



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**EMERGING TRENDS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY USE
AMONG NET-GENERATION ESL TERTIARY LEARNERS**

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**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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To my dear parents, whose persistent encouragement and support paved the way for me to venture and cross the difficulties over.

To my dear wife, Tania, without whose patience and constant encouragement it was impossible to complete the study. Thank you for being the statue of patience and perseverance.

To my cute sons, Amir and Afshin, my shining stars who give me the joy and motivation for struggling hard and to whom I feel greatly in debt.

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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By

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September 2010

Chairman: Assoc. Prof. Mardziah Hayati Abdullah, PhD

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Since 1975, various theories and models have classified learners according to type, style, and language learning strategy use. All the existing theories however, were developed in the years before the pervasion of computer technology, Internet use and the globalisation of knowledge. The new-millennial learners of today have grown up in the era of information explosion, Internet, and online communication opportunities that immerse them in ICT culture. These Net-Generation learners learn and communicate with minimal time and space limitations, and utilise new knowledge and skills to participate in new forms of learning and social communities.

In the light of these changing dynamics, the present study explored whether Malaysian Net-Geners use language learning strategies as earlier generations of learners did, and whether there are emerging trends in the strategies use not addressed in extant theories. The researcher first obtained quantitative data from 107 ESL tertiary learners about their strategy use based on Oxford's (1989) widely used Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), currently considered the most comprehensive inventory. Data on strategy use was then procured using qualitative methods: semi-structured interviews, journal entries, open-ended questionnaires, and texts of the respondents' online interaction in a language task. This latter set of data was analysed (i) to compare the qualitative data with the SILL data, and (ii) to identify possible emergent strategies or trends in strategy use among Net-Geners.

The findings indicate that Net-Geners still made use of language learning strategies identified in extant inventories, but there are perceptible changes in the form of social, memory, and affective strategy use. Minor changes were observed in the use of metacognitive, cognitive, and compensation strategies. While the SILL data showed a lower level of importance put on social and affective strategies, the qualitative data indicated that the respondents were heavily dependent on those strategies. Memory strategy use was also ranked low on the SILL, but the study found that the respondents did substantially utilise 'memory' in electronic form. Slightly different representations of metacognitive, cognitive, and compensation strategies were found to be used by the respondents. Emergent trends in strategy use that are not addressed in the SILL include:

multi-tasking, visual dependency, language customisation, language democratisation, distributed cognition or cognition sharing, growing tendency toward more paper-less learning, and change in the notions of privacy and authorship. These findings point to a need to rethink what we currently understand about language learning strategies and to take a fresh look at what ‘works’ for Net-Generation learners. The existence of some incongruence between SILL data and the qualitative data, as well as the emergence of new trends not apparently captured in the SILL or other existing inventories, suggest a need for further similar research on other groups of Net-Geners, and a revision of currently available language learning inventories in order to incorporate and better describe the emerging skills and strategies of Net-Geners. Based on the findings of the study a model of language learning in the ICT-mediated context of learning is proposed and suggestions are made regarding the modification of existing inventory items as well as the inclusion of new ones that would make an inventory more compatible with language learning strategy use in the digital era. The proposed model could be used as a basis for the development of a new and more relevant language learning inventory that addresses the language learning needs of Net-Geners in the networked world.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**TREND-TREND BARU DALAM PENGGUNAAN STRATEGI PEMBELAJARAN
BAHASA ANTARA PENJANAAN BERSIH ESL PELAJAR-PELAJAR TINGGI**

Oleh

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Sejak tahun 1975, pelbagai teori dan model telah menggolongkan pelajar menurut jenis, gaya dan strategi pembelajaran bahasa yang digunakan. Namun, semua teori yang sedia ada telah dibangunkan pada tahun sebelum liputan teknologi komputer, penggunaan internet dan globalisasi pengetahuan. Pelajar milenium baru hari ini menumbuh di era ledakan maklumat, Internet, dan peluang komunikasi dalam talian yang membenamkan mereka dalam budaya ICT. Pelajar Generasi-Rangkaian ini belajar dan berkomunikasi dengan waktu minimum dan keterbatasan ruang, dan memanfaatkan pengetahuan dan kemahiran baru untuk menyertai dalam bentuk pembelajrana dan komuniti sosial baru.

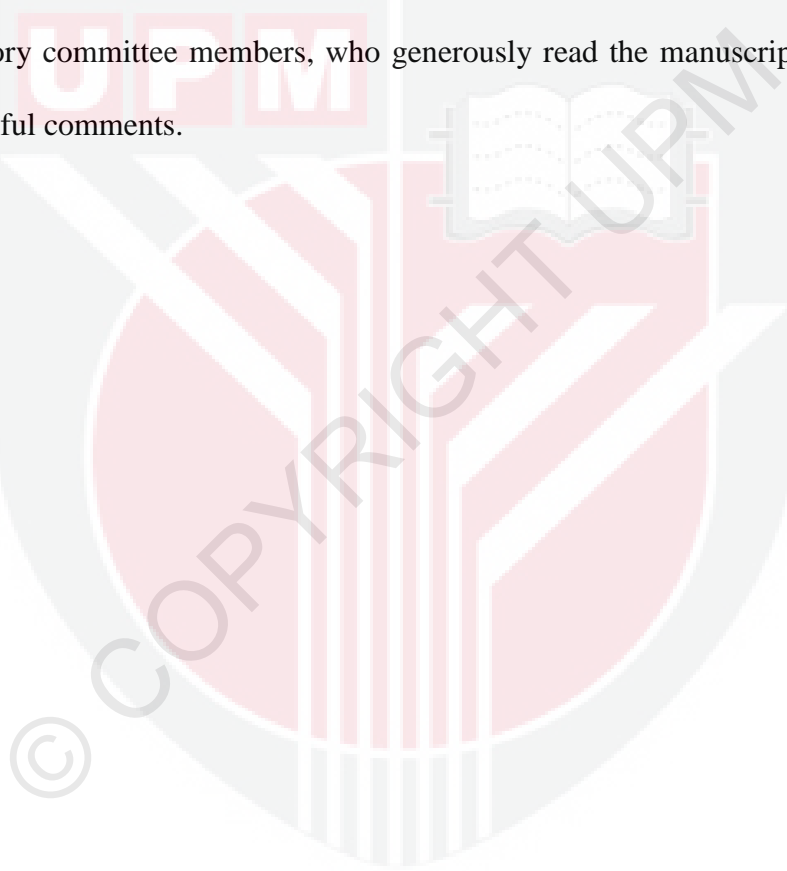
Dengan mempertimbangkan dinamika perubahan ini, kajian pada masa sekarang ini menjelajah sama ada Net-Geners Malaysia menggunakan strategi pembelajaran bahasa sepertimana yang dilakukan oleh pelajar generasi awal, dan sama ada adanya haluan yang tersedia ada dalam strategi yang tidak dibincangkan dalam teori yang masih ada. Penyelidik pertama kali memperoleh data kuantitatif dari 107 pelajar pendidikan tinggi ESL mengenai strategi penggunaan mereka berdasarkan Inventori Strategi bagi Pembelajaran Bahasa (SILL) yang banyak digunakan oleh Oxford (1989) dimananya dianggap sebagai inventori yang paling menyeluruh. Data tentang strategi yang digunakan kemudian diperoleh dengan menggunakan kaedah kualitatif: wawancara berstruktur semi, kemasukan jurnal, senarai soalan terbuka, dan teks interaksi dalam talian responden dalam tugas bahasa. Set data terkini ini dianalisis (i) untuk membandingkan data kualitatif dengan data SILL, dan (ii) untuk mengenalpasti strategi muncul yang berkemungkinan di antara Net-Geners.

Penemuan menunjukkan bahawa Net-Geners masih menggunakan strategi pembelajaran bahasa yang dikenalpasti dalam inventori yang masih ada, tetapi dengan adanya perubahan dalam bentuk strategi sosial, ingatan, dan afektif yang digunakan. Penggunaan strategi metakognitif, kognitif dan pampasan mengalami perubahan kecil . Sedangkan data SILL menunjukkan tahap yang lebih rendah kepentingan dengan pemakaiannya atas strategi sosial dan afektif, data kualitatif menunjukkan bahawa responden sangat bergantung pada strategi-strategi itu. Memori strategi yang digunakan juga berpangkat di peringkat rendah dalam SILL, tetapi kajian ini mendapati bahawa responden banyak

memanfaatkan 'ingatan' dalam bentuk elektronik. Sedikit perbezaan perwakilan strategi metakognitif, kognitif dan pampasan ditemui untuk digunakan oleh responden Net-Generasi kajian ini. Haluan baru perkembangan dalam strategi-strategi yang tidak ditunjukkan dalam SILL termasuk pelbagai-tugasan, pergantungan penglihatan, penyesuaian bahasa, demokratisasi bahasa, kognisi teragih atau berkongsi kognisi, kecenderungan tumbuh ke arah pembelajaran kertas-kurang yang lebih dan perubahan dalam pengertian mengenai kebebasan peribadi dan penulisan. Penemuan ini menunjukkan keperluan untuk memikirkan semula apa yang kita fahamkan pada masa sekarang ini tentang strategi pembelajaran bahasa dan untuk mengambil lihat yang segar atas apa yang berjalan bagi pelajar Generasi-Rangkaian. Kekurangan keselarasan antara data SILL dan data kualitatif serta munculnya haluan baru yang rupanya tidak ditangkap dalam SILL atau inventori sedia ada yang lain menunjukkan keperluan untuk kajian serupa lebih lanjut tentang kumpulan Net-Geners lain serta semakan bagi inventori pembelajaran bahasa yang sedia ada pada masa sekarang untuk menggabungkan dan lebih baik menggambarkan kemahiran baru dan strategi Net-Geners. Berdasarkan penemuan kajian ini, satu model pembelajaran bahasa dalam konteks pembelajaran mengantarai ICT dicadangkan dan akhirnya cadangan dibuat untuk pengubahsuaian bagi beberapa perkara SILL dan pencantuman perkara lain untuk barangkali membuatnya lebih serasi dengan keperluan pembelajaran bahasa di era digital. Model yang dicadangkan boleh digunakan sebagai asas untuk pembangunan inventori pembelajaran bahasa yang baru dan menyeluruh untuk mengatasi keperluan pembelajaran bahasa bagi Net-Geners dalam dunia rangkaian ini.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on (September 2011) to conduct the final examination of Alireza Shakarami on his thesis entitled “Emerging Trends in Language Learning Strategy Use among Net-Generation ESL Tertiary Learners” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institutions.



ALIREZA SHAKARAMI

Date: 19 September 2011

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