

Language Learning Strategy and Motivation of Learning English as Predictors of Student English Proficiency of the Grade 9 Students

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the predictive influence of language learning strategies and motivation in learning English on the perceived English proficiency of Grade 9 students in Cluster 2 schools of Davao City. Anchored on Schunk's Cognitive Learning Theory, the study employed a predictive research design using a descriptive-correlational approach. A total of 212 Grade 9 students were selected through stratified random sampling, and data were gathered using validated questionnaires measuring language learning strategies, English learning motivation, and perceived English proficiency. Descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and Multiple Linear Regression were utilized to analyze the collected data. Findings revealed that students demonstrated high levels of language learning strategies ($M = 2.92$), motivation in learning English ($M = 3.15$), and perceived English proficiency ($M = 3.00$). Results further showed significant positive relationships between language learning strategies and English proficiency ($r = .732, p < .001$) and between motivation and English proficiency ($r = .778, p < .001$). Regression analysis indicated that both language learning strategies ($\beta = .398, p < .001$) and motivation in learning English ($\beta = .525, p < .001$) significantly predicted perceived English proficiency, with the combined predictors explaining 70% of the variance in students' proficiency levels ($R^2 = .700$). The study concludes that strategic learning behaviors and motivational factors play essential roles in enhancing students' English proficiency. It recommends strengthening school-based language programs, developing motivational learning environments, and implementing instructional practices that promote effective language learning strategies to support improved English outcomes among learners.

The Problem and Its Setting

Despite the global importance of English for education, employment, and international communication, many learners continue to exhibit low levels of English proficiency. Studies by Oxford (2020) suggest that effective cognitive, metacognitive, and social language learning strategies help learners process, retain, and apply English more successfully. Likewise, Dörnyei and Ryan (2020) and Tseng and Schmitt (2021) emphasize that strong motivation encourages learners to use these strategies consistently, leading to better language outcomes. However, many students worldwide still struggle to attain English proficiency because they lack effective learning strategies and experience declining motivation, making this a persistent challenge in language education.

Studies from different countries reveal that many students continue to face challenges in achieving English proficiency despite the availability of various learning strategies. In China, Wang et al. (2023) found that students with low motivation are less likely to perform well in English and are less inclined to use effective learning strategies that support language development. Similarly, Habók and Magyar (2018) reported that while Hungarian students employ social and metacognitive strategies, many struggle to select and adapt these strategies effectively, limiting their language achievement. In Vietnam, Tran and Tran (2021) highlighted that insufficient

self-motivation and weak self-regulation hinder students' ability to take charge of their learning, contributing to persistent difficulties in developing English proficiency.

In the Philippines, the lack of English proficiency remains a pressing concern among both students and educators. Tima (2018) reported that a survey conducted by Hopkins International Partners, the official representative of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), found that many Filipino students and teachers possess limited English proficiency, with the use of Filipino as the medium of instruction identified as a possible contributing factor. Likewise, Racca and Lasaten (2016) noted a decline in the number of successful examinees in Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) board examinations across various disciplines, a trend associated with inadequate English language skills. These findings underscore the continuing challenge of improving English proficiency in the Philippines and its impact on academic and professional achievement.

Despite extensive research on language learning strategies, motivation, and English proficiency, few studies have examined the combined predictive effect of language learning strategies and motivation on students' English proficiency, particularly in the Philippine context. Existing local research mainly describes the declining level of English proficiency but provides limited evidence on how these two variables interact to influence language achievement. Addressing this gap can contribute to a better understanding of the factors that shape English proficiency and inform the development of targeted instructional strategies and educational interventions.

Significance of the Study

This study provides school administrators in the Department of Education with insights into training programs and extension reading initiatives, while educators gain references for effective learning strategies tailored to their students. This study can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 4 (Quality Education). Understanding the underlying reasons for the problems behind English proficiency can improve the quality of English education. Additionally, learners can identify approaches to enhance their motivation and language proficiency, and future researchers will gain insights into the relationship between language learning strategies and student outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the impact of language learning strategies and motivation on perceived English proficiency. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of significance of the language learning strategies of students in terms of memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies; the level of motivation in learning English in terms of teacher character, teaching methodology, teaching materials, teaching tasks, and teaching assessments the level of perceived English proficiency in terms of listening, reading, speaking, and writing?
2. Is there a significant relationship between language learning strategies, motivation in learning English, and the perceived English proficiency of students?
3. Do language learning strategies and motivation in learning English have a significant distinct and combined influence on the perceived English proficiency of students?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: Language learning strategies do not significantly correlate with perceived English proficiency.

H₀₂: Language learning motivation does not significantly correlate with perceived English proficiency.

H₀₃: Language learning strategies do not significantly influence perceived English proficiency.

H04: Language learning motivation does not significantly influence perceived English proficiency.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on Schunk's (2012) Cognitive Learning Theory (CLT), which emphasizes its core pillars: Cognitive Information Processing (CIP), Social Cognitive Theory (Triadic Reciprocity), and Self-Regulated Learning (SRL).

Language Learning Strategies (Oxford's Taxonomy), Direct Strategies: Memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies act as deliberate plans within Cognitive Information Processing to help learners encode language into long-term memory networks, organize complex information, and use executive control to overcome retrieval gaps during communication.

Indirect Strategies: Metacognitive, affective, and social strategies allow learners to manage their own learning loop by self-regulating progress, minimizing anxiety to keep working memory clear, and acquiring language through collaborative social interaction.

Language Learning Motivation and Pedagogical Factors, Triadic Reciprocal Causation: Learning environment variables do not act in isolation but instead interact dynamically where personal factors, behaviors, and environmental contexts constantly shape one another.

Language Learning Motivation: Motivation is driven by internal cognitive constructs like self-efficacy and outcome expectations, which determine how long a student will persist when facing difficult linguistic tasks. Teacher Character: The teacher acts as an essential social model who builds student confidence and capability by demonstrating both correct language usage and resilient coping strategies.

Teaching Methodology: Instruction should align with human cognitive architecture by scaffolding new concepts to protect working memory from cognitive overload.

Teaching Materials and Tasks: Learning materials and activities must be designed within the zone of proximal development to activate prior knowledge frameworks and foster high self-efficacy.

Teaching Assessments: Formative assessments and self-assessments support learning by emphasizing student progress over deficiencies, which directly reinforces self-regulatory habits.

English Language Proficiency Skills, Receptive Skills (Listening and Reading): These input-driven mechanics require selective attention to filter sensory language data into working memory, where internal mental networks decode the overall meaning.

Productive Skills (Speaking and Writing): These output-driven operations require shifting from conscious rules to automatic execution, with writing demanding heavy mental monitoring and speaking requiring high self-efficacy to overcome social anxiety.

Conceptual Framework

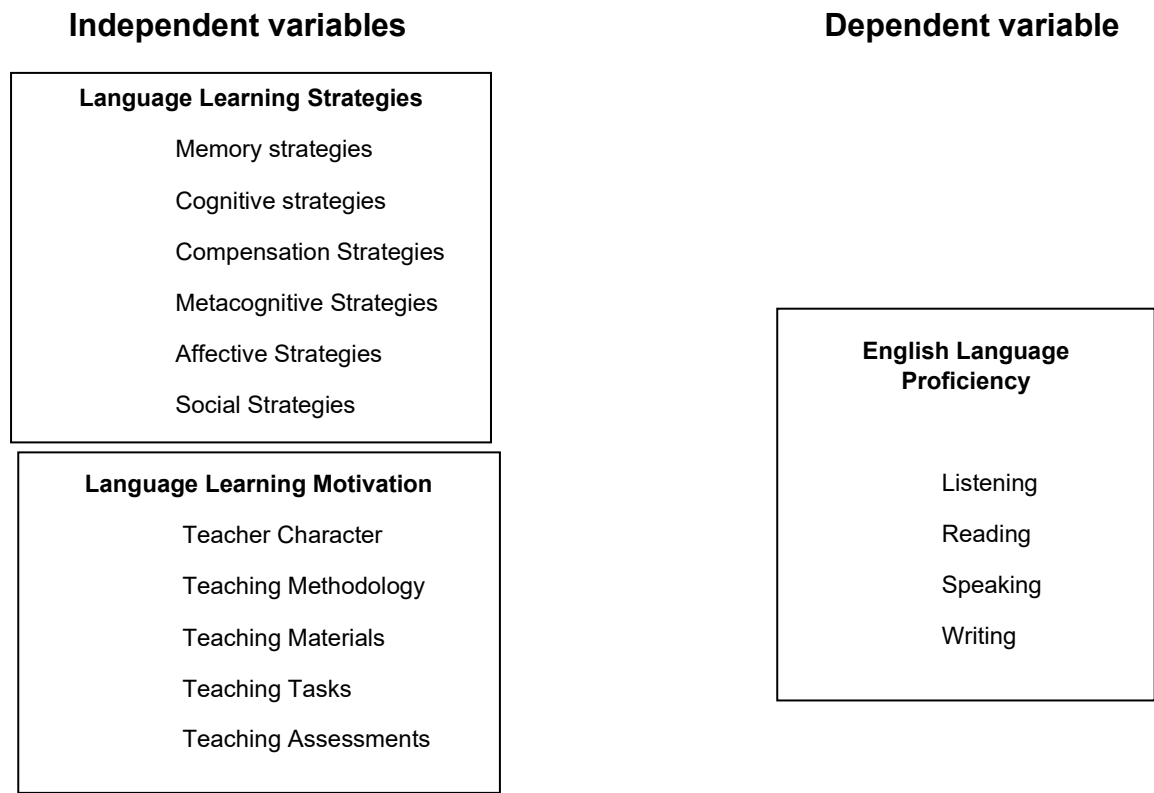


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This section presents the methodology employed by the researcher. Specifically, this section covers the research design, research locale, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, data-gathering procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations. section presents the methodology employed by the researcher. Specifically, this section covered research design, research locale, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, data-gathering procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

The study utilized a predictive design characterized by a descriptive-correlational approach, an effective approach for gathering diverse data, concepts, facts, and information pertinent to the research topic. According to Myers and Well (2013), a correlational design is instrumental for exploring how an independent variable affects a dependent variable, thereby establishing a cause-and-effect relationship between the two. This methodology allowed the researcher to observe and analyze the interaction between variables at a specific moment in time, providing a detailed description of how these factors relate to one another. Through rigorous statistical analysis, the study quantified the relationships, giving them both a degree of strength and direction. Moreover, a descriptive-correlational design is suitable for this study, as the researcher sought to determine whether language learning strategies and motivation have a substantial impact on students' language proficiency. The correlations between the aforementioned variables were examined and documented using the descriptive-correlational design. Nevertheless, this study is deductive because it used a questionnaire to predict the correlation between variables.

Research Locale

This study was conducted in Davao City. Davao City is a premier, highly urbanized city on Mindanao Island, Philippines, with a population of 1.7 million according to the 2020 census. It is the largest city in the Philippines

in terms of land area, covering 2,443.61 km² (943.48 sq mi). The research specifically targeted secondary schools in Cluster 2 within Davao City. Observations indicated that many students experienced difficulties with their English proficiency, primarily due to a lack of interest in class participation and insufficient coping with long, challenging activities. The schools selected for this study conducted face-to-face classes during the 2025-2026 school year. They were situated in a highly urbanized area within a rapidly developing barangay and were committed to fostering socially responsible individuals through transformative education.

Sample and Sampling

The study's sample consisted of 212 Grade 9 high school students from Cluster 2 schools in the Division of Davao City, Philippines. These respondents were selected using stratified random sampling, which divides the population into distinct subgroups, or strata, based on shared characteristics (DeYoreo, 2018). This approach ensured that each subgroup was adequately represented, leading to more accurate and meaningful results. The inclusion criteria for participation included being a Grade 9 student during the school year 2025-2026 and being enrolled in one of the selected schools in Cluster 2. Additionally, only students who submitted their parents' assent and informed consent forms were eligible to participate. Excluded from the study were those who did not meet these criteria or did not attend face-to-face classes throughout the school year.

Research Instrument

Range of Mean	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
3.25 - 4.00	Very High	Language learning strategy is always evident.
2.50– 3.24	High	Language learning strategy is oftentimes evident.
1.76 – 2.49	Low	Language learning strategy is seldom evident.
1.00 – 1.75	Very Low	Language learning strategy is never evident.

This study employed questionnaires divided into three sections, each adapted from published research available online. The first section addressed strategies for learning the English language, followed by an examination of students' motivation for language acquisition. The final section evaluated the language proficiency of students in public high schools in Davao City. Furthermore, the validity and reliability of the instrument were assessed through expert validation. The first part of the study's instrument measured students' language learning strategies with six parts or indicators. This questionnaire is adapted from the study of Kean (2018). The reliability of the original scale obtained Cronbach's alpha value of 0.974. The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert scale and were determined based on the following ranges of means:

The second part of the study's instrument measured students' motivation in learning English with five parts or indicators. This questionnaire is adapted from the study of Tien and Ngoc (2022). The reliability of the original scale obtained Cronbach's alpha value of 0.867. The questionnaire used 4-point Likert scale and were determined based on the following ranges of means:

Range of Mean	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
3.25 - 4.00	Very High	Motivation in Language Learning is always evident.
2.50– 3.24	High	Motivation in Language Learning is oftentimes evident.
1.76 – 2.49	Low	Motivation in Language Learning is seldom evident.
1.00 – 1.75	Very Low	Motivation in Language Learning is never evident.

The third part of the instrument was about the English proficiency of junior high school students. The questionnaire was adapted with modification from the study of Kaewwichian and Jaturapitakkul (2018) with descriptors for language proficiency scales with spoken tasks, comprehension, interaction strategies, qualities of spoken performance, and writing tasks. The reliability of the original scale was obtained with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.92. The instrument used a four-point Likert scale with the following ranges of means:

Range of Mean	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
3.25 - 4.00	Very High	English proficiency is always evident.
2.50– 3.24	High	English proficiency is oftentimes evident.
1.76 – 2.49	Low	English proficiency is seldom evident.
1.00 – 1.75	Very Low	English proficiency is never evident.

Data Gathering

During the data gathering, the researcher undergone steps as follows: A letter from the dean of the Holy Cross of Davao College, Inc. (HCDC) Graduate School was requested to seek authorization to undertake the study titled "Language Learning Strategies and Motivation as Predictors of Language Proficiency in English of the Students." Upon approval of the permission letter, the researcher formally requested ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee (REC) before administering the instruments to the study's target respondents.

Once the REC released the ethical clearance, the researcher forwarded the letters and other documents to the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Davao City to formally request approval to conduct the study in one of the selected public schools. In a separate request letter addressed to the principals of the participating schools, the researcher personally sent it to them, attaching the approved request letter from the SDS and an endorsement letter from the HCDC Graduate School Dean. The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study by first seeking approval from the Research Ethics Committee (REC). Following this, the researcher secured an endorsement from the Dean of Graduate Studies at Holy Cross of Davao College, Inc. This endorsement letter was attached to the permission letters that were submitted to the school administrators of the selected public educational institutions where the study took place.

The intended respondents received official notification regarding their participation in the study. An Informed Consent Form (ICF) and an Assent Form were provided for them to complete with their parents or guardians. They were informed about the study's goals and the important role they played in the research. It was emphasized

that participation was voluntary, and data collection was conducted in person. The data were encoded, tabulated, and analyzed according to the study's objectives.

Data Analysis

The data collected in this study were systematically organized, processed, and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, were employed to determine the levels of language learning strategies, motivation in learning English, and perceived English proficiency of the respondents. Furthermore, inferential statistical techniques, including Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis, were utilized to examine the relationships among variables and to determine their significant influence on English proficiency.

All data were encoded and analyzed using statistical software (SPSS) to ensure accuracy and efficiency in computation. The level of significance was set at 0.05 to determine the statistical significance of the results. Through these methods, meaningful interpretations were drawn to support the findings and conclusions of the study.

Statement of the Problem	Statistical Tool	Purpose/Use
Levels of the three respective variables	Descriptive Statistics (Mean, SD)	Determine levels of language learning strategies, motivation, and perceived language proficiency
Significance of the correlation between the predictive and criterion variables	Pearson Product–Moment Correlation	Test the significance and strength of relationships among variables
Significance of the degree of influence of the predictive variables	Multiple Linear Regression	Assess the degree of influence of language learning strategies and motivation on the perceived language proficiency

On the following page, the matrix containing the scale, descriptive level, and corresponding interpretation for each variable in this study is presented.

Scale	Level	Interpretation for Language Learning Strategies	Interpretation for Motivation in Language Learning	Interpretation for Perceived English Proficiency
1.00 – 1.74	very low	Language learning strategy is never evident.	Motivation in Language Learning is never evident.	English proficiency is never evident.
1.75 – 2.49	Low	Language learning strategy is seldom evident.	Motivation in Language Learning is seldom evident.	English proficiency is seldom evident.
2.50 – 3.74	High	Language learning strategy is often evident.	Motivation in Language Learning is often evident.	English proficiency is oftentimes evident.
3.25 – 4.00	very high	Language learning strategy is always evident.	Motivation in Language Learning is always evident.	English proficiency is always evident.

The following is the Standard Deviation Value Interpretation:

Range	Description	Interpretation
SD ≤ 0.50	Highly Consistent Responses	Strong and uniform perception
SD = 0.51 – 1.00	Moderately Consistent Responses	Acceptable consistency
SD = 1.01 – 1.50	Low Consistency Responses	Differing views or experiences
SD > 1.50	Very Low Consistency Responses	High variability and lack of consensus

In this study, the significance of the correlation is tested at a 0.05 confidence level. The following is the standard measure for the interpretation scale of r -value. The following scheme is used:

Computed r	Descriptive Interpretation
+/- 1.00	Perfect correlation
Between +/- 0.75 – +/- 0.99	High correlation
Between +/- 0.51 – +/- 0.74	Moderately high correlation
Between +/- 0.31 – +/- 0.50	Moderately low correlation
Between +/- 0.01 – +/- 0.30	Low correlation
0.00	No correlation

Ethical Consideration

The study adhered to strict ethical standards in conducting research with student participants. Before data collection, informed consent was obtained from all respondents, ensuring their voluntary participation and the confidentiality of their responses. The research instruments underwent validation and reliability testing to guarantee the accuracy and trustworthiness of the findings. Permission from the Department of Education was formally secured to conduct the study within public schools under its jurisdiction. Moreover, the research proposal was reviewed and approved by the Society of Moral Integrity and Legal Ethics (SMILE) to ensure adherence to ethical, legal, and moral research principles. study adhered to strict ethical standards in conducting research with language teachers.

RESULTS

This chapter presents descriptive and correlation tables, along with analyses and interpretations of the statistical results. It concludes with a summary of findings.

Descriptive Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the study, highlighting key variables including language learning strategies, motivation for learning English, and perceived English proficiency. It includes details on the sample size, standard deviations, means, and descriptive levels for each variable.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (N= 212)

Variables	Sample Size	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Language Learning Strategy	212	0.40	2.92	High
Memory Strategies		0.50	2.85	High
Cognitive Strategies		0.49	2.95	High
Compensation Strategies		0.53	2.70	High
Metacognitive Strategies		0.54	3.09	High
Affective Strategies		0.55	2.84	High

Social Strategies	0.53	3.05	High
Motivation of Learning English 212	0.48	3.15	High
Teaching Character	0.60	3.21	High
Teaching Materials	0.55	3.25	Very High
Teaching Methodology	0.47	3.03	High
Teaching Tasks	0.59	3.14	High
Teaching Assessments	0.56	3.12	High
English Proficiency 212	0.53	3.00	High
Listening	0.58	3.02	High
Reading	0.55	3.12	High
Speaking	0.62	2.93	High
Writing	0.64	2.94	High

The overall mean for Language Learning Strategies is 2.92 (SD = 0.40), indicating that participants frequently use various strategies for language acquisition. Metacognitive Strategies had the highest mean (3.09), reflecting students' strengths in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning. In contrast, Compensation Strategies had the lowest mean (2.70) within the same "High" threshold.

The low standard deviations (0.49 to 0.55) reflect strong consensus among the 212 participants on their strategy usage, with most falling into the "High" usage bracket. The data indicate a balanced learning approach, as both Social Strategies (3.05) and Cognitive Strategies (2.95) are used at similar intensities, showcasing a well-rounded strategic repertoire.

The Motivation for Learning English variable has the highest overall mean across the three main groups at 3.15 (SD = 0.48), indicating a High level of motivation. Within this group, Teaching Materials stands out with a mean of 3.25, reaching a Very High descriptive level—the only variable in the entire table to do so. This suggests that the quality and relevance of the textbooks, media, and classroom resources are the primary drivers of student engagement and enthusiasm for the language.

The motivational factors, like Teaching Character (3.21) and Teaching Tasks (3.14), are rated high, emphasizing the importance of the instructor's persona and classroom activities in maintaining student interest. Students respond strongly to their environment and teachers' approaches, indicating that the instructional setting promotes a positive learning atmosphere.

The group mean for English Proficiency is exactly 3.00 (SD = 0.53), categorized at a High descriptive level. This suggests that, on average, participants perceive their competence in the four core language skills as strong. Among these skills, Reading (3.12) and Listening (3.02) slightly outperform the productive skills. This is a common trend in language acquisition where receptive skills (understanding input) often develop or are rated more confidently than productive skills (generating output).

The productive skills, Writing (2.94) and Speaking (2.93), are both categorized as "High" but represent slightly lower proficiency levels for students. Notably, Speaking has the highest standard deviation (0.62), reflecting greater variability in abilities; some students feel confident while others struggle more, resulting in a wider spread of data.

Correlational Result

The correlation table provides a statistical analysis of the relationship between English proficiency and two key predictors: Language Learning Strategies and Motivation for Learning English, based on a sample of 212 individuals ($N = 212$). For both variables, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected because the p -values were .000, which is well below the established alpha level of 0.05. This indicates that the relationships observed are statistically significant and unlikely to have occurred by chance, suggesting a reliable connection between these factors and language proficiency. In terms of specific strength, both variables show a strong positive correlation with English proficiency. Motivation for Learning English yielded a slightly higher Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = .778$) compared to Language Learning Strategies ($r = .732$). This implies that as a student's motivation and use of learning strategies increase, their English proficiency tends to improve significantly. While both are critical, the data suggest that motivation serves as a slightly stronger predictor of success in this specific group.

Table 2. Correlation Table ($N = 212$)

Variables	English Proficiency			
	r	p -value	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
Language Learning Strategy	.732	.000	Reject	Moderately High Positive, Significant Correlation
Motivation of Learning English	.778	.000	Reject	High Positive, Significant Correlation

Level of Significance: 0.05

Decision Rule: Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$

The regression analysis presented in Table 3 evaluates the predictive power of Language Learning Strategies and Motivation for Learning English on the dependent variable, English Proficiency ($N = 212$). The overall model demonstrates robust statistical significance and high explanatory power, as evidenced by an F -statistic of $F(2,209) = 243.406$ ($p < .000$) and a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.700. This R^2 value indicates that approximately 70% of the variance in English Proficiency can be accounted for by the combined influence of the two independent variables. The strong correlation coefficient ($R = 0.836$) further underscores a substantial linear relationship between the predictors and the outcome, suggesting that the model is highly effective in capturing the factors that drive proficiency.

Regression Results

Table 3. Regression Table ($N = 212$)

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (β)	t	Sig. (p)	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
Constant	-0.368	0.157	—	-2.347	.020	—	—
Language Learning Strategy	0.531	0.066	0.398	8.077	.000	Reject	Positive Significant Influence
Motivation of Learning English	0.578	0.054	0.525	10.662	.000	Reject	Positive Significant Influence

Model Summary:

$R = 0.836$ | $R^2 = 0.700$ | $F(2,209) = 243.406$ | $p = 0.000$

Level of Significance: 0.05

Decision Rule: Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$

Predictive Model : $Y = .531X_1 + .578X_2 - .368$

where: X_1 = Language Learning Strategy

X_2 = Motivation of Learning English

Y = English Proficiency

Individually, both predictors exert a statistically significant positive influence on English Proficiency. Motivation for Learning English emerged as the more influential factor ($\beta = .525$, $t = 10.662$, $p < .000$), indicating that for every standard deviation increase in motivation, English proficiency is expected to rise by 0.525 standard deviations. Similarly, Language Learning Strategies have a significant positive weight ($\beta = .398$, $t = 8.077$, $p < .000$). For both variables, the null hypotheses were rejected, confirming that as students employ more diverse learning strategies and maintain higher levels of motivation, their English proficiency improves predictably. These findings emphasize the critical role of both cognitive approaches and affective drivers in language acquisition.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on statistical results, it was specifically found that:

1. Language Learning Strategies significantly correlate with perceived English proficiency.
2. Motivation for Learning English significantly correlates with perceived English proficiency.
3. Language Learning Strategies and Motivation for Learning English significantly influence perceived English proficiency.

DISCUSSIONS

This chapter discusses the correlation and regression analysis results of the study. The discussion highlights what previous assertions are either supported or denied by these findings. Included here as well are the conclusions based on the findings and the recommendations based on the conclusions.

Language Learning Strategies, Motivation, and the English Proficiency Correlations

The findings revealed moderate-to-high positive correlations between language learning strategies and English proficiency, as well as between motivation and English proficiency. Research by Wu et al. (2025) indicates that learning motivation is directly linked to the use of learning strategies, which in turn positively impacts proficiency in ESL contexts. Additionally, Tai and Zhao (2022) highlight individual learner variables, including strategy implementation and motivational factors, as significant predictors of English proficiency. Recent studies further suggest that high motivation levels and strategic learning techniques are key predictors of proficiency; for instance, Wang et al. (2023) found that foreign language enjoyment positively influences English achievement. Similarly, a study involving Chinese tertiary students demonstrated that motivation and diverse learning practices, such as metacognitive and cognitive strategies, are closely associated with higher EFL proficiency levels (Sari et al., 2023).

Several studies have challenged the positive correlations reported in this study, with Rosidah (2021) and Idham et al. (2025) finding no significant relationships among English motivation, language learning strategies, and proficiency. Baz (2025) also reported a lack of significant correlation between motivation scores and English

proficiency. Additionally, research by Guo et al. (2023) highlighted that individual cognitive engagement, rather than general motivation or emotional engagement, is a key predictor of language achievement.

Recent research highlights a complex relationship between motivation, learning strategies, and English proficiency among learners. While many studies indicate that higher motivation and effective learning strategies lead to better language achievement, other research challenges these findings, suggesting that the correlations may not be as strong as previously believed. Overall, the evidence suggests that motivated learners tend to employ better strategies for language acquisition, but some studies indicate significant discrepancies in these relationships.

Language Learning Strategies and Motivation Influence Perceived English Proficiency

The findings of this research revealed that both language learning strategies and motivation positively influence students' English proficiency. The findings of this study are supported by substantial empirical evidence. Isik (2025) identified motivation, exposure, and aptitude as key predictors of L2 proficiency, with integrative motivation being particularly significant. Furthermore, Rusdani (2017) demonstrated that language learning strategies have a significant impact on students' listening, speaking, and reading skills.

Additionally, Soruc et al. (2022) revealed that the type of motivation directly influences language proficiency, which in turn predicts academic success for English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) students across various academic divisions. Collectively, these studies reinforce the findings that both the utilization of strategies and motivation serve as robust, statistically significant predictors of English proficiency. In addition, recent studies demonstrate that high levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are significant predictors of English self-efficacy, which in turn enhances the frequent and diverse application of language learning strategies (Kayır et al., 2025).

Although the regression model in this study demonstrates strong predictive power, several other studies have failed to replicate these findings. Humaira and Hosanag (2025) found that motivation and study habits accounted for only 2.6% of English language achievement, and this effect was not statistically significant. Furthermore, Wu et al. (2025) found that learning strategies negatively predicted proficiency, directly contradicting the positive coefficients observed in the current regression model. Additionally, Li's (2025) findings suggest that sudden increases in linguistic complexity can overwhelm individual motivational adaptation, implying that perceived proficiency may be more a reflection of task difficulty than of personal strategy use. This discrepancy underscores how the target language context can fundamentally alter the predictive relationships involved.

While many studies support the idea that language learning strategies and motivation positively influence proficiency, some recent research has yielded contradictory results, suggesting a much weaker relationship or even negative effects of certain strategies. This highlights the complexity of language learning, suggesting that contextual factors can significantly affect the relationships between motivation, strategy use, and perceived proficiency.

CONCLUSION

Based on the statistical findings, this study concludes that both Language Learning Strategies and Language Learning Motivation are critical determinants of student's perceived English proficiency. Individually, a student's choice of learning strategies and their level of motivation each share a significant, direct correlation with how proficient they perceive themselves to be in the English language. When combined, these two factors exert a powerful collective influence, serving as significant predictors of perceived language competence. Furthermore, these results strongly affirm the tenets of Cognitive Learning Theory, demonstrating that language acquisition is not merely a passive habit but an active, goal-directed mental process. Ultimately, the integration of strategic learning behaviors and intrinsic or extrinsic drive plays a pivotal role in shaping a learner's cognitive self-assessment and overall language development.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the conclusions, the following are recommended:

First, DepEd Administration, school heads, and teachers are encouraged to initiate and implement activities that emphasize the importance of enhancing students' English proficiency. Programs such as language immersion activities, workshops, and interactive learning sessions can create more engaging opportunities for students to practice and develop their skills. Strengthening institutional support in this area can foster a more positive learning environment and promote continuous improvement in students' language abilities.

Second, future researchers are encouraged to utilize more advanced research methods, such as mediation analysis, to further examine the relationships among variables associated with English proficiency. This approach can help identify underlying mechanisms and indirect effects that may explain how certain variables influence one another. By doing so, researchers can uncover more nuanced and complex interactions that contribute to students' language development.

Third, it is highly recommended to conduct qualitative research to explore themes and constructs that may serve as potential variables related to English proficiency. Through in-depth data collection methods such as interviews or focus group discussions, researchers can generate meaningful subthemes that provide richer context and understanding. These findings can then be used to inform future quantitative studies and develop more refined measurement indicators.

Lastly, it is recommended that future researchers conduct additional studies incorporating different variables to account for the remaining 16.4% variance in English proficiency. Exploring other possible factors will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants that influence students' language performance. This will provide deeper insights into aspects that were not captured in the present study and strengthen the overall body of knowledge in this field.

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