Language Retention of Foreign Language Learners

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Abstract

With the goal to produce multilingual Filipino learners, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) of the Philippines mandated the higher education programs in the country to include foreign languages as electives in their curricula. Thus, Benguet State University (BSU) offered subjects on Spanish, Korean, Nihongo, Mandarin and German languages. However, many students struggled with their language learning and long-term language retention because of many factors. To address this, the study sought for the strategies employed by the learners in developing their foreign language learning and retention, and the effectiveness of these strategies using a quantitative approach. The participants were 28 undergraduate students who responded to the questionnaires and participated in follow-up interviews conducted in the school year 2022-2023. The findings showed that memory strategies and compensation strategies are used by the majority of the learners, while social strategies and cognitive strategies are the least used. Despite this, respondents still consider social strategies, memory strategies and cognitive strategies very effective in developing their language learning and retention. Also, they stated that cognitive strategies and all subcategories of indirect strategies are extremely effective. From these results, a training model for a language program or a crash course was created.

Keywords

Introduction

Policy makers and educators in the Philippines offer foreign language subjects in support of the mandate of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to include foreign languages, other than English, as electives in the curricula of higher education programs. CHED aims to produce multilingual Filipino learners who are globally competitive and are equipped with 21st century skills and who are ready to be immersed in a culturally diverse environment while preserving their national identity (de la Fuente, 2021).

Specifically, Benguet State University offers foreign language subjects centralized in Spanish, Korean, Nihongo, Mandarin and German languages to cater the needs of students from various

undergraduate courses. Each foreign language subject runs for one semester. After the semester, students end their formal learning of the language in the academe. It is on this part where language retention of the students is highly tested.

L. Santos, a fresh graduate of the university, who took four foreign languages stated that she could not remember the terms or lexicons she had learned. She added that one semester would not be enough to learn or retain knowledge of a foreign language, especially to students who are not fast learners. However, she had the desire to strengthen her language retention on the learned languages because it might be of help when in Japan or Korea (personal communication, March 5, 2023). This statement proves that struggles on long-term language retention are observed, especially if students do nothing after the formal learning or after taking foreign language subjects.

In the study of Snow et al. (1986), it was proven that language loss occurred among the participants after their formal learning. This is further supported by Murtagh (2003) in her study on the "Retention and Attrition of Irish as a Second Language. The findings showed that some participants had practically no contact with the language since leaving school, thus there was decline in their level of proficiency in spoken Irish.

If foreign language learners do not practice the language they learned and they experience language loss or decline even before they are brought to a workplace where they can possibly utilize knowledge on a particular foreign language, the ultimate goal of the Philippine educational system and of schools in offering foreign language subjects cannot be possibly achieved.

Certainly, struggles on long-term language retention of students, particularly in BSU, should be addressed to achieve the goal of Philippine education in producing multi-lingual Filipino learners who are globally competitive. This is also in line with the CHED's criteria for the selection of Centers of Excellence (COEs) and Centers of Development (CODs) for the Foreign Language Program of CMO No. 26, series of 2012. The criteria include "Retention", where having clear retention policies is stressed (de la Fuente, 2021).

Thus, there is a need to study further the language learning and the retention of learners after their formal learning in the university.

Literature Review
Second Language Acquisition
Second language acquisition pertains to the process of learning an additional language after a learner has acquired his or her mother tongue. It is a general term that includes both untutored (or 'naturalistic') acquisition and tutored (or 'classroom') acquisition. Moreover, the term refers to everything about a language that a learner needs to master (Ellis, 1985). Much emphasis is given to the process on how second language learners acquire grammatical sub-systems. The process of second language acquisition was considered complicated (Zingzhang, 2005). It was said that there was no single way in which learners acquired knowledge in a second language, especially that were many factors to consider regarding the learners and the learning situations (Ellis, 1985).

In studying any topic related to the learning of foreign languages, the concept of second language acquisition is, undoubtedly, very essential. In this research, second language

acquisition was integrated in explaining the strategies employed by learners in strengthening their foreign language retention.

Language Learning Models

Furthermore, some researches showed that positive attitudes and motivation were related to the success in learning a second language (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Motivation, in this context, considers two factors: the learners' communicative needs and their attitude towards the second language community. Specifically, Gardner and Lambert (1972) introduced two types of motivation: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. The first term refers to the language learning for the purpose of having personal growth or of expanding knowledge about a certain culture. Whereas, the latter refers to the language learning for practical or immediate goals. Based on researches, these two types of motivation were related to the success of a second language (Lightbown & Spada, 1999).

In relation to this, the Working Memory Model is a multi- component memory system that includes two modality- specific subsystems, the phonological loop and the visual-spatial sketchpad. The phonological loop is focused on the manipulation and retention of speech, while the visual-spatial sketchpad centres on visual and spatial information. Considered the most widely researched component of working memory, phonological loop consists of a phonological store, which holds information for a few seconds, and an articulatory rehearsal process, which refreshes decaying information amongst other functions. Phonological loop capacity is usually measured through tasks that involve immediate serial recall of numbers (digit span) or words (Baddeley, 2003).

These details on Working Memory Model particularly Phonological loop prove that generally, a phonological store can only hold speech-based information for a few seconds. Thus, a foreign language learner may need to aid his learning with long-term knowledge or with other methods to strengthen his language retention.

Language Learning Strategies

Furthermore, O' Malley(1985) and Hardan (2013) said that language learning strategies could be divided generally into three: (1) Metacognitive Strategies that express cognitive executive function such as planning, thinking about learning process, monitoring and evaluating; (2) Cognitive Strategies that focus on the direct manipulation of a learning material, like repetition, grouping, note taking, keyword, contextualization and auditory representation; and (3) Socio affective Strategies that involve social-mediating activity and transacting with others, which include cooperation and questioning.

On the other hand, Rubin (1987) categorized strategies into three – learning strategies, communication strategies and social strategies (Hardan, 2013). Learning strategies that aid directly to a learner's language system have two types termed as Cognitive Learning Strategies and Metacognitive Learning Strategies. Cognitive Learning Strategies focus on steps used in learning. Specifically, it involves translation, synthesis of learning materials and direct analysis. Metacognitive Strategies that help to oversee or regulate learning include clarification, guessing or inductive inference, deductive reasoning, practice, memorization or monitoring. Meanwhile, communication Strategies concentrate on the process of participating in a conversation and understanding what a speaker wants to say. Whereas, Social Strategies are observed when learners are exposed to activities that give them the chance to practice a language. It was said that even if these strategies exposed the learners to the target language, they would not directly help students to obtain, to store, to retrieve a language (Hardan, 2013).

In the case of Oxford (1990), the two main classes of language learning strategies are direct and indirect. The direct includes memory, cognitive and compensation strategies. The indirect comprises metacognitive, affective and social strategies. Specifically, memory strategies help learners to remember things more effectively or to retrieve or to transfer information. For instance, a semantic map of a group of verbs can help a student get information back. Cognitive strategies aid learners in understanding their learning. Examples are reasoning, analysis and drawing conclusions. Also, the strategy is observed when a learner uses drills and uses a dictionary in order to find difficult words. Compensation strategies are used to deal with the knowledge gaps in order to communicate. Even if a learner's vocabulary is not enough, the strategies lead a user to utilize the language in speaking or in writing. This could be shown when a student used linguistic clues in order to guess meanings or invent words. Metacognitive strategies assist learners manage or control their own learning by arranging, centering, planning or evaluating what they learn. An example would be when one overviewed a material and decided what to focus on. Furthermore, affective strategies give importance to the emotional aspect or confidence of a learner. These happen when students laugh and relax or reward themselves after achieving something. Lastly, social strategies expose learners to interaction and practical use of a language. These involve questioning or working together with peers or native speakers where language skills will be developed (Hardan, 2013; Lavasani & Faryadres, 2011).

In addition, Altan (2003) mentioned in his study that the strategy inventory for language learning (SILL) by Oxford seemed to be the only language learning strategy instrument that was extensively checked, in many ways, for validity and reliability. Such a claim was based on research in the last two decades. SILL gives descriptions of the different types of learning strategies used by learners. In addition, Lee (2010) considered SILL the most influential instrument in the area of language learning strategies, giving the most exhaustive hierarchy or learning strategies.

In relation to the strategies, Oxford (1994) worked on 'Language Learning Strategies: An Update'. She mentioned that many researchers agreed to the effectiveness of second language learning strategies and that language learners who had good performances were those using strategies in an orchestrated fashion. This means that language learners who know how to select proper strategy for a particular task become successful. Also, cognitive and metacognitive were often used at the same time. So, it came out that well-tailored combinations of strategies had stronger impact. Further, factors that influenced the choice of L2 learning strategies were enumerated. These were: motivation, gender, cultural background, attitudes and beliefs, type of task, age and L2 stage, learning style and tolerance of ambiguity. To address issues on second language learning strategies, Oxford (1994) included in her paper L2 strategy training studies that were tested. It was found out that some trainings were effective in various areas, but not in others.

Also, Altan (2003) proved that the relationship between language learning strategies and second language achievement was linear. Specifically, the compensating strategies were significantly correlated with achievement scores. This means that the use of gestures or synonyms, guessing, inferencing and overcoming knowledge gaps are helpful in foreign language learning. Even if learners have incomplete knowledge, it is believed that compensation strategies can help them to speak and write in the target language. In support, even other researchers claimed that using appropriate language learning strategies can lead learners to the improvement of second language proficiency (Altan, 2003).

After a review on elaborative keyword technique for vocabulary learning, Lawson and Hogben (1996) stated that the more that words were analyzed, the more likely these would be retained. This is similar with the claim of Mayer (1992) and Wittrock (1992) who argued that the more materials were elaborated during acquisition, the more these would be retained. Elaborated explanations or activities when learning new terms enhances recall during reading. However, it should be understood that constructive elaboration is not very effective if done alone. Other than emphasizing the elaborative keyword technique, results in the study of Lawson and Hogben (1996) revealed that the most frequently used procedures of learners were related to repetition. It was concluded that both repetition and elaborative strategies could result in better recall. In fact, it was found out that learners who used repetition had high levels of recall performance.

In addition, the study of Lawson and Hogben (1996) showed that students using many strategies in learning vocabulary had the higher possibility to recall more word definitions than other learners who used few strategies only. Andra et al. (2020) remarked on their study that learners using gestures and pictures were big factors in the learning of foreign language (L2) vocabulary. Results from the data showed that gestures and picture enrichment improved learners' performance on tests. These even benefitted the learners over long time scales. The enrichment lasted up to six months after training. As stated by Andra et al. (2020), the use of visual materials in second language learning enhanced the vocabulary knowledge of the learners. This means that film viewing or showing of videos and use of images as part of instruction could improve language learning. In particular, videos can provide rich semantic and pragmatic contexts which can be useful in foreign language teaching when focusing on lexical phrases.

Contributing Factors in Second Language Retention
Also, it was stated in a study that the initial level of proficiency could possibly affect long-term retention of knowledge. Similarly, it was generally accepted that motivation influences long-term retention (Ducharme, 1995). Since motivation is a determining factor in language learning, it is important to note the importance of an external environment in order to maintain a level of performance. The more a learner practices, the more he maintains his skills. It is, indeed, a fact that attitudes have an impact on motivation which in turn influences language use (Gardner et al., 1985). Also, the length of time a language is studied is correlated with retention. This is proven in the study of Bahrick (Ducharme, 1995). It showed that retention was strengthened depending on the number of years Spanish was studied.

Rationale for the present study
In relation to these studies on language retention and language learning, this research focused on the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies (BAEL) students of the College of Arts and Humanities (CAH) in BSU. Although there were other foreign language learners in other colleges, BAEL students were the chosen respondents in accordance to CHED Memorandum No. 23, s. 2017 that emphasized the involvement of Bachelor of Arts (AB) programs. If there is a particular college allowed to offer a full-fledged degree program in foreign languages, it is the one holding AB programs (CHED, 2017). Moreover, preference on third year students was due to the fact that they finished taking almost all of their foreign language subjects already. The results and output of the study would be of big help not only to the third year BAEL students, but to all other students in the university who would take foreign language subjects. These would aid them develop their foreign language acquisition and apply their learnings to their future jobs or future encounter with foreigners. The study would help educators address the objectives identified in the foreign language curriculums in Philippine Education. Also, it

would assist institutions and other educational agencies accomplish the goal of the country's educational sector in producing globally competitive multilingual Filipino learners who can move around in a culturally diverse environment while preserving their national identity.

Specifically, this study sought to answers the following questions:
1. What are the strategies employed by learners in developing their foreign language learning and retention?
2. What is the level of effectiveness of the strategies employed by learners in developing their foreign language learning and retention?
3. What training model should be developed to strengthen the foreign language learning and retention of language learners?

Method
Research Design
Employing a quantitative research method, this study utilized survey-descriptive research design and thematic analysis. Calderon and Gonzales (2012) mentioned that survey-descriptive method is a fact-finding study with adequate and accurate interpretation. This is used to collect data about people's practices, beliefs, attitudes, interests and perceptions, among others. Then, these data are analyzed, organized and interpreted. Whereas, Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that thematic analysis as a method tells an interpretative story about data, not simply reporting or describing what is in the data.

Context and Participants
The respondents of the study were the 28 third year BAEL students of the College of Arts and Humanities (CAH) enrolled in the second semester S.Y. 2022-2023. They were chosen to be the respondents, since the College of Arts and Humanities (CAH) is the center of foreign language programs (CHED, 2017). CHED put emphasis that schools with a desire to offer full-fledged degree programs in foreign languages and with an aim to produce professionals who could work in various fields, including international establishments, would institute foreign language programs under BA. In addition, the study considered the four foreign language subjects taken by the respondents – Mandarin, Nihongo, Korean language and German language.

Instrumentation
Survey-questionnaires adapted from Murtagh (2003) and Oxford's Classification of Language Learning Strategies were used to determine the strategies employed by learners in developing their foreign language learning and retention and the level of effectiveness of these learning strategies. Altan (2003) mentioned in his study that from the last two decades, Oxford's strategy inventory for language learning seems the lone language learning strategy instrument that has been extensively tested for reliability and validity repeatedly. Also, an interview guide was used to seek further explanation of answers.

Data Collection and Analysis
First, the researcher sought the approval to conduct the research from the Department Head. Then, she administered the questionnaires and conducted interviews. Afterwards, the gathered data were recorded, analyzed and interpreted to determine the strategies employed by learners in developing their foreign language learning and retention and the effectiveness of these learning strategies. Results from the data determined the program developed to strengthen the long-term language retention of foreign language learners.

To get the answers to the specific problems of the study, the data from the questionnaire were recorded, tallied, analyzed, and interpreted properly. These were analyzed using Descriptive statistics. Also, thematic analysis was employed.

Results

This section presents the findings of the study and the major analyses of these findings.

The Strategies Employed by Learners in Developing their Foreign Language Learning and Retention

In the study, the learning strategies of language learners were determined using the Classification of Language Learning Strategies of Oxford (1990). Tables 1 and 2 show the direct and indirect strategies employed by learners in developing their foreign language learning. It is seen in table 1.1 that all Direct Strategies identified were applied by the learners. All items were marked although the number of students in each type differed. According to Oxford (1990), the two main classifications of language learning strategies are the direct and indirect. Direct Strategies are those that directly affect learning (Chamot et al. 1987). The subcategories are Memory, Cognitive and Compensation Strategies. Among all the identified learning strategies, the Memory Strategies, with an average of 26.25, were the ones utilized by the majority of the learners. Hardan (2013) mentioned that memory strategies pertain to the ways that help learners store information. They assist students in remembering or retrieving information. These include creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, reviewing well and employing action, even rhyming and structured reviewing (Altan, 2002).

Table 1

The Direct Strategies Employed by Learners in Developing Foreign Language Learning and Retention

DIRECT STRATEGIES	No. of Learners	Rank
I. Memory		
A. Creating mental linkages	28	1
B. Applying images and sounds	25	2.5
C. Reviewing well	27	1.5
D. Employing Action	25	2.5
Mean	**26. 25**	
II. Cognitive		
. Practicing	27	1.5
B. Receiving and sending messages strategies	24	4
C. Analyzing and reasoning	23	5
D. Creating structure for input and output	21	6
Mean	**23.75**	
III. Compensation Strategies		
. Guessing intelligently	27	1.5
B. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing	25	2.5
Mean	**26**	

Table 2

The Indirect Strategies Employed by Learners in Developing Foreign Language Learning and Retention

INDIRECT STRATEGIES	No. of learners	Rank
I. Metacognitive Strategies		
. Centering your learning	24	3.5

	No.	
B. Arranging and planning your learning	22	5
C. Evaluating your learning	27	1
Mean	**24.33**	
II Affective Strategies		
. Lowering your anxiety	25	3
B. Encouraging yourself	26	2
Mean	**25.5**	
III. Social Strategies		
. Asking questions	24	3.5
B. Cooperating with others	23	4
C. Empathizing with others	21	6
Mean	**22.67**	

Meanwhile, table 2 displays that all identified indirect strategies were used by the respondents. The same with direct strategies, the number of students using each specific strategy varies. Among all indirect strategies, most learners employed affective strategies that highlighted the importance of emotions in language learning. A student mentioned that he kept learning Korean language, so he could enjoy Korean pop culture. Certainly, attitude or motivation matters in language learning (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Gardner and Lambert (1972) introduced the two types of motivation – integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. The type of motivation mentioned earlier says that a student learns a language to gain personal growth or to know more about a particular culture. Another student shared that Korean culture was famous in the Philippines, so he was able to retain words and apply these when watching Korean movies or going to Korean restaurants.

In summary, all the identified direct strategies and indirect strategies by Oxford (1990) were employed by particular respondents in their foreign language learning. Memory Strategies and Compensation Strategies were the ones used by most learners, while Social Strategies and Cognitive Strategies were the least used. Most of the learners would prefer to find ways in remembering details more effectively or to guess meanings of words unknown to them. On the other hand, Social strategies were not employed by some of the respondents because of lack of opportunities to interact especially during online classes as claimed by many of them.

The Level of Effectiveness of the Strategies Employed by Learners in Developing their Foreign Language Learning and Retention
Tables 3 and 4 reveal the effectiveness of the direct and indirect strategies employed by learners in developing their foreign language learning and retention.

Table 3
Level of Effectiveness of the Direct Strategies Employed by Learners in Developing their Foreign Language Learning and Retention

DIRECT STRATEGIES	No. of Participants	Extremely Effective (EE)	Very Effective (VE)	Slightly Effective (SE)	Not at all Effective (NE)	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
. Memory							

. Creating mental linkages	28	5	11	12	0	2.75	VE
B. Applying images and sounds	25	8	10	6	1	3.00	VE
C. Reviewing well	27	8	17	1	1	3.19	EE
D. Employing Action	25	7	7	9	2	2.76	VE
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN						**2.92**	**VE**
II. Cognitive							
. Practicing	27	10	15	2	0	3.30	EE
B. Receiving and sending messages strategies	24	10	11	3	0	3.29	EE
C. Analyzing and reasoning	23	8	9	5	1	3.04	EE
D. Creating structure for input and output	21	3	10	6	2	2.67	VE
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN						**3.07**	**EE**
III. Compensation Strategies							
. Guessing intelligently	27	6	8	11	2	2.67	VE
B. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing	25	6	8	10	1	2.76	VE
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN						**2.71**	**VE**

Specifically, table 3 shows that among the subcategories in Direct Strategies, Cognitive Strategies has the highest mean (3.07) despite it receiving the lowest average of language users. This means that even if the number of respondents who employed Cognitive Strategies were the least under Direct Strategies, the respondents considered methods such as practicing, receiving and sending messages strategies, analyzing and reasoning and creating structure for input and output the most effective in foreign language learning. Although some of the respondents were not able to employ this set of strategies because of some factors like online classes, the majority of them still believed that this sub-category is the most effective. Correlated with the data that show 'Practicing' with the highest mean of 3.30 (Extremely Effective) under Cognitive Strategies, five of the participants verbally affirmed practicing effective. Even more when asked of the most effective learning strategy, one student said practicing the language with his classmates and using it either inside or outside the campus helped a lot. This is supported by Lawson and Hogben (1996), agreeing that learners who employed repetition had better language retention compared to others. Certainly, students could better recall details they learned in a foreign language class if they could find ways to practice or to have drills.

Table 4
Level of Effectiveness of the Indirect Strategies Employed by Learners in Developing their Foreign Language Learning and Retention

INDIRECT STRATEGIES	No. of Participants	Extremely Effective (EE)	Very Effective (VE)	Slightly Effective (SE)	Not at all Effective (NE)	Weighted Mean	Interpretation

I. Metacognitive Strategies							
. Centering your learning	24	7	13	4	0	3.13	EE
B. Arranging and planning your learning	22	8	7	7	0	3.05	EE
C. Evaluating your learning	27	9	15	3	0	3.22	EE
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN						**3.13**	**EE**
II. Affective Strategies							
. Lowering your anxiety	25	12	9	4	0	3.32	EE
B. Encouraging yourself	26	8	13	5	0	3.12	EE
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN						**3.22**	**EE**
III. Social Strategies							
. Asking questions	24	13	11	0	0	3.54	EE
B. Cooperating with others	23	14	9	0	0	3.61	EE
C. Empathizing with others	21	10	10	1	0	3.43	EE
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN						**3.53**	**EE**

Based on table 4, all identified indirect strategies, such as metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies, were rated as 'Extremely Effective'. Even if the strategies did not directly aid students in storing or retrieving a language, the learners considered centering learning, arranging and planning learning, evaluating learning, lowering anxiety, encouraging one's self, asking questions, cooperating with others and empathizing with others very helpful in foreign language learning.

Even if Social Strategies were the category that obtained the least number of users in the identified strategies, the category received the highest overall weighted mean of 3.53 described as extremely effective. This means that learners found themselves most productive in language learning when they were given activities that allowed them to practice a target language (Hardan, 2013). Other than working with others, questioning and communicating with native speakers also helped in developing language skills (Hardan, 2013; Lavasani & Faryadres, 2011).

Discussions
Research Question 1: What are the strategies employed by learners in developing their foreign language learning and retention?

Data from the first problem reveal the various learning strategies employed by the learners. Table 1.1 displays that other than 'creating mental linkages' classified under 'Memory' – Direct Strategies, almost all of the participants (27) reviewed well, so they could memorize vocabulary and other details. Others 'applied images and sounds' (25) or 'employed actions' (25) to aid them in language learning. When learners saw or observed things that were related to the target language, they were led to pondering further on them. Many of the students even said that watching foreign movies or dramas and listening to foreign songs were parts of their language learning (personal communication, March 2023).

Also, many of the respondents found themselves dealing with knowledge gaps in foreign language learning. Altan (2003) found that strategies such as guessing, inferencing or overcoming gaps and using gestures were significantly correlated with good performance of learners. This might have been experienced by many of the respondents, which resulted in the specific strategy being second in place among all sub categories of learning strategies.

In addition, 23. 75 participants of the participants said they employed Cognitive Strategies. They considered the processes in learning essential, such as practicing, receiving and sending messages methods, analyzing and reasoning and creating structure for input and output. This set of strategies also include translating, synthesizing learning materials and direct analysis (Hardan, 2013). Among all direct learning strategies, this sub-category is the least used by the respondents. This could possibly be because of lack of exposure to the languages being learned due to online classes as claimed by many of the respondents. Since some foreign language classes were taken online during the peak of the pandemic, many were not able to practice or even have drills.

Alternatively, indirect strategies specifically Metacognitive strategies identified in table 1.2 were still utilized with an average of 24. 33 respondents although users were not as many as those who employed other sub-categories. Metacognitive strategies help learners manage their own learning by arranging notes, centering, planning or evaluating what was learned (Lavasani & Faryadres, 2011). Although a number of learners chose not to regulate their learning and not to employ metacognitive strategies in general, almost all of the respondents (27) incorporated 'evaluating your learning' in their foreign language learning. They found self-assessment essential when learning a particular language.

In addition, social strategies received the least number of respondents (22.67) in all identified categories of language learning strategies. In social strategies, learners are exposed to activities that give them the opportunity to practice a language. Unfortunately, many of the respondents had very limited or even did not have the chance to practice, especially that some language classes were taken online.

Research Question 2: What is the level of effectiveness of the strategies employed by learners in developing their foreign language learning and retention?

In seeking the effectiveness of the learning strategies as stated in the second problem of the study, it came out that proper combinations of strategies would result in stronger impact in language learning.

Whereas, Memory Strategies were considered 'Very Effective' with an overall mean of 2.92 as appeared on table 2.1. Almost all forms of the sub-category were believed to be 'Very Effective', such as 'Creating mental linkages' (2.75), 'Applying images and sounds' (3.00) and 'Employing action' (2.76). Higher than the others, 'Reviewing well' was perceived to be 'Extremely Effective' (3.19). The data inferred that strategies which aid learners store details, especially reviewing, were very helpful in their language learning. Reviewing or going back to lessons or things learned would be of big help in recalling or memorizing specific details and would help in learning more about a language. Also, Andra et al. (2020) mentioned that gestures and picture enrichment were found to be big factors in the success of children on certain tests. This was further proven by Gilakjani (2012) and Konomi (2014) who agreed that visual materials improved the vocabulary of learners. The claims matched up with the responses of many learners when they were asked about the learning strategies they used. A student remarked that when he watched Korean dramas (with subtitles), he became familiar with the words and these were retained in his memory. On the other hand, Compensation Strategies had the lowest rank among Direct Strategies. A student remarked that compensation strategies were the least effective to him.

Under Indirect Strategies, Affective strategies were also considered extremely effective by the students besides Social Strategies. This inferred that the specific ways relating to the emotional aspect or confidence were big factors when learning a foreign language (Hardan, 2013; Lavasani & Faryadres, 2011). A participant said that although there was no retention in Nihongo, Mandarin and Hangeul, he acknowledged the importance of these languages because these might be factors in applying for jobs in the future. Another mentioned that he was still using Nihongo even after a language class because he would like to practice his vocabulary in preparation for his family's plan to go back to Japan. These various motivations of the learners caused them to stay interested in foreign languages or be 'encouraged in learning' (table 2.2).

Opposite to the earlier claims however, some learners bluntly shared that they were not interested in learning some foreign languages. For instance, two participants expressed that one factor affecting his language retention in Korean was he was not interested in learning the language. Indeed, motivation is a determining factor in language learning (Gardner et al., 1985), may this be in a positive or negative one. Specifically, it influences long-term language retention (Ducharme, 1995). Moreover, Metacognitive Strategies were also rated 'Extremely Effective' with an overall weighted mean of 3.13 despite being the lowest in rank under Indirect Strategies. This shows that strategies which aid in regulating learning are a contributor in learning foreign languages. Specifically, self- evaluation, such as identifying language errors and monitoring progress in learning, could be one of the most helpful, especially that this is considered 'Extremely Effective' with a weighted mean of 3.22, the highest in rank under Metacognitive Strategies.

The said category of strategies could be more effective if combined properly with another strategy. The study of Lawson and Hogben (1996) showed that students using many strategies in learning vocabulary had the higher possibility to recall more word definitions than other learners who used few strategies only.

Research Question 3: What training model should be developed to strengthen the foreign language learning and retention of language learners?

The findings in the study proved that the learners could only recall and use some of the foreign words or terms they studied in foreign language subjects because of various factors, including the limited time a target language is learned and lack of opportunities for practice or exposure. More so, they also experienced the same thing in learning German even if they were currently taking the subject during the conduct of the study.

So to address the difficulty of the learners in their foreign language learning and retention, a training model for a crash course is proposed.

Title of the Program:
ALtoR: " A LANGUAGE TO REMEMBER"
(*a crash course*)

Duration: 5 months; Monday-Friday; 1 hour a day

Delivery:
DAY 1
Review (Recalling words or details)
Vocabulary (Word of the Day)

Practice (Word or Sentence Drills)
Language Focus (Mini Lecture of a New Topic)
Homework

DAY 2
Review (Recalling words or details learned the other day)
Vocabulary (Word of the Day)
Practice (Word or Sentence Drills)
Group Dynamics/ Engagement

DAY 3
Review (Recalling words or details learned the other day)
Vocabulary (Word of the Day)
Practice (Word or Sentence Drills)
Language Focus (Mini Lecture of a New Topic)
Homework

DAY 4
Review (Recalling words or details learned the other day)
Vocabulary (Word of the Day)
Practice 1 (Word or Sentence Drills)
Group Dynamics/ Engagement

DAY 5
Enhancement (A 1-hour interaction to practice the target language)

The language program or crash course is named "ALToR: A Language to Remember"**.** The name of the crash course signifies the need to strengthen the language retention of foreign language learners. The program will run for 5 months. In each month, students will be asked to attend a class from Monday to Friday for 1 hour a day. After a month, the learners may be led to a higher level. However, a student in the program will be allowed to leave after a month if he desired.

In every meeting, a structured teaching-learning process will be followed. This is to give a solution to the weakened language retention of learners as derived from the results of data. In Day 1, there will be a review of learned words or details, word of the day (vocabulary), language focus, practice or drills and homework. Reviews and drills will be done to employ repetition or practice needed in language learning. Day 2 will have a modified process to give more opportunities for learners to use the learned phrases or words with their peers. This will include review, word of the day, practice and group dynamics or engaging activities. Under 'review', the students will recall the terms or details they have learned the previous day. Since the need for 'practice' was emphasized by the respondents of the study and it is a part of language learning, 'review' and 'practice' or drills are suggested to be parts of daily lessons. Also, engagement or group dynamics will be done on Day 2. In this, the students will be given the opportunity to apply concepts learned or to have an activity that will allow them to interact with other learners. Sample activities are games, group work or pair work. Whereas, Day 3 will have the same flow of activities with Day 1, and Day 4 will be the same with Day 2.

On the other hand, Day 5 will be a one-hour activity entirely involving the students only. There will be no new lessons or lectures, but the learners will be given written, spoken, group or

audio-visual activities that will allow them have practical use or have further involvement in the target language. For instance, the learners will have a role play, film viewing, or speeches. If not, they will be asked to leave the classroom and be given related outdoor activities. Since social strategies were considered extremely effective by most of the respondents of the study especially that the result was supported by other researchers, these kinds of strategies will be employed repeatedly in the program.

Conclusions and Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that all identified strategies were employed by the learners but the number of users for each classification of strategies varied. Specifically, memory strategies and compensation strategies were the ones used by the majority of the learners. Meanwhile, social strategies and cognitive strategies were the least used. Also, all identified strategies were considered helpful in foreign language learning. In particular, memory strategies and compensation strategies were very effective, while cognitive strategies and all subcategories of indirect strategies were marked extremely effective. Even if some strategies, especially social strategies were not used by some learners, these were still believed to be very effective by the respondents. The general contributors to the effectiveness of the strategies were: interest in the language or motivation, mode of classes, exposure to the language, social media and complexity of the language learned. The results derived from these conclusions lead the researcher to a number of recommendations. Crafting of curriculums in foreign language subjects should consider the length of time a language will be studied. For instance, an institution may set at least 2 semesters for each foreign language (Mandarin 1 and Mandarin 2). Also, foreign language classes should give more activities that will allow the learners to have practical use of the target language. Moreover, other language programs could be developed to address the retention of learners. In due time, the College of Arts of Humanities may also offer AB in Foreign Languages or AB in Asian Languages or any foreign language course. In addition, the importance of learning the target language should always be emphasized in a foreign language class. Various teaching strategies, especially those that lead learners to interaction, may be employed to cater the different learning styles of learners.

Appendix
A SAMPLE TEACHER'S GUIDE
DAY 1   *(1 hour)*

 REVIEW *(5 minutes)*

The teacher asks the learners of the things they can remember about the culture and customs of Korea, such as foods, clothes, music and language.

VOCABULARY *(3 minutes)*

Words of the Day:

Ani (아니) and **Aniyo** (아니요) mean 'no'.
'**Ani**' is used when communicating with a friend or with someone who is in the same age with you. '**Aniyo**' is used to show politeness. It is used when communicating with someone who is older than you.

PRACTICE *(10 minutes)*

A. The teacher gives a sample sentence using the word/s of the day.

Friend 1: Bap meogeosseo? (Have you eaten?)
Friend 2: **Ani**. (No.)

B. The teacher has the students recite again the two ways of saying 'No' in Hangeul. He puts emphasis on '**aniyo**', which is used to show politeness.

C. Then, the teacher asks 3 pairs to use '**ani**' in a 2-line dialogue, and another three pairs to use '**aniyo**'.

LANGUAGE FOCUS *(27 minutes)*
The teacher discusses the 14 basic Korean consonants and the 10 basic Korean vowels.

LEARNING THE KOREAN ALPHABET

English alphabets are written by stringing individual letters together. However in using Hangeul or Korean writing system, the alphabets are written in terms of syllables. Like English, Hangeul is composed of consonants and vowels.
An example is given below.

kae   na   da
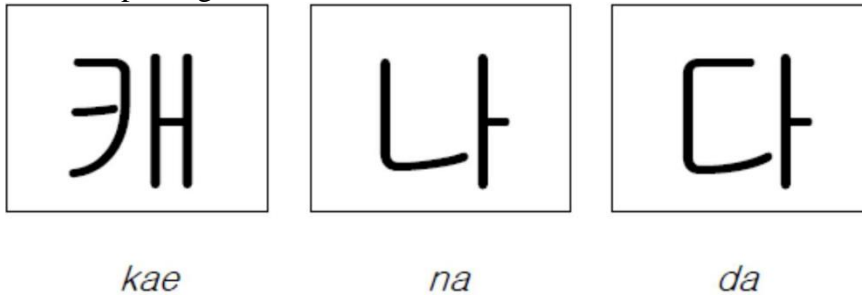
Every Hangeul letter has a name and its own sound. Some characters even have various pronunciations.
The teacher shows or writes one consonant one at a time and gives its name. Then, he stresses the proper pronunciation of each alphabet. Also, he asks the students to say aloud each Korean alphabet.

Basic Korean Consonants

	Sound	*Name*		*Sound*	*Name*
ㄱ	G	giyeok	ㅇ	ng	i-eung
ㄴ	N	nieun	ㅈ	j	jieut
ㄷ	D	digeut	ㅊ	ch	chieut
ㄹ	r/ l	rieul	ㅋ	k	kieuk
ㅁ	M	mieum	ㅌ	t	tieut
ㅂ	B	bieup	ㅍ	p	pieup
ㅅ	S	shiot	ㅎ	h	hieut

ㄱ **g** as in "**g**o"

ㄴ **n** as in "**n**o**n**e"

ㄷ **d** as in "**d**oor"

ㅇ **ng** as in "sa**ng**"

ㅈ **j** as in "**j**ar"

ㅊ **ch** as in "**ch**op"

ㄹ **r** as in "**r**un" or **l** as in "fee**l**"   ㅋ **k** as in "**k**ite"

ㅁ **m** as in "**m**a**m**a"   ㅌ **t** as in "**t**ime"

ㅂ **b** as in "**B**usan"   ㅍ **p** as in "**p**encil"

ㅅ **sh** as in "bu**sh**"   ㅎ **h** as in "**h**ouse"

Basic Korean Vowels

	Sound		Sound
ㅏ	a	ㅛ	Yo
ㅑ	ya	ㅜ	u/oo
ㅓ	eo	ㅠ	Yu
ㅕ	yeo	―	Eu
ㅗ	o	ㅣ	i / ee

ㅏ **a** as in "f**a**ther"   ㅛ **yo** as in "**yo**yo"

ㅑ **ya** as in "**ya**m"   ㅜ **oo** as in "m**oo**n"

ㅓ **eo** as in "y**aw**n"   ㅠ **yu** as in "**you**"

ㅕ **yeo** as in "**yo**nder"   ― **eu** as in "dark**e**r"

ㅗ **o** as in "s**o**ft"   ㅣ **i / ee** as in "f**ee**t"

After all basic Korean alphabets are given, the students will read or recite properly all of the alphabets.

HOMEWORK *(5 minutes)*

Practice the proper pronunciation of the Korean alphabets. Then, write two sample words where each Korean alphabet is used.
Before ending the class, clarifications about the topic may be made.

DAY 2 *(1 hour)*

REVIEW *(10 minutes)*

The teacher writes on the board the 24 basic Korean alphabets and asks some students to write the English equivalent or letter of each. When all alphabets are identified, he asks the class to read all alphabets as he points at each letter.
After reviewing the 24 basic Korean alphabets, the differences between '*ani*' and '*aniyo*' will be recalled (words of the day during the previous day).

VOCABULARY *(5 minutes)*

Words of the day
'**Ye**' (에) and '**ne**' (네) mean 'yes'.

Both are used to say 'yes', however '**ye**' is a little more polite than '**ne**'.
To further practice the words, the teacher will ask simple questions to the students, and the students answer just by saying '**ye**', '**ne**' or 'aniyo'.
Sample questions:
1. Is Korean the only foreign language you learn?
2. Are you a coffee drinker?
3. Do you usually go to the library?
4. Are you fond of hiking?
5. Do you spend Christmas season with your family often times?

PRACTICE *(20 minutes)*

To have drills on the 24 basic alphabets which have been learned the previous day, the students will be asked to write on a piece of paper the English equivalent of the alphabets (without looking at their notes). Then, these will be checked later, so the students can monitor their own errors.

ENGAGEMENT *(15 minutes)*

The class will be grouped into five. With their group mates, they will read the streets signs (written in Hangeul) shown to them.

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