Raising Students' Awareness of Academic Strategies Use: Strategy-based Instruction in English-for-Lawyers Course

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Abstract	Article Information
The purpose of this research was to investigate the impact of raising students' awareness of academic strategies use on their academic success. A quasi-experimental one group pre-test post-test comparison design was developed. A total number of 38 students took part in the study. The study explicitly integrated strategy-based instruction (EISI) as strategies training on awareness-raising practices within first year English courses at Wollega University. The training had been conducted for the first five weeks, from September28 to October 4, 2016 before the regular English for Lawyers course began. Tests and questionnaire were used as data collection instruments. T-tests were employed to determine whether there were significant differences on pre-and-post-test scores of language proficiency tests, and on syllabus-based achievement test given at the end of the course; whereas, the participants' responses to the questionnaire were analyzed comparing the mean values obtained for the categories using the sum of each item. The major findings of the study show that the treatment does not seem to bring significant improvement in learners' comprehension ability and academic achievement in a similar way. Low achievers do seem to benefit more from Strategy Instruction than high achievers. On the other hand, the results of the questionnaire indicated that almost all participants favored strategy-based instruction and became well aware of the significance of strategies training supplemented in the course material; and finally witnessed that the texts, tasks and assessments they practiced in the course material was interesting and good for them to improve their language abilities. Based on these, it can be concluded that the strategy training provided as an introductory unit together with its accompanying improvement on both tests could not be taken as conclusive results. This is because the EISI was restricted on one section that took English for Lawyers course under a single program. Therefore, it is recommended that further studies in the area should include more than these samples and research methods.	 *Corresponding Author: Sherif Ali E-mail: alisherif29@yahoo.com

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INTRODUCTION

Currently, many researchers in the field of SLL have acknowledged the significance of language learning strategies and they have considered them as the very decisive factors in bringing success both in learning process and students' academic work (Nunan, 1999). This is mainly for two possible reasons. The first one is because of the assumptions commonly forwarded by these scholars such as (Oxford, 1990) that these strategies would help language learners retrieve and store material, and facilitate their learning by structuring its environment. The second one is resulted from research findings which have shown that the degree of success in language learning depends largely on the strategies learners use; and these strategies use in turn have made known the existence of significant correlation with students' language proficiency (Oxford, 2001) and self-confidence (Chamot, 2004). Overall, they suggested the necessity of teaching language learning strategies.

Furthermore, many other scholars moved further and noted that students can be taught to use these strategies through curriculums which include strategy training in learning strategy use. In this regard, members of the strategy training group say that if learners are conscious about the selection, and use of their learning strategies, they will become more successful language learners; as they would be able to get chances to take more responsibility for their own language learning, and also enhance their use out of class. As Cohen (1998 in Manchón 1999) remarks, the ultimate goal of strategy training is to empower students by allowing them to take control of the language learning processes.

However, language curricula have tended to focus on teaching knowledge and skills, and have given insignificant attention to learners' *how to learn* for them. In fact, a variety of language learning strategies training have already been developed and implemented in a range of educational settings. Predominantly, almost all of them assumed to involve an expansion of learners' stock of learning strategies, and the aims, according to Cohen (2003) are firstly, to increase learner awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in language learning and be able to choose from the range of strategies which they can help students learn the target language most efficiently.

Oxford (1990) describes awareness training as a course in which learners become familiar with the general thought of language learning strategies and the way such strategies can help these learners carry out various responsibilities. Thus, it is now argued that by raising learners' awareness of these strategies, it is possible to improve students' language proficiency and academic achievement. This consecutively would help to improve both the learning process and product because it enhances learners' awareness of how to learn successfully and inspires those in need of motivation (Rasekh & Ranjbari, 2003 in Muhammed, 2001).

Then again it becomes apparent that raising students' awareness of academic strategies alone does not bring effective language learning. Various research findings have shown that the degree of success in language learning depends greatly on the strategies learners use. This is mainly due to the fact that when students are trained in using strategies, it is believed that they experience self-involvement which leads them to learn individually and autonomously (Cohen, 2003), since this would help to take responsibility of their own learning. Accordingly, it is very important to know that learning strategies training are not limited only to awareness raising; but it also encourages learners to experiment and strengthen their existing strategies.

In this regard, writers on learning strategies instruction (Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1995; Cohen, 1999; Nunan, 1999; Macaro, 2001) have pointed out that learner's strategy training or instruction is important for effective and successful language learning and

language proficiency; they went further on and reported that knowledge, awareness, and practice of language learning strategies should provide learners with 1) skills to take responsibility for their own success as language learners, 2) the ability to diagnose their own learning strengths and weaknesses, and 3) more autonomy in their learning habits (Cohen, 1999 in Kinoshita, 2003, p. 291). As a matter of fact, Nunan (1999) assessed many studies on strategy training and acknowledged the existence of 'some evidence of a relationship between learner effectiveness and awareness of learning strategies; and to this end, strategy training is believed to make a difference.

While there is some recognition of the role of language learning strategies in academic success in Ethiopian higher education, it is more often forgotten to be dedicatedly addressed by curriculums. More frequently, it is assumed that learners have already developed strategies in their previous high school context and are applying these strategies in the university setting. The logical questions that need to be answered are: *do our students fully aware of these strategies including their uses? Are they in a position how to select strategies that match their needs and goals? Which strategies can they choose and also feel comfortable to use with a given/specific task?* These questions, however, could not have been answered positively due to the fact that increasing numbers of learners join to university/college with limited academic experience or with experience they were unable to apply in the learning context.

Reviewing the research results conducted at various universities (AAU, KCTE and MU, Bahrdar and Haromaya Universities), Betegiorgis and Abiy (2015) provided the reason why many programs in universities became unsuccessful was because they would give instructions and practice that are not relevant to the academic needs of students. As a result, the students could not have been getting the type of instruction which would encourage them to be active, involved learners who could, for example, think critically, analyze and synthesize written discourses for communication. In fact, the findings from studies carried out at Wollega University are also very disappointing (Eba, 2013).

The present study attempted to fill-in this gap by providing a basis to redesign and deliver strategy-based instruction (developed by the present researcher) that raises students' awareness of academic strategies use, i.e., **E**xplicitly **I**ntegrated **S**trategy-based **I**nstruction **(EISI)**. As a matter of fact, this instruction (EISI) had been introduced independently in the first 5 weeks before the usual *English for lawyers'* course began. Thus, the objective of this study was to investigate firstly, whether or not this 5-week Explicitly Integrated Strategy Instruction introduced as introductory unit improved students' performances in comprehension, and secondly identify which group benefited more; high-achieving group or low-achieving group; and finally, inquired whether or not these raised awareness of strategies use brought behavioral changes on their awareness and motivation. The study, more specifically, tested the following null hypotheses:

1. Raising students' awareness of academic strategies use through EISI does not bring significant change on students' pre-post-tests mean value scores of comprehension and achievement tests;

2. Raising students' awareness of academic strategies use through EISI does not have a significant change in the mean score values of higher and lower achieving groups;

3. The instructional approaches delivered in the course do not increase students' motivation in doing activities, tasks and assessments presented in the teaching material.

Learning Strategies Use

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As Cohen (2003) suggested, strategies could be categorized into two: *language learning strategies (LLS)* and *language use strategies (LUS)*; and accordingly, the former, language learning strategies are defined as conscious thoughts and behaviors used by learners with an overt goal of improving their knowledge and understanding (lower-level thinking skills) of a target language. They (LLS) include cognitive strategies for manipulating and memorizing target language structures, *Meta cognitive strategies* for managing and supervising strategy use, *affective strategies* for gauging emotional reactions to learning and for lowering anxieties, and finally, *social strategies* for fostering learning, such as cooperating with other learners and looking for interaction with more able persons. Whereas *language use strategies,* which come into play once the language material is already accessible, are to help students utilize the language they have already learned. They *(LUS)*; include strategies for retrieving information about the language already stored in memory, rehearsing target language structures, and communicating in the language in spite of gaps in target language knowledge (ibid).

Two major reasons have been given for the significance of learning strategies in foreign language learning and teaching. The first, according to Grenfell and Harris (1999) is by examining the strategies used by foreign language learners during the language learning process, it is possible to get insights into the meta-cognitive, cognitive, social, and affective processes involved in language learning. The second explanation is that less successful learners can be taught new strategies, by helping them become better language learners. In contrast, Oxford (1990) discussed two general types of strategies: *direct strategies* which include Memory, Cognitive and Compensation Strategies and *indirect strategies* which incorporate Meta cognitive, Affective and Social Strategies:

Memory strategies help the learner store new information in memory and retrieve it

later. They are particularly said to be useful in vocabulary learning which is "the most sizeable and unmanageable component in the learning of any language" (Oxford, 1990). They help students who are learning foreign language skills by making them store written or verbal material and then retrieve it later when needed for communication in consequence enlarging their knowledge base (ibid). The second groups of direct strategies are the cognitive strategies. They are the most common type of strategies used by learners while they are, for example, practicing, receiving and sending messages, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output (O'Malley et al., 1989 & Oxford, 1990).

In contrast, compensatory strategies can help learners to overcome knowledge limitations; Oxford (1990) considered these strategies as the tools for guessing sharply because learners do not have to recognize and understand every single word as long as they can guess 'systematically' through using linguistic clues*:* clues like word order, word formation (e.g. identifying suffixes and prefixes) and word stress including their background knowledge of the target language to facilitate their comprehension. The second group of strategies, that is, indirect strategies, according to Oxford (1990), consists of three subcategories: Meta cognitive, Affective, and Social Strategies.

Meta cognitive strategies mostly involve the use of listening/reading comprehension activities and utilize individual perceptions to help learners increase their levels of understanding. And, they go beyond the cognitive devices and provide a way for learners to coordinate with their own learning process. They occur during the pre-, while and post-stages, and they increase learners' levels of comprehension and better develop an awareness of listening/reading (Garner & Alexander, 1989 in Najar, 1999). The other subcategory, according to Oxford (1990) is the affective side of the learner, claimed to be one of the very biggest influences on

language learning success or failure. It encompasses such concepts as self-esteem, attitudes, motivation, anxiety, culture shock, inhibition, risk-taking, and tolerance of ambiguity (ibid). In contrast, social strategies enable language learners to learn with others by making use of strategies such as asking questions (i.e., asking for clarification or verification), cooperating with others, and empathizing with others (Oxford,1990). This is due to the fact that there are mixed ability groups within which learners (in learning situations) can develop some appropriate strategies for sharing ideas and asking for help.

Accordingly, writers on learning strategies instruction (Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1995; Cohen, 1999; Nunan, 1999; Macaro, 2001) have pointed out that learner's strategy training or instruction is important for effective and successful language learning and language proficiency; they went further on and reported that knowledge, awareness, and practice of language learning strategies provide learners with 1) skills to take responsibility for their own success as language learners, 2) the ability to diagnose their own learning strengths and weaknesses, and 3) more autonomy in their learning habits (Cohen, 1999 in Kinoshita, 2003, p. 291).

Strategies Training and Language Teaching

As a matter of fact, Nunan (1999), as mentioned previously, assessed many studies on strategy training and acknowledged the existence of some evidence of a relationship between learner effectiveness and awareness of learning strategies; and to this end, strategy training is believed to make a difference. This is because these strategies are believed to help language learners retrieve and store material, and facilitate their learning by structuring its environment. Moreover, research has shown that the degree of success in language learning depends greatly on the strategies learners use. Strategy use correlates with students' language proficiency

(Oxford, 2001) and self-confidence (Chamot, 2004). However, it is said that language curricula have tended to focus on teaching knowledge and skills, and have abandoned to teach learners how to learn.

In contrast, strategy training in foreign language teaching is a new approach, preferably inclined in the way of teaching learners explicitly the techniques of learning, and an awareness of how and when to use strategies to enable them to become self-directed (Oxford, 2003). Hence, the ultimate goal of strategy training is to empower students by allowing them to take control of the language learning process (Cohen, 1998 in Manchón 1999). Apparently, advocates of the strategy training group predicate on the assumption that if learners are conscious about and become responsible for the selection, use, and evaluation of their learning strategies, they will become more successful language learners; this is because learners can get chances to take more responsibility for their own language learning, and enhancing their use of the target language out of class.

Oxford (1990) describes awareness training as a course in which learners become aware of and familiar with the general thought of language learning strategies and the way such strategies can help these learners carry out various responsibilities. A variety of instructional models for foreign language strategy training have already been developed and implemented in a variety of educational settings. Scholars in the field sort out and these are briefly described below. The first model for language strategy training is applied on *General Study Skills Courses*. The second one is known as *consciousness-raising or familiarization*. The third instructional model for foreign language strategy training is called *Strategy Workshops*. *Peer Tutoring* is another one. The fifth instructional model for foreign language strategy training is called *Strategies in Language Textbooks*. The final instructional

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model for foreign language strategy training is called *Strategies-based Instruction (S$_b$I)*.

Strategy-based Instruction

Strategies-based Instruction introduced by Andrew Cohen (Cohen, 2003), is a learner-centered approach to teaching that extends classroom strategy training to include both implicit and explicit integration of strategies into the course content. Students experience the advantages of systematically applying the strategies to the learning and use of the language they are studying. In addition, they have opportunities to share their preferred strategies with other students and to increase their strategy use in the typical language tasks they are asked to perform. In actual classroom context, S$_b$I (Cohen, 1999) is promoted as an approach to achieve two objectives: to expose learners to language-learning processes that are efficient and systematic; and to develop the language proficiency of their learners.

Basically, those who provide justified reasons for the need of teaching FL learning strategies (in fact favored by an increasing number of L2/FL studies) through S$_b$I pointed out that language teaching would be more effective if it is based on what learners actually do while learning the language. In line to this state of affairs, curriculums which include dedicated instruction in learning strategy use can provide learners with bridges by encouraging them to apply the learning strategies they already have and in addition, to develop new appropriate ones. Furthermore, many scholars pointed out that students can be taught to use these strategies through curriculums which include strategy-based instruction by encouraging them to apply in the learning contexts they already involved in. More recently, research has been directed towards studying learning strategies that are more appropriate for the tasks learners ordinarily encounter in the educational context and have encouraging findings about the effect of strategy-based instruction.

The first step in S$_b$I is to decide which strategies to focus on and how instruction should take place. Cohen (1999 cited in Kinoshita, 2003, p. 291) presents three options for strategy selection and instruction. One possibility is to 'start with course materials and decide which strategies to focus on and where to insert their instruction'. In fact, this first option is practical for instructors who self-select their course books or have them assigned. Since most course books contain a variety of cognitive, meta-cognitive, and social strategies, selection of strategies will be easy. Additionally, instructional support can be found most in teacher's manuals. Thus, the second option is for instructors who may prefer to insert strategies spontaneously into lessons whenever appropriate – i.e., when there is a need to help students to overcome problems in attending to the tasks or material. However, for instructors who design their own materials for a specific course or modality, they are advised to start with selected (desired) strategies that are relevant to course objectives and focus on and design activities around them. The third option (the one taken as Instructional Framework of the present study) is a way to focus on key strategies believed to be appropriate for meeting course objectives and specific groups of learners.

Instructional Frameworks for Learning Strategies Training

A variety of instructional frameworks for foreign language learning strategies training have already been developed and implemented in a variety of educational settings. Indeed, all types of strategies training involve an expansion of learners' stock of learning strategies, and the aims, as discussed above are to: (1) heighten learner awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in language learning and the range of strategies from which they can choose to help them learn the target language most efficiently and (2) develop responsibility of their own

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learning; that is, to develop learner autonomy (Cohen 2003).

Different types of frameworks for Strategy Training have been known in the field; however, the present study used the Oxford et al. (1990 quoted in Peacock 2001) framework which can help to develop the Explicitly Integrated Strategy Instruction (EISI) which is incorporated as introductory unit. Oxford et al. (ibid) outlines the sequence for the introduction of strategies emphasizing: 1) explicit strategy awareness, 2) discussion of the benefits of strategy use, 3) functional and contextualized practice with the strategies, 4) self-evaluation and monitoring of language performance, 5) suggestions for or demonstrations of the transferability of the strategies to new tasks;

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main objective of the study was to determine the impact of raising students' awareness of academic strategies use on students' language proficiency and achievement. The study employed a quasi-experimental research, especially one-group pre-post comparison design whereby this one group received a treatment. This design involves selecting groups, upon which variables are tested, without any random pre-selection processes. Here the samples are not randomly selected but can use pre-and post-design to assess students' language performances and comprehension abilities before and at the end of study (Nunan, 1999). In such circumstances, what the researcher is likely to do is to control, as much as possible, other variables that meddle the outcome of the study.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were 38 first year Law major students taking English for Lawyers course EnLa-M 1013_at Wollega University. Of these students 21 were female and 17 were male. All of them were taken as sample of the study. To gather pertinent data for the study, different kinds of data collection instruments were used. These are teaching material, tests and questionnaire.

Conducting the Experiment (EISI) in English for Lawyers Course Classes

The main objective of 'English for Lawyers' course, as mentioned previously, is to help students develop the language ability so that they can use it for academic purposes. One of the purposes of the present study is whether the existing instructional textbook that incorporates strategy training and raise academic strategies use can help to facilitate the intended goals of this study.

The teaching material with Explicitly Integrated Strategy Instruction (EISI), incorporated as introductory unit was implemented as *independent variables.* In a 5 weeks long training, 40 hours lessons, were provided as the training of EISI. So, the first part of the teaching material, the introductory unit, is used EISI to develop students' awareness-raising practices using a variety of instructional models for foreign language learning strategies training. In this instruction learners were rendered an explanation and examples on how to use different academic strategies and encouraged them to apply in normally delivered course material by themselves. The remaining parts incorporated different macro and micro language and academic skills/strategies, by employing an integrated approach to teaching English in legal contexts; the texts were authentic and general topics based on law themes. The tasks and activities represented a variety of exercises on grammar, vocabulary, and reading, listening, speaking and writing; together with various reading and writing modes such as narrations, argumentations, descriptions and explanations.

Tests

The students' language proficiency and achievement tests are taken as *dependent variables.* A pretest–posttest-final exam comparison group design with deliberately assigned subjects to the problem–solving

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instructional procedure- EISI was used to examine its impact. Two types of tests were utilized during the study: Comprehension Test and an Achievement Test. Both of them are teacher–made tests. The Comprehension Test was administered as a pre-test and post–test one day prior to and five weeks after the training of EISI respectively. As a pre-test, it was used to assess the students' language proficiencies and comprehension abilities as a controlling condition prior to the instructional training; and to split up students into higher and lower achieving groups. Five weeks later, another closely matched test was administered as a post-test to see if the EISI introduced as the first *independent variable* has brought about differences and /or improvements in the scores of these students (higher and lower achievers). The rationales for the use of these tests for the pre- and post–training assessments are: to have comparable test results in which differences are to be attributed to the treatment. The second kind of test, Achievement Test, was administered as a final exam, at the end of the course. The Achievement Test, however, was employed to assess if students have comparable results (Bachman, 1990) after the EISI training with the normal English for Lawyers course using the conventional approach; and to appraise if they have exhibited any difference in their scores due to the intervention training and without it.

To develop these tests, all the texts from the existing teaching material were utilized, based on the concepts derived from Alderson et.al. 1995; thus, this helps to avoid problems that might arise from different or new modes of presentation. To standardize these teacher–made tests, the following efforts made. Firstly, two colleagues (graduate students) and one senior instructor (PhD holder) were asked to comment on the tests i.e. face validation. Then they were improved and given to other three individuals (one PhD holder and two MA holders), who are involved in testing (TEFL), to evaluate the test vis-à-vis the construct and specification provided i.e.

content validation. Again, the tests were improved based on these comments. Finally, they were piloted on some selected students from previous batch at school of law. The results of the Achievement Test showed a correlation which is very strong.

Questionnaire

Questionnaire was another data collection tool employed in the study. In fact, many data that do not naturally appear in quantitative form such as the present ones, i.e., awareness towards strategies use preferences can be collected in a quantitative way (Oxford, 2003). It had three parts; the first part (see Table 4) constituted 3 items which sought information about the adequacy of support students received from EISI training integrated in English for Lawyers course. The items were developed in Likert Scale. The items were developed by the researcher derived from the literature he has read. In the second and third parts of the questionnaire, (see Table 5 and 6 below) only two open-ended items were probed about students' perceptions regarding the strategy training they were involved in, the benefits they acquired, the challenges they faced and their recommendations about what should be done to make the course better for future students. In the last part of the questionnaire, (Table 7) the participants of the study were required to rank the assessment modes in order of significance to motivate learning the course material best. The assessment modes (quiz/test; home-take exam; group work; open exam; portfolio; peer assessment; self-assessment) were given values that ranged from the most interesting (rank it putting 1) to the next (2) till the least interesting (ranks them putting 3,4,5,6,7).

Methods of data analyses

In this study, descriptive and inferential statistics were employed as methods of data analyses. Mean and standard of deviation were used to summarize the raw data to get the average including the variation from the mean score. T-tests, comprising paired

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samples tests were also used to determine whether there were significant differences on pre-and-post-test scores of language proficiency tests, and on syllabus-based achievement test given at the end of the course; whereas, the participants' responses to the questionnaire were analyzed comparing the mean values obtained for the categories using the sum of each item.

RESULTS

The study is directed towards investigating the impact of the newly developed *instructional approach, i.e., Strategy-based Instruction* in promoting students' academic success in language proficiency and achievement. A comparison is made among the three tests and between 'High-achieving and Low-achieving groups in their performance of the tests. The subjects were equally divided into two homogeneous classrooms of 19 for higher

achieving group and 19 for lower achieving group based on the results of pre-test given by ELIC center before starting their academic courses. The experiment was conducted in the first semester of 2016/2017 academic year.

Hypothesis One: *Raising students' awareness of academic strategies use through EISI does not bring significant change on students' pre-test-post-test mean value scores of their comprehension tests.*

As the treatment came to an end, the group administered a post-test. To measure their abilities, the post-test was administered for the group with a number of multiple choices, referential & inferential questions and the participants were asked to read the texts individually and answer these questions. The descriptive and inferential statistics are reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Empirical Results of Pretest, and Post-test

Test	Participants (N=38)	Mean	St. Deviation	Standard error	t-value	Remark
Pre-test	38	50.3	11.9	1.95		Not
Post-test	38	62.1	5.1	0.87	0.0001	significant

As in table one is shown the mean scores of the pre-test, and posttest are found to be 50.3, and 62.1 respectively. Here we observe that the students have performed better in posttest than in the pre-test. The meaning of this is that, there is a good deal of progress in students' comprehension scores. But as seen there is no statistically significance difference between the two scores. The assumption behind this is that raising students' awareness of academic strategies use through EISI does not bring change in students' performance. Does this mean the approach used in the study not effective? Well, we should not be in hurry; because the standard deviations of the pre-test post-test results (i.e., 11.9 and 5.1 respectively) tell us another story. These results imply that raising students' awareness of academic strategies use enable them to

become closer in their test scores. That is to say in the pre-test it is 11.9 but when treatment EISI is given, the standard deviation of posttest becomes 5.1. This means, initially there was a gap between students but after treatment these variations became lower. What this implies is that the more students' awareness of academic strategies use increased the better the success of students' performance and the smaller the variation between them. The second hypothesis justified the truth of this assertion.

Hypothesis Two: *Raising students' awareness of academic strategies use through EISI does not have a significant change in the mean score values of higher and lower achieving groups.*

The second null hypothesis states the empirical results of high-achieving and Low-

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achieving groups in pre-and post-tests. The results of inferential statistics are presented in Table 2 and 3.

Table 2: Independent sample T-test

Tests	Groups	No. of Students	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	T-value	Remark
Pre test	High-achievers	19	71.3	1.8	0.4	3.14	Significant
	Low-achievers	19	42.7	3.0	0.7		
Post test	High-achievers	19	73.3	2.3	0.5	4.96	Significant
	Low-achievers	19	51	3.8	0.9		

After establishing an alpha level of 0.5, the mean scores of the pre- and post-tests of the two achieving groups were compared using 'independent sample t-test'. As indicated in Table 2 the mean score of High-achievers and Low-achiever students in the pretest 71.3 and 42.7; and post tests are 73.3 and 51 respectively. These findings suggest that students benefited from strategies training in

the EISI and this in turn has impact on their general comprehension ability. The high-achievers are still strong and the low-achievers are still weak. The implication we have here is that the students are almost as good in the pre-test as the post test. However, in relation to the students' performance level, the result of paired sample t-test tells us another account.

Table 3: Paired sample T-test

Groups	Tests	No. of Students	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	T-value	Remark
High-achievers	Pre- test	19	71.3	1.8	0.4	0.2058	Not Significant
	Post-test	19	73.3	2.3	0.5		
Low-achievers	Pre- test	19	42.7	3.0	0.7	8.28	Significant
	Post-test	19	51	0.8	0.9		
Final exam	High-achievers	19	64.5	3.8	0.9	0.007	Not Significant
	Low-achievers	19	54.3	4.1	1.0		

As seen in Table 3, the low-achieving group demonstrates a significant progress in their comprehension scores (from 42.7 to 51) more than the high-achieving one (from 71.3 to 73.3). Moreover, the mean difference of the low achievers' group (3.3) is found to be significant at 5% level. But the mean difference of the high achiever (0.6) has not found significant at 5% level. Low Achievers in the EISI improved significantly in their general language skills or abilities (t-value of 8.28 at critical value given in statistical table). The high Achievers, on the other hand, have not improved on their scores of language

proficiency as a result of introducing EISI used as strategies training.

Quite contrary to the above data, there is one group of data for which the statistical parameters can properly explain the findings of this research at the end i.e. the result of final exam. As mentioned in Table 3 the mean value of the high and low is 64.5 and 54.3 respectively. Still, the higher performed better than the lower. But the difference between the mean becomes closer than the previous cases. Furthermore, the final exam results are not statistically significant at P<O.O5. This means, there is no significant difference in their achievement scores between the lower

and the higher group. Hypothesis Three: Strategy-based Instruction introduced in course material does not bring behavioral changes on students' awareness and motivation to enhance their strategies use.

The objective of this research hypothesis was to bear out the students' perceptions and beliefs about the course material deliberately designed by the course instructor and finally, find out whether or not the employed tasks and activities increased their awareness.

(knowledge) and make use of different strategies or create on them learning interest. In order to achieve this objective, the students were asked different questions in the questionnaire. The first three items required what students do say about their perceived awareness of academic strategies use while taking the course material, doing the tasks and practicing activities in all English language (macro and micro) skills classes?

Table 4: Students' Answers about the Contents in the Teaching Material

(N =38)	1		2		3		4		5	
	N	f (%)	N	f (%)	N	f(%)	N	f(%)	N	f (%)
Did you enjoy the course?	1	2.6%	-	-	10	26.3%	9	23.7%	18	47.4%
Classroom learning tasks/activities	-	-	1	2.6%	8	21%	14	36.9%	15	39.5%
Classroom atmosphere	-	-	-	-	2	5.3%	6	15.8%	30	78.9%

f (frequency = %)

The results of the questionnaire indicated that 18 (47.4%) and 9 (23.7%) participants responded for the very positive and positive options respectively and favored the strategy-based instruction and their enjoyments of the material also witnessed, in the responses given under opened-questionnaire, in such a way that the strategy training introduced in the course was of good scaffolding instruction for them to open their eyes. However, 10 (26.3%) participants responded for the average alternative and showed their neutrality keeping no side in

either of the extremes. Only 1 (2.6%) participate inclined towards negativity.

In a similar vein, students were asked for their beliefs about the existing teaching material presented by the teacher. In other words, whether or not the teaching material used in the course included texts, and tasks helped students enhance their language proficiencies and get additional abilities. Accordingly, they were asked about their beliefs using the response scales ranged from:1- (Too easy); 2- (Ok); - 3 (Good); to 4- (Too difficult).

Table 5: Students' Answers about the Material Teacher Castoff

(n =38)	1		2		3		4	
	N	f (%)	n	f(%)	N	f(%)	N	f (%)
To what extent the existing material presented by the teacher?	1	2.6%	3	7.9%	22	57.8%	12	31.5%

In relation to this question, many of them admired the material presented to them; and 22 (57.8%) learners said it is a good instructional material that they learned a lot of things, as indicated in their free responses, from the course: increase their stock of vocabulary used in criminal settings,

cases and procedures; and also develop the four basic skills, particularly, speaking skills which enable them to introduce themselves and others in confidence including participation in group discussion and debating; and finally found to be a base for other subjects. However, some commented

that six credit hours for course in one semester is not fair and suggested reconsideration of this highest credit assigned for the course. They also wished short notes on grammar lessons should have been prearranged written on the blackboard. In a similar vein, students were asked whether or not they had been motivated practicing in multiple ways through the use of tasks and activities given in course material using the response scales ranged from 1- (Strongly disagree); 2- (Disagree); - 3 (Neutral); - 4 (Agree) to 5- (Strongly agree).

Table 6: Students' Reactions Regarding Motivational Values of Tasks and Activities

	1		2		3		4		5	
(N =38)	N	f (%)	N	f (%)	N	f(%)	N	f(%)	N	f (%)
I am motivated in multiple ways through the use of tasks and activities	-	-	1	2.6	3	8%	22	57.8%	12	31.5%

In relation to the motivational value they have had, from students' questionnaire analysis, in using tasks and activities, it was found that different tasks and/or activities were given to them in all English language skills classes. The course instructor's employed different tasks and activities to address learners' variations using differentiated instruction and increase his students' learning interest. Finally, perception differences were not found between most respondent students' as the overwhelming majority 33 learners (89.3%) would have got opportunities to be successful or manage the course in their preferred learning profiles.

Table 7: Students' Ranking of Assessment Mode

Least		Most ➡								
Assessment Variable	N	Scales in Order of Interest								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	∑	Rank
Quiz	34	7	5	3	7	2	6	4	128	3
Home-take test	34	20	3	5	2	1	2	1	66	1
Group work assignment	34	2	16	4	2	3	2	3	101	2
Open exam	34	4	2	7	9	4	2	6	139	5
Writing port folio	34	1	1	2	3	3	10	14	194	7
Peer assessment	34	3	4	8	5	8	3	3	134	4
Self-assessment	34	3	3	7	3	10	6	2	146	6

The participants favored home-take test the most interesting assessment mode encouraged them to follow their course material, followed by group work assignment. Their third preferred interest was quiz or test lasted within short period. They ranked peer assessment as the fourth preferred mode of assessment, while open-exam as the fifth one. They favored self-assessment and writing portfolio as the least preferred assessments respectively.

Generally, the results of the questionnaire indicated that the participants favored the strategy-based instruction and witnessed that the strategy training introduced in the course was of good

scaffolding instruction for them to open their eyes. Besides, the teaching material used in the course included texts, and tasks which helped them enhance their language proficiencies and get additional abilities. However, some commented that six credit

hours for course in one semester is not fair and suggested reconsideration of this highest credit assigned for the course. They also wished short notes on grammar lessons which should be written on the blackboard.

DISCUSSION

The results of the t-test of this study seem to indicate that the teaching material (EISI) brought about improvements on learners' (both higher and low achievers) language proficiency and/or achievement as seen in the above three tables. However, the idea of the two tables may give us a clue to speculate that the low achieving group benefited more than the higher group. So, low proficient learners might have been stimulated to perform better in the comprehension test (overall) due to the focus given to strategy instruction explicitly integrated in the teaching material. The EISI focused on awareness-raising and strategies use practices for the first five weeks and then students to take the post-test (See Table 2 and Table 3 for their significance values).

Similarly, as indicated in achievement Test (final exam) helps learners' in both groups much to improve their general abilities. However, providing awareness raising activities of academic strategies use brought statistically significant change only on low achieving group (see Table 3). As these learners attend to EISI, the specific objectives focused in the study could probably match with their demands or challenges in the classroom. Regarding this, Nunan (1999) pointed out that learners could develop different strategies to cope with the peculiar challenges they face in new learning environments. Hence, it is worth investigating to see whether strategy-based instruction could have a power to narrow down the gap existing between the two groups.

Similarly, the results of both t-tests seem to indicate that the strategy trainings

(EISI) brought about improvements on learners' language proficiency and/or achievement. Nevertheless, the findings from the t-tests paired- independent suggest that these improvements were not uniform between the two achieving groups. This finding seems to contradict with Alderson et al. (1995) who claim that proficiency tests are too crude to measure students' progress after short period of training. Bachman (1990) also points that proficiency test can measure progress if it has similar construct with the training provided. The overall idea of these findings seems that explicit strategy training could help or encourage learners to be aware as well as deploy the strategies focused. However, this finding seemed to contradict with the ideas of some authors warning about explicit instruction (Tauroza & Allison 1994 cited in Moges, p. 62); some participants in the present study also commented its limitations by giving thankless views on the open-ended questionnaire.

CONCLUSIONS

This study was conducted to investigate the impact of EISI as strategies training on learners' comprehension and achievement, at different language proficiency levels. Thus, teaching material with strategy-based instruction ($S_b I$) that raises students' awareness of academic strategies use was premeditated as an introductory unit and then implemented as *independent variables* and their success in language proficiency and achievement was taken as *dependent variables* respectively. A test-retest quasi-experimental design was

devised in which two kinds of tests (Comprehension and Achievement Tests) were administered before and after the treatments (EISI). One group was designated to experience these different strategy trainings/instructions. Generally, the findings suggest that learners seemed to benefit from both strategy trainings though closer scrutiny of the findings revealed that assortment between the higher and lower achieving groups and levels do exist. However, the opinion test of some respondents showed the existence of contradictory assertions. Overall, the findings suggest that

o Though Explicitly Integrated and General (implicit) Strategy Instructions seem to help learners understand better their course contents and skills learned, they do not seem to bring about significant improvement in learners' comprehension ability and academic achievement in a similar way.

o Low Achievers seem to benefit more from both Strategy Instructions as they manifested significant improvement in their

performance on the comprehension abilities and their academic achievement. This could imply that low achieving learners are ready to take responsibility of their learning and therefore need detailed guidance and help before they become autonomous.

High Achievers have a tendency to improve significantly on their performance scores from both strategies training types. The overall inference, however, seems that providing high achievers (better performing students) with awareness-raising practices may not create a big difference in their language proficiency compared to providing them without advising them to practice it. This perhaps implies that high achieving learners could put in effect the responsibility they are given even without raising their awareness of strategy instruction.

Conflict of Interest

Author declared no conflict of interest regarding publishing this paper.

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