

# Learning Strategies and Language Use: A study of Higher Secondary level of Students in Public and Private Schools in Lower Assam

Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru  
University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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## CERTIFICATE

This dissertation titled "Learning Strategies and Language Use: A study of Higher Secondary level of Students in Public and Private Schools in Lower Assam" submitted by Henna Das, Centre for Linguistics, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of any University or Institution.

This may be placed before the examiners for evaluation for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction and Literature Review**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Learning strategies are prominent issues when student learn their second language in order to enhance their own proficiency for coveted language learning and these strategies are especially important for language learning. Language Learning Strategies are specific actions or techniques that students use, often intentionally, to improve their progress in developing L2 skills ( Green & Oxford, 1995). Learning strategies is very important factor for a student life in developing skills and to learn the textbooks set for them by the local Board and Human Resource Development Ministry. If learning strategies do not cope with students who are differently able, they will not get language properly in a specific period of time given by the education board for the promotion of the next class. Keeping this in the mind, the present strategies need to be revised so that they can adjust with peers and classmates. Even, students in a class hailed from the multitudes of profiles they also grapple with the meanings when English is taught to them, and they are often stuck when teachers communicate with them in English. With this regard the learning strategies which are currently in use to learn the Higher Secondary students needs careful attention. Language is the best way for communicating with people around us and without language people feel multiple obstacles to meet their needs. In the case of teaching-learning matters, language is very essential. More importantly, when students learn specific skills they are bound to use multiple separate strategies for different individual skills. In the process of learning, students usually pick up four skills but they all are not equally good at four skills of language. Among the four skills, speaking and writing are productive while listening and reading are receptive. With the

growth of students' chronological age they devise plans to grasp strategies needed for acquiring each skill. A good language learner is very inquisitive in doing so but an average learner takes more time to do the same job.

#### 1.1.1 Existing learning strategies and language use by the students of lower Assam

Learning strategies is one of the crucial issues which the learners around the world use for getting language for their communication and career development purposes. In lower Assam, the students of higher secondary class usually are not much acquainted with English as they are the lower middle class families and the middle class families. Besides, when they study at the public schools, it assumed that they choose the public schools because their families are generating handsome amount of income. In Assam, the official language is Assamese and it is also use as a medium of instruction and communication. The language they use at the home atmosphere is the Assamese. They hardly use English at home with their family members. They take English in the classroom as their foreign language; therefore they cannot figure the meanings which highly require for carrying good marks as well as communication with friends, teachers and so on. It is noticed that they learn mostly the two skills – writing and reading which are vital for getting a pass degree to promote in the next class. Since they cannot escape from those two skills, they sometimes take the skills burden for their lives and some even leave schools due to not withstand the strategies used by teachers to teach them for exams and communication as well. The learning strategies are not employed in an integrated manner and the students' learning in the classroom and their communication outside the class are hampered greatly. Moreover, the two skills are getting emphasis as it is the reality of their life, whereas the other skills – listening and speaking are seriously ignored. There are also other problems on the teaching of English in public and private schools in Lower Assam.

Firstly, there is a lack of audio – visual education in both public and private schools. There are various types of audiovisual materials which helps students in improving their



learning skills. In Lower Assam, there is very less use of audio-visual education. The methods that are mostly used for teaching English are Chalk board, oration method and direct method. Though these methods are useful, but audio –visual aids will help teachers to teach English more effectively, easy to comprehend and also create interest among students.

Secondly, the infrastructure of the schools is not in a good condition to meet the needs of the student. The buildings were not well furnished and in some schools, rooms were very congested and the walls are also made of bamboo. A good infrastructure helps to make both learning and teaching more effective and make learner active in the classroom.

Thirdly, there is a lack of qualified and competent English teachers which is a major problem in both public and private schools. The teacher doesn't give much equal importance on the four language skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening. They just teach English as a subject that is given in a syllabus. They didn't teach the importance of English language and the students also take it very lightly. That is why, teachers training is important and good teachers is more effective than much more qualified teachers.

## **1.2 Literature Review**

This chapter also deals with literature review which contains different views on learning strategies and language use by the learners while learning English as second language. The experts, in this field, have contributed some valid theories to judge prevalent strategies).

### **Learning and Acquisition**

Learning is a process through which language is learned consciously, whereas Acquisition is a process through which language is acquired unconsciously. "Learning is conscious knowledge of language rules which does not lead to conversational fluency, and is derived from formal instruction. On the other hand, Acquisition occurs unconsciously and spontaneously which leads to conversational fluency and arises from naturalistic language use" (Oxford 1990, pg 4).

Krashen definition of learning and acquisition was completely different. Krashen and Terrell, 1983, proposed five hypotheses on language learning<sup>1</sup> –

- i. Acquisition – Learning Hypothesis – A conscious learning in an ineffective way of developing language, which is better acquired through natural communication.
- ii. Natural Order Hypothesis – A grammatical structure of a language that are acquired in a predictable order
- iii. Monitor Hypothesis- A conscious learning that is of very little value to an adult language learner and can only be useful under certain conditions as a monitor or editor.
- iv. Input Hypothesis - A language is acquired by understanding input which is a little beyond the current level of competence
- v. The Affective Filter hypothesis - A learner's emotions and attitude can act as a filter which shows the acquisition of language. When the Affective filter is high it can block language development.

Krashen's hypothesis was criticized by many scholars. Though they criticized Krashen's hypothesis, but his views on language learning and teaching discipline will remain influential. Even Gregg who criticized Krashen's hypothesis admits that "he is often right on the important questions"<sup>2</sup>.

### What is Learning Strategies?

The study of language learning strategies began in the 1960s (Oxford). Learning strategies are learning process which helps learner to learn language easily and effectively. Rubin (1975) has mentioned learning strategies as "the techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire language"<sup>3</sup>. According to Oxford (1990) "Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more –effective and more self-directed and more transferrable to new situations". Rebecca (1990) divided strategies into two major classes:-Direct Strategies and Indirect Strategies. Direct strategies are language

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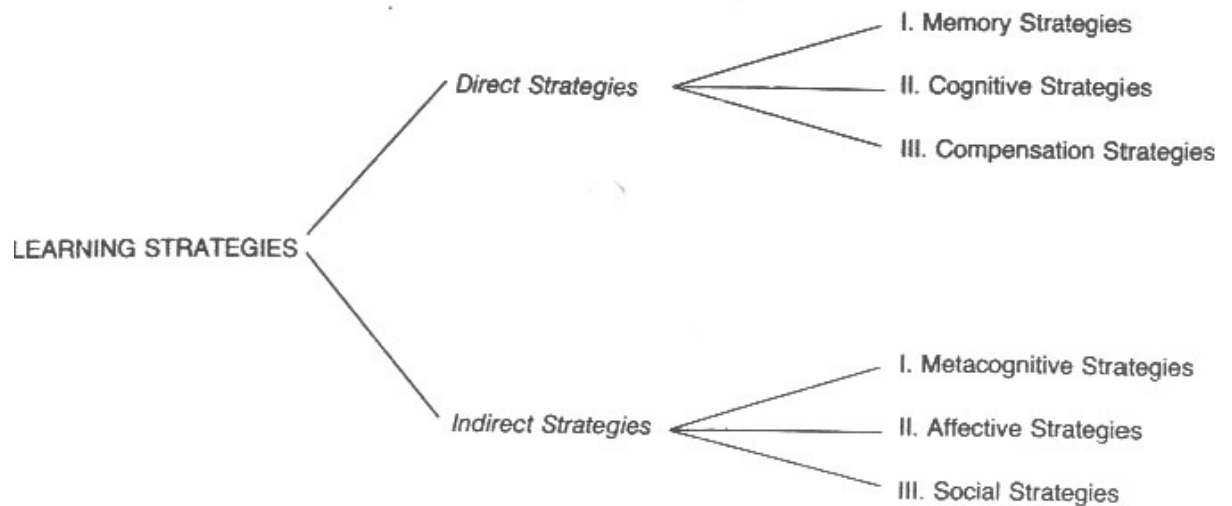
<sup>1</sup> As mentioned by Carol Griffiths (2015) in Language Learning Strategies; Theory and Research

<sup>2</sup> As mentioned by Carol Griffiths (2015) in Language Learning Strategies: Theory and Research

<sup>3</sup> As mentioned by Carol Griffiths (2015) in Language Learning Strategies: Theory and Research

learning strategies which directly involve the target language and indirectly strategies language learning strategies that indirectly involve the target language. Oxford (1990) states that “Direct Strategies is like the performer in a stage play, working with the language itself in a variety of specific tasks and situations, whereas, Indirect Strategies is like the Director of the play. The Director serves a host of functions, like focusing, organizing, guiding, checking, correcting, coaching, encouraging, and cheering the Performer, as well as ensuring that the Performer works co-operatively with other actors in the play. The Director is an internal guide and support to the Performer. The functions of both the Director and the Performer become part of the learner, as he or she accepts increased responsibility for learning”.

Both Direct and Indirect Strategies were used to develop each of the four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These two strategies were subdivided into six groups. Memory, Cognitive and Compensation strategies come under the Direct Strategies and Meta cognitive, Affective and Social strategies comes under the Indirect Strategies.



Note: This Diagram is taken from Language Learning Strategies by Rebecca L. Oxford (page16)

The first strategy that Rebecca L Oxford mentioned under Direct Strategies is Memory strategy. Memory strategies helps learner to store information and retrieve it whenever it is needed for comprehension and production. Cohen (1996) states “memory strategies contribute directly to

learning which helps for learning vocabulary items or grammatical structures".(Page 58), there are four groups of memory strategies<sup>4</sup>

- i. Creating mental linkages: It involves grouping and associating new words with familiar concepts to remember it easily.
- ii. Applying images and sounds: It involves images and sounds, so that students can remember well.
- iii. Reviewing well: It involves reviewing new words or expressions in the target language which is useful for remembering.
- iv. Employing action: It involves using physical response or sensation and mechanical techniques

The next strategy is Cognitive strategies. According to Oxford (1990), cognitive Strategies are essential in learning a new language and it is found to be the most popular strategies with language learning. Cohen(1996) also described Cognitive Strategies as an identification, retention, storage, or retrieval of words, phrases and other elements of the second language.

There are four sets of cognitive strategies<sup>5</sup> –

- i. Practicing: It involves repetition and focuses on pronunciation and intonation. It also includes recombining of known words in new patterns to form different expressions.
- ii. Receiving and sending messages: It involves techniques like skimming and scanning which helps in getting the idea quickly. It also makes use of available resources.
- iii. Analyzing and reasoning : It involves five strategies namely reasoning deductively, analyzing expressions, analyzing contrastively, translating and transferring
- iv. Creating Structure for Input and output: it involves taking notes, summarizing and highlighting.

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<sup>4</sup> Rebecca L Oxford.1990,Page 58

<sup>5</sup>Rebecca L.Oxford.1990, Page 58

The last strategy that comes under direct strategy is Compensation strategies. Compensation strategies enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge and it also intended to make up for an inadequate repertoire of grammar and, especially, of vocabulary.

There are two steps in compensation strategies<sup>6</sup>:

- i. Guessing intelligently: It involves using linguistic and other clues.
- ii. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing : switching to the mother tongue, using mime or gestures, getting help from someone, using synonyms etc.,

Under Indirect strategies, there are three groups:

The first strategy under indirect strategies is Metacognitive strategy. Metacognitive strategies play a vital role in language learning. According to Oxford (1990) "metacognitive strategies are actions which go beyond purely cognitive devices, and which provide a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process".

Metacognitive strategies<sup>7</sup> are divided into three sets:

- i. Centering your learning: over viewing and linking with already known materials, paying attention, delaying speech production to focus on listening.
- ii. Arranging and planning your learning : Finding out about language learning, setting goals and objectives, identifying the purpose of a language task etc.,
- iii. Evaluating your learning: self monitoring and self evaluating.

"Cognitive strategies deals with pre-assessment and pre-planning, on-line planning and evaluation, and post-evaluation of language learning activities, and language use events. Such strategies allow learners to control their own cognition by coordinating the planning, organizing, and evaluating of the learning process". (Cohen, 1996)

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<sup>6</sup>Rebecca L. Oxford, Page 91

<sup>7</sup>Rebecca L. Oxford, Page 137

The next strategy is affective strategies. Affective strategies help learners to control ones emotions, anxieties and also helps to encourage oneself. According to Rebecca L. Oxford, (1990) the term affective means “emotions, attitudes, motivations and values and it is through affective strategies that a language learners can gain control over these factors”.

Affective strategies<sup>8</sup> are divided into three groups:

- i. Lowering your anxiety: using progressive relaxation and meditation, using music etc.,
- ii. Encouraging yourself: making positive statements, rewarding yourself , taking risk wisely.
- iii. Taking your emotional temperature: listening to your body, discussing your feelings with someone else, using a check list and writing a language learning diary

Cohen (1996) has described affective strategies as a helper which control our emotions, motivations and reduce our anxiety and also helps in self-encouragement. Cohen further explained “Good language learners use an affective strategy, it means, learners cope effectively with the emotional and motivational problems of language learning. Classroom learning as well as immersion in the target language environment each entails specific affective problems which have been characterized as language shock and stress, and as culture shock and stress and despite all the difficulties, good language learners approach the task in a positive frame of mind and develop necessary energy to overcome frustrations and persist in their efforts”. (Page

The last strategy that comes under indirect strategies is social strategies. Social strategies are one of the important strategies in language learning. Social strategies involve other people through whom a learner can learn language through interaction. Oxford (1990) described social strategies as a involvement of other people while learning a language and appropriate social strategies are very important in this process. According to Cohen (1996) “Good language learners recognize the inevitably dependent status in early learning and accept the infantilization and satellization involved. As they progress, they strive towards emancipation and desatellization. They seek communicative contact with target language users and the target

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<sup>8</sup> Rebecca L Oxford, Page 141

language community either in person or vicariously through writings, media, role playing, or immersion. In spite of their limitations, good learners will tend to develop and use 'communicative strategies', i.e., techniques of coping difficulties in communicating in an imperfectly known second language”

Social Strategies are divided into three groups:<sup>9</sup>

- i. Asking questions: asking for clarification, verification and correction.
- ii. Cooperating with others: cooperating with peers and also with proficient use of the new language.
- iii. Empathizing with others: developing cultural understanding and becoming aware of other's thoughts and feelings.

This chapter also deals with the language use by the students while learning English as a second language. In Lower Assam, students mostly use Assamese language in different places such as at home, market, schools and while communicating with friends and teachers and there are very few students who use English language for these purpose. These may be the reasons behind students making multiple errors. According to Khansir (2012) “Errors are an integral part of language learning”. According to Ellis, errors and mistakes are two different things. “Errors reflect gaps in a learner's knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. Mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance; they occur because, in a particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows”.( Rod Ellis (\_\_\_\_);Pg 17).

There are two types of approaches to the study of language learning

Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis

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<sup>9</sup> Rebecca L Oxford, Page145

Harris (1974) opines that “one of the major principles in much modern second language-language teaching is that a point-by-point comparison of target and background language will provide the basis for more efficient instruction.” Furthermore contrastive analysis is applied to every aspect of language: to phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon. It is even extended to cultural patterns that are thought to affect language learning and use. Through contrastive analysis ,it is possible to determine (1) what language patterns are identical in both languages, (2) what patterns in the target language have no near equivalents in the background language, and (3) what patterns in the background language have enough similarity to patterns in the target language (without being identical) to constitute major points of interference. “In the 1950s and 1960s the favored paradigm for studying FL/SL learning and organizing its teaching was **Contrastive Analysis**” (James, 2001, Pg.4). “**Contrastive Linguistics** has been defined as “a sub discipline of Linguistics concerned with the comparison of two or more languages or subsystems of language in order to determine both differences and similarities between them”(Fisiak,1981,p.1). Carl (1971) has maintained that Contrastive Analysis is a necessary component of a second language learning model which reliably forecasts that the speaker of an arbitrary first language is liable to produce grammatically deviant second language sentences, the structural descriptions of which will resemble those of analogous first language sentences.

### Non Contrastive Analysis

There are many types of Non Contrastive Analysis. The most distinguished non contrastive analysis is Error analysis hypothesis. According to Corder (1974), error analysis has two objects: one theoretical and another applied. The theoretical objects serve to “elucidate what and how a learner learns when he studies a second language.” And the applied object serves to enable the learner “to learn more efficiently by exploiting our knowledge of his dialect for pedagogical purposes.”

Gas and Selinker (1994) also forwarded six steps in conducting error analysis:



- i. Data collection from learner's language
- ii. Identify Errors
- iii. Classify Errors
- iv. Quantify Errors
- v. Analyzing Errors

Rod Ellis (2003) introduced five steps in analyzing learner's errors -

- i. Collection of a sample of learner language – Data collection is the first step in analyzing learner's errors..
- ii. Identification of Errors– After data is collected, the second step is the identification of Errors.
- iii. Describing of Errors: The errors are described into four main linguistic categories:  
Morpho-syntactic errors –Morpho –syntactic errors are basically grammatical errors which includes errors in closed categories – Pronoun, articles, preposition, conjunctions, quantifiers, Inflectional markings - Subject-verb agreement. lexico – semantic errors - Spelling and punctuation errors - miscellaneous errors -
- iv. Explanation of Errors: After classification of errors, the errors are divided into two groups: Interlingual and Intralingual Transfer.

Interlingual errors occur when there is an interference of L1 to the target language.

Richard (1974) defines intralingual errors as “items produced by learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. The learner, in this case, tries to derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to mother tongue nor to target language”.

Intralingual Transfer - Richards (1970) recognize four types of intralingual errors:<sup>10</sup>

- a. Overgeneralization

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<sup>10</sup> Hassan (2017,page:16)

- b. Ignorance of rule restriction: This means applying rules in contexts in which they do not apply.
  - c. Incomplete application of rules
  - d. Construction of false concept.
- v. Evaluation of Errors– The last step in analyzing the learner’s errors is the evaluation of errors.

### **1.3 Present Study**

The present study is to examine learning strategies and language use by the Higher Secondary level of students in both public and private schools. In learning strategies, I am focusing on the direct and indirect strategies used by the student while learning English in the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. I am also looking on the language used by the students of both public and private schools and error analysis will be shown to examine the influence of language use in writing skills.

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To analyze the learning strategies used by the students of both public and private schools in lower Assam.
- To compare the learning strategies used by the students of public and private schools of Assamese medium.
- To investigate what are the languages used and how they are used in higher secondary public and private schools in lower Assam.
- To identify the linguistic errors while using English as a second language.
- To compare the errors made by the students from both public and private sectors.

## Significance of the Study

This study elicits information regarding learning strategies, teachers' techniques, learners' behavior, learners' language ability, teachers' level of proficiency, classroom context and so on. The in depth analysis of the issues will add new dimensions of the strategies, and also it explores the present level of the strategies and find out next course by which students will get proper guidelines for applying picking up the aforementioned skills. Since much research in this field was not done earlier, the research is trying to pay attention in this area. To meet her goal she will interact with people who are associated with designing questions, framing curriculum and syllabus, and making policies for students' teaching-learning.

## Division of Chapters:

### Chapter one: Introduction and Literature Review

This chapter consists of introduction and sources of learning strategies, history of learning strategies and language use in lower Assam, background of English language education in lower Assam, education system in lower Assam, language proficiency of both teachers and students, significance of the study, statement of the problem, aims and objectives, research questions and research procedures. This chapter will discuss the various parameters of the learning strategies which have got acclamation around the world and also discusses the studies done in the area of learning strategies and language use locally and globally and it traces the theoretical background for the study.

### Chapter two: Research Methodology:

**Data Collection Procedures:** This chapter presents the methodology followed during the course of the study. It describes respondents, instruments used in the data collection, organizing procedures, types of data generated from the instruments.

### Chapter three: Data Analysis and Discussions

In this chapter, a detailed description of data gathered through questionnaires has been examined properly and in the same interpretation, analysis and discussions will be presented through graphs, charts and diagrams. Moreover, it needed, the SPSS software will be used to make it more precise.

#### Chapter four: Summary and Conclusion

This chapter elicits the findings of the study carried by the researcher. It puts forwards certain recommendations for making the strategies better for students, and it also incorporates some suggestions teachers, education administrators and expert people who are devising policies for the learners.

## Chapter 2

### Research Methodology

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methods that were used for this research study. But, first of all, we will look at the various views on research methodology and then will discuss about the present study.

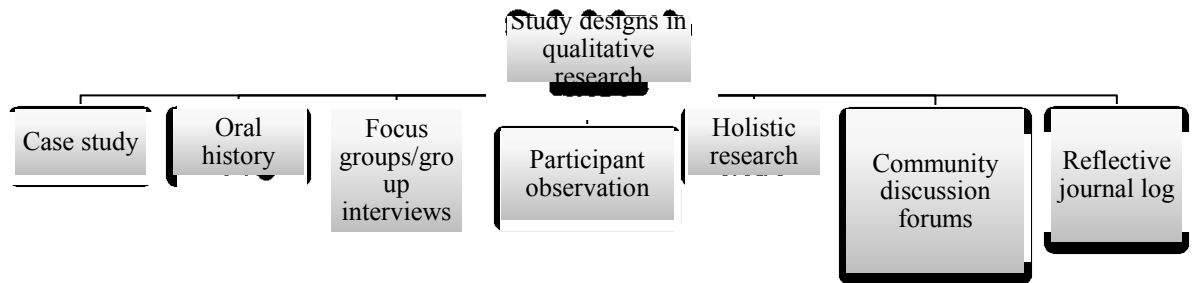
C.R.Kothari(1990) refers research as a “systematic method consisting of enunciating the problem, formulating a hypothesis, collecting the facts or data, analyzing the facts and reaching certain conclusions either in the form of solutions towards the concerned problem or in certain generalizations for some theoretical formulation.” Nicholas Walliman define “research as any kind of investigation that is used liberally which intended to uncover interesting or new facts and research methods are the tools and techniques for doing research.”

According to C.R Kothari (1990), “the main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered as yet.” He also put forward four main research objectives

- To gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it (studies with this object in view are termed as exploratory or formulative research studies);
- To portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or a group (studies with this object in view are known as descriptive research studies);
- To determine the frequency with which something occurs or with which it is associated with something else (studies with this object in view are known as diagnostic research studies);
- To test a hypothesis of a causal relationship between variables (such studies are known as hypothesis – testing research studies).

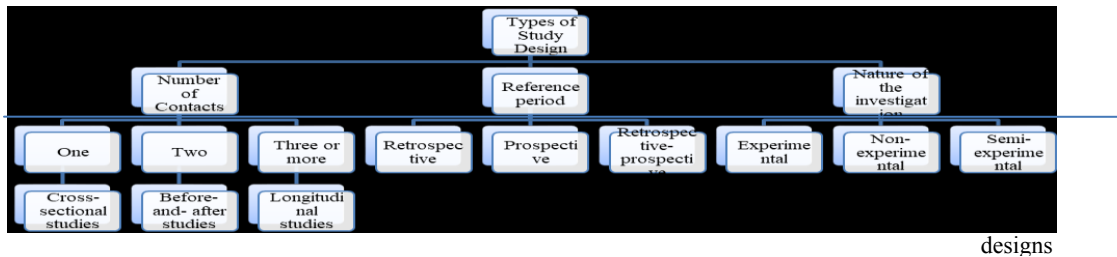
within which research is conducted and constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.” Design study is of various types and this design studies comes under two research groups – Qualitative and Quantitative. The following chart shows the most common use of design study in qualitative research.

Table. 2.1



Ranjit Kumar (2011) have also discussed the various use of study design in quantitative research which shows in the following chart.

Table.2.2



The above two chart is made according to the classification of Ranjit Kumar’s types of research designs mentioned in his book “Research Methodology” (2011)

Cross – sectional study design is said to be the most commonly used design research and the present study is taken on the basis of cross – sectional design studies. Statistics is also used in this type of design study.

According to Ranjit kumar(2011) “Cross – sectional studies are the most commonly used design study and it is best to studies aimed at finding out the prevalence of a phenomenon, situation, problem, attitude or issue, by taking cross – section of the population.”

Cross – sectional studies have one or more than one group. In cross –sectional studies, which have only one group takes sample from a single population and it is studied on one occasion.In cross-sectional design with two or more groups the researcher is interested in two or more groups from the start. This could involve a research question that aims to study the differences between two predefined multiple populations, while drawing a stratified sample from each population. (Gustavsson, Bengt.2007:38)

The present study is based on Cross - sectional design study and this study attempts to render an accurate picture of learning strategies and language use by the students from both public and private schools. The following aims and objectives will show the present study on learning strategies and language use by the students of both sectors.

## **2.2 The Present study:**

The present study is to examine the learning strategies and language used by the students of higher secondary levels of students in Public and Private Schools in Lower Assam. The aims and objectives of present study are given below:

- To analyze the learning strategies used by the students of both public and private schools in lower Assam.
- To compare the learning strategies used by the students of public and private schools of Assamese medium.
- To investigate what are the languages used and how they are used in higher secondary public and private schools in lower Assam.
- To identify the linguistic errors while using English as a second language.
- To compare the errors made by the students from both public and private sectors.

From the above discussion we can say that the following research will be able to show the evidences which prove how applicable the present strategies in the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

#### Research Questions

- What are the strategies used by the learners in reading and writing skills while learning English as a Second language?
- How do the learners employ direct and indirect strategies in speaking and listening skills to perform in classroom interaction?
- What are the linguistic errors commonly made by the students of both the sectors of higher secondary Assamese medium students in Lower Assam?

#### Hypothesis

- . Compared to the students from the public schools, more direct strategies are used by the students of private schools in reading and writing skills
- Direct strategies are more in practice than indirect strategies in both speaking and listening skills.
- The students from private schools performed better than the students from public college.
- The students from public sectors will make more errors than the students from private schools.



## **2.3 Elicitation Procedures**

### **2.3.1 The description of the participants and respondents**

#### **i. Students**

In the research process, the data was collected from the students of six different schools – three from public schools and three from private schools. The profile pages were made and they were to be administered to them in order to get their demographic information. Moreover, total number of students was 160, 80 from public schools and 80 from private schools and their first language was Assamese. The age of the learners was in between 16 to 18 and they were all HS 1<sup>st</sup> year students and registered in particular schools under SEBA (Board of Secondary Education, Assam).

#### **ii. Teachers**

The data was collected from 5 teachers of English department and they were all from different schools and schools. All are from the Assamese medium. Three teachers are from public schools and two teachers are from private schools.

### **2.3.2 Instruments**

The test instruments are essential things which are the ways to judge applicability and suitability of the strategies. The test instruments are questions of the previous year's which were already used in the Board. For data elicitation, three methods are used for my present study

- i. Learners' Questionnaire
- ii. Teachers' Questionnaire
- iii. Language Ability Test (LAT)

#### **Learners' Questionnaire**

The Questionnaire was set to understand the learner's attitude towards the four language skills - reading, writing, listening and speaking. The learners' questionnaire made up of 7 sections:

- The demographic information which includes learners name, age and gender (sections 1 to 3)
- Medium of Instruction from Nursery to Higher Secondary level (section4)
- Language spoken by the learners in different places such as at home, school, market, with friends, teachers (section 5)
- Learners level of proficiency in the four language skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening (section 6)
- The perception of the learner's use of strategies in reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The questions was established on the basis of learners use of strategies in the four language skills and for this a table will made in chapter3 to clearly understand the strategies used by the learners (section 7)

### **Teachers Questionnaire**

The questionnaire for teachers was set to understand the teacher's point of view on learner's use of strategies in the four language skills. Data were collected from 5 teachers. 4 subjective questions were asked to write which are mentioned below.

- What are the strategies used by the students while learning English as a second language?
- What are the strategies you use in classroom interaction to improve their proficiency in English Language?
- How effectively/successful in implementing these strategies for making students enable to become better learners?
- What are the strategies you use to overcome the errors made by the students?

## **Language Ability Test (LAT)**

Language Ability Test was taken to examine the level of proficiency in writing skills. The questions were taken from the previous year's question papers which were set by the SEBA board. In part1 (LAT) there were 30 questions based on prepositions, determiners, verb, voice, adjectives, adverb and use of right alternative. All of these sections have 5 questions each.

- Question no 1 contained questions on prepositions. This part tries to test student's ability to use right preposition.
- Next question contained questions on determiners. This part aims to test learner's choice of using determiners.
- Question no 3 examined learner's capability of using correct form of verb.
- Question no 4 contained questions on voice change.
- Question no 5 tried to test the learner's correct use of alternative words. This part judged students knowledge of lexicon and its meaning
- Question no 6 was to test whether learner knows the correct use of adjectives and adverbs.

In part2 (LAT) Composition test and Comprehension test was taken. Composition test was taken to understand the learners writing skills. Students were given to write a short essay, up to 200 words in any of the following topics:

- The use of social media in our day to day life.
- My favorite festival
- The habit of reading newspaper

For Language Ability Test (LAT) students were given 1hour to complete the paper. Through language Ability Test, a researcher can be able to comprehend learner's knowledge about English language.

## **2.4 Data Analytical Procedures**

For my present study, data were analyzed under three sections:

- i. Learners' Questionnaire
- ii. Teachers' Questionnaire
- iii. Language Ability Test

### **Learners' Questionnaire**

Learners' questionnaire is mainly taken to analyze the learners' use of strategies in reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. It is divided into 7 sections and it was already mentioned on the above discussions. In this part, we will show how data will be analyzed.

To examine the learners' use of strategies while learning English as a second language, a table was made where 40 statements were given using the four language skills. There were five point ordinal scales – Never, Hardly, Sometimes, Often, and Always where students have to tick an option after reading the statement. To analyze it, the percentage of the students' use of strategies will be shown through graphs and subsequently, there will be discussion after mentioning each strategy.

### **Teachers' Questionnaire**

Teachers' questionnaire is mainly taken to examine teachers view on learners' use of strategies while learning English as a second language. Data were collected from 5 teachers .3 teachers were from public schools and 2 teachers were from private schools, teaching English as a second language.

### **Language Ability Test (LAT)**

Language Ability Test is taken to examine learners' proficiency on English language. In part1 (LAT), students were given 30 questions on grammar which includes preposition, determiners, verb, voice, use of alternatives, adjectives and adverbs. Grammar test was

taken to examine the knowledge of students. The students' LAT are entered in excel sheet and the average of the students of both public and private schools will be tabulated in chapter 3. The format is shown in table 2.3

Table 2.3

Categories	No. of questions attempted by the students of Public Schools	No. of questions attempted by the students of Private Schools	Percentage of score
Preposition			
Determiners			
Verb			
Voice			
Use of Alternatives			
Adjectives			
Adverbs			

In part2, (LAT) Composition and Comprehension test was taken. For analyzing the composition test, three steps are followed:

- i. Identification of Errors
- ii. Classification of Errors
- iii. Explanation of Errors

After identify the errors made by the students from both public and private schools, a comparative study will made to examine the errors made by the learners. While

identifying the errors, it focused on four linguistic categories – morpho-syntactic errors, lexico-semantic errors, spelling and punctuation errors and miscellaneous errors.

After identifying the errors, a table is made in which a comparative analysis is made, the errors produced by the students of both public and private schools. It also focus on the total number of students attempt to write on the above mentioned essays and the number of sentences developed by the students and also the number of errors free sentence produced by the students. Tables will be made and percentage of the above discussions will be shown in chapter3.

For classification of errors made by the students, four main linguistic categories are followed:

- Morpho-syntactic errors: This includes errors of articles, prepositions, word order, tense, pronouns, inflectional markings and subject verb agreement.
- Lexico-semantic errors : This includes errors of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs (open class items)
- The third linguistic category is the spelling and punctuation errors produced by the learners.
- The fourth linguistic category is the miscellaneous errors. In this category, the errors occur when there is not using capital letters in the beginning of a sentence and also for nouns and when there is use of capital letters in the middle of a sentence.

After classify the errors, the percentage of all the linguistic categories of errors will be presented in chapter 3 and subsequently, the hierarchy of the errors will be presented and it will be explained under two sections (explanation of errors)

- i. Interlingual transfer
- ii. Intralingual transfer

This section will also presented in chapter 3 through table and percentage and discussion will be made of each errors.

## Chapter 3

### Data Analysis and Discussions

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In the previous chapter, the research methodology for this study has already been discussed. The three main components of data elicitation that are significant for this study are Learners' Questionnaire, Teachers' Questionnaire and Language Ability Test. This chapter deals with the analysis of the data that were collected from Learners' and Teachers' questionnaires and Language Ability Test and provides a detail analysis of the strategies employed by second language learners in improving their English proficiency. The data would be represented in tabulated form as well graphs wherever necessary.

#### **3.1 Analyses of Learners' Questionnaire**

In Learners' questionnaire, there are 7 sections. Section 1 to 3 would deal with learner's personal information such as their name, age and gender. In section 4, students were asked to write their medium of instruction used in their respective schools from Nursery to Higher Secondary level. It was found that Assamese is used mostly in both public and private schools. In section 5, students were asked to write about the language spoken around them such as at their homes, market places nearby, schools and amongst their teachers and friends.



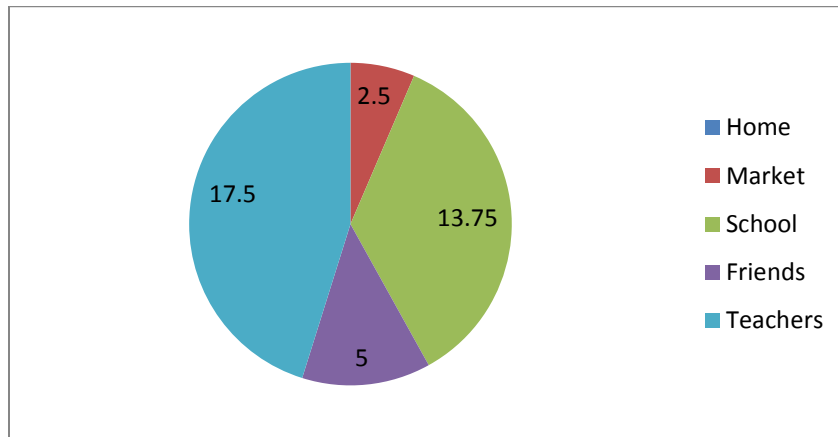
### 3.1.1 Languages Used By the Students

**Table 3.1**

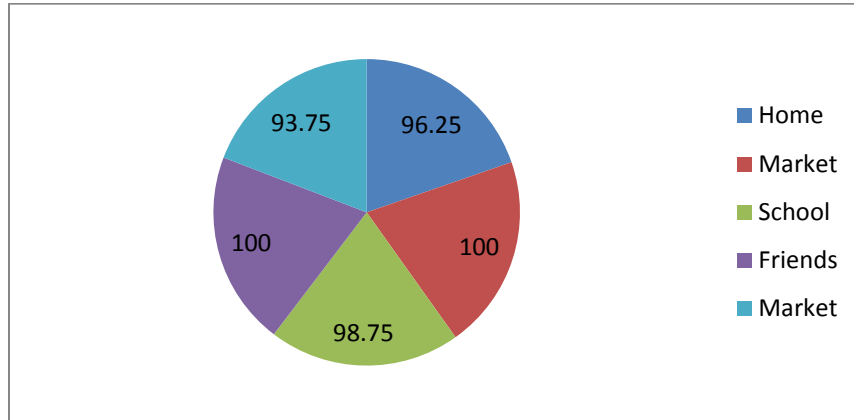
Assamese			Home	Market	School	Friends	Teachers
Public	Count	within	69	70	70	74	74
	class						
Private	Count	within	77	80	79	80	75
	class						

In table 1, we have found that overall 89.25% of students from public schools speak Assamese and 97.75% of students from private schools speak Assamese in all the domains. Since, Assamese is the mother tongue of the people staying in Assam and is spoken by majority of people, it is of no surprise that students irrespective of the schools they study in, prefer to speak in Assamese. The following charts show the percentage of students speaks Assamese in different domain.

**Figure 3.1: Public Schools**



**Figure 3.2: Private Schools**

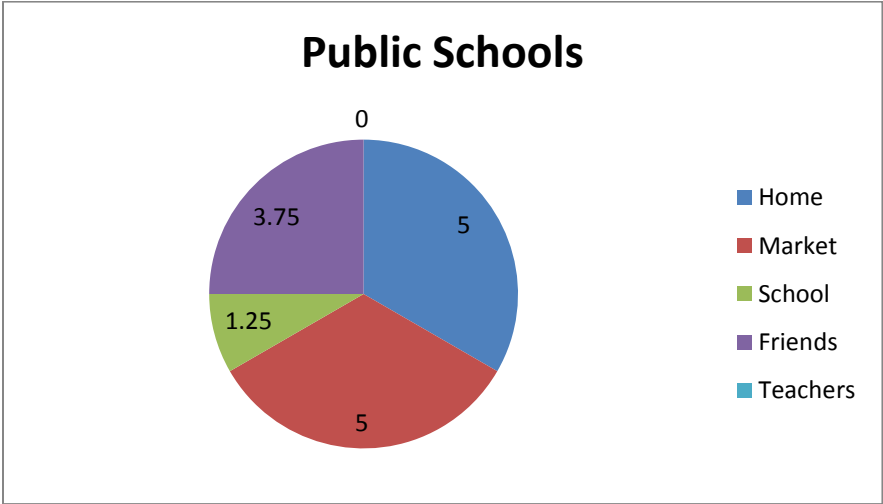


**Table3.1**

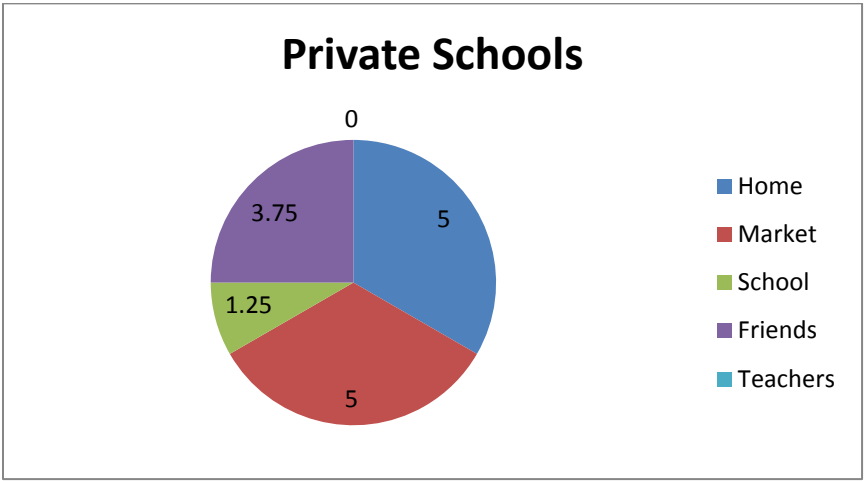
English		Home	Market	School	Friends	Teachers
Public	Count within class	0	0	2	0	2
Private	Count within class	0	2	11	4	14

In table 2, we have found that overall only 5% of students from public schools speak English and only 38.75% of students from private schools speak English in all the domains. The reason may be due to the limited exposure to English language in terms of day to day conversation with parents, teachers and mentors, and lack of preference towards newspapers and magazines in English. The following charts show the percentage of students speaks English in different domain

**Figure 3,3**



**Figure 3.4**

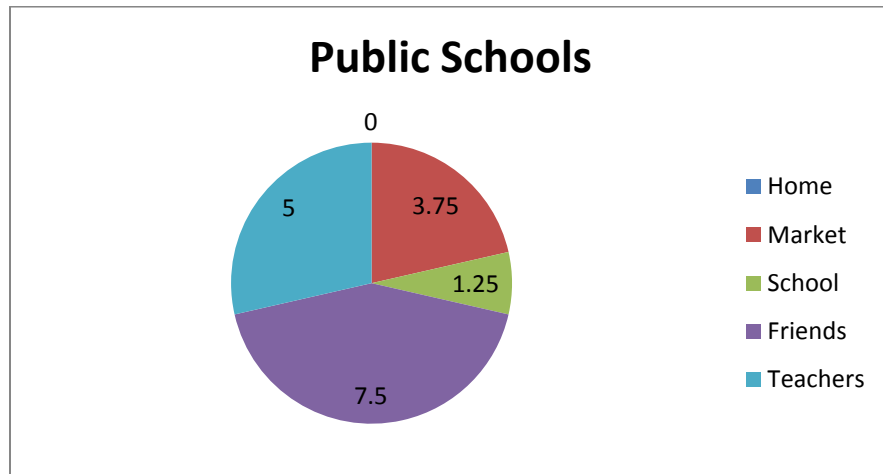


**Table 1.2**

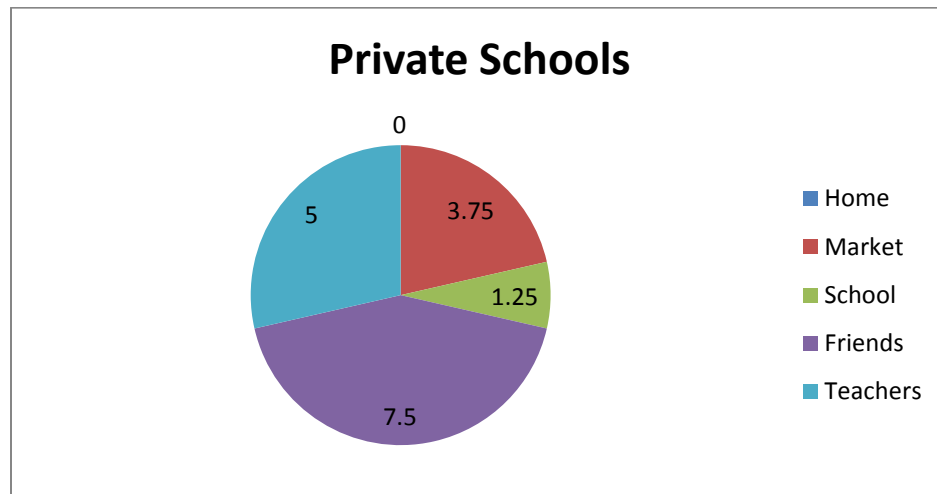
Hindi		Home	Market	School	Friends	Teachers
Category of schools						
Public	Count within class	0	1	3	7	0
Private	Count within class	0	3	1	6	4

In table 3, we have identified that overall only 13.75% of students from public schools speak Hindi and only 17.5% of students from private schools speak Hindi in all the domains. It could be due to the fact that Assamese medium students are introduced to Hindi language at later stage of their schooling and hence similarly have limited exposure to Hindi language. There is also lack of availability of teachers proficient in Hindi, which could also be a contributing factor in the reluctant use of Hindi language in day to day activities. The following charts show the percentage of student speak Hindi in different domain.

**Figure3.5**



**Figure 3.6**

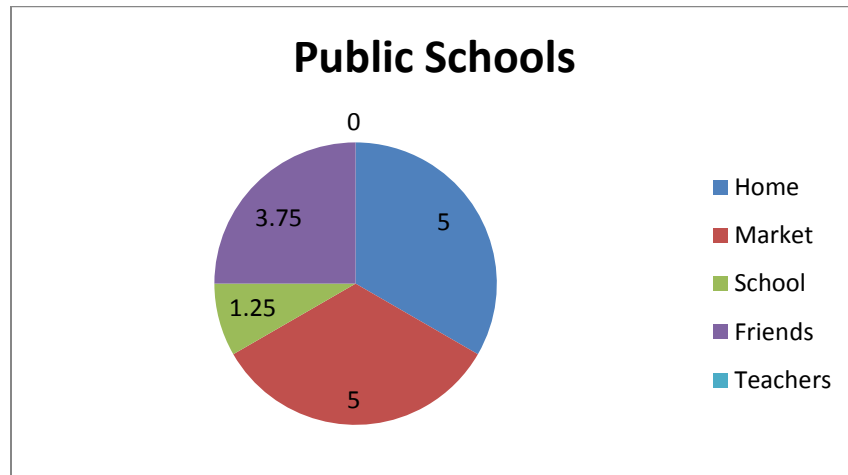


**Table 3.3**

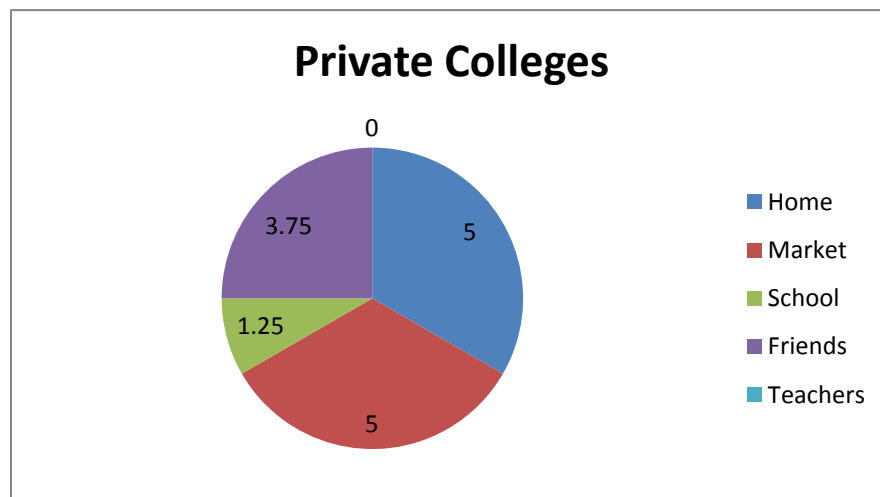
Bodo		Home	Market	School	Friends	Teachers
Category of schools						
Public	Count within class	11	11	10	10	3
Private	Count within class	4	4	1	3	0

The sample distribution consisted of very few Bodo speaking students and this can explain the obtained result which states that overall 56.25% of students from public schools and 15% of students from private schools speak Bodo in all the domains. The following charts shows the percentage of students speak Bodo in different domain.

**Figure 3.7**



**Figure3.8**



In section 6, students were asked to describe their proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The following table shows the level of proficiency of the students in the above mentioned four languages

### 3.1.2 Level of Proficiency in the following four skills in different languages

**Table3.4**

	Assamese	English	Hindi
Public schools	2.8	1.9	1.9
Private schools	2.8	2.1	2.1
Total score	2.8	2.0	2.0

The table shows the proficiency level in the four language skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening in different languages. It is found that the proficiency level in the four language skills is highest in Assamese language. The average score is same in both public and private sectors. In English and Hindi language, the level of proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening skills is same in both public and private sectors as they scored 1.9 and 2.1 respectively. But, the level of proficiency in the four language skills is higher in private sectors than public sectors. From the above discussions, it can say that the level of proficiency in the four language skills is highest in Assamese language. But it is not satisfactory in English and Hindi languages.

### 3.1.3 Learning Strategies used by the student of both Public and Private Schools

This section discusses the learning strategies used by the student of both Public and Private Schools in the four language skills - writing, reading, speaking and listening. Learning strategies play an important role throughout student life in developing



language proficiency. It also aids students to learn language easily and more effectively. There are two types of learning strategies – Direct strategies and indirect strategies. Under direct strategies, there are three groups – memory strategy, compensation strategy and cognitive strategy and under indirect strategies, there are three groups – meta – cognitive strategy, affective strategy and social strategy. This study deals with the learners’ use of direct strategies in employed in writing and reading in English and use of direct and indirect strategies in speaking and listening skills in classroom interaction.

### **Learners’ use of direct strategies in writing skills in English**

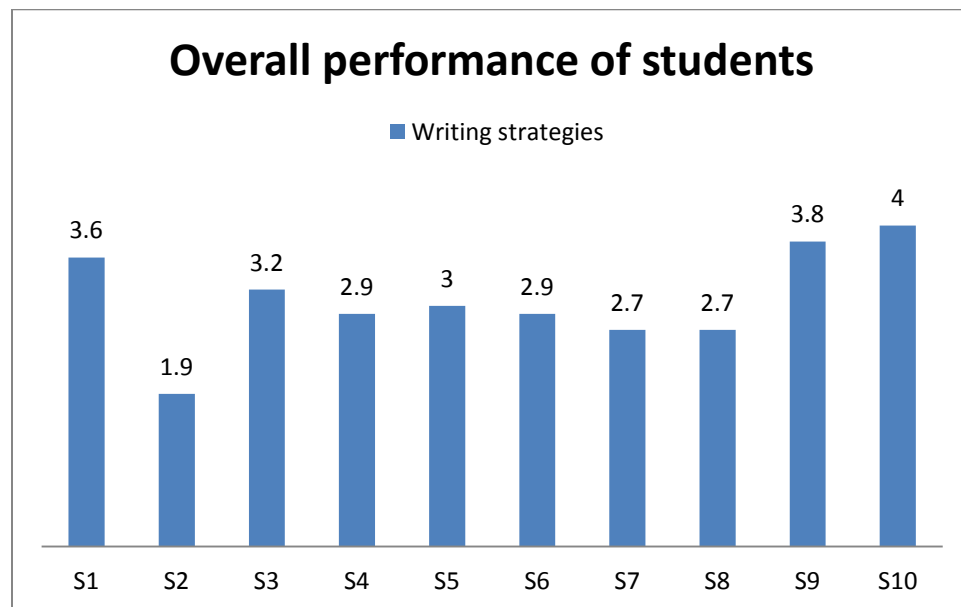
**Table 3.5**

Statement on writing skills	Average scores of the students	Percentage
While writing in English, I expressed my thoughts in Assamese and then translated to English	3.6	70.37
I prefer to write my diary/ personal thoughts/daily mundane activities in English	1.9	38.62
I take my class notes in English	3.2	64.87
I prepare my notes in English by myself	2.9	57.37

I write social media text in English (SMS, emails, facebook, whatsapp, other chatting apps)	3.0	59.87
I try to write on new topic several times by myself to improve my writing skills	2.9	58.87
While writing in English, I try to construct complex sentence which I came across while reading	2.7	54.5
I try to write a summary in English after reading	2.7	53.37
If my mistakes are corrected, I don't repeat it again	3.8	75
I practice several times to improve my writing skills	4	80.37
Total score	3.07	61.32

The table shows the overall use of strategies in writing skills by the students from both public and private schools. 61.32% of students have agreed that they use these learning strategies. The following figure will show the average value of the students in using learning strategies while learning English as a second language.

Figure 3.9



In figure 1, the X axis shows all the ten statements and the Y axis demonstrates the average value of all the statements. In statement 1, the average score of the students is 3.6 which show that they use this strategy occasionally. We can say that this strategy is popular for some learners and for others it is not. In statement 2, the average score of the students is 1.9 which implies that this strategy is hardly used. This also shows that it is not a popular strategy amongst the students. In statement 3, the average score of the students is 3.2 which also indicate that they use this strategy occasionally. In statement 4, the average score of the students is 2.9 which show that they hardly use this strategy. We can say that it is not a popular strategy among the students. In statement 5, the

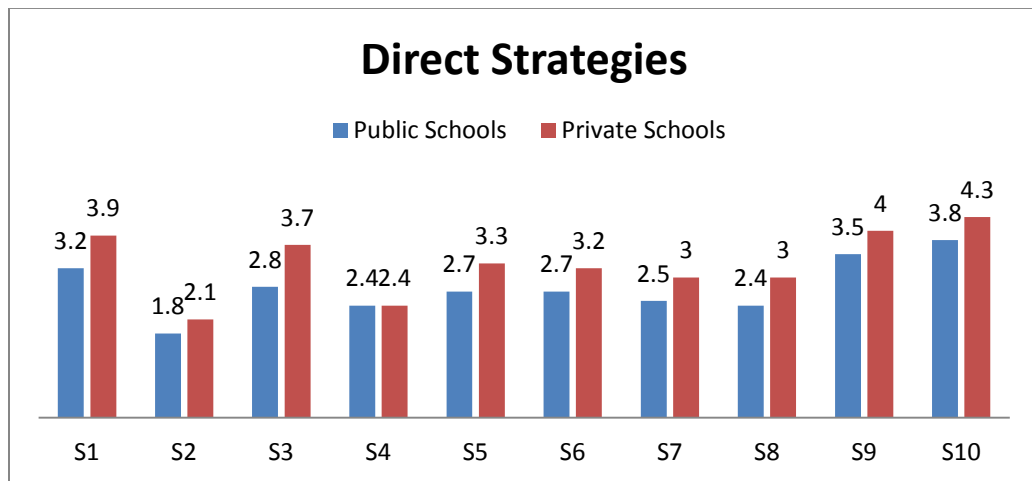
average score of the student is 3.0 which signify that the students use this strategy occasionally. This strategy is popular for some learner and for others it is not.

In statement 6, the average score of the students is 2.9 which show that the students hardly use this strategy. It also shows that it is not a popular strategy among the learners. In statement 7 and 8, the average value is same as they scored 2.7 which show that the students hardly use these strategies. It also shows that both these strategies are not popular among the learners. In statement 9, the average score of the students is 3.8. It shows that the students use this strategy occasionally. It also shows that for some learner it is a popular strategy and for some learner it is not. In statement 10, the average score of the students is 4.0 which show that the student uses this strategy often and we can say it is a popular among the student.

In next figure, it shows a comparative study of students using strategies from both public and private schools

- **Comparative Study of Direct Strategies in Writing skills**

**Figure 3.10**



This chart shows the average value of the student from both public and private schools. It projects the writing strategies comprising of ten separate statements. The x axis

corresponds to the all ten statements and the y axis demonstrates the average values of the statements. Statement 1 was about expressing one's thoughts in Assamese and then translating them to English while writing. The student from public schools have scored 3.2 and the student from private schools have scored 3.9 which indicate that the student from both public and private schools use this strategy frequently, but the responses of the student from private schools shows more progress as compare with the student from public schools. The statement2 was aboutwriting one's personal thoughts/ diary/daily mundane in English. The students from public schools have scored 1.8 and the students from private schools have scored 2.1. It shows that most of the students rarely use this strategy and the response of the students of private schools is comparatively slightly more than the student from private schools. The statement 3 dealt with taking class notes in English. The students from public schools have scored 2.8 which indicate that they hardly use this strategy. Whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.7 which show that they use this strategy occasionally. The statement 4 was about use of English to prepare notes. The students from public schools have scored 2.4 which indicate that they hardly use this strategy. Whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.4 which signify that they use this strategy occasionally. The statement 5 was aboutuse of English as a medium for social networking, the student from public schools have scored 2.7 which indicates that they hardly use this strategy Whereas the student from private schools have scored 3.3 which shows that they use this strategy occasionally. The statement 6 was about attempting to improve one's writing skills by working on a new topic repeatedly. The students from public schools have scored 2.7 which indicate that they hardly use this strategy. Whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.2 which indicate that they use this strategy occasionally. The statement 7 was about attempting to construct complex sentence while reading. The students from public schools have scored 2.5 which indicate that they hardly use this strategy. Whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.0 which indicate that they use this strategy occasionally. The statement 8 was about attempting to write a summary after reading, the students of

public schools have scored 2.4 which indicate that they hardly use this strategy. Whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.0 which indicate that they use this strategy occasionally. The statement 10 was about practicing English several times to improve their writing skills. The students from public schools have scored 3.8 which signify that they use this strategy occasionally. Whereas the students from private schools have scored 4.3 which signify that they frequently use this strategy often. The following figure shows the gender distribution in using direct strategies in writing skills

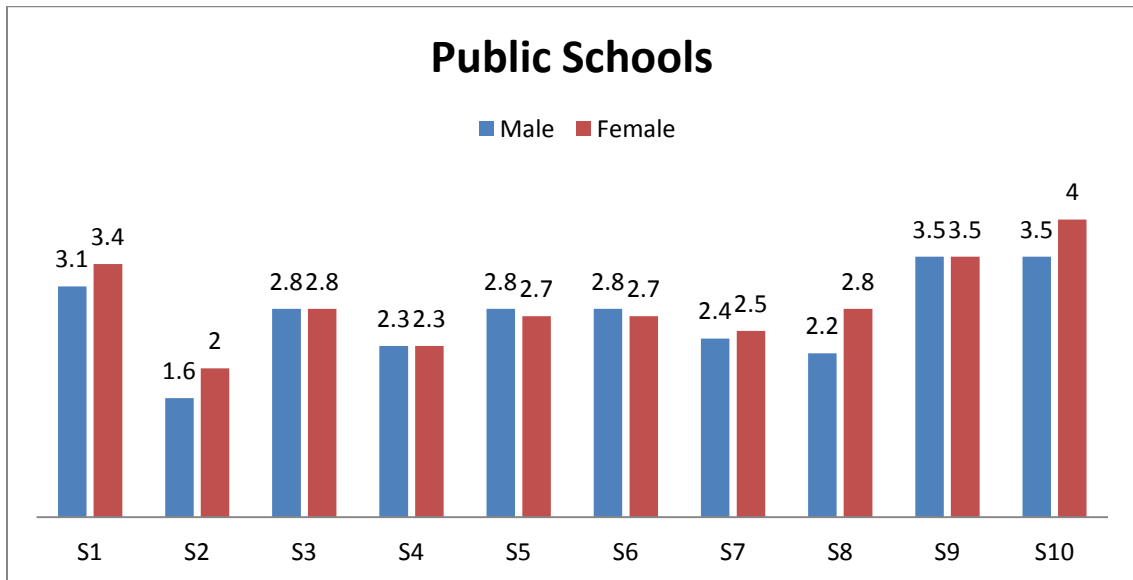
**Gender distribution in using direct strategies in writing skills**

**Table 3.6**

	Public Schools				Private Schools		
	Total	Count within class	% within class		Total	Count within class	% within class
Male	48	1284	53.5	Male	42	1434	68.28
Female	32	915	57.18	Female	38	1246	65.57

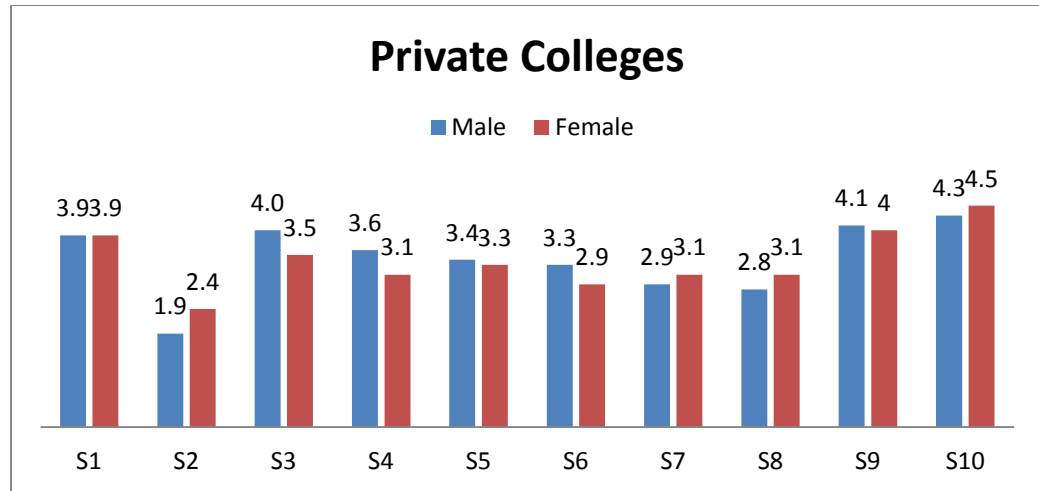
The above table shows the gender distribution of using direct strategies in writing skills in public and private schools and it is found that 53.5% of male participant and 57.18% of female participant use direct strategies in public schools. In private schools, 68.28% of male participant and 65.57% of female participant use direct strategies in writing skills. The following chart shows the average score of using direct strategies in writing skills.

**Figure3.11**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in public Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall/Total average score of the male participant is 2.7 and the female participant is 3.42 in public schools. It shows that the responses of the female participant in using direct strategies are more as compare to the male participant.

**Figure- 3.12**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in private schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 3.42 and the female participant is 3.38 in private schools which shows that the responses of the female participant in using direct strategies are less as compare to the male participant.

### Learners' use of Direct Strategies in reading skills in English

**Table 3.7**

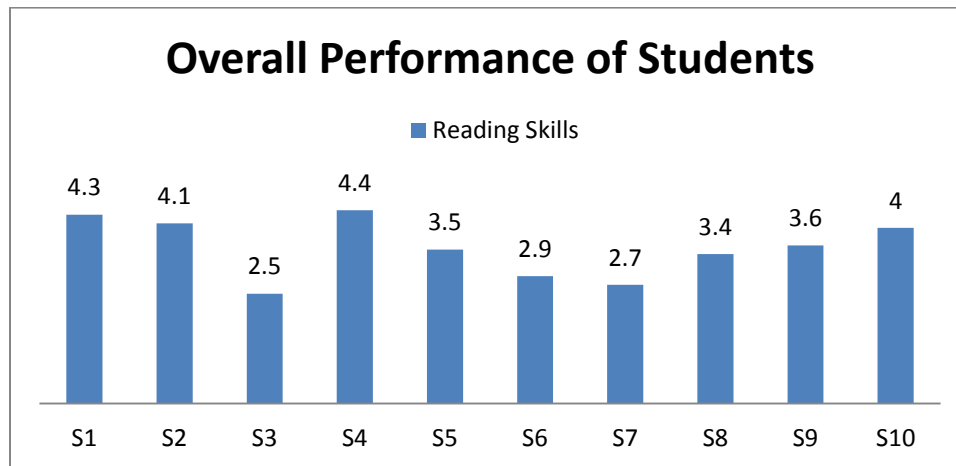
Statement on reading skills	Average score of the student from both public and private schools	Percentage
While reading in English, I try to read fluently.	4.3	84.3
I use dictionary so that I can understand what I am reading.	4.1	81.75



I read English newspaper	2.5	49.37
While reading, I underline the important lines in the text.	4.4	86.75
I read loud so that I can remember and understand what I am reading	3.5	69.12
I prefer to read books (novels, stories, magazines, encyclopaedia etc.) in English	2.9	57.37
I guess the overall meaning of the text without knowing the meaning of every word	2.7	52.87
I break unknown words into parts to understand the meanings.	3.4	67.5
I prefer English – English dictionary to English – Assamese dictionary	3.6	71
Before reading any new text, I first skim and then read it carefully. [Note: Skim means searching for the main idea in the text]	4	79.75
Total score	3.54	70

The table shows the overall use of strategies in reading skills by the students from both public and private schools. 70% of students have agreed that they use these strategies while learning English as a second language. The following figure shows the overall performance of the students

**Figure 3.13**

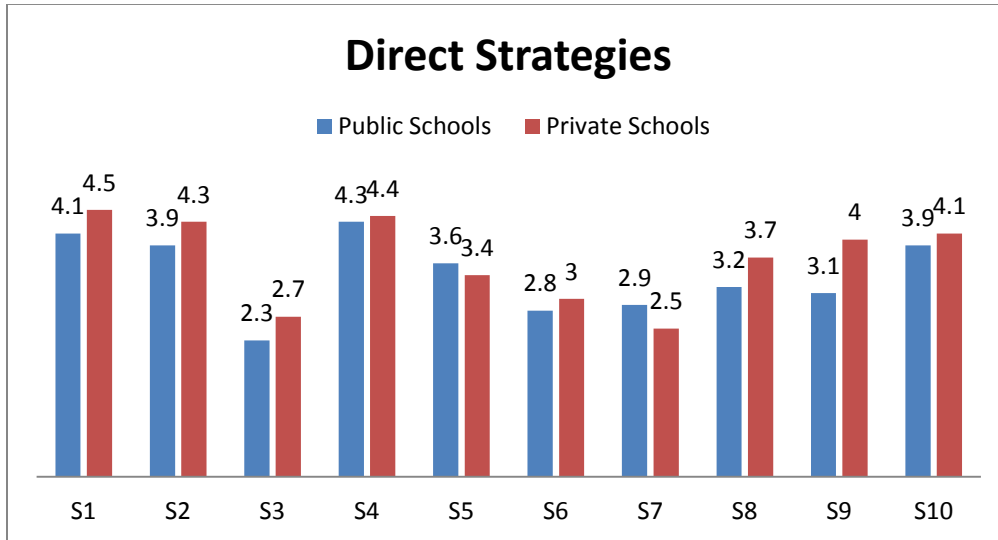


In figure1, the X axis shows all the ten statements on strategies in reading skills and Y axis demonstrates the average value of all the statements. In statement 1 and 2, the average score of the students is 4.3 and 4.1 respectively which indicate that the students use these strategies frequently. In statement 3, the average score of the students is 2.5 which signify that students hardly use this strategy. In statement 4, the result is highest among all the statements as they scored 4.4. It shows that students often use this strategy. In statement 5, the average score of the students is 3.5 which show that the students occasionally use this strategy. In statement 6 and statement 7, the average score of the students is 2.9 and 2.7 respectively. It shows that the learners hardly use this strategy. In statement 8 and statement 9, the average score of the students is 3.4 and 3.6 respectively. It indicates that the learners use this strategy occasionally and it shows that these two strategies are popular for some students, but for some student, it may not be popular strategies. In statement10, the average score of

the student is 4.0 which show that they use this strategy frequently. In next figure, it shows a comparative study of students using strategies from both public and private schools.

### Comparative Study of Direct Strategies in Reading Skills

Figure3. 14



The diagram shows the average value of the student of both public and private school s. It projects the reading strategies comprising of ten separate statements. The X-axis corresponds to the all ten statements and Y-axis demonstrates the average values of the statements. The statement 1 was about attempting to read fluently while reading in English, the students from public schools have scored 4.1 and the students from private schools have scored 4.5 which indicate that they use this strategy often. The statement 2 was about use of dictionary for understanding while reading. The students from public schools have scored 3.9 and the students from private schools have scored 4.3 which indicates that the students from public schools use this strategy occasionally, whereas, student from private schools use this strategy often. The statement 3 dealt with reading English Newspaper. The students from public schools have scored 2.3 and the students from private schools have scored 2.7 which indicate that the student from both public and private schools hardly use this strategy. The statement 4 was about underlining the

important lines in the text while reading, the students of public schools have scored 4.3 and the students from private schools have scored 4.4. It signifies that the student from both public and private schools use this strategy frequently, the responses of the student from private schools are slightly more than the responses of the student from public schools. The statement 5 was about reading loudly for remembering and understanding while reading, the students from public schools have scored 3.6 and the students from private schools have scored 3.4 which signifies that they use this strategy occasionally. The responses of the student from public schools are comparatively more than the responses of the student from private schools. The statement 6 was about reading books in English (such as novels, stories, magazines, encyclopedia, etc.). The students from both public schools have scored 2.8 and the students from private schools have scored 3.0 which indicates that the student from public schools hardly use this strategy, whereas, the student from private schools use this strategy occasionally. The statement 7 was about guessing the overall meaning of the text without knowing the meaning of every word. The student from public schools have scored 2.9 and the student from private schools have scored 2.5 which shows that the student from both public and private schools hardly use this strategy, but the responses of the student from public schools is slightly more than the responses of the student from private schools. The statement 8 was about breaking unknown words into parts to understand its meanings. The students from public schools have scored 3.2 and the students from private schools have scored 3.7, which shows that the student from both schools have use this strategy occasionally but the responses of the student from both public schools is more than the students from private schools. The statement 9 was about using English – English dictionary instead of English – Assamese dictionary. The student from public schools have scored 3.1 and the student from private schools have scored 4.0 which indicates that the student from public schools use this strategy occasionally, whereas, the student from private schools use this strategy frequently. The statement 10 is about - Before reading any new text, I first skim and then read it carefully. The students from public schools have scored 3.9 and the students from private schools have scored 4.1

which indicate that the students from public schools use this strategy occasionally and the student from public schools use this strategy frequently.

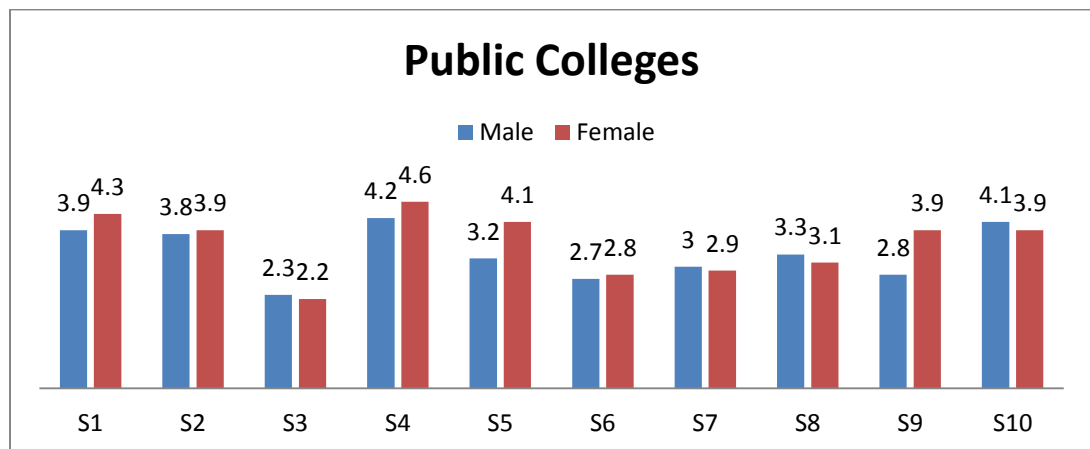
**Gender distribution in using direct strategies in reading skills**

**Table 3.8**

	Public Schools				Private Schools		
	Total Student	Count within class	% within class		Total Student	Count within class	% within class
Male	48	1570	65.41	Male	42	1492	71.04
Female	32	1141	71.31	Female	38	1385	72.89

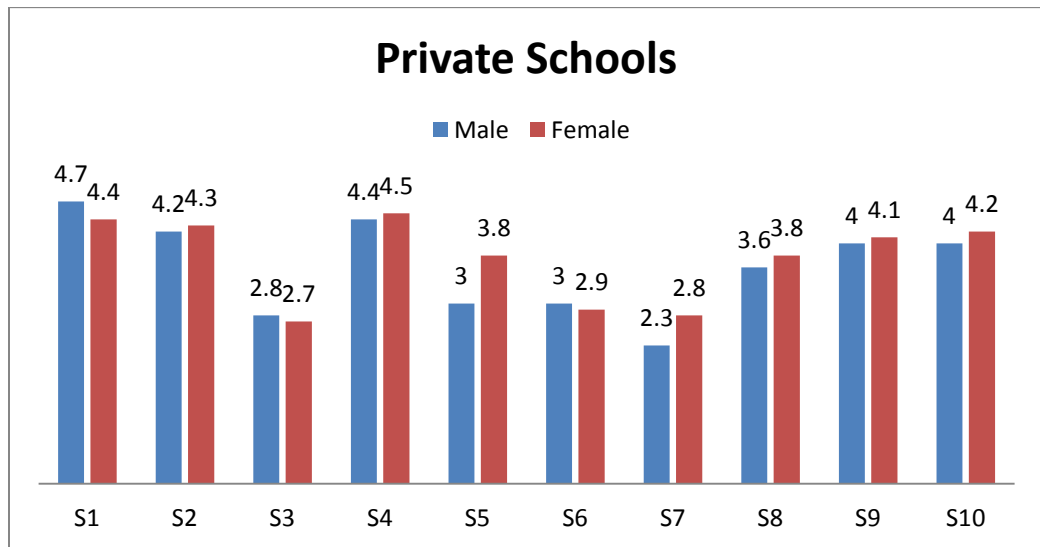
The above table shows the gender distribution of using direct strategies in reading skills in public and private schools and it is found that 65.41% of male participant and 71.31% of female participant use direct strategies in public schools. In private schools, 71.04% of male participant and 72.89% of female participant use direct strategies in reading skills. The following chart shows the average score of using direct strategies in reading skills.

**Figure-3.15**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in public Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 3.33 and the female participant is 3.57 in public schools. It shows that the responses of the female participant in using direct strategies are more as compare to the male participant.

**Figure- 3.16**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in Private Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 3.6 and the female participant is 3.75 in private schools. It shows that the responses of the female participant in using direct strategies are more as compare to the male participant.

### **3.1.3 Direct and Indirect strategies used by the learners in speaking and listening skills**

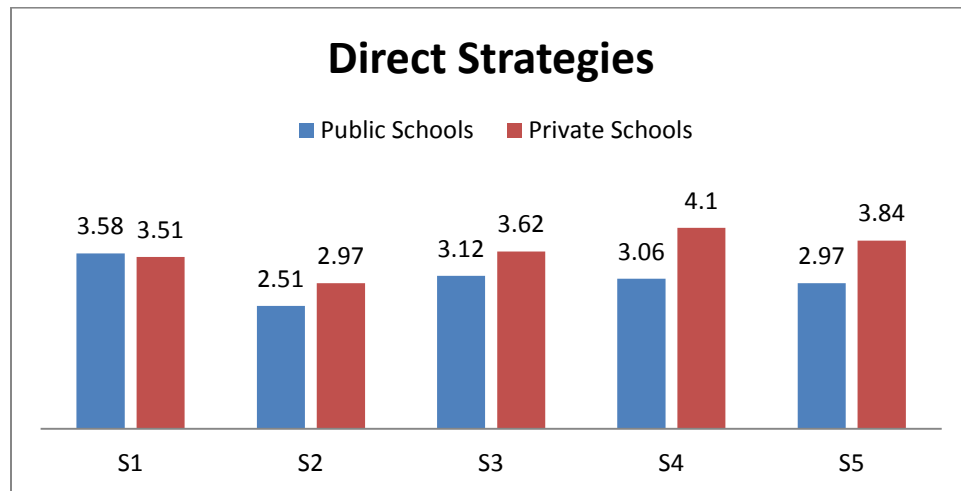
#### ***Direct strategies in speaking skills***

**Table 3.9**

Statement on speaking skills	Average score by the student from public schools	Percentage	Average score by the student from private schools	Percentage
I try to use new words or expressions while speaking with friends, teachers in class	3.58	70.75	3.51	72.5
I ask questions in class / seminar/ discussions in English	2.51	50.25	2.97	59.5
When I don't get the correct expression, I use gestures.	3.12	60.25	3.62	71.5
I try to imitate the way teachers and fluent student speak in English to improve my pronunciation in English	3.06	59.75	4.10	81
When I don't get the correct expression, I use synonyms or try to express it using other expression	2.97	58	3.84	73
Total score	3.04	59.8	3.60	71.5

In table 8, it shows the learner's use of direct strategies in speaking skills in classroom interaction and we have identified that 59.8% of students from public schools and 71.5% of students from private schools employ these strategies. The following figure shows the average score of both public and private sectors students by means of bar diagram.

**Figure 3.17**



The figure 5 shows the average value of the student from both public and private schools. The X axis shows all the five statements on Direct Strategies and Y axis demonstrates the average value of the statements. The statement 1 was about using new words or expressing while communicating with friends and teachers in class, the students from public schools have scored 3.58 which are slightly more than the students from private schools as they scored 3.51. It indicates that the students from both public and private schools use this strategy frequently. The statement 2 dealt with asking questions in class, seminar or any discussions in English, the students from public schools have scored 2.51 whereas the students from private schools have scored 2.97 which signify that they hardly use this strategy. The statement 3 was about using gestures, the students from public



schools have scored 3.12 whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.62 which show that the students from both sectors use this strategy occasionally. The statement 4 was about attempting to imitate the way teachers and fluent speaker speaks in English, the students from public schools have scored 3.06 and the students from private schools have scored 4.01 which show that the public sectors students hardly use this strategy whereas the private sectors use this strategy frequently. .The statement 5 was about using synonyms when they don't get the correct expression, the students from public schools have scored 2.97 and the students from private schools have scored 3.84 which show that the public sectors students hardly use this strategy whereas the private sectors students use this strategy occasionally.

### Indirect Strategies in speaking skills

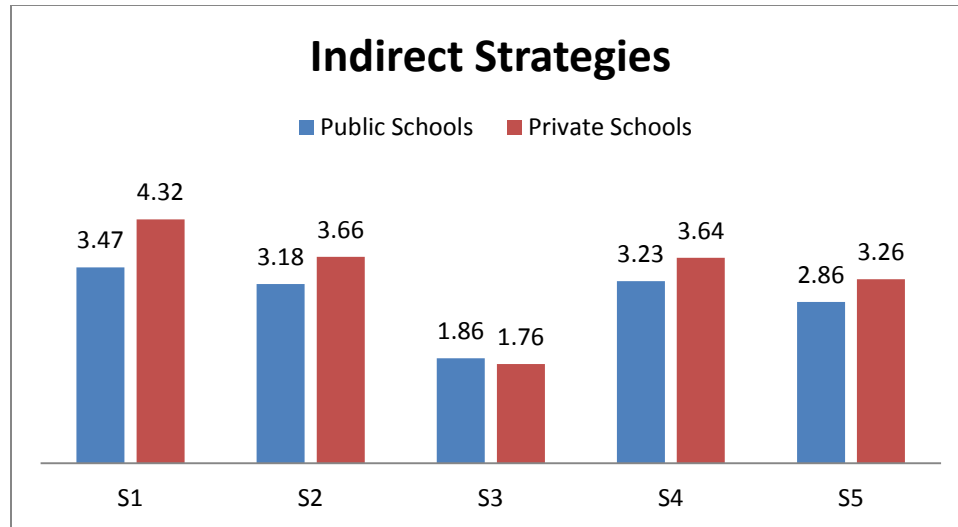
**Table 3.10**

Statement on speaking skills	Average score by the student of public schools	Percentage	Average score by the student of private schools	Percentage
While speaking in English, I try to pay attention to particular elements such as – pronunciation, style, grammar and vocabulary.	3.47	69.5	4.32	84.25
I feel comfortable in joining classroom communication.	3.18	63.75	3.66	73.25

I record my own speech on a tape recorder and then listen to the recording to find out whether it matches with the native speakers or not.	1.86	35.5	1.76	35.25
I use to encourage myself before presenting any speech in English	3.23	63	3.64	71
After a good day of classroom communication in English, I reward myself	2.86	56.5	3.26	63.75
Total score	2.92	57.65	3.32	65.5

In table 9, it shows the learner's use of indirect strategies in speaking skills in classroom interaction and we have identified that 57.65 % of students from public schools and 65.5% of students from private schools have use these strategies. The following figure will show the average score of the students from both public and private sectors by means of bar diagram.

**Figure 3.18**



In figure 6, the X axis shows all the five statements on indirect strategies and the Y axis demonstrates the average value of the statements. The statement 1 was about paying attention to particular elements such as pronunciation, style, grammar and vocabulary while communicating in English, the students from public schools have scored 3.47 and the students from private schools have scored 4.32. It shows that the public sector students use this strategy occasionally whereas the private sector students use this strategy frequently. The statement 2 was about students comfortable in joining classroom interaction, the students from public schools have scored 3.18 and the students from private schools have scored 3.66. It indicates that the students from both public and private sector occasionally use this strategy. The statement 3 was about recording their own speech in which the students from public schools have scored 1.86 which is slightly more than the students from private schools as they scored 1.76 which signifies that students from both the sectors hardly use this strategy. The statement 4 was about encouraging oneself before presenting any speech in English, the students from public schools have scored 3.23 and the students from private schools have scored 3.64 which indicate that the students from both the sectors use this strategy occasionally. The statement 5 was about rewarding oneself in which students from public schools have scored 2.86 and the students from private schools have scored 3.26

which show that the public sectors students hardly use this strategy whereas the private sectors students use this strategy occasionally.

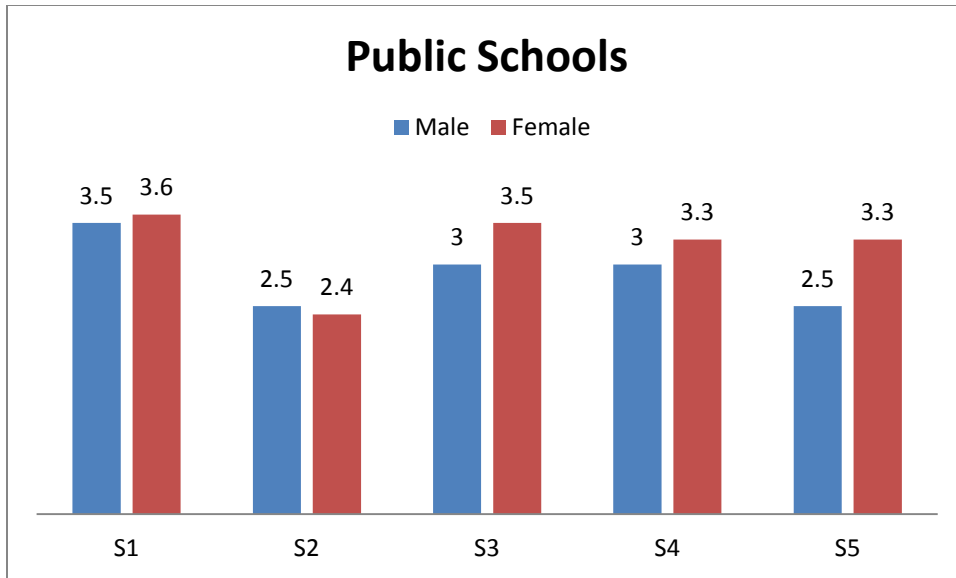
### Gender distribution in using direct strategies in speaking skills

**Table 3.11**

	Public Schools				Private Schools		
	Total Students	Count within class	% within class			Count within class	% within class
Male	48	696	58	Male	42	785	74.76
Female	32	502	62.75	Female	38	653	68.73

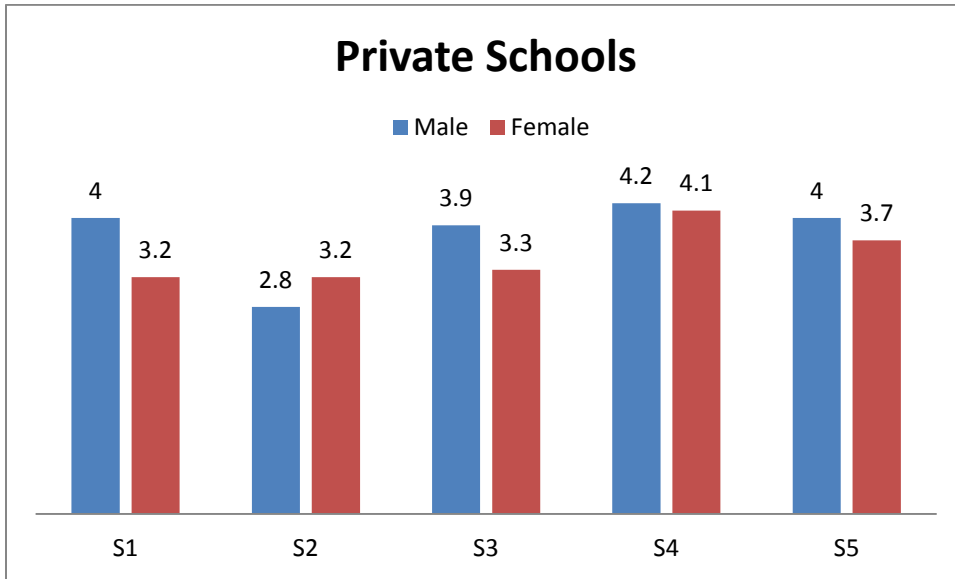
The above table shows the gender distribution of using direct strategies in reading skills in public and private schools and it is found that 58% of male participant and 62.75% of female participant use direct strategies in public schools. In private schools, 74.76% of male participant and 68.73% of female participant use direct strategies in speaking skills. The following chart shows the average score of using direct strategies in speaking skills.

**Figure 3.19**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in public Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 2.9 and the female participant is 3.22 in public schools. It shows that the responses of the female participant in using direct strategies are more as compare to the male participant. The following chart shows the average score of using indirect strategies in speaking skills

Figure 3.20



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in Private Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 3.78 and the female participant is 3.5 in private schools. It shows that the responses of the male participant in using direct strategies are more as compare to the female participant.

### Gender distribution in using indirect strategies in speaking skills

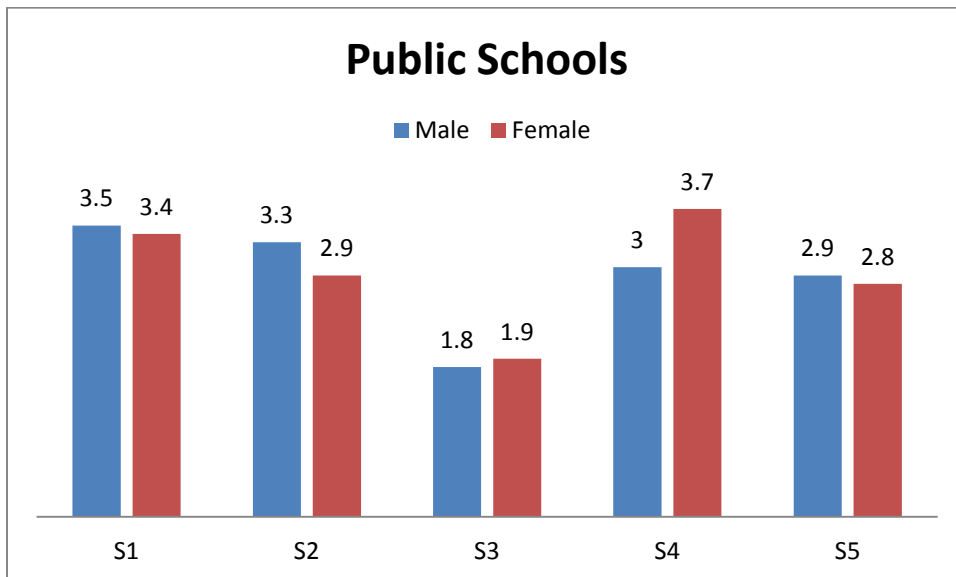
Table3. 12

	Public Schools				Private Schools		
	Total Students	Count within class	% within class		Total Students	Count within class	% within class
Male	48	684	57	Male	42	681	64.85
Female	32	465	58.12	Female	38	626	65.89

The above table shows the gender distribution of using direct strategies in speaking skills in public and private schools and it is found that 57% of male participant and

58.12% of female participant use direct strategies in public schools. In private schools, 64.85% of male participant and 65.89% of female participant use direct strategies in speaking skills. The following chart shows the average score of using indirect strategies in speaking skills

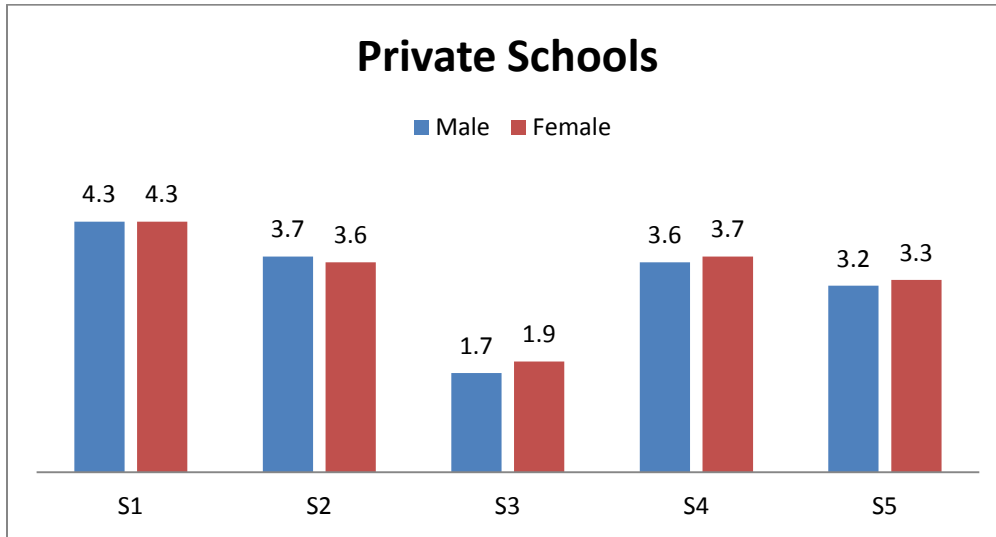
**Figure 3.21**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in public Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 2.9 and the female

participant is 2.94 in public schools. It shows that the responses of the female participant in using indirect strategies are slightly more as compare to the male participant.

**Figure 3.22**



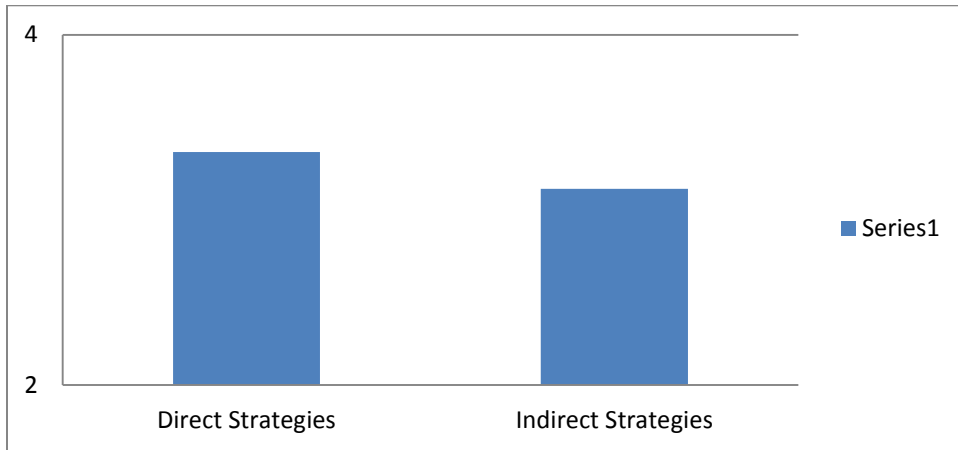
The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in Private Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 3.3 and the female participant is 3.36 in private schools. It shows that the responses of the male participant in using indirect strategies are slightly more as compare to the female participant.

In next diagram, it shows the overall performance of using direct and indirect strategies in speaking skills. The students from both public and private schools have scored 65.65% in using direct strategies and 61.57% in using indirect strategies. The following figure will show the average score of students in using direct and indirect strategies in speaking skills.



## Average score of using direct and indirect strategies in speaking skills

Figure 3.23



In this figure, the x axis shows the types of strategy – direct and indirect and the y axis shows the average score of these two strategies. The average score of the students in using direct and indirect strategies is 3.33 and 3.12 respectively. Though both strategies are used by the students but it is found that direct strategies are more in practice than indirect strategies in speaking skills.

### Direct strategies in Listening skills

Table 3.13

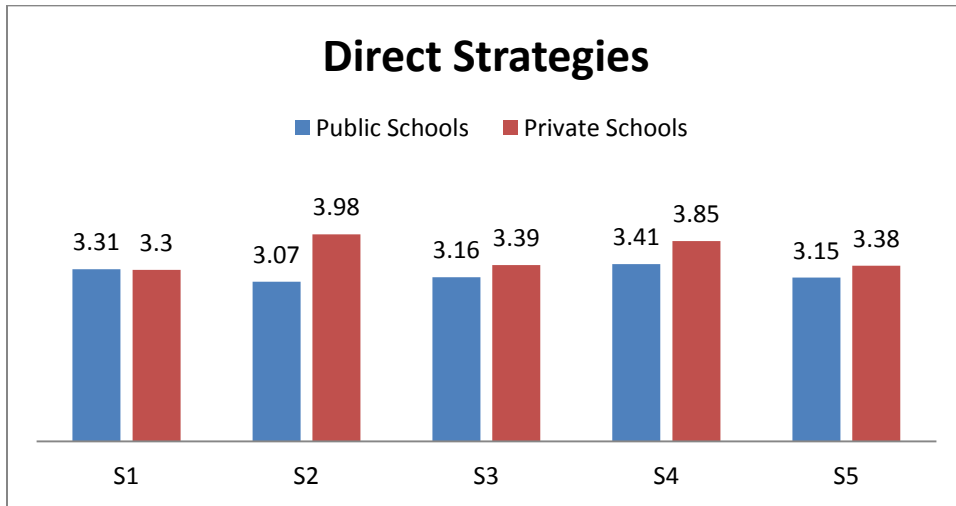
Statement on listening skills	Average score by the students from public schools	Percentage	Average score by the students from private schools	Percentage
I associate new words with familiar concepts to remember	3.31	65.5	3.30	65.25

them easily.				
I listen to English programs to improve my listening skills	3.07	60.75	3.98	78.75
While listening, I break the speech into its component parts to understand well	3.16	63.25	3.39	64.5
I translate what I hear in English in my mother tongue to comprehend it.	3.41	65.75	3.85	74.25
I used to take notes when listening to lectures for better understanding	3.15	63	3.38	66
Total score	3.22	63.65	3.58	69.75

In table 10, it shows the learner's use of direct strategies in listening skills in classroom interaction and we have identified that 63.65% of students from public schools and 69.75% of students from private schools have use these strategies. The following figure

will show the average score of the students from both public and private sectors by means of bar diagram.

**Figure 3.25**



In figure 8, the X axis shows all the five statements on direct strategies in listening skills and Y axis demonstrates the average value of the statements. The statement 1 was about associating new words with familiar concepts for remembering while listening in English; the students from public schools have scored 3.31 which are slightly more than the students from private schools have scored 3.30. It indicates that the students from both the sectors use this strategy occasionally. The statement 2 was about listening English programs in which the students from public schools have scored 3.07 and the students from private schools have scored 3.98 which shows that the from both public and private schools use this strategy occasionally. The statement 3 was about breaking the speech into its component parts while listening in English, the students from public schools have scored 3.16 and the students from private schools have scored students 3.39 which shows that the students from both the sectors use this strategy occasionally. Here also students from both the sectors use this strategy occasionally, but the

responses of the students from private sectors shows more progress than the responses of the students of the students from public sectors. In statement 4 and statement 5, the students from public schools have scored 3.41 and 3.15 respectively whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.85 and 3.38 respectively. It shows that the students from both public and private use this strategy occasionally. It also shows that the responses of the students from private sectors shows more progress than the responses of the students from public sectors. From the above discussions, we can say that direct strategies are mostly used by the students from both public and private schools and therefore these strategies are popular strategies.

a) Indirect Strategies in listening skills

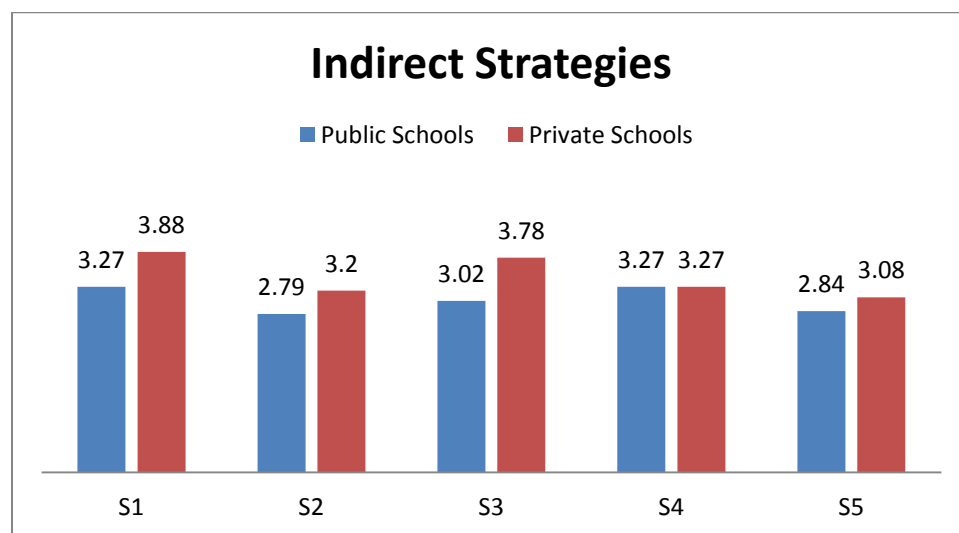
**Table 3.14**

Statement on listening skills	Average score by the students from public schools	Percentage	Average score by the students from private schools	Percentage
I pay attention on lectures and relevant classroom interactions in English	3.27	63	3.88	72.75
When I could not understand while listening lectures or conversations in class, I ask the speaker to slow	2.79	55.25	3.20	62.5

down or repeat or explain				
I practice listening in English with my classmates who are proficient in it.	3.02	60.5	3.78	73.75
While listening, I observe to listeners responses such as behavior (tone, expressions), physical signals	3.27	65.5	3.27	63
I try to find similarities and differences between my mother tongue and English	2.84	56.25	3.08	60.25
Total score	3.03	60.1	3.44	66.45

In table 11, it shows the learner's use of indirect strategies in listening skills in classroom interaction and we have identified that 60.1% of students from public schools and 66.45% of students from private schools have used these strategies. The following figure will show the average score by the students of both public and private sectors by means of bar diagram.

**Figure 3.26**



In figure 6, the X axis shows all the five statements on indirect strategies in listening skills and Y axis demonstrates the average value of the statements. In statement 1 and statement 3, the students from public schools have scored 3.27 and 3.02 respectively whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.88 and 3.78 respectively. It shows that the students from both the sectors use this strategy occasionally, but the responses of the students from private schools shows more progress than the responses of the students from public schools. As these strategies are used occasionally. In statement 2 and statement 5, the students from public schools have scored 2.79 and 2.84 respectively whereas the students from private schools have scored 3.20 and 3.08 respectively. It shows that the students from public sectors hardly use these strategies,

whereas the students from private sectors use these strategies occasionally. In statement 3, the students from both the sectors have scored the same number with average of 3.27 which shows that the students from both the sectors use this strategy occasionally. In next diagram, it shows the overall performance of using direct and indirect strategies in listening skills. 66.7% of students from both public and private have used direct strategies and 63.27% of students have used indirect strategies for listening skills.

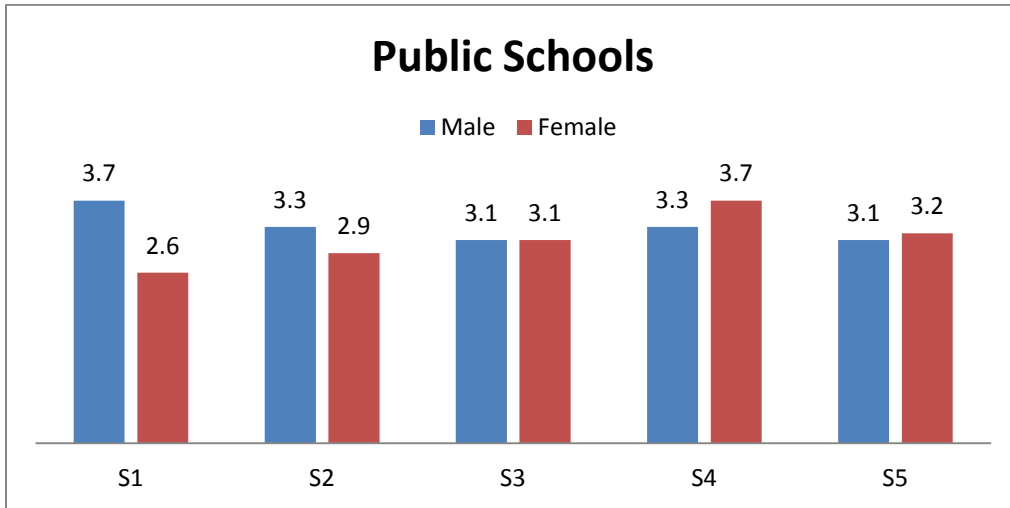
### Gender Distribution in using direct strategies in Listening skills

**Table 3.15**

	Public Schools				Private Schools		
	Total Students	Count within class	% within class		Total Students	Count within class	% within class
Male	48	794	66.16	Male	42	758	72
Female	32	496	62	Female	38	662	69.68

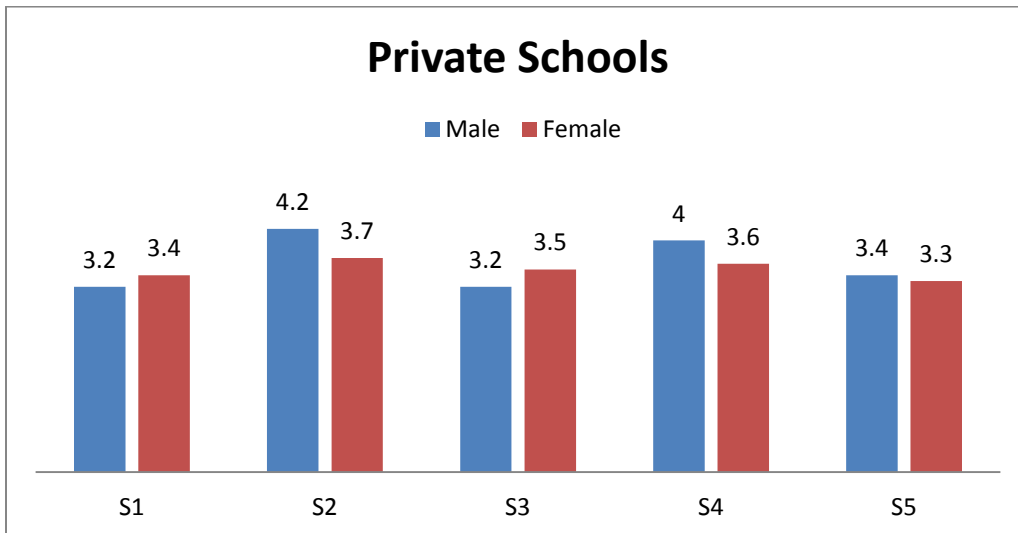
The above table shows the gender distribution of using direct strategies in listening skills in public and private schools and it is found that 66.16% of male participant and 62% of female participant use direct strategies in public schools. In private schools, 72% of male participant and 69.68% of female participant use direct strategies in listening skills. The following chart shows the average score of using indirect strategies in listening skills

**Figure 3.27**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in public Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 3.3 and the female participant is 3.1 in public schools. It shows that the responses of the female participant in using direct strategies are less as compare to the male participant.

**Figure 3.28**





The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in private schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 3.6 and the female participant is 3.5 in private schools. It shows that the responses of the male participant in using direct strategies are slightly more as compare to the female .

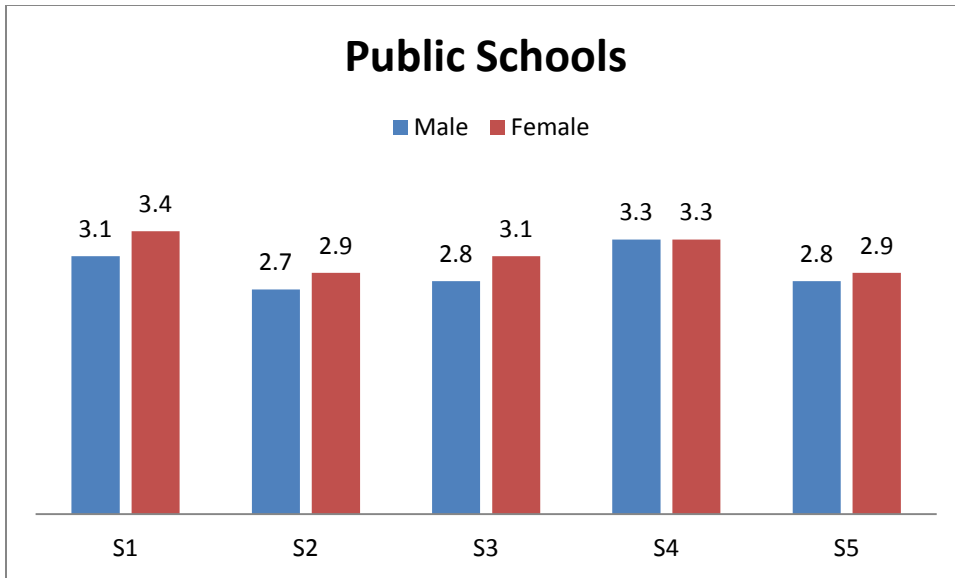
### Gender distribution in using indirect strategies in listening skills

**Table 3.16**

	Public Schools				Private Schools		
	Total Students	Count within class	% within class		Total Students	Count within class	% within class
Male	48	701	58.41	Male	42	697	66.38
Female	32	503	62.87	Female	38	666	70.10

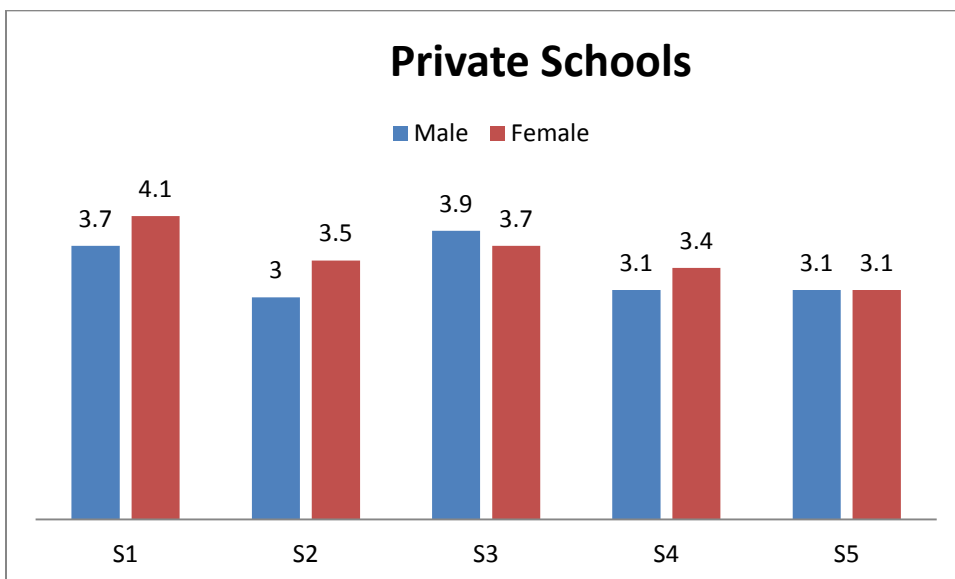
The above table shows the gender distribution of using indirect strategies in listening skills in public and private schools and it is found that 58.41% of male participant and 62.87% of female participant use direct strategies in public schools. In private schools, 66.38% of male participant and 70.10% of female participant use direct strategies in listening skills. The following chart shows the average score of using indirect strategies in listening skills.

**Figure 3.29**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in public Schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 2.94 and the female participant is 3.12 in public schools. It shows that the responses of the female participant in using indirect strategies are more as compare to the male participant.

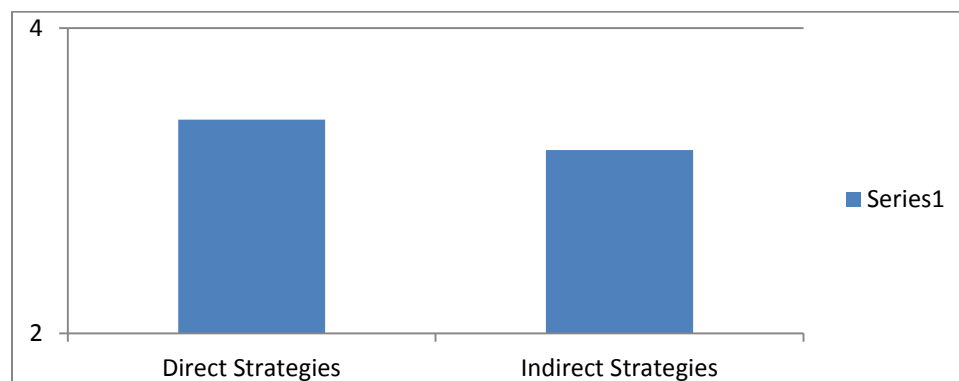
**Figure 3.30**



The X axis shows the average value of male and female participant in private schools. The X axis shows all the ten statements and Y axis shows the average value of the statements. The overall average score of the male participant is 3.36 and the female participant is 3.56 in private schools. It shows that the responses of the male participant in using indirect strategies are slightly more as compare to the female participant.

### Overall average score in using direct and strategies in listening skills

**Figure 3.31**



In this figure, the X axis shows the types of strategy – direct and indirect and the Y axis shows the average score of these two strategies. The average score of the students in using direct and indirect strategies is 3.4 and 3.23 respectively. Though both strategies are used by the students but it is found that direct strategies are more in practice than indirect strategies in listening skills.

### 3.2 Analysis of Teachers Questionnaire

The data were collected from 5 teachers, 3 of them were from public schools and 2 of them from private schools. In Teachers Questionnaire also there are different sections. Section1 enquires about teacher's personal profile such as name, age, gender,

qualification, teaching experience etc. Section 2 is about teacher's priority of using different languages in classroom. It is found that in both public and private sectors, teachers generally use English as medium of communication. Occasionally they use Assamese when student fail to understand English. If students still have problems in understanding, they take help of other languages for better understanding. In section 3, teachers were asked about the methods that are used for teaching English. The following are the methods that are used in the classroom by the teachers of both public and private schools -

- i. Methods used by the teachers of public schools in classroom interaction for teaching English.
  - Oration method
  - Chalk board
  - Grammar translation method
  - Direct method
  - Discussions
- ii. Methods used by the teachers of private schools in classroom interaction for teaching English.
  - Oration method
  - Chalkboard
  - Grammar translation method
  - Direct method
  - Audio Visual Method

In section 4, it deals about teacher's perception about learning and teaching strategies. In this section, 4 subjective questions were asked which will discuss it below:

- The first question is about strategies used by the students while learning English as a second language. It is found that learning strategies vary from student to student. Some students may learn a word by breaking it down into components and some learners learn a sentence by dividing it into chunks and another

learner may learn a paragraph by reading it aloud several times. Some learners also prefer group work or discussions. It is also found that students try to understand the lessons in their mother tongue and then translated to English.

- The second question is about strategies used by the teachers in classroom interaction to improve student's proficiency in English Language. It is found that teachers used English for interaction in the class, but they also take help of Assamese language as student find difficult. One teacher said that he organized group discussions and vocabulary development. One teacher from public schools said that she give questions-answer on topics of the syllabus through spoken English and written English with guidance for correct pronunciation and grammar presentations
- The third question is about students successful in implementing these strategies for making students enable to become better learner. Most of the teachers opined that though students use these strategies, but success or effectiveness is low, they make mistakes mostly in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation due to their lack of practice. Only 20 – 30 percent student become better learners. One teacher from public schools
- The last question is about the strategies teacher's use to overcome the errors produced by the students. Most of the teachers opined that they give homework to develop their knowledge on grammar and instant correction in the class during testing time.

### **3.3 Analysis of Language Ability Test (LAT)**

#### **Grammar Test**

Language ability test is taken to recognize the language use by the students in writing skills. In this section, there were 30 questions based on preposition, determiners, verb, voice, adjectives, adverb and use of correct alternatives. Language ability test helps to find out student's proficiency in particular domains. It also helps both learners and teachers to comprehend their effectiveness and ineffectiveness in writing skills. The overall performances of the students from both public and private schools are presented below in tables and graphs.

**Table3.17**

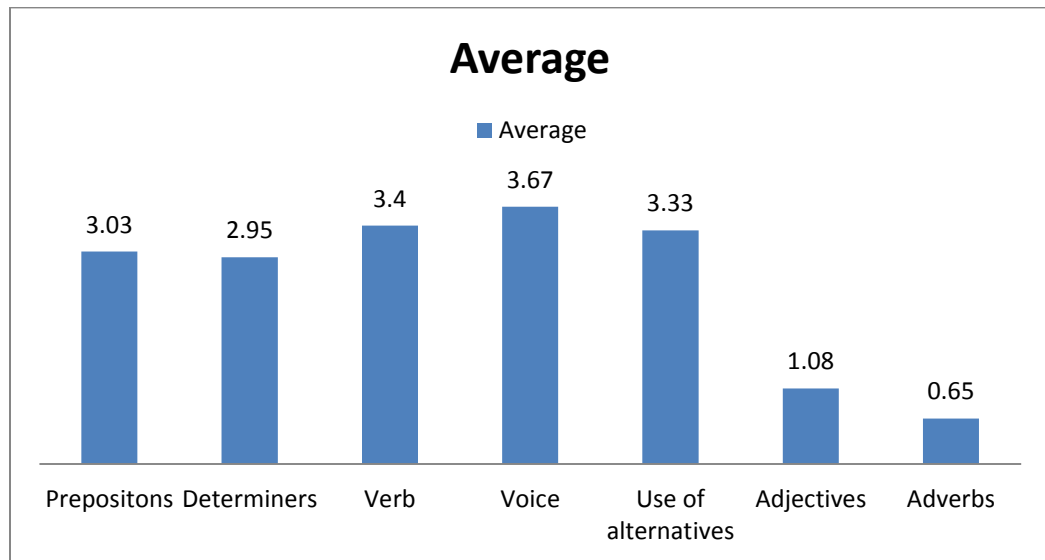
Categories	Full Marks	No. of questions attempted by the students of both public and private schools	Percentage	Average
Preposition	800	485	60.62	3.03
Determiners	800	473	59.12	2.95
Verb	800	545	68.12	3.40
Voice	800	588	73.5	3.67
Use of alternatives	800	533	66.62	3.33
Adjectives	480	173	36.04	1.08
Adverbs	320	104	32.5	0.65
Total score	4800	2901	60.43	2.58

In Table1, it shows the overall performance of the students in each category and we have identified that the overall performance of the students were not satisfactory. The students from both public and private schools have scored 60.43% and the average score is 2.58.

In Figure 1 we will show in graphs the overall performance of students in writing skills and consequently, there will be discussions of each category.

### Overall performance in each category

Figure 3.32



In this diagram, it projects the average value comprising of seven different categories. The x axis corresponds to the all seven categories and y axis corresponds to the average value of these categories. In table 1, we identified that student's performance is highest in the domain of voice in which the average score is 3.67. The next highest score that students performed in the domain of verb and the average score is 3.40. The next category is the use of alternatives in which the students scored 3.33 and then it is followed by prepositions in which they scored 3.03. After prepositions, the next category is determiners where students scored only 2.95 which are not satisfactory. The

lowest score that students performed is in the domain of adjectives and adverbs. They scored only 1.08 in the domain of adjectives and 0.65 in the domain of adverbs.

In next section, we will discuss separately the performance of students of both public and private schools.

**Table3.18**

Category	Average score by the student of public schools	Percentage	Average score by the student of private schools	Percentage
Prepositions	2.42	48.5	3.63	72.75
Determiners	2.43	48.75	3.47	69.5
Verb	2.75	55	4.06	81.25
Voice	3.33	66.75	4.01	80.25
Use of alternatives	2.91	58.25	3.75	75
Adjectives	1.13	37.91	1.02	34.16
Adverbs	0.53	26.87	0.76	38.12
Total score		51.79		69.08

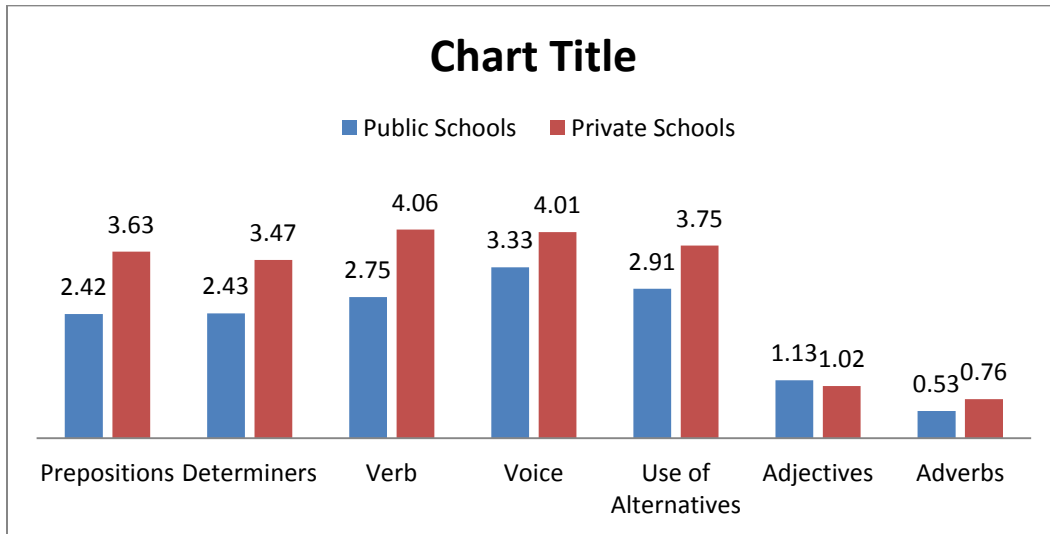
In table 2, it shows the performance of students from both public and private schools and we have identified that 51.79% of students from public schools and 69.08% of students from private schools have attempted questions correctly. The following figure



will show the average score of both public and private schools students by means of a bar diagram.

### Performance in each category: Public Vs Private Schools

Figure 3.33



In figure 2, it shows that the performance of the student from private schools is much better than the student from public schools in the domain of prepositions, determiners, verb, voice and use of alternatives. In the domain of prepositions, the students from private schools have scored 3.63 which performed better than the student from public schools as they scored 2.42. In the domain of determiners, the students from public schools have scored 2.43 which is less than the student from private schools. In the domain of verb, the students from private schools performed much better with average of 4.06 than the students from public schools as they scored only 2.75. In the domain of voice and use of alternatives, the students from public schools have scored less with average of 3.33 and 2.91, whereas the students from private schools have performed better as they scored 4.01 and 3.75 respectively. In the domain of adjectives and adverbs, the students from both public and private schools have not performed well. The students from public schools have scored only 1.13 in the domain of adjectives

which is slightly more than the student from private schools as they scored only 1.02. In the domain of adverbs, the student from public schools have scored only 0.53 which is slightly less than the performance of the student from private schools as they scored only 0.76.

### **Composition Test**

In Composition test, students were asked to write an essay on any one of these three topics. The data were collected from 160 students, but overall only 82 students from both public and private schools were able to write the composition test. 40 were from private schools and 42 were from private schools. The composition test is analyzed in the following three steps - Identification of Errors, Classification of Errors and Explanation of Errors. After identifications of errors, the errors are classified into four main linguistics groups: morphosyntactic errors, lexico-semantic errors, spelling and punctuation errors and miscellaneous errors. After classifications of errors, the errors will be explained under two sections – interlingual and intralingual transfer.

This section deals with the overall errors in learners’ compositions. This section also shows the total number of words and total number of sentence produced by the students. The following table will show the errors in learner’s composition test.

### **Overall errors in learners’ composition test**

**Table3. 19**

Total number of students	82
Total number of words	10,574
Total number of errors	856
Total score	8.09

The above table shows the total number of learners' errors in composition test and we have found that 8.09% of errors produced by the students. The following table will show the comparative study of students from public and private sectors

**A comparative study of learners' errors in composition test**

**Table 3.20**

Schools	Public	Private
Total Number of Students	40	42
Total Errors	465	391
Average error	11.625	9.30

The above table shows the average errors of learners' composition from both public and private schools. The public sectors students made 11.625 errors on an average, whereas, the private sectors students made 9.30 errors on an average. The following table will show the overall errors of students in four main linguistic categories – morphsyntactic, lexicosemantic, spelling and punctuation and miscellaneous errors.

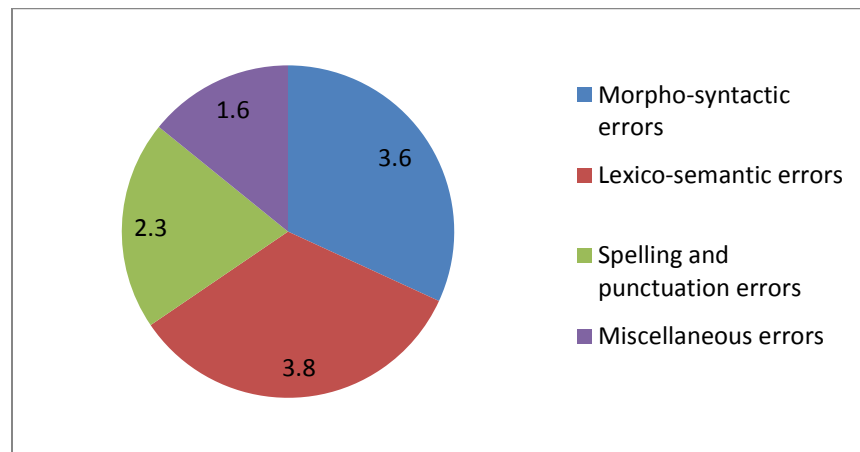
**Overall Errors of students in the four linguistic categories**

**Table 3.21**

	Morpho-syntactic	Lexico-semantic	Spelling and Punctuation	Miscellaneous
Count within class	292	311	167	84
% within class	34.11	36.33	19.50	9.81

The table shows the errors made by the students in the four main linguistic categories and we found that the students produced highest number of errors in the category of lexico-semantic. Out of the total number of errors, 36.33% of the errors fall in the category of lexico-semantic errors. The next highest numbers of errors are found in the category of morpho-syntactic. Out of the total number of errors, 34.11% of the errors fall in the category of lexico – semantic. In the domain of spelling and punctuation and miscellaneous, the errors made by the students is comparatively less as compare to the errors by the students in the category of morpho –syntactic and lexico-semantic. Overall 19.50% of errors made by the students in the category of spelling and punctuation errors. In the category of miscellaneous, the errors are lowest in numbers as the students produced 9.81% of errors. The following figure will show the average score of the errors made by the students in the following four categories.

**Figure 3.37**



The following examples will show the errors made by the students in the four categories:

1. Examples of Morpho-syntactic Errors

- a) Rongali Bihu celebration on\* 7 days.
- b) People bathed\* very early.
- c) In Bohag Bihu, people are\* dance.

2. Examples of Lexico-semantic Errors

- a) Bihu is the National\* festival of Assam.
- b) In Magh Bihu, people eat so many\* food.
- c) The farmer get\* the light in cropfield.

3. Examples of Spelling and Punctuation Errors

- a) In Kati Bihu earthan\* lamps are lighted in the paddy field.
- b) The Bohag Bihu continus\* for seven days.
- c) Rongali Bihu is celebrated\* for seven days.

4. Examples of Miscellaneous Errors

- a) In assam,\* there are three types of Bihu.

- b) In this Bihu, assamese\* people make various types of food.
- c) Through media, we get Information\*

**Distribution in the category of errors: Public schools Vs Private schools**

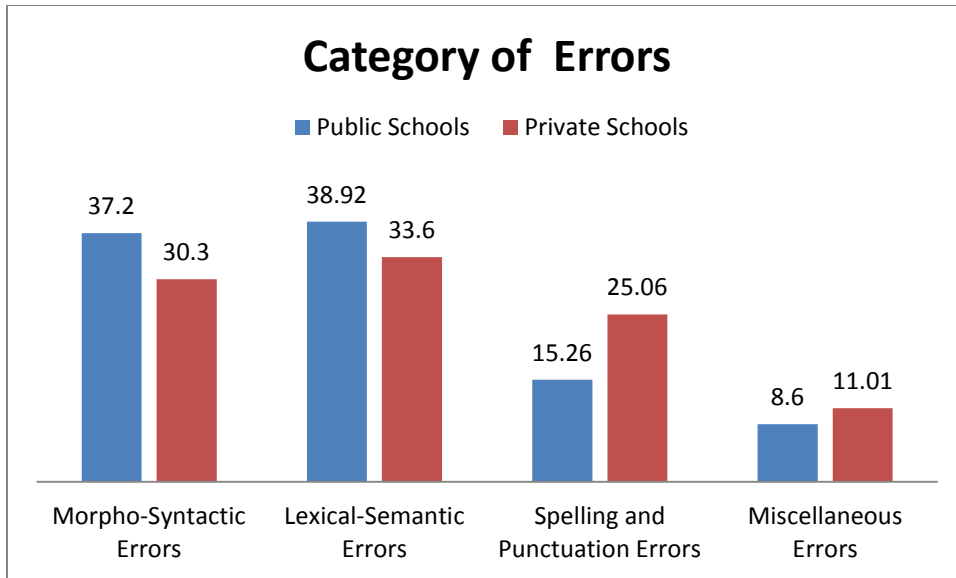
**Table 3.21**

Category of Errors	Public Schools			Private Schools		
	Count within class	% within class		Count within class	% within class	
Morpho-syntactic	173	37.20		110	30.30	
Lexico-semantic	181	38.92		122	33.60	
Spelling and Punctuation	71	15.26		91	25.06	
Miscellaneous	40	8.60		40	11.01	

The table shows a comparative study of students from both public and private schools in the four linguistics category.

**Comparative study of Category of Errors**

**Figure 3.38**

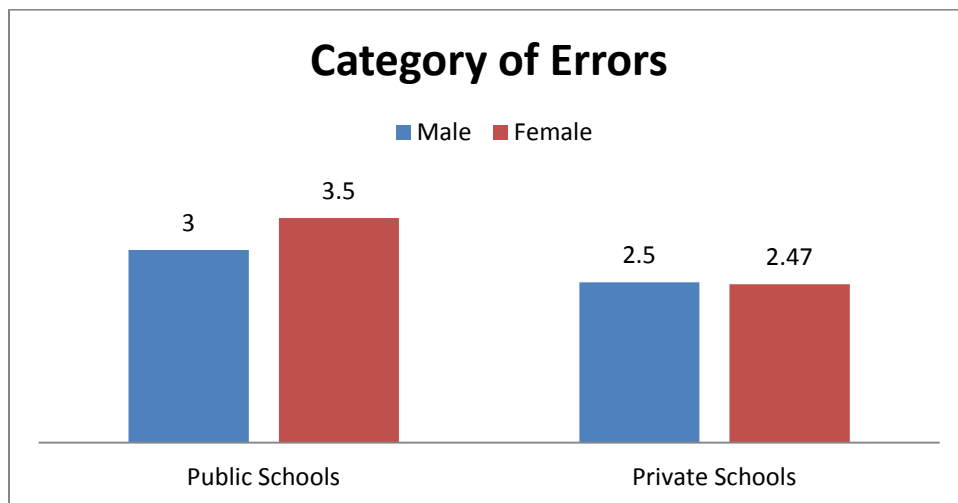


The X axis shows the categories of errors and the Y axis shows the percentage of errors produced by the students from both public and private schools. From the chart, we can identify that the students from both public and private schools have produced highest number of errors in the domain of lexico-semantic and then followed by the other three categories. In the domain of morpho-syntactic, the student from public schools have produced 37.20% of errors, whereas, the students from private schools have produced 30.30 % of errors. The number of errors of students from public schools is more than the numbers of errors of students from private schools. In the domain of lexico-semantics, the students from public schools have made 38.92% of errors which is more than the students from private schools as they produced 33.60% of errors. In the domain of spelling and punctuation, here the students from private schools have produced 25.06% of errors which is more as compare to the students from the publicschoools as they produced 15.26% of errors. In the domain of miscellaneous, the errors are less as compare to the other three categories. The students from public schools have produced 8.60% of errors, where as the students from private schools have 11.01% of errors. The students from private schools have produced more errors than the students from the public schools. From the above discussions, we found that the

students from public schools have produced more errors in the category of morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic as compare to the students from private schools. But in the category of spelling and punctuation and miscellaneous, the number of errors are more in private schools as compare to the students from public schools.

Gender Distribution of category of errors in writing skills

**Figure 3.39**



The above chart shows the gender distribution of errors in writing skills and it is found that overall, the average score of errors of male participant is 3.0 in public schools and 3.5 of female participant which shows that the female participant produce more errors than the male participant. Whereas, in private schools, the average score of errors of male participant is 2.5 and the female participant is 2.47 which shows that the male participant produce more errors than male participant.

Next we will explain the errors into two groups: Interlingual and Intralingual Errors. The following table shows the distribution of both Interlingual and Intralingual Errors.



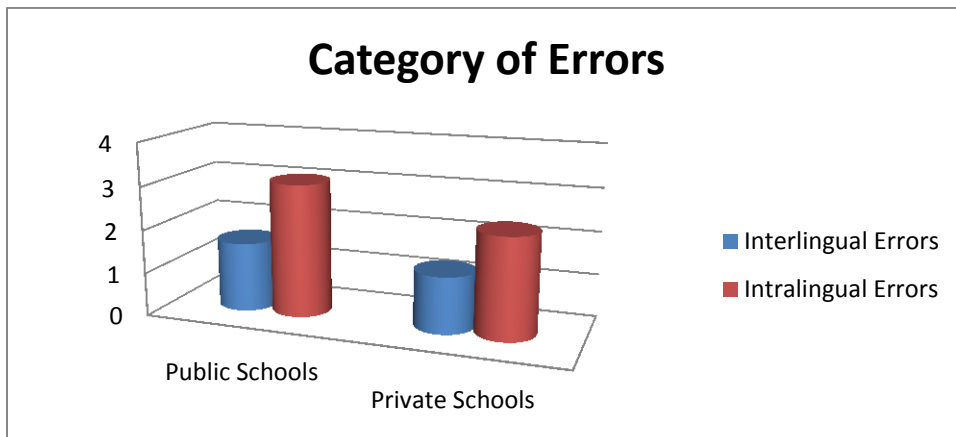
## Distribution of Interlingual and Intralingual Errors

**Table 3.22**

Groups of Errors	Public schools		Private schools	
	Count within class	Average	Count within class	Average
Interlingual	64	1.6	52	1.3
Intralingual	120	3.07	93	2.32

The table shows the errors produced in Intralingual and Interlingual and it is found that the number of Intralingual errors are more than the number of Interlingual errors in both sectors. We also found that the students from public schools have made more errors in both Interlingual and Intralingual as compare to the students from private schools. The following figure will show the average score of the errors of students from both sectors.

**Figure 3.40**



The following examples will show the Errors produced in Interlingual and Intralingual by the students of both sectors.

#### Examples of Interlingual Errors

1. Bihu becomes three times in a year (Interlingual Error)

Bihu is celebrated three times in a year (English)

Bihu bosorot tinibar koi udzapon kora hoi (Assamese)

Literal meaning of English word 'becomes' means 'hoi' in Assamese.

2. /In kongali bihu, people give saki in field ( Interlingual Errors)

In kongali bihu, people lid earthen lamp in field/ (English)

Kongali bihut manuhe potharot saki jolai/diye (Assamese)

Literal meaning of English word 'give' means 'diye' in Assamese.

3. These three Bihu gets unity among the people.

These three Bihu brings unity among the people (English)

Ai tinita bihue manuhor majot milapriti aane/jogai ( Assamese)

Literal meaning of English word 'brings' means aane in Assamese.

#### Examples of Intralingual Errors

The newspaper is the\* very important thing in our everyday life. (Insertion of unnecessary article)

Rongali Bihu celebration\* on\* 7 days (wrong use tense and preposition)

People bathed\* very early (Overgeneralization)

We should to\* read the newspaper everyday (use of unnecessary preposition)

Bihu is a National\* festival of Assam (wrong use of words)

People make cake and other foods\* (insertion of unnecessary plural marking)

## Chapter 4

### Summary and Conclusion

#### 4.1 Summary

The present study intends to use both primary and secondary sources, which includes data collected from the field and secondary sources like journals, magazines and text. This study attempts to render an accurate picture of learning strategies and language use by the students from both public and private schools in lower Assam. The data were collected from six schools, three from public schools and three from private schools which involves 160 students, 80 students from public schools and 80 students from private schools. In both sectors, Assamese is used as a medium of instruction. This study is based on cross-sectional design study and the following aims and objectives shows the present study on learning strategies and language use by the students from both public and private schools:

- To study the learning strategies of higher secondary level of students in public and private schools in lower Assam.
- To compare the learning strategies used by the students of public and private schools of Assamese medium.
- To investigate what are the languages used and how they are used in higher secondary public and private schools in lower Assam.
- To identify the linguistic errors while using English as a second language.
- To compare the errors made by the students from both public and private sectors.

From the above discussions, we have answered the following research questions in this study:

- What are the strategies used by the learners in reading and writing skills while learning English as a Second language?
- How do the learners employ direct and indirect strategies in speaking and listening skills to perform in classroom interaction?

- What are the linguistic errors commonly made by the students of both the sectors of higher secondary Assamese medium students in Lower Assam?
- How the choices of a set of strategies influence the language use in writing skills of the second language learners?

For data elicitation, both subjective and objective questions were taken and there are three main components that were taken for the present study –

- i. Learner's Questionnaire
- ii. Teacher's Questionnaire
- iii. Language Ability Test

In learner's questionnaire, there were 7 sections. Section 1 to 3 was about student's personal information such as name, age and gender. Section 4 and 5 dealt with learner's medium of instruction used in their respective schools from Nursery to Higher Secondary level and language spoken in different places such as at home, market, school and while communicating with friends and teachers. Section 6 has dealt with student's level of proficiency in the four skills – writing, reading, speaking and listening skills. Section 7 is about learner's use of direct strategies in reading and writing skills and learner's employed direct and indirect strategies in speaking and listening skills.

In Teacher's questionnaire, four subjective questions have been taken. First and Second questions are based on learning and teaching strategies, third and fourth questions are based on errors made by the students and what strategies used by the teacher's to overcome these errors.

In Language Ability Test (LAT), there are two parts. In part1, students were given 30 questions based on prepositions, determiners, verb, voice, use of alternatives, adjectives and adverbs to examine their proficiency in writing skills. In part2, composition test were taken and for analyses, three main components were followed – Identifications of Errors, Classifications of Errors and Explanation of Errors.

The results of all the three parts have been presented through table and graphs which were mentioned in chapter 3.

## 4.2 Main Findings

### Summary of the Findings from the Learner's Questionnaire

- In section 5, we have identified the languages spoken in different domains such as at their home, market place, school and while communicating with friends and teachers and we have found that the language spoken by the students from both sectors in all the domains is highest in Assamese language. Whereas, in English and Hindi language, overall only 21.87% of students speak English and only 15.62% of students speak Hindi in all the domains. The result may be due to limited exposure to English and Hindi language and there may be also lack of availability of proficient teachers.
- In section 6, we have identified the level of proficiency in the following skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening and we have found that the level of proficiency is highest in Assamese language and followed by English and Hindi Language.
- In section 7, we have identified the use of direct strategies in writing and reading skills and we have found that overall 61.32% of students from both public and private sectors use direct strategies in writing skills. In statement 1, 3, 5 and 9, we have found that the students use these strategies occasionally and in statement 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8, the students hardly use these strategies and in statement 10, we have seen that the student use this strategy frequently. We also found that the responses of the male participant are less than the female participant in public schools, whereas, in private schools, the responses of the male participant are more than the female participant in writing skills. In reading skills, overall 70% of students from both public and private schools use strategies. In statement 1, 2, 4 and 10, we have found that the student

frequently use these strategies and in statement 5, 8 and 9, we have found that the student use this strategy occasionally and in statement 3, 6 and 7, we have found that the student hardly use this strategy. But the responses of the students from private schools are comparatively more than the responses of the students from public schools. We also found that the responses of the male participant in both public and private schools are less than the female participant. Overall 54.87% of students from public schools and 74.55% of students from private schools use direct strategies to learn writing skills in English. In reading skills, overall 67.02% of students from public schools and 72.97% of students from private schools use direct strategies to learn in English.

**Hypothesis-1:** the use of direct strategies proves the hypothesis-1 which states that the direct strategies are more in use by the students from private schools as compare to the students from public schools.

- For speaking and listening skills, we have identified learner's employed direct and indirect strategies in classroom interactions and we have found that in speaking skills, the responses of the female participant are more than the male participant in public schools in using direct strategies, whereas, in private schools, the responses of the male participant are more than female participant in speaking skills.. In using indirect strategies, the responses of the male participant are less as compare to the female participant in both public and private schools.. Overall 65.65% of students use direct strategies and 61.57% of students use indirect strategies in classroom interaction. In listening skills, the responses of the male participant are less than the female participant in using direct strategies in both public and private schools. In using indirect strategies, the responses of the male participant are less as compare to the responses of the female participant in both public and private schools. Overall 66.7% of students use direct strategies and 63.27% of students use indirect strategies in

classroom interactions. But the responses of the students from private schools are comparatively more than the responses of the students from public schools.

**Hypothesis-2:** The above statement proves the hypothesis 2 which states that direct strategies are more in practice than indirect strategies in both speaking and listening skills.

#### Findings from the Teacher's Questionnaire

- In section 2, teachers were asked to write their priority of using different languages in classroom interaction. It is found that teachers generally use English as medium of communication. But they use Assamese when student fail to understand English.
- In section 3, teachers were asked about the teaching methods that are used for teaching English. Only 1 Teacher from private college said that he use Audio – lingual method, 3 teacher said that they use Grammar translation method and only 1 teacher said that he use Direct method for Teaching English.
- In section 4, the teachers were asked to answer the four subjective questions. In question 1, we have found that the strategies that are used by the students vary from one learner to another learner .The Teachers say that some learners may learn a word by breaking the words into component. Some learners may learn by reading loudly and some learners prefer group discussions, but for some learners they may not prefer group discussion. Though students use these strategies, but success or effectiveness is low. 1 teacher from public college said that average feedback have been found from the student. To overcome those errors, most of the teachers opined that they give homework to develop their grammars and instant corrections and discussions in theclass. Only one teacher from private college has said that he used audio- visual aids to overcome those errors.

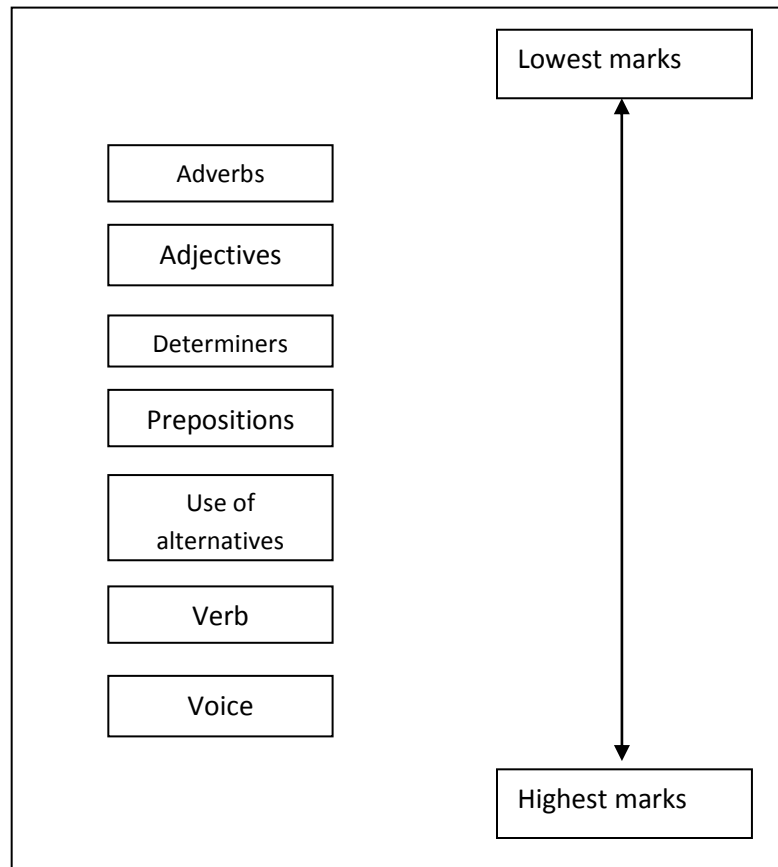


## Findings from the Language Ability Test

In part1(LAT), we have identified that overall 60.43% of questions attempted by the students in the domain of prepositions, determiners, verb, voice, use of alternatives, adjectives and adverbs. The students' performance is highest in the domain of voice in which the average score is 3.67, whereas the lowest performance of students is in the domain of adverbs with an average score of 0.65. The following figure shows the hierarchy of marks.

- **Hierarchy of Marks**

**Figure: 4.2**



Overall 51.79% of questions attempted by the students from public schools and 69.08% of questions attempted by the students from private schools in all the domains which show that the performance of class XI students from private sectors is better than the performance of class XI students from public sectors.

**Hypothesis 3** : The performance in LAT 1 proves the hypothesis 3 which states that the students from private schools performed better than the students from public college.

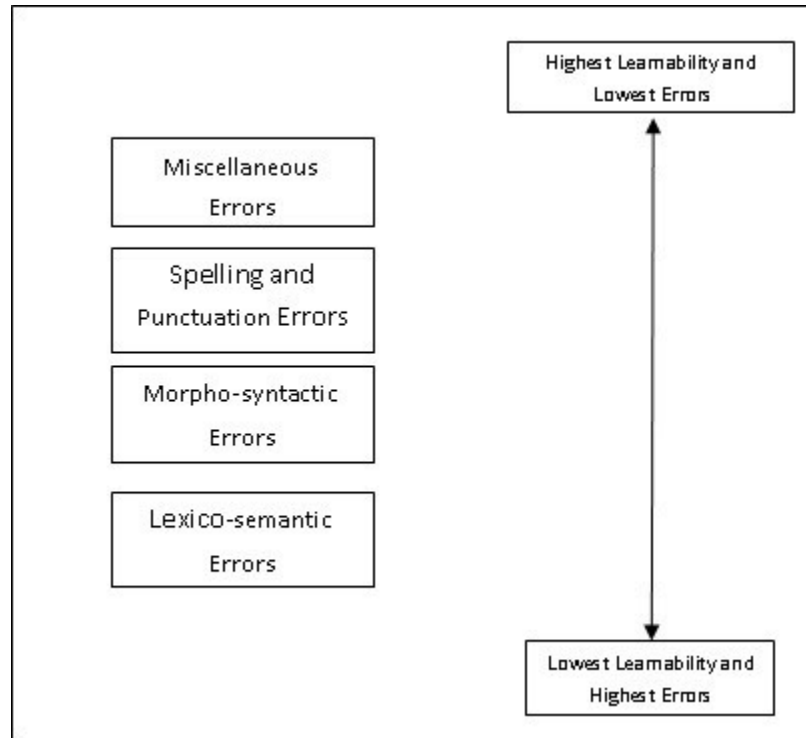
Hierarchy of marks

- In part2 (LAT), we have identified that overall 856 errors were made by the students in all the domains. The errors were divided into four linguistic categories – morpho –syntactic, lexico-semantic, spelling and punctuation and miscellaneous. It is found that in public schools, the female participant makes more errors than male participant, whereas, in private schools, the male participant makes more errors than female participant.

the students of both the sectors make highest errors in the category of lexico-semantic and they make lowest number of errors in the category of miscellaneous. The following table will show the hierarchy of errors made by the students in the four language skills.

- **Hierarachy of Errors**

**Figure 4.3**



The students from public schools produced more errors than the students from private schools in the category of morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic. But in the category of spelling and punctuation and miscellaneous, the students from private schools produced more errors than the students from public schools. The total number of average score of errors of public schools is 11.625 and for private schools, the average score of errors is 9.30 which show that the errors made by the students from public schools are more than the errors produced by the students from private schools.

**Hypothesis 4:** The performance in LAT2 proves the hypothesis 4 which states that the students from public sectors will make more errors than the students from private schools.

- The morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic errors are further divided into two groups : Interlingual and Intralingual errors. We have found that the number of Intralingual errors are more as compare to the Interlingual errors. We also found that the students from public schools have produced more errors in both the groups as compare to the students from private schools.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

From the abovementioned findings that have been collated, discussed and tabulated from the analysis of learners' questionnaire, we can conclude by saying that 61.32% of students from both public and private schools opined that they use direct strategies to learn writing skills in English. In reading skills, 70% of students from both public and private schools opined that they use direct strategies to learn reading skills in English.

In speaking skills, 65.65% of students from both public and private schools said that they use these direct strategies to learn English. Whereas, 61.57% of students from both sectors said that they use indirect strategies to learn speaking skills in English. In listening skills, 66.7% of students from both sectors said that they use direct strategies to learn listening skills in English. Whereas 63.27% of students from both sectors use indirect strategies while learning English in listening skills. It also indicates that the direct strategies are more in practice as compare to the indirect strategies in both speaking and listening skills.

All the strategies are not equally popular among students. Some students are more comfortable in using specific strategies, while other students are more comfortable in using other set of strategies. Although in some strategies, the students from public schools have responded positively in comparison to the private schools' students, but the response of the students from public schools is comparatively less than the responses of the students from private schools.

From the teachers' questionnaire, we have found that the learning strategies used by the student vary from learner to learner. Most of the teachers said that the strategies implement by them are not so effective. The reason may be the teaching methods that are used while learning English in classroom interaction. Most of the teachers said that they used 'Grammar- translation method' for teaching English in both the sectors. Only one teacher said that he uses Audio- Visual methods for teaching method. The reason may be that the teachers are not aware of new methods available for teaching or due to the lack of infrastructure and equipment required for teaching through these new methodologies.

In both the Language Ability test, we have found that the students from both sectors have made errors in each category, but the students from private schools have performed better than the students from public schools. In LAT 1, the students performed highest in the domain of voice, whereas the students performed lowest in the domain of adverbs. In LAT 2, the students make highest errors in the category of lexico-semantic, whereas the students make lowest errors in miscellaneous. Intralingual errors are found to be more in both public and private schools as compare to the Interlingual errors. It is found that the errors generally occur due to the influence of mother tongue, as Assamese language is used as a medium of instruction by the students of both public and private schools in all their day to day activities.

#### **4.4 Recommendation**

- 1) Students should be given equal efforts in improving the four language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing. There should be remedial classes for the weaker students.
- 2) The strategies that are implementing by the teachers should be improved. Apart from giving homework and discussions in class, the teachers should also use other strategies that are equally important in the four language skills.
- 3) Both teachers and students should follow standard books on language learning strategies which will help students for better learners.

- 4) The exposure to English language is very limited among the students from both the sectors; hence teachers should take extra class on English language which should be equally focused on the four language skills.
- 5) The syllabus should be designed in such a way so that it can provide the needs of the students
- 6) There should be proficient English teachers. The teachers training should be of all kind of weather of teaching learning process in both Government and Private sectors.
- 7) The teachers should adopt innovative teaching methods and new teaching techniques which should not be confined to the four walls of book; rather it should be applied according to the situation for the improvement of learners' English skills.
- 8) The teaching technique must be a two way process. Teacher should engage the student in the teaching process. Hence, it must be a interactive class.
- 9) The infrastructure and equipment required for teaching should be improved in both public and private schools.

#### **4.5 Limitation of the study**

This research is based on written data collected from field work. Due to time limitation, other testing skills were not taken for reading, speaking and listening skill. The data were collected from only five teachers which is very limited and only objective questions were taken.

## APPENDIX 1

### Questionnaire for the Learners

1. Name:

2. Age:

3. Sex:

4. Medium of Instruction:

Class	Assamese	English	Hindi	Others
Pre- primary stage ( nursery to KG)				
Primary stage (1 to 5)				
Upper Primary stage ( 6 to 8)				
Secondary stage (9 to 10)				
Higher- Secondary stage (11to12)				

**5. Language Spoken**

	Assamese	English	Hindi	Others
At Home				
At Market				
At School				
With Friends				
With Teachers				

## 6. Level of Proficiency in the following skills

Language	Reading skills	Writing skills	Speaking skills	Listening skills			
Assamese					High	Medium	Low
English							
Hindi							
Others							

## 7. Questions about learner's use of Strategies in the following four skills:

Writing Skills	Never	Hardly	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. While writing in English, I expressed my thoughts in Assamese and then translated in English.					
2. I prefer to write my diary/personal thoughts/daily mundane activities in English.					
3. I take my class notes in English.					
4. I prepare my notes in English by myself.					
5. I write social media text in English (SMS, emails, facebook, whatsapp, other chatting apps)					
6. I try to write on new topic several times by myself to improve my writing skills.					
7. While writing in English, I try to construct complex sentence which I came across while reading					
8. I try to write a summary in English after reading.					
9. If my mistakes are corrected, I don't repeat it again.					
10. I practice several times to improve my writing skills					

Reading Skills	Never	Hardly	Sometimes	Often	Always



11. While reading in English I try to read fluently.					
12. I use dictionary so that I can understand what I am reading.					
13. I read English newspaper					
14. While reading I underline the important lines in the text.					
15. I read loud so that I can remember and understand what I am reading.					
16. I prefer to read books (novels, stories, magazines, encyclopedia etc.) in English.					
17. I guess the overall meaning of the text without knowing the meaning of every word.					
18. I break unknown words into parts to understand its meanings.					
19. I prefer English - English dictionary to English - Assamese dictionary.					
20. Before reading any new text I first skim and then read it carefully. [Note: Skim means searching for the main ideas in a text]					

Speaking Skills	Never	Hardly	Sometimes	Often	Always
21. I try to use new words or expressions while speaking with friends, teachers in class.					
22. I ask questions in English in class / seminar / discussions.					
23. Sometimes when I don't get the correct expression I use gestures.					
24. I try to imitate sounds or the way teachers and / or fluent students speak in English to improve my pronunciation in English.					
25. When I cannot remember the exact expression I use synonyms or try to express it using other expressions.					
26. I take turns in classroom communications.					
27. While speaking in English I try to pay attention to particular elements such as – pronunciation, style, grammar and vocabulary.					

28. I feel comfortable in joining classroom communication in English.					
29. I record my own speech on a tape recorder and then listen to the recording to find out whether it matches with the native speakers or not.					
30. I use to encourage myself before presenting any speech in English.					
31. After a good day of classroom communication in English I reward myself.					

Listening Skills	Never	Hardly	Sometimes	Often	Always
32. I associate new words with familiar concepts to remember them easily					
33. I listen to English programs to improve my listening skills.					
34. While listening I break the speech into its component parts to understand well.					
35. I translate what I here in English in my mother tongue to comprehend it.					
36. I used to take notes when listening to lectures for better understanding.					
37. I pay attention on lectures and relevant classroom interactions in English.					
38. When I could not understand while listening lectures or conversations in class I ask the speaker to slow down or repeat or explain.					
39. I practice listening in English with my classmates who are proficient in it.					
40. While listening I observe to listeners responses such as behavior (tone, expressions), physical signals.					
41. I try to find similarities and differences between my mother tongue and English.					

## Appendix 2

### Teacher's Questionnaire

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Gender:
4. Institution Name:
5. Qualification:
6. Designation:
7. Teaching Experience in English Language:
  
8. When you are teaching in class, how long do you use the following languages?
  - a) Assamese:
  - b) English :
  - c) Other:
9. What is the method used for teaching English?

#### Questions for the Teachers

1. What are the strategies used by the students while learning English as a second language?
2. What are the strategies you use in classroom interaction to improve their proficiency in English Language?
3. How effectively/successful in implementing these strategies for making Students enable to become better learners
  
4. What are the strategies you use to overcome the errors made by the students?

## Appendix 3

### Language Ability Test

Choose the right preposition from those given in brackets and fill in the blanks:

1. Gandhi was convicted \_\_\_\_\_ lying. (of/for/to)
2. Always beware \_\_\_\_\_ false friends. (from/at/of)
3. I warned him \_\_\_\_\_ driving so fast. (of/from/against)
4. Great books deal \_\_\_\_\_ human problems. (of/with/in)
5. The teacher was annoyed \_\_\_\_\_ me. (at/from/with)

Fill in the blanks with determiners, where necessary. Put x where no determiners is needed:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Honorary secretary gets no salary for holding the post. (a/an/the)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ of the candidates must produce his/her identity card. (any/every/each)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ hour has passed since he left us. (a/an/the)
4. Have you \_\_\_\_\_ book to read? (some/many/any)
5. This is \_\_\_\_\_ European lady I was talking about. (a/an/the)

Fill in the blanks with correct form of verb:

1. If he (start) in time, he would not have missed the train.
2. We (not see) Rahul for many years.
3. He told us that he never (tell) a lie.
4. The boys (play) in the garden when the tree fell down.
5. When I went to meet him, he (read) a book.

Change the voice of the following sentences:

1. Some boys were helping the wounded man.
2. He will finish the work in a fortnight.
3. Your brother wrote a letter.
4. The boy will eat this apple.
5. The girl has broken the window.

Choose the right alternative:

1. An \_\_\_\_\_ writer was invented as the chief guest. (imminent/ eminent)
2. Several boats \_\_\_\_\_ in the river during the storm. (drowned/sank)

3. A man of \_\_\_\_\_ is respected by all (principle/principal)
4. My advice had little \_\_\_\_\_ on the boy. (affect/effect)
5. He is no \_\_\_\_\_ for the post. (eligible/illegible)

Fill in the words in brackets as adjective or adverb:

1. Suddenly there arose a \_\_\_\_\_ storm. (strong)
2. This is a very \_\_\_\_\_ matter. (serious)
3. The weather is \_\_\_\_\_ cool. (delightful)
4. The child slept \_\_\_\_\_. (sound)
5. It is a \_\_\_\_\_ lie. (great)

Language Ability Test 2

Composition Test

Q: Write a short essay, up to 200 words in any one of the following topics:

- i. The use of social media in our day to day life  
Or
- ii. My favourite festival  
Or
- iii. The habit of reading newspaper

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