

School-related Variables Support toward the Utilization of Language Learning Strategies in a Private Bilingual High School

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Abstract:

Learning strategies play significant roles in successful English language learning, especially in the EFL context where inputs are limited. However, the use of learning strategies is highly affected by internal variables, e.g., motivation, learning style, and external variables, e.g., school-related variables. This study aims at exploring the roles of school-related variables in supporting the use of language learning strategies. This study was conducted in a private bilingual high school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and five students who fulfilled the criteria were selected as the participants. The data were collected through semi-structured online interviews and recorded for more accessible analysis. The results of the interview were then analyzed using thematic analysis. The results of the study showed that school-related variables have significant and distinctive roles in supporting the use of language learning strategies. Each variable has its parts, e.g., the curriculum deals with language input, and the learning environment can enhance students' motivation. Thus, teachers and school principals should be aware of their prominent roles and be able to design and create supportive school-related variables for their students.

Keywords: language learning strategies, private bilingual school, school-related variables

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1970s, language learning strategies have been the subject of extensive research because they can help people learn languages more successfully (Zhang et al., 2019). According to (Oxford, 2017), language learning strategies are actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques that students adopt to advance their learning of a second language (L2). As tools for direct participation are essential for developing

communicative capacity, these methods may make it easier for people to internalize, store, retrieve, or utilize a new language (Oxford, 2017). This results in effective language learning and acquisition (Hardan, 2013). Therefore, it is important to assist and encourage L2 learners to utilize their LLS.

The support to be successful learners may come from many different variables. Oxford & Amerstorfer (2018) argued that many factors affect the choice of LLS: cultural beliefs and expectations, educational policies, local influences, task requirements, personal preferences, learning opportunities, and individual differences in age and gender, educational level, and social class. Her earlier research discovered that motivation, gender, cultural background, career incentive, work type, age, L2 level, learning style, and tolerance of ambiguity impacted how often LLS was used (Oxford, 1990, 1994, 2017). Numerous research further studied the internal variables that support learners' LLS, e.g., motivation and gender (Khamkhien, 2010; Liyanage & Bartlett, 2012; Ranjan & Philominraj, 2020), learner's language level (Salahshour et al., 2013), and age (Sepasdar & Soori, 2014). On the contrary, the external variables affecting students' LLS have not been widely discussed. Wharton's (2000) study also emphasizes the goal learners must achieve and the setting where language learning occurs. Psaltou-Joycey et al. (2018) investigated how a teacher's viewpoint, beliefs, attitudes, and desire toward teaching a language affected how a student used LLS. Little is known about the support of school-related variables to the LLS in the EFL context.

Based on the rationale above, it is crucial to investigate how schools can support their students' LLS in learning English in the EFL context, as it is where most students learn the language (Lauder, 2008). Indonesia is a non-English-speaking country, and English is an EFL; hence the students' experience of English outside of school is highly limited. Mustafa (2018) discovered that most Indonesian schools could not take advantage of this opportunity. Of the 500 participants in his study, 76% believe their high school only partially helped them improve their English. In contrast, 15% think that their high school had a significant impact on their current level of English proficiency, and 9% deny that their high schools had any real impact on their English.

Apart from the issue, a private bilingual high school in Yogyakarta (henceforth: PBHSY) was able to raise the English proficiency by more than 65% of its grade 12 students by at least one CEFR level in just two years, according to the results of the school's annual English proficiency test reports (TOEFL ITP Prediction and British Council's English Score Test). With multiple C1 level students, some (36% of the population) could even improve their CEFR levels by two levels. Several factors could cause this development of students' English proficiency. Furthermore, as this development is observed within the school years, there is a high possibility that the school plays an essential role in this result. Therefore, this study explores the roles of school-related variables in utilizing LLS. This research can contribute to the design of the school environment and school policy to support students' learning of English.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Language Learning Strategies

Many studies have formulated their definitions and classifications of language learning strategies. There are at least 33 definitions of LLS, several of which overlap (Oxford, 2017). This wide range of definitions reveals how reluctant scholars have been to settle on a single accepted description for this concept. Oxford (2017) further defined strategies as contextually specific thoughts and actions that can be both mental and physical; that they can be combined in clusters or chains, can have cognitive, emotional, and social roles to play depending on the individual; and are complex when it comes to their use in self-regulation.

Oxford (1994) classified learning strategies into six categories, i.e., memory strategies (related to how students remember language), cognitive strategies (related to how students think about their learning), compensation strategies (which enable students to make up for limited knowledge), metacognitive strategies (related to how students manage their learning), affective strategies (related to students' feelings)

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and social strategies (which involve learning by interaction with others). Meanwhile, Lessard-Clouston (1997) divided the characteristics of Language Learning Strategies (LLS) into four categories. First, LLS is learner-generated; they are steps taken by language learners. Second, LLS enhances language learning and helps develop language competence, as reflected in the learner's listening, speaking, reading, or writing skills in the L2 or FL. Third, LLS may be visible (behaviors, steps, techniques, etc.) or unseen (thoughts, mental processes). Fourth, LLS involves information and memory (vocabulary knowledge, grammar rules, etc.).

More recently, Cohen (2021) argued that the categorization of LLS should be associated with different skill areas, e.g., listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary learning, pronunciation, grammar learning, translation, and pragmatics. This argument shows the different needs of different skills followed by different strategies adopted by the learners. Thus, the labels for learning strategies are designed based on the operationalization of the strategy, for example, the strategies for L2 listening comprehension.

2.2 School-related Variables

School-related variables, or school variables, are the factors that can affect the outcome of learning experiences (Aja-Okorie et al., 2019). Every aspect the school offers to support students' learning experiences can be categorized as a school-related variable. They include the availability of human resources and the school environment (Aja-Okorie et al., 2019) to the more specific variables such as teacher quality and classroom ergonomics (Etan et al., 2022). However, this study delimits the investigation to four specific variables relevant to English learning, i.e., the school's English curriculum, English teaching methods, English learning environment, and school facilities.

2.3 Previous Studies

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of curriculum (Ahmed, 2021; Andrietti & Su, 2019; Sun et al., 2018; Zein et al., 2020), environment (Agarwal & Thakur, 2014; Araújo & da Costa, 2013; Mbiro, 2021; Mirhadizadeh, 2016), teaching methods (Likitrattanaporn, 2018; Munir et al., 2019; Ökmen & Kılıç, 2016; Yu & Wang, 2009), and facilities (Akhtar et al., 2019; Arshad & Tayyab, 2019; Mbiro, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2021; Ramli & Zain, 2018) towards students' learning development and achievement, including their learning strategies.

In terms of language curriculum, Sun et al. (2018) showed that educational policies could significantly predict language learning development. Andrietti & Su (2019) also found that curriculum affects the students' preparedness, which is linear to their achievements. Similarly, Zein et al. (2020) reported some significant effects of curriculum change on language learning. More recently, Ahmed (2021) found a correlation between curriculum and students' learning outcomes. Curriculum development impacts students' knowledge transfer positively. Moreover, a developed curriculum supports teachers to teach effectively to their students and provide high teaching quality. In general, this affects the language learning process, including using learning strategies.

As for the learning environment, Araújo & da Costa (2013) proved that classroom size does affect language learning, meaning that the classroom environment is crucial to the process. Agarwal & Thakur (2014) also studied the influence of the school environment as the result of the teacher-student interaction, teachers' academic and professional qualifications, and teachers' teaching towards their English learning. Their study suggests a positive relationship between the school environment and students' English learning. Emphasizing the importance of the learning environment, Mirhadizadeh (2016) suggested that teachers should provide a safe environment for learning, either physically or mentally. The importance of the learning environment has also been argued by Mbiro (2021), highlighting the school's role in language learning, especially in class management and classroom environment.

Furthermore, Yu & Wang (2009) pointed out that the use of learning strategies is influenced by some factors, including learning context and classroom practice related to teaching methods used by teachers in

the classroom. In a similar fashion, Ökmen & Kılıç (2016) reported a meaningful and positive relationship between teaching methods and students' academic success. A survey and quantitative data analysis of 95 English teachers and 8th-grade students' English exam results demonstrated that the teaching methods affect students' English exam scores. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, Munir et al.'s (2019) experimental study on 68 junior high school students found that a specific teaching method, which is students' team achievement division (STAD), positively affects students' English achievements. Regarding learning strategies, Likitratnaporn (2018) demonstrated that 49% of the students who participated in the study utilized learning strategies in the implementation of cooperative learning. This shows a relation between teaching methods and learning strategies preferred by students.

Lastly, facilities have also been proven to impact students' achievement positively. Ramli & Zain (2018) investigated 364 university students to determine the impact of facilities on students' academic achievement. The study reported that the factors related to the facilities contributed significantly towards their achievement for about 51,4%. A quantitative study by Arshad & Tayyab (2019) with regression analysis of grade 8th-grade students found that physical facilities significantly influenced students' accomplishments. More precisely, the facilities contributed about 15,4% to students' academic achievements. In a like manner, Akhtar et al. (2019) also reported the importance of school facilities which can lead to lacking good English command due to poor school facilities. More specifically related to learning strategies, (Nguyen et al., 2021) claimed that infrastructure is positively correlated with learning strategies which can affect the psychological and mental development of the learners.

All those earlier relevant studies discussed the roles of school-related variables in language learning in general, although some covered learning strategies in the study. The present study, however, focused more on utilising language learning strategies affected by various school-related variables to depict the roles of each variable in learning strategy use.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Type and Participants

This study employed a qualitative method to explore the roles of school-related variables concerning language learning strategies. The participants of this interview were five (5) PBHSY students (further referred to as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5) who met two criteria. First, they have improved their English proficiency by at least two levels of CEFR from grades 10-12. Second, they believed that the school had supported their usage of language learning strategies which was proven by the average scale of the variable questionnaire responses of a minimum of 3.50.

3.2 Data Collection

The participants were interviewed to describe and elaborate on how those variables work to gain insights into how they support their language-learning strategies utilization. Before the interview, school-related variable questionnaires were distributed to grade 12 students as background checks to select the participants. Five students were selected based on the above criteria. The interviews were conducted to understand how certain significant variables affect students' LLS utilization. The type of interview was in-depth and semi-structured, allowing the researcher to collect more comprehensive information. The interviews were conducted virtually and recorded. The data from the interviews were also cross-checked with the data gathered from observation.

3.3 Data Verification

The interview results were validated using the member-checking technique, which was conducted by re-interviewing the participants to confirm the findings. The findings were listed in statements and presented to the participants. The participants were asked if the statements were true or not to them based on their experiences. They also had to give further explanations of their answer.

3.4 Data Analysis

The interviewees' descriptions and elaborations on how the significant school-related variables helped them utilize their language learning strategies are analyzed using thematic content analysis. Thematic analysis is a data analysis method that allows a researcher to identify themes and meanings across a dataset concerning a particular research question (Clarke & Braun, 2017). This method involves seven steps: transcription, reading and familiarization, coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and finalizing the analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

4. RESULTS

4.1. PBHSY's English curriculum

The significant features found in the school's English curriculum that supports students' English learning are essentially categorized into four aspects: the syllabus (topic arrangement), the English textbook, the number of lesson hour, and the English tests. Firstly, the English syllabus in PBHSY arranges the topics' level of complexity from years 10 to 12 to gradually increase. The students testified that the topics they studied started easily from the basic level of English vocabulary, grammar, and skills in year 10 and progressively became more advanced until the end of English class in year 12. They testified that this had helped them understand the topics better as it did not rush their learning pace, and they could fully understand one topic at a time before moving into a more complex concept. Participant P4 said, "*(the syllabus) is more structured, Miss, so it is easier for us to learn. Initially, it was a basic lesson; then, it became more difficult (complex) as time passed. It helped me a lot (in learning English) because I did not feel rushed (to learn them)*".

The topics chosen to be part of the syllabus are also interrelated and complementary. The participants testified that they often found that the topic they were learning was connected or similar to the previous topics or an essential part of the topic they later learned. They could also sometimes recall a topic they learned in the past while learning the current topic. They explained that it helped them find patterns of certain lesson information, such as a particular grammar pattern, word formation, or writing structure. They also claimed that this topic interrelation helped them internalize the old or new knowledge of the English language. Participant P5 said, "*I think the (the lesson) that we learned is well-structured and interconnected to each other. What I learned today would be used later, maybe the next day or week. So, at the end of the chapter, I could fully understand. It made us easier to learn*". Participant P2 also mentioned, "*In the beginning, we got basic lessons, but later we were challenged (with more complex lessons), the challenge got more complex. Nevertheless, it was challenging so that we could remember the lesson.*"

Regarding the English textbook used for the curriculum, the participant testified that the books they used in English class since years 10-12 were beneficial for them in learning English effectively. The books follow the school's English curriculum syllabus with comprehensive explanations, examples, and exercises that help them learn and understand the topics well. Participant P4 said, "*The explanation and examples (in the book) are comprehensive. Texts are fun.*"

In terms of the number of English lesson hours, the school provides 10 lesson hours pre-COVID-19 pandemic in person and 4-5 lesson hours a week with a virtual meeting during the pandemic. The participants testified that the vast number of English lesson hours a week gave them a lot of English exposure that helped them learn, familiarize themselves, and use English more intensively. The participant said that "*(the vast number of the English lesson) helps me a lot, Miss (in learning English). I got more exposure to English because of it.*"

Lastly, the participants also mentioned that the regular English tests they received, such as unit progress tests, mid-term tests, and final tests, forced them to review the topics they learned. They also used the tests' results to evaluate their English proficiency and find areas where they excel and need improvement.

Participant P1 said, “*(the English tests) help me (in learning English), Miss, because I can evaluate how far I have progressed (in English). They let me know which area I need to improve.*”

The statements from the participants were supported by the observation data showing that the curriculum adopted in PBHSY is well-designed. They employed a CEFR-based curriculum developed by Cambridge University Press and Cambridge English Language Assessment. The skill and proficiency grading are well-structured, from basic to advanced, from grades 10-12 which makes student easier to learn the materials. The lessons are also delivered in two types of classes, namely General English and Skill classes. In General English class, students learn English grammar and vocabulary with occasional reading, listening, and writing to give them context. Meanwhile, Skill classes focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

4.2. PBHSY's English learning environment

Based on the participants' statements, one of the most significant supports of their English language learning from school is the learning environment that encourages them to use English comfortably. This English learning environment came from three major factors: peer support, teacher support, and English usage in other subjects. The participants testified that their peers are willing to converse in English with each other. They commonly use English during English class but communicate in English outside of the classroom. Participant P4 said, “*My friends around me are also willing to speak English, Miss, so I feel encouraged (to speak English too).*” Participant P3 also has the same experience by stating that “*my friends are confident in speaking English, and that makes me confident to speak in English, too.*”

Moreover, during this communication, the participants felt comfortable because they knew their peers would not show negative responses when they made mistakes in using English. The English-speaking students are not belittled for using the language nor made fun of when making mistakes in using the language. Their peers were able to correct the error in a friendly way. Participant P2 testifies, “*My friends are not judgmental about mistakes (in speaking English).*” Participant P5 also mentions, “*I think my learning environment (peers) is not the judgmental type, who would belittle anyone who speaks English. So, it is easier for me to practice my (English) skills.*”

The participants also testified that the peers' assistance in explaining the topics they were struggling with helped them to understand the lesson. They mentioned that sometimes they found it easier to understand a lesson when explained by their peers as the communication would be more casual, and they could use the language they felt more relatable. Participant P5 said, “*(if I was struggling in learning English), I could ask my friends about it. I feel more comfortable with friends because we have similar understanding (way of thinking).*”

The support in creating a comfortable English learning environment also comes from the teacher. The teacher emphasizes using English as the medium language in teaching and learning in English classes. During the English class, the teacher gives instructions and explanations in English, the learning materials are in English, and students must respond to the lesson and communicate in English. The participants explained that this extensive use of English in the classroom makes them accustomed to using English. Participant P1 says, “*(the learning environment) is very supportive. We must use English in the classroom. So, we are not afraid to use English in daily life.*”

Moreover, despite the constant use of English in the classroom, the teacher can also create an enjoyable classroom situation that frees students from fear of making mistakes. The English teachers encourage them to be active in the classroom, and when the students make mistakes, the teachers are tolerant and correct them in non-intimidating ways. The teacher is also willing to help students when they struggle with a topic. Participant P1 said, “*Even if we make mistakes (when learning English), (the teacher) will correct it but not in an intimidating way that makes us afraid to answer questions (in a class discussion). So, it is okay to make mistakes.*”

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Furthermore, the students also see the English teachers as approachable and fun. This kind of persona helps them enjoy communicating with the teachers and feel at ease learning English optimally. The participants claimed that these treatments help them feel comfortable in the class and allow them to absorb the material more effectively. Participant P3 *“Classroom situation is not intense. It is quite relaxing to study. Because of no pressure, it is easier for us to think. I like it, Miss, because even though we must speak English, the teacher will not intimidate us if we make mistakes, and my friends also speak in English. So, I am comfortable speaking in English”*. Participant P2 also said, *“The (English) teachers are fun,”* and Participant P4 *“(the support) also comes from the (English) teachers Miss. They look easy to approach when I speak in English. (because of that) I do not feel afraid to speak in English with them.”*

Another environmental factor that supports effective English language learning is using English in non-English subjects. English is also used as the medium language in several other subjects in the school. The participants testified that this situation helped them learn English more effectively as they could apply what they learned in English class to non-English class, such as writing and giving a presentation in English. Participant P5 said, *“(by using English in other classes) I could still learn English outside of English class, and I can get used to applying what I learned in English class.”* They also claimed that using English in other subjects also enriches their vocabulary. Participant P4 said, *“(by using English in other classes) I got more exposure to English, and I can learn more vocabulary.”*

The participants' responses were supported by the observation data demonstrating the intensive use of English in the school, which can encourage students to speak more confidently. The learners are gathered based on their proficiency level for English classes (standard and higher level) that can help high achievers learn faster, and the average learners can also cope with the materials since the teachers will adjust their language use in these two different classes; in high-level classes, the teachers can speak English all the time, while they need to balance English and Indonesian in standard level classes.

4.3 Varieties of teaching methods in PBHSY

The participants explained that one factor that makes them enjoy learning English is the variety of teaching methods and activities they experienced while studying at PBHSY. The methods vary from the most traditional ones consisting of explaining grammar topics, examples, and exercises, to the more participatory activities such as peer work, group work, discussions, projects, etc. They testified that the various activities helped them understand the topics well. For example, when learning English grammar using traditional learning methodologies, they could focus on understanding the grammar rules the teacher explained. It enabled them to do the grammar exercises well and use them in real life. Participant P5 said, *“(traditional learning methodologies) Help me learn English because I learn it step-by-step.”*

Furthermore, during the teaching-learning process, the English teachers were often able to connect the topic that the students were learning with the previous topics to create a comprehensive picture. The participants claimed that this strategy helped them to recall what they had learned and internalize the information. Participant 2 mentions that *“(the teacher's method to connect one topic to another) Helps me learn English effectively because the topics are interrelated, and the teachers taught the lesson by connecting it.”*

Moreover, as the class requires them to use English extensively, they were given plenty of opportunities to practice their English-speaking skills during participatory activities such as pair work, group work, presentation, etc. In this activity, students involved themselves in learning the materials and could communicate in English with their peers. They found this activity effective in learning language as it is fun, not dull, and they can use it more comfortably with their peers. Participant P5 said, *“Yes, (there are many learning activities). We once made a mini fair, presentation, and unique activities. It honed our soft skills. The activities are fun, so we are not bored and enthusiastic about learning. I like having discussions with my friend.”*

The participants also claimed they had other opportunities to interact with students and teachers using English for several reasons: asking questions, giving answers, and sharing ideas in open discussions on the topics within or beyond the lesson. These opportunities helped them to deepen their understanding of the topic and practice speaking and listening in English. Participant P4 explained, “*(discussing a certain topic in the class) Helps me a lot in adding new info and using English. So, I have much practice in speaking English.*”.

The statements of the participants were proven by the observation data showing that the schoolteachers utilize many teaching methods, e.g., Communicative Language Learning, Collaborative Learning, Cooperative Learning, Direct Method, Structural Approach, Task-Based Language Learning, Project-Based Learning, Experiential Learning, and many others. They also use multiple strategies and techniques to teach English, e.g., class discussion, group discussion, individual/group presentation, games, role play, listening activities, reading activities, projects, etc. These various methods, strategies, and techniques can provide more opportunities for the students to learn and practice their English in the classrooms.

4.4 School facilities in PBHSY

All participants believed that some of the school’s facilities helped them learn English more effectively: English storybooks, English online workbooks, internet connection, and the interactive flat panel installed in their classroom. The English storybooks in the school were exciting and helped them learn new vocabulary. The English online workbook also helped them learn English grammar and vocabulary as it was presented in an interesting layout. They can easily redo the exercises if they make incorrect answers.

The internet connection also supported the students in exploring more information that helped them understand English materials and improve their skills, whether guided or independently done. Lastly, the interactive flat panels used as a ‘blackboard’ in the classroom provide an exciting experience to the students that help engage them in the learning process. For example, the various pen colors enabled them to remember the information written on it. Its ability to access various learning resources such as videos and websites helps them to explore more information. Participant P2 said, “*Yes, the storybooks, online workbook, interactive smartboard, internet connections, videos, and Chromebook help me (learn English).*”

In addition, an interesting fact found is that the participants are personally well-facilitated to explore authentic English resources. The most frequently used LLS of the participants of this research is that they watch English-language TV shows or movies spoken in English. The participants testified that they like to watch English videos, movies, or series via online platforms such as *YouTube, Netflix, Disney Hot Star*, and many more for recreational purposes. They prefer to use English subtitles even when the videos are in other languages. They can do this activity frequently as they have a suitable device such as a smartphone and computer, as well as easy access to the Internet with Wi-Fi at their places and internet data in their smartphone. The participant said, “*I often watch TV shows in English. I am not sure how many hours a day, but it is surely every day. If it is not English speaking, I use English subtitles.*”

The observation data also reported that there are a lot of facilities to support English language learning and the utilization of learning strategies. The students were equipped with a CEFR-based student’s book along with the online workbook, Chromebook (for each student), excellent internet connection, interactive flat panel (IFP), and many other facilities. The school library also supports learning English since it has many English dictionaries and CEFR-based English stories (simplified classics). There is also an online library for easy access to those resources.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings reported that the English curriculum, teaching methods, learning environment, and school facilities support the use of strategies for learning English in PBHSY. In terms of the curriculum, the finding is in line with the study of Sun et al. (2018) and Zein et al. (2020), stating that education policy and

curriculum change significantly affect learning development. Ahmed (2021) and Andrietti & Su (2019) also claimed that curriculum positively impacts students' knowledge transfer and readiness and helps teachers effectively teach. These studies reported the prominent roles of the curriculum in the students' English learning development.

More specifically about the curriculum, this study identified that PBHSY's curriculum design is aligned with Krashen's input hypothesis. According to Krashen (1982), "humans acquire language in only one way - by understanding messages, or by receiving comprehensible input". Comprehensible input consists of new linguistic stimuli or exposure slightly higher than the learner's current language level (Rijoly, 2017). This theory believes that progression in language learning can occur if they receive inputs containing what the learner already acquires and added with a new input on the level above it. This process is symbolized with $i + 1$, with i as the current level and 1 as the next level along the natural order (Krashen, 1982). This process is believed to be the development of acquiring a new language.

The participants testified that the level of complexity of the English lesson progressed from the basic topics to the more advanced ones. For example, they started with a simple grammar lesson and later developed into a more complex grammar concept related to the previous ones. It indicates that the arrangement of the topics follows Krashen's formula of ' $i + 1$ ', which means that the topic is arranged gradually by beginning with basic information and then added with new information as the development of the previous information.

This research also demonstrated the use of various teaching methods that can support students' learning strategies. This result corresponds to the results of a study done by Yu & Wang (2009), Likitrattanaporn (2018), Munir et al. (2019), Ökmen & Kılıç (2016). Yu & Wang (2009) demonstrated the impact of classroom practice on the use of learning strategies, and more recently, Ökmen & Kılıç's (2016) and Munir et al.'s (2019) studies have been proven effective in supporting students' learning strategies since these provide students with high-quality teaching. More specifically, Likitrattanaporn (2018) showed that using a particular teaching method might result in different choice of learning strategies for the learners.

The teaching methods used in the school included Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Cooperative Language Learning (CLL), and Task-Based Language Learning (TBL). CLT encourages learners to learn the language through activities that promote authentic and meaningful communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This teaching method is highly prevalent in the school, as participants testify that they often do group discussions, class discussions, and other activities requiring them to communicate in English. They can also interact with students and teachers in English for academic and personal purposes. It is also due to the English class environment strongly encouraging them to speak English for any purpose.

Meanwhile, CLL is also commonly practiced during English classes. CLL is the teaching method that promotes all students' mutual helpfulness and active participation (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The participants state that throughout their study in the school, they have had a lot of English activities that require them to collaborate with other students, such as peer work and group work. With this method, students have the opportunity not only to combine and corroborate their knowledge and skills to complete their task but also to improve communication which helps accustom themselves to speaking English.

TBL, another method reported in this study, is commonly used in English classes. TBL uses tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching through meaningful activities that support the learning process (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The participants testified that they are often given a task to complete, individually or in a team, such as writing essays, and quizzes, answering grammar questions, etc. These activities helped them evaluate their understanding of the lesson and enhanced their mastery of the topics. Despite not being as communicative nor collaborative as other activities, this type of methodology also plays a role in improving their English proficiency.

The research findings also indicate that the supportive learning environment at PBHSY can assist in the use of learning strategies. The result corresponds to the result of previous studies done by Agarwal & Thakur (2014), Araújo & da Costa (2013), Mbiro (2021), Mirhadizadeh, (2016). Araoujo & de Costa (2013) argued that school-related variables, e.g., learning environment, affect the language learning process. Agarwal & Thakur (2014) proved that a fun learning environment contributes to students' successful learning. These findings are also supported by the following studies by Mbiro (2021) and Mirhadizadeh (2016), which explored the contribution of facilities (external variables) to the learners' learning development and achievement. Based on Afrasteh et al. (2015), some characteristics of an effective learning environment are active and interactive teaching, a joyful atmosphere, and the teachers' expertise. The school can provide active and interactive teaching that comfortably engages students in class discussion. The participants said they enjoyed the class discussion and were comfortable expressing their thoughts.

The support of peers and teachers in encouraging the students' use of English inside and outside the classroom creates a joyful atmosphere in learning English. Peers are willing to help each other in their English learning and not judgmental towards English speakers. The English teachers are perceived to be approachable and fun, thus allowing the students to optimize their learning experience. These characteristics of joyful atmosphere support effective learning (Afrasteh et al., 2015). The students testified that this supportive atmosphere helped them feel comfortable exploring and optimizing their learning. In this situation, they can optimize their thinking process and internalization of the information.

This research reported that school facilities, e.g., English storybooks, online workbooks, the Internet, etc., also supported students' English learning process. These facilities can increase students' exposure to the target language and help them access English materials faster, boosting their learning development. This is in accordance with the findings from Akhtar et al. (2019), Arshad & Tayyab (2019), Nguyen et al. (2021), and Ramli & Zain (2018) reporting the prominent role of school facilities and infrastructure in language learning and learners' achievement. The research findings of Arshad & Tayyab (2019) and Ramli & Zain (2018) also emphasize the significant part of school facilities in utilising students' learning strategies.

Based on the explanation above, school-related factors can highly affect language learning, so teachers, language educators, and curriculum makers should consider them. Being motivated as a learner is not enough. It should be supported with a great language curriculum design, an encouraging environment, diverse teaching methods, and complete school facilities. Each party has its roles which should complete each other; thus, it is not necessary to overlook one or just focus on one.

6. CONCLUSION

In their learning journey, students should be assisted and encouraged to achieve their successful stage. As proven by this study, schools have crucial roles in assisting students to use the best strategies for learning English. School parties should be aware of their essential role in student achievement and release more relevant policies to support the language learning process. The students should be provided with more opportunities to develop their skills by designing a quality curriculum, selecting the appropriate teaching methods, creating a friendly school environment, and giving complete and decent school facilities. The support from these aspects can enable them to select various strategies to learn English more effectively. However, this study involved a small-scale range of participants and was conducted in one private school in one of the regions in Indonesia. Thus, future researchers should consider collecting data from a more massive number of participants, different types of schools (e.g., public schools) and different regions.

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