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CHAPTER 3: AIMS AND PROCEDURE

3.1 Aims and Objectives of the Study

This chapter goes through the methodology being adopted in this research project. It explains the problems, hypotheses and introduces the population and sample. It also describes the data collection as well as data analysis methods. But what is the problem to be investigated? As it was explained in chapter one, millions of Iranian and Indian EFL/ESL learners are wandering to acquire language. To facilitate their learning process requires lots of research and as much preparation. One important way to assist this population is first to get familiar with them, their personality characteristics, their personal needs and techniques that they need to be armed with in order to master language. Language learning strategies play a crucial role in today’s Language learning setting. It has been proved that successful language learners use more strategies and they use strategies more frequently. These strategies have been found to be affected by the level of learners’ proficiency and learners’ gender. However, a lot of research has been conducted to investigate the impact of different variables on using language learning strategies and as many numbers on the importance of using language learning strategies in learning different language skills, unfortunately only a few, have been conducted to explore the impact of personality traits on the use of language learning strategies. Now the first problem that is talked over in this dissertation is whether language learning strategy selection and frequency of application are affected by the type of personality traits one beholds? The second problem is whether there exists a difference between the type of strategies and their frequency of application among Iranian and Indian male and female learners. As the Iranians are using English as a foreign language with almost no exposure to an authentic situation out of the classroom, but Indians are ESL learners using English in their daily communication and their schools as a medium of instruction. Gender differences in language learning strategies and personality traits were also reviewed in this research work. Whether males or females are better in language learning strategies is of main concern in this research work. The personality trait differences between male and females and also between Iranian and Indian learners is another
matter of concern which will be elaborated on in details. Now the research questions can be formed as follows.

### 3.2 Research Questions

1. Are the selection and frequency of using language learning strategies affected by the personality traits of a learner? Do people with different personality traits use different strategies?

   As the personality traits used in this study are based on the classification by McCrae and Costa (1995), there are five broad domains of personality. Each of these domains are further sub classified into 6 facets, and then there are 30 facets and five traits. On the other hand, strategies are classified into 6 groups based on SILL, which have been explained in details in chapter 1. Therefore, the relationship between each of these traits, facets, and strategies in pairs can form a long list of questions to be answered and the researcher raises the questions immediately after posing the general questions in detailed questions section.

2. Are Males and females different in the type of strategies they use and frequency of application of these strategies?

3. Do ESL Learners and EFL learners differ in the type of strategies they apply and the frequency of their application?

### 3.3 Hypotheses

According to Larsen and Buss, (2002, p. 8), the personality of an individual can be described as “a set of psychological traits and mechanisms within an individual which are organized and relatively enduring and influence his or her interactions with, and adoptions to, the environment (including the intra psychic, physical and Social environments)”. Personality is a concept that has been used to recognize stability and consistency of behavior in different situations, uniqueness of the individuals and personal differences. These personal differences may affect the general behavior of a person in learning processes. Therefore, the researcher hypothesized that such an enduring mechanism is the source of variation in different people. Personality is used to recognize stability and behavior. Language learning and using strategies in learning
language are behaviors which might be the result of a consistent resource. Oxford (1990, p.8) whose strategy classification is used in this research as a base for evaluating language learning strategies defines Language learning strategies as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations”.

So, the researcher hypothesized that specific actions taken by the learner (language learning strategies) are affected by consistently found (across people and over time) dimensions of thinking, behavior and feeling allow people individuals to be placed in a continuum with respect to different traits (personality traits).

It has further been hypothesized that gender might be a determining factor in the type and frequency of language learning strategies. Learning situations (EFL/ESL) have been hypothesized to exert influence on the type and frequency of strategies.

The hypotheses to be analyzed in this research are formed as:

1. Personality traits affect the type and frequency of strategy categories that one uses in learning language.
2. Indian ESL learners are different from their Iranian EFL counterparts in the type and frequency of using language learning strategies.
3. Males use the same type of language learning strategies as the females do.

In the first hypothesis, personality traits are correlated with strategy categories. As both personality traits and strategies are divided into sub categories, then the number of sub hypotheses is increased. For example, personality traits are classified into five dimensions (extraversion, Openness to experience, agreeableness, Neuroticism, and conscientiousness). Therefore, a serious of sub hypotheses can be formed as:

1.1 Extraversion dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of language learning strategies.
1.2 Openness dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of language learning strategies.
1.3 Agreeableness dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of language learning strategies.
Neuroticism dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of language learning strategies.

Conscientiousness dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of language learning strategies.

On the other hand, language learning strategies are classified into six categories as: Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies. The use and frequency of each of these strategy categories are hypothesized to be affected by different personality dimensions. Therefore, it has been sub hypothesized that:

1.1.1 Extraversion dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of Memory category of language learning strategies.

1.1.2 Extraversion dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of Cognitive category of language learning strategies.

1.1.3 Extraversion dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of Compensation category of language learning strategies.

1.1.4 Extraversion dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of Metacognitive category of language learning strategies.

1.1.5 Extraversion dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of Affective category of language learning strategies.

1.1.6 Extraversion dimension of personality affects the use and frequency of Social category of language learning strategies.

The given sub hypotheses are only for Extraversion personality trait related to learning strategy categories while the same can be considered for the other personality traits of Openness to experience, agreeableness, Neuroticism, and conscientiousness. Then, a total number of 24 more sub hypotheses are formed.

Considering gender, and language learning situation, the researcher also sub hypothesized the influences of these two factors on the use and frequency of different learning strategy categories. Therefore, a number of 12 more sub hypotheses formed as:

1. Males use the same Memory strategies as females and with the same frequency.
2. Males use the same Cognitive strategies as females and with the same frequency.
3. Males use the same Compensation strategies as females and with the same frequency.
4. Males use the same Metacognitive strategies as females and with the same frequency.
5. Males use the same Affective strategies as females and with the same frequency.
6. Males use the same Social strategies as females and with the same frequency.

And for language learning strategies, it has been hypothesized that:
1. ESL learners use the same Memory strategies as EFL learners and with the same frequency.
2. ESL learners use the same Cognitive strategies as EFL learners and with the same frequency.
3. ESL learners use the same Compensation strategies as EFL learners and with the same frequency.
4. ESL learners use the same Metacognitive strategies as EFL learners and with the same frequency.
5. ESL learners use the same Affective strategies as EFL learners and with the same frequency.
6. ESL learners use the same Social strategies as EFL learners and with the same frequency.

The number of hypotheses is not blocked here as personality dimension are further classified into facets. Each of the big 5 personality traits is made up of 6 facets or sub traits. These can be assessed independently of the trait that they belong to. They are also called Subordinate Personality Traits. These traits from the Adjective check list correlated substantially with scores on the facet in a study of self-ratings (Costa and McCrae, 1992, p.49).

The facets of extraversion are friendliness (Warmth-outgoing), Gregariousness (sociable), Assertiveness (forceful), Activity level (energetic), excitement-seeking (adventurous), and cheerfulness (enthusiastic). So, the following hypotheses are
formed correlating each facet with language learning strategies in general and language learning categories in particular.

1. Friendliness (Warmth-outgoing) affects the use and frequency of language learning strategies in general.
2. Friendliness (Warmth-outgoing) affects the use and frequency of Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective and Social categories of language learning strategies.
3. Gregariousness (sociable) affects the use and frequency of language learning strategies in general.
4. Gregariousness (sociable) affects the use and frequency of Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective and Social categories of language learning strategies.

A long list of questions and related hypotheses are formed considering five dimensions of personality and each personality dimension including six facets correlated with six language learning categories. Therefore, there are tens of questions and hypotheses embedded in the general dimensions of personality and their related facets and also in different groups of strategies. A list of the questions is appeared at the end of this chapter (3) all the hypotheses and sub hypotheses which are listed at the end of this chapter are empirically analyzed in chapter4 and 5.

3.4 Population: Subjects

The participants in the present research project consist of 300 male and female college level students studying English in English Language Teaching Institute of Symbiosis (ELTIS). Disproportionate stratified random sampling was used. In this study both Iranian and Indian male and female students aged 18 to 25 were included. They had just started their certificate course (a 6.5 months course) and they had been placed in beginners’ level based on a placement test. They are using the same facilities as language labs and Audio-visual technologies. A number of 24 full time faculty members are running classes of all four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and also grammar and vocabulary courses. The subjects had all been interviewed orally as a placement test and placed in beginner’s level. The subjects
include 150 Indians (75 males and 75 females) and the remaining 150 students were Iranians (79 females and 71 males).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3-1 The gender wise, nation wise distribution of the sample</th>
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<td>Indians = 150 (males = 75 and females = 75)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iranians = 150 (females = 79 and males = 71)</td>
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3.5 Data Collection and Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study included 2 questionnaires and a personal data sheet. Descriptions of the three tools are as follows:

3.5.1. SILL Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford 1990)

In order to measure strategy use, Oxford (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning SILL was used in this study. The SILL was devised by Rebecca Oxford (1990) as an instrument to assess the frequency of use of language learning strategies by students. There are two versions: one for native speakers of English (80 items) and another for learners of English as a second or foreign language (50) items. The SILL is one of the most useful manuals of learner strategy assessment tool currently available. It is estimated that 40-50 major studies including dissertations and theses have been done employing the SILL. The SILL appears to be the only instrument that has been checked for reliability and also validated in multiple ways (oxford and Bury- Stock, 1995). Many previous measures were not adopted for many studies because they lacked reliability and validity data. The SILL uses a 5 Likert-scale for which the learners are asked to indicate their responses (1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) to a strategy description Such as” I try to find patterns in English”. The researcher did not do any modifications on the items of the SILL. The version of SILL used in this study is a fifty item instrument which assesses two main groups of strategies: direct strategies and indirect strategies which are further subdivided into sex groups of Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Social and Affective groups.

- Memory-related strategies help learners link one L2 item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding. Various Memory-
related strategies enable learners to learn and retrieve information in an
Orderly string (e.g., acronyms), while other techniques create learning and
retrieval via sounds (e.g., rhyming), images (e.g., a mental picture of the word
itself or the meaning of the word), a combination of sounds and images (e.g.,
the keyword method), body movement (e.g., total physical response),
mechanical means (e.g., flashcards), or location (e.g., on a page or blackboard)
(see Oxford, 1990 for details and multiple examples).

- **Cognitive** strategies enable the learner to manipulate the language material in
direct ways, e.g., through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, summarizing,
synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger schemas
(knowledge structures), practicing in a naturalistic settings, and practicing
structures and sounds formally.

- **Compensatory** strategies (e.g., guessing from the context in listening and
reading; using synonyms and “talking around” the missing word to aid
speaking and writing; and strictly for speaking, using gestures or pause words)
help the learner make up for missing knowledge.

- **Metacognitive strategies** (e.g., identifying one’s own learning style
preferences and needs, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing
materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, and
evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning
strategy) are employed for managing the learning process overall.

- **Affective** strategies, such as identifying one’s mood and Angry level, talking
about Feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, and using deep
breathing or positive self talk.

- **Social** strategies (e.g., asking questions to get verification, asking for
clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task,
talking with a native-speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and
Social norms) help the learner work with others and understand the target
culture as well as the language.

3.5.2 NEO PI-R (Costa and McCrae, 1992)

To measure the five dimensions of personality such as Neuroticism,
extroversion, agreeableness, Openness and conscientiousness a test designed by Costa
and McCrae (1992) will be used. The NEO PI-R (NEO-PI-R; Costa and McCrae, 1992) includes 240-item. As described by Costa and McCrae, the NEO-FFI was constructed by first selecting the 12 items with the largest structure coefficients for each of the five factors. Subsequently, 10 substitutions were made to permit reverse keying of some items in each scale, diversify item content, and eliminate items with joint coefficients.

The Five domains covered by NEO-PI-R/NEO-FFI can be described as follows:

**Neuroticism (N):** The most pervasive domain of personality scales contrasts adjustment or emotional stability with maladjustment or Neuroticism. Although clinicians distinguish among many different kind of emotional distress, from Social phobia to agitated Depression to bOrderline hostility, many studies have shown that individuals prone to any one of these emotional states are also likely to experience the others also (Costa and McCrae, 1992). The general tendency to experience negative affect such as fear, sadness, embarrassment, anger, guilt and disgust is the core of the N domain.

* Extraversion (E): Extraverts are of course, sociable, but sociability is only one of the traits that comprise the domain of Extraversion. Extraverts like people and prefer large group gathering, and in addition to it they are also assertive, active and talkative. They like excitement stimulation and tend to be cheerful is disposition. They are upbeat, energetic, and optimistic.

* Openness (O): Openness to experience is much less well known that N or E as a major dimension of personality. The element O- active imagination, aesthetic, sensitivity, attentiveness to inner Feelings, preference for variety, intellectual curiosity, and independence of judgment have often played a role in theories and measures of personality, but their coherence in a single broad domain has seldom been recognized.
• **Agreeableness (A):** Like extraversion, agreeableness is a primary dimension of interpersonal tendencies. The agreeable person is fundamentally altruistic. He or she is sympathetic to other and eager to help them, and believes that others will be equally helpful in return. On the other hand, the disagreeable or antagonistic person is ego centric, skeptical of other's intentions and competitive rather than cooperative.

• **Conscientiousness (C):** Many of the theoretical approaches to personality, particularly psychodynamic theory, concern the control of impulses. During the course of development most individuals learn to manage their desires and the inability to resist impulses and temptation is generally a sign of high N among adults. But self control can also refer to more active processes of planning, organizing and carrying out tasks: and individual differences in this tendency are the basis of conscientiousness.

In a sample of 1,539 employees of a large national corporation, Costa and McCrae found coefficients of internal consistency ranging from .68 for agreeableness to .89 for Neuroticism. The test-retest reliability calculated on a sample of 208 college students with an interval of three months shown that the temporal reliability of NEO-FFI is good. The test-retest reliability for Neuroticism is .79, for extroversion is .79, for Openness is .80, for agreeableness is .75 and for conscientiousness is .83.

3.5.3 Personal Data Sheet

The personal data sheet was constructed which comprises the demographical details of the students such as their name, age at the time of the testing, their gender, college, education and the other details regarding their hobbies. It also assigns whether the participants are EFL learners or ESL learners.

3.5.3.1 Foreign Language and Second Language

According to Oxford (2003, p.1), A second language is a language studied in a setting where that language is the main vehicle of everyday communication and where abundant input exists in that language. A foreign language is a language studied in an
environment where it is not the primary vehicle for daily interaction and where input in that language is restricted.

3.6 Research Design

For the present study 2 x 2 x 2 factorial research design was employed. Two independent variables, namely, language environment of the participants (Iranian EFL and Indian ESL), gender of the participants (male and female) and personality dimensions and facets and three dependent variables, personality traits, personality facets and language learning strategy groups are included in this study.

3.7 Variables

3.7.1 Independent Variables

(i) Language environment – ESL/EFL

(ii) Sex – Male and Female

(iii) Personality – (a) Neuroticism, (b) Extraversion, (c) Openness,
     (d) Agreeableness, (e) Conscientiousness

3.7.2 Dependent Variables

- Language learning strategies
- Personality dimensions
- Personality facets

3.7.3 Controlled Variables

(i) Education – Subjects are all students studying English in a certificate course. They are all beginners.

(ii) Place for the Study – Symbioses English language teaching institute of Symbiosis (ELTIS)

(iii) Age - 18 to 25 years
3.8 Procedures

Sample for the study was randomly selected from different colleges of Pune university English center and Symbioses ELTIS (English language teaching institute of Symbiosis). All the subjects were administered the NEO –PI.R in small groups ranging from 8 to 20. Testing was done in small group and tests administered in following sequence – (i) Personal Data Sheet, (ii) SILL Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (iii) NEO PI-R. Researcher took all the efforts to clarify the doubts of the participants about the research and the tests. Subjects were told they could respond anonymously but no one did. As an incentive to participate in the study, subjects were promised feed back if they were interested in their personality characteristics. While collecting the completed answer sheets from each subject, they were scanned for missing data. In cases with missing data, subjects were persuaded to fill in the gaps. After scoring was completed, the interested subjects were given feedback through their emails in their personal data sheet. Subjects were also told they could contact the researcher for further clarification with respect to the feedback if necessary. Quite a few subjects called back to use this opportunity. The collected answer sheets for both questionnaires and personal data sheet were entered into a data form in SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 18. Each item in Likert-scale was inputted. The data for independent variables of gender and nationality were codified as 1 and 2 both males and females and ESL and EFL successively. Through compute variables of data analysis, all the amounts of variables were assigned and the raw data got ready to be analyzed.

3.9 Statistical Analysis

1. Descriptive statistics and internal consistency of NEO PI-R and SILL were calculated using SPSS.

2. Cronbach Alpha for the full sample was measured. Alpha coefficient for domains and facets were recorded.

3. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was used to assign the normality of distribution. It can be modified to serve as a goodness or fit test. In the special case of testing for normality of the distribution, samples are standardized and
compared with a standard normal distribution. This is equivalent to setting the mean and variance of the reference distribution equal to the sample estimates, and it is known that using these to define the specific reference distribution changes the null distribution of the test statistic.

4. Pearson correlation was used to investigate the relationship between personality traits, facets and groups of language learning strategies. In statistics, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (sometimes referred to as the PPMCC or PCC or Pearson's r, and is typically denoted by r) is a measure of the correlation (linear dependence) between two variables X and Y, giving a value between +1 and −1 inclusive. It is widely used in the sciences as a measure of the strength of linear dependence between two variables...

5. T. test, correlation coefficient, and regression were also used to assign relationship between traits and strategies and also between independent variables and dependent ones.

As explained in hypotheses section in this chapter, broad domains of personality can be further sub classified into 30 facet and strategies can be grouped into five. Therefore lots of questions can be formed and the same number of hypotheses can be thought of. The researcher analyzed the following questions and hypotheses by means of factor Analysis system. The findings will be discussed in chapter 5.

3.10 Further Research Questions and Hypotheses

1. Is there a relationship between Neuroticism and different groups of language learning strategies?
2. Is there a relationship between Extraversion and different groups of language learning strategies?
3. Is there a relationship between Openness to experience and different groups of language learning strategies?
4. Is there a relationship between Agreeableness and different groups of language learning strategies?
5. Is there a relationship between Conscientiousness and different groups of language learning strategies?
6. Is there a relationship between Angry and different groups of language learning strategies?
7. Is there a relationship between Angry Hostility and different groups of language learning strategies?
8. Is there a relationship between Depression and different groups of language learning strategies?
9. Is there a relationship between Self-Consciousness and different groups of language learning strategies?
10. Is there a relationship between Impulsiveness and different groups of language learning strategies?
11. Is there a relationship between Vulnerability and different groups of language learning strategies?
12. Is there a relationship between Warmth and different groups of language learning strategies?
13. Is there a relationship between Gregariousness and different groups of language learning strategies?
14. Is there a relationship between Assertiveness and different groups of language learning strategies?
15. Is there a relationship between Activity and different groups of language learning strategies?
16. Is there a relationship between Excitement-seeking and different groups of language learning strategies?
17. Is there a relationship between Positive emotion and different groups of language learning strategies?
18. Is there a relationship between being Fantasy and different groups of language learning strategies?
19. Is there a relationship between Aesthetics and different groups of language learning strategies?
20. Is there a relationship between Feelings and different groups of language learning strategies?
21. Is there a relationship between Actions and different groups of language learning strategies?
22. Is there a relationship between Ideas and different groups of language learning strategies?
23. Is there a relationship between Values and different groups of language learning strategies?
24. Is there a relationship between Trust and different groups of language learning strategies?
25. Is there a relationship between Straightforwardness and different groups of language learning strategies?
26. Is there a relationship between Altruism and different groups of language learning strategies?
27. Is there a relationship between Compliance and different groups of language learning strategies?
28. Is there a relationship between Modesty and different groups of language learning strategies?
29. Is there a relationship between Tender-mindedness and different groups of language learning strategies?
30. Is there a relationship between Competence and different groups of language learning strategies?
31. Is there a relationship between Order and different groups of language learning strategies?
32. Is there a relationship between Dutifulness and different groups of language learning strategies?
33. Is there a relationship between Achievement-Striving and different groups of language learning strategies?
34. Is there a relationship between Self-Discipline and different groups of language learning strategies?
35. Is there a relationship between Deliberation and different groups of language learning strategies?

Based on the research questions listed above, it can be, as a whole, null hypothesized that:
1. There exists a relationship between personality factors and the frequency of using language learning strategies.

2. There is a difference between ESL learners and EFL learners on the frequency of using language learning strategies?

3. There is a difference between male and female in their use of language learning strategies.

And it can further be null hypothesized that there does not exist a kind of relationship between the pairs which appear in each research question. Therefore the whole paper goes through finding an answer in Order to statistically accept or reject the null hypotheses.