CREATIVE PERCEPTION AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AMONG MALAYSIAN FORM FOUR STUDENTS

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Abstract

Many factors have been reported to affect language learning and language achievement. Among them are cognitive constructs like intelligence and creativity (Palaniappan, 1996b). Perceptions, attitudes and motivation, too, are found to influence second language acquisition. However, few studies have investigated the relationship between creative perception i.e., perception of oneself as creative, and language learning strategies. This paper intends to (a) provide empirical evidence on the nature of the relationship between the two dimensions of creative perception and language learning strategies used by second language learners. And (b) to find out if there any differences in the relationships between the two dimensions in terms of gender, type of school and socio-economic status.

Introduction

Creativity, one of the most revered cognitive constructs has been found to comprise many divergent thinking skills and personality characteristics which are related to second language acquisition. Creative thinking skills, like the ability to recognise patterns easily, use metacognitive strategies readily, and personality characteristics like willingness to take risks and being not

inhibited to communicate, tend to enhance language learning. Certain creative personality characteristics, like perceiving oneself as creative (or creative perception), may be related to language learning strategies one employs in learning a second language.

According to Torrance (1974), creative thinking comprises several divergent thinking abilities, namely, originality, fluency, flexibility, elaboration, abstractness, resistance to premature closure (not jumping to conclusions), being emotionally expressive, synthesis of incomplete figures (or information), extending or breaking boundaries and fantasising. Students who are original are able to come up with ideas that are unique and statistically infrequent. Studies have shown that they accomplish this by using many strategies that they are either endowed with or have learnt. Students high on originality, for example, are in control of most of their mental processes and are able to use them strategically in their learning. Hence, they are able to garner easily the appropriate strategies for any form of learning, including learning of a second language.

Students high on originality, by virtue of the fact that they can combine and seek or force relationships between seemingly unrelated concepts, are also able to enhance their ability to remember. One of the learning and remembering skills is the skill of seeking relationships between intangible concepts and objects that are familiar. Creative students, especially students who are high originals, are able to do this more effectively than students who are less creative or original.

Another ability present among creative students is the ability to sense missing elements (Torrance, 1974) and to fit in the missing elements with appropriate ideas to make a whole, intelligible picture. Hence, creative individuals are able to compensate for missing knowledge, especially in instances where they come across unfamiliar English words, have to choose an appropriate word or be able to make out what the other person is saying. Thus, creative students tend to use this ability well in the process of acquiring second language competencies.

Studies have also shown that creative individuals are prone to emotional disturbances due to rejections of their ideas from their peers. Hence, they are very emotional. However, they are normally self-confident, willing to take risks and venture into unknown territories. Torrance (1962), from his review of studies on creative personality characteristics, found as many as eighty-four personality characteristics in creative individuals. These characteristics include the ability to accept disorder, awareness of others, being baffled by something, attraction to disorder, desire to excel, being emotionally sensitive, not being afraid to be different, independence in thinking and judgment, being intuitive, questioning, self-assertive, self-aware, self-confident, unwilling to

accept anything on mere say so, willing to take risks, and versatile, to name a few. This study intends to explore the relationships between some of these characteristics and language learning strategies, which are reported in literature to be influenced by learner personality characteristics (Oxford, 1989).

Language learning strategies have been defined as 'steps taken by the learner to facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval or use of information (Oxford & Crookall, 1989). Recent research on language learning strategies has shown that language learning strategies can affect the success with which students learn a language (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). It has been consistently found that good language learners use a wide range of learning strategies (Rubin, 1975, Nyikos, 1987, O'Malley et al., 1985, Oxford, 1989) They also appear to be able to combine effective strategies by selecting strategies that work together for a particular task (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Vann & Abraham, 1989). On the other hand, studies on weak students have shown that these students also used strategies to a large extent (Vann & Abraham, 1989). However, they failed to use certain strategies due to the inadequate knowledge about these.

The list of language learning strategies that exists is extensive and there have been many attempts to classify all of them. One of the most recent forms of classification has been provided by Oxford (1990). She suggests that there are generally six broad categories of language learning strategies, namely, Memory strategy, Cognitive strategy, Metacognitive strategy, Compensation strategy, Affective strategy and Social strategy The first, (Memory strategy) consists of strategies to remember effectively through structured review, imagery and grouping. The Cognitive strategy category consists of strategies to practise using the language such as repeating, formally practising with sounds and writing systems as well as deeper level processing strategies such as reasoning deductively, transferring and analysing expressions. Compensation strategy consists of strategies which allow students to communicate despite deficiencies in their language knowledge such as by using clues to guess meaning, using their mother tongue, synonyms and so on. Metacognitive strategy deals with strategies which allow learners to control their own learning such as identifying goals of a language task, self monitoring and self-evaluating. Affective strategy consists of strategies, which help students gain control over their emotions, attitudes, motivations and values. Examples of this strategy are rewarding and encouraging oneself Social strategy consists of strategies, which help students interact with other people such as asking for clarification and becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings.

Research on language learning strategies has focused on a variety of factors affecting its use, such as gender (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989), personality types (Rubin, 1975, Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995),

ethnic group (Politzer & McGroarty, 1985), age (Bialystok, 1981, Chamot, O'Malley, Kupper & Impink- Fernandez, 1987) and so on. According to MacIntyre (1994), the use of language learning strategies appears to depend on the interaction of learner characteristics and the demands of the situation. As such, it is believed that an investigation of the relationship between learner characteristics and the use of language learning strategies can provide useful insights into the learning process as a whole.

Few studies have been undertaken on learner characteristics. Three types of personality characteristics, which appear to influence strategy use, are competitiveness, anxiety and lack of inhibition (Rubin,1975, Bailey, 1983). Ehrman and Oxford (1989) conducted a study to investigate the nature of the relationship between overall personality types and language learning strategies used. They found that extroverts used significantly more affective strategies and visualisation strategies than did introverts. Introverts reported significantly more frequent use of strategies involving searching for and communicating meaning. Intuitive people were also found to use more affective, formal model-building, functional practice (authentic language use), and searching for and communicating meaningful strategies. Feeling-type people used general study strategies significantly more.

In another study by Oxford and Ehrman (1995), it was found that learners who were highly persistent, strongly motivated and oriented toward systematic planning were active strategy users. They also found that users of Compensation strategies reported themselves as highly flexible, sensitive and as having unusual experiences and ideas. The users of Metacognitive strategies were found to be methodical and systematic, as well as intrinsically motivated and confident. had a need for orderliness, a desire for greater personal distance and an overall dislike of ambiguity.

Some of the personality characteristics of creative people mentioned earlier were found to be similar to the personality characteristics of second language learners who chose the various language learning strategies. For example, in Oxford's (1990) categories of language learning strategies, students who choose the Remembering More Effectively or Memory strategy, tend to be able to make new associations, use imagery, sound, and sound-and-image combinations. These students are also displayed creative orientations. Those who used Memory strategies showed tendencies to be persistent and not anxious about self-esteem issues.

Students who chose Using All Your Mental Processes or Cognitive strategy tended to be recombining familiar items in new ways, practising new language in a variety of different situations, looking for new patterns and adjusting their understanding according to new information. Creative individuals also tended

to seek new ways of combining ideas, in new situations, and were quick to discover new patterns.

Characteristics of students who used Compensating for Missing Elements or Compensation strategy tended to use all possible clues to guess the meaning of what was heard or read in the new language. These characteristics are evident in Torrance's (1974) definition of creativity:

> a process of becoming sensitive to problems, deficiencies, gaps in knowledge, missing elements, disharmonies, and so on; identifying the difficult, searching for solutions, making guesses or formulating hypotheses about the deficiencies, testing and retesting these hypotheses and possibly modifying and retesting them, and finally communicating the results. (p. 8)

Students who used Organise and Evaluate Learning strategy or Metacognitive strategy, preferred to overview and link with materials already known, pay attention to minor details and have the tendency to find out how language learning works. These are also considered as characteristics commonly found among creative individuals, who are curious and inquisitive.

Students, who used Managing Their Emotions or Affective strategy, tended to take risks, are persistent in learning and energized. Again, creative individuals were found to be risk-takers and persistent in whatever they undertook.

Learning with others or Social strategy, commonly used by students who asked for clarifications or verification also appeared to be used by creative individuals since they were usually inquisitive and curious. The users of social strategies were found to be persistent as well as both expressive and realistic.

Of the six language learning strategies identified by Oxford, Remembering More Effectively or Memory strategy and Using All Mental Processes or Cognitive strategy appear to be more commonly used by creative individuals since they are found to be employed by students who have more characteristics of a creative person as identified by Torrance (1962). This study aims to seek empirical evidence for this proposition.

Definition of terms

(1) Creative Perception is the perception of oneself as being creative. It is measured by the Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory (KTCPI) which consists of two subscales, namely, What Kind Of Person Are You? (WKOPAY) (Khatena & Torrance, 1990) and Something About Myself (SAM) (Khatena & Morse, 1991).

(2)   Creative Perception as measured by WKOPAY, which is a creative Personality measure, is based on the rationale that an individual has a psychological self whose structures have incorporated both creative and non-creative ways of behaving. Its factors are defined as below·

  (a)   Acceptance of Authority relates to being obedient, courteous, and conforming and accepting of judgments of authorities.
  (b)   Self-confidence relates to being socially well-adjusted, self-confident, energetic and curious, thorough and remembering well
  (c)   Inquisitiveness relates to always asking questions, being self-assertive, feeling strong emotions, being talkative and obedient.
  (d)   Awareness of Others relates to being courteous, socially well-adjusted, popular or well-liked, considerate of others, and preferring to work in a group.
  (e)   Disciplined Imagination relates to being energetic, persistent, thorough, industrious, imaginative, adventurous, never bored, attempting difficult tasks and preferring complex tasks.

(3)   Creative Perception, as measured by Something About Myself (SAM), is a creative achievement measure and is based on the rationale that individual creativity is reflected in creative characteristics possessed in the use of creative thinking, and in creative productions (Khatena & Morse, 1991). It gives measures of six personal factors which are defined as follows.

  (a)   Environmental Sensitivity relates to being open to the ideas of others, relating ideas to what can be seen, touched, or heard, interest in beautiful and humorous aspects of experiences and sensitivity to meaningful relations.
  (b)   Initiative relates to directing, producing and /or playing leads in dramatic and musical productions, producing new formulas or new products, and bringing about changes in procedures or organization.
  (c)   Self-strength relates to self-confidence in matching talents against others, resourcefulness, versatility, willingness to take risks, desire to excel and organizational ability.
  (d)   Intellectuality relates to intellectual curiosity, enjoyment of challenging tasks, imagination, preference for adventure over routine, liking for reconstruction of things and ideas to form something different, and dislike for doing things in a prescribed routine.
  (e)   Individuality relates to preference for working by oneself rather than in a group, seeing oneself as a self-starter and somewhat

eccentric, critical of others' work, thinking for oneself, working for long periods without getting tired.

(f)   Artistry relates to production of objects, models, paintings, carvings, musical compositions, receiving awards or prizes or having exhibits, production of stories, plays, poems and other literary pieces.

(4)   Language Learning Strategies or LLS are defined by Oxford (1989, p.235) as "behaviors or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed, and enjoyable"

Methodology

This is a descriptive study employing survey techniques. Two classes of students comprising 70 students were chosen randomly from two schools, one urban (n=32) and one rural (n=38). There were 29 boys and 41 girls. They were approximately 16-17 years of age and had had nine years of formal schooling. The medium of instruction in their schools was Bahasa Melayu but they had been following the English Communication syllabus ever since they started formal schooling at age seven. Three instruments were administered in this study To ascertain the level of Creative Perception, the Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory (KTCPI) which consists of two subscales, namely WKOPAY and SAM, was administered. The language learning strategies applied by respondents were assessed via Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) which was adapted from the 7.0 version to suit the situation in Malaysia. A Personal Background Inventory (PBI) was administered to collect data relating to age, gender, socio-economic status and other relevant background information.

WKOPAY, consists of fifty forced-choice items with paired decripters from which the respondent was required to choose one. The items were bilingual with the English and Bahasa Melayu items appearing side by side. (A sample item on this inventory is 'A. Pendiam B Taat dan patuh' for 'A. Quiet B Obedient') Apart from giving an overall score for perception of oneself as creative based on creative personality characteristics, this scale also gives measures of five personal factor scores, namely, Acceptance of Authority (AA), Self-confidence (SC), Inquisitiveness (I), Awareness of Others (AO), and Disciplined imagination (DI).

The other subscale, SAM, also consists of 50 stimulus statements, each of which requires the respondent to decide whether the statements describe them or not. The items were also in Bahasa Melayu and English .(A sample item on this inventory is 'Saya berbakat dalam pelbagai bidang' for' I have many talents') Apart from giving an overall score of creative perception based

on past creative achievements this inventory also gives measures of 6 factors, namely, Environmental Sensitivity (ES), Initiative (IN), Self-strength (SS), Iintellectuality (IT), Individuality (ID), and Artistry (A).

The SILL consists of 50 items in a five point Likert-scale requiring respondents to report the frequency of use of language learning Strategies. The strategies were grouped into six sections, namely:

Section A. Remembering more effectively or Memory strategy
Section B Using all mental processes or Cognitive strategy,
Section C: Compensating for missing knowledge or Compensation strategy,
Section D· Organizing and evaluating learning or Metacognitive strategy,
Section E. Managing emotions or Affective strategy and
Section F· Learning with others or Social strategy

The responses from the Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception inventory and Strategy inventory for language learning were scored according to their published manual. The data obtained were analysed using the SPSS Version 7.5 computer statistical analyses program.

Table I shows the mean, median, mode, minimum and maximum scores obtained by the sample for the two subscales and their factor scores of Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory The means and medians indicate that the scores are fairly normally distributed, which in turn indicates that the sample is representative of the population from which it is drawn.

Table I
Means, Standard Deviations, Medians, Minimums and Maximums of
Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory Scores. (n = 70)

	Mean	StdDev	Median	Minimum	Maximum
SAM	31.6	5.6	31.0	15.0	40.0
EnvironmentalSensitivity	4.8	1.2	5.0	1.0	6.0
Initiative	2.3	1.6	2.5	.0	5.0
Self-strength	6.5	1.3	6.0	3.0	9.0
Intellectuality	7.5	1.6	8.0	3.0	10.0
Individuality	3.7	1.2	4.0	1.0	6.0
Artistry	2.2	1.7	2.0	.0	11.0
WKOPAY	23.7	5.0	24.0	16.0	36.0
Acceptance ofAuthority	3.1	1.6	3.0	.0	7.0
Self-confidence	6.8	1.9	7.0	3.0	11.0
Inquisitiveness	3.0	1.5	3.0	.0	6.0
Awareness ofOthers	7.1	1.5	7.0	2.0	10.0
DisciplinedImagination	3.8	4.0	2.0	2.0	8.0

When compared to the norm reported in the Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory, it was found that the sample subjects have an above average score on (SAM) compared to American, Indian and Hungarian samples (Palaniappan, 1996). The factor scores of Self-strength, Intellectuality and Individuality, of this sample are significantly higher than that of the norm. This indicates that Malaysian students have a high perception of themselves as creative based on their past creative performances. Hence, this sample population are capable of using the cognitive aspect of their creative thinking as well as their personality in employing the relevant language learning strategies to acquire second language competencies.

The other dimension of Creative Perception, (WKOPAY) is significantly lower that the norm reported in the manual. But the factor score, Awareness of Others, is significantly higher than the norm. The other factor score, Inquisitiveness, however, is significantly lower than the norm. These findings indicate that this sample population perceive themselves as creative based based on their previous creative experiences as opposed to their personality characteristics.

The means and medians in Table 2 show that the scores of the six language learning strategies are normally distributed and are representative of the population from which the sample was drawn.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Medians, Minimums and Maximums of the Language Learning Strategies. (n = 70)

Factor Label	Factor Name	Mean	StdDev	Median	Minimum	Maximum
A	Rememberingmore effectively	24.8	5.8	24.0	10.0	39.0
B	Using mentalprocess	41.0	8.3	41.0	21.0	62.0
C	Compensating for missing knowledge	17.8	4.3	17.0	11.0	36.0
D	Organizing and evaluating learning	30.0	6.8	30.5	12.0	43.0
E	Managingemotions	16.4	4.7	16.0	8.0	29.0
F	Learning with others	19.1	5.2	19.5	7.0	30.0

Table 3 shows the Pearson product moment correlations between the two dimensions of creative perception and their factor scores and the six language learning strategies for the whole sample.

The overall score of creative perception (SAM) is significantly ($p < .05$) correlated with the Cognitive ($r = .34$) and the Social strategy ($r = .28$) of English language learning. This indicates that students who are creative (based on their past experiences) tend to use Cognitive strategies like repeating, recombining familiar items in new ways and practising new language in a variety of situations. They also tend to ask questions for clarifications or verification and cooperate with their peers.

Students, who are 'Environmentally Sensitive', tend to use the Memory strategy for language learning. This indicates that students who are creative tend to be open to the ideas of others, relate ideas to what can be seen, and tend to use strategies like grouping, making associations ,and placing new words into a context so that they can remember well.

Students who are high on the factor 'Individuality' tend to employ Cognitive, Metacognitive and Social strategies when learning language. This indicates that students who prefer working alone rather than in a group and who are self-starters tend to use the strategy of repeating, recombining familiar items in new ways, linking new materials

attention to specific details, cooperating with proficient users of the new language and asking questions for clarification when learning language.

On the second dimension of creative perception (WKOPAY), students identified as creative based on their perception of their creative personality characteristics do not appear to use any of the strategies identified by Oxford in language learning. Findings indicate that students who are low on 'Self~confidence' $(r = -.25)$ tend to use the Compensation strategy when learning a language. This indicates that students who are socially not well-adjusted, not energetic or curious, and do not remember well, may resort to the compensation method for language learning that is, use all possible clues to guess meaning and find ways to get the message across in speaking and writing despite limited knowledge.

Table 3

Pearson Product Moment Correlations between Creative Perception (SAM) and Language Learning Strategies. (n = 70)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
SAM	.20	34**	.13	.22	.02	.28*
EnvironmentalSensitivity	.24*	.22	.03	.15	.13	-.09
Initiative	.13	.21	.03	.08	-.07	.23
Self-strength	.02	18	-.05	.02	-.06	.10
Intellectuality	-.01	13	-.13	-.03	-.11	.05
Individuality	.18	.31**	16	.28*	.05	.29*
Artistry	.09	.03	-.07	.07	.07	13
WKOPAY	.03	.14	.04	.00	-.11	-.10
Acceptance of Authority	.10	-.02	18	.00	.07	.04
Self-confidence	-.24	-.09	-.25*	-.13	-.18	-.05
Inquisitiveness	-.61	.10	.04	.11	-.04	.09
Awareness of Others	-.14	-.16	.03	-.12	.08	-.02
Disciplined Imagination	-.05	.18	.02	16	.00	-.05

I-tailed Signif: * -.01   ** -.001

With regard to gender differences, comparisons of the correlations of Creative Perception and language learning strategies between male and female subjects were undertaken (Tables 4 and 5). While there were nine correlations which were significant for male subjects, only three were significant for female

subjects. For male subjects, the overall score of SAM as found to be related significantly to Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies while no such significant correlations were found for female subjects. This indicates that male subjects who are creative based on their past experiences, tend to employ strategies like repeating, practising the new language in new situations, organising and evaluating learning whereas female subjects do not.

Male subjects who scored high on the factor Initiative tend to employ Cognitive and Social strategies compared with their counterparts. This shows that male subjects who display creative characteristics like directing and producing employ language learning strategies like looking for language patterns, repeating and cooperating with proficient users, whereas female subjects who are high on Initiative, do not.

On the factor score, Individuality, male subjects who are very individualistic in their approach tend to employ Cognitive $(r = .49)$, Metacognitive $(i = .52)$, Affective $(r = .38)$ and Social $(r = .38)$ strategies whereas female subjects do not. On comparing with Table 13, appears that the strong correlation obtained for the whole sample may be actually due to the strong correlation obtained for male subjects. The findings show that male subjects who are individualistic and prefer to work alone tend to use all their mental processes, organise and evaluate their learning, manage their emotions and learn from others, while female subjects who are individualistic do not use these strategies.

Significant gender differences are also found in the correlation between. Self - confidence(of WKOPAY) and the strategies. There appears to be strong negative correlations for female subjects but not for male subjects. This indicates that while female subjects who are less self-confident tend to use Compensation strategy in language learning, male subjects who are not self-confident do not. Hence, teachers who encourage students to use the Compensation strategy will find that low self - confident female subjects benefit more than low self-confident male subjects.

Table 4

Pearson Product Moment Correlations between Creative Perception (SAM)
and Language Learning Strategies for Male Subject s. (n= 28)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
SAM	.30	.49**	17	.39*	.29	.36
EnvironmentalSensitivity	.26	.34	-.04	.32	.24	.01
Initiative	.22	50**	11	.29	.25	.49**
Self-strength	.18	.37	10	.20	17	.08
Intellectuality	.04	35	10	-.03	-.07	.06
Individuality	.40*	.49**	.34	.52**	.38*	.38*
Artistry	.03	-.06	-.09	.06	11	.03
WKOPAY	.20	-.10	.07	-.22	.04	-.27
Acceptance ofAuthority	-.25	.04	.06	.06	-.10	17
Self-confidence	-.06	-.08	.04	17	-.09	-.08
Inquisiti veness	-.07	19	.02	-.03	-.18	-.02
Awareness of Others	-.19	-.09	.02	-.10	.08	-.01
Disciplined Imagination	.06	-.21	-.03	-.19	-.10	.49**

1-tailed Signif: * -.01   ** -.001

Table 5

Pearson Product Moment Correlations between Creative Perception (SAM)
and Language Learning Strategies for Female Subjects. (n = 41)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
SAM	19	.29	.14	10	-.12	.25
EnvironmentalSensitivity	16	.12	.03	.01	-.01	-.21
Initiative	.28	14	.05	.01	-.15	12
Self-strength	.04	14	-.10	-.06	11	19
Intellectuality	.05	.08	.20	.03	-.04	10
Individuality	.08	.24	.09	13	- 12	.25
Artistry	.07	.03	-.09	.04	.01	17
WKOPAY	-.00	.30	.09	18	- 13	.04
Acceptance of Authority	.17	-.10	18	-.09	.05	-.08
Self-confidence	-.16	.01	-.32*	-.20	-.07	.06
Inquisitiveness	-.28	.04	.04	.22	.03	16
Awareness of Others	-.11	-.23	.04	- 15	10	-.02
Disciplined Imagination	-.07	.43**	.06	.39*	10	.28

1-tailed Signif: * -.01   ** -.001

Another set of significant gender differences is found in the correlations
between Disciplined Imagination and Cognitive, Metacognitive, and Social
Strategies. While there is a significant relationship between Disciplined
Imagination and Cognitive and Metacognitive strategy for female subjects,
similar correlations are not found for male subjects. This indicates that female
subjects who have the creative personality characteristics of being persistent,
thorough and adventurous, tend to use all their mental processes, and prefer
organising and evaluating their learning when learning language whereas male
subjects do not. Male subjects who are low on Disciplined Imagination tend to
use Social strategy while their counterparts do not. Hence, teachers of boys
who are less industrious, or imaginative may be able to enhance the language
learning by using the technique of asking questions, getting students to
cooperate with other persons who are proficient users of the language.

Pearson product moment correlations undertaken between the two
dimensions of Creative Perception and their factors, on the one hand, and the
various language learning stategies, on the other are shown in Tables 6 and 7

These indicate that there are only six correlations that are significant for the urban school students compared to eleven for rural school students.

Significant differences appear in the correlations between the SAM scores and Affective strategy for both urban and rural students. While the correlations are significantly negative for urban subjects, they are significantly positive for the rural subjects. This indicates that in urban schools, subjects who are low in creative perception of themselves based on their past experiences, tend to learn language by managing their emotions, lowering their anxiety and encouraging themselves through positive statements. Rural school subjects who are high in this creative orientation tend to use this strategy It appears that teachers of rural and urban schools may need to adopt different strategies when teaching the English Language to creative students.

Rural school subjects who are creative, based on past creative achievements, appear to employ the five language learning strategies while their urban counterparts do not use any of these. The creative rural subjects tend to enhance their language learning by using the Memory, Cognitive, Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies Rural school subjects who are individualistic also employ more language learning strategies than urban school subjects. The former tends to use Memory, Cognitive, Metacognitive, and Social strategy while the latter do not. Urban subjects, who have a low level of Initiative, tend to use the Affective strategy while rural subjects who have a high level of Initiative tend to use the Social strategy during language learning.

Table 6

Pearson Product Moment Correlations between Creative Perception (SAM)
and Language Learning Strategies for Urban Subjects. (n = 32)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
SAM	-.01	.28	.03	-.03	-.40*	12
EnvironmentalSensitivity	18	12	.12	.23	19	-.12
Initiative	-.09	15	.06	-.13	-.39*	.03
Self-strength	-.05	.22	-.18	-.26	-.28	18
Intellectuality	-.11	.17	.17	-.10	-.44*	.08
Individuality	-.03	.31	.06	12	-.24	.23
Artistry	-.10	.04	.00	.05	-.16	-.02
WKOPAY	-.00	.36*	.02	.01	-.13	-.11
Acceptance of Authority	.25	-.24	.24	.05	13	.04
Self-confidence	-.14	.11	-.31	-.08	-.22	15
Inquisitiveness	-.40*	.10	-.01	.28	.18	.03
Awareness of Others	-.16	-.34	.03	-.17	11	-.03
Disciplined Imagination	-.05	.47**	-.14	.31	10	-.07

1-tailed Signif: *   -.01   **   -.001

Table 7

Pearson Product Moment Correlations between Creative Perception (SAM) and Language Learning Strategies for Rural Subjects. (n = 38)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
SAM	.44**	.41**	.25	.45**	.36*	.43**
Environmental Sensitivity	.30	.34	-.08	.07	.08	-.08
Initiative	.29	.23	-.00	.24	19	.34*
Self-strength	.08	.19	.08	.30	10	.06
Intellectuality	.06	16	.09	.08	10	10
Individuality	.35*	.36*	.29	.44**	.25	.38*
Artistry	.20	.11	-.12	11	12	.30
WKOPAY	.06	-.09	.07	-.01	-.08	-.12
Acceptance of Authority	-.05	.06	.10	-.11	11	-.10
Self-confidence	-.34*	-.23	-.19	- 17	-.18	-.20
Inquisitiveness	-.00	-.03	.08	-.07	-.12	.01
Awareness of Others	- 12	-.01	.04	-.08	.04	.03
Disciplined Imagination	-.04	-.06	17	.04	.06	-.04

1-tailed Signif: * -.01 ** -.001

An interesting finding is that, urban students who have low level of Intellectuality tend to use Affective strategy while their rural counterparts do not. Urban students who are low on Inquisitiveness, tend to use Memory strategy while similar rural students do not. On the other hand, rural students, who are low on Self-confidence, tend to use the Memory strategy while their urban counterparts do not. Urban students who have high levels of Disciplined imagination tend to use the Cognitive strategy in language learning while their rural counterparts do not. This indicates that teachers in rural schools teaching low self-confident subjects may need to adopt a teaching strategy, which encourages remembering and making associations. Teachers in the urban schools teaching subjects, who prefer intellectual stimulation, may do well by using techniques requiring maximum usage of mental processing and thinking.

On Socio-economic status (SES) differences in the relationships between creative perception and language learning strategies, Pearson product moment correlations were undertaken for both the low and high SES subjects. Tables 8 and 9 show the results of these analyses. There appears to be significant socio-economic differences in these relationships. High SES subjects who are

creative based on their past creative achievements, tend to employ Memory and Cognitive strategy while creative low SES subjects do not. High SES subjects who have high levels of Self-strength tend to employ Cognitive strategy while low SES subjects do not. Compared with high SE5 subjects, low SE5 subjects appear to have a strong negative correlation between Environmental Sensitivity and Social strategy Low SES students, who are not open to ideas of others, and do not relate ideas to what can be seen, tend to learn better by cooperating with proficient users of the new language.

Table 8
Pearson Product Moment Correlations between Creative Perception
Language Learning Strategies for Low SES Subjects. (n =36)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
SAM	.05	.32	16	.14	-.03	.25
Environmental Sensitivity	.14	.20	-.18	-.05	-.21	-.34*
Initiative	.17	.24	-.01	.18	-.10	.22
Self-strength	-.17	-.06	.01	-.14	-.06	.06
Intellectuality	-.11	17	.16	-.10	-.09	.07
Individuality	.09	.30	.19	.26	.07	.36*
Artistry	.15	.12	.01	.14	.07	.23
WKOPAY	.05	.13	.20	.14	.02	-.06
Acceptance of Authority	.03	-.01	.07	-.19	.07	-.08
Self-confidence	-.32	.40*	-.22	-.47**	-.37*	-.25
Inquisitiveness	-.24	.19	-.13	.12	-.04	.15
Awareness of Others	-.04	.00	.03	-.10	.03	-.01
Disciplined Imagination	.02	.22	.30	.32	.11	.10

1-tailed Signif: * -.01   ** -.001

Table 9

Pearson Product Moment Correlations between Creative Perception (SAM)
and Language Learning Strategies for
High SES Subjects. (n = 34)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
SAM	.34*	.35*	.09	.28	.12	.33
Environmental Sensitivity	.32	.26	.21	.30	.37*	.08
Initiative	10	16	.03	-.02	.03	.27
Self-strength	.21	.35*	-.17	14	.04	16
Intellectuality	.05	.07	.07	.03	.08	.05
Individuality	.29	.32	14	.30	.04	.22
Artistry	-.02	-.11	-.18	-.04	.01	-.03
WKOPAY	.02	11	-.17	-.14	18	-.13
Acceptance of Authority	.20	-.04	.28	19	11	17
Self-confidence	-.15	19	.32	17	.05	16
Inquisitiveness	-.08	-.03	14	11	.05	.05
Awareness of Others	-.23	-.33	.00	-.15	18	.01
Disciplined Imagination	-.12	11	.30	.02	-.03	-.18

1-tailed Signif·   * -.01   ** -.001

Surprisingly, low SES subjects who are high on the factor Individualistic, tend to use the Social strategy of language learning while their high SES counterparts do not. This indicates that low SES subjects, who prefer to work alone and are self-starters, tend to learn better by cooperating with proficient language users. Again, teachers of these subjects may encourage such subjects to work in groups with at least one member proficient in the language.

High Self-confident subjects from the low SES, tend to use the Cognitive Strategy more compared to similar subjects from high SES. However, low self-confident subjects from low SES, tend to use the Metacognitive and Affective strategy compared to their high SES counterparts. This shows that subjects' level of self confidence appear to influence the choice of language learning strategies used especially for low SES subjects.

Discussion

The findings obtained in this exploratory study afford empirical support for the initial proposition that there may be significant relationships between Creative Perception and language learning strategies as identified by Oxford (1990). The various significant relationships indicate that the students' choice of the various language learning strategies depend on certain creative personality characteristics and subjects' perception of these characteristics. For example, the findings indicate that subjects prefer who working alone (Individualistic) tends to use the Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies for language learning.

Of the two dimensions of Creative Perception, one based on one's past creative achievement (SAM) and the other, based on one's creative personality characteristics (WKOPAY), the former appears to be more significantly related to the language learning strategies than the latter. One possible reason could be that Malaysian students tend to judge themselves based on their past creative achievements rather than on their creative personality (Palaniappan, 1996). Creative personality effects on language learning strategies may be more prominent for students identified as creative based on their past creative achievements (SAM) rather than based on their perception of their creative personality characteristics (WKOPAY).

With regard to gender, the findings indicate significant gender, type of school and SES differences on the nature of the relationships between the various creative personality characteristics and language learning strategies. More creative personality characteristics appear to be related to the various language learning strategies for male subjects than for female subjects. Teachers intending to enhance language learning among creative male students may benefit from encouraging students to use Cognitive, Metacognitive and Affective language learning strategies.

Differences in the relationships based on the type of school suggest that there is a greater influence of subjects' creative personality characteristics on language learning strategies among rural school subjects than the urban school subjects. Teachers in rural schools may be able to enhance proficiency of English language among creative students by encouraging them to use Memory, Cognitive, Metacognitive, Affective and Social language learning strategies.

Socio-economic status also appears to have significant influence on some of the relationships between Creative perception and language learning strategies. It appears that among low SES students, factors such as Self-confidence, Intellectuality and Environmental Sensitivity play important roles in the choice of their language learning strategies while the choice of the high SES students tend to be influenced by 'Environmental Sensitivity' and Self-strength.

Conclusion

These preliminary findings of a relationship, hitherto rarely investigated, may serve as stimulus for further research into the nature of the relationships between creative personality characteristics and the language learning strategies. Further explorations of similar nature are recommended to enhance teachers' understanding of factors relating to students' choice of language learning strategies.

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