing about organizing and evaluating their own learning. This is illustrated in table 3 where 100% of pupils say that they do not evaluate and plan their learning.

By those elements found in answers from our respondents, we see that compensation, cognitive and memory strategies are frequently used by pupils whereas social and affective strategies are less used by them. This is perhaps because they are not familiar to paying attention to their own feelings and social relationships as part of second or foreign language. Metacognitive strategies are never used by students. So, one can conclude that the first hypothesis which

states that social, metacognitive and affective strategies are frequently used by students is rejected.

2. What are the effects of learning strategies on students' learning?

It has been discovered that social strategies present some advantages on students' learning. The table 9 makes an indication that 47 pupils out of 50(from the selected schools) confirmed that group works are advantageous and helpful for they allow pupils to share their strengths. Through the same table, it is also revealed that group works help students to promote their thinking. In addition, group works contribute to the improvement of elaboration.

Moreover, all the respondents (from the selected schools) affirmed that using linguistic clues such as: synonyms and guesses is fruitful since pupils manage to decipher new vocabulary or figure out the meaning of a text or a speech. They make guesses based on pictures, headlines, surrounding text, gestures, or other information related to the text (see table 10). It is also shown that reference materials namely: dictionary, textbooks, periodicals and internet allow pupils to solve complex problems and complete the task independently. Students can look up words or expressions they do not know and find target language cultural information as well.

The data collected (see table 11) indicates that all the respondents(from the selected schools) agreed on the importance of summarizing .It is useful for listening tasks since without notes students would not be able to keep a record of what they hear. It is also helpful for students while they for they allow them to remember key concepts by writing down important points.

In short, the results obtained for this question show that the use of English learning strategies is advantageous for students. Therefore, the second hypothesis which states that learning strategies determine students' success in English is confirmed.

3. How does students' use of learning strategies relate with the students' attitude towards English language learning?

The data collected (see table 12) indicates that there is a close relationship between students' strategy use and their attitudes towards English taking into account students' answers (from selected schools). Students' use of learning strategies is closely related to their perception and motivation regarding the English language. It is worth to mention that strategy use is closely related with intrinsic motivation and desire to use the language outside the class. Therefore, the third hypothesis which stated that strategy use is closely related with students' attitude towards English language learning is confirmed.

CHAPTER V: GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Introduction

This chapter intends to give a nutshell of the whole work. The recommendations which would be gained by people involved in the use of English learning strategies are formulated.

5.1. General Conclusion

The researcher attempted to analyze the students' strategies in English learning. She suggested the role of learning strategies in English learning process. The whole work was built on five chapters namely:

The first chapter is the general introduction whose aim was to provide the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the motivation, the research questions, the aims of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and delimitation and the definitions of key terms.

The second chapter is the literature review which aimed at showing what other writers have said about this topic.

The third chapter is the methodology which reveals the methods used to collect the data, the data analysis and findings through which data from informants were presented and interpreted, at last but not least chapter of this study, the conclusion and recommendations were formulated.

As far as the data from the respondents are concerned, the results revealed that compensation, memory and cognitive strategies are mostly used, social and affective strategies are less used and metacognitive strategies are never used. The findings implied that students need further support in the area of metacognitive strategies. Social and affective strategies need to be fostered since they can contribute to the overall achievement level of the students as it was

proposed by Rubin(1987) that" effective learners use strategies in a systematic manner by involving variety of strategies as compared to less able learners who use strategies in a random, uncontrolled and unconnected manner". It has also been proved that learning strategies have a positive impact on students' learning now that they determine students' success. Moreover, the results proved that students' strategy use is closely related with their attitude towards English language learning.

5.2. Recommendations

To raise first arts section students' strategy use, a number of things are suggested to students and teachers (of selected schools) and future researchers.

To Students

- Students are expected to know that strategy use is one of the most efficient ways that allow them to overcome difficulties they encounter during English learning.
- Students are suggested to use metacognitive strategies and develop social and affective strategies.

To Teachers

- Teachers are expected to bring English learning strategies to the attention of the students; this includes encouraging students who already exhibit use of these strategies so that others might imitate them.

To future researchers

- It is suggested that since the researcher emphasized on schools in Bujumbura city, future research should be carried in other parts of the country.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

University of Burundi

Department of English Language and Literature

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

November, 10th, 2017

Re: Letter to the respondents

Dear respondents,

I am a student from the University of Burundi at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature.

I am writing my dissertation entitled: **"Analysis of Students' Strategies in English Learning: Case of Selected Public Secondary Schools in Bujumbura City".**

I would, therefore ask you to respond to the following questions as honestly as you can.

Thanks for your co-operation.

Yours Faithfully

Ange Marie Grâce Munezero

APPENDIX 2

Questionnaire

I. Informant identification

Name of your school:

Class level:

II. Instructions

-Put a cross (x) in the square before the right answer, or answer using your own words if necessary.

-You can use the back of the paper to give more information, provided that you put the number of the question.

- Answer only a question that you understand well.

- Try to be objective

III. Questions

1. What do you do to remember new English words?

I use flashcards ☐

I use or write new English words several times ☐

2. How often do you think about or plan your learning?

Sometimes ☐

Always ☐

Never ☐

3. What do you do when you don’t know how to say a word in English?

I use gestures ☐

I ask a classmate or my teacher ☐

I encourage myself even when I am afraid of making mistakes ☐

4. What do you do when you miss a word to use while doing an expose?

I use a French word ☐

I keep quiet ☐

5. What happen to you when you face an unfamiliar English word while reading a text?

I guess its meaning ☐

I use a dictionary ☐

I try to find its meaning by dividing it into parts that I understand ☐

6. What do you do when you don't hear a word during listening tasks?

I relate it to the part of the conversation that I have understood ☐

I ask the teacher to replay the tape ☐

7. How often do you review English lessons?

Everyday ☐

Twice a week ☐

Three times a week ☐

8. Do you think group works are fruitful in any language task?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Explain:

……

……

……

9. Do you think linguistic clues (synonyms, guesses) and reference materials (dictionary, internet) are useful for reading tasks?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Explain:

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…….

10. Do you think summarizing is helpful for listening tasks?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Explain:

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11. In what way do you improve your English learning?

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