Taki Al Abduwani
Dean, Gulf College – Sultanate of Oman

- Professorship, International University of Vienna
- PhD, University of Reading, UK
- Master, University of Lincoln, UK
- CMA, The Institute of Certified Management Accountants, Australia
- ISO 9001:2008 Certified Internal Auditor

GULF COLLEGE
كلية الخليج

Educational depth... Academic origin

Omani Undergraduate Students' Strategy Use During Their Independent Learning Hours: A Cross-Generational Study on Language Learning
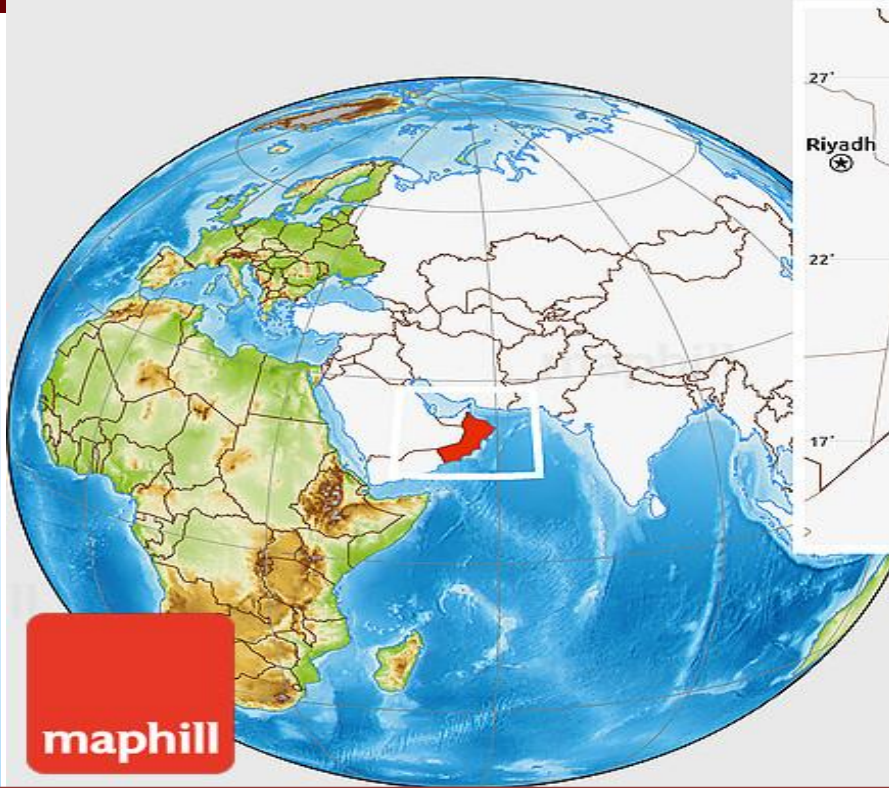
taki1966@omantel.net.om

http://www.gulfcollege.edu.om

Sultanate of Oman

1. **Official language** : Arabic
2. **Capital** : MUSCAT - largest city.
3. **Population :** 2016 – 4.544 million, with 2.460 million Omani nationals and 2.084 million expatriates.
4. Total Area : 309,500 km^2
5. **Unemployment Rate**: Oman : **7.60** %
6. **Per Capita Income** : USD 21,687

Oman

1. Investigate **learning strategies** of students during their **independent learning** hours.

2. Based on the findings of the study**, 'memorisation and rote learning'** was the **most frequent type of learning strategy** utilised by all participants from three generations.

3. The **second most frequent** learning strategy was using the 'mother tongue pronunciation **in order to memorize the materials'** was observed to be the second most-frequent learning strategy among all participants.

1. **Questionnaire** aimed at identifying the participants' age, **gender, generation**, as well as the **year they started to learn English** as a foreign language.

   - Questionnaire was designed based on Jiang and Smith's (2009) learning strategies framework.

2. **Reliability** of the instrument was measured through Cronbach alpha's formula, which was observed to be highly reliable (R= 0.875) (Cohen et al., 2007).

METHOD : PARTICIPANTS

1. **6 males and 6 females**
2. Participants were selected based on **purposive sampling**, as their **age and the year they began learning English**
3. **Subjects** were selected from those studying at the International Foundation Program **(IFP)**, Gulf College, Muscat, Oman.
4. Participants were classified under **three main categories**, each representing a generation.

Generation Code	Age Range	Numbers
1	18-28	4
2	29-38	4
3	39-48	4

1. Instructions on how to deal with the instrument were provided to the participants in advance.

2. Participants were supposed to answer the questions within 15 minutes.

3. In order to motivate the participants in providing additional data, relatively **open questions were deployed,** as suggested by Cohen (2004) and Wengraf (2001).

DATA ANALYSIS

1. The data were collected and analysed through the 16th version of SPSS.

2. In search for statistically **significant differences** among the frequencies of strategies deployed by different generation of participants, the **chi-square procedure was used**.

3. Although the **sample size seems to be low**, **sufficient data were taken from the participants.**

4. **The present work** was more of a **qualitative nature**; therefore, the researcher made use of tables and figures in order to explain the results of the study.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Participant Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Age	46	43	45	39	29	35	32	28	23	21	20	19
Genera-tion	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
Gender	M	M	F	F	F	M	M	F	F	M	M	F
Year Began Learning English	1986	1989	1987	1992	2000	1999	2001	2002	2007	2009	2008	2010

FREQUENCIES OF LEARNING STRATEGY

Strategy Code	Participant Number												Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1.Memorisation and Rote Learning	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	**12**
2.Understanding and Memorisation		*		*			*		*	*		*	6
3.Memorisation and the Need for Review	*		*		*			*			*		5
4.Word Association and Memorisation		*				*			*				3
5.Use of Local Pronunciation and Memorisation	*	*	*			*		*		*	*	*	**8**
Total	3	4	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	

BASIC STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE FREQUENCIES OF LEARNING STRATEGIES

Strategy Code	Strategy Definition	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency (Chi Square)	Residual
1	Memorisation and Rote Learning	12	7	5
2	Understanding and Memorisation	6	7	-1
3	Memorisation and the Need for Review	5	7	-2
4	Word Association and Memorisation	3	7	-4
5	Use of Local Pronunciation and Memorisation	8	7	1
Total		34		

RESULT OF THE CHI-SQUARE TEST AMONG THE FREQUENCIES OF THE LEARNING STRATEGIES

Chi-Square	7.143
Df differences among the frequencies	4
Asymp. Sig.	0.1285

Based on the findings of the chi-square test, the differences among the frequencies of learning strategies were **not statistically significant** (*p*> 0.05). In other words, **participants** of the study **did not make use of certain learning strategies during their independent learning hours.**

Why Independent learning is important

10 credit modules UK standards requires 100 hrs. of study
- Contact hours   =24
- Guided learning seminars   = 6
- Independent learning hours   =70

1. improves academic performance

2. helps in identifying limitations and ability of the students

3. enables teachers to organise a wider range of activities in their classrooms

4. Enables teaching staff to keep the balance between teaching and learning.

1. **Scaffolding:** helping students step by step to achieve the learning outcome. The objective is the gradual transfer of responsibility from the teacher to the student step by step, the teacher responding flexibly to students' responses rather than following a predetermined teaching path.

2. **Self-monitor** : Providing students with opportunities to self-monitor through feedback

3. **Stick and Carrot**: Utilise homework, assignment, quizzes, formative exams, group discussions, subject or module forms

4. **Utilising Technology:** **Blackboard** or **Moodle**

http://www.gulfcollege.edu.om

taki1966@omantel.net.om