

A STUDY OF THE METACOGNITIVE LANGUAGE-LEARNING STRATEGY USE
AND LANGUAGE-LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCES OF ENGLISH L2
LEARNERS AT A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION INSTITUTE IN HONG KONG

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Abstract

This study identifies the relationship between preferred metacognitive language-learning strategies (MCLLSs) and language-learning styles (LLSYs) and their patterns of use amongst a selected group of learners at a vocational education institute in Hong Kong. Quantitative data were collected from 192 survey respondents and qualitative data from 8 interview participants.

With regard to MCLLSs, the quantitative data reveal a medium to high use among learners, with *Finding out about language learning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* identified as the most frequently used MCLLSs; with regard to style preferences, the quantitative data reveal a prevalence of multiple major preferences. The most favoured LLSYs are *Auditory*, *Kinaesthetic* and *Group*.

The qualitative data show the reasons for using (and not using) particular MCLLSs as well as the reasons for preferring (and not preferring) particular LLSYs. The major factors which were found to determine the use of MCLLS were easiness of implementation, applicability, availability of opportunity, level of knowledge of strategies and motivation to use strategies. The major factors which were found to affect the choice of LLSYs were boredom, easiness in implementation and availability of practice opportunities. The study also identified the situations and language tasks in which MCLLSs were selectively used and in which particular LLSYs were favoured.

The survey questionnaires and interviews reveal some differences in the use of MCLLSs and choice of LLSYs, and in the relationship between them. Despite the existence of these discrepancies, the findings from the two data sources were consistent in showing that there were no differences in the MCLLS use of learners with each of the six major style preferences.

Several methodological issues, implications for teaching and directions for future research are discussed.

Keywords: Metacognitive Language-learning Strategies, Language-learning Styles, Learner Autonomy, Metacognition, Chinese-speaking L2 Learners, Hong Kong, Vocational Education.

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Abbreviations

Language-learning Strategies	LLSs
Meta-cognitive Language-learning Strategies	MCLLSs
Language-learning Styles	LLSYs
Strategy Inventory for Language Learning	SILL
Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire	PLSPQ

Preface

The origin of the research can be traced back to my experience as a secondary school English teacher at schools of different natures about fifteen years ago in Hong Kong. I started my English teaching at the secondary level. I was lucky to have the experiences of teaching in one school in which more successful and another in which less successful learners studied. This experience led me to start thinking about the differences between the more and less effective second-language English learners. Equipped only with basic principles and knowledge of language teaching, I started to experiment different approaches and materials, but little progress on my attempts to facilitate the learning of less effective learners had been resulted.

With the accumulation of knowledge on *TESOL* through my studies over the years, I realised the importance of strategies in learning in addition to a variety of factors such as aptitude, motivation, personality in contributing to the success in L2 learning. I became more and more interested in knowing how LLSs can help the less effective learners. I am particularly interested in MCLLSs, because my informal observations and discussions with students let me know that, very often, learners know how to apply language-learning strategies but do not know how to apply them effectively. At the same time, I realised that there are cultural differences in learning and the direct application of some techniques and theories developed in the western contexts cannot be directly applied in the Hong Kong Chinese context.

The above background gave rise to the present study. I hope that through a better understanding of how MCLLSs are related to LLSYs, less effective L2 English learners can benefit from better instruction.

During the about five years of this course, I have learned how to apply the knowledge and techniques which I learned from the modules into a research study. Conducting this study has also allowed me to deepen my understanding on the topic and the issues involved. This experience has improved my knowledge, skills and horizon in doing research. In summary, I have become a more effective researcher.

Apart from the academic requirements, I have become more matured in terms of approaching problems. I have learned how to approach and solve problems from different perspectives.

1 Introduction

This introductory chapter provides information on the significance, the aim and the research questions as well as the contextual background information of this study. The information is presented below.

1.1 Significance of the Study

There are several reasons for selecting metacognitive language-learning strategies (MCLLSs) as the focus of this study. Firstly, it is a relatively neglected dimension in LLS research. It was not until 1987, or around 20 years since research on language-learning strategies (LLSs) began that a clear distinction was made between metacognitive and cognitive LLSs (Chamot, 1987) and researchers began to conclude that the management and co-ordination of learning plays a more important role in learning than any specific strategy (for example, O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Some MCLLSs such as *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* were first found to be characteristics which differentiate successful and less successful learners in the 'Good Language Learners' studies (Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern and Todesco, 1978; Rubin, 1975). Later studies also found that what differentiates successful and unsuccessful language learner is the ability to apply appropriate strategies (Abraham and Vann, 1987; Vann and Abraham, 1990). In the Chinese context, the management of language learning was found to be the strongest predictor of L2 achievement (Wen and Johnson, 1997). In another large-scale meta-study comparing the factor structures of SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) data collected in different cultures (Oxford and Burry-stock, 1995), it was also found that MCLLSs was the single most explanatory factor in the Taiwan data set and the second mostly explanatory one in the People's Republic of China data set.

Despite these pioneer efforts in discovering the importance of MCLLSs,

MCLLS use has been an under-researched area in *TESOL* research. It is not common to find research treating MCLLSs as separate from other cognitive and social/affective LLSs. There has been a lack of attention to the importance of MCLLS.

Another reason for selecting MCLLSs as the focus of this study is that one important characteristic of an autonomous learner is being able to manage their learning effectively. A common goal of LLS instruction is to promote learner autonomy (Oxford and Leaver, 1996; Wenden, 1991). As MCLLSs focus on the management of language learning, findings of this study can provide useful implications for the development of autonomous learners.

An observation on past research on LLSs is that substantial research focused on establishing the relationship of MCLLS use with language achievement and proficiency. A similar situation exists in the Chinese context, as a large number of studies focused on the relationships between LLSs and language achievement. The main finding from these studies seems to be that high-proficiency learners reported using more LLSs than low-proficiency ones. There was a lack of research in how MCLLS use is related to other learner characteristics, such as language-learning styles (LLSYs).

MCLLS research to date is characterised by using descriptive data collection methods, mainly by self-report survey questionnaires such as the SILL. Numerical data were used to establish relationships between MCLLSs and learner characteristics such as L2 proficiency, gender, personality. There is a need to gather qualitative data in MCLLS research as descriptive data can only provide us a restricted account of the phenomena under study. As will be explained in detail in Chapter Three, this study gathers both qualitative and quantitative data which can allow us to have a more comprehensive understanding on MCLLS use.

Different patterns of MCLLS use have been found among Chinese L2 learners compared with their western counterparts (Griffiths, 2003; Oxford and Crookall, 1989). Oxford (1996) points out that culture is one of the factors which influence LLS and MCLLS use. More and more research has indicated cultural differences in LLS use. For example, Chinese were found to use MCLLSs moderately (Bedell and Oxford, 1996; Yang, 1999), which is in contrast to some findings that MCLLSs are less frequently used among learners of western cultures (for example, O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Küpper and Russo, 1985a; 1985b). Thus research findings collected in the western context might not be directly applicable to the local Chinese context. With the differences in the patterns of MCLLS use between the western and Chinese contexts, there is a need to further explore the patterns of MCLLS use in the local context. It is only based on local findings that local theories on MCLLSs as well as MCLLS instruction can be developed.

Another characteristic of past LLS research both in the western and Chinese contexts is that the selection of participants has focused overwhelmingly on tertiary students, either English or non-English majors (Zhang, 2003). Zhang (2003) points out that except the study by Lin (2000), most other studies focus on the LLS use of tertiary students. He calls for more research in middle schools. As will be introduced in detail below, the participants in this study are young adults who have just completed their secondary education and started their studies at a vocational institute. Another characteristic of these subjects is that most of them are less successful in terms of their academic achievement. Thus, the findings of this study can complement the findings from previous studies by providing a picture of MCLLS use of less successful L2 learners in the Hong Kong Chinese context.

More recently, the choice and the use of MCLLSs were found to be related to language-learning styles (LLSYs) (Cohen, 2003). Reid (1987) found that learners' learning modality preferences are related to their choice of LLSs. However, most of these studies focus on cognitive LLS. There were few attempts to link LLSYs to MCLLSs. As with the situation of LLS research, past research on LLSYs focused on how they are related to language achievement, both in the western and Chinese contexts (for example, Reid, 1995; 1998; Wu, Liu, Jeffery, Yang and Zhou, 1996). Hyland (1993) points out that up to now we still know very little about the learning styles of specific cultural groups. Little is also known about the relationships between learning styles and MCLLS use, especially those in the Chinese context. Despite the repeated mentioning of LLSYs as one of the factors affecting the use of LLSs (for example, Oxford and Crookall, 1989), there was no attempt to further explore how the two are related. Despite her claim of the strong relationship between LLSs and LLSYs, Oxford (1989) admits there was too little research on the possible association between these two variables.

As with the situation in MCLLS research, different patterns of LLSYs were found among Chinese L2 learners (for example, Reid, 1987; Rossi-Le, 1995). There is a need to further explore the characteristics of LLSYs of Chinese learners.

The reason for selecting LLSYs among other learner factors is that it is more modifiable and has been under researched in MCLLS studies in the Chinese context. Oxford (1995) reminds us that learning strategy use could be a function of social expectations, attitudes, motivation, and learning styles. Thus we can improve learning outcomes by modifying LLSYs. Through increased understanding on the process of how LLSYs affect MCLLS use, more effective MCLLS instruction can be devised.

In tandem with the increased research on LLSs, a lot of researchers have found that instruction in the use of LLSs and MCLLSs is effective both in the western (Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto, 1989; Cohen, Weaver and Li, 1998; O'Malley, 1987) and Chinese (Huang, 2001) contexts. The promising results of training programmes indicate that there is strong evidence showing the effectiveness of LLS training, including metacognitive strategy training. As less effective students can learn LLSs and apply them in order to improve the effectiveness of their language learning, a lot of LLS training materials have been developed over the past decades. However, what we only know from these studies is that MCLLS training is effective. Little is known on how to design effective MCLLS instruction programmes, especially those that take into consideration the characteristics of the local Chinese L2 learners. Studies such as this one, which explores the relationships between MCLLSs and LLSYs, and especially those conducted in a local context, can provide us with useful information on the design of programmes which suit the needs of local Chinese learners. MCLLS use is a very new research area in the local context.

There has been little attempt to implement LLS training in Hong Kong. Even if they are employed as a means to improve language learning, they are usually not very systematic, and tend to be short-term and based on the concepts and findings relating to LLSs previously developed in the western context (for example, Nunan, 1996). Bearing in mind the lack of locally designed MCLLS instruction programmes, this study serves another purpose that of providing preliminary findings which can be used as the starting points for the development of MCLLS instruction in the local context. Chinese L2 learners might therefore better benefit from MCLLS instruction programmes developed from local findings.

In sum, the present study has both theoretical and practical values. Firstly, it addresses the problem of a lack of theoretical development relating to MCLLS use, especially in the local context. Secondly, through our increased understanding of how the two factors affect the use of MCLLSs in the local Chinese context, more effective MCLLS instructional programmes can be devised.

1.2 Aim of the Study

Given the above background, the aim, objectives and research questions of the present study are as follows:

Aim

To gather information on the use of MCLLSs and investigate how MCLLS use is related to LLSYs among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.

Objectives

- a. To gather descriptive information on the MCLLS use and LLSY preferences of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.
- b. To explore the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.

Research Questions

1. *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong?*
2. *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong?*

3. *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong?*

1.3 Contextual Background

There has been an increasing awareness of the role of context in affecting language learning in recent decades. In *TESOL* research, some seminal works such as Atkinson (1999) and Kramsch (1993) highlight the importance of contextual influences in language learning. Context should be considered in investigating LLSs as it was found that Chinese culture affects the learning strategies and learning styles of Chinese EFL learners (Rao, 2002). Therefore, it is necessary to introduce the socio-linguistic context in which the English L2 learners participated in this study.

Since colonial times, English has been the dominant language in the government, education, business and the law courts. English has traditionally been an important medium for communication, the media, tourism, and the arts in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is an international centre of trade, finance and commerce with a population of over six million, 98% of whom are Chinese with Cantonese as the predominant language. Cantonese is common in the daily lives of Hongkongers. Hong Kong people seldom have the need to use English except in the workplace. In school, code-mixing is common (Johnson and Lee, 1987). English is typically considered as having a ‘value-added’ role in the Hong Kong society (Li, 1999).

However, after the changeover, the Chief Executive began to promote a “biliterate and trilingual policy” which emphasised the need for students to be proficient in written English and Chinese and able to converse in Cantonese, English and Putonghua (Tung, 1997). This caused many schools to change their aim of teaching English as a subject. Going back to English, an attempt was made

to introduce more expatriate native speakers of English into the secondary system. However, their presence was restricted to English lessons and therefore has had minimal effects (Walter and Balla, 1992).

English has therefore always played a crucial role within the education system. English is first introduced in primary school almost as a foreign language. At secondary school, schools have the choice of using English or Chinese as the medium of instruction. Because of the recognition of the economic and educational potential knowledge of English makes available, most parents have opted for English-medium secondary education for their children.

There are two main public examinations at the secondary level in Hong Kong. The first one is the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) and the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examinations (HKALE). Most candidates take the HKCEE after their five-year study at a secondary school at the age of about 17. In 2004, 118,213 took the HKCEE (Hong Kong Examination and Assessment Authority, 2004). Those who have satisfactory results in their HKCEE are offered places to continue their studies in secondary school for two years (Form Six and Seven). The HKALE is normally taken by a student at the end of his/her two-year sixth-form courses. In 2004, 33,829 candidates entered for the examination (Hong Kong Examination and Assessment Authority, 2004). Thus we can see that about 29% of the candidates who took the HKCEE are eligible to continue their sixth-form courses and sit for the HKALE. In both examinations, English is one of the compulsory subjects, meaning that they have to get at least a pass in order to be eligible to continue their studies. Among those who decide not to prepare for their HKALE, some start a career, some continue their studies abroad and some of them continue their studies locally in other institutions. Vocational education is one of their choices.

In year one of the diploma course, which the participants of this study are studying, English is a compulsory subject, with approximate instruction time of about 200 hours. The English curriculum is heavily vocationally biased, with students learning the different types of communication in the workplace, including speaking, writing, reading and listening.

In sum, the present study is located in the sociolinguistic context which has the following characteristics. First of all, English has the tradition of being a prestige language which is regarded as providing access to good education and furthering career prospects. Secondly, English is seldom used in the daily life of the society and the local dialect, Cantonese is viewed as the vehicle for maintaining the cultural identity of the society. Secondary school students have to face two major public examinations, in which the English results are crucial to their further studies and future careers. These contextual characteristics exert positive and negative influences on the use of the MCLLSs and LLSYs of L2 English learners. At the same time, they influence the design, development and implementation of MCLLS instruction programmes in the local context.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into four parts. After the literature review on MCLLS and LLSYs research as well as research investigating the relationship between them both in the western and Chinese contexts in Chapter Two, in Chapter Three the methodology of this study will be introduced. In introducing the methodology, discussions will include locating this study within the wider paradigm framework, sampling, data collection procedures, ethical issues and the limitations of the study. The qualitative and quantitative findings on the two variables and their relationships will be presented in Chapter Four and Five. In Chapter Six, a conclusion and recommendations for teaching and future research will be given.

There are several reasons for not approaching the quantitative data as a hypotheses testing exercise. Firstly, as we will see in the next chapter on literature review, there is little previous research in identifying the patterns of MCLLSs and LLSYs and the association between them of L2 learners systematically, especially in the local context. Previous findings on MCLLSs and LLSYs and the association between them are piecemeal and not systematic. Therefore, there is a greater need of gathering descriptive data on the two variables rather than testing hypotheses. The lack of previous findings on the two variables also means that it is difficult to devise hypotheses on the two variables and the association between them. The second reason is that this study focuses on the patterns of MCLLS use of LLSYs of L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong. There has been no research in the local context focusing on this type of L2 learners. This study can be regarded as an exploratory one. Given the exploratory nature of this study, hypotheses testing would not be appropriate.

The final and most important reasons for not approaching the quantitative data of this study as hypotheses testing exercise is that this study is based on the interpretist paradigm. This means that the primary focus of this study is the subjective meanings of the research participants on the two variables. Therefore, the qualitative data, which were gathered from the semi-structured interviews, were the main focus of this study. It is because they allow us to know the perception of the participants of this study on MCLLSs and LLSYs. The quantitative data gathered from survey questionnaires only served the purpose of facilitating our understanding of the focuses of the study. Therefore, hypothesis testing, which is more commonly used in quantitative research, would not be appropriate. More details of the methodology of this study will be given in Chapter Three.

2 Literature Review

In the previous chapter, the significance and the potential contributions of this study as well as the aims, objectives and research questions of the study were introduced. It is necessary to provide the research background for this study. Therefore the first focus of this chapter is to review the notion of MCLLSs and LLSYs. Another focus of this chapter is to review how the two concepts were studied in past research and summarise previous findings relevant to this study.

This chapter is divided into three parts. Firstly, notion of MCLLSs will be reviewed. This is followed by a brief review of significant research on MCLLSs both in the western and Chinese context in order that we can have a more solid background on the findings from MCLLS research to date. As there were few studies which link MCLLSs with LLSYs, research on these two areas will be reviewed separately.

A review of the relevant literature on MCLLS use and the patterns of LLSYs in both the western and Chinese contexts indicate that there have been more and more research on these two areas. More sophisticated conceptualisations and methods have been employed over the last two decades. Findings from more recent research have advanced our understanding of how MCLLSs are used in different skill areas, how they are related to a number of learner characteristics and the effectiveness of strategy training programmes, in addition to the differences in MCLLS use between more and less successful L2 learners. Recent research on LLSYs has also enhanced our understanding of the cultural differences in exercising LLSYs. Despite the above advancement, no past research has provided any information on the patterns of MCLLS use and LLSYs among Chinese L2 learners. As mentioned in Chapter One, most of the past research on MCLLS use and LLSYs focused on tertiary students. There have been few attempts of gathering information on these two areas of younger adults such as learners undertaking vocational education. Findings of this study can fill in these two

gaps of previous findings. This is achieved by providing the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, and the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*. In addition to the lack of information on MCLLS use and the pattern of LLSYs of local L2 learners, we still know very little on the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs, both in the western and Chinese contexts. Therefore, in terms of theoretical development, this study was an attempt to extend the focus of previous research, mainly by investigating how MCLLS use and LLSYs are related. This is achieved by providing the results of the investigation provoked by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*.

Details of the theoretical significance of this study, as pointed out in Chapter One, will be given below.

2.1 MCLLS Research in the Western and Chinese Contexts

A review of past research on MCLLS use in the western context indicates that there has been a trend of treating MCLLSs separately from other LLSs as researchers began to understand the important role of MCLLSs. There has been a widening of focuses on MCLLS research over the last two decades too. More and more research has shown how MCLLSs are used in different skill areas, and how MCLLS use is related to a number of learner characteristics, such as age and cultural background. These developments have enhanced our understanding of MCLLS use in addition to findings from earlier research, which mainly focused on classifying and identifying the patterns of MCLLS use between more and less successful L2 learners. As mentioned above, we need to gather more information

on the MCLLS use of learners other than undertaking tertiary education. We can fill in this gap in previous research in the western context by providing the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.*

Research on MCLLS use in the Chinese context has followed the trend of the western context. Up to now research has provided us information on how MCLLSs are used in different skill areas and how MCLLS use is related to learner characteristics such as age. However, little attention has been given to the study of MCLLSs as separated from other types of LLSs. We also do not know the patterns of MCLLS use of L2 learners in the Chinese context. The findings of this study can allow us to have a better understanding on this neglected area in the MCLLS research conducted in the Chinese context.

Before going into detail the relevant research on MCLLS use in the western and Chinese context, it is necessary to review the notion of MCLLSs and the notion of metacognition, which is highly related to MCLLSs. They are described below.

2.1.1 Meanings of MCLLSs

MCLLSs are ‘thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring the learning task, and evaluating how well one has learned’ (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990, p. 137), and are being viewed as used to ‘oversee, regulate or self-direct language learning’ (Rubin, 1987, p. 25). Oxford (1990a) emphasises on the coordinating function of MCLLSs, which includes centering, arranging, planning and evaluating in her definition. MCLLSs are among other types of LLSs (i.e., cognitive and social/affective) more useful in the sense that they can be used for other

learning activities in addition to language learning (Chamot and O'Malley, 1987).

Based on different underlying theories of L2 learning, different classifications of MCLLSs have been developed over the past few decades (for example, Brown and Palinscar, 1982; Dansereau, 1985; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990a; Rubin, 1981). The major classifications are introduced below.

One of the seminal classifications in the history of LLS research is provided by O'Malley and Chamot (1990). In their classification, there are seven categories of MCLLSs, including advanced organisers, directed attention, functional planning, selective attention, self-management, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation.

Rubin (1981) identifies six general strategies which contribute directly to language learning, including clarification/verification, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning, practice, memorisation, and monitoring. We can see that she does not classify LLSs into different major types, and the only MCLLS included in her classification is monitoring.

Wenden (1982) identifies several planning strategies which students use, including choosing what they want to learn and how they should learn a language (which is based on their beliefs of how language is to be learned), as well as prioritising the aspects of language they want to learn. By choosing and prioritising, students set their own learning goals. They also plan what their learning strategies should be and change them if they are not successful. She divides MCLLSs into planning, monitoring and evaluation.

Despite the lack of consensus, we can see from the above review that most of these earlier researchers share some common elements in their

conceptualisations of MCLLSs. MCLLSs refer to a series of higher order, more abstract LLSs which help learners to plan, organise, monitor, manage and coordinate their learning.

In the current study, Oxford's classification of MCLLSs is adopted because her classification is theoretically more consistent than other classifications (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002), is conceptually more sophisticated (Oxford and Cohen, 1992) and is readily operational. Ellis (1999) regards her classification as the most comprehensive one to date, as she built her classifications on earlier ones. Her LLS model has strong empirical support not only in the western context but also in different cultures (for example, El-Dib, 2004; Khalil, 2005; Park, 1997). Her classification is more appropriate for this study in the Chinese context because a lot of previous studies, including many recent ones, in the Chinese context were based on her classification (for example, Bedell and Oxford, 1996; Nisbet, Tindall and Arroyo, 2005; Wharton, 2000). The findings from this study can therefore be compared to earlier studies conducted in the Chinese context.

Oxford (1990a) points out that MCLLSs are 'actions which go beyond purely cognitive devices, and provide a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process' (p.136) which 'help learners to regulate their own cognitive and to focus, plan, and evaluate their progress as they move toward communicative competence.' (p.8)

In her framework, Oxford (1990a) divides LLSs into direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are strategies which directly involve the target language and include memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. Indirect strategies, as the name implies, do not directly involve the target language. They serve a supporting, managing and coordinating function in

language learning. They consist of three main types, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies. Metacognitive strategies allow learners to control their own cognition. Affective strategies regulate emotions, motivations, and attitudes. Social strategies facilitate learning through interaction with others. There are intimate interrelationships between all the six groups of direct and indirect strategies.

Based on this classification system, Oxford (1990a) developed a framework including 62 specific LLSs. As the focus of the present study is only on MCLLSs, they will be selected here for discussion. The 11 specific MCLLSs in her framework are as follows:

Table 1

Oxford's classification of MCLLSs

	1. <i>Overviewing and linking with already known material</i>
<i>Centering your learning</i>	2. <i>Paying attention</i>
	3. <i>Delaying speech production to focus on listening</i>
	4. <i>Finding out about language learning</i>
	5. <i>Organising</i>
	6. <i>Setting goals and objectives</i>
<i>Arranging and planning your learning</i>	7. <i>Identifying the purpose of a language task (purposeful listening/ reading/ speaking/ writing)</i>
	8. <i>Planning for a language task</i>
	9. <i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>
<i>Evaluating your learning</i>	10. <i>Self-monitoring</i>
	11. <i>Self-evaluating</i>

(Oxford, 1990a, p.137)

Among the three types of MCLLSs, *Centering your learning* refers to

learners' efforts to converge attention and energies on certain language tasks. The purpose is to provide a focus for language learning. It includes *Overviewing and linking with already known material*, *Paying attention*, and *Delaying speech production to focus on listening*. There are three steps in the first MCLLS, identifying the reasons for doing the activity, building needed vocabulary and making associations. *Paying attention* refers to an early decision on focusing on a language learning task and paying attention to specific aspects of the language or to details. *Delaying speech production to focus on listening* can be done either totally or partially until learners' listening comprehension skills are better developed. The first two MCLLSs can be applied to listening, speaking, reading and writing, while the third one can be applied to listening and speaking.

Arranging and planning your learning helps learners to organise and plan in order to achieve the best result. There are six strategies under this type of MCLLS. *Finding out about language learning* can be achieved by reading books and talking with other people. *Organising* involves the understanding and use of conditions such as schedule and physical environment which are related to optimal learning. *Setting goals and objectives* involve both long-term goals and short-term objectives. *Identifying the purpose of a language task* is also known as purposeful listening/ reading/ speaking/ writing, and it involves deciding on the purpose of these four tasks. There are four steps in *Planning for a language task*, 'describing the task or situation, determining its requirements, checking one's own linguistic resources, and determining additional language elements or functions necessary for the task or situation' (Oxford, 1990a, p. 139). In *Seeking practice opportunities* learners find out or create

opportunities to practise the language in natural situations. All these MCLLSs can be applied to all the four language skills. Under *Evaluating your learning* we can find *Self-monitoring* and *Self-evaluating*, which again can be applied to all the language skills. *Self-monitoring*, or the evaluation of one's own progress, refers to the identification of errors both in understanding and producing the language. It also involves the intentional efforts of learners to track the source of important errors and to eliminate such errors.

Metacognition is highly related to MCLLSs. This notion is briefly described below.

Metacognition

Metacognition includes the second-order cognitions, thoughts about thoughts, knowledge about knowledge, or reflections about actions. It is important in MCLLS research because it affects the acquisition, comprehension, retention, application, learning efficiency, critical thinking, problem solving and self-regulation of learning (Hartman, 1998). Marzano, Brandt, Hughes, Jones, Presseisen, Rankin and Suhor (1988) describe metacognition as being aware of 'our own thinking as we perform specific tasks and then using this awareness to control what we are doing' (p. 9). It is worth mentioning that MCLLSs have to be distinguished from the concept metacognition. Although both refer to the higher order thinking about language learning, MCLLSs are executive skills or techniques, while metacognition refers to knowledge about language learning. Without possessing this higher order knowledge and awareness, a learner cannot use the skills (i.e., MCLLSs) effectively.

There are therefore two elements of metacognition, metacognitive

knowledge and metacognitive awareness. According to Wenden (1995), metacognitive knowledge is ‘the stable, statable and sometimes fallible knowledge learners acquire about themselves as learners and the learning process’ (Wenden, 1995, p.185). She defines three kinds of metacognitive knowledge: person, strategic and task knowledge. She (Wenden, 1982) first mentioned metacognitive knowledge in *TESOL* research and introduces five aspects, including the knowledge of the target language, student proficiency, outcome of student’s learning endeavours, student’s role in the learning process and how best to approach the task of language learning. She views metacognitive knowledge as complementary to MCLLSs, as the former is the information which facilitates the use of latter, which is skills. Metacognitive knowledge is also centrally involved in monitoring. Metacognitive awareness, as its name implies, is the awareness learners possess regarding this type of knowledge. It has been consistently found that a major characteristic that distinguishes good and poor learners is metacognitive awareness (Chamot and O’Malley, 1994; Yamamori, Isoda, Hiromori and Oxford, 2003) and raising awareness on LLS use has been found to be useful in strategy instruction effectiveness (Huang, 2004).

2.1.2 MCLLS Research in the Western Context

After introducing the definitions of MCLLSs, we will now review relevant past research on MCLLSs. As a comprehensive review of LLS research is beyond the scope of this chapter, only studies which have direct relevance to MCLLSs will be selected for discussion.

Research on MCLLS use in the western context began with the ‘Good Language Learners’ studies. This trend has been continuing until now. More recent research began to recognise the importance of MCLLSs in language

learning, and more and more research on MCLLS use has been conducted. At the same time, there has been more and more research investigating the use of MCLLSs in different skill areas, and how it is related to learner characteristics such as age and cultural background.

The study of Carton (1966) can be regarded as one of the earliest attempt to study LLSs. He regards language learning as a kind of problem-solving in which the students can bring to bear prior experience and knowledge in the processing of language. He found that tolerance of risk varied with ability to make good inferences, and that learners use different kinds of cues, including intralingual, interlingual and extra-lingual ones to aid their language learning. Carton's work was followed by a series of research studies, included investigation into the 'Good Language Learners', which focus on identifying the LLSs used by more successful L2 language learners and classifying them into different categories (for example, Hosenfeld, 1977; Naiman et al., 1978; Politzer, 1983; Rubin, 1975). Another example of research in this direction include Bialystok's (1979) study, whose findings showed the positive effects of monitoring and formal practising on L2 learning. Wong-Fillmore (1976), in her study of five Chicano students who were learning English, found that 'staying in the conversation had an important connection to learning' (p.21).

There have been subsequent case studies on the LLSs used by successful and non-successful readers (for example, Hauptman, 1979; Knight, Padron and Waxman, 1985), and the main conclusion from these studies is that the strategic use of LLSs, i.e., knowing how to use certain strategies in certain contexts and tasks, distinguishes more successful learners from less successful ones. No specific types of strategies and no

single strategy were found to be ‘good’ or ‘bad’. We can see that, taken together, these studies show the importance of metacognitive awareness of how to use the different types of strategies.

In these earlier studies, MCLLSs were treated as peripheral. It was not until two decades ago that researchers started to make distinctions between LLSs and MCLLSs. Chamot and O’Malley (1987) contrasted cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

The series of studies by O’Malley and his colleagues (Chamot, Küpper and Impink-Hernandez, 1988a; 1988b; O’Malley et al., 1985a; 1985b; O’Malley, Chamot and Küpper, 1989) needs further elaboration here because of their comprehensiveness and their influence on subsequent LLS research. In Study 1 (O’Malley et al., 1985a), teacher and student interviews as well as classroom observation were employed. Beginners were found to use more planning and evaluation strategies but fewer self-monitoring strategies than intermediate learners. Cognitive and metacognitive strategies were more commonly used than social / affective LLSs. Learners were also found to possess a high level of metalinguistic awareness, and to analyse language structures overtly or to think and talk about language. The implications of these results were that learners seldom used LLSs in integrative tasks despite their report of frequent use. Teachers expressed interests in knowing more about LLSs and instruction methods. Their conclusion is that LLS instruction is possible. They also found that L2 learners tended to use more strategies in vocabulary learning and pronunciation compared to listening for inference and making an oral presentation. In addition, they found learners used specific strategies for specific tasks, rather than using a series of MCLLSs and LLSs integratively

across different task types.

In Study 2 (Chamot et al., 1988a; 1988b), interviews were used to gather data. As in Study 1, learners of both Spanish and Russian at all levels reported using far more cognitive than MCLLSs, with higher level learners reporting using more LLSs. Learners of all ability were found to use LLSs, but more effective learners used LLSs more often and had a wider repertoire. The MCLLSs of self-management, selective attention, and functional planning, were found to be used in more complex language tasks. The longitudinal findings of this study showed that different language tasks elicited different MCLLSs. For example, self-monitoring was more often used in vocabulary learning and listening, while planning and self-evaluation were more often used in writing tasks. More effective learners were also found to monitor their comprehension from time to time.

Subsequent research on comparing the MCLLS use of more and less successful L2 learners confirmed the findings of O'Malley and his colleagues. For example, metacognitively oriented readers were found to be more aware of their characteristics as language learners, the demands of the tasks, and more able to select, employ, monitor and evaluate the LLSs they used as well as to identify and repair comprehension failures (Palinscar and Brown, 1989). Long and Long (1987) had similar findings. They found that more successful readers focused on relationships between meanings, self-monitored their own understanding, and actively interacted with facts by means of self-questioning, anticipation, making inferences, summarising, etc.

In their third study, O'Malley et al. (1989) focused on listening. Data were collected from a two-phase individual interview each of one hour, and

included a training and a reporting phase. They found statistically significant differences on self-monitoring, elaboration, inferencing between effective and ineffective learners. Thus, echoing the conclusion of Study 1, they concluded that less successful learners can learn to be more successful given assistance.

In Study 4 (Chamot et al., 1988a; 1988b), workbooks, interview guides, small group training, and think-aloud interviews were employed to collect information. As in Study 2, more effective learners were found to use more LLSs, and to use them more appropriately and more purposefully in accomplishing a language task. The stability and increase in LLS use was found after one year. Different LLSs were also found to be used in different tasks, and some in all tasks. Self-monitoring was found to be used in all the tasks on vocabulary learning, listening, cloze tests, and writing. self-evaluation, on the other hand, was found to be more commonly used in vocabulary learning, cloze tests and writing. The implication of these findings was that LLS instruction should focus on a variety of different tasks.

Putting together the above four studies, the main findings collected are that beginning learners used more LLSs and MCLLSs than intermediate learners, all learners possessed a high level of metacognitive awareness, learners used more cognitive LLSs than MCLLSs, and effective learners used more MCLLSs of different types. It was also found that different MCLLSs were used in different tasks, and that LLS use was found to be stable over the period of one year. These studies are worth summarising because they have laid the foundation of four directions of subsequent research on LLSs. Firstly, these studies extended the tradition of comparing

more and less proficient L2 learners in their LLS use in *TESOL* research, a trend which has continuing up until now (for example, Griffiths, 2003). The study of listening skills pioneered investigation on LLS use in different language tasks, a research area which has been proliferated recently. As far as research methodology is concerned, these studies stimulated a wide variety of methods, such as surveys, teacher and student interviews, classroom observations and think-aloud. The final significance of these studies is that the findings have confirmed one important assumption in LLS research pointed out by Rubin (1981) and mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, that LLSs can be learned for good use by less effective learners.

After the series of studies of O'Malley and his colleagues as mentioned above, later studies were characterised by comparisons of the MCLLS use of more and less successful learners in different skill areas. It has been consistently found that learners use different LLSs in different language tasks (for example, see Cohen, 2003; Oxford, 1989).

More recent studies on LLSs and MCLLSs have following the direction pioneered by O'Malley and his colleagues, including the investigation of the 'Good Language Learners' (for example, Fleming and Walls, 1998), how LLSs are used in different aspects of English learning such as vocabulary learning (for example, Gu, 2003), and how they are related to different learner characteristics and to learners of different backgrounds. For example, instead of investigating the LLS use of adult L2 learners more and more research focuses on young adult L2 learners and children (for example, Chesterfield and Chesterfield, 1985; Chamot and El-Dinary, 1999; Lan and Oxford, 2003). There have been growing interests in studying LLS use of

learners of different cultures (for example, see Oxford, 1996; Riazi and Rahimi, 2005; Park, 1997; Shmais, 2003) too. Moreover, there has also been a proliferation of methods used, for example, diary journals, in addition to more traditional methods of think aloud protocols, interviews and survey questionnaires. Less traditional data analysis techniques such as cluster analysis (Yamamori et al., 2003) are also being used. Another direction is the continuation of the evaluation of strategy instruction effectiveness (for example, Huang, 2003).

Despite treating MCLLSs as a separate concept and the proliferation of research focuses in more recent research of MCLLS use, we can see that little attention has been given to investigating how MCLLS use is related to LLSYs. This study is an attempt to extend the limited focuses of the more recent research of MCLLSs.

Among the more recent studies, those conducted by Oxford and her colleagues need to be mentioned here because of the substantial findings on different aspects which contribute substantially to our understanding of LLSs and MCLLSs.

As introduced in Chapter One, Oxford developed her classification system of LLSs, which is different from that of earlier researchers. Oxford (1990a) developed her Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and applied it extensively not only to learners of different profiles and cultures worldwide, but also in investigating the relationships between LLS use and learners' characteristics, for example, gender, career choice and psychological type (Ehrman and Oxford, 1988), L2 proficiency and age (Green and Oxford, 1995), cognitive attitude and learning styles (Ehrman and Oxford, 1995), as well as task difficulty (Oxford, Cho, Leung and Kim,

2004).

The SILL has also been administered by many other researchers. For example, Griffiths and Parr (2001) used the SILL and found that students ranked MCLLSs second after social strategies in their use of LLSs among other types of LLSs in Oxford's classification. They were followed by compensation strategies, cognitive strategies, affective strategies and memory strategies in the order of the frequency used. Examples of other studies employing the SILL include Oxford and Nyikos (1989) as well as Griffiths (2003). Oxford (1996) as well as Oxford and Burry-stock (1995) also provide comprehensive reviews of the studies employing the SILL.

After introducing research on MCLLSs and LLSs in the western context, it is necessary to review the LLS and MCLLS research conducted in the Chinese context.

2.1.3 MCLLS Research in the Chinese Context

As mentioned earlier in this section, MCLLS research in the Chinese context has followed a similar trend as the western context. It began with studies of the 'Good Language Learners'. Subsequent efforts were characterised by investigating the use of MCLLS in different language skill areas. What is important is that we still know very little about the patterns of MCLLS use of Chinese L2 learners. Providing the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, allows us to fill this gap in previous MCLLS research in the Chinese context.

Following the tradition of research in the west, LLS research in the Chinese context began with research on the 'Good Language Learners' (for

example, Goh, 1998; Wen, 1995; Wen and Johnson, 1997). Also a lot of attention has been given to how different learner variables are related to LLS use (for example, Shieh, 1995). As with studies in the west, mixed results have been found. One example is that although the main finding from most previous studies was that high-proficiency learners reported using more LLSs than low-proficiency ones, one recent study by Oxford et al. (2004) found that less proficient Chinese L2 learners used more LLSs in difficult tasks. Wen and Johnson (1997) found that management strategies and strategy beliefs had indirect effects on language achievement, while Wu et al. (1996) did not find LLSs to be a significant factor in influencing language achievement.

Comparable to the situation in the western context, LLS research in the Chinese context has recently paid more attention to LLS use in different skill areas. This is a response to a call for more research into different skill areas as the use of LLSs was found to be task-specific. However, as Zhang (2003) comments, most of these studies have focused on how LLSs are related to L2 achievement. The major findings relating to MCLLSs are selected and introduced below.

In reading, Li and Munby (1996) conducted a study on Chinese university students in Canada by interviews, think-aloud sessions and journals. The results indicated that the students were able use a number of reading strategies, including using background knowledge, translation, self-questioning, summarising and prediction to plan, monitor, evaluate and remedy their comprehension in reading. Monitoring was shown to be the most important and most frequently used LLSs in reading by native Chinese speakers learning English in another study (Zhang, 1999). However, in

another study on reading strategies on 20 tertiary native Chinese students in reading by using think-aloud protocols, Feng and Mokhtari (1998) found that monitoring comprehension was the only MCLLS being used by the participants. An interesting finding is that they used this MCLLS more frequently when reading more difficult Chinese texts compared to easy ones. They used it more frequently in reading English compared to Chinese texts, and finally this MCLLS was used more frequently in reading difficult English texts compared to easy ones.

In listening, Goh (2002) interviewed Chinese L2 learners of English and found that selective attention, as compared to comprehension monitoring, which is more commonly found in reading, was the most frequently used strategy for listening tasks. This is different from Chamot and Küpper's (1989) finding that monitoring was more often used in listening. This is also different from the more frequent use of monitoring found by several studies conducted in the Chinese context. Lin (2000) found that among the 258 high school students, more proficient listeners compared to the less proficient ones employed the MCLLS of comprehension monitoring. Wang (2002) investigated MCLLS use in listening tasks among Taiwanese university students. He found that, unlike less proficient listeners, more proficient listeners were found to use more planning, monitoring, self-evaluating than other cognitive and social strategies. Goh (1998) found among her Singaporean English learners that better listeners were characterised by greater use of selective attention, directed attention, comprehension monitoring, comprehension evaluation, and real-time assessment of input. Another interesting finding is that less successful listeners were particularly poor at MCLLSs. After further analyses, she

reported that higher ability listeners had more effective use of both cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

In vocabulary learning, Gu (1994) compared two learners, one successful and another less successful learner of vocabulary in a tertiary institution in a reading task. He reported that the more successful one employed more MCLLSs and cognitive LLSs. Another important finding is that the better reader was found to be more flexible in their use of LLSs. Two MCLLSs, self-initiation and selective attention, were also found to be used by more successful learners in learning vocabulary in another study (Gu and Johnson, 1996). These strategies are different from the self-monitoring used by more successful vocabulary learners previously reported by Chamot and Küpper (1989). This, again, is another example of a different pattern of MCLLS use between research in the western and Chinese contexts. In another study on the vocabulary learning strategies of 202 non-English majors, Wu and Wang (1998) found that respondents used a wide range of MCLLSs and cognitive LLSs. In addition, there were significant differences between successful and less successful learners in the use of the MCLLSs of holding beliefs, advanced organising, self-monitoring, self-evaluating and selective attention as well as the cognitive LLSs of using context, guessing, using dictionaries, classifying, and memorising by rote. These differences found in the MCLLS use of successful and less successful learners confirmed the earlier findings of Gu (1994) and Gu and Johnson (1996) relating to the differences in MCLLS use between more and less successful vocabulary learners. Focusing on young learners, Lin (2001) conducted case studies investigating seven Taiwanese elementary school students on their use of vocabulary strategies.

The four MCLLSs among the total of 18 LLSs used by the respondents included advanced preparation, selective attention, monitoring and self-management.

One observation which can be made from the above review is that as in the west there has been little research on MCLLSs relating to speaking and writing in the Chinese context. There were mixed findings on the MCLLSs which are used more frequently by more successful learners in different skill areas.

There has been little research on MCLLSs in the local Hong Kong Chinese context. One exception is Flowerdew and Miller's (1992) study in which the MCLLSs of pre- and post-reading were identified among university students in Hong Kong. However, the study did not focus on language learning but on learning in general, and the section on MCLLSs was exploratory. No details of the MCLLS use of students were given.

A comparison of the above findings with those obtained in the western context show that the MCLLSs used by more successful Chinese L2 learners in different skill areas show similarities to and differences from their counterparts in the west. Among the differences, two MCLLSs, including selective attention and self-monitoring, were found to be consistently more commonly used by more successful Chinese L2 learners.

The SILL (Oxford, 1990a) has also been employed frequently in the Chinese context. In a study on 175 Chinese EFL learners from the PRC in Singapore, Goh and Kwah (1997) used it and found that MCLLSs were used more frequently than other types of LLSs, memory, cognitive, compensation, affective and social strategies. Simmons (1996) administered the SILL in Hong Kong to study learner autonomy and found that L2

English learners agreed they had become more autonomous learners after a programme for independent learning.

In concluding the present situation on LLS and MCLLS research in the Chinese context, Zhang (2003) calls for more research in different skill areas.

To summarise, research on LLSs and MCLLSs in the Chinese context shares a lot of characteristics with studies conducted in the western context. Earlier findings are characterised by the identification of the LLSs and MCLLSs used by more successful learners. There has been an increasing number of research studies focusing on the LLSs and MCLLSs used in different skill areas. Recently a variety of methods have been employed in investigating LLS and MCLLS use and more and more studies are focusing on the relationships of LLSs and MCLLSs with learners of different cultures and characteristics. However, we still know very little from past research the MCLLS used by Chinese-speaking learners in Hong Kong, especially the non-undergraduate students such as students undertaking vocational education.

As will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three, few of the research studies describe above employed interviews and survey questionnaires simultaneously. Therefore these two methods are included in the design of this study.

2.2 How LLSYs are Related to MCLLS Use

Research on LLSYs is characterised by a proliferation of conceptualisations. Most previous research on LLSYs conducted in the western context focused on identifying the cultural differences in exercising LLSYs. In the Chinese context, mixed findings on the style preferences of Chinese L2 learners were found. We

can see that there is a need to identify the LLSY patterns of Chinese L2 learners. Like MCLLS research, most previous research on LLSYs focused on tertiary students. Little is known about the patterns of LLSYs of younger adults. These two issues can be addressed by providing the results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.*

As we will see in details below, there was little past research investigating the relationships between MCLLSs and LLSYs, both in the western and Chinese contexts. There is a need to address this lack of research, and this is achieved by providing the results of the investigation provoked by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.*

Keefe (1979), one of the pioneers in studying learning styles, views learning styles as stable cognitive, affective and physiological traits of learners' perception, interactions and responses to the learning environment. Despite Keefe's view of learning styles as stable traits, learning styles can be influenced by a number of factors, including the situation, a learner's developmental level and by style training (Oxford, 1990b). It might also be a function of the task to be performed. In fact, a number of studies found that learning styles are not stable and change over time (for example, Willing, 1988). It was also found that there are differences in style preferences among learners of different levels and lengths of studies (Reid, 1987).

In LLSY research, different conceptualisations have been used. Some examples are the field dependent/independent dimension originating from general psychology, the active/passive and studial/experimental dimensions from the quantitative approach, the MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) modality

preference (for example, aural/visual/kinaesthetic/tactile), the concrete, analytical, communicative and authority-oriented learning style proposed by Willing (1988), and finally the deep, elaborative and shallow learning styles proposed by Schmeck (1983). Oxford, Hollaway and Horton-Murillo (1992) point out that there are at least eight dimensions of learning styles out of a total of 20 dimensions identified in past research which affect language learning.

Oxford (1990b) summarises the results of learning style research into several main directions plus several other smaller dimensions. The most famous direction is the field independence-dependence research. Mixed results in learning styles research focusing on this concept have been found. A second important direction is ‘Competitiveness - Cooperativeness – Independence’, which are self-explanatory. Oxford (1990b) points out that there has been too little attention given to these aspects. A third direction is ‘Reflection – Impulsivity’. Reflective learners tend to be slow and accurate, while impulsive ones tend to be fast and inaccurate. Findings in this direction have yet to be established.

Some narrower dimensions on LLSYs have been investigated, which are the sensory modality preferences (for example, Reid, 1987; Dunn and Dunn, 1972), breadth of categorisation, ‘Leveling–sharpening’, Kolb’s (1976) experiential learning model. Little attention has been given to these four dimensions and no firm conclusion can be drawn from previous research employing these conceptualisations. The final dimension is the MBTI. In the MBTI, individuals are classified into different psychological types, including introvert / extravert, sensors / intuitives, thinkers / feelers, judgers / perceivers. As mentioned briefly in 2.1.2, Oxford and her colleagues (Ehrman and Oxford, 1988; Oxford and Ehrman, 1989) employed this concept to investigate the relationships between LLSYs and LLS use. Their studies are exceptions to the lack of studies which focus on the

relationship between LLSYs and LLS use. Oxford and Ehrman (1989) found that introversion was related to more frequent use of MCLLSs. Extroverts, on the other hand, were reported to have frequent use of organising learning, seeking practice opportunity and paying attention. 'Sensing' learners were also found to possess a high use of MCLLSs such as planning and goal setting. 'Intuitive' learners, on the other hand, were also found to employ planning and self-evaluating. 'Thinkers', as their name suggests, were found to employ planning and self-evaluation strategies. 'Judging' learners had clear preference for the MCLLS like tactical planning which 'Perceivers' avoided. Another relevant finding from different studies focusing on LLSYs and MCLLSs is that more effective L2 learners organise and plan their learning around their preferred ways of learning (Oxford, 1990a; Wenden, 1986).

From the above review, we can see that research on LLSYs has been characterised by a wide diversity of conceptualisations.

Learning styles not only help to determine the specific choice of LLSs and MCLLSs (Oxford, 1990b; Oxford and Crookall, 1989; Rossi-Le, 1995), but also affect the effectiveness of LLS instruction (Oxford, 1989; Carrell, Pharis and Liberto, 1989). O'Malley et al. (1985a; 1985b) found that compared to Hispanic students Asians were not very receptive to LLS training as they preferred to use rote memorisation which was well-established among themselves. A previous observation by Sutter (1987) was that teaching strategies which were opposed to learners' learning styles would result in resistance. Therefore, it is important to delineate the characteristics of learning styles of Chinese learners which are influenced by culture so that effective training can be designed.

In this study, Reid's (1987; 1995) conceptualisation of LLSYs of modality is adopted as it is more general, and fits the exploratory nature of the present study

despite the relatively little empirical support established. This conceptualisation is not as narrow as some of the conceptualisations mentioned above, nor is it too focused on one aspect, such as personality, as the MBTI.

In Reid's framework, there are six elements of learning style preference, Auditory, Visual, Tactile, Kinaesthetic, Individual and Group. Auditory inclined learners learn best when they hear words spoken and from oral explanation. Visual learners, on the other hand, learn best when materials are presented in books or other visual materials. Kinaesthetic learners prefer to be involved physically in their learning experiences. Tactile learners find it easy to learn when given the opportunity to engage in 'hands-on' experiences with materials. Group learners find it more effective to learn when they are in groups. Finally, individual learners like to be alone when they are learning. Based on this framework, Reid (1995) developed her 'Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire' (PLSPQ) to assess learners' inclinations towards these traits.

As mentioned in 1.3, culture is a significant contextual factor which influences language learning. Maley (1993) recapitulates that one important focus of discussion in *TESOL* research to date is the reason for culture being valuable and how to incorporate culture in our teaching. A culture of learning is regarded as comprising learners' expectations, attitudes, values and beliefs about what to learn, how to learn and what constitutes effective learning (Cheng, 2002; Cortazzi and Jin, 1996), and how it affects the learning styles of individuals.

Past research has shown clearly that there are cultural differences in learning preferences (Dunn, Gemake, Jalali, Zenhausern, Quinn and Spiridakis, 1990; Nuby and Oxford, 1996). Comparative studies of LLSYs employing Reid's conceptualisation (Reid, 1987; Rossi-Le, 1995) also reported cultural differences in LLSYs. Chinese L2 learners compared to L2 learners of other cultures were

found to be more kinaesthetic and tactile (Reid, 1987). Rossi-Le administered Reid's (1987) PLSPQ and confirmed Reid's finding of the relationships found between cultural backgrounds and learning styles. More specifically, she found that Spanish speakers are more auditory reflecting their oral tradition. Chinese and Vietnamese, on the other hand, were found to be more visual. The possible reason given by Rossi-Le is the pictorial and iconographic nature of their written languages. Rao's (2002) finding confirmed the prevalence of visual learning styles among Chinese L2 students. However, no evidence for kinaesthetic and auditory learning styles was found. In the same study, it was also found that Chinese L2 learners tended to be more reflective, analytic, and concrete-sequential.

In addition to the comparative studies as described above, research on learning styles employing Reid's conceptualisation has also been conducted in the Chinese context over the past two decades. The significant findings are summarised below.

In Taiwan, studies have found the existence of both multiple learning styles (Ko, 1991) and non-existence of any learning style preference (Lin and Shen, 1996). In addition, in a study of 149 tertiary students in China by Yu (1997), several characteristics of Chinese LLSYs were found. Chinese learners were found to be more visual than aural in their language learning. They prefer formal teaching, and like to complete their assignments as one goal. In his multiple regression analysis, two factors, linear processing of information and memory were found to be predictors of language achievement.

Despite the style preferences of Chinese L2 learners identified above, in another study of 331 Chinese undergraduate and graduate students (Melton, 1990), it was found that Chinese students preferred kinaesthetic, tactile and individual learning. Yet in another study of 1,076 Chinese L2 learners of English using

Reid's (1987) classification (Dirksen, 1990), findings different from Melton's were reported. In this study, Kinaesthetic was the preferred style for most (73%), followed by Tactile (67%) and Visual (62%) learning styles. The least preferred style found was Auditory (28%). 68% of the research participants preferred collaborative learning. These findings confirm Reid's (1987) finding that Chinese learners had multiple major learning styles. Other research which reported the multiple learning styles of Chinese L2 learners include Stebbins (1995) and Tobin, Wu and Davidson (1989).

Apart from the existence of multiple learning styles among Chinese L2 learners, style differences were also found in different levels and lengths of studies among Chinese L2 learners (Reid, 1987). Senior students were found to prefer auditory learning more than freshmen, while sophomores were more visually oriented than the freshmen. However, all levels chose Tactile as their major learning style and group learning as a negative style. As pointed out earlier in this section, there were differences in learning style orientations among learners with different length of time of studying the target language. In this study by Reid (1987), students who studied English longer were found to prefer Auditory and Kinaesthetic preferences. Students who had native speakers of English as their teachers for more semester preferred these two learning styles more than the other students.

Among the previous studies reviewed above, none was conducted in the Hong Kong Chinese context. In addition, most of these studies focused on the LLSYs of undergraduates. There is a need to identify the patterns of LLSYs of local L2 learners undertaking other than university education. Therefore, providing results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking*

vocational education in Hong Kong, allow us to address this inadequacy in previous research in LLSYs.

As in the western context, in the Chinese context there has been little attempt to link LLSYs with MCLLS use. Among the few studies, Rossi-Le (1995) administered Reid's (1987) PLSPQ and the SILL and found a relationship between the two. She found that preference for group learning was related to the use of social and affective strategies, and Kinaesthetic learning style was related to seeking practice opportunities with native speakers. Tactile learners preferred authentic language use, and visual learners preferred to use more visualisation strategies. Finally, learners who preferred to learn individually were found to prefer self-directed learning. However, no details of the statistics were given and Rossi-Le only provides a very descriptive account of the relationships.

The study by Ko (1991) mentioned earlier employed the PLSPQ and the SILL. In this study of junior high school students, she found that her respondents preferred Kinaesthetic / Tactile, Visual / Nonverbal, and Auditory to Visual / Verbal learning styles. However, no statistical significant differences in LLS use were found between learners with different learning styles. There have been calls for more research in exploring the relationships between the two concepts in the Chinese context (for example, Gu, 2002), on the ground that most research in the western context on the relationships between individual differences and LLSs is not convincing. This is because most relationships were inferred from the relationships found between individual differences and learning outcomes. There is a need to investigate how LLSYs are related to MCLLSs in the local Chinese context, as suggested by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.*

The tentative conclusion which can be drawn from the findings of the above research is that we could expect LLSYs to be related to MCLLS use in the Chinese context as in the western context. Secondly, the different patterns of MCLLS use of Chinese L2 learners found in previous research might lead to a different patterns of relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs compared to research in the west found.

2.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter began with an introduction of the meanings of MCLLSs and how they were located within the larger framework of LLSs. The reasons for selecting Oxford's (1990a) classification of MCLLSs and the 11 specific MCLLSs were explained. The concept of metacognition and how it is related to MCLLSs were introduced.

After explaining the relevant concepts, this chapter moved on to review the research on MCLLSs in both the western and Chinese contexts. In the western context, research on LLSs began with the research on the 'Good Language Learners' which aimed at identifying the LLSs used by more successful learners and classifying them. However, these attempts had not been very fruitful because most of these studies found that more successful learners did not use more LLSs or use them more frequently. Nor did they use particular types of or specific LLSs more frequently. Instead, more successful learners were found to use the appropriate strategies in different tasks, or simply use LLSs strategically. After the studies on the 'Good Language Learners', more research focused on how LLSs were related to different learner characteristics such as age, gender, language proficiency, attitudes, learning styles, etc., in different skills aspects of listening, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary learning. Despite mostly consistent findings, inconsistent findings have also been reported. Parallel to research along

these lines there has also been research on evaluating the effectiveness of LLS instruction programmes. More recent studies on LLS and MCLLSs mainly follow the directions of previous research. However, there has been a proliferation of methods used, and learners with different backgrounds such as age and cultural background have been studied.

MCLLS research in the Chinese context has followed the direction taken in the western context. There has been research on the ‘Good Language Learners’, and how MCLLSs are related to different learner characteristics in different skill aspects of learners with different backgrounds. Compared to the research findings in the western context, both differences and similarities in LLS and MCLLS use have been found. There have been no studies which focused particularly on MCLLSs. There is a need to collect data in the local Chinese context in order that comparison can be made with earlier studies. In addition, there has been a lack of research in the local Chinese context on adolescent learners. Therefore, there is a need to find out the patterns of MCLLS use of adolescents in Hong Kong, especially among academically less successful L2 learners such as the participants of this study.

Among the different conceptualisations of LLSY reviewed, Reid’s framework is adopted in this study because it is relatively more comprehensive compared to other conceptualisations. Substantial research indicates that there are cultural differences in LLSYs. The characteristics of Chinese learning styles include being more kinaesthetic and visual. However, more and more studies have found that Chinese L2 learners have multiple learning styles. However, there has been no research in the local Hong Kong context to investigate the learning style preferences of local learners employing Reid’s framework. There is a need to collect data in this aspect and compare the findings with previous ones.

There has been little research focusing specifically on the relationships between LLSYs and MCLLSs. Research on LLSYs has traditionally focused on how they are related to language achievement and other learner characteristics rather than on MCLLSs. There is a need to investigate the relationships between the two variables, especially in the local context, both for theoretical and teaching purposes.

In sum, this chapter has provided the theoretical background in which this study is located. More importantly, it has provided information on how the three research questions of this study are related to previous research and the broader theoretical background. There is a need to elaborate the reasons for selecting research questions rather than hypotheses as the foundation of this study as mentioned at the end of Chapter One, after reviewing the relevant literature on MCLLSs and LLSYs. From the above review, we can see that past research has identified mixed patterns of MCLLS use and LLSYs, both in the western and Chinese contexts. With inconclusive findings, it is difficult to draw a firm conclusion from previous research. Therefore, there is a need of gathering details rather than testing hypotheses. It is only after we have a more comprehensive understanding of the two variables that we can have a better theoretical foundation for generating hypotheses for testing in the local context.

3 Methodology

Cohen and Manion (1989) distinguish between methodology and methods. Methodology, a process of scientific enquiry, is the design of the whole process of a study. It includes not only the data collection methods but also the designs of data analyses and locating a study within the wider paradigms. Methods, on the other hand, are the range of approaches used to gather data to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation. Methods may include techniques such as surveys, experiments, participant observations, role-playing, etc. This chapter introduces the methodology of this study, which is the methods selected for data collection, the procedures, and how the methods are located within their paradigms.

The choices of methods are by no means straightforward, as we have to take into considerations a large number of factors. Some of the fundamental factors to be considered are the aims of the study and the nature of the concepts under study. More practical aspects, such as the sources of data, the backgrounds of respondents, and the accessibility of data, need to be considered too. Finally, resources including time and manpower available have determining effects on the decisions on how the data will be collected and analysed. How these considerations affected the decisions on the methodology of this study will be introduced in this chapter. As a major pre-requisite for a successful study is a clear positioning of its methodology among the paradigms, how the chosen methods are emerged from their respective paradigms will be discussed as well. Ethics is important in conducting research. They will be introduced next. The last part of this chapter is devoted to pointing out the limitations of this study.

The two data collection methods employed in this study are semi-structured interviews and survey questionnaires. These methods have been found to be useful in studying LLSs (Ellis, 1999). Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) identify the different research strategies and data collection techniques to be used in research for different purposes.

Exploratory research has the purpose of investigating a little-understood event, situation, or circumstance, to identify or discover important variables and to generate hypotheses for further research. The research strategies of case study, observation, field study and the data collection techniques of participant observation, non-participant observation, in-depth interviews and selected interviews are suitable for this type of research. In descriptive research, researchers aim to document an event, situation, or circumstance of interest. Suitable strategies include case study, field study, ethnography and observation, and suitable techniques for this type of research include participant observation, non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, written questionnaires and content analyses. Strategies available for explanatory research include case study, field study, and ethnography. Suitable techniques for explanatory research are participant observation, non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, written questionnaire and content analysis. Observation and interviews are recommended for predictive research, and suitable data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, written questionnaires, and content analysis.

The first objective of this study is to gather descriptive information on the MCLLS use and LLSY preferences of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong. This is a descriptive objective and therefore both interviews and survey questionnaires are suitable data collection techniques. The second objective of this study is to explore the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong. This objective is exploratory. Therefore, interviews are a suitable means to achieve this objective. Written questionnaires, on the other hand, are a suitable instrument for achieving the explanatory aspect of this objective.

The methodological perspective which this study is based on is interpretist. Although survey questionnaires were used, they only served the purpose of gathering

numerical data to facilitate our understanding of the focuses of this study.

Details of the two data collection methods of this study and how they are related within the larger paradigm are given below.

3.1 Semi-structured Interviews

According to Cannell and Kahn (1968), a research interview has the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information with the ultimate aim of systematic description, prediction, or explanation. It involves two persons (i.e., an interviewer and an interview participant). A common purpose of interviewing is to find out what people think or how they feel about something. The goal of an interview is to obtain valid information from the respondents and find out the details of how conversational partners understand what they have seen, heard or experienced (Rubin and Rubin, 1995).

Semi-structured interviews are employed as the main method of data collection in this study. In a semi-structured interview, there is a guideline for collecting data but there is some room for flexibility over the content, emphases and order of questions (Cohen and Scott, 1996; Cannell and Kahn, 1968). They are located in the middle of the continuum from structured to unstructured interviews and share some features and strengths of both types of interviews at both ends of the continuum.

In structured interviews, there are pre-determined questions and items. Researchers follow the questions strictly during the course of data collection, and there is little flexibility in using this type of interview. However, employing this type of interview can ensure consistency and accuracy, thus facilitating the control of variances and biases. This type of interview is suitable for topics which require a high level of accuracy. At the other end of the continuum we can find unstructured interviews, in which the researchers only have a brief or even do not

have a focus in mind. The directions of the interviews and the focuses are determined by the interests of the interviewers and interview participants and are always subject to changes in the course of interviews. This type of interview is particularly suitable for research which is exploratory in nature with the aim of generating hypotheses and theories.

The reason for selecting semi-structured interviews in this study was that this study focused on two specific concepts of MCLLS use and LLSYs and the researcher had quite specific information which he wanted like to collect relating to these two concepts (for example, MCLLS use in particular language skills). At the same time, this study aims at exploring and generating insights for theory development in the local context. Therefore, semi-structured interviews, which contain some pre-determined questions for discussion and at the same time allow flexibility for exploration, were highly suitable.

Two focuses of this study were to identify the patterns of MCLLS use and LLSYs as well as to explore the relationships between them. Information on these two variables is highly dependent on the perception of the research participants of this study. Thus, participants' local meanings from their point of view (Erickson, 1986) are of primary importance. The use of MCLLSs relies heavily on the perceived usefulness of the strategies to learners. Therefore, data gathered by interviews are 'soft' and rich in description of research participants' views on the selected variables from their own perspectives. The data are 'soft' in the sense that they are subjected to interpretation and the meanings are highly dependent on the frame of reference of the participants. Interviews are the most appropriate means of gathering data on subjective perception. This is because they allow participants to express their perceptions, clarify and elaborate them, and negotiate with the researcher and produce mutually agreed understanding. The focuses of

participants' own frame of reference and their subjective reasons for their views (i.e., on the MCLLSs they employ and their preferred LLSYs in this study) are the main features of the interpretive paradigm.

Semi-structured interviews are useful in generating insights and gathering information on the variations of different individuals. Given our limited understanding of MCLLS use and LLSYs as well as how they are related in the local context, there is a need to generate insights in order to facilitate the theoretical development in the local context. The interpretive paradigm, in which semi-structured interviews are located, is highly suitable to achieve this purpose. It is because the paradigm is inductive, which means it is used to develop concepts, insights and understanding rather than using data to confirm existing theories and models. This study aims to describe the typical MCLLS use and LLSYs of a selected group of L2 learners at a particular vocational education institute. The variations of different individuals having different profiles in their MCLLS use and LLSYs could be compared by using the qualitative data gathered from semi-structured interviews. In this way, the typicality of individuals in terms of the two characteristics could be established.

As MCLLSs and LLSYs are mental operations which are not directly observable, methods such as direct observation are not appropriate (Cohen, 1987; Cohen and Hosenfeld, 1981; Cohen and Scott, 1996). Most MCLLSs, for example, *Self-monitoring*, do not have direct behavioural manifestation. Therefore, we must rely on learners' self-report in gathering information. Interviews are a good means of eliciting verbal information in this respect. There have been doubts about learners' ability to verbalise their use of MCLLSs (Seliger, 1983) and the concern that verbal report places too great a burden on learners' memories which results in inaccurate data (Dobrin, 1986). However, research has shown that adults (Cohen,

1996) and even children (Chamot and El-Dinary, 1999) are able to articulate clearly how they apply LLSs in their language learning. Chamot (1987) found that both beginning and intermediate learners were able to verbalise their use of LLSs, and unsuccessful learners were able to discuss their use of LLSs (Chamot and Küpper, 1989). Other research has repeatedly shown that verbal reports are a reliable means of data collection (Ericsson and Simon, 1980).

The use of semi-structured interviews to produce valuable findings on MCLLSs and LLSYs is common. For example, Naiman, Fröhlich and Todesco (1975) used semi-structured interviews and found six strategies as the keys to successful language learning in their pioneer study on the 'Good Language Learners'. In their seminal studies on LLS use of ESL learners described in Chapter Two, O'Malley et al. (1985a; 1985b) employed interviews and identified a large number of LLSs. The results from the study were subsequently employed to develop their influential classification of LLSs. In another study on evaluating the effectiveness of three LLS instruction programmes, Chamot (1993) used interviews and found a number of reasons for respondents not using certain MCLLSs, for example, the perception that the MCLLSs were not effective, were not needed, and the respondents' fatigue in using the strategies. This type of information cannot be collected by survey questionnaires but is extremely useful for further research, strategy instruction programmes, and language policy decision-making. As far as research on LLSYs is concerned, Oxford and Green (1996) used interviews to collect qualitative data on how language learning histories affected the LLSYs of L2 learners. Ehrman and Oxford (1988; 1990) included interviews in their investigations on how LLSYs were related to LLSs and found LLSYs as one of the determinants of the choice of LLSs.

Zhang (2003) summarises the major methods used in LLS research in the

Chinese context as interviews (Goh, 1999; Huang and van Naerssen, 1987), think-aloud protocols (Goh, 1998; Wang and Wen, 2002), learner diaries and journals (Goh, 1999) and experimental designs (Liu, 1996). We can see that interviews are also a popular means of data collection in LLS research in the Chinese context. As a result of the abundance of previous research using interviews in research into both MCLLSs and LLSYs, the findings of this study can be compared with those of previous research.

MCLLS research is a new area in the field of language teaching in Hong Kong not only for language learners but also for teachers and policy makers. MCLLS instruction is not included in most English curricula, nor in teacher training. Semi-structured interviews are appropriate for topics which are not familiar to the research participants. This is because respondents can ask questions for clarification and the researchers can focus on the topic by following a pre-determined guideline. Since LLS research is unknown to most school managements, they might have resistance in providing support and resources. However, semi-structured interviews have wider acceptance to school management, teachers and learners. In other words, they are more accessible. Conducting semi-structured interviews require less time and manpower resources compared to other methods such as think-aloud. It is more suitable for the limited resources available for this study.

To summarise, the reasons for selecting semi-structured interviews as the main data collection method of this study is that it is suitable to the aim of and the nature of variables selected for this study. Two other reasons are that a large number of previous studies both in the western and Chinese contexts used this method and the wide acceptance of semi-structured interviews to respondents, policy makers and the public at large.

3.2 Survey Questionnaires

Introspective methods such as rating scales and questionnaires have been popular in second language research on learner factors such as attitudes, motivation and learning styles (Faerch and Kasper, 1987a). The underlying logic of using survey is that of positivism. In positivism, the meaning of knowledge is defined by what the sciences do through scientific procedures. Knowledge is built up according to a complex set of rules based on formal logic and mathematics (Habermas, 1972). The purpose of knowledge is to describe the external world which is connected with our senses. Given the above assumptions, positivist researchers very often investigate selected variables and look for causal relationships between them, just as natural scientists are looking for universal laws of nature. Therefore, positivists are typically associated with the use of quantitative methods and statistics to look for patterns in the phenomena under study.

As already explained earlier in this chapter, despite the use of survey questionnaires this study was located within the interpretive paradigm because research participants' subjective meanings were the focus of this study. Although survey questionnaires were used, their use was not based on the positivist assumptions of determinism, prediction, control, the applicability of natural science methods to human behaviours, the isolation of events from their contexts, and the generalisation of findings to the larger population and collectivism (Cohen and Manion, 1989). Rather, numerical data collected by survey questionnaires were used to supplement the qualitative data gathered by semi-structured interviews so as to enrich our understanding of MCLLS use and LLSYs as well as the relationships between them.

The first objective of this study is to collect descriptive data on MCLLSs

and LLSYs. Descriptive statistics provide us a easy-to-understand summary of the MCLSs and LLSYs which were prevalent among the selected group of learners at the institute. Correlational statistics also allow us to know the relationships between the two variables, which provide the results of the investigation provoked by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*. At the same time, they can show us how MCLS use and LLSYs are related to different learner characteristics such as age and gender.

A lot of important research on LLSs has used survey questionnaires and obtained useful findings. For example, Ramirez (1986) used questionnaires and found the eight strategies contributed most to the success of language learners. Politzer (1983) found strategy use and language achievement were related but the relationship depended on course level and teaching methodology. Oxford and Nyikos (1989) surveyed 1,200 students learning five languages (French, Spanish, Italian, German and Russian) at an US university. They used the SILL and found five factors on LLSs.

In the same review mentioned earlier in the previous sections, Zhang (2003) pointed out that one major method used in Chinese LLS research is the questionnaire (Goh, 2002; Goh and Kwah, 1997; Gu and Johnson, 1996).

In LLSY research, Stebbins (1995) administered the PLSPQ to 740 ESL students in his study, with findings comparable to Reid's (1987) study. Rossi-Le (1995) also surveyed 147 adult ESL learners by using the PLSPQ and SILL and found that LLSYs and LLS use are related. In the Chinese context, Melton (1990) used the PLSPQ and found the existence of multiple major learning styles of PRC L2 learners. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, a lot of other research

in investigating LLSYs both in comparative studies (Dunn et al., 1990; Rossi-Le, 1995) and in the Chinese context (Li and Qin, 2003; Lin and Shen, 1996) used survey questionnaires as a means of data collection.

Given the previous findings of using survey questionnaires in LLS and LLSY research, findings obtained from surveys can be compared to previous findings easily both in the western and the Chinese contexts. The numerical data can also allow us to compare findings across ethnicities, contexts and over time.

As with the case for semi-structured interviews, survey questionnaires are a good means of collecting data with limited resources in terms of manpower, time, and expertise. In addition to being able to collect a large quantity of data within a short time, the analysis of quantitative data is straightforward and does not require substantial manpower (Cohen, 1998). At the same time, it is non-threatening as far as confidentiality is concerned.

The use of survey questionnaires in this study provides methodological triangulation. Triangulation refers to the use of more than one method or data source. There are different types of triangulation, for example, those of data, investigators, and theories. Among the different types of triangulation, methodological triangulation was employed in this study. Creswell (1998) describes the different types of methodological triangulations. The first type is to collect qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously. Another way is to use qualitative methods to gather details after the quantitative collection of data. The final way is to use quantitative methods to validate or extend qualitative findings. This study is of the second type. Methodological triangulation was selected in this study because it is highly recommended by qualitative researchers (for example, Silverman, 1993), as a particular research method only collects information selectively on a certain aspect of reality. Therefore, multiplication of methods can

deepen our understanding on an issue and hence reduce bias in data collection. This improves the internal validity of the findings. Rank (2004) summarises the three advantages of methodological triangulation. First of all, data gathered from different methods can complement each other, as qualitative data provide depth, while data gathered from a large number of respondents can summarise their characteristics. Secondly, data collected from different methods can provide different perspectives. Finally, if findings collected from the two types of methods are consistent, they provide additional claims for validity. If the findings are inconsistent, researchers can explore the reasons for the discrepancies and redirect the research process.

In LLS research, Cohen (1998) and Ellis (1999) recommend LLS researchers to use a combination of methods. One reason is the context-insensitivity of questionnaires as a research tool. As the use of LLSs always depends on context, the research methods must be contextually sensitive (Yamamori et al., 2003). This means that data collected by questionnaires might not reflect the reality completely. In a study by Takeuchi and Wakamoto (2001), the reason for the low reported use of LLSs is that respondents had a lack of opportunity for communicating in English. Survey questionnaires are not able to gather this information if items relating to this reason are not included in the questionnaires. The use of interviews has the advantage of exploring in greater detail the influence of contextual influences. Another example is that Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990) who employed student interviews supplemented by a student checklist and a survey to find out the strategies students used to deal with teachers' feedback on a writing task. In Huang and van Naerssen's (1987) study, 20 interviews (10 highest and 10 lowest oral proficiency) were conducted and 60 questionnaires were administered. They found that functional practice is related to

L2 English oral proficiency. There are many studies in which these two methods are employed (for example, Chamot, 1987; Wen and Johnson, 1997; Wenden, 1986) in investigating LLSs. However, in LLSY research there have been few studies which employed a combination of methods, both in the western and Chinese contexts.

It is worth recapitulating that despite the use of interviews to gather details to supplement the quantitative findings in this study, the foundation of this study was research questions rather than hypotheses.

To summarise, the justifications for selecting survey questionnaires in this study are that numerical data collected by standardised items and procedures allow easy understanding of the phenomena under study and direct comparison with previous findings. The validity and reliability of the findings were also improved with the use of established measurement items. Survey questionnaires are a suitable method given the limited time and manpower resources of this study. Finally, the inclusion of survey questionnaires in the use of semi-structured interviews provided us many benefits of triangulation of methods.

3.3 Sampling and Procedures

The data collection of this study consists of two parts. A survey was conducted, followed by semi-structured interviews. The interview participants were selected based on the findings of the survey. Details of the sampling and procedures are introduced in this section.

3.3.1 Sampling

Sampling refers to the selection of subjects from a defined population (Borg and Gall, 1989). Broadly speaking, there are two types of sampling in survey research, probability and non-probability sampling. As generalisation of findings to the larger population is not the aim of this study,

probability sampling, which originated in the positivist paradigm, was not adopted.

Convenience sampling was employed in this study as it is very often employed in small-scale surveys (Punch, 2003). A more homogeneous sample of year one diploma students was selected in this study because the aim of the study is to describe the MCLLS use and LLSYs of a selected group of L2 learners at a particular vocational education institute. Therefore, a homogeneous sample would be more appropriate in order to represent typicality.

Eight classes were randomly selected from the total of 26 higher diploma year one classes of about 25 students each. The reasons for selecting about 200 out of a total of 600 year one higher diploma students to participate in the survey is to avoid the possible inconveniences caused to school administration of a large sample and the limited time and manpower resources available in this study.

The students who participated in the survey were invited to show their willingness to participate in this second stage of data collection of semi-structured interviews by writing down their names and contact numbers on the survey questionnaire. Selections were based on the willingness of the respondents to participate in the semi-structured interviews and the typicality of respondents' LLSYs as indicated by the results of the PLSPQ. One respondent of each of the six types of learning style preferences was selected randomly from the pool of respondents who had only one major learning style preference, and who at the same time indicated their willingness to participate in the semi-structured interviews. As about 35% of the respondents showed no major preferences for any of

the six learning styles, two from the 66 respondents in this category were selected randomly and were invited for interviews. Finally, one respondent was selected randomly from the eight respondents who showed multiple major style preferences, i.e., those with all the six preferences as their major learning styles.

There were only four respondents with Kinaesthetic preference as their only major preference, and two of them were not willing to participate in the interviews. Among the rest, one could not be contacted and one did not show up for the interview despite an appointment being made. Therefore, Robert with Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Individual preferences as his only major preferences was invited to the interview. There were only two respondents with Tactile preference as their only major preference, and neither of them was willing to participate in the interviews. Therefore, Michael with Tactile and Visual preferences as his only major preferences was invited to the interview. There were only seven respondents with all styles as their major preferences. Only three of them showed a willingness to participate in the interviews. However, when contacted they all said they were too busy. Therefore, Annie with five preferences (Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Individual) as her major preferences was invited to the interview instead.

In sum, there were altogether eight participants, including six with each of the Auditory, Visual, Kinaesthetic, Tactile, Group and Individual learning styles, one with no major learning style preferences, and one with five (Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Individual) major style preferences.

3.3.2 Procedures

Survey

Several steps are involved in doing survey research, including defining the objectives, selecting the sample, writing the items and preparing the questionnaire, pre-testing, preparing the cover letter, sending out questionnaire and following-up (Borg and Gall, 1989; Punch, 2003). We have defined the research problem in Chapter One. In this chapter we have also introduced the sampling procedures. Verbal consent from school management was obtained. Therefore, there is no need for a covering letter. There were also no need to send out the questionnaire (by mail) and follow-up, we will focus on constructing the items and preparing the questionnaire in this section.

The nine items on MCLLS of Oxford's SILL version 7.0 designed for speakers of other languages learning English were used to measure MCLLS use. In Oxford's (1990) classification, MCLLSs are divided into three groups, including *Centering your learning* (one item), *Arranging and Planning your learning* (six items), and *Evaluating your learning* (two items). In this part, respondents were asked to rate how often they used the specific MCLLSs, ranging from '1' (Never or almost never true of me) to '5' (Always or almost always true of me). There are 50 items in the whole SILL version 7.0 measuring cognitive, meta-cognitive and social/affective language-learning strategies. Only Part D, which measures MCLLSs, was included in the questionnaire, to suit the focus of this study. Despite only one part of the whole inventory being included in the questionnaire, the items in this part can be regarded as an independent scale, as its reliability and validity statistics independent of other parts have been reported (for

example, Bremner, 1999; Oh, 1992). In addition, Reid's 30-item PLSPQ was included in the survey questionnaire. In these items, respondents were asked the degree to which the individual statements were true of them in a Likert scale format, ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' (1) to 'Strongly Agree' (5). The information of permission of using the instruments in this study by the developers is given in Appendix A.

The number of items on demographic data was kept to a minimum and these items were included at the end of the questionnaire. Suitable items from Oxford's (1990) Background Questionnaire, which were recommended to be used together with the SILL to collect information on learners' characteristics, were included and modified whenever necessary. Finally, respondents were also asked to indicate their willingness to participate in a semi-structured interview by writing down their names and contact numbers on a voluntary basis. The questionnaire in English and Chinese are given in Appendix B.

The questionnaire in English was translated into Chinese by a translator who had a Master's degree in Translation with a specialism in English/Chinese translation. The Chinese version of the questionnaire was back-translated by another translator who had the same training as the first translator. The reason for back-translating the items was to ensure the accuracy in translation. Although a Chinese version of the SILL is available (Oxford and Burry-stock, 1995; Yang, 1999), the items were translated because items in local written Chinese were more easily understood by respondents.

Before the actual administration of the questionnaire, items were piloted and revised. The researcher invited five students to fill in the Chinese

version of the questionnaire on a voluntary basis. The researcher then asked them for feedback on the wording, order, and length of the questionnaire as well as their difficulties in answering the questions. Subsequent changes based on their feedback were made. The first change was that the Likert scale from 1 (Never or almost never true of me) to 5 (Always or almost always true of me) of the SILL was changed to '1' (Strongly disagree) to '5' (Strongly agree) as all the pilot participants said they had difficulties in understanding the direct Chinese translation. The second change involved the translation of the word 'instructions' in item 10 and 12 of the PLSPQ. An alternative in more colloquial Cantonese was added to the Chinese version because most pilot participants said they did not understand the direct translation of this word. Finally, 'favourite experience' of question 6 of Part 3 of the questionnaire was changed to 'most impressive experience' as three participants said they had difficulties in understanding the question.

The questionnaire was administered to eight randomly selected classes of about 25 students each at the beginning of an English lesson by the researcher. The researchers explained to the learners why they were chosen to participate in the study, the purpose of the survey and the instructions for completing the questionnaires. They were also informed that the data collected would be strictly for research purposes and would be kept confidential, and that participation in the research was voluntary.

SPSS was used to perform descriptive and inferential statistics. As there were three items (1, 6, and 7) measuring *Seeking practice opportunities*, the mean of these items was computed and used for further analyses. The specific MCLSs which belong to the broader categories were also combined and used for subsequent statistical analyses. Details of how the

means of the individual MCLSs and MCLS categories are computed from the nine items are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Details of MCLSs and MCLS categories

MCLS / Categories of MCLS	Item No.
<i>Finding out about language learning</i>	4
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	2
<i>Paying attention</i>	3
<i>Organising</i>	5
<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	1, 6, 7
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	8
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	9
<i>Arranging and planning your learning</i>	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
<i>Centering your learning</i>	3
<i>Evaluating your learning</i>	2, 9
MCLS total score	1-9

The coding scheme for quantitative data analyses is given in Appendix D.

Semi-structured Interviews

Kahn and Cannell (1983) suggest that three conditions must be met in order for successful completion of an interview. They are accessibility, cognition and motivation. Accessibility refers to whether the participants have the necessary information the researchers need. Cognition refers to whether the participants have the understanding of what is required of them in the interview. Finally, motivation is the interest participants have in

participating in the interviews. As one objective of the study is to describe MCLLS use and LLSYs of L2 learners at an institute, participants of this study had the necessary information for this study and were therefore accessible. The participants were learners who indicated their willingness to participate in this second stage of research. Therefore, there was a high level of motivation in their participation in the interviews. Finally, the results of the pilot indicate that they had the cognitive level and maturity both to understand topics related to MCLLSs and LLSYs and to express themselves in these two areas. In short, the choice of participants satisfies the above three criteria.

The outline of semi-structured interviews contains three parts. The first part consisted of questions on the use of MCLLSs based on Oxford's classification. The second part consisted of pictures explaining the different types of learning style preferences and questions on LLSYs. The third part was concerned with some general topics about the participants' English learning experience such as their reasons for learning, their goals and their difficulties in learning English. The interview outline is given in Appendix C.

Pilots were conducted with the purpose of clarifying any uncertainties participants might have in the interviews and at the same time to collect feedback on the wording and sequence of questions. Changes to the wording were made so that items in the questionnaire were easier for respondents to understand.

After the piloting, interviewers asked the participants for feedback and comments. The pilots were also transcribed and then content analysed. As the respondents only had a limited command of English, the interviews

were conducted in Cantonese, the mother tongue of both the respondents and the researcher.

Eight interviews of about one hour each were conducted. At the beginning of the interviews, the researcher explained the purpose of the interviews and informed the participants that the data collected would be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. The participants were also assured that their identities would be kept anonymous. They were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the interviews any time. Finally, the researcher explained to the participants that the purpose of tape-recording the interviews was for transcription and analyses. The researcher then requested their consent for the interview to be taped, and all of them agreed.

Warm-up topics such as how they found their school lives and how they learnt English in general were initiated by the researcher at the beginning of the interviews. The purpose was to build rapport and to create a more relaxed atmosphere. Another purpose was to create a friendly and an equal relationship between the researcher and the participants to facilitate later responses (Bodgan and Taylor, 1975). After this 'ice-breaking' stage, the researcher explained to the participants the meanings of LLSs and MCLLSs with specific examples. Then the researcher elicited the participants' views on MCLLSs, for example, their usefulness, the frequency with which the participants used them, and how they used them in English learning in general. The researcher then moved on to the more specific MCLLSs included in Oxford's classification and asked the participants how they used them in specific language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The participants were also asked how they used MCLLSs at present.

Then they were asked to recall occasions when they had used MCLLSs over the last three to six months. As can be seen, the questions asked moved from general to specific, with more recent information asked for first followed by questions concerned with the past, as suggested by Fontana and Frey (1994). In discussing LLSYs, at the beginning the researcher explained to the participants the meanings of the six learning style preferences with the aid of pictures. The participants were subsequently asked which style(s) they identified most with. As the discussion on MCLLSs, the researcher probed the participants' views on the different learning styles from general to specific situations and from the present to the past.

The participants were not informed of the results of their survey questionnaires. This means that they did not know which MCLLS(s) they reported that they used more frequently in their survey. Neither did they know which major learning style(s) they showed preference for in their survey questionnaire.

Closing was done both socially and in terms of content. The researcher summarised what he thought he had learnt from the participants so that they could give feedback.

The outline described above was not followed strictly but in a flexible manner. The emphases and the orders of questions varied with different participants according to their concerns and interests.

An important consideration in conducting interviews is cultural influences. Care was taken in considering some of the cultural characteristics of the participants. Chinese learners tend to respect teachers who are perceived as a source of knowledge. This especially influences the relationships between teacher-researchers and their student respondents.

This characteristic is highly relevant to this study as the researcher was a teacher of the participants. In addition, Chinese have also been found to be more indirect, implicit, nonverbal, formal, goal oriented, emotionally controlled and self-effacing in their communication (Chan, 1992), tending to emphasise harmonious social relationships and avoid direct confrontation (Bond and Hwang, 1986). The interviewer maintained his sensitivity to these cultural characteristics in conducting the interviews by encouraging respondents to express their views, and maintained a friendly atmosphere throughout the whole interview. As we will see in the presentation of qualitative findings in 4.2.2 in the next chapter, there were occasions when interviewer changed the focuses of the discussions because participants had difficulties in expressing their views. The purpose of the changes in focuses rather than clarifications was to maintain a friendly atmosphere.

The tape-recordings of the interviews were transcribed and translated, and the transcriptions were used for subsequent content analyses. Summaries of transcriptions are given in Appendix F.

Analysis of Interview Data

There were four steps in analysing the transcribed data. Firstly, the researcher read the transcriptions of the eight interviews one by one and isolated the data into units of meaning. This was followed by sorting the data into meaningful categories. In this step, data which cannot be put into the categories were checked. Six categories of data were identified, including MCLLS use, LLSYs, context- and task-specific uses of MCLLSs and LLSYs, change in MCLLS use and LLSYs over time, the participants' views on the implementation of a workshop on training MCLLSs and LLSYs, and finally English learning in general. In the third step, the

transcriptions were coded and put into these six categories. In coding the qualitative data, the extent of MCLLS use was classified into 'High' (3), 'Medium' (2) and 'Low' (1). A strategy use was classified as High when a participant said explicitly they used it very often or they mentioned the strategy repeatedly. The use of a strategy was classified as Medium when a participant expressed they used it. Strategy use was classified as Low when a participant said they seldom or did not use it. Qualitative data on LLSYs were also classified into Major, Minor and Negligible/Negative according to Reid's (1987) classification. A learning style preference is classified as a Major learning style when an interview participant stated it was the main learning style or they used it very often. A learning style preference is classified as a minor preference when a participant reported it was preferred sometimes only. A learning style preference is classified as a Negligible / Negative when an interview participant stated they did not use or dislike that style.

After the above steps, the researcher looked for the similarities and differences between the different categories identified. In this stage the researcher looked for patterns with particular reference with the research questions. As will be seen in the next two chapters, the results of comparison were put into tables for easy understanding. Finally, the researcher interpreted the data into the context in which they were collected.

The above steps were not followed in a linear fashion and the researcher went back to previous steps whenever it was necessary. As suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984), analyses of qualitative data are cyclical and do not follow a series of linear procedures. These steps were selected because they were recommended by many qualitative researchers (for example,

Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1984). The use of numbers was also recommended by many qualitative researchers, as it can give a more balanced picture of findings (Bryman, 1988; Lazaraton, 1995; Silverman, 1993). The use of numbers in qualitative research can also allow researchers to discover the patterns in the phenomena and causal relationships between different variables. As we remember, investigating the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs was one of the aims of this study.

The findings from the semi-structured interviews were also compared with the findings from the survey in order to identify similarities and differences among them.

3.4 Ethical Issues

Various issues and guidelines related to the ethics in conducting educational research are available, for example in the Guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (British Educational Research Association, 1992), McNamee and Bridges (2002) and Burgess (1989). This section of the chapter focuses on the two issues of informed consent and privacy / confidentiality, which are the most relevant to this study. In addition, issues related to case study research and statistical analyses will be discussed.

The basic principle regarding informed consent is that research participants should have the freedom to agree or refuse to participate in the light of comprehensive information concerning the nature and purpose of the research. Informed consent includes four elements from different standards worldwide, including informing subjects of what is occurring or might occur, ensuring subjects should be able to comprehend the information, ensuring subjects are competent to make a rational and mature judgment, and finally ensuring that the

agreement to participate should be voluntary, free from coercion and undue influence (Homan, 1991). As mentioned in the previous sections, the participants both in the semi-structured interviews and survey were clearly presented with the purpose of the study and the reasons why they were chosen before they participated in the research. They were also informed they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time. Thus participants' informed consent was obtained.

Privacy is defined in terms of subjects' self-control of information of their own (Homan, 1991). In this study care was given to ensure the privacy of participants by explaining to the participants clearly that the information they would provide would be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. In addition, the participants were informed that their identities would be kept anonymous in the presentation of findings. They were also informed of the nature and purpose of the study, and the duration of data collection. In analysing and presenting the data, all the personal information of the respondents was kept anonymous. Thus, the privacy of respondents' personal information was protected in this study.

The BERA Guidelines (British Educational Research Association, 1992) are divided into seven areas, namely (1) Responsibility to the Research Profession, (2) Responsibility to Participants, (3) Responsibility to the Public, (4) Relationship with Funding Agencies, (5) Publication, (6) Intellectual Ownership, and finally (7) Relationship with Host Institution. Since 1, 2, and 3 are more relevant to this study, they are selected for discussion.

Among the six specific guidelines in the Responsibility to the Research Profession (1), the first three guidelines in the BERA code are relevant to this study. Permissions for using the two instruments (the SILL and the PLSPQ) were

obtained from the developers. The procedures from choosing topic, selecting participants, development of research instruments, data analysis to writing findings and conclusions have been described in detail in previous sections of this chapter. We can see that steps were taken in this study to fulfill the responsibilities towards fellow researchers. In conducting the study, the five guidelines regarding Responsibility to Participants (2) were thoroughly considered too. Permission from school was obtained for conducting the survey and interviews, and the relationships between the researcher and the participants had been honest and open. Care had also been taken to meet the conservative culture of Chinese participants in expressing their opinions, especially in semi-structured interviews as mentioned in 3.3.2. The researcher also discussed findings with the participants whenever it was necessary in order to avoid misrepresentation of findings and conclusions. Responsibility to the Public (3) of the BERA code was followed. The findings and the practical significance of the research was introduced in previous chapters and will be further discussed in later chapters.

With the increasing popularity of using the case study approach, ethical problems are becoming more and more common (Simons, 1989). A problem is that the close-up portrayal of individuals, for example, the school principal of a particular school or teachers of a particular subject might threaten their anonymity in participating in research. This issue is highly relevant to this study as this study focuses on a particular group of learners of a specific institute. In presenting the data collected in this study, care was taken to avoid this threat to anonymity. Any information which might give clues to the identity of the participants, for example, the location of the institute, was not included in reporting the findings.

In conducting statistical analyses in this study, care was taken to ensure there were enough considerations for the ethical issues involved as mentioned in

the codes of the International Statistical Institute (International Statistical Institute, 1983). As shown earlier in this chapter and as will be introduced in greater details in the next chapter, the levels of analyses and the procedures of statistical analyses were explicit so that readers of findings will not be misled. As will be shown in Chapter Four and Five, the reasons for choosing the particular statistical techniques adopted in presenting their findings were clearly explained.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study selected for discussions include the small number of participants in both the survey and interviews for data analyses, difficulties encountered in selecting the interview participants, limitations of verbal reports and survey research, the fall in the level of motivation of participants during the course of interviews, the lack of flexibility of survey questionnaires in gathering data, the cross-sectional nature of the data gathered, the high levels of expertise required for a multi-method approach and finally other influences on MCLLS use. They are described below.

As we will see in the next two chapters, in survey the number of participants of some of the LLSYs preferences available for some data analyses was small. An example is that despite a total of 192 questionnaires were collected, there were only two participants who had Tactile preference as their major styles. This might affect the validity of results, for example, results from ANOVAs.

As we remember, the participants in the semi-structured interviews were selected on the typicality of their learning style preferences as reported by their survey findings. Another criterion was that the participants should have only one style preference in order to be invited for semi-structured interviews. The purpose, as indicated in 3.1, was to allow the best possible variations in style differences so that comparisons could be made more easily. However, some of the participants

who met the criteria did not show a willingness to be interviewed. In addition, some who had written down their contact numbers were reluctant to take part in the interviews when contacted. Finally, some dropped out of the interviews after fixing the time of their interviews with the interviewer. Because of these reasons, the eight participants did not meet the criteria perfectly. As we will see in the next chapter, these problems created difficulties in data analysis which might affect the validity of qualitative findings.

As we will see in greater detail in the next chapter, some interview participants had problems in verbalising and misunderstandings in their discussions on MCLLSs and LLSYs. Another two related problems are the fall in the motivation level of some interview participants during the interviews. Thus, the three criteria of accessibility, cognition and motivation for successful completion of interviews as suggested by Kahn and Cannell (1983) were not completely fulfilled. Some suggestions on improving the methodology will be made in the last chapter (see p. 214).

Survey research has some potential pitfalls. Its most serious problem is that there is a lack of flexibility in using survey questionnaires, as respondents are forced to select from pre-determined answers to questions already given. A potential consequence of the lack of interaction between the researcher and the participants is the misinterpretation of the meanings of questions and answers by respondents. This is because in administering surveys researchers take a detached role and respondents might feel uncomfortable to raise the points with they are not clear about. These weaknesses might affect the validity of findings.

The findings of this study only provide a snapshot of the phenomena under study. As Oxford (1990) and the findings of this study suggest, MCLLS use and LLSYs are amenable to change. Using semi-structured interviews and survey

questionnaires instead of longitudinal methods cannot capture these changes.

Using a multi-method approach requires a mastery of both the knowledge and skills in both the quantitative and qualitative realms. The heavy demand of this requirement on the researcher may affect the quality of the data collected and the conclusions drawn. This is especially true given the limited experience of the researcher of this study. However, care has been taken at every step of the study to minimise the influence of biases and inaccuracies.

As mentioned in Chapter One, apart from LLSYs the use of MCLLSs is prone to other influences. Focusing only on how LLSYs affected MCLLS use might neglect the influences of other factors in play. As Ramsden (1988) suggests, learners adapt their uses of learning strategies to different contextual factors. The influences of other factors might influence the validity of the relationships found. Choosing variables to study in isolation without considering the context and exerting control might affect the objectivity of findings.

This chapter began with a brief introduction of the two data collection methods selected in this study, i.e., survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. In addition to introducing the two methods, the reasons on why the two methods were suitable for this study and how they were located within the larger methodological paradigms were discussed. Details of the sampling and procedures employed in conducting this study as well as the justifications for employing them were given. This was followed by a discussion on how the two ethical issues of informed consent and privacy/confidentiality were relevant to this study and what steps were taken to ensure that these ethical considerations were fulfilled. The last part of this chapter focused on the limitations of this study.

4 Findings Relating to Background Information and MCLLS Use

This chapter provides background information about the research participants and the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*. This allows us to achieve the first objective of gathering descriptive information on the MCLLS use of the Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong. In order to provide the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, findings related to the patterns of MCLLS use will be introduced.

The results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, and the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, will be given in Chapter Five. In order to provide the results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, the patterns of LLSYs of the research participants will be given. By providing the results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, the second part of the first objective of this study of gathering descriptive information on the LLSYs of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong can be achieved. The results of the investigation provoked by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, will be given by presenting findings relating to how MCLLS use and LLSYs were related. This allows us to

achieve the second objective of exploring the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.

In presenting the findings, both quantitative and qualitative data will be analysed, and comparisons of the two types of data will be made.

The background information of the research participants as indicated by the quantitative and qualitative findings are given below.

4.1 Background Information

In this section, the background information of the respondents will be introduced. Findings from semi-structured interviews will be given after the discussion of the quantitative findings, and comparison of the two types of data will be made.

The quantitative and qualitative findings relating to the background information of the research participants show a consistent picture in that they regarded English as very important mainly for instrumental reasons. Other reasons such as travelling, culture learning and communication were also mentioned. Their favourite experiences were mainly participation in activities related to English learning. The details of the survey findings are given below.

4.1.1 Survey

A total of 192 questionnaires were collected from the eight selected classes. Among the respondents, 106 (57.6%) were males and 78 (42.4%) were females. Their mean age was 17.6.

Almost half of the respondents (95, or 49.5%) were from the Department of Hotel, Service and Tourism Studies, and about one-third (54, or 28.1%) were from the Department of Business Administration. Finally, 12.5% (24) of respondents studied in the Department of Electrical

Engineering and 9.9% (19) from the Department of Computer and Information Management.

Most of the respondents perceived their English standard to be average (55.9%) or poor (35.1%). Despite this, all of them regarded being proficient in English as either very important (68.3%) or important (31.7%). Most of them said that they enjoyed learning English moderately (70.9%), while about 25% of the respondents said that they did not like learning English. We should also note that six of them (3.12%) said they liked English very much. This background information indicates that although the respondents did not perceive their English standard to be good, they attached a high importance to English learning and liked learning English.

The reasons for the importance of English proficiency given by respondents are given in Table 3 below.

Table 3
Reasons for the importance of English given by survey respondents

<u>Reason</u>		<u>No. of response</u>
<u>Career-related</u>		
1.	English is important and essential in a lot of jobs	30
2.	English is important in finding a good job	30
3.	English is helpful to future jobs	8
4.	English increases competitiveness	4
5.	English is helpful to future	7
Total		79
<u>Studies</u>		
6.	English is useful and important to studies	11
7.	English enables one to learn other subjects effectively	7
Total		18

<u>Daily living</u>		
8.	English is essential for effective communication with foreigners	27
9.	English is essential in daily life	15
Total		42
<u>Others</u>		
10.	English is useful for travelling to other countries	4
11.	Good English represents you are knowledgeable	3
12.	Interest in the English language	2
13.	English allows one to learn the cultures of English-speaking countries.	1
Total		10
Total		149

Among the total of 149 responses, the most frequently mentioned reasons were related to careers (79, or 53%). The second type of most frequently mentioned reason was related to communication with foreigners and the importance of English in daily life (42, or 28%). What is worth mentioning is that relatively few respondents cited less instrumental reasons, such as interest in the cultures of English-speaking countries. These findings confirm most previous findings that Chinese L2 learners are motivated by instrumental reasons in their English learning (Lai, 1999; Tachibana, Matsukawa and Qu, 1996). The reason for the prevalence of instrumental motivation is contextual, as mentioned in 1.3. English has the tradition of being a prestige language which is regarded as providing access to good education and career prospects. However, it is seldom used in the daily life of the majority of the population except in the workplace. Therefore, it is not surprising for the respondents of this study to regard

learning English as important because of the practical benefits English proficiency could give them.

The favourite experiences in their English learning as supplied by the respondents are given in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Respondents' favourite experiences in English learning

<u>Experience</u>		<u>No. of responses</u>
1.	Speaking, oral practice, role playing with classmates, teachers, expatriate teachers and tourists.	20
2.	Learning through activities, including playing games, listening to songs, watching movies, reciting poems, participating in English camps, playing dramas, making presentations.	12
3.	Misunderstandings due to mistakes and mispronunciation.	3
4.	Learning English helps one to become more confident.	1
5.	One can get a lot of satisfaction from getting high marks in English.	1
6.	One can apply what they have learned in English lessons.	1
7.	Interests in knowing the accents of people of different countries in speaking English.	1
Total		39

The small number of responses given to this question reflects that this was not a popular question among the respondents. Another possible reason was that respondents might have few positive experiences in their English learning, given their relatively less successful academic performance. Among the above responses, the most frequently mentioned experience was speaking English, which were talking to both classmates and expatriate teachers as well as interviewing tourists in English (51.3%). Another type of popular experience was learning through activities, including playing games,

listening to songs, watching movies, reciting poems, participating in English camps, playing dramas, and making presentations. The popularity of activities, particularly speaking, shows that respondents were more interested in getting real-life English learning experiences.

4.1.2 Semi-structured Interviews

The interview findings relating to the interest in English learning of respondents parallel those of the survey. For example, Judy said she got a lot of satisfaction from being understood by others in English (Interview 2, L133-135). Despite two out of a total of eight interviewees saying that they would not learn English at all if they had a choice (Shirley, Interview 1, L94-95; Judy, Interview 2, L137-138), the others expressed rather positive attitudes towards English learning (for example, Peter, Interview 5, L178).

The findings relating to the importance of English proficiency also correspond to the quantitative findings. All the eight interview participants said English was very important.

As in the quantitative findings, the reasons participants pointed out for the importance of English were mainly survival, finding a good job and future career development. Knowledge of English was a type of security, as pointed out by Michael (Interview 4, L143). Some other reasons, such as travelling, as reported by survey respondents, were also mentioned, for example, by Robert (Interview 3, L96-96) and Lynn (Interview 6, L155). The maintenance of social image in the face of people from other countries and integrative reasons such as appreciation of cultures and lives of other cultures were also mentioned by Peter (Interview 5, L173-174; L180-184). Friendship was mentioned by Robert as one of the reasons for his perceived importance of learning English (Interview 3, L95-96). The last reason was

not reported by survey respondents. Thus we can see that the qualitative data showed a much wider range of reasons for learning English than the quantitative data. This is one of the strengths of getting ‘rich’ information and participants’ local meanings (Erickson, 1986) by means of interviews, as pointed out in 3.1. This type of data was also ‘soft’ because it was a product of interpretations of participants which was different from the ‘hard’ data gathered from survey questionnaires. As we will see in greater detail below, the qualitative findings relating to MCLLS use and LLSYs also provided us with this kind of data, which is valuable for our understanding of the two concepts and the relationships between them.

4.2 MCLLS Use

The results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, are reported in this section of the chapter. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings will be presented and a comparison of the two types of findings will then be made in order to identify their similarities and differences. The presentation of findings in this section allow us to achieve the first objective of this study, of gathering descriptive information on the MCLLS use of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.

The results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, are that there was a medium to high use of MCLLSs among the participants. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings show that *Finding out about language learning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* were the most popular MCLLSs among the research participants. *Organising*, *Seeking*

practice opportunities, and *Setting goals and objectives* were the least used MCLLSs. *Arranging and planning your learning* and *Evaluating your learning* were found to be moderately used by the participants.

The quantitative data show that MCLLS use was not related to age, gender or the participants' perceived importance of English proficiency. However, it was found to be related to the participants' perceived English proficiency and interest in learning English. Individual MCLLSs and MCLLS categories were found to be inter-correlated to varying degrees.

The qualitative data, on the other hand, show us the reasons for using, and more importantly, not using individual MCLLSs. Qualitative data show that *Organising* and *Setting goals and objectives* were the least frequently used MCLLSs. Other strategies were identified to be moderately used by the participants. Some reasons for using the strategies included easiness in implementation, wide applicability and affective control. The reasons for not using the two MCLLSs, *Organising* and *Setting goals and objectives*, are contextual limitations, participants' difficulties in implementation, participants' lack of knowledge, sufficient English proficiency, time, and motivation. The situation in which most MCLLSs were selectively used was examinations or revision for examinations. Different MCLLSs were also used in different language tasks. Changes in MCLLSs use over time were reported by two participants. Finally, discrepancies between perceived importance and actual use of MCLLSs were found to be common among the participants.

Apart from providing the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, the findings also provide us with the additional information relating to MCLLS use. It was found that the participants had prior knowledge and experience of using MCLLSs, which were found to be piecemeal and ad hoc, and

they learned MCLLSs informally outside classrooms.

A comparison of the quantitative and qualitative findings indicates that interview data revealed consistently lower patterns of MCLLS use than those shown by the quantitative data. Several methodological reasons were suggested for this discrepancy: survey respondents treating questions as tests of knowledge, research participants’ lack of understanding or misunderstandings of MCLLSs, changes in MCLLS use over time, and the time difference in conducting survey and semi-structured interviews.

The details of the quantitative findings relating to MCLLS use are given below.

4.2.1 Survey

The means and standard deviations of the individual MCLLSs and the 3 categories are given in Table 5 below.

Table 5
Means and standard deviations of individual MCLLSs and MCLLS
categories

<u>MCLLS / MCLLS Category</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
<i>Finding out about language learning</i>	4	3.5	.89
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	2	3.5	.84
<i>Paying attention</i>	3	3.6	.86
<i>Organising</i>	5	2.7	.90
<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	1, 6, 7	3.1	.70
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	8	3.1	.93
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	9	3.3	.91
<i>Arranging and planning your learning</i>	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	3.1	.66
<i>Centering your learning</i>	3	3.6	.86
<i>Evaluating your learning</i>	2, 9	3.4	.75

The mean of the above nine items was 3.2 on a Likert scale of '1' ('Strongly disagree') to '5' ('Strongly agree'). Among the seven MCLLSs, *Paying attention* had the highest score, with a mean of 3.6 (S.D.=.86). Item 5, which measures *Organising* strategy, ('I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English') had the lowest score, with a mean of 2.7 (S.D.=.90). Similarly, among the 3 broader categories of MCLLSs, *Centering your learning* (in which item 3 on *Paying attention* is included) was the most popular, while *Arranging and planning your learning* was the least popular. These findings confirm the earlier finding of Li and Munby (1996) that Chinese L2 learners are able to use a variety of MCLLSs.

According to Oxford (1990), a mean within the range of 3.5 to 4.4 could be regarded as being within the low end of high-use range. We can see that in this study the use of *Finding out about language learning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* are within this range. The frequent use of *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* found in this study also confirms most earlier findings (for example, Goh, 2002; Goh and Kwah, 1997; Zhang, 1999) as mentioned in the literature review. However, no previous findings have been reported on the medium use of *Finding out about language learning* as revealed in this study.

Based on the previous findings employing the same SILL items (see Oxford and Burry-stock, 1995), means which range from 2.5 to 3.4 could be regarded as within the medium use range. The uses of *Organising*, *Seeking practice opportunities*, *Setting goals and objectives*, *Self-evaluating* and MCLLS use as a whole are within this range. Reflecting the earlier findings of Gunning (1997), *Seeking practice opportunities* was found to be unpopular among Chinese learners, especially for respondents who were

required to practise their English in speaking with others. A mean of 2.9 is found in the item ‘I look for people I can talk to in English’.

As we will see in greater detail in the qualitative data below, the reason for the reluctance of respondents to speak to others in seeking their practice opportunities is contextual. For Chinese speakers, English performs an instrumental role in the Hong Kong sociolinguistic context. It is seldom used in daily life. Therefore, using English, especially speaking, is limited to the classroom. However, as *Seeking practice opportunities* was applied in general use and reading, respondents found it more easily applied. This is reflected by the higher means of 3.3 for item 1 (‘I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English’) and 3.2 for item 7 (‘I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English’). These two means are comparable to the means of other MCLLS items.

One possible reason for the comparatively infrequent use of *Organising* is the higher cognitive demand this strategy imposes on learners. Respondents of this study were from a relatively academically less successful group. Therefore, we would expect that they might be more unwilling to adopt strategies such as *Organising*, which require more abstract cognitive processing. Compared to *Organising*, other MCLLSs are more straightforward. As will be discussed in the next section, the qualitative findings confirm this view, as some interview participants converged on the view that *Organising* is cognitively too demanding to be used, especially in some learning tasks such as speaking.

As far as the MCLLS categories are concerned, the medium use of two out of the three categories of MCLLSs (i.e., *Arranging and planning your learning* and *Evaluating your learning*) is similar to the findings from Wu in

a study of the same level of students at the same institute in 2002 (Wu, 2002). However, compared to the mean of 3.5 as reported by Goh and Kwah (1997) among their 175 tertiary students from the PRC in Singapore, this finding was comparatively low. One possible reason is that the survey respondents in this study were younger than those in the study by Goh and Kwah. As we know, age is a significant factor affecting MCLLS use. Older language learners have been consistently found to employ MCLLSs more frequently (Oxford, 1989). The age difference in MCLLS use found in this study compared with that by Goh and Kwah (1997) is further confirmed from the findings of a study by Lan and Oxford (2003), who reported a mean of 2.9 among their 379 elementary school respondents in their overall strategy use as measured by the children’s version of SILL.

The statistics of administering a reliability test for the nine-item MCLLS scale are displayed in the table below.

Table 6
Item-total statistics of MCLLS items

Item	Scale mean if item deleted	Scale variance if item deleted	Corrected item-total correlation	Squared multiple correlation	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted
1	25.71	26.773	.569	.377	.870
2	25.49	26.241	.593	.503	.867
3	25.36	26.368	.566	.442	.870
4	25.47	25.120	.695	.541	.859
5	26.25	26.377	.532	.417	.873
6	26.06	25.447	.607	.449	.867
7	25.81	25.284	.667	.502	.861
8	25.87	24.878	.685	.544	.859
9	25.68	25.087	.674	.499	.860

The Cronbach's alpha of the nine-item MCLLS scale was .878. This means that the scale has high internal consistency and reliability. This value is comparable to those previously reported (for example, Bremner, 1999; Oh, 1992).

In order to investigate the relationships of MCLLS use with different learner characteristics, including age, respondents' perceived English proficiency, their perceived importance of English proficiency and their interest in learning English, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed. There were no significant relationships between age and respondents' perception of the importance of being proficient in English with MCLLS use (in terms of individual items, specific strategies or broader categories).

A likely possible reason for the lack of relationship found between age and MCLLS use is that respondents came from a narrow age range (with 71.3% between 17 and 18). Most of them attached a high importance to being proficient in English (68.3% chose 'Very important' and the rest of 31.7% chose 'Important', with no respondent saying it was not important). Therefore, no significant relationship was found between this learner characteristic and MCLLS use.

Respondents' perception of their English proficiency was found to be related to a number of MCLLSs. The findings are given in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Significant Pearson correlation coefficients between MCLLSs and learner characteristics

<u>MCLLS / MCLLS category</u>	<u>Perceived English proficiency</u>	<u>Interest in learning English</u>
<i>Finding out about language learning</i>	-- ^a	.154*
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	.191**	--
<i>Paying attention</i>	--	.152*
<i>Organising</i>	.215**	--
<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	.232**	.242**
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	.227**	.167*
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	.183*	.299***
<i>Arranging and planning your learning</i>	.252***	.222**
<i>Centering your learning</i> ^b	--	.152*
<i>Evaluating your learning</i>	.219**	.245**
MCLLS total score	.245**	.251**

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

^a: findings not significant.

^b: This is measured by Item 3.

As we can see from the above, all the significant coefficients are rather low. Yet they show that the respondents perceived that their proficiency in English was positively related to the use of particular MCLLSs and to the use of MCLLSs as a whole. This confirms the earlier finding by Watanabe (1990) on the positive relationship between overall LLS use (as measured by the SILL) and learners’ perceived English proficiency. However, we should also be aware that good perceived English proficiency may be a result of more frequent MCLLS use. The positive correlations which exist between perceived English proficiency and individual MCLLSs are also consistent with most earlier findings, for example, on the positive

relationships between *Self-monitoring* and listening proficiency (Lin, 2000), and between *Planning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Self-evaluating* and actual listening proficiency (Goh, 1998; Wang, 2002).

Respondents' interest in learning English was found to be positively related to MCLLSs and MCLLS categories. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients ranged from .152 to .299. This shows that the more positive respondents are towards English learning, the more likely they employ more MCLLSs.

Since all the respondents were in their first year of study in the streams, we did not expect there would be differences in the MCLLS use of students studying in different streams of studies, and therefore these statistics were not computed.

In order to test for gender differences in MCLLS use, t-tests were conducted and no gender differences were found in overall MCLLS use. Among the nine items, gender difference was found only in item 9 (*Self-evaluating*). This item was more popular among female respondents ($t=-2.797$, $p<0.01$). This confirms the earlier findings of Nisbet et al. (2005) and Wu (2002) that there is no significant gender difference in the use of MCLLSs as measured by the SILL. However, at the same time this finding is different from the majority of earlier studies, which show that females tend to employ more MCLLSs (Ehrman and Oxford, 1988; Green and Oxford, 1995; Gunning, 1997; Oxford, Nyikos and Ehrman, 1988). Details of the results of t-tests are given in Appendix E

In order to explore the relationships between different MCLLSs, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed. The correlation matrix is given in the table below.

Table 8

Pearson correlation matrix of MCLLSs

	<i><u>Finding out about language learning</u></i>	<i><u>Self- monitoring</u></i>	<i><u>Paying attention</u></i>	<i><u>Organising</u></i>	<i><u>Seeking practice opportunities</u></i>	<i><u>Setting goals and objectives</u></i>	<i><u>Self- evaluating</u></i>
<i>Finding out about language learning</i>	--	.595***	.530***	.343***	.593***	.534***	.552***
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	.595***	--	.596***	.213**	.490***	.423***	.451***
<i>Paying attention</i>	.530***	.596***	--	.215**	.474***	.395***	.422***
<i>Organising</i>	.343***	.213**	.215**	--	.604***	.435***	.431***
<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	.593***	.490***	.474***	.604***	--	.620***	.568***
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	.534***	.423***	.395***	.435***	.620***	--	.630***
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	.552***	.451***	.422***	.431***	.568***	.630***	--
Mean	.525***	.461***	.439***	.374***	.558***	.506***	.509***

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

All the individual MCLLSs were found to be significantly correlated at $p < .01$. The highest coefficient was found between *Setting goals and objectives* and *Self-evaluating* ($r = .630$), followed by that between *Setting goals and objectives* and *Seeking practice opportunities* ($r = .620$). The lowest coefficients were found between *Organising* and *Self-monitoring* (.213) and between *Organising* and *Paying attention* (.215). The MCLLSs which were found to have the highest correlations with all the other items were *Seeking practice opportunities* and *Finding out about language learning*, with average correlation coefficients of .558 and .525 respectively. The MCLLS having the lowest correlation with other items was *Organising*.

An inclination for setting goals and objectives in L2 learning reflects a strong motivation for learning English. Therefore, a learner who exhibits this behaviour tends to evaluate their learning more frequently and seek more opportunities to improve their learning, and vice versa. The same holds true for the relationship of *Setting goals and objectives* and the uses of other MCLLSs. The high coefficients found between *Setting goals and objectives* and other MCLLSs reflect the finding that the more motivated respondents were in setting goals and objectives in their language learning were, the more they tend to employ different MCLLSs. Although motivation is not the focus of this study, we can see from the responses to the open-ended questions of the survey questionnaires that most respondents regarded learning English as important and very important. This shows that motivation may be an important factor which influences the relationships between individual MCLLSs.

The reason for the weak relationships of *Organising* with other

MCLLSs, as previously mentioned, can be explained by respondents' difficulties in implementing this strategy. As will be seen in the next section on the analyses of qualitative data, difficulties in implementing this strategy were pointed out by the majority of participants as the main reasons for not using this strategy. Therefore, respondents viewed this strategy as separate from other strategies and it was found to have weak relationships with other strategies. However, the exceptionally high correlation which exists between *Organising* and *Seeking practice opportunities* can be explained by the fact that the two strategies are conceptually close. L2 learners who are good at seeking whatever opportunities are available for using and practising their English also tend to be good organisers of their learning. This is because without organising one's learning well, it will be difficult to find opportunities for learning and practising. The reverse is also true, in that learners who are very active in seeking opportunities to use English will find the need of organising their learning, as otherwise, it will be impossible for them to use this strategy effectively.

The specific MCLLSs were combined into the broader categories based on Oxford's classification, and Pearson correlation coefficients among them were calculated. The correlation matrix is presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9

Pearson correlation matrix of MCLLS categories

	<u>Arranging and planning your learning</u>	<u>Centering your learning</u>	<u>Evaluating your learning</u>
<i>Arranging and planning your learning</i>	--	.478***	.693***
<i>Centering your learning</i>	.478***	--	.593***
<i>Evaluating your learning</i>	.693***	.593***	--
*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001			

All the coefficients are statistically significant at $p<.001$. The highest coefficient was found between *Arranging and planning your learning* and *Evaluating your learning* (.693), while the lowest coefficient was found between *Arranging and planning your learning* and *Centering your learning* (.478). In addition to showing the high internal consistency of the MCLLS scale and Oxford’s classification, the high correlations show that learners who use one category tend to use other categories. This, again, confirms the high internal consistency of the MCLLS scale as measured by Cronbach’s alpha as described on page 82.

Details of the qualitative findings from the semi-structured interviews are given in 4.2.2 below.

4.2.2 Semi-structured Interviews

This section provides the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, as indicated by the qualitative findings. This is to achieve the first objective of gathering descriptive information on the MCLLS use of Chinese-speaking L2 learners

undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the selection of the interview participants was based on the typicality of their LLSYs. However, the format of the presentation of findings in this part is based on the use of individual MCLLSs. It is because the analyses of these data indicated that there are common patterns to the MCLLS use of the participants. Therefore, the presentation of findings is based on the use of individual MCLLSs in order that we have an easier understanding of the MCLLS use of the participants. Another reason for this presentation format is that discussions of findings according to individual MCLLSs allow more direct comparison with the quantitative findings as discussed in the previous section and with previous findings.

This section will begin with the presentation of findings on the general MCLLS use of the interview participants. This will be followed by the presentations and discussions of findings of the use of the seven individual MCLLSs. The views of the interview participants on a workshop organised for training in MCLLS use and LLSYs were also gathered and will be presented. The analyses of qualitative data indicate that the three themes, situation- and task-specific use of MCLLSs, discrepancies between the participants' perceived importance and their actual use of MCLLSs, and changes in MCLLS use over time, emerged. Each will be discussed separately.

The results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, as indicated by the qualitative data, are that the participants had some prior knowledge of LLSs which were limited

to a few cognitive strategies. They had been using some MCLLSs despite a lack of formal MCLLS instruction. Their uses of MCLLSs were found to be piecemeal and ad hoc. Some participants experienced frustrations (for example, Shirley, Interview 1, L28-29; L34-35; Judy, Interview 2, L20-22; L28-30) in using some MCLLSs, while some commented that the strategies they were told in the past were boring (for example, Kelly, Interview 7, L29-30; Lynn, Interview 6, L92-94; Annie, Interview 8, L14).

Among the seven MCLLSs, *Finding out about language learning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* were found to be most frequently used, mainly because they were easy to use and had wide applicability. *Organising* was found to be the least frequently used, followed by *Setting goals and objectives*. The reason for not using these two strategies was that they were difficult to use. The tasks and situations in which certain MCLLSs were used were identified. The reasons for using MCLLSs are wide applicability, easiness in implementation and affective control. The reasons for not using certain strategies are contextual limitations, participants' difficulties in implementation, participants' lack of knowledge, sufficient English proficiency, time, and motivation. The situation in which most MCLLSs were selectively used was examinations or revision for examinations. Different MCLLSs were also used in different language tasks. Changes in MCLLSs use over time were reported by two participants.

Finally, some methodological issues in using semi-structured interviews as data-gathering tools were identified. There were notable discrepancies between the perceived importance and the actual use of MCLLSs among the participants, and some possible reasons are suggested.

General MCLS Use

The findings relating to general MCLS use indicate that learners had prior knowledge of MCLSs and had been using some MCLSs. However, their MCLSs use was limited to a few cognitive strategies and their MCLS use was ad hoc and not systematic. The prior negative experience in using MCLSs of some interview participants resulted in negative feelings about MCLS use. The qualitative findings also indicate that there is a lack of systematic training on MCLSs in Hong Kong. The details of the above findings are given below.

The responses to the warm-up questions revealed that all the eight interview participants had some prior knowledge of language-learning strategies or metacognition. This finding confirms the earlier finding of Li and Munby (1996). However, their knowledge was limited to a few cognitive strategies. This shows that they possess the metacognitive awareness but not a high level of metacognitive knowledge. As we remember, metacognitive awareness and metacognitive knowledge are the two elements of metacognition as suggested by Wenden (1995). Strategies such as guessing meanings from contexts, memorising, checking dictionary, and practising were mentioned by the participants (For example, Judy, Interview 2, L8-9; Kelly, Interview 7, L26-30). This prior knowledge was not only reflected in participants' responses to the warm-up questions but also throughout the interviews. For example, Judy mentioned that she translated English from Chinese when she wrote (Interview 2, L73). When being asked if he planned differently in his revision of different skills for examinations, Robert said he used memorising and repeating. Similarly,

Michael said the main strategy he used was writing vocabulary items repeatedly until he remembered them (Interview 4, L100-101). In addition, when asked if he used strategies other than the MCLLSs discussed, Michael said:

‘Yes, for example, breaking down a word into several parts according to its pronunciation’ (Interview 4, L63-64).

These are only some of the numerous examples of the participants’ use of cognitive strategies.

However, prior use of learning strategies might result in frustration and negative feelings on the part of the participants because of a lack of proper knowledge and implementation skills. For example, Annie said

‘when I was very young I set a goal of learning all the words in a dictionary, but I failed. I think it was because I didn’t persist and I was lazy.’ (Interview 8, L48-50)

Peter, Kelly and Annie all said that their experiences of MCLLS use in the past were quite negative (Peter, Interview 5, L3-8; Kelly, Interview 7, L10-11; Annie, Interview 8, L14-15), and the strategies they were taught in the past were monotonous ones, such as learning vocabulary from a dictionary, repeated practice, and doing written exercises (for example, Judy, Interview 2, L8-9; Kelly, Interview 7, L26-30). They emphasised the importance of learning strategies which were interesting.

In addition to showing an over-reliance on cognitive strategies, the above findings show a lack of systematic training on MCLLSs. This is a common phenomenon among all the eight participants, and we will see more examples in the discussions on the use of individual strategies later in

this section.

What is common among Shirley, Judy, and Robert (in the past when he was young) is that they all used *memorising* as an important learning strategy (Shirley: Interview 1, L25; Judy: Interview 2, L8; Robert: Interview 3, L38). This phenomenon seems to echo some previous findings that Chinese learners rely heavily on rote learning, as mentioned in 2.2. However, the responses of other participants show that their learning habits are quite diverse. For example, Michael liked to learn by doing (Interview 4, L67), Lynn liked to read grammar books and newspapers (Interview 6, L9-10), Kelly had the habit of guessing the meanings of words from their contexts (Interview 7, L4), and Annie said she liked to learn English by watching films (Interview 8, L4). We can see that the earlier reports of the tendency of Chinese students to employ limited approaches in learning may not reflect the whole picture.

The participants also revealed that they did not learn MCLLS formally in the classroom but informally from teachers (Judy, Interview 2, L20; L32-33; Lynn, Interview 6, L13-14; L16-18; Kelly, Interview 7, L22; L26-27), mother (Robert, Interview 3, L8), and friends (Lynn, Interview 6, L13-14, and Kelly, Interview 7, L22, L26-27). This confirms the earlier observation that there is a lack of LLS/MCLLS instruction in Hong Kong language classrooms. Robert's response that nobody told him anything about learning strategies since his mother had taught him when he was young reflects this phenomenon most directly:

'I have been using the strategies which I have mentioned. I have used them since I was young. Nobody told me how to learn

English better over the years.’ (Interview 3, L54-56)

Details of the use of individual MCLLSs are discussed below.

Finding out about language learning

The use of this strategy by Judy, Robert, Lynn, and Kelly can be regarded as medium (Judy, Interview 2, L61-63; Robert, Interview 3, L50-52; Lynn, Interview 6, L89-91; Kelly, Interview 7, L18-20). However, few details or reasons for the medium use were given. As with his comments on other strategies, Michael knew that this strategy was useful but he said he was lazy when it came to using it (Interview 4, L37-38). Similarly, Annie said that she had used this strategy before but again, as she commented on other strategies, she said that the main issue was whether one was willing to use the strategies. She did not use this strategy often despite having sound knowledge of it:

‘For example, you can learn a lot of English on the streets, on the bus, or at the MTR stations.’ (Interview 8, L45-46)

This is an issue of affective factors or motivation for MCLLS use, and it could be found not only in Annie but also Shirley (for example, Interview 1, L37-39), Judy (for example, Interview 2, L48-49) and Michael (for example, Interview 4, L34-35). This influence is a barrier to their use of MCLLSs, as we will see in more examples in the discussions of the uses of other strategies below.

Two participants, Peter and Lynn, gave an interesting comment on MCLLSs in their discussions of this strategy. They both said they would like to know more interesting strategies of learning English rather than the traditional strategies which to them were boring (Peter, Interview 5, L91-92;

Lynn, Interview 6, L91-94). Again, these comments are related to the affective aspect of MCLLS instruction and even to L2 learning in general. The implications for MCLLS instruction will be discussed in Chapter Six.

As with the strategies previously discussed, the participants varied in their uses of this strategy, which as a whole can be regarded as high. The reasons for not using it were mainly affective ones.

Self-monitoring

Generally speaking, there was a medium use of this strategy among the interview participants. Although Shirley did not use this strategy, she regarded it as the most important among all the MCLLS discussed (Interview 1, L51-57). Judy, Robert, Peter, Lynn and Annie also said they used this strategy to an intermediate degree (Judy, Interview 2, L66-68; Robert, Interview 3, L66-72; Peter, Interview 5, L72-75; Lynn, Interview 6, L73-77 ; Annie, Interview 8, L76-81).

As mentioned earlier, *Self-monitoring* was another strategy highly used by Michael, who always commented that he was lazy about using the MCLLSs. The reason given by him was as follows:

‘I think this is useful because if you have the habit of correcting your own mistakes, you can correct them. To communicate with others in speaking is important.’ (Interview 4, L29-31)

The reasons for using this strategy were quite straightforward. For example, a high user of this strategy, Kelly, said

‘I’ll find out which areas I am particularly weak in and correct the pronunciation mistakes I make. After that I can speak better.’ (Interview 7, L64-66)

‘I also find out which grammar topics I am weak in and do more that type of exercises.’ (Interview 7, L68-69)

A similar response was given by Lynn (Interview 6, L56-57).

The reason Shirley gave for not using this strategy was that she had no time to use it (Interview 1, L57). Given her rather negative attitudes towards MCLS use and English learning in general, we may speculate that this was just a convenient reason for expressing her frustrations towards the use of MCLSs in general.

A possible reason for the popularity of this strategy is that it is simple and straightforward in its application. Wide applicability compared to other MCLSs is also another possible reason for its popularity.

Paying attention

As a whole, there was a medium use of this strategy among the participants. Shirley, who had frustrations and negative experiences in her English learning, reported her use of this strategy to be medium (Interview 1, L45-46). Except Michael (Interview 4, L11-12) and Robert (Interview 3, L81-83), all the other six participants had medium use of this strategy (Judy, Interview 2, L64-65; Peter, Interview 5, L103-107; Lynn, Interview 6, L99-102; Kelly, Interview 7, L47-49; Annie, Interview 8, L73-75).

Michael regarded this strategy as the most useful and used it very often. This strategy was the only strategy apart from *Self-monitoring* which he was ‘not lazy’ in using:

‘I think this is the most useful strategy and I use it very often during lessons.’ (Michael, Interview 4, L12-13)

He also regarded this strategy as more important than *Seeking practice*

opportunities because:

‘Even if I speak English with my friends, they will not respond.

However, if I speak with people from other countries, the most important thing is that I need to understand before I can speak.

Therefore, *Paying attention* is very important.’ (Interview 4, L21-25)

Lynn also used this strategy but more outside classrooms (Interview 6, L100-102).

Two participants, Peter and Annie, mentioned they used this strategy heavily when they watched television and films. For example, Peter said:

‘I can also pay attention to how they (characters in television programmes) speak. It is useful for my listening and speaking.’

(Interview 5, L106-107)

However, when the situation is paying attention to what others say, Robert said it was not possible because it would be too demanding for him (Interview 3, L82-83).

We can see that the selective uses of strategies in different situations were common not only for this strategy but for other strategies as well. For example, as we will see below, Peter used *Organising* in examinations (Interview 5, L19-24). The uses of MCLLSs in specific language skills were also common, for example, *Seeking practice opportunities* in listening by Robert (Interview 3, L44). We will see more of these examples in the discussion on the uses of other strategies below.

One possible reason for the popularity of this strategy is its easiness in application. Wide applicability is also another possible reason for its

popularity.

Organising

Organising posed particular difficulties for interviewees. All the participants except Robert and Kelly regarded planning, setting timetables and organising their language learning as very useful and important. However, none of them except Peter used this strategy actively and frequently. The reason given by them was that this strategy was too difficult to implement. Judy, in recalling her use of this strategy, said that

‘When I was studying Form 4, I had to prepare for the HKCEE. I planned how much time I needed to study, and so on. But the problem was, again, every time when I didn’t understand, I wanted to give up and I had to force myself very hard to continue.’

(Interview 2, L43-47)

Shirley (Interview 1, L37-39) and Kelly (Interview 7, L10-11; L13-15) also reported a similar experience.

Michael and Annie simply said they did not have this habit:

‘I don’t have this habit. I know this strategy is useful, but I simply could not develop this habit’. (Michael, Interview 4, L9-10)

Annie said

‘I don’t learn it (English), not to say setting timetables to learn English.’ (Interview 8, L68-69)

Robert expressed this strategy was not useful (Interview 3, L21-22), and Lynn used it only in doing examination past papers (Interview 6, L40-42).

What is common among these participants in their comments is that they all said that it was a useful strategy, and the main difficulty was how to

apply it. This, again, reflects a lack of knowledge and skills, and to a certain extent, motivation, in using the strategy. These issues will be discussed later in this section and their implications for teaching will be introduced in Chapter Six.

A contrary view was given by Peter, who used this strategy a great deal. He also pointed out the advantages of using this strategy, which is systematic learning through using this strategy. To him the use of this strategy also served the affective purpose of calming him down and giving him more confidence during examinations (Interview 5, L41-48; L50-51).

We can see from the above findings that, except Peter, most participants experienced difficulty in using this strategy. The use of this strategy among the interview participants as a whole is low.

Seeking practice opportunities

A medium use of this strategy was report by the participants as a whole. Robert reported using this strategy highly (Interview 3, L44-49). While Shirley (Interview 1, L41-42) and Judy (Interview 2, L54-55) reported they used this strategy and were quite positive towards it, Lynn seldom used it (Interview 6, L96-98) and Kelly and Annie (Kelly, Interview 7, L51-52; Annie, Interview 8, L22-23) did not use it at all. Michael, on the other hand, did not value the strategy highly and only used it to a limited extent:

‘I do not take a lot of initiatives in finding opportunities to use English, especially when I talk. It is not necessary because if I need to use it, most of the time I can do it (speak English).’ (Interview 4, L2-4)

The reason given by Kelly and Annie in not using this strategy was

contextual. Kelly said that it was difficult for her to practise English with her friends and family, and therefore should not use this strategy:

‘I think the reason is because of context. People around me do not speak English. Furthermore, my primary and secondary schools used Chinese in teaching.’ (Interview 7, L37-39)

Another reason given by Annie was that she did not have sufficient English proficiency for basic communication and was therefore not able to speak English with her friends. She stated:

‘I don’t know a lot of words and my English is not good. You can’t just say to your friends ‘Let’s speak English’. I tried but after a few sentences we changed back to Cantonese.’ (Interview 8, L25-28)

This comment about not having sufficient English proficiency was another manifestation of a lack of knowledge of MCLLSs as pointed out in the discussion of *Organising*.

Despite the fact that Peter reported not using this strategy at all (Interview 5, L54), when asked what strategies he thought would be useful at the end of the second part of the interview, it was found that he was actually quite active in using *Seeking practice opportunities*. He said watching television was a good means of learning English (Interview 5, L103-104). This may show participants’ difficulties in understanding MCLLSs categories.

An interesting comment was made by Judy regarding her use of this strategy. She said that she could not do this very often because she could not concentrate for a long time (Interview 2, L54-55). This again shows that she might lack the necessary skills in order to implement this strategy effectively.

Shirley's lack of implementation skills might be one of the sources of her frustration in using not only *Organising* but other MCLLSs as well.

Despite the difficulties in applying this strategy, the medium use of this strategy showed that the strategy was quite popular among the participants.

Setting goals and objectives

On average, the use of this strategy among all the participants was low.

Judy, who had quite negative experiences in learning English, did not think this strategy was useful at all (Interview 2, L49).

Lynn stated that despite knowing this strategy was useful, she seldom used it. Her reason was difficulty of implementation (Interview 6, L34-37), and this reason was also given by Kelly (Interview 7, L33-35).

In describing her use of other strategies, Annie emphasised that persistence was important in order for this strategy to be effective and as she did not persist, therefore did not use this strategy (Interview 8, L48-50).

An interesting response was given by Michael, who had a different view on *Setting goals and objectives*:

'I don't have some specific goals in my mind. But what I think is that if I need to achieve something, I will learn the English I need to achieve it. For example, if I need to read a book in English, then I will learn all the necessary words in order to understand the book.' (Interview 4, L44-48)

Actually it wasn't the case that Michael had no specific goals in learning English as he suggested. Rather, his goals were short term. He and Robert were the only two participants using this strategy.

Finally, Peter said his goal was to pass all the examinations, and Robert

that his goal was to communicate effectively with others in English. For example, Robert said that his goal is

‘to be able to listen and speak effectively, to communicate.’

(Robert, Interview 3, L60-61)

Michael also had this concern in saying that

‘the most important thing is that I need to understand before I can speak. (Michael, Interview 4, L23-24)

The participants’ use of this MCLLS as a whole can be regarded as low. Most participants did not use this strategy frequently. Their reasons for not using it include perceiving it as not useful, as difficult to implement, and not having the motivation to use it.

Self-evaluating

Overall, there was a medium use of this strategy. Shirley did not mention her use of the strategy, and Michael reported he did not use it at all (Interview 4, L34-35).

Robert was the only participants who reported a high use of this strategy:

‘I always do that. I always think about how much I have achieved and what I have not done properly.’ (Interview 3, L64-65)

Judy, Kelly and Annie reported a medium use of the strategy (Judy, Interview 2, L76; Kelly, Interview 7, L57; Annie, Interview 8, L88-91). Three of the participants, Judy, Peter and Kelly, said they used it mostly in examinations .

A typical example of the context-specific use of this strategy was given by Peter:

‘It is difficult to evaluate except after knowing your exam results. I will evaluate my progress based on my exam results. I will reflect and find out what I have not prepared and what I have done wrong.’ (Interview 5, L95-98)

Judy (Interview 2, L74-78) and Kelly (Interview 7, L57-58) also said they only evaluated their English learning after their examinations.

This task-specific use of this strategy will be discussed separately later in this section.

It is worth mentioning that Lynn seemed to have problems focusing on the discussion of this strategy. She misunderstood this strategy, taking it as referring to time management when first asked:

‘I noticed how much time was left for completing the papers. If I found there was very little time left, I would complete the papers as soon as possible.’ (Interview 6, L51-53)

After the explanation of the interviewer she gave a response about the achievement of goals (Interview 6, L60-64).

These responses are related to the methodological issue of the ability of learners to verbalise their MCLLS use, which was described in the discussions of the use of semi-structured interviews in this study in 3.1 (p. 46). This issue will be discussed separately at the end of this section. Suggestions on how tackle this problem will be given in the next chapter.

Annie said about using this strategy:

‘I’ll have some standards on what I should have learned at different levels.’ (Interview 8, L88-89)

We can see that instead of evaluating her progress against some external

standards, she set her own standards of English proficiency which she was supposed to reach.

As pointed out repeatedly earlier in this section, the affective and motivation factors are important aspects of MCLLS use found from the semi-structured interview. What is common among five of the interview participants, namely Shirley, Judy, Michael, Lynn and Annie, is that their willingness to employ MCLLSs was more important than their knowledge of the strategies themselves. Annie had this feeling most strongly, and said repeatedly throughout the whole interview that the willingness to use MCLLSs was important (for example, Interview 8, L42; L49-50; L71-72). Michael, although less direct, always said that he was lazy in using the strategies (for example, Interview 4, L34-37). Shirley, who had a lot of negative experiences in learning English, also said repeatedly that the use of strategies made no difference to her English learning (Interview 1, L34-35; L49-50). Judy, although having a less negative experience than Shirley, also shared her view, suggested that sometimes the use of strategies did not help her English learning (Interview 2, L49). Lynn showed this tendency as well:

‘I know how to learn English, but very often I don’t put a lot of effort into learning English.’ (Interview 6, L2-3)

This theme will be further discussed in the part of the discrepancies between participants’ perceived importance and actual use of MCLLSs on page 118.

Views on a Workshop on MCLLS and LLSY Training

The responses to the question on participation in a workshop organised for improving the use of MCLLSs and the exercise of LLSYs also showed

the importance of motivation rather than knowledge of and skills in MCLLS use and LLSYs. In interviews where the interviewer found that the participants were comfortable with further discussions, a question on their views on participation in a workshop on MCLLS use and the LLSYs was asked. In answering this question, Robert explained the low level of participation in the following way:

‘It is because people may not be willing to change their habits.’

(Interview 3, L137-138)

Michael also gave a negative response:

‘I think over 70% of students of my class will not participate in the workshop if it is not compulsory. Even for myself, I don’t think I’ll join this workshop.’ (Interview 4, L120-122)

Similar comments were also made by Lynn (Interview 6, L177-179), Kelly (Interview 7, L18-20; L101-107) and Annie (Interview 8, L145-149).

Lynn, echoing Kelly’s and Annie’s view, was suggesting that she regarded MCLLS use as not relevant to examination results. Together with the earlier view of the participants that they believed MCLLSs were something which can improve their English, we can see that there is a seeming paradox among the participants. To the participants, MCLLSs are something which could improve their English. However, when it comes to passing examinations, they are not useful. Therefore, the participants and their classmates would not be interested in learning more about MCLLSs (or LLSYs). We can see that they regarded learning English in general as different from the English they need to pass the examinations. The

participants had a high level of awareness that MCLLS only facilitated their learning indirectly. This is a great hurdle for effective MCLLS instruction and will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Summary of Qualitative Findings Relating to MCLLS Use

The qualitative findings from semi-structured interviews were coded. As mentioned in Chapter Three the use of numbers in qualitative research provides us with the advantage of having a more balanced view on the qualitative findings (Bryman, 1988; Lazaraton, 1995; Silverman, 1993). A summary of the uses of individual MCLLSs is given in Table 10 below.

Table 10

Summary of qualitative findings of MCLLSs

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Finding out about language learning</u>	<u>Self- monitoring</u>	<u>Paying attention</u>	<u>Organising</u>	<u>Seeking practice opportunities</u>	<u>Setting goals and objectives</u>	<u>Self- evaluating</u>
Shirley	2 Medium ^a	1 Low	2 Medium	1 Low	2 Medium	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Judy	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	2 Medium	1 Low	2 Medium
Robert	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low	3 High	2 Medium	3 High
Michael	1 Low	3 High	3 High	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low
Peter	Not mentioned	2 Medium	2 Medium	3 High	1.5 Medium/Low ^c	2 Medium	1 Low
Lynn	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low
Kelly	3 High	3 High	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low	2 Medium
Annie	3 High	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low	2 Medium
Mean	2.1 Medium ^b	2.1 Medium	2 Medium	1.4 Low	1.7 Medium	1.3 Low	1.7 Medium

^a High: 3, Medium: 2, Low: 1. A strategy use was classified as High when a participant said explicitly they used it very often or they mentioned the strategy repeatedly. The use of a strategy was classified as Medium when a participant expressed they used it. Strategy use was classified as Low when a participant said they seldom or did not use it.

^b: Mean score of all the participants. Criteria for classification: 0-1.4: Low; 1.5-2.4: Medium, 2.5-3: High. In case the use of a strategy was not mentioned, it was excluded from the calculation.

^c: Despite his reported use of this strategy as low, at the end of the discussion on MCLLSs that he mentioned he used this strategy quite often by watching television. Therefore, his use of this MCLLS was classified at Medium/Low, and a score of 1.5 was used for the calculation of overall mean score.

Organising and *Setting goals and objectives* were not popular among the interview participants. Excluding these two, the other strategies were found to be in the medium use range. As mentioned in the literature review, in the Chinese context Goh (2002) used interviews and found that *Paying attention* was used more frequently in listening, while *Self-monitoring* was found to be more frequently used in the western context (Chamot and O'Malley, 1989). We can see that the qualitative findings of this study did not confirm the findings of either of these studies. In this study, *Self-monitoring* was found to have only medium use by the participants. In addition, there was little difference in the extent of the uses of these two strategies, as shown by their almost identical means of 2.0 (*Paying attention*) and 2.1 (*Self-monitoring*).

Despite the existence of inconsistencies with previous findings, the qualitative findings are consistent with the quantitative findings in the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*. As the quantitative data, the qualitative data show that *Finding out about language learning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* are the most popular MCLLSs among the interview participants. The qualitative findings are also consistent with the quantitative findings in showing that *Organising* is one of the least frequently used MCLLSs. The medium use level of *Seeking practice opportunities* and *Self-evaluating* as shown by the qualitative findings are also consistent with the quantitative findings. The only discrepancy between the quantitative and qualitative findings is found in the MCLLS of *Setting goals and objectives*. The

interview participants reported to use this strategy less frequently than the survey respondents.

In addition to confirming the order of popularity of individual MCLLSs, the qualitative findings allow us explore the details of learners' use of individual MCLLSs. The interview participants stated that they would like to learn about more interesting MCLLSs in relation to the use of *Finding out about language learning*. They also mentioned easy implementation and wide applicability as the reasons for the popularity of *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention*. One participant mentioned the advantages of using *Organising*, although difficulty in implementation was mentioned as the reason for not using this strategy. In addition, the participants had diverse views towards *Seeking practice opportunities*, had difficulties in implementing *Setting goals and objectives* and did not have the motivation to use this strategy.

In addition to general MCLLS use and the details of the uses of individual MCLLSs, the interview participants also pointed out the situation and task specific uses of certain MCLLSs and the reasons for using and not using particular MCLLSs in specific situations and tasks. The analyses of the qualitative data also revealed that there were discrepancies between the perceived importance and actual use of the MCLLSs of the interview participants. Changes in MCLLS use over time were reported by the interview participants. This information is valuable in complementing the findings from the survey and they are described below.

Situation- and task-specific Uses of MCLLSs

As we remember from the discussion of individual MCLLSs as reported

by the interview participants, all interview participants reported that their MCLLS use was situation or task specific. This confirms the earlier view that MCLLS use was situation and task specific (Oxford, 1990). These findings demonstrate the strength of semi-structured interviews in allowing the flexibility of gathering further information (Cohen and Scott, 1996; Cannell and Kahn, 1968) as mentioned in 3.1. The situations and tasks in which they used individual MCLLSs are listed in Table 11 below.

Table 11
Situation- and task-specific uses of MCLLSs

<u>MCLLS</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Situation / Task MCLLSs used</u>
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	Judy	Speaking (Interview 2, L70-71).
	Robert	Writing and reading (Interview 3, L74-75).
	Peter	Revising English (Interview 5, L77).
	Kelly	Speaking / pronunciation (Interview 7, L64-66).
	Lynn	Used only in exams because ‘when you are having exams you can’t make mistakes’. (Interview 6, L83-84)
	Annie	Exams (Interview 8, L78-79). Speaking and writing (Interview 8, L83).
<i>Paying attention</i>	Michael	Pronunciation in listening and understanding meanings of words in reading (Interview 4, L95-96).
	Peter	Watching TV for learning speaking and listening (Interview 5, L103).
	Annie	Watching films (Interview 8, L74).
<i>Organising</i>	Robert	Only for exams (Interview 3, L30-31).
	Peter	More for exams (Interview 3, L13-17).

<u>MCLLS</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Situation / Task MCLLSs used</u>
	Lynn	Only planned the number of past papers to be done, but not the content of English to be learned. However, she regarded planning the contents to be learned was useful (Interview 6, L40-42).
<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	Shirley	Speaking (not reading) because of job requirements (Interview 1, L41-44).
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	Peter	Passing exams as the goal (Interview 5, L100).
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	Judy	Revising for exams (Interview 2, L78).
	Peter and Kelly	Exams, measured progress according to exam results (as criterion) (Peter, Interview 5, L95-98; Kelly, Interview 7, L57-58).

As can be seen from the above table, all MCLLSs except *Finding out about language learning* were mentioned as useful in certain situations and for particular tasks. This is natural as the use of this strategy is quite general. At the same time, we can see that different situations and tasks were very often mentioned by more than one participant. These details have not been documented in previous research and they contribute greatly to our understanding of the MCLLS use of the participants and also complement the quantitative findings.

As far as the situations in which MCLLSs were used, the most frequently mentioned were examinations and revision for examinations. More specifically, in examinations and revision for examinations, *Organising* and *Self-evaluating* were used by three participants, *Self-monitoring* was used by two participants, and *Setting goals and objectives* was used by one participant. We can see that the above findings are consistent with the participants' responses implying instrumental

reasons for learning English. At the same time they are consistent with the answers to the open-ended questions in the survey questionnaire described at the beginning of this section.

Among the respondents reporting the use of MCLLSs in examinations, a good illustration was given by Peter, who used *Organising* for passing his English examinations, both in the institute and as a private candidate in the HKCEE. Like Peter, Lynn also limited her use of *Organising* to doing past papers. She also said that she learned English because she needed to pass the examinations. According to her, if there was no need to pass the examinations, she would not practise her English at all (Interview 6, L111-112). Kelly, Peter and Lynn also used their examination results as the criterion for evaluating themselves (Kelly, Interview 7, L57-58; Peter, I5, L96-98; Lynn, Interview 6, L51-53). As we remember, the reasons for Annie not using certain strategies was that her goal was just to pass the examinations at the institute (Interview 8, L63-66). She said that if one had ‘big goals’, such as getting good results from the public examinations such as the HKCEE and HKAL, one would use LLSs actively and frequently (Interview 8, L52-54). Together with the reasons for perceiving English to be important, as described earlier in this section, we know that the participants were highly motivated by instrumental reasons in their MCLLS use. Although the focus of language-learning motivation is beyond the scope of this study, it is related to both MCLLS use and LLSYs and provides some implications for teaching. This issue will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six.

As for the language tasks in which they used individual MCLLSs,

Self-monitoring was the most frequently mentioned MCLLS used in different learning tasks. While Judy and Kelly used this strategy more in speaking (Judy, Interview 2, L70-71; Kelly, Interview 7, L64-66), Robert stated that he used it in writing and reading (Interview 3, L74-75). *Paying attention* was used by Michael in reading by paying attention to the meanings of words in addition to listening to what others were saying (Interview 4, L11-12; L95-96), and Peter and Annie used it in watching television and films (Peter, Interview 5, L103; Annie, Interview 8, L74). Finally, Shirley used *Seeking practice opportunities* in speaking for her job (Interview 1, L41-44), as mentioned in the previous section.

The above findings are different from the tasks in which particular MCLLSs were used as identified by Chamot, Küpper, and Impink-Hernandez (1988a; 1988b). In their studies, *Self-monitoring* was found to be more frequently used in vocabulary learning, listening, cloze tests and writing. We can see that the use of this strategy in writing is the only finding consistent with the findings of Chamot et al.'s studies. Chamot and her colleagues also found that *Self-evaluating* was more often used in vocabulary learning, listening and cloze tests, but this study failed to find these uses and this strategy was found to be used only in examinations or examination related situations.

What we can conclude from the above findings is that there are evident differences in the participants' uses of MCLLSs in different situations and in attempting tasks of different natures. *Organising* and *Self-evaluating* were more often used in revising for examinations, and *Setting goals and objectives* was used by one participant for passing examinations. Different

participants used *Self-monitoring* selectively in different skills. *Seeking practice opportunities* and *Paying attention* were also used mostly in listening and speaking. The situations and tasks in which MCLLSs were used found in this study were different from the findings of previous research in the west.

A related question for the situation / task specific uses of MCLLSs is whether there was a lack of sufficient understanding of the participants in applying MCLLSs in other situations, tasks or contexts or that whether they were simply not interested in learning English apart from for examination purposes. Therefore, the reasons for not using certain MCLLSs in specific situations or tasks are summarised in Table 12 below.

Table 12
Situations and tasks in which MCLLSs were not used

<u>MCLLS</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Situation / Task MCLLSs not used</u>
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	Shirley	No time (Interview 1, L57)
	Judy	Writing (Interview 2, L72-73).
	Robert	Cognitively too demanding to be used in speaking and listening (Interview 3, L74-75).
	Lynn	Not used apart from examinations (Interview 6, L82-84).
	Annie	Reading and listening (Interview 8, L84-85).
<i>Paying attention</i>	Robert	Cognitively too demanding to be used in listening (Interview 3, L74-75).
	Kelly	People speak too fast that I could understand little (Interview 7, L48-49).
<i>Organising</i>	All except Peter and Lynn	Strategy too difficult to be implemented (Shirley, Interview 1, L34-35; Judy, Interview 2, L25-30; Robert, Interview 3, L24-26; Michael, Interview 4, L9-10; Kelly, Interview 7, L10-11; Annie, Interview 8, L68-69).

<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	Michael	Friends and families did not speak English (Interview 4, L20-22).
	Lynn	Reading and speaking (Interview 6, L103-109).
	Kelly	Others will not be willing to speak to me even if I speak to them in English (Interview 7, L37-39).
	Annie	She did not have the necessary proficiency to speak with her classmates (Interview 8, L25-28). Classmates did not speak to her (Interview 8, L25-28). Difficult to find a film which does not have Chinese subtitles (Interview 8, L30-32). No opportunities for using English outside classrooms (Interview 8, L35-37).
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	Lynn	Learning English (Interview 6, L65-66).
	Kelly	No opportunities in schools and families to practice (Interview 7, L37-39).
	Annie	She did not persist and failed to use this strategy (Interview 8, L48-50).
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	Kelly	Difficult to implement except in exams (Interview 7, L60-61).
<i>All</i>	Lynn	Cannot use MCLLSS in classrooms because the system is too examination oriented (Interview 6, L111-112).

An important reason for not using some strategies is contextual. As pointed out by Michael in commenting on his use of *Seeking practice opportunities*,

‘I don’t use the last one (*Seeking practice opportunities*) because all my friends and families are Hong Kong people. Even if I speak English with my friends, they will not respond’ (Interview 4, L20-22)

In addition to what was mentioned earlier (Interview 8, L25-28), Annie also mentioned in other parts of the interview the contextual reasons for her

of not using this strategy (Interview 8, L30-32; L35-37).

Kelly also mentioned that she was not able to use *Setting goals and objectives* because there were no opportunities to use English either in school or at home (Interview 7, L37-39). Lynn, who focused her English learning on passing examinations, said that contextual reasons also prevented her from using *Seeking practice opportunities* in reading and speaking, as she said it was difficult for her to find someone to practice her English (Interview 6, L96-98).

Another reason of not using some MCLLSs is the difficulties in implementing them. In addition to the difficulties in implementing *Organising*, as mentioned earlier, *Self-monitoring* was used by Robert and Annie selectively in certain tasks for the same reason (Robert, Interview 3, L77-80; Annie, Interview 8, L83-85).

Lynn did not use *Self-monitoring* in situations other than examinations (Interview 6, L82-84). To her, *Self-evaluating* was difficult to use in situations other than examinations too (Interview 6, L63-64). Finally, Kelly and Robert said that *Paying attention* was too difficult to use in listening when others were speaking (Kelly, Interview 7, L48-49; Robert, Interview 3, L74-75). As mentioned earlier, the difficulties in implementation reflect participants' lack of understanding of MCLLSs.

It is worth mentioning that lacking sufficient English proficiency was also given by the participants as one of the reasons for not using certain strategies, as we can see from the response of Annie, who said that she did not know many English words and therefore could not use *Seeking practice opportunities* (Interview 8, L25). Another example is Kelly, who said that

she could not use *Paying attention* because most of the time she could only understand a few words when she paid attention to what others were saying (Interview 7, L48-49). These responses show participants' lack of knowledge and skills in applying MCLLSs. This issue provides us with some implications for MCLLS instruction and will be further explored in the next chapter.

We can conclude that contextual limitations, participants' difficulties in implementation, participants' lack of knowledge, sufficient English proficiency, time, and motivation are the reasons for not using MCLLSs.

Discrepancies between Participants' Perceived Importance and Actual Use of MCLLSs

Another phenomenon regarding MCLLS use which was found to be common among the participants was that there was a prevalence of discrepancies between the perceived importance of MCLLS and actual use. Annie, when asked what she thought of organising their English learning in general instead of just for examinations, said:

‘(However), the issue is that whether the strategies are useful, and whether you will use the methods.’ (Annie, Interview 8, L41-42)

The exchanges from L52 to 72 also show this trend clearly:

Michael said that

‘I am confident that I can communicate verbally with them if I do so.’ (Interview 4, L25-26)

The above discrepancies show an issue which is closely related to MCLLS use. The reasons for the discrepancies were mainly due to the motivation to use MCLLS, as is evident from the responses of Michael and

Annie, who always said that they knew the strategies were useful but they did not see the point of using them. This motivation factor, together with the reasons for not employing certain MCLLSs, confirmed Chamot's (1993) findings in her study investigating the reasons for not using LLSs by high school and college level students learning Japanese, which are discussed below.

Chamot (1993) classified the reasons she identified into three categories: 'Evaluation of strategy effectiveness', 'Difficulties due to instruction', and 'Affective or personal considerations'. The perception of *Organising* as not useful by Robert (Interview 3, L21-22), *Seeking practice opportunities* by Michael (Interview 4, L2-4), *Setting goals and objectives* by Judy (Interview 2, L48-49), and finally the reasons for not willing to participate in a workshop on MCLLSs and LLSYs of Robert (Interview 3, L132-138), Lynn (Interview 6, L173-180), Kelly (Interview 7, L98-107) and Annie (Interview 8, L142-150) all correspond to Chamot's first category 'Not effective/does not help'. The reason given for not using *Organising* by Judy (Interview 2, L43-47), Shirley (Interview 1, L34-35), Michael (Interview 4, L9-10) and Lynn (Interview 6, L40-42) and *Setting goals and objectives* by Lynn (Interview 6, L34-37) and Kelly (Interview 7, L33-35) because they were too difficult was also identified by Chamot as 'Confusing/difficult to use' in her second category.

No opportunities to use *Seeking practice opportunities* as pointed out by Kelly (Interview 7, L37-39) and Annie (Interview 8, L25-28; L30-32; L35-37) was consistent with 'No opportunity to use strategy' in Chamot's second category. Not having opportunities for using LLSs also confirmed

the finding of Takeuchi and Wakamoto (2001). Requiring too much effort for not using *Setting goals and objectives* by Annie (Interview 8, L48-50) was also identified by Chamot as ‘Takes too much time or too much effort’ in her third category. The reason of having no time to use *Self-monitoring*, as mentioned by Shirley (Interview 1, L57), also belongs to this category. The reason, ‘Feeling too tired’, as mentioned by Robert for not using *Paying attention* (Interview 3, L74-75) and not using *Seeking practice opportunities* by Judy (Interview 2, L54-55) was also consistent with Chamot’s third category. Finally, in commenting that traditional LLSs were too boring, Lynn (Interview 6, L91-94) was giving the same reason of ‘Finds it boring’ of Chamot’s third category. We can easily find other reasons which were found by Chamot in the findings of the reasons for not using certain strategies in certain situations or tasks as listed in Table 12.

In addition to the above findings, it is worth mentioning that the reason of not having sufficient English proficiency to practise speaking with others was not found in Chamot’s study. This new finding contributes to our better understanding of MCLLS use. Finally, the reason given by Peter for using *Organising* confirms the reason of affective control found by Chamot in using LLSs. Peter used *Organising* to calm him down and make him more confident in examinations (Interview 5, L41-51).

Changes in MCLLS Use Over Time

As regarding the question concerning the changes in MCLLSs over time, different responses were given by different participants. A summary of the changes and their details are given in Table 13.

Table 13

Details of changes in MCLLS use over time

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Change in MCLLS use?</u>	<u>Detail of change</u>
Shirley	No	No major differences in MCLLS use, but she had to check the dictionary more now because the English she learned in the past was easier (Interview 1, L58-63).
Judy	Yes	‘We are expected to be more independent now.’ (Interview 2, L125-126)
Robert	No	‘No. I have been using the strategies which I have mentioned. I have used them since I was young. Nobody told me how to learn English better over the years.’ (Interview 3, L54-56)
Michael	No	--
Peter	Yes	<i>Organising</i> used after the ‘painful experience of HKCEE’ (Interview 5, L3-11).
Kelly	Had difficulties answering this question.	
Annie	Had difficulties answering this question.	

As we can see from the above table, among the five participants who mentioned changes in MCLLS use over time, only two said there were differences in their MCLLS use between the past and the present. Among the two, only Peter said there was an obvious difference in his use of *Organising*. We can see that as a whole there were few changes of MCLLS use over time reported. This finding partially support the finding of Chamot et al.’s Study 4 that MCLLS use was stable over time. However, these findings also showed that MCLLS use can be changed.

Despite the fruitful findings obtained from semi-structured interviews as described above from the responses of Kelly and Annie as indicated in Table 14 and in informal discussion with the participants after the

interviews, several participants said that they found the questions difficult to answer and therefore they could only give few comments. Some of them said that they just used some of the strategies automatically and did not have the habit of discussing them. They also found it very difficult to express and verbalise their thoughts. This phenomenon was particularly evident in the interviews with Kelly, Judy and Shirley, and to a certain extent with Michael and Lynn. In different interviews there were occasions in which the interviewer had to give further explanations and examples and to re-direct the discussions and ask the same questions in different ways in order to maintain the smooth flow of the interview and avoid participants' negative feelings. These are some of the strengths of semi-structured interview (Cohen and Scott, 1996; Cannell and Kahn, 1968) as mentioned in Chapter Three. Despite the interviewer's careful planning and sensitivity in using the interviewing skills (for example, Judy: Interview 2, L23-24; Robert: Interview 3, L34-37; L69-71; Peter: Interview 5, L59-62, L91-94; Lynn: Interview 6, L78-80; Kelly: Interview 7, L70-78), as mentioned in 3.3.2, there were times in which the interviewer had to abandon the discussion on certain topics (for example, Robert: Interview 3, L34; Lynn: Interview 6, L133-135; Kelly: Interview 7, L62-63).

It is also not uncommon for participants to mistake one strategy for another (for example, treating *Self-monitoring* as *Self-evaluating* in the case of Lynn (Interview 6, L51-53)) or to misunderstand questions (for example, Annie, Interview 8, L9-11). The retrospective question on MCLLS use in the past also posed difficulties for some participants (for example, Robert, Interview 3, L34). Therefore, some participants' answers were very short.

As difficulties in understanding MCLLSs are prevalent among the participants even for more expressive participants like Robert, Michael and Annie, this is an important methodological issue. As mentioned earlier in 3.1, this finding seems to support the earlier view that verbal report places too great a burden on learners (Seliger, 1985; Dobrin, 1986) rather than the opposite view. As we will see in the second section of the next chapter, some participants also experienced difficulties in verbalising their LLSYs. This is a weakness of interviews and a limitation of this study as mentioned in 3.5.

In the next section, an attempt will be made to bring together the quantitative and qualitative data on MCLLS use in order that we can know the similarities and differences between these two types of data.

4.2.3 Comparisons of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

As we remember, the quantitative and qualitative findings show the same trend in terms of the order of popularity of MCLLSs as described in 4.2.2. However, the MCLLS use shown by interview data was consistently lower than those shown by the quantitative data. Several methodological reasons were suggested for the discrepancies, including social desirability in conducting the survey, the participants' lack of understanding or misunderstandings of MCLLSs, and the time difference in conducting survey and semi-structured interviews.

In order for us to have a more detailed understanding of how the quantitative and qualitative data complement each other, a comparison of the quantitative and the qualitative findings of each interview participant was made. Details are given in Table 14 below, with the discrepancies of the

findings between the survey and semi-structured interviews of individual
MCLSs highlighted:

Table 14

Comparison of the MCLLS use of quantitative and qualitative findings relating to the MCLLS use of interview participants

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Survey/ Interview</u>	<u>Finding out about language learning</u>	<u>Self- monitoring</u>	<u>Paying attention</u>	<u>Organising</u>	<u>Seeking practice opportunities</u>	<u>Setting goals and objectives</u>	<u>Self- evaluating</u>
Shirley	Survey	3 ^a High	3 High	3 High	2 Medium	3 High	3 High	3 High
	Interview	2 Medium ^b	1 Low	2 Medium	1 Low	2 Medium	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Judy	Survey	2 Medium	3 High	3 High	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium
	Interview	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	2 Medium	1 Low	2 Medium
Robert	Survey	3 High	3 High	3 High	3 High	3 High	3 High	3 High
	Interview	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low	3 High	2 Medium	3 High
Michael	Survey	2 Medium	3 High	3 High	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low
	Interview	1 Low	3 High	3 High	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low
Peter	Survey	2 Medium	2 Medium	3 High	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low	2 Medium
	Interview	Not mentioned	2 Medium	2 Medium	3 High	1.5 Medium/Low ^d	2 Medium	1 Low
Lynn	Survey	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low
	Interview	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low
Kelly	Survey	3 High	3 High	3 High	1 Low	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium
	Interview	3 High	3 High	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low	2 Medium

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Survey/ Interview</u>	<u>Finding out about language learning</u>	<u>Self- monitoring</u>	<u>Paying attention</u>	<u>Organising</u>	<u>Seeking practice opportunities</u>	<u>Setting goals and objectives</u>	<u>Self- evaluating</u>
Annie	Survey	3 High	3 High	2 Medium	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low
	Interview	3 High	2 Medium	2 Medium	1 Low	1 Low	1 Low	2 Medium
Mean	Survey	2.4 High	2.8 High	2.8 High	1.6 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.8 Medium	1.9 Medium
	Interview	2.1 Medium ^c	2.1 Medium	2 Medium	1.4 Low	1.7 Medium	1.3 Low	1.7 Medium

^a: The original Likert scale from 1 to 5 was coded into 1 (1-2), 2 (3), and 3 (4-5). 1: Low, 2: Medium, 3: High.

^b: A strategy use was classified as High when a participant said explicitly they used it very often or they mentioned the strategy repeatedly. The use of a strategy was classified as Medium when a participant expressed they used it. Strategy use was classified as Low when a participant said they seldom or did not use it.

^d: Mean score of all the participants. Criteria for classification: 0-1.4: Low; 1.5-2.4: Medium, 2.5-3: High. In case the use of a strategy was not mentioned, it was excluded from the calculation.

^e: Despite reported use of this strategy to be low, at the end of the discussion on MCLLSs he mentioned he used this strategy quite often by watching television. Therefore, his use of this MCLLS was classified at Medium/Low, and a score of 1.5 was used for calculation of overall marks.

A comparison of MCLLS use in terms of MCLLS categories and total MCLLS use is given in Table 15. As with the previous table, the discrepancies are highlighted.

Table 15
 Comparison of quantitative and qualitative findings of MCLLS categories and MCLLS total scores of interview participants

Participant	Survey/ Interview	<i>Arranging & planning your learning^a</i>	<i>Centering your learning^b</i>	<i>Evaluating your learning^c</i>	Total Mean ^d
Shirley	Survey	2.7 High	3.0 High	3.0 High	2.8 High
	Interview	1.5 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.0 Low	1.6 Medium
Judy	Survey	2.2 Medium	3.0 High	2.5 High	2.3 Medium
	Interview	1.5 Medium	2.0 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.7 Medium
Robert	Survey	3.0 High	3.0 High	3.0 High	3.0 High
	Interview	2.0 Medium	1.0 Low	2.5 High	2.0 Medium
Michael	Survey	1.3 Low	3.0 High	2.0 Medium	1.8 Medium
	Interview	1.0 Low	3.0 High	2.0 Medium	1.6 Medium
Peter	Survey	1.2 Low	3.0 High	2.0 Medium	1.7 Medium
	Interview	2.1 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.5 Medium	1.9 Medium
Lynn	Survey	1.5 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.5 Medium	1.5 Medium
	Interview	1.8 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.5 Medium	1.7 Medium
Kelly	Survey	2.2 Medium	3.0 High	2.5 High	2.3 Medium

Annie	Interview	1.5 Medium	2.0 Medium	2.5 High	1.9 Medium
	Survey	2.0 Medium	2.0 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.9 Medium
	Interview	1.5 Medium	2.0 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.7 Medium
Mean	Survey	2.0 Medium	2.8 High	2.3 Medium	2.3 Medium
	Interview	1.6 Medium	2.0 Medium	1.9 Medium	1.8 Medium

^a: Mean of *Finding out about language learning, Organising, Seeking practice opportunities* and *Setting goals and objectives*.

^b: Measured by *Paying attention*. Data reproduced for easy comparison.

^c: Mean of *Self-monitoring* and *Self-evaluating*.

^d: Mean score of all the seven MCLLSs.

As we can see from Table 14, out of the total of 56 comparisons between the quantitative and qualitative findings on individual MCLLSs, 27 (or about 50.9% after excluding the three comparisons which could not be made due to lack of information) are inconsistent. In four comparisons the discrepancies are large, meaning that the MCLLS use of participants was identified as High in survey and Low in interviews or vice versa (i.e., *Self-monitoring* for Shirley, *Paying attention* for Robert, and *Organising* for Robert and Peter). However, in terms of MCLLS use as a whole as shown by MCLLS use total mean score as shown in Table 15, only those of Shirley and Robert are not consistent. Among these 27 discrepancies, the majority (23 or 85%) of them are that the participants’ reported MCLLS uses in interviews are lower than those they reported in their questionnaire. Although there are four comparisons in which the level of MCLLS use interview was higher than that of the survey, this trend shows that there is a tendency among the participants to overrate their use of MCLLSs in the

survey questionnaire. This trend is particularly evident when comparisons between the quantitative and qualitative findings of individual MCLLSs are made. We can see from Table 14 that except *Seeking practice opportunities* and *Self-evaluating*, interview participants' reports of the use of all MCLLSs in survey are consistently higher than their reports in the interviews. We should also note that despite the over-ratings, the pattern of MCLLS use as shown by the qualitative data is consistent with that obtained in the quantitative data. As shown in Table 14, *Organising* and *Setting goals and objectives* were still the least frequently used MCLLSs for the interview participants, and *Finding out about language learning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* were still the most frequently used strategies.

Among all the seven MCLLSs, the largest number of discrepancies was found in the comparisons of *Organising*, with six out of a total of eight participants showing inconsistent reported use. This is followed by *Paying attention* (five participants). The MCLLSs with the largest number of consistent findings are *Finding out about language learning* and *Self-monitoring* (three inconsistencies), and *Self-evaluating* (two inconsistencies).

In terms of individual participants, the number of inconsistencies is large. There are five discrepancies in the use of seven MCLLSs reported by Shirley and Robert. Four inconsistencies were identified in the reports of Judy, Peter and Annie.

As mentioned in Chapter Three these inconsistencies resulting from the triangulation of methods provide us with valuable information on the MCLLS use of the participants. This issue, again, will be discussed in

Chapter Six.

We should remember that most existing research on the use of MCLLSs is quantitative. The quantitative findings of this study were mostly consistent with previous findings. The qualitative findings, on the other hand, only partially confirm the previous findings, given the discrepancies between the quantitative and qualitative results. As a conclusion, the qualitative data indicate that the use of MCLLSs was not as frequent as the quantitative data suggested.

There are three possible methodological reasons for the above inconsistencies. Firstly, the respondents tended to over-rate their MCLLS use in the survey because they might treat the survey as a kind of test of knowledge. Therefore, they tended to choose 'more positive' answers. The participants in the semi-structured interviews might face this pressure too, especially when the contact was personal, face-to-face and recorded. However, after the explanations of the interviewer at the beginning of each interview and the warming-up stage, there were few signs that the participants showed this trend of social desirability. One example is Judy, who reported using MCLLSs highly in her survey. However, during the interviews, they expressed frustration about using MCLLSs due to lack of understanding, contextual limitations, etc.

The second possible reason is that the participants had misunderstandings or difficulties either in understanding or expressing their views on MCLLSs. After getting a better understanding of MCLLSs through clarification with the interviewer, they had a more reliable evaluation of their uses of MCLLSs. An example is given by Robert in his

description of *Self-monitoring*. He misunderstood it as telling other people the mistakes they made (Interview 3, L66-68).

The third possible reason, which will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Six, is related to the stability of MCLLS use and the stability of findings from verbal reports over time. As we remember, the interviews were conducted after the collection and preliminary analyses of survey results. Therefore, there might be differences for the interview participants to report differently in their survey and interviews.

Although it is too speculative to conclude that these reasons contribute to the discrepancies, nevertheless they show that they are some possible reasons for the discrepancies. We can see that all these possible reasons are methodological and provide us with some directions for future research. They will be further discussed in Chapter Six.

A summary of the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, is as follows. Quantitative findings show that there was a medium to high use of MCLLSs among the participants. Quantitative findings show that *Finding out about language learning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* were the most popular MCLLSs among the research participants. *Organising*, *Seeking practice opportunities*, and *Setting goals and objectives* were the least used MCLLSs. *Arranging and planning your learning* and *Evaluating your learning* were found to be moderately used by the participants. Qualitative findings show a consistently less frequent pattern of MCLLS use than the quantitative findings.

Additional findings related to the patterns of MCLLS use was that

participants were found to have prior knowledge and experience of using MCLLSs, which were found to be piecemeal and ad hoc, and they learned MCLLSs informally outside classrooms. MCLLS use was found to be related to the participants' perceived English proficiency and interest in learning English. The reasons for using MCLLSs are easiness in implementation, wide applicability and affective control. The reasons for not using MCLLSs are contextual limitations, participants' difficulties in implementation, participants' lack of knowledge, sufficient English proficiency, time, and motivation. The situation in which most MCLLSs were selectively used was examinations or revision for examinations. Different MCLLSs were also used in different language tasks. Changes in MCLLSs use over time were reported by two participants. Finally, discrepancies between perceived importance and actual use of MCLLSs were found to be common among the participants.

A comparison of the quantitative and qualitative findings indicates that interview data revealed consistently lower patterns of MCLLS use than those shown by the quantitative data. Several methodological reasons were suggested for this discrepancy: survey respondents treating questions as tests of knowledge, research participants' lack of understanding or misunderstandings of MCLLSs, changes in MCLLS use over time, and the time difference in conducting survey and semi-structured interviews.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter started with a presentation of findings on the background information of the research participants and their views about English learning. Patterns of MCLLS use were identified from both the quantitative and qualitative data. In addition, the similarities and differences in these two types of results were

identified. The quantitative data show the relationships of MCLLS use and background variables. The qualitative data, on the other hand, also show that the use of MCLLSs was context and task specific, and changes in MCLLSs use over time were reported by two participants. The qualitative data provide the reasons for not using certain MCLLSs. Discrepancies between the participants' perceived importance and actual use of MCLLSs were identified from the qualitative data, and reasons for the discrepancies were suggested. A comparison of the quantitative and the qualitative data shows that the reported levels of MCLLS use in the survey were consistently higher than those revealed in the interviews, and several reasons were suggested for these discrepancies.

In order to provide the results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, and the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, findings on LLSYs and how they are related to MCLLS use will be introduced in the next chapter. Findings from semi-structured interviews will be followed by those of survey. Unlike the presentation format of MCLLSs in this chapter, findings relating to LLSYs will be introduced according to the typicality of LLSYs of each interview participant. The reason, as we remember, is that the selection of the interview participants was based on their affiliation to LLSYs.

5 Findings Relating to LLSYs and the Relationships between LLSYs and MCLLS Use

In the last chapter, the results of investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, were given. This chapter aims at providing the results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, and the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*. We can achieve the first objective of gathering descriptive information on the MCLLS use and LLSYs of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong by providing the results of the investigation provoked by the first and second research questions. We can also achieve the second objective of this study of exploring the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong by providing the results of the investigation provoked by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*. As in the previous chapter, the quantitative findings on the patterns of LLSYs will be introduced. This will be followed by a presentation of the qualitative findings from semi-structured interviews. Finally, findings from both sources of data will be compared to identify their similarities and differences.

The patterns of LLSYs found among the survey respondents are given in 5.1 below.

5.1 LLSYs

There are several results of the investigation provoked by the second

Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.* The first result is that, as reflected by the quantitative data, there was a prevalence of multiple style preferences among the respondents. Twenty-five percent of the respondents had only one major style preference. Other respondents either had no major preferences or had more than one preference. One-third of the respondents did not report any major style preferences, and about 42% had two or more preferences. Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were the three most prevalent preferences.

There are some additional findings relating to the LLSY pattern. A Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were found to be weakly related to respondents' perceived proficiency. Age and respondents' perceived importance of English proficiency were found to be not related to any LLSYs. The respondents' levels of interest in learning English were found to be related to Auditory and Group preferences. Except Individual preferences, there were no gender differences in LLSYs, with females were found to be more individualistic. Changes in LLSYs as compared to LLSY patterns in the past were reported by two participants, and both of which reported using a wider variety of preferences. Changes in LLSYs were found to be due to changes in the amount of opportunities available for exercising different style preferences studying at the institute. All preferences were found to be inter-correlated except between Individual and Tactile preferences. The inter-relationships contribute to the internal consistency of the PLSPQ.

The reasons for exercising certain preferences, as shown by the qualitative data, are sharing work with others and easiness in implementation. The reasons for

not exercising certain styles to learn English are boredom, contextual reasons, diffusion of responsibilities, not having sufficient English proficiency and difficulty in concentrating. A preference for LLSYs in certain language skills, and discrepancies in the order of LLSY intensities reported between the survey questionnaire and the interview in the case of one participant were identified. Finally, two methodological issues, low motivation in participating in the interviews and difficulties in verbalising LLSYs towards the end of the interview, were identified. A comparison between the quantitative and qualitative data indicates that, contrary to the case of MCLLS use, there was a tendency of respondents to underrate the intensities of LLSYs in their survey. Two reasons, lack of understanding or misunderstanding, and changes of LLSYs over time, were suggested as the possible reasons for the discrepancies.

The presentation of both the quantitative and qualitative findings allow us to achieve the second part of the first objective of this study of gathering descriptive information on the LLSYs of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong. The findings relating to the LLSY patterns as indicated by the quantitative data are given below.

5.1.1 Survey

As with MCLLS use, in this section the popularity of LLSYs among the learners as indicated by the quantitative findings will be presented. This will be followed by a presentation of findings of the quantitative analyses which reveal how LLSYs are related to different learner characteristics.

The results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, as indicated by

the prevalence of intensity of LLSYs obtained from the quantitative findings, are that a quarter of the respondents had one major style preference, about one-third of them had no major preference and about 42% of them had two or more major preferences. Among the respondents who had major preferences, Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were the most favoured. As we will see below, popularity in terms of the intensities of these three styles are consistent with the prevalence of styles.

The LLSYs of the survey participants can be viewed in terms of prevalence and intensity. Intensity should be distinguished from prevalence because it is possible that only a few respondents chose a particular preference as their major style yet they could have high scores on the chosen items.

In the remainder of this section, the findings relating to prevalence will be introduced first, and this will be followed by those of intensities. The final part of this section focuses on the relationships between LLSYs and some selected aspects of learner characteristics.

LLSY Patterns in Terms of Prevalence

The score of each of the 6 elements measured by the PLSPQ is calculated as follows: sum total of the score on 5 items x 2. According to Reid's (1987) criteria, a score between 38 and 50 of the PLSPQ is classified as a major preference. A score between 25 and 37 is classified as a minor preference, and score below 24 is regarded as negligible preference. The findings on the prevalence of LLSYs indicate that 27.6% of the total number of responses indicated major preferences. Among the 316 responses indicating major preferences, the most popular is Auditory. Among the total

of 192 respondents, about 42% had two or more style preferences, and 25% had one major preference. The details are given below.

The frequency distribution of major, minor and negligible LLSYs is given in Table 16.

Table 16

Frequency distribution of major, minor and negligible LLSYs

	<u>Major</u>		<u>Minor</u>		<u>Negligible</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Visual	39	20.4	141	73.8	11	5.8	191	100
Auditory	75	39.5	110	57.9	5	2.6	190	100
Kinaesthetic	56	29.9	119	63.6	12	6.4	187	100
Tactile	47	24.9	119	63.0	23	12.2	189	100
Group	57	29.7	113	59.4	21	10.9	192	100
Individual	42	21.9	118	61.5	32	16.7	192	100
	316	27.6	720	63.3	104	9.1	1,141	100

It is worth mentioning that the above classification of major, minor and negligible style preferences are not mutually exclusive. This means that a particular respondent can show multiple major learning preferences, while another might not reveal any particular major style preference.

As we can see from the above table, out of a total of 1,141 preferences reported by a total of 192 respondents, 27.7% (N=316) were major style preferences, 63.2% (N=720) were minor preferences and 9.1% (N=104) were negligible preference.

Most respondents were identified as having minor learning styles, while 27.6% of the respondents were identified as having major learning styles and a small number of respondents were identified as having negligible style preferences.

In order for us to have a more detailed understanding on the patterns of major style preferences among the respondents, the frequency distribution of style preferences among the 128 respondents who had one major preference or more are given in Table 17 below.

Table 17
Frequency distribution of major learning style types

<u>LLSY</u>	<u>No. of respondents (N=128)</u>						<u>No. of responses</u>	<u>%</u>
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>(N=316)</u>	
Visual	5	6	5	7	9	7	39	12.4
Auditory	18	12	14	13	11	7	75	23.6
Kinaesthetic	4	12	13	10	10	7	56	17.8
Tactile	2	7	11	9	11	7	47	15.0
Group	10	14	11	7	8	7	57	17.8
Individual	9	5	9	6	6	7	42	13.4

Since there were a total of 316 responses and 128 respondents having one or more preferences, there was an average of about 1.6 major style preferences for each respondent. Among respondents who showed one major style preference (N=48), an Auditory preference was the most popular (N=18 or 37.5%), in addition to having the highest intensity, as we will see below. Among the total number 316 responses, an Auditory preference was also the most popular (23.6%). This is followed by Kinaesthetic and Group (both constituted 17.8%) preferences.

The frequency distribution of the number of major style preferences as reported by respondents is given in Table 18.

Table 18

Frequency distribution of number of major learning style preferences

<u>No. of preferences</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
0	64	33.3
1	48	25.0
2	28	14.6
3	21	10.9
4	13	6.8
5	11	5.7
6	7	3.6
Total	192	100

As we can see from the above table, one-third of the respondents did not show any style preferences. Only 25% of the respondents had one major preference. Respondents with two or more preferences constituted 41.6% of the total number of respondents. Together with the average of 1.6 major preferences already mentioned, this shows that having multiple style preferences was a common pattern among the respondents. The percentage of respondents having multiple major learning styles (41.6%) is slightly less than those who had no or only one major learning style (58.3%). This, it can be argued, only partially confirms the previous finding that Chinese L2 learners have multiple learning styles (Reid, 1987). Only about 25% of the respondents were found to have one major style. Nevertheless, multiple style preferences constituted the largest group (a total of 52.6% of respondents having two to six preferences) among the 192 respondents. We can conclude that multiple style preferences prevailed among the respondents.

The clear pattern of major style preferences found among respondents of this study is different from the earlier findings by Lin and Shen (1996) who

used the same PLSPQ as in this study. They found that learners had no preferences for learning styles. In this study, however, only one-third of the respondents did not show any major learning styles. The finding that most respondents had major learning styles preferences is also different from an earlier finding that Chinese learners possess multiple learning styles (Reid, 1987), as there were 58.3% of respondents showing no or one major preference and only 41.6% of respondents in this study showing two or more major style preferences.

An issue which is worth mentioning here is related to comparison of PLSPS findings across studies. Reid (1990) has stated clearly that the development of her PLSPQ was normed for intensive international ESL students studied in the U.S. In the development process, she found that Japanese students tended to respond towards the means while NSs used the entire range of the 5-point Likert scale of the instrument. Although clear patterns of style preference were found in this study, this does not mean that the present study is free from this threat. This threat may be the reason for one-third of the respondents of this study failed to report any major style preference, and, as we will see below, the lack of major style preference as shown by the average scores of all respondents in terms of intensity. This might also be a reason for the findings of this study confirming both the previous finding that Chinese L2 learners had no major style preferences at the same time had multiple style preferences.

The LLSY patterns of respondents in terms of intensity are given below.

LLSY Patterns in Terms of Intensity

The findings relating to the intensity of LLSYs indicated a trend

consistent with the findings relating to the prevalence of LLSYs. Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were found to be the most popular LLSYs, as these preferences had the highest scores.

The frequency distributions of the scores of the individual items of the PLSPQ are given in Table 19 below.

Table 19

Frequency distribution of LLSYs

Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree						Mean	S.D.
Item	<u>1</u>		<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>		<u>5</u>				
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>			
<u>Visual</u>													
6	0	0	18	9.4	80	41.7	61	31.8	33	17.2	3.6	.88	
10	4	2.1	19	9.9	81	42.2	72	37.5	16	8.3	3.4	.86	
12	4	2.1	13	6.8	88	46.1	69	36.1	17	8.9	3.4	.83	
24	8	4.2	25	13	89	46.4	61	31.8	9	4.7	3.2	.88	
29	4	2.1	51	26.6	96	50	34	17.7	7	3.6	2.9	.82	
Total											33.2	5.18	
<u>Auditory</u>													
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree						Mean	S.D.
Item	<u>1</u>		<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>		<u>5</u>				
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>			
1	0	0	13	6.8	49	25.5	91	47.4	39	20.3	3.8	.84	
7	1	.5	13	6.8	68	35.6	83	43.5	26	13.6	3.6	.82	
9	3	1.6	24	12.5	80	41.7	67	34.9	18	9.4	3.4	.87	
17	1	.5	9	4.7	61	31.8	86	44.8	35	18.2	3.8	.82	
20	2	1.0	21	11.0	91	47.6	61	31.9	16	8.4	3.4	.83	
Total											35.9	5.58	

<u>Kinaesthetic</u>												
<u>Strongly Disagree</u>							<u>Strongly Agree</u>					
<u>Item</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>		<u>5</u>		<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>		
2	2	1	19	9.9	61	31.8	76	39.6	34	17.7	3.6	.92
8	3	1.6	24	12.6	73	38.4	71	37.4	19	10	3.4	.89
15	10	5.2	29	15.2	57	29.8	68	35.6	27	14.1	3.4	1.07
19	9	4.7	29	15.3	85	44.7	55	28.9	12	6.3	3.2	.93
26	3	1.6	16	8.3	100	52.1	65	33.9	8	4.2	3.3	.75
Total											33.8	6.22
<u>Tactile</u>												
<u>Strongly Disagree</u>							<u>Strongly Agree</u>					
<u>Item</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>		<u>5</u>		<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>		
11	10	5.2	36	18.8	69	36.1	61	31.9	15	7.9	3.2	1.00
14	7	3.6	26	13.6	93	48.7	54	28.3	11	5.8	3.2	.87
16	8	4.2	36	18.8	69	35.9	60	31.3	19	9.9	3.2	1.01
22	7	3.6	16	8.3	83	43.2	66	34.4	20	10.4	3.4	.92
25	13	6.8	34	17.8	100	52.4	40	20.8	4	2.1	2.9	.86
Total											31.9	6.61

<u>Group</u>												
<u>Strongly Disagree</u>							<u>Strongly Agree</u>					
<u>Item</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>		<u>5</u>		<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>		
3	5	2.6	17	8.9	87	45.3	60	31.3	23	12	3.4	.91
4	6	3.1	17	8.9	76	39.6	78	40.6	15	7.8	3.4	.88
5	2	1	26	13.5	79	41.1	67	34.9	18	9.4	3.4	.87
21	11	5.7	23	12	79	41.1	65	33.9	14	7.3	3.3	.96
23	8	4.2	23	12	82	42.7	64	33.3	15	7.8	3.3	.92
Total											33.4	7.10
<u>Individual</u>												
<u>Strongly Disagree</u>							<u>Strongly Agree</u>					
<u>Item</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>		<u>5</u>		<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>		
13	4	2.1	26	13.5	58	30.2	69	35.9	35	18.2	3.5	1.00
18	2	1	31	16.1	84	43.8	52	27.1	23	12	3.3	.92
27	3	1.6	42	21.9	92	47.9	44	22.9	11	5.7	3.1	.86
28	6	3.1	37	19.3	94	49	42	21.9	13	6.8	3.1	.89
30	7	3.6	40	20.8	91	47.4	43	22.4	11	5.7	3.1	.90
Total											32.3	7.28

The above table shows that the Auditory preference had the highest mean score among all six preferences, thus the largest intensity. The second and third largest intensity in style preferences were found in Kinaesthetic (mean=33.8) and Group (mean=33.4) preferences respectively. The preference having the least intensity was Tactile (mean=31.9). Using Reid's (1995) criteria, respondents as a whole did not have any major preferences. Their scores of the PLSPQ showed they had all the six preferences as their minor styles. Although the average scores do not indicate major preferences, we cannot conclude there is a lack of major preference among the respondents of this study. It is because the results of the previous section on the prevalence of LLSYs have shown that there is a prevalence of multiple major style preferences among the respondents, and only one-third of the respondents did not show any major style preference.

The mean scores which show their intensities are mainly consistent with their prevalence as described in the previous section. Taking together the two sets of findings, we can conclude that Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were the most popular learning style preferences in terms of both intensity and prevalence among the respondents.

Among the 30 items, item 1 ('When the teacher tells me the instructions I understand better') and 17 ('I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture'), which measure Auditory preference, had the highest mean of 3.8 (S.D.=.84). The item with the lowest mean were items 25 ('I enjoy making something for a class project', measuring Tactile preference) and 29 ('I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to lectures', measuring Visual preference), both with a mean of 2.9.

Several observations can be made regarding the above findings. Firstly, an Auditory preference, which is emphasised in traditional classroom learning, remained popular among our respondents. However, what is interesting is that, a Visual preference, which is also emphasised in traditional classroom learning, failed to be another common preference among respondents. The lowest mean score is found in item 29. This is contrary to the earlier finding that Chinese are more inclined to Visual learning (Dirksen, 1990; Rossi-Le, 1995). One possible reason is the less successful academic results of the respondents compared to other learners in Hong Kong. This idiosyncrasy may result in their lower interest in reading learning related materials such as worksheets and textbooks (which many find difficult to access). The other item with the lowest mean (2.9) is item 25 ('I enjoy making something for a class project'). This is due to the lack of popularity of Tactile preference among respondents. A possible reason, as indicated by the qualitative findings, is that there is a lack of opportunity for L2 learners in Hong Kong to develop this style preference. How contextual influences affected the styles of the participants will be more evident in the discussion of the qualitative findings in the next section.

Thus, we can see that both the prevalence and intensity of the frequency distribution of LLSYs show that respondents were more inclined towards Auditory, Group and Kinaesthetic preferences. The preference for Kinaesthetic learning among Chinese learners confirms the findings of Reid (1987) and those of a local study by Melton (1990). However, some of the above findings are different from some earlier findings. For example, while Dirksen (1990), Melton (1990) and Stebbins (1995) all found that a Tactile

preference was popular among Chinese learners, the findings from this study show that it was the least preferred learning style, for the possible reasons already pointed out. Dunn et al. (1990) found that Chinese-American elementary age students were more individual in their language learning, but an Individual preference was the second least preferred learning style preference among respondents in this study in terms of intensity. A possible reason for the popularity of a Group preference is again contextual. As we remember, the teaching methods of English at the institute emphasise communication. Compared to the examination-oriented teaching of most primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong, learning through activities in classes of 25 to 30 learners (compared to the class size of about 40 in most primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong) is new to respondents. Therefore, the classroom context might become a suitable environment for respondents to exercise their Group preference, which they did not have an opportunity to do in the past. This view is further supported by the comments given by the participants in the semi-structured interviews, and will be introduced in the second part of this section.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, the final part of this section focuses on how LLSYs are related to certain learner characteristics. The relationships found are given below after the presentation of item statistics.

LLSYs and Learner Characteristics

Item statistics are given in Table 20.

Table 20

Item-total statistics of PLSPQ items

<u>Item</u>	<u>Scale mean if item deleted</u>	<u>Scale variance if item deleted</u>	<u>Corrected item- total correlation</u>	<u>Squared multiple correlation</u>	<u>Cronbach's alpha if item deleted</u>
1	96.43	154.061	.467	.566	.878
2	96.64	152.921	.474	.538	.877
3	96.86	154.045	.435	.637	.878
4	96.84	154.057	.451	.567	.878
5	96.89	154.906	.410	.585	.879
6	96.68	154.241	.428	.471	.878
7	96.63	153.471	.505	.487	.877
8	96.84	151.303	.566	.545	.875
9	96.88	155.352	.385	.392	.879
10	96.85	154.989	.411	.527	.879
11	97.08	150.982	.506	.545	.876
12	96.82	152.902	.536	.548	.876
13	96.70	153.839	.387	.477	.879
14	97.08	152.573	.512	.393	.876
15	96.88	149.723	.515	.569	.876
16	97.02	153.524	.404	.470	.879
17	96.49	154.109	.473	.493	.877
18	96.90	155.193	.370	.610	.880
19	97.09	151.899	.512	.515	.876
20	96.92	154.316	.465	.382	.878
21	97.02	155.262	.346	.578	.880
22	96.85	151.441	.551	.567	.876
23	96.98	156.967	.293	.536	.881
24	97.07	157.082	.311	.377	.881
25	97.33	154.857	.414	.477	.879
26	96.95	154.030	.533	.439	.877
27	97.16	156.680	.329	.653	.880
28	97.15	159.459	.190	.622	.883
29	97.33	158.833	.240	.413	.882
30	97.22	159.056	.206	.709	.883

The reliability, as measured by Cronbach’s alpha, of the 30-item PLSPQ is .882. This shows the scale has good reliability. This is higher than the alpha of .70 as reported by Lin and Shen (1996).

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed to determine the relationships between LLSYs and learner characteristics of age, respondents’ perceived importance of English proficiency, their perceived English proficiency and interest in learning English. The details are given in Table 21 below.

Table 21
Significant Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients of LLSYs and learner characteristics

<u>Item</u>	<u>PLSPQ type</u>	<u>Perceived importance of English proficiency</u>	<u>Perceived English proficiency</u>	<u>Interest in learning English</u>
7	Auditory	.144*	--	--
26	Kinaesthetic	.150*	--	--
13	Individual	.157*	--	--
18	Individual	.146*	--	--
9	Auditory	--	.164*	--
8	Kinaesthetic	--	.172*	--
19	Kinaesthetic	--	.241**	--
3	Group	--	.191**	--
4	Group	--	.185*	--
21	Group	--	.170*	--
23	Group	--	.186*	--
27	Individual	--	.149*	--

<u>Item</u>	<u>PLSPQ type</u>	<u>Perceived importance of English proficiency</u>	<u>Perceived English proficiency</u>	<u>Interest in learning English</u>
6	Visual	--	--	.151*
12	Visual	--	--	.178*
29	Visual	--	--	-.198**
1	Auditory	--	--	.161*
9	Auditory	--	--	.168*
17	Auditory	--	--	.223**
8	Kinaesthetic	--	--	.155*
3	Group	--	--	.229**
23	Group	--	--	.229**
21	Group	--	--	.163*
Type	Auditory	--	--	.168*
Type	Kinaesthetic	--	.233**	--
Type	Group	--	.214**	.202**

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Age was found not to be correlated with either individual items or types of learning styles. This is different from Reid’s finding (1987) indicating an association between age differences and LLSY preferences. However, the non-existence of any significant age difference in this study may be due to the narrow age range of respondents, as mentioned earlier in Chapter Four

Taking MCLLS use in account, the respondents’ perceived importance of English proficiency does not have a significant relationship with any learning style preferences. However, this variable was found to be significantly correlated with four individual items in the PLSPQ, although the correlations were weak. This indicates that the importance respondents recognise in learning English does not have a strong relationship with LLSYs.

The respondents' perception of their own English proficiency was found to be significantly correlated with Kinaesthetic and Group preferences and a number of individual items of other style preferences. As mentioned in the outset, the focus of research on LLSYs has been narrow. There have been few studies of how LLSYs are related to L2 achievement. The most relevant finding from past research is that Visual learners were found to outperform Auditory and Tactile/Kinaesthetic learners in learning Japanese by satellite television (Oxford, Park-Oh, Ito and Sumrall, 1993). However, this study focused on learning in a specific situation (i.e., learning by satellite television) and the applicability of its findings to classroom learning is limited.

In another study by Bailey, Onwuegbuzie and Daley (2000), it was found that a Kinaesthetic learning style was negatively related to L2 achievement. This finding is contrary to Ehrman and Oxford's (1995) earlier finding that Kinaesthetic preference and L2 achievement are positively related. The positive relationship found between a Kinaesthetic preference and respondents' perceived English proficiency seems to confirm Ehrman and Oxford's finding. However, we should remember that in this study, the respondents' self-perceived English proficiency rather than their actual L2 achievement was reported and it was measured by only one item in the questionnaire. The positive relationships found between Group preference and self-perceived English proficiency, on the other hand, has not been documented before. There have been other attempts to investigate how LLSYs are related to L2 proficiency (for example, Ehrman and Oxford, 1995), but they were by no means based on the conceptualisation of Reid.

The weak correlations of the two (i.e., Kinaesthetic and Group) out of a total of six types of preference and individual items with self-perceived English proficiency found in this study also confirm an earlier view that LLSYs are only weakly or indirectly related to L2 achievement (for example, Ehrman and Oxford, 1995).

The respondents' interest in learning English was also found to be correlated significantly with ten individual items of LLSYs, as well as Auditory and Group preferences. The ten items can be broadly classified into three Groups, including Visual, Auditory and Group preferences. This means that generally speaking respondents who were more inclined towards Visual, Auditory and Group preferences tended to like learning English more.

Since all the respondents were in their first year of study, we did not expect there would be differences in the MCLLS use of students studying in different departments, and therefore relevant statistical tests were not computed.

A series of t-tests were conducted to determine possible gender differences in LLSYs. A summary of significant findings from the t-tests is given in Table 22 below.

Table 22

Significant findings of t-tests of gender differences in LLSYs

		Mean (S.D.)		
PLSPQ Item / Type	Focus	Male (n=106)	Female (n=78)	t-value
Item 6	Visual	3.47(.886)	3.74(.844)	-2.098*
Item 13	Individual	3.41(1.076)	3.78(.847)	-2.560*
Individual	--	31.42(7.478)	33.69(6.591)	-2.145*
*p<.05	**p<.01	***p<.001		

In terms of LLSY types, the only gender difference found among the six types of learning styles was Individual ($t=-2.145$, $p=.033$). Female respondents preferred to study alone to a greater degree than males. In terms of certain individual items, gender differences were also found. Significant differences were found in item 13 ('When I study alone, I remember things better'), an item on Individual preference, and item 6 ('I learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the chalkboard'), on an item on Visual preference. Details of the results of t-tests are given in Appendix E.

These findings partially confirm earlier findings on gender differences and LLSYs. While Reid (1987) found that females were more Auditory and Kinaesthetic and at the same time less Tactile than male learners, the above findings do not show these trends. However, the stronger preference for Individual learning of female respondents confirms Reid's (1987) finding. However, it is contrary to Melton's (1990) findings that male and female participants did not differ in their preference for Individual style.

The Pearson product-moment correlation matrix of the six learning preferences is given in Table 23 below.

Table 23

Pearson product-moment correlation matrix of LLSY types

	<u>Visual</u>	<u>Auditory</u>	<u>Kinaesthetic</u>	<u>Tactile</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Individual</u>
Visual	--	.579***	.476***	.379***	.171*	.458***
Auditory	.579***	--	.563***	.391***	.293***	.332***
Kinaesthetic	.476***	.563***	--	.656***	.505***	.218**
Tactile	.379***	.391***	.656***	--	.539***	.081
Group	.171*	.293***	.505***	.539***	--	-.224**
Individual	.458***	.332***	.218**	.081	-.224**	--
*: p< .05 **: p< .01 ***: p<.001						

The above coefficients show that all except two (Tactile and Individual) of the six types of LLSYs were significantly correlated. The highest correlation was found between Kinaesthetic and Tactile preferences (r=.656). This is followed by Visual and Auditory (r=.579). The lowest correlation is found between Group and Individual (-2.224). These findings contribute to the internal validity of the PLSPQ, as preferences which are conceptually more closely related (i.e. Kinaesthetic and Tactile; Visual and Auditory) had high correlations, while those which are contrary (i.e. Group and Individual) were negatively correlated. Group activities require movements and ‘hands-on’ learning, while Visual- and Auditory-oriented activities are more commonly found in individual learning. These explain why a Group preference was found to be more closely related to Kinaesthetic and Tactile preferences, and an Individual preference was found to have stronger relationships with Visual and Auditory preferences.

The patterns of LLSYs of the research participants as reflected by the findings of the semi-structured interviews are presented in the next section.

5.1.2 Semi-structured Interviews

As mentioned in Chapter Three, the selection of interview participants was to be based on the typicality of their LLSYs. Owing to practical difficulties as described in 3.3.1, the actual profiles of the selected interviews participants did not match the planned ones perfectly. The plan was to select one participant having each of the LLSY types as their only major preference. However, the third participant, Robert, had Auditory, Tactile and Individual major preferences in addition to the planned profile (Kinaesthetic) for this participant. The planned profile for the fourth participant was Tactile. However, only Michael, who had Visual major preference as well, could be interviewed. The planned profile for the eighth participant was a learner with all LLSY types as their major preferences. However, only Annie, who only had five LLSYs as her major preference, was interviewed. Despite these discrepancies in the actual and planned profiles of the interview participants, the actual profiles of interview participants can also be regarded as relatively consistent with the planned profiles.

The LLSY profiles of the eight interview participants, as indicated by the results of PLSPQ, are given in Table 24 below.

Table 24

LLSY profiles of the interview participants as indicated by the PLSPQ

<u>Partici-</u> <u>pant</u>	<u>Visual</u>	<u>Auditory</u>	<u>Kinaesthetic</u>	<u>Tactile</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Individual</u>
Shirley	Major	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor
Judy	Minor	Major	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor
Robert	Minor	Major	Major	Major	Minor	Major
Michael	Major	Minor	Minor	Major	Minor	Negative/ Negligible
Peter	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Major	Negative/ Negligible
Lynn	Minor	Minor	Negative/ Negligible	Negative/ Negligible	Negative/ Negligible	Major
Kelly	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor
Annie	Major	Major	Major	Major	Minor	Major

The details of each type of LLSY are discussed below.

Shirley (Visual major)

The findings of the interview confirm those of the questionnaire which revealed that Shirley was a Visual learner. She gave an example of preferring the Visual mode in her English learning:

‘When I watch English channels on TV, I read the English subtitles and read them out.’ (Interview 1, L80-81)

She also said that Auditory preference was not suitable for her because:

‘if you don’t understand the meanings, no matter how much you listen, you won’t understand.’ (Interview 1, L87-88)

In addition to confirming that Shirley was a Visual learner, it was found that she was negative towards the Auditory preference.

Judy (Auditory major)

Judy, who was found to be an Auditory learner, reported herself as an Auditory learner during the interview. She said that it was difficult to exercise this style to learn during lessons because lessons were too busy (Interview 2, L112-113). She also said that she preferred learning in a group because she could share the work with her group members (Interview 2, L114-115). She was quite negative towards visual learning because she would fall asleep when she exercised this style (Interview 2, L121).

It is evident that the additional information on the learning style preferences obtained from Judy demonstrates the limitations of the survey questionnaire as a data collection tool.

It is also worth mentioning that both Shirley and Judy were quite unmotivated in this second part of the interview. They gave few responses to the questions. This is a limitation of interviews, as already mentioned in the last chapter.

Robert (Kinaesthetic, Auditory, Tactile and Individual major)

According to the results of PLSPQ, Robert had major Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Individual preferences. The focus was his Kinaesthetic preference. In the interview, he reported he was a Kinaesthetic and Auditory learner (Interview 3, L102), which is consistent with his PLSPQ profile. However, instead of confirming his style preferences as reported by the PLSPQ, Robert said he had Visual and Group preferences as well (Interview 3, L102), which were not included in his PLSPQ profile. He gave a reason for each of his choice of style preferences.

According to Robert, a Visual preference was important to him because of personal preference (Interview 3, L103-107) and he relied on an Auditory

preference to improve his English (Interview 3, L107-108). A Kinaesthetic preference was important for him because there are a lot of things in English which you cannot learn from books. (Interview 3, L108-111). Finally, Group learning also allowed Robert to train his speaking and listening and learn in interesting ways (Interview 3, L112-114).

Robert also mentioned the reasons for not having Tactile and Individual preferences (Interview 3, L117-120). This information is valuable to our understanding of LLSYs because it cannot be captured by survey questionnaires. According to Robert,

‘we seldom have the chance of using learning by doing except in learning listening and speaking by talking to foreigners. There is little motivation for learning if you are alone. It is also more boring if you learn alone.’ (Interview 3, L117-120)

Robert’s information on his LLSYs again shows the discrepancies between results obtained from the quantitative and qualitative data, which is the same trend shown by the findings of MCLLS use.

Robert also said that he was more inclined towards Visual and Auditory preferences in the past, but he had Kinaesthetic and Group preferences at the time of the interview as well (Interview 3, L127-128). The reason, according to him, was that he had more opportunities to exercise the two preferences while studying at the institute (Interview 3, L130-131).

Michael (Tactile and Visual major)

Again, Michael was revealed to be a Tactile and Visual learner by the PLSPQ, and in the interview said he had strong preference for Tactile learning (Interview 4, L67). He mentioned that he not only preferred

‘learning by doing’ in his English learning but in other subjects as well:

‘I like learning by doing. This is not true only in English but in learning other things. When I want to learn something, I always repeat doing the same thing or activities. I can remember better by doing activities.’ (Interview 4, L67-70)

He also told the interviewer about his method of converting words and meanings into images, then connecting the images into a story in order to remember them more easily (Interview 4, L76-81).

This style of learning was different from the meaning of Tactile preference in Reid’s conceptualisation. It was rather a method of using mental images. This finding has implications for LLSY instruction and research and will be discussed in Chapter Six.

He also expressed a preference for Individual learning and a distaste for Group learning. He said that no one was willing to take responsibilities in Group learning (Interview 4, L84-85). He did not have comments on the other styles (i.e., Visual, Auditory, and Kinaesthetic). The reasons he gave was that each style had its own strengths and different styles are suitable for different situations and in learning different skills (Interview 4, L103-107).

Instead of just confirming Michael as a Tactile learner, a lot of additional information on his LLSYs was collected from the interview. Firstly, despite being reported to be a Visual learner by the PLSPQ, in the interview, Michael did not show a particular preference for it. Secondly, Michael gave his own views on Tactile preference. Finally, he gave the reasons for preferring an Individual style and not affiliating to the Group preference.

Peter (Group major)

Peter identified himself as a Group learner during the interview (Interview 5, L110). Upon further probing on his styles in learning different skills, he said that he learned alone when he was learning writing, listening and reading (Interview 5, L116-117). He also said he was a Kinaesthetic learner in watching television and a Tactile learner in playing Scrabble (Interview 5, L117-120). An Auditory style was preferred when he learned by using the internet, and finally a Visual preference was favoured when he watched television to learn English (Interview 5, L120-123). We can see that the findings from the semi-structured interview on his style preferences are mainly consistent with those of the survey questionnaire. The findings of the survey questionnaire indicate that Peter had minor Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Tactile preferences. However, instead of having Individual preference as a negligible / negative style preference, Peter identified himself as favouring this preference. The following response might even show that he had major Individual preference and no negative style preference:

‘I can’t say there are some styles which I don’t like. It’s only that I used Group and Individual preferences most of the time and use others in different situations.’ (Interview 5, L130-132)

When asked, Peter said the order of frequency in using the six preferences were Group, Individual, Tactile, Kinaesthetic, Visual and Auditory (Interview 5, L133-135). We should note that except a Group preference being most favoured, the order of other preferences did not correspond to the order of his scores on the PLSPQ. Again, there are

discrepancies in the findings between the quantitative and qualitative data as with those of Robert.

Peter said that he learned by the Visual and Auditory preferences more in the past but now he exhibited a greater variety of learning styles (Interview 5, L146-147). This might be due to contextual limitations. As mentioned earlier, secondary schools in Hong Kong use more traditional teaching methods and are more examination oriented. Therefore, Peter could not learn in other ways in the past. The vocational institution adopts a more communicative approach. Therefore, Peter could exercise more different styles in his English learning. As was also reported by Robert and will be seen below when we discuss Annie, this finding is contrary to Keefe's (1979) view that LLSYs are stable constructs. On the contrary, it seems to support Oxford's (1990b) view that LLSYs are a function of the situation, and more importantly, can be changed by training.

One comment made by Peter is valuable to our understanding of LLSYs:

'I can't promise using more different styles can let people to learn better English, but at least to me what you learn from using different methods will be more than what you learn from using only one way, for example, using your eyes. You'll learn different things by using different methods. If you always use the same methods to learn, you'll get bored easily.' (Interview 5, L149-155)

What Peter was suggesting was that he believed that exercising more different style preferences in one's learning had two benefits. The first benefit was that one could learn more (Interview 5, L149-153) and the

second was that learning was more interesting (Interview 5, L153-157). This echoed his earlier view on MCLLS use, that learning in interesting ways is an important issue to learners.

Lynn (Individual major)

Lynn was found to have major Individual preference, minor Visual and Auditory preferences and negative / negligible Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Group preferences. However, the qualitative findings show a slightly different picture. She regarded herself having major Visual, Auditory and Individual preferences (Interview 6, L116). Consistent with the quantitative findings, in the interview she reported very little affiliation to Kinaesthetic and Tactile preferences (Interview 6, L121-126), and was negative towards Group preference (Interview 6, L127-130).

Her reason for being negative towards Group learning was that she thought that her English standard might not match that of others and this could affect learning (Interview 6, L118-120).

Again, as happened in some discussions on MCLLSs, Lynn sometimes had problems in understanding questions which required her to recall information in the past:

Ir : Are there any differences in your learning styles in the past and now?

L : Now my writing is better. In the past I don't know the skills in writing a good essay. Now I know more and can write better.

(Interview 6, L133-135)

Like Peter, Lynn agreed that being more versatile in one's learning

styles could improve one's English learning (Lynn, Interview 6, L170-172)

Kelly (no major preference)

Contrary to what the quantitative findings indicate, Kelly identified herself as an Individual learner in the interview (Interview 7, L80). In addition, she showed her dislike for Group learning.

'It is because if we study in Group, the English standard of different Group members will be different. It is also very difficult to concentrate when I study in Groups. There was a time I studied in Group and we ended up chatting with each other.' (Interview 7, L80-84)

She also said that she favoured Tactile preference, but she did not learn in this way for contextual reasons (Interview 7, L85-86). Visual and Auditory preferences were also useful to her (Interview 7, L87). These findings were consistent with the three preferences identified as minor types in the questionnaire. However, when asked her style preferences in learning different skills, Kelly seemed to have problems in giving details (Interview 7, L89-91). Upon further discussion, she said that she learned through Visual and Individual preferences most of the time (Interview 7, L93).

The difficulties in verbalising LLSYs and the inconsistencies of reporting LLSY preferences of Kelly and other participants described below raise the issue that verbal reports may not be a reliable means of investigating LLSYs for some L2 learners, as pointed out earlier in the discussion of MCLLS use. It also shows the limitation of interviews. This methodological issue will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Kelly said she seldom studied English outside the classroom (Interview

7, L96-97) This might be a threat to effective MCLLS instruction, the development of LLSYs and learner autonomy. As pointed out in Chapter Two, an autonomous learner is at the same time a learner who can use learning strategies effectively, and autonomy is not only limited to learners in the classroom.

Annie (Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Individual major)

Consistent with the quantitative findings, Annie showed a negative feeling towards Group preference (Interview 8, L95) However, in the interview she said that the main styles she preferred to learn English were Individual, Visual and Auditory (Interview 8, L97-103). She also pointed out that these three preferences often went together (Interview 8, L98-99).

She commented that she seldom had the opportunities to learn her English with Kinaesthetic style preferences as she progressed on to higher forms (Interview 8, L100-103). The reason was contextual limitations, as learning English at higher forms was more examination oriented and she relied heavily on the Visual and Auditory modes.

The changes in her style preference, again, were due to contextual influences. Annie said that in the past there were not many opportunities for 'interactive' and Group learning (Interview 8, L110-113).

Echoing Peter's and Lynn's view, she agreed that using more different styles to learn can improve one's learning (Interview 8, L151-153).

Thus, contextual factors may limit the development of certain style preferences, such as Tactile preference. One example was given by Annie, who said that she like Kinaesthetic learning. She recalled enjoying playing games such as 'Head and shoulder, knees and toes' when she was young

(Interview 8, L100-103). However, as she progressed to higher levels, most of the time she could only exercise Visual and Auditory preferences (Interview 8, L110-113).

Like Kelly, Annie said she avoided reading English as much as possible and did not spend time on English (Interview 8, L30). This poses particular difficulty for MCLS instruction as well as the development of LLSYs and learner autonomy. Again, the implications for teaching and future research will be introduced in the next chapter.

A Summary of Qualitative Findings Relating to LLSYs

There are several common characteristics in the LLSYs of the eight participants. Firstly, they all mentioned the reasons for their preference for certain LLSYs. For example, sharing her work with others by Judy for favouring Group preference (Interview 2, L114-115), and easy understanding for favouring Visual preference (Interview 3, L103-105) and learning things not contained in books for favouring Kinaesthetic preference by Robert (Interview 3, L108-109). At the same time, the participants also gave reasons for not using certain preferences, including boredom for not using a Visual preference by Judy (Interview 2, L120-121), contextual reasons for not using a Tactile preference by Robert (Interview 3, L117-120) and Kelly (Interview 7, L85-86), boredom for not using an Individual preference by Robert (Interview 3, L120), and diffusion of responsibilities, not having sufficient English proficiency and difficulties in concentrating for not using a Group preference by Michael (Interview 4, L84-85), Lynn (Interview 6, L118-120) and Kelly respectively (Interview 7, L82-84). Some of these reasons participants gave were the same as they gave for not

using certain MCLLSs. We can see that there are some common reasons for not using MCLLSs and exercising LLSYs.

Two of the eight participants reported that their LLSY preferences were situation or task specific. Compared to MCLLS use, there were fewer situation- or task-specific preferences for LLSYs. Only Judy (Interview 2, L117-119) and Peter (Interview 5, L116-123) mentioned they preferred different styles in different situations and language tasks. Judy found Group preference particularly useful when translating Chinese into English because she could share the work with other group members (Interview 2, L117-119). Peter, on the other hand, exercised an Individual preference in writing, listening and reading (Interview 5, L116-117), a Group preference in speaking (Interview 5, L117-118), and a Tactile preference in watching television, playing Scrabble and visiting websites for learning English (Interview 5, L118-121). This, again, confirms Oxford's (1990b) view that LLSYs are a function of the tasks performed.

The influence of the examination oriented nature of English learning in Hong Kong on the LLSYs of interview participants is another common phenomenon found among the participants. Robert, Peter, and Annie all said that they had fewer LLSYs in the past compared to the time of interview because the English lessons in the past were too examination oriented (Robert, Interview 3, L127-131; Peter, Interview 5, L144-147; Annie, Interview 8, L108-113). We can also find this phenomenon in MCLLS use.

From the above and from earlier discussions, we have identified a number of contextual influences on the MCLLS use and the choice of LLSYs. This shows the importance of context in influencing the L2 learning.

More specifically, the contextual influences of availability of opportunity for practice and examination orientation of the education system were found to influence the choice of MCLLSs and LLSYs. These two contextual influences were also found to contribute to the changes in MCLLS use and LLSY patterns over time, and resulted in the instrumental motivation of the L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.

Three participants (Robert, Peter and Annie) expressed that exercising more styles can result in better English learning. Finally, as the case of MCLLS use, two participants (Lynn and Kelly) had difficulties in understanding and verbalising in the interviews, and the problem of low motivation in participating in the interviews of two participants (Shirley and Judy) were identified.

5.1.3 Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

A comparison of the quantitative and qualitative findings on the LLSYs favoured by the Chinese-speaking L2 learners at the institute reveals that there was a tendency of respondents to underrate the intensities of LLSYs in their survey. Two reasons, lack of understanding or misunderstanding, and changes of LLSYs over time, were suggested as the possible reasons for the discrepancies.

A summary of the findings of survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews on LLSYs is given in Table 25 below.

Table 25

Comparison of quantitative and qualitative findings relating to LLSYs of interview participants

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Survey/ Interview</u>	<u>Visual</u>	<u>Auditory</u>	<u>Kinaesthetic</u>	<u>Tactile</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Individual</u>
Shirley	Survey	Major	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor
	Interview	Major	Negative	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Minor	Not mentioned
Judy	Survey	Minor	Major	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor
	Interview	Negative	Major	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Minor ^a	Not mentioned
Robert	Survey	Minor	Major	Major	Major	Minor	Major
	Interview	Major	Major	Major	Negative	Major	Not mentioned
Michael	Survey	Major	Minor	Minor	Major	Minor	Negligible/Negative
	Interview	Major	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Major	Negative	Minor
Peter	Survey	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Major	Negative
	Interview	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Major	Major
Lynn	Survey	Minor	Minor	Negligible/Negative	Negligible/Negative	Negligible/Negative	Major
	Interview	Major	Major	Negligible	Negligible	Negative	Major
Kelly	Survey	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor
	Interview	Minor	Minor	Not mentioned	Minor	Negative	Major
Annie	Survey	Major	Major	Major	Major	Minor	Major
	Interview	Major	Major	Major	Negative	Negative	Major

^a: A learning style preference is classified as a minor preference when a participant reported it was preferred sometimes only.

Compared to the comparisons of the quantitative and qualitative findings relating to MCLLS use, the above comparisons of LLSYs show a greater degree of correspondence. In the comparisons of MCLLS use, about half of the quantitative data are inconsistent with the qualitative data. Among the 38 available comparisons of individual preferences of each of the eight participants, only 36.8% (or 14 comparisons) are inconsistent. Ten comparisons could not be made because of lack of information. In some interviews, the participants did not provide information on some of the style preferences. One example is Shirley, who could comment on two style preferences only. This lack of motivation, as mentioned earlier in the discussion of the qualitative findings relating to MCLLS use, is particularly evident in this second part of interview. Face-to-face interviews might not be a suitable means to collect information from participants like Shirley and Judy. The issue of the methodological limitations of semi-structured interviews, which was pointed out in Chapter Three, will be discussed in the next chapter.

Among the 14 inconsistent comparisons, 5 (or about 36%) are cases where a major preference was reported by a participant in the interview and the same preference was reported as minor preference in the questionnaire. This shows that, contrary to the case with MCLLS use, the participants underrated the intensity of LLSYs in the survey. This might contribute to the large proportion (33.3%) of the survey participants reporting no major preferences, which resulted in the findings of this study only partially confirming the findings of earlier studies such as Reid (1987), that Chinese L2 learners have multiple style preferences. These discrepancies may be

explained by a lack of understanding or misunderstanding on LLSYs and changes in LLSYs over time. The last reason is, again, confirmed by the comments of two participants, that there were changes in their learning styles over time.

5.2 MCLLS Use and LLSYs

This section provides the results of the investigation provoked by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*. This can allow us to achieve the second objective of this study of exploring the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong.

Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that there are positive relationships between MCLLS use and LLSY preferences as reported by survey respondents. However, the relationships found from quantitative data are different from the relationships found from qualitative data.

The quantitative analyses reveal that Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Auditory preferences were found to have the strongest relationships with total MCLLS use. The qualitative data fail to show this trend.

The number of major learning styles was found to be positively related to total MCLLSs use in the quantitative results, but the qualitative findings again do not show this trend. There is no difference in the MCLLS use of survey respondents having the each of the six preferences as their major styles. The qualitative analyses confirm this trend. However, the qualitative findings indicate that the Auditory learner and the participant who had no major style preference had the same level of MCLLS use as the Individual learner. Despite a large

number of discrepancies in the relationship between MCLLS use and LLSYs between the quantitative and qualitative data, the findings from the two sources were consistent in showing that there is no difference in the MCLLS use of research participants having each of the six major preferences.

The relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs as indicated by the findings of the survey are given below.

5.2.1 Survey

The quantitative findings from survey questionnaires indicate that there is a positive relationship between general MCLLS use and LLSYs as a whole. Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Auditory preferences have the strongest relationship with total MCLLS use in the order of strengths of relationship. This partially confirms previous findings. The number of major preferences was found to be significantly correlated with MCLLS use, both in terms of individual MCLLSs and MCLLS categories. The relationships are positive and moderate. Results from ANOVAs indicate that those with no major preference, each of the six major preferences and all major preferences differ in their use of *Self-monitoring*, *Setting goals and objectives*, and the MCLLS category of *Arranging and planning your learning*. However, no differences in MCLLS use were found when respondents who had no major preferences and all the six learning styles as their major preferences were excluded from the analyses.

Table 26 summarises the correlations between MCLLSs and LLSY types.

Table 26

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients between MCLLSs and LLSYs

<u>MCLLS / MCLLS category</u>	<u>Visual</u>	<u>Auditory</u>	<u>Kinaesthetic</u>	<u>Tactile</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Mean of sig. correlations</u>
<i>Finding out about language learning</i>	.13	.23**	.28***	.24**	.18*	.09	.23
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	.15*	.22**	.24**	.25***	.19**	.12	.21
<i>Paying attention</i>	.14	.19**	.20**	.27***	.20**	.07	.22
<i>Organising</i>	.12	.12	.20**	.14	.18*	.21**	.20
<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	.17*	.19*	.30***	.21**	.11	.18*	.21
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	.21**	.22**	.31**	.21**	.25***	.23**	.24
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	.20**	.29**	.35***	.21**	.28**	.16*	.25
<i>Arranging and planning your learning</i>	.19**	.23**	.33***	.24**	.19**	.22**	.23
<i>Centering your learning^a</i>	.14	.19**	.20**	.27***	.20**	.07	.22
<i>Evaluating your learning</i>	.21**	.30***	.35***	.27***	.28***	.17	.28
Total MCLLS	.21**	.27***	.36***	.28***	.24***	.20***	.26

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

^a: As measured by *Paying attention*. Details reproduced for easy comparisons.

A Kinaesthetic preference was found to have the highest correlations with three MCLLSs of *Self-evaluating* ($r=.35$), *Setting goals and objectives* ($r=.31$) and *Seeking practice opportunities* ($r=.30$). These are followed by the correlations between an Auditory preference and *Self-evaluating* ($r=.29$), a Kinaesthetic preference and *Finding out about language learning* ($r=.28$) and between a Group preference and *Self-evaluating* ($r=.28$). The significant correlation found between a Kinaesthetic preference and *Seeking practice opportunities* (.30) confirms the earlier finding of Rossi-Le (1995).

A Kinaesthetic preference again was shown to have the strongest correlations with MCLLS categories. Another strong correlation was found between a Kinaesthetic preference and *Evaluating your learning*, followed by that between a Kinaesthetic preference and *Arranging and planning your learning*. The LLSYs which were found to have the weakest correlations with MCLLSs are Visual and Individual preferences. At the same time, these two preferences were also found to be correlated with the smallest number of MCLLSs.

As the specific relationships between other specific MCLLSs and LLSYs which were based on the same conceptualisation as this study have not been previously reported, a comparison with previous findings could not be made.

A Kinaesthetic preference was found to be correlated strongly with total MCLLS use, followed by Tactile and Auditory preferences, whilst an Individual preference has the lowest correlation with total MCLLSs score. The means of the significant correlations between MCLLSs and MCLLS categories and LLSY types were calculated and are shown in the last

column of Table 27. The mean correlation of .26 between total MCLLS use and LLSY types indicates that, overall, there was a moderate positive relationship between MCLLS use and LLSYs. Apart from the MCLLS category of *Evaluating your learning*, which had the highest correlation coefficient of .28, other MCLLSs had similar magnitudes of correlations with LLSYs as a whole, ranging from .20 to .25.

The relationships between total MCLLS use and all the six types of learning styles are significant and at the same time moderate. This confirms the earlier finding of Rossi-Le (1995), that MCLLS use and LLSYs are significantly related. However, the significant positive relationships found above are contrary to the previous finding by Ko (1991) that MCLLS use and LLSYs are unrelated.

Pearson correlation coefficients between the number of major learning styles respondents reported (i.e., from zero to six) and the seven MCLLSs and the three MCLLS categories were computed. They are given in Table 27 below.

Table 27

Pearson correlation coefficients of number of major learning styles and total MCLLS use

MCLLS / MCLLS category	<u>r</u>
<i>Finding out about language learning</i>	.28***
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	.31***
<i>Paying attention</i>	.28***
<i>Organising</i>	.20**
<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	.28***
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	.31***
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	.27***
<i>Arranging and planning your learning</i>	.33***
<i>Centering your learning</i>	.28***
<i>Evaluating your learning</i>	.34***
MCLLS total score	.36***
*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001	

All the above coefficients are significant and their magnitudes can be regarded as moderate. We can conclude that there is a positive relationship between MCLLS use and respondents’ reported number of style preferences. This confirms the earlier view that learners with more style preferences use MCLLSs more frequently.

In order to test if there were differences in the MCLLS use of respondents having different style preferences, a series of Analyses of Variances (ANOVAs) was performed. In order to avoid double counting, thus affecting the validity of the findings, respondents having two to five major preferences were excluded from the analysis. This means that only

data provided by respondents having no, one and six major preferences were used for analyses (N=119). The frequency distribution of these selected respondents is given in Table 28 below.

Table 28
Frequency distribution of respondents having nil, one and six major preferences

<u>LLSY major preferences</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
No preference	64	53.8
Visual	5	4.2
Auditory	18	15.1
Kinaesthetic	4	3.4
Tactile	2	1.7
Group	10	8.4
Individual	9	7.6
All preferences as major	7	5.9
Total	119	100

ANOVA tests and subsequent Post-Hoc Scheffé tests showed that among all the MCLLSs, MCLLS categories and total MCLLS use, the above respondents only differed in their use in *Self-monitoring* (F=2.471(7,111), p<.05, All preferences as major > Individual > Visual > Group > Kinaesthetic > Auditory > Nil major preference > Tactile), *Setting goals and objectives* (F=2.973(7,111), p<.05, All preferences as major > Tactile > Individual > Visual > Group > Nil major preference > Auditory > Kinaesthetic), and finally *Arranging and planning your learning* (F=2.478(7,111), p<.05, All preferences as major > Tactile > Visual > Individual > Nil major preference > Group > Auditory > Kinaesthetic). In

order to further explore the existence of possible differences, another series of ANOVAs were conducted in which respondents having no major preferences and all preferences as their major preferences were excluded. The results show that there were no differences in the MCLLS use of respondents having each of the six preferences as their major style, which confirms Ko's (1991) finding. This means that the significant differences may be contributed by the number of preferences rather than the types of preferences. However, we should note that the number of respondents used in the analysis was quite small and this might affect the validity of the findings, as mentioned earlier in 3.5. The details of the results of ANOVAs are given in Appendix E.

5.2.2 Semi-structured Interviews

The findings from the semi-structured interviews indicate that a variety of individual MCLLSs and MCLLS categories were found to be more frequently used, and others less frequently used, by different learners who had different learning style profiles. The participant who had more major preferences was found not to use more MCLLSs. Learners having Kinaesthetic, Group and Individual preferences and the learner who exhibited no major style preferences made more use of MCLLS as a whole.

In order to explore the relationships between MCLLS use and LLYSs, Table 10, representing the qualitative findings relating to MCLLS use, is reproduced in Table 29. It should be noted that the focus of discussion here is the relationships between LLSYs and MCLLS use.

Table 29

Scores of MCLLS use of interview participants

	<u>Shirley</u>	<u>Judy</u>	<u>Robert</u>	<u>Michael</u>	<u>Peter</u>	<u>Lynn</u>	<u>Kelly</u>	<u>Annie</u>	<u>Mean</u>
<u>MCLLS / MCLLS category</u>	Visual	Auditory	Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Tactile, Individual	Visual, Tactile	Group	Individual	Nil	Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Tactile, Individual	--
<i>Finding out about language learning^a</i>	2	2	2	1	Not mentioned	2	3	3	2.1
<i>Self-monitoring</i>	1	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2.1
<i>Paying attention</i>	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	2
<i>Organising</i>	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	1.4
<i>Seeking practice opportunities</i>	2	2	3	1	1.5	2	1	1	1.7
<i>Setting goals and objectives</i>	Not mentioned	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1.3
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	Not mentioned	2	3	1	1	1	2	2	1.7
<i>Mean</i>	1.6	1.7	2	1.6	1.9	1.7	1.9	1.7	1.8
<i>Arranging and planning your learning</i>	1.3	1.5	2.0	1	2.2	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.7
<i>Centering your learning</i>	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	2
<i>Evaluating your learning</i>	1	2	2.5	2	1.5	1.5	2.5	2	1.9

^a: Low: 1, Medium: 2, High: 3

From the table, we can see that Shirley, as a Visual learner, seldom used *Self-monitoring* and *Organising*. An Auditory learner, Judy, seldom used *Organising* and *Setting goals and objectives*. Robert, who was more kinaesthetically inclined, used *Seeking practice opportunities* and *Self-evaluating* most, and *Paying attention* and *Organising* the least. Michael, who was primarily a Tactile learner, reported very low use of all the MCLLSs except *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention*, which he used highly. Peter, who was a Group learner, tended to use *Organising* more frequently than the other participants. In fact, he was the participant who used this strategy most frequently. The MCLLS which he used least frequently was *Self-evaluating*. Lynn, an Individual learner, seldom used *Setting goals and objectives* and *Self-evaluating*. Kelly, who did not have any preferences, used *Finding out about language learning* and *Self-monitoring* frequently but seldom used *Organising*, *Seeking practice opportunities* and *Setting goals and objectives*. Finally, Annie, who had five major preferences, used *Finding out about language learning* most but seldom used *Organising*, *Seeking practice opportunities*, and *Setting goals and objectives*.

In terms of MCLLS categories, the highest use was by Michael (a Tactile learner) in his use of *Centering your learning*. *Evaluating your learning* was also found to be highly used by Robert (a kinaesthetically inclined learner) and Kelly (a learner with no major preferences). *Arranging and planning your learning* was the strategy least used by Michael, *Centering your learning* was the strategy least used by Robert and *Evaluating your learning* was the strategy least used by Shirley (a Visual

learner).

In terms of MCLLS use as a whole, as indicated by the mean of the use of the seven MCLLSs, Robert (a Kinaesthetic learner), was the most frequent user. Peter (a Group learner) and Kelly (who had no major preferences) were identified as the most frequent users of MCLLS. They were followed by Judy (an Auditory learner), Lynn (an Individual learner) and Annie (who had five major preference), who all had the same level of total MCLLS use. Shirley and Michael were the least frequent users of MCLLSs. We should remember that Annie had five preferences as her major preferences. Based on the quantitative results, she was supposed to have the highest level of MCLLS use. However, her level of MCLLS use as revealed in the interview was even lower than that of Kelly, who had no major style preferences. In fact, Kelly was one of the most frequent users of MCLLSs. As we have seen above in the discussions of the qualitative data relating to LLSYs, what is important in determining the MCLLS use of the participants was the motivation for MCLLS use rather than their learning styles.

5.2.3 Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

As regarding the situation of MCLLS use and LLSYs, the qualitative data only partially confirmed the quantitative data. Despite the significant positive relationships between MCLLSs and LLSYs were found in the quantitative analyses, no relationships were found in the qualitative analyses. In addition, different patterns of relationships between individual MCLLS use, MCLLS categories and total MCLLSs with LLSYs were found in the quantitative and qualitative results.

The qualitative data indicate that the level of MCLLS use of the Auditory learner and the learner who had no major preferences to be the same as that of the Individual learner. Despite the significant positive relationships between the number of major preferences and the frequency of MCLLS use in the quantitative analyses, the qualitative data did not show this trend. Differences in the use of two MCLLSs (*Self-monitoring* and *Setting goals and objectives*) and one MCLLS category (*Arranging and planning your learning*) were found between participants who had no major preference, each of the six preferences as their major style and all the six preferences as their major styles according to the quantitative analyses. Again, the qualitative analyses fail to show this trend. The qualitative data confirm the quantitative finding of no differences in the MCLLS use of respondents having only one of the six major preferences.

A summary of the results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, is as follows. As reflected by the quantitative data, there was a prevalence of multiple style preferences among the respondents. Twenty-five percent of the survey respondents had only one major style preference. Other respondents either had no major preferences or had more than one preference. One-third of the survey respondents did not report any major style preferences, and about 42% had two or more preferences. Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were the three most prevalent preferences.

There are some additional findings relating to the LLSY patterns in this study. A Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were found to be weakly related to

respondents' perceived proficiency. The respondents' levels of interest in learning English were found to be related to Auditory and Group preferences. The only gender difference in LLSYs is that females were found to be more individualistic. Changes in LLSYs over time were reported by two participants. Both of them reported exercising a wider variety of preferences at present because more opportunities were available for exercising different LLSYs studying at the institute. The reasons for exercising certain preferences, as shown by the qualitative data, include easiness in implementation and sharing work with others.

The qualitative findings reveal that the reasons for not exercising certain styles to learn English are boredom, contextual limitations, diffusion of responsibilities, not having sufficient English proficiency and difficulty in concentrating. Finally two methodological issues, including difficulties in verbalising LLSYs and low motivation in participating in the interviews towards the end of interviews, were identified. A comparison between the quantitative and qualitative data indicated that there was a tendency of respondents to underrate the intensities of LLSYs in their survey. Two reasons, lack of understanding or misunderstanding, and changes of LLSYs over time, are suggested as the possible reasons for the discrepancies.

A summary of the results of the investigation provoked by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, is as follows. There are positive relationships between MCLLS use and LLSY preferences as reported by the survey respondents. However, the relationship found from quantitative analyses are different from the relationships found from qualitative analyses. The quantitative analyses reveal that

a Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Auditory preferences were found to have the strongest relationships with total MCLLS use. The qualitative data fail to show this trend.

The number of major learning styles was found to be positively related to total MCLLSs use from the quantitative results, but the qualitative findings again do not show this trend. No differences in the MCLLS use of the survey respondents having each of the six major preferences were found. The qualitative analyses confirm this trend. However, the qualitative findings indicate that the Auditory learner and the participant who had no major style preference had the same level of MCLLS use as the Individual learner. Despite a large number of discrepancies found in the relationship between MCLLS use and LLSYs between the quantitative and qualitative data, the findings from the two sources are consistent in showing that there are no differences in the MCLLS use of research participants having each of the six major preferences.

5.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a presentation of the findings relating to LLSYs. The patterns of LLYSs among survey respondents were identified and the relationships of LLSYs with respondents' background variables were introduced. Findings relating to the inter-relationships between different LLSY types were presented. Semi-structured interviews revealed the factors affecting LLSYs. Changes in LLSYs over time were identified by two interview participants. Several methodological issues in investigating LLSYs by using the two methods were identified.

The second part of this chapter focused on the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs. More specifically, the relationships of LLSYs and number of LLSYs with individual MCLLSs, MCLLS categories and total MCLLS

use, and differences in MCLLS use of participants with different style preferences were explored. The findings of the quantitative statistical tests were presented and the results were compared with the qualitative findings. Similarities and differences between the two types of findings were identified and discussed.

The next chapter aims at providing recommendations for teaching and further research. In addition, both theoretical and methodological issues raised in this and the last chapters will also be discussed.

6 Conclusion and recommendations

In the last two chapters, the results of the investigation provoked by the three research questions were given. This was achieved by presenting the findings relating to the prevalence of MCLLS use and LLSY preferences as well as the relationships between MCLLS use and LLSYs. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings were presented and similarities and differences between them were identified and discussed. Discussions followed the presentations of the findings and several theoretical and methodological issues were raised. Thus, the first objective of gathering descriptive information on the MCLLS use and LLSYs, as well as the second objective of exploring the relationships between them of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong were achieved in the last two chapters.

There are two focuses of this chapter. The first focus is drawing an overall conclusion from this study. The second focus is on providing recommendations where appropriate in light of the findings and the issues raised. Recommendations will be made for both the institute and general English teaching in Hong Kong. Recommendations for future research will be provided too.

6.1 Conclusion

To conclude, the findings of this study provide the results of the investigation provoked by the three research questions and achieved the two objectives of this study. In addition, some additional information which was useful in complementing our understanding of the areas focused on this study was gathered.

A summary of the results of the investigation provoked by the first Research Question, *What MCLLSs are used by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, is as follows. There was a medium to high

use of MCLLSs among the participants. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings show that *Finding out about language learning*, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* were the most popular MCLLSs among the research participants. *Organising*, *Seeking practice opportunities*, and *Setting goals and objectives* were the least used MCLLSs. *Arranging and planning your learning* and *Evaluating your learning* were found to be moderately used by the participants.

Additional findings related to the patterns of MCLLS use was that participants were found to have prior knowledge and experience of using MCLLSs, which were found to be piecemeal and ad hoc, and they learned MCLLSs informally outside classrooms. MCLLS use was found to be related to the participants' perceived English proficiency and interest in learning English. The reasons for using MCLLSs are easiness in implementation, wide applicability and affective control. The reasons for not using MCLLSs are contextual limitations, participants' lack of knowledge, sufficient English proficiency, time, and motivation. The situation in which most MCLLSs were selectively used was examinations or revision for examinations. Different MCLLSs were also used in different language tasks. Changes in MCLLSs use over time were reported by two participants. Finally, discrepancies between perceived importance and actual use of MCLLSs were found to be common among the participants.

A comparison of the quantitative and qualitative findings indicates that interview data revealed consistently lower patterns of MCLLS use than those shown by the quantitative data. Several methodological reasons were suggested for this discrepancy: survey respondents treating questions as tests of knowledge, research participants' lack of understanding or misunderstandings of MCLLSs, changes in MCLLS use over time, and the time difference in conducting survey

and semi-structured interviews.

A summary of the results of the investigation provoked by the second Research Question, *What preferred LLSYs are favoured by Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, is as follows. As reflected by the quantitative data, there was a prevalence of multiple style preferences among the respondents. Twenty-five percent of the survey respondents had only one major style preference. Other respondents either had no major preferences or had more than one preference. One-third of the survey respondents did not report any major style preferences, and about 42% had two or more preferences. Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were the three most prevalent preferences.

There are some additional findings relating to the LLSY patterns in this study. A Kinaesthetic and Group preferences were found to be weakly related to respondents' perceived proficiency. The respondents' levels of interest in learning English were found to be related to Auditory and Group preferences. The only gender difference in LLSYs is that females were found to be more individualistic. Changes in LLSYs over time were reported by two participants. Both of them reported exercising a wider variety of preferences at present because more opportunities were available for exercising different LLSYs studying at the institute. The reasons for exercising certain preferences, as shown by the qualitative data, include easiness in implementation and sharing work with others.

The qualitative findings reveal that the reasons for not exercising certain styles to learn English are boredom, contextual reasons, diffusion of responsibilities, not having sufficient English proficiency and difficulty in concentrating. Finally two methodological issues, including difficulties in

verbalising LLSYs and low motivation in participating in the interviews towards the end of interviews, were identified. A comparison between the quantitative and qualitative data indicated that there was a tendency of respondents to underrate the intensities of LLSYs in their survey. Two reasons, lack of understanding or misunderstanding, and changes of LLSYs over time, are suggested as the possible reasons for the discrepancies.

A summary of the results of the investigation provoked by the third Research Question, *Is there an association between the use of MCLLSs and LLSY preferences among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong*, is as follows. There are positive relationships between MCLLS use and LLSY preferences as reported by the survey respondents. However, the relationship found from quantitative analyses are different from the relationships found from qualitative analyses. The quantitative analyses reveal that a Kinaesthetic, Tactile and Auditory preferences were found to have the strongest relationships with total MCLLS use. The qualitative data fail to show this trend.

The number of major learning styles was found to be positively related to total MCLLS use from the quantitative results, but the qualitative findings again do not show this trend. No differences in the MCLLS use of the survey respondents having each of the six major preferences were found. The qualitative analyses confirm this trend. However, the qualitative findings indicate that the Auditory learner and the participant who had no major style preference had the same level of MCLLS use as the Individual learner. Despite a large number of discrepancies found in the relationship between MCLLS use and LLSYs between the quantitative and qualitative data, the findings from the two sources are consistent in showing that there are no differences in the MCLLS use of research

participants having each of the six major preferences.

How the methodology of this study has allowed us to achieve the objectives and provide the results of the investigation provoked by the three research questions are described below.

Both the survey and semi-structured interviews allowed us to achieve the two objectives of this study and its over-arching aim of gathering information on the use of MCLLSs and LLSYs and investigating how they are related among Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong. Both methods served their functions in providing useful information on both concepts. Triangulation of methods also allowed us to see how the two types of data complemented each other. This gave us a more holistic picture on the MCLLS use and LLSYs of the participants as well as revealing how they were related.

The survey served its function, with notable strengths, as pointed out in 3.2. It showed the prevalence and patterns of MCLLS use and LLSYs through easy-to-understand descriptive data. Correlational statistics showed the relationships between the two concepts. In addition, the survey ensured the validity and reliability of the findings through the use of standardised items and the high internal consistency of the questionnaire items. This allowed a comparison of the findings of this study with previous studies as well as comparisons of findings across contexts.

The semi-structured interview performed its functions in this study by providing us with details, such as the contexts and tasks in which certain MCLLSs were used and not used, as well as the reasons for the discrepancies between the perceived importance and actual use of MCLLSs. This information complemented

our understanding of MCLLSs and LLSYs obtained through the survey. In the semi-structured interviews, the researcher could take care of the emotions of the participants through flexibility over the contents and orders of questions asked. As we will see in 6.2 below, several insights for theory development, teaching and future research were generated by the qualitative data. The misunderstandings participants had and the clarifications the researcher made demonstrated that the semi-structured interview was a suitable method of investigation for topics like those of this study which were not familiar to the participants. All of the above are the strengths of semi-structured interview mentioned in 3.1.

Methodological triangulation demonstrated that the quantitative findings of this study provided us with breadth, such as the prevalence of the two phenomena, how they were related to the participants' background information and how they were related to each other. The qualitative findings, on the other hand, provided us with depth of understanding, such as the reasons for not using certain strategies. These are the two benefits brought by methodological triangulation as mentioned in page 51. The consistencies between the quantitative and qualitative data assured us of the validity of findings, while the differences between them provided us with an added understanding of the two concepts studied.

The recommendations in light of the findings of this study are given in 6.2 below.

6.2 Recommendations

The recommendations of this study, including those related to teaching and future research, are presented in this section. They are as follows.

6.2.1 Recommendations for Teaching

The recommendations for teaching of the findings of this study can be

broadly divided into three categories. The first two categories relate to instruction in MCLLS use and to LLSY options. This will be followed by suggestions on fostering learner autonomy. As we remember from Chapter Two, learner autonomy is highly related to the training in both language-learning strategies and styles.

In the discussions below, emphasis will be given to the teaching of the selected group of learners who participated in this study. Recommendations which are applicable to general English teaching in Hong Kong will be given where appropriate.

MCLLS instruction

Several findings provided us with recommendations for MCLLS instruction. They include the findings that respondents had prior knowledge and experience of MCLLSs, the popularity of certain MCLLSs, the inter-relationships between individual MCLLSs, situation- and task-specific MCLLS use, the reasons for using and not using MCLLSs, the relationships found between interest in English learning and MCLLS use, and changes in MCLLS use over time. The applicability of MCLLS instruction to the Communicative Approach will then be discussed.

The prior knowledge of and the high use of MCLLSs identified among the participants of this study can be both an advantage and a disadvantage for MCLLS instruction. It is an advantage because instructors can make use of the participants' knowledge and prior experiences during instruction and learners can therefore master MCLLSs more easily. It is a disadvantage because, as we remember, some of the participants' prior experiences were quite negative because of a lack of systematic training they received in the

past. This may create resistance to participate in MCLLS training. This also means that instructors should be aware of this possible barrier to effective MCLLS instruction.

An issue related to knowledge of MCLLSs is that from the qualitative findings, we know it is possible that L2 learners have limited awareness of their high to medium use of MCLLSs and, as some of the interview participants pointed out, their use of some MCLLSs was unconscious. Therefore, awareness training and helping learners to identify the strategies they have been using are effective steps at the beginning of LLS instruction (Oxford, 1990a; Cohen, 1998). This can not only increase learners' cognitive knowledge of MCLLSs but also build up their motivation to use them. At the same time, teachers may face resistance in raising learners' awareness. Sternberg (1998) points out that one important challenge for language teachers in improving the metacognition of learners is to make them see the importance of MCLLSs. This is a difficult task because many MCLLSs do not contribute directly to learning, as some of the interview participants suggested. This is especially true in the Hong Kong context, which is examination oriented. Most students who are facing the tremendous task of passing public examinations, including some of our interview participants, find it difficult to see the need to become competent in LLS use. Given these reservations, perhaps 'the most efficient way for learner awareness to be heightened is by having teachers provide strategies-based instruction to students as part of the foreign language curriculum' (Cohen, 1998, p. 65). Awareness raising, in turn, improves the effectiveness of LLS training (Huang, 2004).

Based on the findings of a study on the effects of modifiable factors on L2 English achievement among Chinese tertiary students, Wen and Johnson (1997) recommend that strategy training programmes should match students' assumptions on language learning. They also point out the usefulness of identifying beliefs about language learning and related strategy preferences. Exploring beliefs, attitudes and motivation in language-learning are important before formal instruction in MCLLS (Oxford, Crookall, Cohen, Lavine, Nyikos and Sutter, 1990).

Finding out about language learning, *Self-monitoring* and *Paying attention* were more popular among respondents because they are simple to understand, straight-forward in their implementation and have wide applicability. MCLLS instruction should start with this type of strategy in order to create successful learning experiences for learners. In addition, the use of these strategies may result in learners using other MCLLSs as well, as shown by the correlations found between all the individual MCLLSs.

A lot of information on the situation- and task-specific uses of individual MCLLSs was gathered through semi-structured interviews. This type of information provides us with useful implications for MCLLS instruction. One example is that instructors in MCLLS training can identify the situations or tasks in which the participants use certain MCLLSs. The design of activities can be based on this type of information so that learners can benefit most from the training. Another example is that strategies with wider applicability such as *Paying attention*, as mentioned above, should be introduced to learners first. After learners have the basic knowledge and skills in these strategies, the next step is to teach them how to choose further

strategies (Oxford et al., 1990).

As for the language tasks to be included in MCLLS training, it is suggested that in MCLLS instruction, teachers should follow the order of reading, listening, speaking and writing. This is because reading and listening are more receptive in nature. They are more appropriate given the limited proficiency and motivation of Chinese-speaking L2 learners undertaking vocational education in Hong Kong. Chinese learners have been found to prefer to focus on specific details in language learning. Reading and listening provide many opportunities for teachers to go through the details with learners. Speaking and writing impose higher cognitive demands on learners, and especially on those with limited proficiency. Therefore MCLLS relating to them should be reserved for the later part of the programme. Another recommendation is integrating MCLLS training for the four skills with subsidiary language skills, such as study skills, vocabulary learning, pronunciation, etc. (Scarcella and Oxford, 1992). However, this should be carried out after both learners and teachers have more experience in MCLLS training.

The reasons, including wide applicability, easiness in implementation and affective control were mentioned by the interview participants for using certain strategies. These reasons should be used as guidelines for designing and implementing MCLLS instruction. For example, as mentioned earlier, strategies such as *Paying attention* and *Self-monitoring*, which are applicable to a lot of situations and tasks, would be more attractive for L2 learners. As some of the interview participants suggested, they are easier to apply than some other strategies such as *Organising*. Affective control,

although not as popular as other reasons, should also be promoted to learners, preferably at a later stage. Learners should also be informed as to how MCLSs could help their affective control, such as enabling them to be calmer and more confident in learning English.

Quite a number of reasons were given by the participants in this study for not using certain strategies: for example, strategies were seen as contextually limiting, participants' difficulties in implementation, learners' lack of knowledge, sufficient English proficiency, time, and motivation. Designers of MCLS instruction programmes should take this into consideration. However, this does not mean that the MCLSs not used by the participants should not be taught, but rather that they should be given extra attention. To tackle the first possible barrier, ample opportunities for using MCLSs should be created in the L2 learning environment for learners. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the difficulties participants experienced in implementing MCLSs are due to a lack of knowledge. To tackle this problem, instructors must also make sure learners understand the MCLSs before they use them. Strategies such as *Organising*, which the participants found difficult, should be introduced after learners have mastered some straightforward ones. With better understanding on MCLSs and how to use them, learners will understand that time and English proficiency are not the factors which limit their use of MCLSs. How to raise the motivation for using MCLSs, which is also an issue in LLSY instruction, as reflected by findings of this study, will be introduced separately later in this section.

The findings of this study show that the participants' interest in learning

English is positively related to MCLLS use. Raising the level of motivation in learning English could be a way to enhance MCLLS use, and this can be done not only in MCLLS training but also in English teaching in general.

This study found that MCLLS use changes over time. This means that it is amenable to change and can be taught, as suggested in Chapter Two. As we remember, an important reason for the changes is context. Therefore, again, more opportunities should be given to learners to use a greater variety of MCLLSs, for example, *Seeking practice opportunities* in speaking.

The underlying logic of LLS instruction parallels that of the Communicative Approach. Strategic competence, or using the right strategies or orchestrating strategies, is the core aim of LLS instruction. This concept of strategic competence parallels the concept of communicative competence which underlies the Communicative Approach (CA). It is because a communicatively competent learner is able to manipulate the necessary resources, including language-learning strategies, to achieve the goal of effective communication. Oxford, Lavine and Crookall (1989) point out that CA fosters more effective LLS use, because many LLSs promote the communicative competence of learners. For example, the MCLLSs of *Paying attention* and *Self-monitoring* assist learners to focus on and evaluate their progress, which in turn allow them to move towards higher communicative competence. As we remember, the CA is adopted at the institute. Therefore, MCLLS instruction works hand-in-hand with the CA in facilitating the English learning of students. In addition to the applicability of LLS training to the CA, as Griffiths and Parr

(2001) point out, a strength of LLS theory is that it ‘operates comfortably alongside most other language-learning and teaching theories, and fits easily with a wide variety of different methods and approaches’ (p. 249). We should make good uses of this strength. However, the bias of the curriculum towards vocational communication and, as we have seen, the instrumental motives of the research participants and in all probability of the other students in the institute might cause resistance from both teachers and students in accepting MCLLS training. At present, the institute only has very limited resources for English teaching, so that putting aside resources for additional training (for both students and teachers) in MCLLS instruction is likely to meet resistance. Efforts should be made to fully inform school management of the benefits of MCLLS and LLSY training.

The above suggestions are selected from a list of recommendations suggested by previous researchers. They are selected for discussion because they are highly applicable to the findings of this study. Among some of the previous recommendations, Pearson and Dole (1987) suggest a model containing the steps of modelling, guided practice, consolidation, independent practice and application of strategies to new tasks. Chamot and Rubin (1994), on the other hand, list some components in successful strategy training, including teacher presentation, modelling, explaining to learners the reasons behind and the situations when strategies are used, and providing ample practice opportunities. Explicitly informing learners about the purpose of training to learners, developing suitable materials for specific skills in conducting training, integrating training with classroom activities and evaluation are suggested as the four main criteria for successful LLS

training (Wenden, 1987).

To summarise, ten recommendations for MCLLS training are appropriate:

1. Making use of learners' prior knowledge of MCLLSs and minimising the effects of negative prior experiences in MCLLS use.
2. Raising learners' awareness of their MCLLS use.
3. Matching MCLLS training with learners' assumptions on language learning.
4. Setting priorities for the MCLLSs to be trained.
5. Taking into consideration learners' situation- and task-specific uses of MCLLSs in designing MCLLS instruction.
6. Instructing MCLLSs in the order of reading, listening, speaking and writing.
7. Taking into considerations the reasons for using and not using MCLLSs in designing MCLLS instruction.
8. Raising learners' level of motivation in learning English.
9. Providing ample opportunities for learners to use a wide variety of MCLLSs.
10. Employing the Communicative Approach as a means for MCLLS instruction.

Apart from direct MCLLS training, LLSY training is also another way of enhancing MCLLS use. This is because both the findings of this study and of previous research show that they were related. Recommendations on LLSY instruction are suggested below.

LLSY Instruction

A number of findings relating to LLSYs have useful implications for LLSY training. They include

- the multiple style preferences found among the participants;
- the popularity of some LLSYs;
- the positive relationships found between individual LLSYs;
- the popularity of some LLSYs in certain situations and tasks and the reasons for these;
- the reasons for not favouring certain LLSYs;
- the relationship found between the number of LLSYs and MCLLS use;
- the positive relationships found between LLSYs and MCLLSs;
- the gender differences found in Individual preference;
- the finding of a lack of difference in the MCLLS use of research participants with different major style preferences; and finally
- the changes in LLSYs over time.

Multiple LLSYs preferences were found to be prevalent among the research participants of this study. One possible reason for the lack of prevalence of participants reporting major preferences was their lack of knowledge and exposure to LLSYs. In addition to encouraging and training learners to have a wider variety of LLSYs, in L2 teaching a wider variety of learning experiences should be provided in order that learners have the opportunity for learning in some of the other styles. For example, activities which require the use of ‘hands-on’ learning should be included, such as doing project or group work, or physical movements such as those suggested in the ‘Total Physical Response’ approach in addition to the

traditional visual, auditory and individual learning modes.

As with MCLLS use, some preferences were found to be more popular among the research participants. Given the popularity of Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Group preferences, these preferences should be introduced to learners first in conducting training on LLSY development. This may increase learners' number of styles as well, given the inter-relationships among different style preferences. As we remember, there is a positive relationship between the number of style preferences and MCLLS use. Training in one preference may not only have a single effect but an overall effect on LLSYs.

As with MCLLS use, the preference for learning in different LLSYs in different situations and tasks implies that the design of LLSY training should be selective. As we remember, whether learners can learn in interesting ways was regarded as one of the important reasons for participants' preference for LLSYs. The design of training should not only suit this learner characteristic but allow participants to benefit from interesting learning.

As with MCLLS use, a number of reasons were identified for favouring and not favouring certain preferences, the most important of which was context. As mentioned earlier, the classroom environment which learners can exercise the maximum number of LLSYs should be created. The reasons of diffusion of responsibilities in exercising Group preference, lack of sufficient English proficiency and difficulties in concentrating are all related to a lack of understanding or misunderstandings of LLSYs. This implies that, as the suggestions on MCLLS training described above, in

LLSY training instructors should make sure learners' have a good understanding of the different LLSYs and their value in their L2 learning.

It should be mentioned too that there is a positive relationship between the number of LLSYs and MCLLS use, and most LLSYs were found to be positively related to most MCLLSs. This further increases our confidence that LLSY training is an effective means of enhancing MCLLS use. In addition, in designing LLSY training we can focus on the styles which were found to be strongly related to MCLLS use.

Female learners should be given more opportunities to exercise their Individual preference. This can not only increase their variety of LLSYs but also heighten their motivation for exercising LLSYs as a result of their successful experience.

No differences in MCLLS use were found among learners with different major preferences. This implies that there is no need to consider the effects of individual preferences on different MCLLSs. This can simplify the design of LLSY training. As the results from the ANOVAs suggest, differences in MCLLS use may be due to the differences in the number of preferences. This finding, together with the finding of the positive relationships between the number of major preferences and MCLLS use and the prevalence of multiple style preferences, means that one goal of LLSY training should be helping learners to develop a maximum number of styles.

Despite not being as prevalent as in MCLLS use, the findings show that there are changes in LLSYs over time. This, again, shows that, as with MCLLS use, LLSYs are amenable to change and learners can benefit from LLSY instruction.

Several recommendations on LLSY training were found to be appropriate. They are exposing learners to different style preferences, giving priority to encouraging the development of and training in more popular preferences, taking into consideration learners' selective choice of styles in different situations and tasks, as well as their reasons for favouring and not favouring certain LLSYs, giving priorities to training preferences which were found to be strongly related to MCLLS use, giving female learners more opportunities for group learning, and, finally, maximising the number of preferences.

Another important issue is the participants' lack of motivation in using MCLLSs and exercising LLSYs to enhance their English learning. As suggested, the main reasons for this lack of motivation are the belief that strategies and style preferences are not useful, negative prior experiences and boredom. Suggestions as to how to tackle each of these problems are introduced below.

The belief that MCLLSs and LLSYs did not contribute to their learning directly might result in the discrepancies between the perceived usefulness and the actual use of MCLLSs found in this study. Therefore, the design of MCLLS and LLSY instruction programmes should focus not only on knowledge and skills but also on changing learners' beliefs on the values of MCLLS use and LLSYs in their L2 learning. In Hong Kong, contextual factors such as over-emphasis on passing examinations, as mentioned by the participants, contribute heavily to the belief that MCLLS and LLSY training are not useful for English learning. At the classroom level, learners as well as teachers are always inhibited by factors such as the narrowness of the

syllabus, large classes and traditional textbooks which neglect LLS instruction. Schools might be given pressures by parents and the government to produce good examination results and feel they cannot put resources and school hours into encouraging teachers to carry out MCLLS and LLSY instruction, or to develop appropriate instructional materials, not to mention incorporating instruction into the curriculum. This means that the promotion of MCLLSs and LLSYs should be harnessed to policy changes by the government.

In order to avoid L2 learners feeling frustrated towards using MCLLSs, as Shirley and Judy were in this study, careful planning of MCLLS instruction must not only focus on the knowledge and skills and their suitability to learners but also take into consideration affective elements. Sustained emotional support and encouragement should be given to each L2 learner in order that they have the motivation not only to learn about MCLLSs and LLSYs but also to use MCLLSs and exercising LLSYs outside the classroom and in their future L2 learning.

The final possible reason for the lack of motivation of using MCLLSs and exercising LLSYs is boredom. As we remember, interesting ways of learning English were mentioned repeatedly by the participants as important. Designers of instruction programmes should devise activities which can motivate learners. Without dealing properly with the learners' affective influences and feelings, effective training cannot be achieved.

In addition to the solutions to the above three possible sources of participants' lack of motivation of using MCLLSs and exercising LLSYs, learners' instrumental motivation in their L2 learning is another possible

source of their lack of motivation. The background information provided by the participants showed that they had instrumental reasons for learning English. The instrumental reasons can be useful elements in designing instruction programmes for the enhancement of MCLLS use and LLSY. For example, in the first stage of programmes, instructors can explain to participants the direct and indirect effects of such training on their academic achievement.

There are many other factors which contribute to successful training in MCLLSs and LLSYs: for example, Horwitz (1999) and Yang (1999) point out the importance of teacher beliefs, and Li (1993) focuses on teacher creativity in affecting MCLLS use. Space limitation here does not allow detailed discussions of these factors.

Learner Autonomy

As mentioned in Chapter Two, autonomous learners are able to manage and control their own learning, or, to put it simply, to apply MCLLSs successfully. This concept applies to LLSYs as well. Strategic competence is the core aim of MCLLS instruction and can be the aim of LLSY training as well. Therefore, what is important is not whether they continue to use the strategies they have learned and maintain the styles they have developed, but whether they develop their own strategies and styles for the new circumstances they find themselves in. This is one direction for learners to pursue to become autonomous. As some participants in the interviews suggested, there is a need for learners to make more habitual use of MCLLSs. This is especially true as learners might have resistance in adopting new modes of English learning, as mentioned above, and may not

use the LLSs they have learned. Apart from formal instruction and classroom learning, another important aim of MCLLS and LLSY training is to encourage the out-of-class use of strategies and choice of style.

In Chinese society, a particular barrier in promoting autonomy is the cultural tradition of social relations, which emphasises the inequality of teachers and students. This might cause resistance as the rationale of learner autonomy might contradict the teacher-centred classroom of Chinese culture. One way of breaking down the barrier in promoting autonomy in Chinese society is the use of large-scale simulation, which can transform the ordinary classroom which emphasises hierarchical relations. This has proved successful locally (Ho and Crookall, 1995), and more innovative attempts to promote learner autonomy, such as this one, should be carried out.

The English learning of two interview participants, Kelly and Annie, was only limited to the classroom. As mentioned above, this poses particular difficulties for the development of autonomous learners. Sufficient guidance should be given to learners in order that they can develop the habit of using MCLLSs and maximising the variety of their learning styles. This is a challenge for English teachers as we recall that participants in this study are mainly motivated by instrumental reasons with two interview participants reporting that they did not study English outside the classroom.

In conclusion, in designing and implementing training programmes designers and instructors of MCLLS and LLSY training should be sensitive to the numerous characteristics of learners, not only their MCLLSs and

LLSYs, but also their beliefs, attitudes and motivation, as well as the classroom environment and the wider societal contexts.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there are some recommendations for future research in light of the findings of this study and the issues raised in the discussion of findings. They are described in the next section.

6.2.2 Recommendations for Future Research

The recommendations for future research can be broadly divided into two areas, recommendations for theory development and for methodology. They are described below.

Theory Development

This study has some findings which have not been documented before. Some examples are the medium use of *Finding out about language learning*, the infrequent use of *Organising*, learners' self-perceived English proficiency and their interest in learning English being related to MCLLS use, the lack of popularity of Visual preference, the positive relationships found between Group preference and learners' self-perceived English proficiency. These findings remain to be confirmed by further studies and can be the starting points of further theory development.

What is important for theory development too is that discrepancies were found between the findings of quantitative and qualitative data. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the identification of the inconsistencies in the findings of the two types of data is the strength of methodological triangulation. The reasons for the inconsistencies can be useful insights for theory development.

The qualitative data generated some insights for future research. For example, Peter and Annie shared similar views on the benefits of using different styles to learn (Peter, Interview 5, L148-157; Annie, Interview 8, L151-153); Peter shared his ‘mini-theory’ on how the use of *Organising* led to better examination results; Michael set task-specific goals for his English learning - learning English as a means to, for example, read a book on certain subject and his conceptualisation of tactile learning which was different from Reid’s; Annie regarded ‘big goals’ as a powerful impetus for MCLLS use. These views have heuristic values for future research. These are some of the directions for future research in MCLLS use and LLSYs for theory development.

The situation- and task-specific uses of MCLLSs and exercise of LLSYs identified in the semi-structured interviews also provide insights for theory development. Similarly, the reasons for using and not using MCLLSs and exercising and not exercising LLSYs provide us directions for future research on theory development.

The findings from the semi-structured interviews indicate that MCLLS use and LLSY preferences change over time. This is contrary to the common conceptualisation that MCLLS use and LLSYs are stable. More research is needed to investigate the patterns of change and the factors affecting LLSYs or causing LLSYs to change.

The qualitative findings from the semi-structured interviews show clearly that motivation is an important factor influencing the use of MCLLSs and the development of LLSYs. More research in investigating why there is a lack of motivation in these aspects should be conducted. The

qualitative findings of this study also confirm several previous findings, that MCLLS use is not only related to LLSYs but also to a number of factors, for example, study habits, motivation and learners' beliefs on language learning. More research on how these concepts are related to these factors should be conducted so that we can obtain a more comprehensive understanding of them.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, up to now, LLS and LLSY research in the Chinese context has been scarce. Systematic research in providing evidence on the more frequent use of MCLLS among Chinese L2 learners and detailed information on their patterns of MCLLS use is needed. Despite the long history of research on the 'Good Language Learners' in the western context, Zhang (2003) observed that research in this aspect is scarce in the Chinese context. He also calls for more research in the different skill areas. Given the lack of research in LLSYs, there is also a need to investigate LLSYs of Chinese L2 learners and how they are related to different learner characteristics, including MCLLS use. In addition, more research is needed in investigating Chinese L2 learners in different contexts in these two aspects. The present study is conducted in the Hong Kong context. Its British colonial history, education system and the language-learning environment are totally different from the contexts of L2 learners in other parts of China and other Chinese communities in other parts of the world. Contextual influences might be the reasons why the findings of this study only partially confirm the findings of previous research conducted in different contexts. An example is the context of English learning in mainland China. In mainland China, English has been introduced in the

primary curriculum only recently. Most EFL teachers are not well-trained, and there is a severe lack of teaching and learning materials as well as language input from everyday life. These are some of the challenges teachers and learners are facing in China which do not appear in Hong Kong. The L2 learning of Chinese learners in other countries is influenced by contextual factors. Contextual factors affect their MCLLS use and LLSYs. More comparative studies in this aspect are required.

Unlike the situation in the western context, there have been few efforts to link LLS research findings to classroom applications in the Chinese context (Zhang, 2003). In the western context, substantial efforts have been put into developing LLS instruction programmes (for example, Dansereau, McDonald, Collins, Garland, Holley, Diekhoff and Evans, 1979; Chamot and O'Malley, 1987). No similar attempts which take into considerations the characteristics of Chinese LLS have been made in the Chinese context. This situation is even more serious in LLSY research. There has been little attention given to linking LLSY research to learner training, both in the western and Chinese context. More effort should be devoted to the development of context-specific LLS and LLSY instruction programmes and to research into the effectiveness of these programmes.

There are still many other issues relating to MCLLS and LLS use which remain to be explored in the Chinese context. An example is the metacognition and the metacognitive awareness found among the participants of the study. As mentioned in Chapter Two, metacognition is highly related to MCLLS use. How the nature of the tasks (Oxford, 1990a), gender (Politzer, 1983), personality (Ehrman and Oxford, 1988), teaching

methods (Politzer, 1983; Oxford, 1990a), etc., affect the choice of MCLLSs also remains to be further explored. We can find a similar situation in LLSY research. These are only a few of the areas to be investigated. The last limitation of this study pointed out in 3.5 is the effects of other possible influences on MCLLS use which may influence the relationships found between MCLLS use in this study. This limitation can be addressed by more research on how MCLLS use are related to other factors, as suggested in the section on the recommendations for theory development.

Methodology

As mentioned in 3.5, some of the limitations of this study are methodological. The recommendations in this part include suggestions for solving or minimising the negative effects of the limitations of this study, as well as the methodological issues raised in the discussions of findings in Chapter Four and Five. They are given below.

The small percentage of survey respondents having only one major preference might affect the validity of some statistical tests in this study. An example is that in ANOVA tests there were only two respondents having the Tactile preference as their only major preference. A larger pool of research participants should be recruited in future research on MCLLSs and LLSYs.

As mentioned earlier in 3.5, the difficulties recruiting suitable interview participants might affect the representativeness of the qualitative findings. Given the small percentage of research participants having a single major style, interview participants should be recruited from a larger pool of survey participants in future research when replication of the methods of this study is attempted.

The third limitation of this study as pointed out in 3.5 is the limitations of verbal reports and survey research. This resulted in the lack of understanding and misunderstandings of both survey respondents and interview participants.

Three methodological reasons were identified for the discrepancies between the quantitative and qualitative data. They include treating interview questions as tests of knowledge, lack of understanding and misunderstanding of MCLLSs and LLSYs, changes in MCLLS use and LLSYs over time and the time difference between conducting the survey and the interviews. Suggestions on how to tackle these problems are given below.

To tackle the first problem, it is suggested that different methods should be employed in future research so that we can minimise the effects of social desirability which is more prone to occur in surveys. Many good suggestions are available, for example, task completion (Oxford et al., 2004) and learner diaries (Carson and Longhini, 2002). Learner diaries allow us to obtain a more fine-grained picture of students' perceptions and values. The value of survey questionnaire such as the SILL employed in this study is undeniable. However, Oxford et al. (2004) recommend a further step of asking respondents to complete an actual task before requesting them to complete the questionnaire. They did a study of reading and found that the reported LLS used by respondents were different under three conditions, including when they were not requested to complete any task, when they were requested to complete an easy task, and when they were requested to complete a difficult task. Completion of tasks can be incorporated in

gathering information on LLS use in future research.

Using methods such as task-completion, think-aloud and questionnaire together with interview can also solve the second problem of misunderstanding, as research participants are given training and they can verbalise their MCLLS use and LLSY preferences more easily during and after task completion. The misunderstandings participants had relating to MCLLSs and LLSYs showed that there is a possibility that survey respondents might also have misunderstandings or a lack of complete understanding of some of the questionnaire items, as pointed out in 3.5. This might be a reason for the over-rating of MCLLS use and under-rating of LLSY intensities in the survey questionnaire results. An added advantage of using triangulation of method is that data gathered from different sources complement each other.

One possible reason for the discrepancies in the quantitative and qualitative findings is that MCLLS use and LLSYs may change over time, as suggested by the qualitative data. Although whether changes occurred within the short time gap between time of conducting the survey questionnaires and interviews is questionable, this factor may affect the findings of this study. The most suitable solution to this problem is conducting more research on the changes in MCLLS use and LLSYs over time as already pointed out.

Finally, the problem of time difference can be solved by improving the arrangements for data collection.

An issue highly related to the participants' misunderstanding of MCLLSs and LLSYs is the problems in classifications. There have been

debates over this issue since the pioneer attempt to identify the strategies used by the ‘Good Language Learners’. Despite considerable progress in classifying LLSs, problems in taxonomy still remain and many strategies are open to interpretation (Ellis, 1994). Given this uncertainty, there is a need to conduct research to further refine the existing classifications.

As mentioned in Chapter One, there have been repeated concerns in LLS research over the biased choice of subjects towards university students selected on a non-random basis because of the convenience of locating subjects and for comparison with previous studies (for example, Zhang, 2003; Lin, 2000). More future research on the LLS of learners from other backgrounds, such as the participants in this study, should be conducted. Within the institute, comparative studies of L2 learners pursuing different programmes, such as Certificates, Diploma, Higher Diploma, could also be conducted.

As we remember, the findings from the semi-structured interviews greatly supplement our understanding of the MCLLS use and LLSYs by providing details. This illustrates the lack of flexibility of survey questionnaires in gathering data. A possible reason of the discrepancies found between the quantitative and qualitative findings is the lack of understanding or misunderstanding of items in the survey questionnaires. This also illustrates the lack of flexibility of survey questionnaires, as respondents had few opportunities to clarify their uncertainties on the questionnaire items. Given the lack of flexibility of survey questionnaires as a data collection tool, it is suggested that future research should employ methodological triangulation whenever it is appropriate and with available

resources. Other types of triangulation, as described in Chapter Three, should also be included, if possible.

As mentioned in 3.5, one limitation of this study is that the data only provided a snap-shot view of the MCLLS use and LLSY preferences of research participants. Rees-Miller (1993) suggests that we should conduct more longitudinal studies into the details of learner training both in general and in specific instances. One reason for this need is the fact that strategy use and language-learning styles change over time. Although the findings of this study show that the changes were mainly due to contextual influences, up to now we have very little information on how the changes occur and the factors that contribute to these changes. Before we have more empirical support, we should be cautious in implementing LLS training programmes. Longitudinal case studies employing different methods, such as introspection and retrospection, allow us to have a more in-depth understanding of MCLLS use over time. This type of research is very meagre in the Chinese context. More this type of research should be conducted.

The last two limitations of this study mentioned in 3.5 are the high level of expertise for a multi-method approach and other influences on MCLLS use. The expertise required for a multi-method approach as this study can be addressed by employing a team approach in conducting research. A team consisting of expertises in both quantitative and qualitative research can lower the high demand on the expertise of a single researcher.

The lack of motivation in participating in the interviews was also another methodological problem which needs to be addressed. As we

remember, out of the three criteria of accessibility, cognition and motivation as suggested by Cannell and Kahn (1983), only the first one could be fully met in this study. To avoid the lack of or a fall in motivation in participating in the interviews as occurred in the cases of Shirley and Judy, arrangements such as simplifying the contents and shortening the length of interviews should be introduced. Including task-completions can also help to make the interviews more interesting and thus also motivating.

This chapter began with a presentation of the conclusion of this study. This was followed by recommendations for teaching and future research. Recommendations for teaching were given under three headings: MCLLS instruction, LLSY instruction and suggestions on fostering learning autonomy. Recommendations for future research contained suggestions on theory development and methodology.

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Appendix A

1. Permission from Professor Rebecca L. Oxford for the Use of Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Yahoo! Mail - manfredwu@yahoo.com

第 1 頁，共 2 頁



Print - Close Window

Date: Tue, 29 Mar 2005 21:42:00 -0800 (PST)
From: "Rebecca Oxford" <rebecca_oxford@yahoo.com>
Subject: Re: Permission for the Use of SILL for study purpose
To: "Wu Manfred" <manfredwu@yahoo.com>

Dear Manfred,

You certainly have my permission to use the SILL for the purposes of your study. My only stipulation is that I would like to receive a copy of the dissertation or other research when it is completed. I am very interested in what you will find.

If you are willing to send me a copy, you could do it by email attachment or else send it to:

Dr. R. Oxford
2311 Benjamin Building
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
USA

Would that be OK with you? I am looking forward to seeing what you will learn.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Oxford

--- Wu Manfred <manfredwu@yahoo.com> wrote:
> Dear Professor Oxford
>
> I am currently pursuing a Doctor of Education course
> in the TESOL Strand at University of Leicester. I am
> very interested to know how language learning styles
> and learners' beliefs on language learning are
> related to the use of metacognitive
> language-learning strategies. As I am going to use
> survey questionnaires as part of my research design,
> I would like to seek for your permission to use the
> items on metacognitive language-learnign strategies
> of your SILL.
>
> As I think you might be interested in the situation
> of Hong Kong, I'll keep you intformed of the
> findings.
>
> Yours sincerely
>
> Manfred Wu
>
>
> -----
> Do you Yahoo!?
> Yahoo! Small Business - Try our new resources site!

Rebecca L. Oxford

2. Permission from Professor Joy M. Reid for the Use of Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ)

Yahoo! Mail - manfredwu@yahoo.com

第 1 頁，共 2 頁

YAHOO! MAIL

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Subject: RE: Request for Permission of Using the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire
Date: Fri, 23 Sep 2005 13:58:33 -0600
From: "Joy Maurine Reid" <JReid@uwoyo.edu>
To: "Wu Manfred" <manfredwu@yahoo.com>

Dear Wu Manfred,

Thanks for writing to ask permission to use my Perceptual Learning Styles Preference Survey (PLSPS). Please consider this email as my formal permission to use the PLSPS with your learners in Hong Kong. (I'm not certain that I haven't already written you with this permission, but just in cast . . .)

One caveat: as you probably know, the target audience for my survey was international ESL students in intensive English language programs in the U.S. The survey has been normed for that population. If you use the survey on another population, the results may be unreliable and invalid. At most, you will want to re-norm the survey on your target audience (see my "Dirty Laundry" article in the Forum section of the *TESOL Quarterly* in 1990 for my norming processes). At least, if you are publishing your results, you will need to indicate that the survey was not normed for your population.

You might be interested to know that my first edited anthology is out of print, so I have regained the copyright. Neil Anderson at BYU has had the entire book on the WWW. So everyone can access it, for free, at:

<http://linguistics.byu.edu/classes/ling677na/learningstylesbook.pdf>

If you intend to do statistical analysis on your data, and if you intend to do any comparisons with my original data, I need to tell you about the re-scaling I did on my original data. Although the students answered the survey on a 1-5 scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree), my statistics mentor suggested that we rescale to 0-4 for ease of doing the statistical analysis. If you decide to rescale, that will not change the trends of your results, only the numbers. If you decide not to, and you want to compare your data with mine, you need to know that the trends might be similar, but your numbers will be higher.

Thanks again for writing. I'd be happy to hear about the results of your research, so stay in touch, please. And I hope that your students find the information as helpful as mine have.

Joy Reid

From: Wu Manfred [mailto:manfredwu@yahoo.com]
Sent: Mon 7/11/2005 1:36 AM
To: Joy Maurine Reid
Subject: Request for Permission of Using the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire

Dear Professor Reid

I'm currently a EdD student at the University of Leicester. My topic is how language-learning styles and learners' beliefs on language learning are related to the use of metacognitive language learning strategies among L2 learners in Hong Kong. I am using your conceptualisation on language-learning styles and therefore would like to request for your permission to use your questionnaire.

Please get back to me if you need further information.

Regards

Appendix B
Survey Questionnaire

English

We are carrying out a research on English learning, and would like to get your opinions. There are no right and wrong answers to the questions, and we would only like to get your valuable ideas. Information which you give will be kept confidential and only be used for research purposes. We would be grateful if you could spend 20 minutes to complete the following questionnaire.

Part I

People learn in many different ways. For example, some people learn primarily with their eyes (visual learners) or with their ears (auditory learners); some people prefer to learn by experience and /or by “hands-on” tasks (kinesthetic or tactile learners); some people learn better when they work alone while others prefer to learn in groups.

This questionnaire has been designed to identify the way(s) you learn best – the way(s) you prefer to learn.

Read each statement on the following pages. Please respond the statements AS THEY APPLY TO YOUR STUDY OF ENGLISH.

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree				
1. When the teacher tells me the instructions I understand better.	1	2	3	4	5					
2. I prefer to learn by doing something in class.	1	2	3	4	5					
3. I get more work done when I work with others.	1	2	3	4	5					
4. I learn more when I study with a group.	1	2	3	4	5					
5. In class, I learn best when I work with others.	1	2	3	4	5					
6. I learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the chalkboard.	1	2	3	4	5					
7. When someone tells me how to do something in class, I learn it better.	1	2	3	4	5					
8. When I do things in class, I learn better.	1	2	3	4	5					
9. I remember things I have heard in class better than things I have read.	1	2	3	4	5					
10. When I read instructions, I remember them better.	1	2	3	4	5					
11. I learn more when I can make a model of something.	1	2	3	4	5					
12. I understand better when I read instructions.	1	2	3	4	5					
13. When I study alone, I remember things better.	1	2	3	4	5					

14. I learn more when I make something for a class project.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I enjoy learning in class by doing experiments.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I learn better when I make drawings as I study.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture.	1	2	3	4	5
18. When I work alone, I learn better.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I understand things better in class when I participate in role-playing.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I learn better in class when I listen to someone.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I enjoy working on an assignment with two or three classmates.	1	2	3	4	5
22. When I build something, I remember what I have learned better.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I prefer to study with others.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I learn better by reading than by listening to someone.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I enjoy making something for a class project.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I learn best in class when I can participate in related activities.	1	2	3	4	5
27. In class, I work better when I work alone.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I prefer working on projects by myself.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to lectures.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I prefer to work by myself.	1	2	3	4	5

Part II

Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Work as quickly as you can without being careless. This usually takes less than 5 minutes to complete this part. If you have any questions, let the teacher know immediately.

Please choose the answers which best describes you.

	Never true				Always true	
1. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.	1	2	3	4	5	

2.	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I look for people I can talk to in English.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I think about my progress in learning English.	1	2	3	4	5

Part III

Sex: _____ Age: _____

1. How do you rate your overall proficiency of English? (Please circle)

Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. How important is it for you to become proficient in English

Very important Important Not so important

3. Why?

4. Do you enjoy learning English?

5. What has been your favourite experience in English learning?

6. In the coming weeks, you might be chosen by us to discuss about your views on English learning. If you are chosen, are you willing to attend an interview for about 1 hour?

Yes / No.

7. Could you leave your name and number so that we can contact you later?

8. Do you have other comments ?

**** End of Questionnaire. Thank you ****

Chinese

我們現正進行一項英語學習的研究，希望你能給我們一些寶貴意見。下列問題沒有對或錯的答案，我們只希望得到你的看法。你所給我們的資料會絕對保密，而資料只會用於研究上。希望你能花一些時間，去完成這份問卷。多謝合作。

第一部分

不同人用不同方式去學習。例如有些人靠看會學得更好、有些人則靠聽、或靠經驗和實踐；有些人單獨時學習會更有效，而有些人在小組中學習會更有效。問卷的這部份是設計來找出你喜愛的一種或多種的學習英語的方式。請就你學習英語的情況，圈出你對句子的同意程度。

	極 不 同 意				極 同 意
1. 老師指示下，我會更容易明白。	1	2	3	4	5
2. 我較喜歡通過課堂活動來學習。	1	2	3	4	5
3. 我和他人合作時，成效會更好。	1	2	3	4	5
4. 小組學習令我學得更多。	1	2	3	4	5
5. 在課堂中，我和其他同學合作時會學得最好。	1	2	3	4	5
6. 老師寫在白板令我學得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
7. 當他人在課堂上告訴我怎樣做，我會學得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
8. 當我在課堂上做習作時，會學得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
9. 我在課堂上聽到的，比我閱讀過的印象更深刻。	1	2	3	4	5
10. 我閱讀一些指示/指引時會記得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
11. 如果我能製作某些東西的模型，我會學得更多。	1	2	3	4	5
12. 當我閱讀指示/指引時，會理解得較易。	1	2	3	4	5
13. 我獨個兒溫習時會記得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
14. 當我要做課堂專題習作時，會學得更多。	1	2	3	4	5
15. 我喜愛通過做實驗來學習。	1	2	3	4	5
16. 繪圖有助我學得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
17. 上課時專心聆聽老師講課，助我易於理解。	1	2	3	4	5
18. 我獨個兒工作時，會學得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
19. 課堂中的角色扮演活動，助我理解。	1	2	3	4	5
20. 聆聽別人在課堂的說話，助我學得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
21. 我喜歡和兩三個同學一起做習作。	1	2	3	4	5

22.	當我要製作某些東西時，我會將學過的知識記得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
23.	我較喜歡和其他人一起學習。	1	2	3	4	5
24.	閱讀比聆聽別人說話令我學得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
25.	我喜歡為課堂專題習作製作一些東西。	1	2	3	4	5
26.	參與課堂相關活動有助我學習得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
27.	在課堂獨個兒工作，我會表現得更好。	1	2	3	4	5
28.	我較喜歡獨個兒做課堂習作。	1	2	3	4	5
29.	自己閱讀課本，較聆聽老師更能助我學習。	1	2	3	4	5
30.	我較喜歡獨個兒工作。	1	2	3	4	5

第二部分
請圈出句子對你的真確程度。

	完全不真確				完全真確
1.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	1	2	3	4	5

第三部分

性別： 男 / 女 年齡： _____

1. 你如何評價你的英語水平？（請圈出答案）
- 非常好 好 普通 差

2. 有一定英語水平，對你有幾重要？

非常重要 重要 不太重要

為什麼？

3. 你喜愛學習英語嗎？

4. 在學習英語中，你最深刻的經驗是甚麼呢？

5. 我們會以抽樣方式，在幾星期內挑選同學就問卷的內容搜集進一步資料，若你被選中，你是否願意花一點時間和我們傾談？

是 / 否

6. 請寫下你的姓名和聯絡電話，以便我們和你進一步聯絡。

7. 對這份問卷所提到的，你還有其他的意見嗎？

問卷完，多謝合作

Appendix C

Outline of Semi-structured Interviews

Thank you for being willing to take part in a follow up interview to the previous survey.
Can I first of all assure you that you will remain completely anonymous and no records of the interview will be kept with your name on them.

Introduction

Interviewer introduces himself, purpose of the interview, mentions confidentiality, ask permission to set up the tape, mentions how long the interviews will take, how the data will be analysed and providing them a summary of findings.

- How long have you studied English ? (warm up)

Part I : MCLLSs

Some people use meta-cognitive strategies when they learn English (Interviewer explains briefly what meta-cognitive strategies mean and gives examples).

- What do you think of these strategies?
- (If interviewee uses them) Could you give me some examples of how you use them?
- (If interviewee uses them) How frequent do you use them?

(Interviewer then probes for the specific aspects of reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar and vocabularies and possible circumstances, for example, during lesson, revision at home, assessments)

(Probe until topic exhausted)





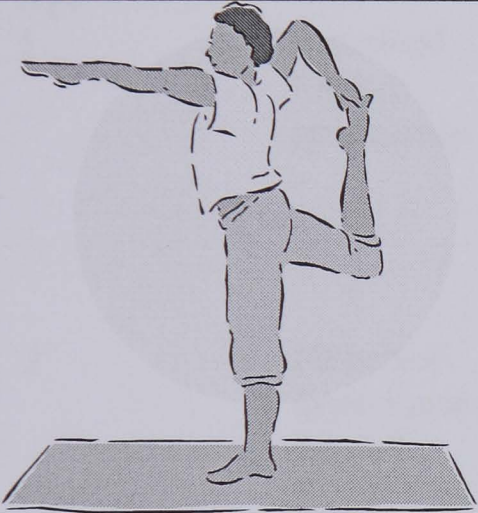
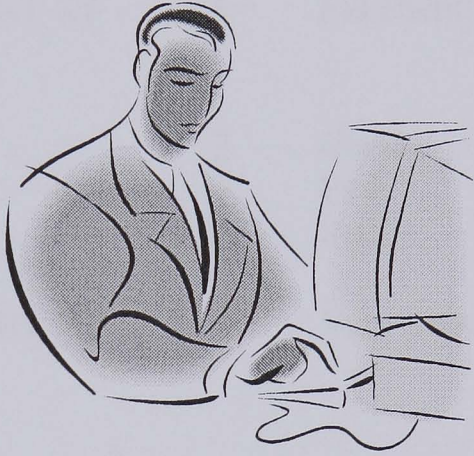
(If interviewee mentions he / she seldom or never uses the MCLLSs, interviewer will ask him / her to describe how he / she learns English)

Part II : LLSYs

People learn in many different ways. For example, some people learn primarily with their eyes (visual learners) or with their ears (auditory learners); some people prefer to learn by experience and /or by “hands-on” tasks (kinesthetic or tactile learners); some people learn better when they work alone while others prefer to learn in groups.

Now I would like to know more about the way(s) you learn best – the way(s) you prefer to learn.

Interviewer shows to interviewees a card containing the names of different learning styles (with pictures) as below:

Visual		Tactile	
Auditory		Group	
Kinesthetic		Individual	

- Which type of learners do you think you tend to be?
- Interviewer explores learners' styles in different situations, probing for examples and details.

(Probe until topic exhausted)

Part III: Other information

- How important do you think learning English is?
- Why do you learn English?
- What is (are) your goal(s) in learning English?
- What difficulties do you have in learning English?
- Do you have anything else to add on what we've discussed?
- Are there any questions you would like to ask about what we've talked about?

Closure

Interviewer thanks the interviewee and mentions he'll let the interviewee know when he has the summary of findings.

Appendix D

Coding Scheme of Quantitative Data

<u>Spreadsheet</u> <u>Column</u>	<u>Questionnaire</u> <u>Item</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Variable Label</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Value Label</u>
1		Serial No.			
	Part I				
2-31	1-30	PLSPQ	LSY1 – LSY30	1	Strongly Disagree
				5	Strongly Agree
	Part II				
32-40	1-9	SILL	MLS1 – MLS9	1	Strongly Disagree
				5	Strongly Agree
	Part III				
41	Sex	--	SEX	1	Male
				2	Female
42	Age	--	AGE		
43	1	Perceived English proficiency	PER_ENG_ST AND	1	Excellent
				2	Good
				3	Fair
				4	Poor
44	2	Perceived importance of English proficiency	IMP_ENG_ST AND	1	Very important
				2	Important
				3	Not so important
45-47	Reasons for importance of English proficiency	--			Open-ended question.
48	3	Like English learning or not	LIKE_ENG		Open-ended question
49-50	4	Favourite exoerience in learning English			Open-ended question
51	5	Willingness to participate in interview	INTERVIEW	1	Yes
				2	No
52-53	6	Contact information			
54	7	Other comments			Open-ended question

Appendix E
SPSS Printouts of t-tests and Analyses of Variances

T-test
Total MCLLS Use by Gender

T-Test

Group Statistics

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MLS_T	Male	106	28.49	5.241	.509
	Female	78	29.74	6.063	.687

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
MLS_T	Equal variances assumed	1.262	.263
	Equal variances not assumed		

Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
MLS_T	Equal variances assumed	-1.499	182	.136	-1.253
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.466	151.391	.145	-1.253

Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
			Lower	Upper
MLS_T	Equal variances assumed	.836	-2.902	.396
	Equal variances not assumed	.855	-2.942	.436

T-test
SILL Items by Gender

T-Test

Group Statistics

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MLS1	Male	106	3.23	.808	.078
	Female	78	3.32	.781	.088
MLS2SELFMON	Male	106	3.48	.842	.082
	Female	78	3.49	.833	.094
MLS3PAYINGATTENTION	Male	106	3.62	.867	.084
	Female	78	3.60	.873	.099
MLS4FINDINGOUTLL	Male	106	3.46	.875	.085
	Female	78	3.53	.908	.103
MLS5ORGANISING	Male	106	2.69	.919	.089
	Female	78	2.81	.854	.097
MLS6	Male	106	2.83	.971	.094
	Female	78	3.04	.889	.101
MLS7	Male	106	3.03	.910	.088
	Female	78	3.28	.881	.100
MLS8GOALSETTING	Male	106	3.03	.910	.088
	Female	78	3.19	.913	.103
MLS9SELFEVALUATING	Male	106	3.12	.847	.082
	Female	78	3.49	.908	.103

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
MLS1	Equal variances assumed	.257	.613
	Equal variances not assumed		
MLS2SELFMON	Equal variances assumed	.004	.950
	Equal variances not assumed		
MLS3PAYINGATTENTION	Equal variances assumed	.026	.872
	Equal variances not assumed		
MLS4FINDINGOUTLL	Equal variances assumed	.157	.692
	Equal variances not assumed		
MLS5ORGANISING	Equal variances assumed	1.128	.290
	Equal variances not assumed		
MLS6	Equal variances assumed	2.400	.123
	Equal variances not assumed		
MLS7	Equal variances assumed	.481	.489
	Equal variances not assumed		
MLS8GOALSETTING	Equal variances assumed	.040	.841
	Equal variances not assumed		
MLS9SELFEVALUATING	Equal variances assumed	3.365	.068
	Equal variances not assumed		

Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
MLS1	Equal variances assumed	-.792	182	.430	-.094	.119	-.329	.140
	Equal variances not assumed	-.796	169.113	.427	-.094	.118	-.328	.139
MLS2SELFMON	Equal variances assumed	-.048	182	.961	-.006	.125	-.253	.241
	Equal variances not assumed	-.048	167.022	.961	-.006	.125	-.253	.241
MLS3PAYINGATTENTION	Equal variances assumed	.155	182	.877	.020	.130	-.236	.276
	Equal variances not assumed	.155	165.418	.877	.020	.130	-.236	.276
MLS4FINDINGOUTLL	Equal variances assumed	-.478	182	.633	-.063	.133	-.325	.198
	Equal variances not assumed	-.475	162.534	.635	-.063	.133	-.327	.200
MLS5ORGANISING	Equal variances assumed	-.894	182	.372	-.119	.133	-.382	.144
	Equal variances not assumed	-.904	172.409	.367	-.119	.132	-.379	.141
MLS6	Equal variances assumed	-1.490	182	.138	-.208	.140	-.484	.068
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.510	173.448	.133	-.208	.138	-.481	.064
MLS7	Equal variances assumed	-1.895	182	.060	-.254	.134	-.518	.011
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.904	168.943	.059	-.254	.133	-.517	.009
MLS8GOALSETTING	Equal variances assumed	-1.207	182	.229	-.164	.136	-.432	.104
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.206	165.796	.229	-.164	.136	-.432	.104
MLS9SELFEVALUATING	Equal variances assumed	-2.797	182	.006	-.365	.130	-.622	-.107
	Equal variances not assumed	-2.768	159.335	.006	-.365	.132	-.625	-.104

T-test
PLSPQ Items by Gender

T-Test

Group Statistics

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
LSY1	Male	106	3.78	.851	.083
	Female	78	3.88	.806	.091
LSY2	Male	106	3.59	.974	.095
	Female	78	3.69	.827	.094
LSY3	Male	106	3.40	.963	.094
	Female	78	3.40	.811	.092
LSY4	Male	106	3.41	.870	.085
	Female	78	3.37	.870	.098
LSY5	Male	106	3.42	.871	.085
	Female	78	3.33	.878	.099
LSY6	Male	106	3.47	.886	.086
	Female	78	3.74	.844	.096
LSY7	Male	105	3.59	.851	.083
	Female	78	3.71	.775	.088
LSY8	Male	104	3.33	.875	.086
	Female	78	3.56	.862	.098
LSY9	Male	106	3.34	.914	.089
	Female	78	3.46	.817	.092
LSY10	Male	106	3.34	.882	.086
	Female	78	3.50	.769	.087
LSY11	Male	105	3.16	1.039	.101
	Female	78	3.18	.950	.108
LSY12	Male	105	3.36	.921	.090
	Female	78	3.54	.678	.077
LSY13	Male	106	3.41	1.076	.105
	Female	78	3.78	.847	.096
LSY14	Male	105	3.20	.892	.087
	Female	78	3.17	.844	.096
LSY15	Male	106	3.34	1.086	.105
	Female	77	3.39	1.041	.119
LSY16	Male	106	3.26	1.063	.103
	Female	78	3.19	.941	.106
LSY17	Male	106	3.72	.848	.082
	Female	78	3.82	.769	.087

SEX		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
LSY18	Male	106	3.24	.931	.090
	Female	78	3.46	.878	.099
LSY19	Male	105	3.10	.990	.097
	Female	77	3.22	.837	.095
LSY21	Male	106	3.19	.996	.097
	Female	78	3.33	.935	.106
LSY22	Male	106	3.34	.975	.095
	Female	78	3.45	.816	.092
LSY23	Male	106	3.26	.908	.088
	Female	78	3.33	.935	.106
LSY24	Male	106	3.16	.917	.089
	Female	78	3.28	.836	.095
LSY25	Male	105	2.92	.927	.090
	Female	78	2.97	.772	.087
LSY26	Male	106	3.25	.769	.075
	Female	78	3.37	.705	.080
LSY27	Male	106	3.02	.884	.086
	Female	78	3.24	.809	.092
LSY28	Male	106	3.06	.914	.089
	Female	78	3.19	.854	.097
LSY29	Male	106	2.93	.876	.085
	Female	78	2.96	.746	.085
LSY30	Male	106	2.99	.878	.085
	Female	78	3.17	.918	.104

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
LSY1	Equal variances assumed	.440	.508	-.819	182	.414	-.102	.124	-.346	.143
	Equal variances not assumed			-.825	170.871	.410	-.102	.123	-.345	.141
LSY2	Equal variances assumed	2.220	.138	-.718	182	.474	-.098	.136	-.367	.171
	Equal variances not assumed			-.736	178.244	.463	-.098	.133	-.361	.165

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
LSY3	Equal variances assumed	2.671	.104	-.009	182	.993	-.001	.135	-.267	.264
	Equal variances not assumed			-.009	178.623	.993	-.001	.131	-.260	.257
LSY4	Equal variances assumed	.001	.974	.261	182	.794	.034	.130	-.222	.290
	Equal variances not assumed			.261	166.169	.794	.034	.130	-.222	.290
LSY5	Equal variances assumed	.135	.714	.627	182	.531	.082	.130	-.176	.339
	Equal variances not assumed			.626	165.389	.532	.082	.131	-.176	.340
LSY6	Equal variances assumed	.512	.475	-2.098	182	.037	-.272	.130	-.528	-.016
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.114	170.340	.036	-.272	.129	-.526	-.018
LSY7	Equal variances assumed	.854	.357	-.936	181	.351	-.115	.123	-.356	.127
	Equal variances not assumed			-.949	173.654	.344	-.115	.121	-.353	.124
LSY8	Equal variances assumed	.010	.919	-1.821	180	.070	-.237	.130	-.494	.020
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.825	167.342	.070	-.237	.130	-.494	.019
LSY9	Equal variances assumed	.577	.449	-.935	182	.351	-.122	.130	-.379	.135
	Equal variances not assumed			-.951	175.207	.343	-.122	.128	-.375	.131
LSY10	Equal variances assumed	.729	.394	-1.286	182	.200	-.160	.125	-.407	.086
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.313	176.817	.191	-.160	.122	-.401	.081
LSY11	Equal variances assumed	.231	.631	-.117	181	.907	-.018	.150	-.313	.278
	Equal variances not assumed			-.119	173.314	.905	-.018	.148	-.309	.274
LSY12	Equal variances assumed	4.768	.030	-1.429	181	.155	-.177	.124	-.420	.067
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.494	180.989	.137	-.177	.118	-.410	.057
LSY13	Equal variances assumed	8.150	.005	-2.560	182	.011	-.376	.147	-.667	-.086
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.653	181.126	.009	-.376	.142	-.656	-.096
LSY14	Equal variances assumed	.155	.694	.256	181	.798	.033	.130	-.224	.291
	Equal variances not assumed			.258	170.791	.797	.033	.129	-.222	.289
LSY15	Equal variances assumed	.062	.804	-.313	181	.755	-.050	.160	-.365	.265
	Equal variances not assumed			-.315	167.774	.753	-.050	.159	-.363	.263
LSY16	Equal variances assumed	3.438	.065	.475	182	.635	.072	.151	-.226	.370
	Equal variances not assumed			.484	175.837	.629	.072	.148	-.221	.365
LSY17	Equal variances assumed	.474	.492	-.851	182	.396	-.104	.122	-.344	.136
	Equal variances not assumed			-.864	174.219	.389	-.104	.120	-.340	.133
LSY18	Equal variances assumed	.000	.995	-1.664	182	.098	-.226	.136	-.493	.042
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.679	171.212	.095	-.226	.134	-.491	.040
LSY19	Equal variances assumed	.998	.319	-.833	180	.406	-.116	.139	-.391	.159
	Equal variances not assumed			-.855	176.296	.394	-.116	.136	-.384	.152

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
LSY21	Equal variances assumed	.287	.593	-.999	182	.319	-.145	.145	-.430	.141
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.008	171.573	.315	-.145	.143	-.428	.138
LSY22	Equal variances assumed	3.123	.079	-.803	182	.423	-.109	.136	-.377	.159
	Equal variances not assumed			-.825	178.920	.411	-.109	.132	-.370	.152
LSY23	Equal variances assumed	.119	.731	-.504	182	.615	-.069	.137	-.340	.202
	Equal variances not assumed			-.502	163.293	.616	-.069	.138	-.341	.203
LSY24	Equal variances assumed	.079	.779	-.923	182	.357	-.122	.132	-.382	.138
	Equal variances not assumed			-.936	173.803	.350	-.122	.130	-.378	.135
LSY25	Equal variances assumed	3.967	.048	-.391	181	.696	-.051	.129	-.306	.204
	Equal variances not assumed			-.402	178.570	.688	-.051	.126	-.299	.198
LSY26	Equal variances assumed	.074	.786	-1.057	182	.292	-.117	.111	-.336	.101
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.071	173.456	.286	-.117	.109	-.333	.099
LSY27	Equal variances assumed	.008	.929	-1.767	182	.079	-.225	.127	-.476	.026
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.791	173.494	.075	-.225	.126	-.472	.023
LSY28	Equal variances assumed	.160	.690	-1.023	182	.307	-.136	.133	-.397	.126
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.034	171.936	.303	-.136	.131	-.395	.123
LSY29	Equal variances assumed	2.772	.098	-.224	182	.823	-.028	.123	-.270	.215
	Equal variances not assumed			-.230	178.049	.818	-.028	.120	-.264	.209
LSY30	Equal variances assumed	.594	.442	-1.319	182	.189	-.176	.134	-.440	.087
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.310	161.863	.192	-.176	.134	-.442	.089

T-Test

Group Statistics

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
VIS	Male	105	32.59	5.413	.528
	Female	78	34.05	4.547	.515
AUD	Male	104	35.58	5.351	.525
	Female	78	36.64	5.606	.635
KIN	Male	103	33.24	6.356	.626
	Female	76	34.50	5.788	.664
TAC	Male	103	31.84	7.078	.697
	Female	78	31.92	5.815	.658
GP	Male	106	33.34	7.343	.713
	Female	78	33.54	6.829	.773
IND	Male	106	31.42	7.478	.726
	Female	78	33.69	6.591	.746

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
VIS	Equal variances assumed	1.549	.215	-1.930	181	.055	-1.461	.757	-2.954	.032
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.980	178.225	.049	-1.461	.738	-2.916	-.005
AUD	Equal variances assumed	.021	.886	-1.301	180	.195	-1.064	.818	-2.678	.550
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.292	161.732	.198	-1.064	.824	-2.690	.562
KIN	Equal variances assumed	.716	.399	-1.358	177	.176	-1.257	.926	-3.084	.570
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.377	169.290	.170	-1.257	.913	-3.059	.545
TAC	Equal variances assumed	3.395	.067	-.080	179	.937	-.078	.985	-2.023	1.866
	Equal variances not assumed			-.082	177.775	.935	-.078	.959	-1.971	1.814
GP	Equal variances assumed	1.452	.230	-.187	182	.852	-.199	1.064	-2.298	1.900
	Equal variances not assumed			-.189	172.295	.850	-.199	1.052	-2.275	1.878
IND	Equal variances assumed	1.096	.297	-2.145	182	.033	-2.277	1.062	-4.372	-.183
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.187	176.099	.030	-2.277	1.041	-4.332	-.222

Uneway

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
MLS2SELFMON	Between Groups	10.442	7	1.492	2.471	.021
	Within Groups	67.020	111	.604		
	Total	77.462	118			
MLS3PAYINGATTENTION	Between Groups	8.248	7	1.178	1.997	.062
	Within Groups	65.500	111	.590		
	Total	73.748	118			
MLS4FINDINGOUTLL	Between Groups	6.810	7	.973	1.452	.192
	Within Groups	74.367	111	.670		
	Total	81.176	118			
MLS5ORGANISING	Between Groups	5.598	7	.800	1.197	.310
	Within Groups	74.134	111	.668		
	Total	79.731	118			
MLS8GOALSETTING	Between Groups	13.386	7	1.912	2.973	.007
	Within Groups	71.404	111	.643		
	Total	84.790	118			
MLS9SELFEVALUATING	Between Groups	5.558	7	.794	1.020	.421
	Within Groups	86.408	111	.778		
	Total	91.966	118			
SEEKINGPO	Between Groups	4.289	7	.613	1.437	.198
	Within Groups	47.331	111	.426		
	Total	51.621	118			

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) LLSY TYPE	(J) LLSY TYPE	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
MLS2SELFMON	NIL	VIS	-2.01	.75
		AUD	-.90	.69
		KIN	-1.86	1.20
		TACT	-1.96	2.31
		GROUP	-1.34	.68
		IND	-1.89	.23
		ALL	-2.01	.36
	VIS	NIL	-.75	2.01
		AUD	-.98	2.03
		KIN	-1.70	2.30
		TACT	-1.69	3.29
		GROUP	-1.33	1.93
		IND	-1.86	1.46
		ALL	-1.94	1.54
	AUD	NIL	-.69	.90
		VIS	-2.03	.98
		KIN	-1.87	1.42
		TACT	-1.94	2.49
		GROUP	-1.40	.95
		IND	-1.94	.49
		ALL	-2.05	.60
	KIN	NIL	-1.20	1.86
		VIS	-2.30	1.70
		AUD	-1.42	1.87
		TACT	-2.08	3.08
		GROUP	-1.76	1.76
		IND	-2.29	1.29
		ALL	-2.36	1.36
	TACT	NIL	-2.31	1.96
		VIS	-3.29	1.69
		AUD	-2.49	1.94
		KIN	-3.08	2.08
		GROUP	-2.80	1.80
		IND	-3.33	1.33
		ALL	-3.38	1.38
	GROUP	NIL	-.68	1.34
		VIS	-1.93	1.33
		AUD	-.95	1.40
		KIN	-1.76	1.76
		TACT	-1.80	2.80
		IND	-1.87	.87
		ALL	-1.97	.97
	IND	NIL	-.23	1.89
		VIS	-1.46	1.86
		AUD	-.49	1.94
		KIN	-1.29	2.29
		TACT	-1.33	3.33
		GROUP	-.87	1.87
		ALL	-1.50	1.50
	ALL	NIL	-.36	2.01
		VIS	-1.54	1.94
		AUD	-.60	2.05
		KIN	-1.36	2.36
		TACT	-1.38	3.38
		GROUP	-.97	1.97
		IND	-1.50	1.50

T-Test

Group Statistics

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
VIS	Male	105	32.59	5.413	.528
	Female	78	34.05	4.547	.515
AUD	Male	104	35.58	5.351	.525
	Female	78	36.64	5.606	.635
KIN	Male	103	33.24	6.356	.626
	Female	76	34.50	5.788	.664
TAC	Male	103	31.84	7.078	.697
	Female	78	31.92	5.815	.658
GP	Male	106	33.34	7.343	.713
	Female	78	33.54	6.829	.773
IND	Male	106	31.42	7.478	.726
	Female	78	33.69	6.591	.746

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
VIS	Equal variances assumed	1.549	.215	-1.930	181	.055	-1.461	.757	-2.954	.032
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.980	178.225	.049	-1.461	.738	-2.916	-.005
AUD	Equal variances assumed	.021	.886	-1.301	180	.195	-1.064	.818	-2.678	.550
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.292	161.732	.198	-1.064	.824	-2.690	.562
KIN	Equal variances assumed	.716	.399	-1.358	177	.176	-1.257	.926	-3.084	.570
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.377	169.290	.170	-1.257	.913	-3.059	.545
TAC	Equal variances assumed	3.395	.067	-.080	179	.937	-.078	.985	-2.023	1.866
	Equal variances not assumed			-.082	177.775	.935	-.078	.959	-1.971	1.814
GP	Equal variances assumed	1.452	.230	-.187	182	.852	-.199	1.064	-2.298	1.900
	Equal variances not assumed			-.189	172.295	.850	-.199	1.052	-2.275	1.878
IND	Equal variances assumed	1.096	.297	-2.145	182	.033	-2.277	1.062	-4.372	-.183
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.187	176.099	.030	-2.277	1.041	-4.332	-.222

Uneway

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
MLS2SELFMON	Between Groups	10.442	7	1.492	2.471	.021
	Within Groups	67.020	111	.604		
	Total	77.462	118			
MLS3PAYINGATTENTION	Between Groups	8.248	7	1.178	1.997	.062
	Within Groups	65.500	111	.590		
	Total	73.748	118			
MLS4FINDINGOUTLL	Between Groups	6.810	7	.973	1.452	.192
	Within Groups	74.367	111	.670		
	Total	81.176	118			
MLS5ORGANISING	Between Groups	5.598	7	.800	1.197	.310
	Within Groups	74.134	111	.668		
	Total	79.731	118			
MLS8GOALSETTING	Between Groups	13.386	7	1.912	2.973	.007
	Within Groups	71.404	111	.643		
	Total	84.790	118			
MLS9SELFEVALUATING	Between Groups	5.558	7	.794	1.020	.421
	Within Groups	86.408	111	.778		
	Total	91.966	118			
SEEKINGPO	Between Groups	4.289	7	.613	1.437	.198
	Within Groups	47.331	111	.426		
	Total	51.621	118			

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) LLSY TYPE	(J) LLSY TYPE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
MLS2SELFMON	NIL	VIS	-.628	.361	.880
		AUD	-.106	.207	1.000
		KIN	-.328	.400	.998
		TACT	.172	.558	1.000
		GROUP	-.328	.264	.980
		IND	-.828	.277	.267
		ALL	-.828	.309	.419
	VIS	NIL	.628	.361	.880
		AUD	.522	.393	.970
		KIN	.300	.521	1.000
		TACT	.800	.650	.981
		GROUP	.300	.426	.999
		IND	-.200	.433	1.000
		ALL	-.200	.455	1.000
	AUD	NIL	.106	.207	1.000
		VIS	-.522	.393	.970
		KIN	-.222	.430	1.000
		TACT	.278	.579	1.000
		GROUP	-.222	.306	.999
		IND	-.722	.317	.638
		ALL	-.722	.346	.737
	KIN	NIL	.328	.400	.998
		VIS	-.300	.521	1.000
		AUD	.222	.430	1.000
		TACT	.500	.673	.999
		GROUP	.000	.460	1.000
		IND	-.500	.467	.992
		ALL	-.500	.487	.994
	TACT	NIL	-.172	.558	1.000
		VIS	-.800	.650	.981
		AUD	-.278	.579	1.000
		KIN	-.500	.673	.999
		GROUP	-.500	.602	.998
		IND	-1.000	.607	.908
		ALL	-1.000	.623	.919
	GROUP	NIL	.328	.264	.980
		VIS	-.300	.426	.999
		AUD	.222	.306	.999
		KIN	.000	.460	1.000
		TACT	.500	.602	.998
		IND	-.500	.357	.961
		ALL	-.500	.383	.973
	IND	NIL	.828	.277	.267
		VIS	.200	.433	1.000
		AUD	.722	.317	.638
		KIN	.500	.467	.992
		TACT	1.000	.607	.908
		GROUP	.500	.357	.961
		ALL	.000	.392	1.000
	ALL	NIL	.828	.309	.419
		VIS	.200	.455	1.000
		AUD	.722	.346	.737
		KIN	.500	.487	.994
		TACT	1.000	.623	.919
		GROUP	.500	.383	.973
		IND	.000	.392	1.000

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) LLSY TYPE	(J) LLSY TYPE	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
MLS2SELFMON	NIL	VIS	-2.01	.75
		AUD	-.90	.69
		KIN	-1.86	1.20
		TACT	-1.96	2.31
		GROUP	-1.34	.68
		IND	-1.89	.23
		ALL	-2.01	.36
	VIS	NIL	-.75	2.01
		AUD	-.98	2.03
		KIN	-1.70	2.30
		TACT	-1.69	3.29
		GROUP	-1.33	1.93
		IND	-1.86	1.46
		ALL	-1.94	1.54
	AUD	NIL	-.69	.90
		VIS	-2.03	.98
		KIN	-1.87	1.42
		TACT	-1.94	2.49
		GROUP	-1.40	.95
		IND	-1.94	.49
		ALL	-2.05	.60
	KIN	NIL	-1.20	1.86
		VIS	-2.30	1.70
		AUD	-1.42	1.87
		TACT	-2.08	3.08
		GROUP	-1.76	1.76
		IND	-2.29	1.29
		ALL	-2.36	1.36
	TACT	NIL	-2.31	1.96
		VIS	-3.29	1.69
		AUD	-2.49	1.94
		KIN	-3.08	2.08
		GROUP	-2.80	1.80
		IND	-3.33	1.33
		ALL	-3.38	1.38
	GROUP	NIL	-.68	1.34
		VIS	-1.93	1.33
		AUD	-.95	1.40
		KIN	-1.76	1.76
		TACT	-1.80	2.80
		IND	-1.87	.87
		ALL	-1.97	.97
	IND	NIL	-.23	1.89
		VIS	-1.46	1.86
		AUD	-.49	1.94
		KIN	-1.29	2.29
		TACT	-1.33	3.33
		GROUP	-.87	1.87
		ALL	-1.50	1.50
	ALL	NIL	-.36	2.01
		VIS	-1.54	1.94
		AUD	-.60	2.05
		KIN	-1.36	2.36
		TACT	-1.38	3.38
		GROUP	-.97	1.97
		IND	-1.50	1.50

MLS2SELFMON

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
TACT	2	3.00
NIL	64	3.17
AUD	18	3.28
KIN	4	3.50
GROUP	10	3.50
VIS	5	3.80
IND	9	4.00
ALL	7	4.00
Sig.		.682

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

MLS3PAYINGATTENTION

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
TACT	2	3.00
NIL	64	3.30
IND	9	3.56
GROUP	10	3.60
KIN	4	3.75
AUD	18	3.78
VIS	5	3.80
ALL	7	4.14
Sig.		.494

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

MLS4FINDINGOUTLL

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
NIL	64	3.22
KIN	4	3.25
AUD	18	3.33
GROUP	10	3.40
IND	9	3.44
VIS	5	3.60
TACT	2	4.00
ALL	7	4.14
Sig.		.810

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) LLSY TYPE	(J) LLSY TYPE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
MLS8GOALSETTING	NIL	VIS	-.356	.372	.996
		AUD	.122	.214	1.000
		KIN	.344	.413	.998
		TACT	-1.156	.576	.774
		GROUP	-.156	.273	1.000
		IND	-.378	.286	.971
		ALL	-1.156	.319	.081
	VIS	NIL	.356	.372	.996
		AUD	.478	.405	.985
		KIN	.700	.538	.974
		TACT	-.800	.671	.984
		GROUP	.200	.439	1.000
		IND	-.022	.447	1.000
		ALL	-.800	.470	.892
	AUD	NIL	-.122	.214	1.000
		VIS	-.478	.405	.985
		KIN	.222	.443	1.000
		TACT	-1.278	.598	.711
		GROUP	-.278	.316	.998
		IND	-.500	.327	.937
		ALL	-1.278	.357	.089
	KIN	NIL	-.344	.413	.998
		VIS	-.700	.538	.974
		AUD	-.222	.443	1.000
		TACT	-1.500	.695	.700
		GROUP	-.500	.474	.992
		IND	-.722	.482	.943
		ALL	-1.500	.503	.271
	TACT	NIL	1.156	.576	.774
		VIS	.800	.671	.984
		AUD	1.278	.598	.711
		KIN	1.500	.695	.700
		GROUP	1.000	.621	.918
		IND	.778	.627	.980
		ALL	.000	.643	1.000
	GROUP	NIL	.156	.273	1.000
		VIS	-.200	.439	1.000
		AUD	.278	.316	.998
		KIN	.500	.474	.992
		TACT	-1.000	.621	.918
		IND	-.222	.369	1.000
		ALL	-1.000	.395	.498
	IND	NIL	.378	.286	.971
		VIS	.022	.447	1.000
		AUD	.500	.327	.937
		KIN	.722	.482	.943
		TACT	-.778	.627	.980
		GROUP	.222	.369	1.000
		ALL	-.778	.404	.811
	ALL	NIL	1.156	.319	.081
		VIS	.800	.470	.892
		AUD	1.278	.357	.089
		KIN	1.500	.503	.271
		TACT	.000	.643	1.000
		GROUP	1.000	.395	.498
		IND	.778	.404	.811

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) LLSY TYPE	(J) LLSY TYPE	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
MLS8GOALSETTING	NIL	VIS	-1.78	1.07
		AUD	-.70	.94
		KIN	-1.24	1.93
		TACT	-3.36	1.05
		GROUP	-1.20	.89
		IND	-1.47	.71
		ALL	-2.38	.07
	VIS	NIL	-1.07	1.78
		AUD	-1.07	2.03
		KIN	-1.36	2.76
		TACT	-3.37	1.77
		GROUP	-1.48	1.88
		IND	-1.73	1.69
		ALL	-2.60	1.00
	AUD	NIL	-.94	.70
		VIS	-2.03	1.07
		KIN	-1.47	1.92
		TACT	-3.57	1.01
		GROUP	-1.49	.93
		IND	-1.75	.75
		ALL	-2.65	.09
	KIN	NIL	-1.93	1.24
		VIS	-2.76	1.36
		AUD	-1.92	1.47
		TACT	-4.16	1.16
		GROUP	-2.32	1.32
		IND	-2.57	1.12
		ALL	-3.42	.42
	TACT	NIL	-1.05	3.36
		VIS	-1.77	3.37
		AUD	-1.01	3.57
		KIN	-1.16	4.16
		GROUP	-1.38	3.38
		IND	-1.62	3.18
		ALL	-2.46	2.46
	GROUP	NIL	-.89	1.20
		VIS	-1.88	1.48
		AUD	-.93	1.49
		KIN	-1.32	2.32
		TACT	-3.38	1.38
		IND	-1.63	1.19
		ALL	-2.51	.51
	IND	NIL	-.71	1.47
		VIS	-1.69	1.73
		AUD	-.75	1.75
		KIN	-1.12	2.57
		TACT	-3.18	1.62
		GROUP	-1.19	1.63
		ALL	-2.32	.77
	ALL	NIL	-.07	2.38
		VIS	-1.00	2.60
		AUD	-.09	2.65
		KIN	-.42	3.42
		TACT	-2.46	2.46
		GROUP	-.51	2.51
		IND	-.77	2.32

MLS5ORGANISING

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
KIN	4	2.25
AUD	18	2.33
GROUP	10	2.40
NIL	64	2.66
VIS	5	2.80
IND	9	2.89
TACT	2	3.00
ALL	7	3.14
Sig.		.836

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

MLS8GOALSETTING

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
KIN	4	2.50
AUD	18	2.72
NIL	64	2.84
GROUP	10	3.00
VIS	5	3.20
IND	9	3.22
TACT	2	4.00
ALL	7	4.00
Sig.		.191

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

MLS9SELFEVALUATING

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
KIN	4	3.00
NIL	64	3.02
VIS	5	3.20
IND	9	3.22
AUD	18	3.28
GROUP	10	3.30
TACT	2	3.50
ALL	7	3.86
Sig.		.905

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

ANOVAs
MCLLS Categories by LLSY Types

Oneway

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
MLS3PAYINGATTENTION	Between Groups	8.248	7	1.178	1.997	.062
	Within Groups	65.500	111	.590		
	Total	73.748	118			
EVAUTGYROWNL RNG	Between Groups	6.498	7	.928	1.842	.086
	Within Groups	55.927	111	.504		
	Total	62.424	118			
ARRANGINGANDPLANNI NGYRL RNG	Between Groups	97.326	7	13.904	2.478	.021
	Within Groups	622.880	111	5.612		
	Total	720.206	118			

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) LLSY TYPE	(J) LLSY TYPE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
ARRANGINGANDPLANNI NGYRLRNG	NIL	VIS	-1.15312	1.09999	.993
		AUD	.43576	.63201	.999
		KIN	1.04688	1.22089	.998
		TACT	-2.20313	1.70101	.974
		GROUP	.04688	.80550	1.000
		IND	-1.06424	.84332	.978
		ALL	-3.16741	.94304	.139
	VIS	NIL	1.15312	1.09999	.993
		AUD	1.58889	1.19752	.971
		KIN	2.20000	1.58908	.963
		TACT	-1.05000	1.98194	1.000
		GROUP	1.20000	1.29748	.997
		IND	.08889	1.32129	1.000
		ALL	-2.01429	1.38707	.952
	AUD	NIL	-.43576	.63201	.999
		VIS	-1.58889	1.19752	.971
		KIN	.61111	1.30944	1.000
		TACT	-2.63889	1.76565	.944
		GROUP	-.38889	.93429	1.000
		IND	-1.50000	.96709	.932
		ALL	-3.60317	1.05518	.125
	KIN	NIL	-1.04688	1.22089	.998
		VIS	-2.20000	1.58908	.963
		AUD	-.61111	1.30944	1.000
		TACT	-3.25000	2.05150	.924
		GROUP	-1.00000	1.40144	.999
		IND	-2.11111	1.42351	.946
		ALL	-4.21429	1.48477	.337
	TACT	NIL	2.20313	1.70101	.974
		VIS	1.05000	1.98194	1.000
		AUD	2.63889	1.76565	.944
		KIN	3.25000	2.05150	.924
		GROUP	2.25000	1.83492	.981
		IND	1.13889	1.85183	1.000
		ALL	-.96429	1.89932	1.000
	GROUP	NIL	-.04688	.80550	1.000
		VIS	-1.20000	1.29748	.997
		AUD	.38889	.93429	1.000
		KIN	1.00000	1.40144	.999
		TACT	-2.25000	1.83492	.981
		IND	-1.11111	1.08842	.994
		ALL	-3.21429	1.16739	.379
	IND	NIL	1.06424	.84332	.978
		VIS	-.08889	1.32129	1.000
		AUD	1.50000	.96709	.932
		KIN	2.11111	1.42351	.946
		TACT	-1.13889	1.85183	1.000
		GROUP	1.11111	1.08842	.994
		ALL	-2.10317	1.19380	.873
	ALL	NIL	3.16741	.94304	.139
		VIS	2.01429	1.38707	.952
		AUD	3.60317	1.05518	.125
		KIN	4.21429	1.48477	.337
		TACT	.96429	1.89932	1.000
		GROUP	3.21429	1.16739	.379
		IND	2.10317	1.19380	.873

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) LLSY TYPE	(J) LLSY TYPE	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ARRANGINGANDPLANNING YRLRNG	NIL	VIS	-5.3637	3.0574
		AUD	-1.9834	2.8550
		KIN	-3.6264	5.7202
		TACT	-8.7142	4.3080
		GROUP	-3.0364	3.1302
		IND	-4.2923	2.1638
		ALL	-6.7772	.4424
	VIS	NIL	-3.0574	5.3637
		AUD	-2.9950	6.1727
		KIN	-3.8827	8.2827
		TACT	-8.6364	6.5364
		GROUP	-3.7665	6.1665
		IND	-4.9687	5.1465
		ALL	-7.3237	3.2951
	AUD	NIL	-2.8550	1.9834
		VIS	-6.1727	2.9950
		KIN	-4.4012	5.6234
		TACT	-9.3974	4.1196
		GROUP	-3.9652	3.1874
		IND	-5.2018	2.2018
		ALL	-7.6422	.4358
	KIN	NIL	-5.7202	3.6264
		VIS	-8.2827	3.8827
		AUD	-5.6234	4.4012
		TACT	-11.1027	4.6027
		GROUP	-6.3644	4.3644
		IND	-7.5600	3.3378
		ALL	-9.8977	1.4691
	TACT	NIL	-4.3080	8.7142
		VIS	-6.5364	8.6364
		AUD	-4.1196	9.3974
		KIN	-4.6027	11.1027
		GROUP	-4.7737	9.2737
		IND	-5.9495	8.2273
		ALL	-8.2345	6.3059
	GROUP	NIL	-3.1302	3.0364
		VIS	-6.1665	3.7665
		AUD	-3.1874	3.9652
		KIN	-4.3644	6.3644
		TACT	-9.2737	4.7737
		IND	-5.2774	3.0551
		ALL	-7.6828	1.2542
	IND	NIL	-2.1638	4.2923
		VIS	-5.1465	4.9687
		AUD	-2.2018	5.2018
		KIN	-3.3378	7.5600
		TACT	-8.2273	5.9495
		GROUP	-3.0551	5.2774
		ALL	-6.6728	2.4664
	ALL	NIL	-.4424	6.7772
		VIS	-3.2951	7.3237
		AUD	-.4358	7.6422
		KIN	-1.4691	9.8977
		TACT	-6.3059	8.2345
		GROUP	-1.2542	7.6828
		IND	-2.4664	6.6728

Homogeneous Subsets

MLS3PAYINGATTENTION

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
TACT	2	3.00
NIL	64	3.30
IND	9	3.56
GROUP	10	3.60
KIN	4	3.75
AUD	18	3.78
VIS	5	3.80
ALL	7	4.14
Sig.		.494

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

EVAUTGYROWNL RNG

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
NIL	64	3.0938
KIN	4	3.2500
TACT	2	3.2500
AUD	18	3.2778
GROUP	10	3.4000
VIS	5	3.5000
IND	9	3.6111
ALL	7	3.9286
Sig.		.775

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

ARRANGINGANDPLANNINGYRL RNG

Scheffe^{a,b}

LLSY TYPE	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
KIN	4	10.5000
AUD	18	11.1111
GROUP	10	11.5000
NIL	64	11.5469
IND	9	12.6111
VIS	5	12.7000
TACT	2	13.7500
ALL	7	14.7143
Sig.		.250

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 5.818.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Oneway

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
MLS2SELFMON	Between Groups	4.068	5	.814	1.071	.390
	Within Groups	31.911	42	.760		
	Total	35.979	47			
MLS3PAYINGATTENTION	Between Groups	1.383	5	.277	.426	.828
	Within Groups	27.283	42	.650		
	Total	28.667	47			
MLS4FINDINGOUTLL	Between Groups	1.094	5	.219	.301	.910
	Within Groups	30.572	42	.728		
	Total	31.667	47			
MLS5ORGANISING	Between Groups	3.140	5	.628	1.062	.395
	Within Groups	24.839	42	.591		
	Total	27.979	47			
MLS8GOALSETTING	Between Groups	4.950	5	.990	1.435	.232
	Within Groups	28.967	42	.690		
	Total	33.917	47			
MLS9SELFEVALUATING	Between Groups	.433	5	.087	.112	.989
	Within Groups	32.567	42	.775		
	Total	33.000	47			
SEEKINGPO	Between Groups	1.111	5	.222	.528	.754
	Within Groups	17.665	42	.421		
	Total	18.775	47			

Post Hoc Tests

Appendix F
Summary of Transcriptions of Semi-structured Interviews

Interview 1
(Ir: Interviewer, S: Shirley, Visual major)

Comments
Shirley was not confident and quite apologetic. She seldom looked at the interviewer during the interview. Therefore, some answers were not clarified and the interview was short.

Transcription		Line	Remarks
Ir	: Before the interview starts, I would like to let you know that the content will be kept confidential and will be used for study purpose only. Your name will not appear in my thesis, and you can refuse to answer any questions which you feel uncomfortable with. Also, you can stop the interview any time if you don't want to continue. Since it is not possible to write down everything we discuss, may I request that the interviews to be recorded? Again, this will only be used for study purposes.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Introducing confidentiality and request for informed consent.
S	: Okay.	10	
Ir	: There are a lot of strategies which we use for language learning, for example, how to learn vocabulary, how to read passages. Today we are going to discuss some selected strategies. Another topic we will discuss today is learning styles. Learning styles are one's preferences on how to learn. For example, some people learn better by seeing and reading, while some people learn better by listening, some learn better in a group. The final part of this interview is discussions on your English learning in general. Are you ready?	11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	Outline of interviews introduced to S.
S	: Yes.	23	
Ir	: Can you tell me what strategies you have been using?	24	
S	: Memorising.	25	Cognitive LLSs.
Ir	: Do you use different strategies in different language skills, for example, listening, writing, and reading?	26 27	
S	: Yes. Maybe I'm not very interested in English. It's very difficult to learn.	28 29	S did not quite follow the discussion, and focused on her difficulties in learning English.
Ir	: Some people will plan their English learning. What do you think of this method?	30 31	Organising.
S	: It is useful.	32	
Ir	: Have you ever tried to do that?	33	
S	: Yes. I tried to plan for one or two days. But I gave up when I didn't understand.	34 35	
Ir	: I see.	36	
S	: I planned to do one or two reading comprehensions each day. When you checked the dictionary again and again and you still didn't understand, you got so frustrated.	37 38 39	S expressed her frustration in learning English.
Ir	: How about looking for opportunities to use English?	40	Seeking practice opportunities.
S	: I seldom read English outside classrooms, but I speak to others in English.	41 42	Not typical of seeking speaking opportunities, therefore Ir probed for

			further details.
Ir	: Who are the other people?	43	Ir clarified.
S	: I need to talk to other people in English in my job.	44	
Ir	: I see. How about paying attention to what others are speaking?	45	Ir probed for S's use of <i>Paying attention</i> .
S	: Mostly when I am speaking.	46	
Ir	: How about noticing your own mistakes, for example, when you are speaking or writing?	47 48	
S	: Speaking. When I realise other people don't understand what I say, I know that I used the wrong grammar or words.	49 50	
Ir	: Can you order these strategies in degree of importance, from 1 to 5?	51 52	Prioritise specific MCLLSs in order of importance (not frequency of use) to facilitate responses given S's difficulties / hesitations in answering the questions.
S	: Noticing my own mistakes, looking for more exposures of English, self-evaluation, planning and organising, and finding out how to be a better English learner.	53 54 55	
Ir	: So, do you notice your own mistakes very often?	56	<i>Self-monitoring</i> .
S	: No, because I don't have the time to do it.	57	Reason for not using <i>Self-monitoring</i> .
Ir	: When you look back, how you compare your use of strategies in the past and present?	58 59	Changes in MCLLS use over time.
S	: I need to check a lot of words in the dictionary now, because there are a lot of difficult words. The English I learned in the past was easier. I read more and listen more but there has been no major difference between the past and the present.	60 61 62 63	
Ir	: Shall we start the second topic on learning styles?	64	
S	: Yes.	65	
Ir	: People learn in different ways. Some people learn best when they see and read, but some people prefer to listen. Some people learn best when they practice, some learn best when they move their bodies. Some prefer to learn in groups while some prefer to learn alone by themselves.	66 67 68 69 70	Ir introduced meanings of LLSYs with the aid of pictures. The pictures were presented to S throughout the discussion.
S	: Okay.	71	
Ir	: I would also like to tell you that most people have different styles at the same time. Preferring listening, for example, does not mean that you do not prefer other styles. People may also have different styles in learning different subjects. Which type of learners do you think you are in your English learning? You can choose more than one types.	72 73 74 75 76 77	Explain to J that the preferences are not mutually exclusive. Ir pointed out learning styles may be different in learning different subjects.
S	: Learning by seeing and reading.	78	S as a visual learner.
Ir	: Can you give me some examples?	79	
S	: When I watch English channels on TV, I read out the English subtitles.	80 81	
Ir	: This is what you do at home. How about in school?	82	
S	: Sometimes I learn in a group because members who are better in their English can help the others.	83 84	
Ir	: Are there any styles which you never use or totally not suitable for you?	85 86	Identifying negative styles.
S	: Auditory, because if you don't understand the meanings, no matter how much you listen, you won't understand.	87 88	
Ir	: I would like to know how enjoyable learning English is to you in general.	89 90	
S	: ...	91	S showed rather negative

			attitude towards English learning. Therefore, Ir stopped the discussion on the topic.
Ir	: Do you think English is important?	92	S's perceived importance of English.
S	: Yes.	93	
Ir	: If you have a choice, would you learn English?	94	
S	: No. Definitely not. It is because English is too difficult. We don't have enough exposures in English.	95 96	S described her negative prior experiences in English learning.
Ir	: Which parts of English are difficult for you?	97	
S	: Fluency in speaking and writing.	98	
Ir	: This is almost the end of the interview. Let me summarise what we have discussed. We have discussed your English learning strategies, your learning styles, and the reasons why English is important. Do you have anything to add?	99 100 101 102	Summary.
S	: No.	103	
Ir	: Can I request if there is anything which I am not clear about this interview, can I call you and ask you?	104 105	
S	: Yes, just call my handphone.	106	

Interview 2

(Ir: Interviewer, J: Judy, Auditory major)

Remarks

This and subsequent interviews have the same structure as the first one. Therefore, the parts on introducing the purpose of research, informed consent, consent for tape recording (L1-23), explanations on LLSYs (L64-77), summaries of discussions and request for future contacts for further clarification (L99-106) of Interview 1 are omitted and only the parts relevant to the research questions are transcribed. These omissions also apply to subsequent interview transcriptions.

Comments

Judy was quite amicable but lacked confidence. She spoke very softly. Therefore, the interviewer maintained his sensitivity to her answers and tried not to ask her or give comments which might adversely affect her feelings.

<u>Ir/J</u>	<u>Transcription</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Remark</u>
Ir	: How important are learning strategies to you?	1	Warm up questions.
J	: Important. If you don't know the methods, you do not	2	J was referring to guessing
	remember (vocabulary) or understand, for example, reading	3	meanings from contexts.
	comprehension. If you don't know how to read, you do not	4	
	know the meanings of the words, then you don't know the	5	
	meanings of passages and you forget easily.	6	
Ir	: Can you tell me what strategies you have been using?	7	
J	: Memorising, memorise vocabulary, do more exercises, and	8	
	check the dictionary.	9	
Ir	: Do you use different strategies in different language skills,	10	
	for example, listening, writing, and reading?	11	
J	: Yes. When you read and listen, you need a lot of	12	
	vocabulary.	13	
Ir	: Have you ever tried to use different methods for you to	14	
	learn more?	15	
J	: Yes, but every time I try I forget.	16	
Ir	: What do you forget?	17	
J	: I forget the meanings.	18	
Ir	: How about the strategies?	19	Ir went back to methods.
J	: Teachers always tell us the same methods, I follow those	20	
	methods but I don't know why the results are always the	21	
	same (not satisfactory).	22	
Ir	: Some people plan their English learning. What do you think	23	Ir re-directed the discussion
	of this strategy?	24	to <i>Organising</i> .
J	: I believe this strategy works. However, every time I do	25	
	some English exercises and feel they are difficult, then I	26	
	give up. When I remember how important English is in the	27	
	society, I do not want to give up. I always feel that no	28	
	matter how hard I try, I am not doing things right and I want	29	
	to give up.	30	
Ir	: Can you give an example?	31	Ir probed for details of a
			specific example.
J	: For example, there were times that teachers told us to do	32	
	more exercises, and I found some exercises to do. I did	33	
	those exercises, but when teachers were not around, I didn't	34	
	know why those were the answers. Although I could check	35	
	the answers and found out why, but I felt this was very	36	
	time-consuming and I didn't what to do that. It's the best if	37	
	I have a teacher sitting next to me and explain everything	38	
	which I don't understand.	39	

Ir	: Have you ever written down a timetable and implement it?	40	Ir probed for more details on the use of <i>Organising</i> .
J	: Yes, I have.	41	
Ir	: Can you give me the details?	42	Probing for details.
J	: When I was studying Form 4, I had to prepare for the HKCEE. I planned how much time I needed to study, and so on. But the problem was, again, every time when I didn't understand, I wanted to give up and I had to force myself very hard to continue.	43 44 45 46 47	
Ir	: Have you ever tried to set a goal?	48	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
J	: The result was the same, it made no difference.	49	
Ir	: Some people will look for opportunities to look for more exposures in English, no matter in speaking, listening, reading, writing and learning vocabulary. What do you think of this strategy?	50 51 52 53	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>
J	: I do this, but I cannot always do this because I cannot concentrate for a long time.	54 55	Reasons for not using <i>Seeking Practice Opportunities</i> .
Ir	: Some people will try to speak to tourists when they have the opportunities, some will borrow English books for leisure, make friends with people from other countries through the ICQ.	56 57 58 59	Ir gave some specific examples to facilitate J's understanding.
J	: Seldom.	60	
Ir	: A related question is that are you interested in knowing how to be a better English learner?	61 62	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
J	: Yes, of course.	63	
Ir	: Do you pay attention when other people are speaking?	64	<i>Paying attention.</i>
J	: Yes, more in listening to other people speaking.	65	
Ir	: How about noticing your own mistakes, for example, when you are speaking or writing?	66 67	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
J	: Yes.	68	
Ir	: In what situation?	69	Ir probed for the situation-specific uses of <i>Self-monitoring</i> .
J	: When I am speaking. After I speak, I realise I make some mistakes.	70 71	
Ir	: How about in writing?	72	
J	: I always translate English from Chinese when I write.	73	
Ir	: Some people will evaluate how well they have learned from time to time. What do you think of this strategy?	74 75	<i>Self-evaluating.</i>
J	: Sometimes.	76	
Ir	: When?	77	
J	: Before the exams. I seldom do this in other situations.	78	<i>Self-evaluating</i> used in exams.
Ir	: Let me summarise what we have discussed. We've discussed planning and organising, setting goals, paying attention, looking for more exposures in English, noticing your own mistakes and evaluating yourself. Is that all?	79 80 81 82	J seemed to be quite passive up to this point.
J	: Yes.	83	
Ir	: Can you order these strategies in degree of importance, from 1 to 5?	84 85	Ir prioritised specific MCLLSs in order to facilitate J's responses.
J	: Planning and organising, finding out how to be a better English learner, looking for more exposures of English, noticing my own mistakes, and self-evaluation.	86 87 88	
Ir	: How about those you use most frequently and least frequently?	89 90	Ir simplified questions because J had difficulties in prioritising the MCLLSs she used.
J	: I use noticing my own mistakes the most, and finding out	91	

	how to be a better English learner the least.	92	
Ir	: What I observed is that the MCLLS you think is most important is not the one that you use most frequently. Can you tell me why?	93 94 95	Ir explored reasons the discrepancies between perceived importance and actual use of MCLLSs.
J	: I have no time.	96	
Ir	: You mean writing timetable, planning and setting goals.	97	
J	: Yes.	98	
Ir	: We've finished the first topic on strategy use. Do you have anything to add?	99 100	
J	: No.	101	
Ir	: If you want to add anything, you can do it anytime.	102	
J	: Okay.	103	
Ir	: Shall we start the second topic on learning styles?	104	
J	: Yes.	105	
Ir	: Which type of learners do you think you are in your English learning? You can choose more than one types.	106 107	
J	: Listening (pointing at the picture).	108	
Ir	: Can you say more?	109	
J	: I like listening to English songs.	110	
Ir	: This is what you do at home. How about in school?	111	Probing for LLSYs in different contexts.
J	: I don't have much time to do this in school. The English lessons are always very busy. I use (pointing at the pictures) Auditory style during lessons. Sometimes I use the Group style because we can help each other.	112 113 114 115	
Ir	: Do you use different styles in different situations?	116	
J	: Yes. When we need to translate some points from Chinese into English (when we need to do presentations), group work will be more efficient because we can share the work.	117 118 119	
Ir	: Are there any styles which you never use?	120	Identifying negative styles
J	: Visual, because I will fall asleep.	121	
Ir	: I would like to go back to the strategies. When you look back, can you compare how you use the strategies in the past and at present?	122 123 124	Comparisons of MCLLS use and LLSYs between present and the past. Ir went back to discuss MCLLSs because J felt more secured and talked more. Also, this retrospective question was asked only at this time when J had a better understanding of the topics.
J	: We have to learn more English now. We are also expected to be more independent in learning English now. In the past, a lot of meanings are given by teachers and textbooks.	125 126 127	
Ir	: How about your learning styles?	128	
J	: I read more and listen more but there has been no major difference between the past and the present.	129 130	
Ir	: I would like to know how enjoyable learning English is to you in general.	131 132	Attitudes towards English learning.
J	: Half and half. Learning one more language is useful. When I talk to other students in English and they understand, I get a lot of satisfaction.	133 134 135	
Ir	: Do you think English is important?	136	Reasons for the importance of English proficiency.
J	: Because you need it to survive in Hong Kong. If I can choose, I prefer not to learn English.	137 138	
Ir	: Why is it difficult?	139	

J	: It is not as simple as learning Chinese. Speaking is particularly difficult.	140
		141

Interview 3

(Ir: Interviewer, R: Robert, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile and Individual major)

Comments

Robert was mature and expressive. He was generous in giving his own views on various issues. More probing and follow-up questions were therefore asked in order to obtain more details.

<u>Ir / R</u>	<u>Transcription</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Remark</u>
Ir	: Can you tell me what methods you have been using?	1	A warm up question.
R	: When I speak with others in English and don't know how to express myself, I check the dictionary and then continue. Then I'll write down the words in a notebook. Sometimes I pay attention to the signs and banners which are bilingual and try to remember the English parts. Another way is to memorise vocabulary.	2 3 4 5 6 7	Cognitive LLSs.
	When I was young, my mother always forced me to memorise a lot of vocabulary and English story books.	8 9	
Ir	: How about learning grammar?	10	
R	: By doing exercises.	11	
Ir	: Actually the focus of today's discussion is on certain strategies which are more concerned with how you manage your English learning.	12 13 14	
R	: Okay.	15	
Ir	: So, do you organise your English learning?	16	<i>Organising.</i>
R	: No.	17	
Ir	: For example, do you plan your learning and do something like setting your timetable?	18 19	
R	: No.	20	
Ir	: Do you think this method is useful?	21	
R	: Maybe not.	22	
Ir	: Why?	23	
R	: It is because there is a limit to how much you can memorise. If you force yourself to memorise more than what you can, you might forget everything in the end.	24 25 26	Reasons for R perceived <i>Organising</i> not being useful.
Ir	: What you just said was about English learning in general. Do you do differently when you are studying for exams?	27 28	Ir probed for R's use of <i>Organising</i> in exams.
R	: During exams I just revise what I have learned.	29	
Ir	: I mean do you plan or set timetables on what you revise?	30	
R	: Yes, sometimes I do this.	31	
Ir	: Can you recall the details of the last time you used this strategies?	32 33	Since R was more expressive, more follow-up questions were asked.
R	: Um....(Silence).	34	
Ir	: Never mind. Can I ask do you have different plans when you revise different skills, for example, listening, reading, writing and learning vocabulary for exams?	35 36 37	Since R had difficulties in describing the details of the last time he used <i>Organising</i> , Ir started another topic of the use of <i>Organising</i> in learning different skills.
R	: I will practice a lot and memorise the words I need before exams on speaking. I'll do exercises before exams on grammar. I do not plan my revision before listening exams. I write and ask teachers to correct writings for me.	38 39 40 41	Use of <i>Organising</i> in different tasks.
Ir	: Some people try to find as many opportunities as possible to use English. What do you think of this strategy?	42 43	Since R had difficulties in giving further details on his use of <i>Organising</i> , Ir changed the focus to <i>Seeking</i>

* 6

R	: Yes, I will try to speak English with others and listening to more English by doing things such as watching TV.	44	<i>practice opportunities.</i>
Ir	: What else do you do?	45	
R	: Yes, I will chat with others by using the internet. I use proper English when I chat with them through the ICQ and MSN Messenger.	46 47 48 49	
Ir	: Are you interested in knowing how to be a better English learner?	50	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
R	: Yes, I am interested.	51	
Ir	: Are there any examples?	52	
R	: No. I have been using the strategies which I have mentioned. I have used them since I was young. Nobody told me how to learn English better over the years.	53 54 55 56	Ir probed for examples.
Ir	: How did you learn these strategies?	57	
R	: From my mother and one of my teacher.	58	
Ir	: How about setting goals for you to learn English?	59	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
R	: My goal is to be able to listen and speak effectively, to communicate.	60 61	
Ir	: Do you evaluate your learning progress from time to time against the goals you have set?	62	<i>Self-evaluating.</i>
R	: I always do that. I always think about how much I have achieved and what I have not done properly.	63 64 65	
Ir	: Do you notice the mistakes you made when you learn English?	66	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
R	: Do you mean telling others the mistakes they have made?	67	
Ir	: I mean your own mistakes. For example when you write, do you frequently pay attention to whether you have made any mistakes and what mistakes you have made?	68 69 70 71	Seeing R had difficulties in providing answers, Ir gave an example.
R	: Yes.	72	
Ir	: How about reading, speaking and listening?	73	<i>Use of Self-monitoring in different skills.</i>
R	: I used this strategy more in writing and reading, but seldom use it in speaking and listening.	74 75	
Ir	: Why?	76	<i>Probing for details.</i>
R	: It is because you have something written down in writing and you can look back and find out what mistakes you have made. However, when you speak, you don't know whether you have made mistakes.	77 78 79 80	Reasons for not using <i>Self-monitoring</i> ,
Ir	: Do you pay attention to others when they speak?	81	<i>Paying attention.</i>
R	: As I said, it is not possible to do this when you are speaking to others.	82 83	
Ir	: From what we have discussed, I see that you are quite positive towards MCLLSs, as you always want to know more about English learning.	84 85 86	
R	: Maybe it is because I regard English as very important.	87	R initiated discussion on his perceived importance of English proficiency.
Ir	: Why?	88	
R	: It is very important in your job. When others speak with you in English and you don't know how to respond in your job, it is very embarrassing. When I compare English and Putonghua, I think English is more important.	89 90 91 92	Reasons for the importance of English proficiency.
Ir	: Do you have other reasons for thinking English as important?	93 94	
R	: When you go out with friends, you also need to know some English. Or when you go abroad for holidays, you also need English. English is an international language, and people in every country use it.	95 96 97 98	

Ir	: Another topic I planned to discuss today is learning styles. (Ir explained the six LLSYs with the aid of pictures)	99 100	Discussion on LLSYs.
	Which type(s) of learner(s) do you think you are?	101	
R	: Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic and Group.	102	
	Reading allows me to learn English more easily because if I	103	
	can see the written form, it would be easier for me to learn,	104	
	for example, the vocabulary and grammar. If you just say	105	
	the words suddenly to me, I might not know them	106	
	immediately. Listen to more different accents allows me to	107	
	improve my English. About Kinesthetic, I think there are a	108	
	lot of things in English which you cannot learn from books.	109	
	Sometimes through activities such as exercises you can	110	
	know the meanings of the words. If you learn in groups,	111	
	you can train your oral English and listening. It will also be	112	
	less boring because you can use English to talk about other	113	
	things.	114	
Ir	: May I know why you think the other two are less important	115	Probing for the reasons for
	to you?	116	Tactile and Individual being
			less important to R.
R	: I think we seldom have the chance of using learning by	117	
	doing except in learning listening and speaking by talking	118	
	to foreigners. There is little motivation for learning if you	119	
	are alone. It is also more boring if you learn alone.	120	
Ir	: So far we have focused on learning listening and speaking.	121	Use of different styles in
	Do you use different styles when you learn other skills such	122	different skills.
	as writing, reading, etc.?	123	
R	: I don't think there are any differences.	124	
Ir	: Are there any differences in your styles now as compared	125	Comparison of LLSYs
	to the past?	126	between the present and the
			past.
R	: In the past I mainly used Visual and Auditory. Now I use	127	
	others as well.	128	
Ir	: May I know why?	129	Reasons for the changes.
R	: It is because in the past there were not many opportunities	130	
	to use other styles.	131	
Ir	: Suppose there is a workshop on helping students to know	132	Probing for R's views on his
	more about their learning strategies and learning styles as	133	classmates' participation of a
	well as how to use them, do you think your classmates will	134	workshop on MCLLSs and
	join?		LLSYs.
R	: No. I don't think so.	135	
Ir	: May I know why?	136	
R	: It is because people may not be willing to change their	137	
	habits.	138	
Ir	: Let's go back to the topic on the importance of English.	139	Reasons for the importance
	You've just said that you learn English for career purposes,	140	of English proficiency.
	travelling and communicating with others. Your goal of	141	
	learning English is to be able to communicate effectively	142	
	with the English-speaking people. Is that right?	143	
R	: Yes.	144	
Ir	: Can you give me more details on this goal? For example,	145	Goals of learning English.
	some people may have the goal of learning English to the	146	
	level that allows them to stay and work in an	147	
	English-speaking country, while others may have the goal	148	
	of being able to communicate effectively with others in the	149	
	workplaces in Hong Kong.	150	
R	: Working in Hong Kong and be able to communicate with	151	
	foreigners in the workplace.	152	

Interview 4

(Ir: Interviewer, M: Michael, Tactile and Visual major)

Comments:

Michael was very direct and logical. Therefore, interviewer asked more direct questions and confronted him for clarification.

<u>Ir / M</u>	<u>Transcription</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Remark</u>
Ir	: What do you think of seeking opportunities to use English?	1	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>
M	: I do not take a lot of initiatives in finding opportunities to use English, especially when I talk. It is not necessary because if I need to use it, most of the time I can do it (speak English).	2 3 4	
Ir	: I'm sorry but what I think is that if one use more English they will be much better at it. Am I right?	5 6	Ir clarified the seemingly contradiction in M's responses.
M	: If I need to use English what I find is that I am able to use it.	7	
Ir	: How about setting timetables?	8	<i>Organising.</i>
M	: I don't have this habit. I know this strategy is useful, but I simply could not develop this habit.	9 10	
Ir	: How about paying attention to others when they speak?	11	<i>Paying attention.</i>
M	: I think this is the most useful strategy and I use it very often during lessons.	12 13	
Ir	: How about noticing your own mistakes, for example, when you are speaking or writing?	14 15	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
M	: I also use it quite often.	16	
Ir	: What I observed is that you use <i>Paying attention</i> and <i>Self-monitoring</i> more but not <i>Seeking practice opportunities</i> . Am I right?	17 18 19	Ir summarising
M	: I don't use the last one because all my friends and families are Hong Kong people. Even if I speak English with my friends, they will not respond. However, if I speak with people from other countries, the most important thing is that I need to understand before I can speak. Therefore, 'Paying attention' is very important. I am confident that I can communicate verbally with them if I do so.	20 21 22 23 24 25 26	Reasons for using <i>Seeking practice opportunities</i> less often.
Ir	: Can you say something more about 'noticing your own mistakes' which you use more often?	27 28	Probing for further information on <i>Self-monitoring</i> .
M	: I think this is useful because if you have the habit of correcting your own mistakes, you can correct them. To communicate with others in speaking is important. I also pay attention to my mistakes in pronunciation.	29 30 31 32	
Ir	: What do you think of evaluating your own progress?	33	<i>Self-evaluating.</i>
M	: I must admit that I am quite lazy. Therefore, I don't use this strategy. I don't have good feelings towards this method.	34 35	
Ir	: How about finding out how to be a better English learner?	36	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
M	: Again, I know this strategy is useful but I am lazy in doing this.	37 38	
Ir	: Some people will compare their English standard with certain external standards such as the HKCEE. Do you do this?	39 40	Probing for further information on <i>Self-evaluation</i> .
M	: Yes, but only rarely.	41	
Ir	: What I have heard is that you are quite 'spontaneous' in your English learning. How about setting goals?	42 43	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
M	: I don't have some specific goals in my mind. But what I think is that if I need to achieve something, I will learn the English I need to achieve it. For example, if I need to read a	44 45 46	

	book in English, then I will learn all the necessary words in order to understand the book. I don't use exam results as the goal, but at least I make sure I am not bad.	47 48 49	
Ir	: So you are learning by interests. How interested are you in studying the English language?	50 51	
M	: I am not interested in learning the language itself. English is only a means for me to understand what I am interested in.	52 53	
Ir	: Can you give me more details in on the use of the above strategies in English learning in different situations, for example, in exams, at home, in school?	54 55 56	Discussion on MCLLS use in different situations.
M	: I think there won't be any big differences in the use of these strategies in different situations.	57 58	
Ir	: Do you use the strategies differently as you were in the past?	59	Comparison of MCLLS use between the present and the past.
M	: No.	60	
Ir	: Are there any strategies which you find very useful but we haven't discussed so far?	61 62	Encouraging M to give details on his use of LLSs /MCLLSs.
M	: Yes, for example, breaking down a word into several parts according to its pronunciation.	63 64	
Ir	: Can you tell me what approaches you have been using in learning English?	65 66	LLSYs.
M	: I like learning by doing. This is not only true in English but in learning other things. When I want to learn something, I always repeat doing the same thing or activity. I can remember better by doing activities.	67 68 69 70	
Ir	: So you mean in learning other academic subjects you tend to practice. Is that right?	71 72	
M	: Yes.	73	
Ir	: How about learning different aspects of English, for example, listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar?	74 75	Probing for details of learning different language skills.
M	: When I learn English, no matter it is listening, reading, etc., I read all the words, and then I 'convert' them into images and identify the order of the words and how to say them. If I need to understand a passage, I'll change the words and meanings into something like a film. In this way, I have a map in my brain. So, it's like you are actually doing something.	76 77 78 79 80 81	
Ir	: How about these two styles (Ir pointing at the pictures on Group and Individual learning styles)?	82 83	Group / Individual preferences.
M	: I like learning alone by myself, because when you work in a group, no one is willing to take responsibilities.	84 85	
Ir	: So you are talking about some group work like doing projects in group.	86 87	
M	: Yes.	88	
Ir	: Some people will study in groups when they are not doing projects. What do you think of this?	89 90	
M	: I seldom study together with others.	91	
Ir	: When you learn English, most of the time you learn by doing. Are there any other styles which you will use in some other situations?	92 93 94	Identify M's other styles.
M	: When I listen, I pay attention to the pronunciation. When I read, I pay attention to the meanings of the words, and then I change them into images and films. I use other approaches to supplement this main approach which I use.	95 96 97 98	
Ir	: Can you tell me how you use other approaches?	99	
M	: The main approach I use is repeated writing. I write the vocabulary again and again until I remember them.	100 101	

Ir	:	How about the rest? (Ir pointing at the pictures)	102	
M	:	I have no comments on other methods because I've tried to	103	
		use different methods and I can't find which approaches I	104	
		don't particularly like. Each approach has its uses, for	105	
		example, in doing listening I listen more and when I do	106	
		reading I use my eyes more.	107	
Ir	:	Since you are more of this type of learners (Tactile), do you	108	
		find it difficult to learn in lessons because in most English	109	
		lessons you always have to listen to what teachers say and	110	
		you have to read what the teachers write on the board and the	111	
		handouts? If you can choose, how would you prefer your	112	
		English lessons to be?	113	
M	:	I'd prefer teachers to teach as they are now: lecture, teacher	114	
		writing on the board. Sometimes I jot down notes.	115	
Ir	:	If we organise a workshop on explaining to the students	116	Probing for M's views on his classmates' participation of a workshop on MCLLSs and LLSYs.
		what learning strategies and learning styles are and how to	117	
		use them to improve their learning, do you think they will be	118	
		interested?	119	
M	:	I think over 70% of students of my class will not participate	120	
		in the workshop if it is not compulsory. Even for myself, I	121	
		don't think I'll join this workshop.	122	
Ir	:	May I know why?	123	Reasons for the lack of interests of classmates' participation in the workshop.
M	:	For myself, I don't think a workshop like this is necessary	124	
		although I agree that they are useful.	125	
Ir	:	But it seems contradictory that you think this type of	126	
		workshop is useful and yet you are not interested in	127	
		participating.	128	
M	:	Yes, I think I won't participate in the workshop.	129	
Ir	:	Do you think learning English is important?	130	Reasons for the importance of English proficiency.
M	:	Yes.	131	
Ir	:	Apart from using English as a means for learning other things	132	
		you are interested in, do you have other reasons for regarding	133	
		English as important?	134	
M	:	Yes. If you are walking in the street, sometimes people from	135	
		other countries will ask you for directions. At least you need	136	
		to know how to answer them. Knowledge on English is a	137	
		kind of security. You have to know it because you don't know	138	
		when you need to use it.	139	
Ir	:	Do you have any other points to add? Do you have any	140	
		questions?	141	
M	:	Not much. I learn English because it allows me to learn the	142	
		things I am interested in. English is also a security to me.	143	
Ir	:	Then that's all. Thanks a lot.	144	

Interview 5

(Ir: Interviewer, P: Peter, Group major)

Comments:

Peter is a bit shy and not very expressive. Therefore, interviewer did not go into a lot of details.

<u>Ir / P</u>	<u>Transcription</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Remark</u>
Ir	: Do you plan your own learning, for example, writing a timetable?	1	<i>Organising.</i>
		2	
P	: Before I took the HKCEE, I didn't think a timetable is important. After the exams, I knew the importance of organising my learning. If I study whenever I like spontaneously, you don't know where to start and what to do. It's very confusing. The results (HKCEE) were much worse than I expected.	3	Comparison of MCLS use between present and the past.
		4	
		5	
		6	
		7	
		8	
Ir	: Okay.	9	
P	: After the painful experience of the HKCEE, this year I set the goal that I must pass the HKCEE again.	10	
		11	
Ir	: Can I know more how you plan your timetable?	12	Details of using <i>Organising</i> .
P	: It is very difficult this year because I have to attend lessons here (in this institute). So, I cannot spend a lot of time on studying for the HKCEE. Moreover, I have to take the exams here. In the morning and afternoon I study the subjects I'm taking now in this school. In the evening, I study for the HKCEE.	13	
		14	
		15	
		16	
		17	
Ir	: Did you set the time for studying the different papers?	18	There are four papers in the HKCEE: Writing (Paper 1), Reading Comprehension and Usage (Paper 2), Integrated Listening, Reading and Writing (Paper 3) and Oral English (Paper 4).
P	: Yes, since the exams for Paper 1, 2 and 3 are scheduled quite early, I focus on these three papers first. Since the oral (Paper 4) exam will be held in the month after the first 3 papers were held, then I will focus on Paper 4 later. I go back to my mother school, because there is a group of ex-classmates who can practice speaking with me.	19	
		20	
		21	
		22	
		23	
		24	
Ir	: So you are preparing for different courses at different times of the day. Do you have a timetable when you study the English here in this school?	25	Ir probing for further details on P's use of <i>Organising</i> .
		26	
		27	
P	: Yes. I do. I studied science subjects in the past, so I don't have a lot of problems in these subjects. I don't know if science students are particularly weak in arts subjects. I am very weak in arts subjects, therefore I have to be very hard working in studying English.	28	
		29	
		30	
		31	
		32	
Ir	: I would like to narrow down to your studies of English in this school. Do you set timetables?	33	Ir focused the discussion on P's English learning in school.
		34	
P	: Whenever there is an assessment, I plan two months before the assessment. I revise everything related to the assessment, including the grammar I need, spelling, etc.	35	
		36	
		37	
Ir	: You said at the beginning that you did not plan your studies in the past and now you do so. What benefits can you get from planning your revision?	38	Ir assisted P to compare the use of <i>Organising</i> between past and present.
		39	
		40	
P	: The main advantage is that it is less confusing and more systematic. When you are confused, you don't have confidence and you fail. During the assessments, you don't understand the questions and how you should answer them. If you follow a timetable to study, you learn step-by-step and you know very well what you have learned. Then you know how to answer the questions and become more confident. The result is that you have better exam results.	41	P used <i>Organising</i> to calm himself down.
		42	
		43	
		44	
		45	
		46	
		47	
		48	

Ir	:	I see.	49	
P	:	Since you are very nervous when you are taking your exams, if you are not confident it is easy for you to feel lost.	50	
Ir	:	Let's go to another strategy. What do you think of seeking more opportunities to have contacts with English?	51	
P	:	Um I can say I am a quite passive person. I am easily influenced by the environment and other people. No matter it was in the past in my mother school, or now here in this school, I am always put into 'elite' classes. The advantage of this is that other classmates push me to work hard.	52	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>
			53	
			54	P seemed to have problems understanding this question.
			55	
			56	
			57	
Ir	:	I see that you are not very active in gaining exposures in English. But can you tell me, for example, if you have one hour free and you want to study English, what would you do?	58	
			59	Ir re-focused the discussion onto <i>Seeking practice opportunities</i> rather than English learning in general.
P	:	I'll learn vocabulary. I don't know why, but I like learning vocabulary very much. I also don't know why, I like dictation very much. I'll also go to some websites to listen to English, because I think speaking is very important. As far as reading, I can tell you that I don't have any reading habit. However, sometimes I'll go to the library to borrow some English books to read. Sometimes story books and sometimes other reference books. I also write compositions and ask teachers to correct them for me.	60	
			61	
			62	
			63	
			64	
			65	
			66	
			67	
			68	
			69	
			70	
Ir	:	Some people notice their own mistakes when they learn. How often do you use this strategy?	71	
			72	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
P	:	Most of the time I know what mistakes I have made, but sometimes I need others to tell me.	73	
			74	
			75	
Ir	:	In what situations do you use this strategy more?	76	Probing for the situations P used <i>Self-monitoring</i> .
P	:	I use it when I revise my English. When I study with other schoolmates in groups, we can tell each other what mistakes we have made.	77	
			78	
			79	
Ir	:	How about when you are studying alone?	80	
P	:	Yes. I do.	81	
Ir	:	Can you give an example?	82	
P	:	When I practice the HKCEE Paper 4.	83	
Ir	:	Paper 4 is speaking, it that right?	84	
P	:	Yes. I usually know I've made a mistake and I'll do the practice again. When I study in group, I will ask others what mistakes I have made and I'll do the practice again. With repeated practice I can improve my English.	85	
			86	
			87	
			88	
Ir	:	Another strategy is that some people will look for methods to improve their English. What do you think?	89	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
			90	
P	:	Yes. Most people like to play. So I think a good method is learning through playing games or doing activities.	91	P seemed to have problems on focusing on the question.
			92	
Ir	:	Some people will evaluate themselves from time to time when they learn English.	93	<i>Self-evaluating.</i>
			94	
P	:	It is difficult to evaluate except after knowing your exam results. I will evaluate my progress based on my exam results. I will reflect and find out what I have not prepared and what I have done wrong.	95	
			96	
			97	
			98	
Ir	:	Do you set goals for your English learning?	99	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
P	:	Yes, to pass all the exams.	100	
Ir	:	Are there any strategies which you find useful but we have not discussed?	101	
			102	
P	:	Watching TV. There are some funny programmes in the English TV channel. When you read the English and Chinese subtitles, I can learn a lot of grammar. It is useful for my writing. I can also pay attention to how they speak. It is useful for my listening and speaking.	103	<i>Paying attention.</i>
			104	
			105	
			106	
			107	

Ir	: Shall we start the second part on learning styles?	108	LLSYs.
	Which type of learner do you think you are?	109	
P	: This type. I prefer working in a group.	110	
Ir	: Do you use different styles when you are learning different	111	
	things in different situations? For example, it is more	112	
	common to work in groups when you are learning speaking.	113	
	When you are learning reading and writing, what styles do	114	
	you prefer?	115	
P	: Most of the time I learn alone when I am learning writing,	116	
	listening and reading. When I am learning speaking I prefer	117	
	to work in groups. As I said earlier, when I watch TV, I do	118	
	'learning by doing'. I use this preference (Tactile) when I	119	
	play Scrabble. I go to website for English learning to listen	120	
	to how to speak English. Finally, I use my eyes (Visual) to	121	
	watch TV. I also go to websites to read news and articles in	122	
	English.	123	
Ir	: I see that you have different style preferences in different	124	Ir confirmed P's preference.
	situations. Can you tell me the main style you use most of	125	
	the time?	126	
P	: Learning in group and individually.	127	
Ir	: Are there any styles which you think are not suitable for	128	Seeing a negative preference
	you or you don't like?	129	was mentioned by P, Ir
			continued to probe for details
			on negative style preferences.
P	: I can't say there are some styles which I don't like. It's only	130	
	that I used Group and Individual preferences most of the	131	
	time and use others in different situations.	132	
Ir	: Can you order them in the order of degree you prefer?	133	
P	: The first one is Group, followed by Individual, then Tactile,	134	
	Kinesthetic, Visual, Auditory.	135	
Ir	: You like working in group. Group learning is quite different	136	Ir asked if the preference for
	from the way we learn in the classroom. In classroom most	137	Group learning is in conflict
	of the time we just use our ear to listen to teachers'	138	with classroom learning.
	explanations and use our eyes to read what teachers write	139	
	on the board, handouts and books. What do you think of	140	
	this?	141	
P	: I think there is no problem for it. It is because I just like the	142	
	atmosphere of working in a group.	143	
Ir	: When you compare you learning styles at present and those	144	Comparison of LLSYs
	in the past, are there any differences?	145	between the past and the
			present.
P	: Yes. In the past I used my eyes (Visual) and ears (Auditory)	146	
	to learn, but now I use more different ways to learn.	147	
Ir	: Do you think learning in more ways is better?	148	Ir probed for P's views on
			multiple style preferences.
P	: I can't promise using more different styles can let people to	149	
	learn better English, but at least to me what you learn from	150	
	using different methods will be more than what you learn	151	
	from using only one way, for example, using your eyes.	152	
	You'll learn different things by using different methods. If	153	
	you always use the same methods to learn, you'll get bored	154	
	easily. However, if you use different methods, you not only	155	
	will not get bored but feel more interested in learning. It's	156	
	the difference between the two methods.	157	
Ir	: The final area for our discussion is interests in learning	158	Reasons for perceiving
	English. My impression so far is that you seems to regard	159	English as important.
	learning English as important. What are the reasons for	160	
	this?	161	
P	: The main reason is that English is an international	162	

	language. English is very important for finding a job.	163	
	People will look at your English results on your certificate,	164	
	especially your HKCEE certificate, when you find jobs. If	165	
	your English results are unsatisfactory, it is difficult to find	166	
	a job which is more well-paid.	167	
Ir	: Are there any other reasons?	168	
P	: Yes. If your English is not good, it is difficult for you to	169	
	communicate with people from other countries. For	170	
	example, there might be tourists asking you directions, what	171	
	transport to take to certain places, etc. If you don't know	172	
	how to answer them in English, it might affect our image on	173	
	people of other countries.	174	
Ir	: If you don't have to find jobs, will you still learn English?	175	Probing for further details on the reasons for learning English.
	Or if English is not an international language, will you still	176	
	learn it?	177	
P	: I would still learn it but don't think I'll spend so much time	178	
	and concentrate on it.	179	
	English also allows me to know more people of other	180	
	countries. English can let me know the cultures and social	181	
	lives of people of other countries. I am quite curious in	182	
	knowing these. It is because I don't want to be limited by	183	
	the culture of Hong Kong.	184	
Ir	: So your other reasons for learning English is that you are	185	Ir summarised the reasons for P to learn English.
	interested in the cultures of other countries, communicating	186	
	with people of other countries and make more new friends.	187	
P	: The practical value of learning English is more important to	188	
	me.	189	

Interview 6

(Ir: Interviewer, L: Lynn, Individual major)

Comments:

Lynn was quite expressive and talkative. Therefore, some other issues were discussed and she expressed quite a lot opinions.

Ir / L	Transcription	Line	Remark
Ir	: What do you think of LLSs?	1	
L	: I know how to learn English, but very often I don't put a lot of effort into learning English. Sometimes I read grammar books or English newspapers, but I still find them difficult. You need to know a lot of words. Otherwise, it would be difficult when you need to do reading comprehensions.	2 3 4 5 6	L seemed to have difficulties in understanding LLSs/ MCLLSs. Further probing was needed.
Ir	: I've just heard that 'you know how to learn English'. Can you give me some details?	7 8	
L	: I mean doing more exercises, reading more newspapers and learn more vocabulary. I can't do these because I don't have the time.	9 10 11	
Ir	: Can I know where did you learn the above strategies?	12	
L	: From teachers and sharing from friends who are good at English.	13 14	
Ir	: Did teachers tell you formally the above methods?	15	Follow-up on how LLS instruction is conducted in Hong Kong.
L	: No, she was a native speaker and she asked us to do practices, for example, by listening to songs, watching films, or reading newspapers. However, in Hong Kong when you have to pass the (public) exams, you need to limit yourself to what are required by the exams.	16 17 18 19 20	
Ir	: There are a lot of strategies for learning English. Can I narrow down the strategies into those related to the management of your learning?	21 22 23	
L	: Um.....	24	L seemed to be a bit puzzled.
Ir	: May be I can ask you one by one.	25	Ir gave alternative suggestions.
L	: Okay.	26	
Ir	: What do you think of setting goals in learning English?	27	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
L	: I believe this method is useful. At the same time, you need to tell the people around you so that they will remind you. They will 'monitor' you.	28 29 30 31	
Ir	: Have you ever tried it?	32	
L	: Not for English.	33	
Ir	: May I know why?	34	
L	: It is because there are too many things in English like listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar. It is difficult to set so many goals and monitor them. Other subjects are easier.	35 36 37	
Ir	: Some people will plan and set priorities. What do you think of this strategy?	38 39	<i>Organising.</i>
L	: I planned the number of past papers I did before the HKCEE, and apart from this I didn't plan what I should learn.	40 41 42	
Ir	: Do you think it would be useful if you plan what you should learn apart from just doing past papers?	43 44	Probing for L's views on the usefulness of <i>Organising</i> .
L	: Yes, it is because after you've learned more tenses and prepositions, you will find other areas such as reading and speaking easier.	45 46 47	
Ir	: So you agree that learning step-by-step is useful. Let's go	48	Ir used L's real-life

	back to your experience of doing past papers. Did you from time to time evaluate your progress?	49	experience of doing past
		50	papers to get details on L's use of <i>Self-evaluating</i> .
L	: I noticed how much time was left for completing the papers. If I found there was very little time left, I would complete the papers as soon as possible.	51	
		52	
Ir	: Did you check your answers and found out what you had done wrong after you did the past papers?	53	
		54	Ir tried to focus discussion on <i>Self-evaluating</i> .
L	: Of course. If you don't know why you make mistakes, there is no point doing the past papers.	55	
		56	
Ir	: Do you do this when you are learning English in general?	57	
		58	Ir probed for details in general English learning.
L	: No.	59	
Ir	: For example, when you do writing or speaking, do you evaluate your progresses and think about if you have achieved your goals?	60	Ir gave specific examples.
		61	
L	: How far you reach the goals depends on how many marks you get in your exams.	62	
		63	
Ir	: So, how often do you set goals and evaluate your learning?	64	
		65	<i>Setting goals and objectives and Self-evaluating.</i>
L	: Seldom.	66	
Ir	: How about planning, organising and setting timetables?	67	
L	: Seldom.	68	
Ir	: So how do you learn English in general?	69	
L	: I just revise what teachers teach at that time. Sometimes I will take out some grammar books to improve my grammar.	70	Ir probed for details of English learning in general.
		71	
		72	
Ir	: Some people will pay attention to the mistakes they make, for example, when they learn writing, speaking reading and listening. How often do you do this?	73	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
		74	
L	: I only do it when I do (written) exercises. I don't do this when I doing speaking, listening and writing.	75	
		76	Task-specific use of <i>Self-monitoring</i> .
Ir	: I mean noticing your own mistakes when you are doing the exercises, not checking the answers after you have finished the exercises.	77	
		78	L seemed to take
		79	<i>Self-evaluating</i> as
		80	<i>Self-monitoring</i> . Ir clarified.
Ir	: Do you think this method is useful?	81	
L	: Only when I am having exams. When you are not having exams, you can make mistakes. However, you can't make mistakes when you are having your exams.	82	
		83	
		84	
Ir	: Do you use this strategy differently when you are learning listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary?	85	Ir probing for the use of
		86	MCLSs in different
		87	language skills.
L	: No. I don't use this strategy quite often.	88	
Ir	: Are you interested in knowing how to improve your English?	89	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
		90	
L	: Yes, of course. I hope there will be more interesting methods to learn English. I don't want to hear strategies such as checking the whole dictionary in order to improve your vocabulary.	91	
		92	
		93	
		94	
Ir	: Do you seek more opportunities to use more English?	95	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>
		96	
L	: Yes. Now Putonghua and English are important. I can practice Putonghua with my family easily. However, it is difficult for me to find someone to practice my English.	97	
		98	
Ir	: Do you pay attention when people speak English?	99	<i>Paying attention.</i>
L	: Yes. When I hear some foreigners speaking English in the MTR (underground trains), I always want to understand their conversations.	100	
		101	
		102	
Ir	: How about seeking opportunities to read more English?	103	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>

L	:	I'm not very active in doing this, but I would like to have exposures on it (reading English).	104 105	
Ir	:	How about speaking? Do you seek opportunities to practice your speaking despite having few opportunities to speak English with your family as you have said?	106 107 108	
L	:	I won't.	109	
Ir	:	Why?	110	
L	:	Because I need to pass the exams first. If there are no exams, I don't need to practice.	111 112	
<hr/>				
Ir	:	Actually there is another topic for discussion, which is about the styles of language learning.	113 114	LLSYs.
		What do you think your style(s) is(are)?	115	
L	:	These three (pointing at Visual, Auditory and Individual).	116	
Ir	:	Can you say more?	117	
L	:	I like to read more English. I tend to learn alone and seldom learn in group, because my English standard might not match others'.	118 119 120	
Ir	:	How about this one? (pointing at Tactile preference)	121	
L	:	I seldom learn by doing. I like to learn alone. Most of the time I read. If I want to learn something, I always read books.	122 123 124	
Ir	:	How about learning by moving your body? (Kinesthetic)	125	
L	:	Seldom.	126	
Ir	:	How about doing group work, for example, when you have to do projects?	127 128	
L	:	I'm not interested in doing group projects. If I really have to do it for assignments, I don't participate much.	129 130	
Ir	:	Are there any differences in your learning styles in the past and now?	131 132	Comparison of LLSYs of present and the past. L seemed to have difficulties in answering the question. Ir therefore stopped following up on this question.
L	:	Now my writing is better. In the past I don't know the skills in writing a good essay. Now I know more and can write better.	133 134 135	
Ir	:	Do you think you learn in different ways when you are learning different skills, for example, reading, writing, speaking, etc.?	136 137 138	Exploring the exercise of LLSYs in different language skills.
L	:	There are no major differences. However, when you are speaking, grammar is not that important compared to fluency and pronunciation. In writing, reading and listening, grammar is more important.	139 140 141 142	
Ir	:	How important do you think English is?	143	
L	:	My family always tells me English is important. When I was young, I didn't take this seriously. As I became older, I realised English is important. However, I always feel that I cannot master English.	144 145 146 147	Reasons for the importance of English proficiency.
Ir	:	What are the reasons for you to think English is important?	148	
L	:	Because it is an international language. When you work in the future, you need a lot of English. You need English in your job. Even if a company employs you, you will not be competent in your job if your English is not good.	149 150 151 152	
Ir	:	What I heard is that to you English is important for your career.	153 154	
L	:	English is also very useful when you travel.	155	
Ir	:	Are there other reasons?	156	
L	:	No.	157	
Ir	:	Can I say you learn English because you need it in your job, and it is useful when you travel?	158 159	

L	:	Yes. My first priority is career.	160	
Ir	:	Do you think if we know more about our learning styles and the learning strategies we have been using or can use will help our English learning?	161	Since L was rather
			162	expressive, Ir discussed this
			163	issue with her.
L	:	When you know what strategies you have been using, you know what other strategies you can use to improve your English learning. Some people will learn by rote and yet they can apply the knowledge while other rote learn and cannot use the knowledge they have acquired.	164	
			165	
			166	
			167	
			168	
Ir	:	How about the learning styles?	169	
L	:	It's the same. Some people may not know which types of learners they are. After knowing their learning styles, they can learn to use other styles to improve their learning.	170	
			171	
			172	
Ir	:	Suppose there is a workshop on teaching how to use the strategies and learning styles. Do you think yourself and your classmates will join?	173	Probing for L's views on his
			174	classmates' participation of
			175	a workshop on MCLLSs and LLSYs.
L	:	I don't think so. You know, the people around are just too practical. If they don't see the workshops will help directly to their examination results, they will not go.	176	
			177	
			178	
Ir	:	How about you yourself?	179	
L	:	Um..... I think I will go if I have the time.	180	L showed uncertainties.

Interview 7

(Ir: Interviewer, K: Kelly, No major style)

Comments

Kelly was very co-operative and patient during the interview. However, there were times in which she found it difficult to express herself. In order to avoid any negative feelings on her part, the interviewer did not clarify some of her answers.

Ir/ K	Transcription	Line	Remark
Ir	: Are there any strategies which you think are useful or you having been using?	1	A warming-up question to sensitise K into MCLLS use.
K	: Reading English books. I can learn more English words by guessing the meanings of the words from their contexts instead of checking the dictionary. I think this is the best strategy.	2 3 4 5 6	
Ir	: Since there a lot of strategies, I would like to focus on some types of strategies, for example, planning your English learning. What do you think of this strategy?	7 8 9	<i>Organising.</i>
K	: Usually I find it difficult to implement the plans and forget about them.	10 11	
Ir	: May I know why?	12	Probing for reasons.
K	: I am always very interested in planning and I plan carefully. However, I always don't have the mood to implement the plans. I don't know why.	13 14 15	
Ir	: How about timetables?	16	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
K	: No. I don't set any timetables.	17	
Ir	: Are you interested in knowing more how to become a better English learner?	18 19	
K	: Yes.	20	
Ir	: Can you give me more details?	21	Ir probing for examples.
K	: For example, teachers sometimes tell us some methods. I also ask friends who are good in English how they learn English.	22 23 24	
Ir	: What method do you think is the best?	25	
K	: I remember there was a teacher who asked us to read one page of dictionary each day. I learned several words each day, and after one year I could learn all the words in the dictionary. However, this method is boring and after a few days you forget some words.	26 27 28 29 30	
Ir	: This is something related to what we have said earlier. Do you set some goals in learning English?	31 32	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
K	: Sometimes you cannot achieve the goals you have set. I don't know why...I always want to improve my English but most of the time I cannot do so.	33 34 35	
Ir	: What are the possible reasons?	36	Reasons for not being able to use MCLLSs.
K	: I think the reason is because of context. People around me do not speak English. Furthermore, my primary and secondary schools used Chinese in teaching.	37 38 39	
Ir	: Can I say you are interested (in knowing more how to learn English)?	40 41	
K	: Yes. The older I am, the more important I know English is. I regret having chosen Chinese-medium primary and secondary schools.	42 43 44	In Hong Kong, students can opt to study in either Chinese- or English-medium schools.
Ir	: You can work hard and catch up.	45	
K	: Maybe.	46	

Ir	:	Do you pay attention when others speak English?	47	<i>Paying attention.</i>
K	:	Yes, but most of the time I don't understand. If people speak slowly, I can understand a few words.	48	
			49	
Ir	:	Do you seek opportunities to use English?	50	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>
K	:	Others will not be willing to speak English even if I am willing to speak to them.	51	
			52	
Ir	:	Who are the 'others'?	53	
K	:	My friends.	54	
Ir	:	Some people try to notice their progresses. How often do you do this?	55	<i>Self-evaluating</i>
			56	
K	:	Sometimes. I usually notice if I have improved by looking at the exam results.	57	
			58	
Ir	:	Do you use it when you are not doing your exams?	59	
K	:	It is difficult for me to notice my progress when I am not having exams. Er ...	60	
			61	
Ir	:	How about noticing your mistakes when you are learning English, for example, speaking?	62	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
			63	Ir changed focus frequent / did not probe for further details because K expressed uncertainties in answering.
K	:	Yes. I'll find out which areas I am particularly weak in and correct the pronunciation mistakes I have made. After that I can speak better.	64	
			65	
			66	
Ir	:	This is about speaking.	67	
K	:	I also find out which grammar topics I am weak in and do more that type of exercise.	68	
			69	
Ir	:	Some people will use different strategies in learning different skills, for example, listening, speaking, reading and writing, etc. You've mentioned you pay attention to others speaking English, you try to find more opportunities to read English, and you find it difficult to practice your speaking. How about learning other skills?	70	Ir probed for details on the use of MCLLSs in different skill aspects.
			71	
			72	
			73	
			74	
			75	
K	:	I'll watch English channel (TV).	76	K seemed to have difficulties in understanding the question.
Ir	:	I mean the strategies you use for learning different skills.	77	
K	:	These methods are useful.	78	K expressed difficulties in giving further details.
<hr/>				
Ir	:	Which type of learner do you think you are?	79	LLSYs.
K	:	This one (Individual). It is because if we study in a group, the English standard of different group members will be different. It is also very difficult to concentrate when I study in a group. There was a time I studied in group and we ended up chatting with each other.	80	
			81	
			82	
			83	
			84	
			85	
			86	
			87	
Ir	:	Do you have different styles in learning different skills?	88	
K	:	Yes, because the emphases of different skills are different, so I use different styles.... I don't know how to organise my thoughts.	89	K found it difficult to express her thoughts.
			90	
			91	
Ir	:	Never mind. Which styles do you use more often?	92	
K	:	Visual and Individual.	93	
Ir	:	Do you use different styles when you are learning English at home compared to learning in school?	94	Ir probed for MCLLS use in different contexts.
			95	
K	:	I seldom study English at home. Most of the time I learn English during lessons.	96	
			97	
Ir	:	Suppose there is a workshop on teaching how to use the strategies and learning styles. Do you think your and your classmates will join?	98	Probing for K's views on her classmates' participation of a workshop on MCLLSs and
			99	
			100	

K	:	I think people are different. Some have already known	101	
		their learning styles, some may not. Those who really	102	
		want to learn English may join the workshop. However,	103	
		most people do not have interests in learning English. If	104	
		they know more about learning strategies and their	105	
		learning styles, they might not use them. So, in the end it	106	
		(the workshop) is not useful.	107	
Ir	:	You've just said that you feel that English as more and	108	
		more important as you get older. Can you tell me the	109	
		reasons?	110	
K	:	Because over the years I heard more and more people	111	Reasons for the importance of
		said English is important for finding jobs.	112	
Ir	:	Do you have any goals in learning English?	113	
K	:	Yes. I would like my English to reach the standard which	114	
		enables me to communicate effectively with other people.	115	

Interview 6
(Ir: Interviewer, L: Lynn, Individual major)

Comments:
Lynn was quite expressive and talkative. Therefore, some other issues were discussed and she expressed quite a lot opinions.

Ir / L	Transcription	Line	Remark
Ir	: What do you think of LLSs?	1	
L	: I know how to learn English, but very often I don't put a lot of effort into learning English. Sometimes I read grammar books or English newspapers, but I still find them difficult. You need to know a lot of words. Otherwise, it would be difficult when you need to do reading comprehensions.	2 3 4 5 6	L seemed to have difficulties in understanding LLSs/ MCLLSs. Further probing was needed.
Ir	: I've just heard that 'you know how to learn English'. Can you give me some details?	7 8	
L	: I mean doing more exercises, reading more newspapers and learn more vocabulary. I can't do these because I don't have the time.	9 10 11	
Ir	: Can I know where did you learn the above strategies?	12	
L	: From teachers and sharing from friends who are good at English.	13 14	
Ir	: Did teachers tell you formally the above methods?	15	Follow-up on how LLS instruction is conducted in Hong Kong.
L	: No, she was a native speaker and she asked us to do practices, for example, by listening to songs, watching films, or reading newspapers. However, in Hong Kong when you have to pass the (public) exams, you need to limit yourself to what are required by the exams.	16 17 18 19 20	
Ir	: There are a lot of strategies for learning English. Can I narrow down the strategies into those related to the management of your learning?	21 22 23	
L	: Um.....	24	L seemed to be a bit puzzled.
Ir	: May be I can ask you one by one.	25	Ir gave alternative suggestions.
L	: Okay.	26	
Ir	: What do you think of setting goals in learning English?	27	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
L	: I believe this method is useful. At the same time, you need to tell the people around you so that they will remind you. They will 'monitor' you.	28 29 30	
Ir	: Have you ever tried it?	31	
L	: Not for English.	32	
Ir	: May I know why?	33	
L	: It is because there are too many things in English like listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar. It is difficult to set so many goals and monitor them. Other subjects are easier.	34 35 36 37	
Ir	: Some people will plan and set priorities. What do you think of this strategy?	38 39	<i>Organising.</i>
L	: I planned the number of past papers I did before the HKCEE, and apart from this I didn't plan what I should learn.	40 41 42	
Ir	: Do you think it would be useful if you plan what you should learn apart from just doing past papers?	43 44	Probing for L's views on the usefulness of <i>Organising</i> .
L	: Yes, it is because after you've learned more tenses and prepositions, you will find other areas such as reading and speaking easier.	45 46 47	
Ir	: So you agree that learning step-by-step is useful. Let's go	48	Ir used L's real-life

	back to your experience of doing past papers. Did you from time to time evaluate your progress?	49	experience of doing past
		50	papers to get details on L's use of <i>Self-evaluating</i> .
L	: I noticed how much time was left for completing the papers. If I found there was very little time left, I would complete the papers as soon as possible.	51	
		52	
Ir	: Did you check your answers and found out what you had done wrong after you did the past papers?	53	
		54	Ir tried to focus discussion on <i>Self-evaluating</i> .
L	: Of course. If you don't know why you make mistakes, there is no point doing the past papers.	55	
		56	
Ir	: Do you do this when you are learning English in general?	57	
		58	Ir probed for details in general English learning.
L	: No.	59	
Ir	: For example, when you do writing or speaking, do you evaluate your progresses and think about if you have achieved your goals?	60	Ir gave specific examples.
		61	
L	: How far you reach the goals depends on how many marks you get in your exams.	62	
		63	
Ir	: So, how often do you set goals and evaluate your learning?	64	
		65	<i>Setting goals and objectives and Self-evaluating.</i>
L	: Seldom.	66	
Ir	: How about planning, organising and setting timetables?	67	
L	: Seldom.	68	
Ir	: So how do you learn English in general?	69	
L	: I just revise what teachers teach at that time. Sometimes I will take out some grammar books to improve my grammar.	70	Ir probed for details of English learning in general.
		71	
		72	
Ir	: Some people will pay attention to the mistakes they make, for example, when they learn writing, speaking reading and listening. How often do you do this?	73	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
		74	
L	: I only do it when I do (written) exercises. I don't do this when I doing speaking, listening and writing.	75	
		76	Task-specific use of <i>Self-monitoring</i> .
Ir	: I mean noticing your own mistakes when you are doing the exercises, not checking the answers after you have finished the exercises.	77	
		78	L seemed to take <i>Self-evaluating</i> as <i>Self-monitoring</i> . Ir clarified.
		79	
		80	
Ir	: Do you think this method is useful?	81	
L	: Only when I am having exams. When you are not having exams, you can make mistakes. However, you can't make mistakes when you are having your exams.	82	
		83	
		84	
Ir	: Do you use this strategy differently when you are learning listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary?	85	Ir probing for the use of MCLLSs in different language skills.
		86	
		87	
L	: No. I don't use this strategy quite often.	88	
Ir	: Are you interested in knowing how to improve your English?	89	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
		90	
L	: Yes, of course. I hope there will be more interesting methods to learn English. I don't want to hear strategies such as checking the whole dictionary in order to improve your vocabulary.	91	
		92	
		93	
		94	
Ir	: Do you seek more opportunities to use more English?	95	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>
		96	
L	: Yes. Now Putonghua and English are important. I can practice Putonghua with my family easily. However, it is difficult for me to find someone to practice my English.	97	
		98	
Ir	: Do you pay attention when people speak English?	99	<i>Paying attention.</i>
L	: Yes. When I hear some foreigners speaking English in the MTR (underground trains), I always want to understand their conversations.	100	
		101	
		102	
Ir	: How about seeking opportunities to read more English?	103	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>

L	:	I'm not very active in doing this, but I would like to have exposures on it (reading English).	104 105	
Ir	:	How about speaking? Do you seek opportunities to practice your speaking despite having few opportunities to speak English with your family as you have said?	106 107 108	
L	:	I won't.	109	
Ir	:	Why?	110	
L	:	Because I need to pass the exams first. If there are no exams, I don't need to practice.	111 112	
<hr/>				
Ir	:	Actually there is another topic for discussion, which is about the styles of language learning. What do you think your style(s) is(are)?	113 114 115	LLSYs.
L	:	These three (pointing at Visual, Auditory and Individual).	116	
Ir	:	Can you say more?	117	
L	:	I like to read more English. I tend to learn alone and seldom learn in group, because my English standard might not match others'.	118 119 120	
Ir	:	How about this one? (pointing at Tactile preference)	121	
L	:	I seldom learn by doing. I like to learn alone. Most of the time I read. If I want to learn something, I always read books.	122 123 124	
Ir	:	How about learning by moving your body? (Kinesthetic)	125	
L	:	Seldom.	126	
Ir	:	How about doing group work, for example, when you have to do projects?	127 128	
L	:	I'm not interested in doing group projects. If I really have to do it for assignments, I don't participate much.	129 130	
Ir	:	Are there any differences in your learning styles in the past and now?	131 132	Comparison of LLSYs of present and the past.
L	:	Now my writing is better. In the past I don't know the skills in writing a good essay. Now I know more and can write better.	133 134 135	L seemed to have difficulties in answering the question. Ir therefore stopped following up on this question.
Ir	:	Do you think you learn in different ways when you are learning different skills, for example, reading, writing, speaking, etc.?	136 137 138	Exploring the exercise of LLSYs in different language skills.
L	:	There are no major differences. However, when you are speaking, grammar is not that important compared to fluency and pronunciation. In writing, reading and listening, grammar is more important.	139 140 141 142	
Ir	:	How important do you think English is?	143	L's perceived importance of English.
L	:	My family always tells me English is important. When I was young, I didn't take this seriously. As I became older, I realised English is important. However, I always feel that I cannot master English.	144 145 146 147	
Ir	:	What are the reasons for you to think English is important?	148	Reasons for the importance of English proficiency.
L	:	Because it is an international language. When you work in the future, you need a lot of English. You need English in your job. Even if a company employs you, you will not be competent in your job if your English is not good.	149 150 151 152	
Ir	:	What I heard is that to you English is important for your career.	153 154	
L	:	English is also very useful when you travel.	155	
Ir	:	Are there other reasons?	156	
L	:	No.	157	
Ir	:	Can I say you learn English because you need it in your job, and it is useful when you travel?	158 159	

L	:	Yes. My first priority is career.	160	
Ir	:	Do you think if we know more about our learning styles and the learning strategies we have been using or can use will help our English learning?	161	Since L was rather
			162	expressive, Ir discussed this
			163	issue with her.
L	:	When you know what strategies you have been using, you know what other strategies you can use to improve your English learning. Some people will learn by rote and yet they can apply the knowledge while other rote learn and cannot use the knowledge they have acquired.	164	
			165	
			166	
			167	
			168	
Ir	:	How about the learning styles?	169	
L	:	It's the same. Some people may not know which types of learners they are. After knowing their learning styles, they can learn to use other styles to improve their learning.	170	
			171	
			172	
Ir	:	Suppose there is a workshop on teaching how to use the strategies and learning styles. Do you think yourself and your classmates will join?	173	Probing for L's views on his
			174	classmates' participation of
			175	a workshop on MCLLSs and LLSYs.
L	:	I don't think so. You know, the people around are just too practical. If they don't see the workshops will help directly to their examination results, they will not go.	176	
			177	
			178	
Ir	:	How about you yourself?	179	
L	:	Um..... I think I will go if I have the time.	180	L showed uncertainties.

Interview 7
(Ir: Interviewer, K: Kelly, No major style)

Comments

Kelly was very co-operative and patient during the interview. However, there were times in which she found it difficult to express herself. In order to avoid any negative feelings on her part, the interviewer did not clarify some of her answers.

<u>Ir / K</u>	<u>Transcription</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Remark</u>
Ir	: Are there any strategies which you think are useful or you having been using?	1	A warming-up question to sensitise K into MCLLS use.
		2	
K	: Reading English books. I can learn more English words by guessing the meanings of the words from their contexts instead of checking the dictionary. I think this is the best strategy.	3	Guessing meanings from contexts.
		4	
		5	
		6	
Ir	: Since there a lot of strategies, I would like to focus on some types of strategies, for example, planning your English learning. What do you think of this strategy?	7	<i>Organising.</i>
		8	
		9	
K	: Usually I find it difficult to implement the plans and forget about them.	10	Probing for reasons.
		11	
Ir	: May I know why?	12	
K	: I am always very interested in planning and I plan carefully. However, I always don't have the mood to implement the plans. I don't know why.	13	
		14	
		15	
Ir	: How about timetables?	16	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
K	: No. I don't set any timetables.	17	
Ir	: Are you interested in knowing more how to become a better English learner?	18	
		19	
		20	
K	: Yes.	20	Ir probing for examples.
Ir	: Can you give me more details?	21	
K	: For example, teachers sometimes tell us some methods. I also ask friends who are good in English how they learn English.	22	
		23	
		24	
Ir	: What method do you think is the best?	25	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
K	: I remember there was a teacher who asked us to read one page of dictionary each day. I learned several words each day, and after one year I could learn all the words in the dictionary. However, this method is boring and after a few days you forget some words.	26	
		27	
		28	
		29	
		30	
Ir	: This is something related to what we have said earlier. Do you set some goals in learning English?	31	Reasons for not being able to use MCLLSs.
		32	
K	: Sometimes you cannot achieve the goals you have set. I don't know why...I always want to improve my English but most of the time I cannot do so.	33	
		34	
		35	
Ir	: What are the possible reasons?	36	In Hong Kong, students can opt to study in either Chinese- or English-medium schools.
		37	
K	: I think the reason is because of context. People around me do not speak English. Furthermore, my primary and secondary schools used Chinese in teaching.	38	
		39	
		40	
Ir	: Can I say you are interested (in knowing more how to learn English)?	41	
K	: Yes. The older I am, the more important I know English is. I regret having chosen Chinese-medium primary and secondary schools.	42	
		43	
		44	
		45	
Ir	: You can work hard and catch up.	45	
K	: Maybe.	46	

Ir	:	Do you pay attention when others speak English?	47	<i>Paying attention.</i>
K	:	Yes, but most of the time I don't understand. If people	48	
		speak slowly, I can understand a few words.	49	
Ir	:	Do you seek opportunities to use English?	50	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>
K	:	Others will not be willing to speak English even if I am	51	
		willing to speak to them.	52	
Ir	:	Who are the 'others'?	53	
K	:	My friends.	54	
Ir	:	Some people try to notice their progresses. How often do	55	<i>Self-evaluating</i>
		you do this?	56	
K	:	Sometimes. I usually notice if I have improved by	57	
		looking at the exam results.	58	
Ir	:	Do you use it when you are not doing your exams?	59	
K	:	It is difficult for me to notice my progress when I am not	60	
		having exams. Er ...	61	
Ir	:	How about noticing your mistakes when you are learning	62	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
		English, for example, speaking?	63	Ir changed focus frequent / did
				not probe for further details
				because K expressed
				uncertainties in answering.
K	:	Yes. I'll find out which areas I am particularly weak in	64	
		and correct the pronunciation mistakes I have made. After	65	
		that I can speak better.	66	
Ir	:	This is about speaking.	67	
K	:	I also find out which grammar topics I am weak in and do	68	
		more that type of exercise.	69	
Ir	:	Some people will use different strategies in learning	70	Ir probed for details on the use
		different skills, for example, listening, speaking, reading	71	of MCLLSs in different skill
		and writing, etc. You've mentioned you pay attention to	72	aspects.
		others speaking English, you try to find more	73	
		opportunities to read English, and you find it difficult to	74	
		practice your speaking. How about learning other skills?	75	
K	:	I'll watch English channel (TV).	76	K seemed to have difficulties
				in understanding the question.
Ir	:	I mean the strategies you use for learning different skills.	77	
K	:	These methods are useful.	78	K expressed difficulties in
				giving further details.
<hr/>				
Ir	:	Which type of learner do you think you are?	79	LLSYs.
K	:	This one (Individual). It is because if we study in a group,	80	
		the English standard of different group members will be	81	
		different. It is also very difficult to concentrate when I	82	
		study in a group. There was a time I studied in group and	83	
		we ended up chatting with each other.	84	
		This one (Tactile) is also useful, but there are not much	85	
		opportunities to practice because of contextual reasons.	86	
		Visual and Auditory are useful.	87	
Ir	:	Do you have different styles in learning different skills?	88	
K	:	Yes, because the emphases of different skills are different,	89	K found it difficult to express
		so I use different styles.... I don't know how to organise	90	her thoughts.
		my thoughts.	91	
Ir	:	Never mind. Which styles do you use more often?	92	
K	:	Visual and Individual.	93	
Ir	:	Do you use different styles when you are learning English	94	Ir probed for MCLLS use in
		at home compared to learning in school?	95	different contexts.
K	:	I seldom study English at home. Most of the time I learn	96	
		English during lessons.	97	
Ir	:	Suppose there is a workshop on teaching how to use the	98	Probing for K's views on her
		strategies and learning styles. Do you think your and your	99	classmates' participation of a
		classmates will join?	100	workshop on MCLLSs and

K	:	I think people are different. Some have already known	101	
		their learning styles, some may not. Those who really	102	
		want to learn English may join the workshop. However,	103	
		most people do not have interests in learning English. If	104	
		they know more about learning strategies and their	105	
		learning styles, they might not use them. So, in the end it	106	
		(the workshop) is not useful.	107	
Ir	:	You've just said that you feel that English as more and	108	
		more important as you get older. Can you tell me the	109	
		reasons?	110	
K	:	Because over the years I heard more and more people	111	Reasons for the importance of
		said English is important for finding jobs.	112	English proficiency.
Ir	:	Do you have any goals in learning English?	113	
K	:	Yes. I would like my English to reach the standard which	114	
		enables me to communicate effectively with other people.	115	

Interview 8

(Ir: Interviewer, A: Annie, Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile and Individual major)

Comments

Annie was very expressive and gave a lot of details to her answers. However, there were times which she misunderstood the questions and gave irrelevant answers.

Ir / L	Transcription	Line	Remark
Ir	: Are there any strategies which you think are useful or you having been using?	1 2	A warming-up question on MCLLS use.
A	: Doing more exercises and listening to more English. Watching English movies is also a good way.	3 4	
Ir	: How about in school?	5	
A	: I do the exercises given. I seldom study English at home and I am not very active in learning English.	6 7	
Ir	: Do you use different strategies in learning different skills?	8	
A	: Yes, of course. Listening is useful. Speaking is useful when I work in the future. Writing is also useful for my future.	9 10 11	A had problems in understanding the question.
	The strategies we are using now are more 'person-oriented' (focusing on inter-personal communication). The strategies we used in the past were more monotonous.	12 13 14 15	A was referring to the communicative approach of the course she was studying at the institute.
Ir	: Since there are a lot of different strategies, I would like to narrow down our discussion today on some specific strategies.	16 17 18	
	You've just said that you are not very active in learning English. Do you seek opportunities to speak more English?	19 20 21	<i>Seeking practice opportunities.</i>
A	: Of course not. Where can you find someone to speak English with you?	22 23	
Ir	: Why?	24	
A	: I don't know a lot of words and my English is not good. You can't just say to your friends 'Let's speak English'. I tried but after a few sentences we changed back to Cantonese.	25 26 27 28	
Ir	: How about reading?	29	
A	: I avoid reading English as far as I can. Even if you watch a movie, you won't choose one which has no English subtitles. I just try to have as little contact with English as possible	30 31 32 33	In fact, it is difficult to find a film which does not have Chinese subtitles in Hong Kong.
Ir	: How about using English?	34	
A	: There are no opportunities for me to use English outside school. Apart from using English in exams, I don't have contacts with English and foreigners.	35 36 37	
Ir	: Do you try to find out how to be a better learner of English?	38 39	<i>Finding out about language learning.</i>
A	: I have been trying to find out methods to improve my English. However, the issue is that whether the strategies are useful, and whether you will use the methods.	40 41 42	
Ir	: Can you give an example of how you find out those methods?	43 44	Ir probed for details of a specific example.
A	: In our daily life. For example, you can learn a lot of English on the streets, on the bus, or at the MTR (underground train) stations.	45 46	
Ir	: Have you ever set some goals when you learn English?	47	<i>Setting goals and objectives.</i>
A	: Yes, when I was very young I set a goal of learning all the words in a dictionary, but I failed. I think it was because I didn't persist and I was lazy.	48 49 50	

Ir	:	Um...	51	
A	:	If you have some big goals such as passing the HKCEE	52	
		and HKAL, I think one will persist. Then one will do	53	
		something like reading English newspapers everyday.	54	
		However, a higher form student once told me that you	55	
		cannot take care of so many things like vocabulary,	56	
		grammar, etc. at the same time when you read newspaper.	57	
		So I don't think I can benefit much from reading English	58	
		newspapers. In my secondary school, we had an activity	59	
		called 'morning reading'. It all depends on yourself	60	
		whether you are self-conscious. You can read the whole	61	
		book or you can fall asleep in that activity.	62	
Ir	:	So do you use all these methods now?	63	Exploring changes in MCLLS use over time.
A	:	No, because now my goal is just to pass my English and	64	
		not pass the HKCEE or HKAL. If I can pass the exams, I	65	
		also hope that I can get higher grades.	66	
Ir	:	How about setting timetables to learn English?	67	<i>Organising.</i>
A	:	I don't learn it (English), not to say setting timetables to	68	
		learn English.	69	
Ir	:	But do you think it is useful?	70	
A	:	I think it must be useful if you persist. You will at least	71	
		learn something from it.	72	
Ir	:	Do you pay attention to others speaking English?	73	<i>Paying attention.</i>
A	:	Yes, when I watch films. I'll repeat simple sentences	74	
		spoken in films.	75	
Ir	:	How about noticing your own mistakes, for example,	76	<i>Self-monitoring.</i>
		when you are speaking or writing?	77	
A	:	Yes, but only limited to when I am having exams. I had an	78	
		English teacher who was a native speaker. When I talk to	79	
		her, I just try to make her understand. I don't notice my	80	
		own mistakes.	81	
Ir	:	Are there any differences in studying different skills?	82	Ir probed for details in the use of <i>Self-monitoring</i> in different skills.
A	:	I notice more my own mistakes in speaking and writing. It	83	
		is more 'practical' in doing so. In reading and listening, I	84	
		won't do it to such details.	85	
Ir	:	Some people will evaluate how well they have learned	86	<i>Self-evaluating.</i>
		from time to time. What do you think of this strategy?	87	
A	:	I'll have some standards on what I should have learned at	88	
		different levels.	89	
Ir	:	So you mean you have some standards in your mind.	90	
A	:	Yes.	91	
<hr/>				
Ir	:	Now we start the topic on language-learning styles. There	92	
		are some pictures which describes different learning styles	93	
		in learning languages. Can you comment on these styles?	94	
A	:	I don't like this one (Group). It is because when you are	95	
		doing group discussion, nobody is willing to talk.	96	
Ir	:	Individual is more suitable for me. This (Visual) and this	97	A was very expressive and resourceful. She was able to describe in details her style preferences.
		(Auditory) are also useful. Actually these three go	98	
		together, for example, when you learn English by	99	
		watching a film. This is also useful (Kinesthetic), I also	100	
		learn English by playing games such as 'Head and	101	
		shoulders, knees and toes'. However, I seldom have the	102	
		opportunities to learn in this way now.	103	
A	:	Tactile... is very difficult to use, not suitable for me.	104	
Ir	:	Do you use different styles more when you learn different	105	
		skills like listening, speaking, etc.?	106	

A	:	I use Visual and Auditory more.	107	
Ir	:	How about your styles in the present compared to those in the past?	108	Comparison of LLSYs over time.
			109	
A	:	In the past I used Auditory and then doing exercises individually. Learning was more monotonous in the past.	110	
		Learning English now is more interactive and we have more group discussions.	111	
			112	
			113	
Ir	:	What I heard was a description of how teachers teach English. How about your styles?	114	
			115	
A	:	I still prefer listening (Auditory) and then practice individually.	116	
			117	
Ir	:	So there have not been many changes in your learning styles.	118	
			119	
A	:	Yes.	120	
Ir	:	Shall we start our discussion on the last topic on the reasons for you to learn English?	121	
			122	
A	:	Okay.	123	
Ir	:	What are the reasons for you to learn English?	124	Reasons for learning English.
A	:	The main reason is that I want to learn more English in the future.	125	
			126	
Ir	:	Yes.	127	.
A	:	Moreover, after I studied this course (Logistics in China Business), I realised that I need to learn more English, because I need to communicate with a lot of people if I start my career in this field.	128	
			129	
			130	
			131	
Ir	:	Are there any other reasons apart from career?	132	
A	:	No. I am not the type of people which think that English allows me to live in other countries or study abroad. My reason is monetary.	133	
			134	
			135	
Ir	:	What difficulties do you encounter in learning English?	136	A had misunderstanding on the question.
A	:	My difficulty is that I don't know what to do. Most of the time I don't know what is supposed for me to do. I read the questions and I don't know what I should write.	137	
			138	
			139	
Ir	:	Are you talking about the writing exercise?	140	
A	:	Yes.	141	
Ir	:	If there is workshop which teaches people about their learning strategies and learning styles, do you think your classmates will be interested in joining it?	142	Probing for A's views on workshop on MCLLSs and LLSYs.
			143	
			144	
A	:	I don't think the workshop will be useful. People won't go to this type of workshop. People will say 'why learn so much?' or things like this. Getting a pass in English to them is enough. I think you have to learn this type of things since you are very young. I am not interested in this type of workshop.	145	
			146	
			147	
			148	
			149	
			150	
Ir	:	Another question is that do you think one will learn better if they use more different styles?	151	
			152	
A	:	Yes.	153	
