



## Language Learning Strategies of EFL Business Students : A Case Study of Thai Business Students

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### บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้วัดถูประสคเพื่อศึกษาการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาในบริบทที่แตกต่างกัน คือ ในห้องเรียนและนอกห้องเรียนของนิสิตชาวไทยที่เรียนทางด้านธุรกิจในระดับอุดมศึกษาในประเทศไทย โดยแบ่งตามการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาของนิสิตในด้านธุรกิจที่มีสาขาวิชาเอกที่แตกต่างกันและความสามารถทางภาษาที่แตกต่างกัน กลุ่มตัวอย่างคือนิสิตชั้นปีที่ 2 มีจำนวน 187 คน โดยแบ่งออกเป็นสาขาวิชานักศึกษา 68 คน สาขาวิชาการตลาดจำนวน 50 คนและสาขาวิชาการจัดการจำนวน 79 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการเก็บข้อมูลคือแบบสอบถามการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษามีความเชื่อมั่นที่ 0.91 ซึ่งผู้วิจัยได้พัฒนามาจาก Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) version 7.0 ข้อมูลที่ได้จะถูกนำมาวิเคราะห์โดยใช้สถิติอันได้แก่ ส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน පෝර්ඩ්‍රේන්‍ර pos-hoc และ MANOVA ทั้งนี้ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นิสิตที่มีความสามารถทางภาษาสูงและนิสิตที่มีความสามารถทางภาษาต่ำใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาโดยรวมแตกต่างกันอย่างไม่มีนัยสำคัญที่ระดับ .05 และเมื่อพิจารณาในด้านสาขาวิชาเอกนั้นพบว่า นิสิตสาขาวิชานักศึกษาและนิสิตสาขาวิชาการจัดการมีการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาที่คล้ายคลึงกันในขณะที่นิสิตสาขาวิชาการจัดการจะมีการใช้ที่แตกต่างไปบ้างเล็กน้อย นิสิตทั้ง 3 สาขainด้านธุรกิจมีแนวโน้มในการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาคล้ายคลึงกัน นอกจากนั้นยังพบว่านิสิตไทยที่เรียนทางด้านธุรกิจจะใช้กลวิธีในบริบทในห้องเรียนด้านอารมณ์และความรู้สึก (Affective) บ่อยที่สุด ใช้กลวิธีด้านการจำ (Memory) ในบริบทนอกห้องเรียนบ่อยที่สุดและกลวิธีที่ใช้บ่อยที่สุดคือ กลวิธีด้านสังคม (Social)

**คำสำคัญ** : กลวิธีการเรียนภาษา ความสามารถทางภาษา สาขาวิชาเอกที่แตกต่างกันในด้านธุรกิจ

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## ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at investigating language learning strategies used in different settings: in-class and out-of-class, by Thai business students at a tertiary level in Thailand in relation to different majors in the same business field and different proficiency levels. The subjects consisted of 187 second-year business students including 68 Accounting students, 50 Marketing students and 79 Management students. The questionnaire on language learning strategy, adapted from Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) version 7.0, with the reliability of 0.91 was used to collect data. Statistics used to analyze the data were standard deviation, percentage, pos-hoc and MANOVA. It was found that overall the language learning strategies used by the high- and the low-proficiency-level students were different but not at a significance level of .05. Regarding majors, the strategies used by the Accounting and Marketing students were likely to resemble each other, but the Management students employed strategies in a slightly different way. In each aspect of language learning strategy use, three majors in the business field seemed to rely on the same language learning strategy. Evidently, among the strategies employed in the in-class setting, the Affective strategy group was the most frequently used, whereas the Memory group was the most often used outside the classrooms and Social strategies were the least often used.

**Keywords :** Language learning strategy, Language proficiency, Major in the field of business

## Introduction

At the present time, English has undeniably become a universal language which is spoken by people all around the world in such diverse fields as international business, news reporting, and education. In many countries, particularly those where the first language is not English, the study of English is an important part of their educational policy in order that the citizen are able to understand and use English to communicate and receive any information efficiently. In the case of Thailand, Thai students are required to study English as a compulsory subject at school (Office of the National Education Commission, 2001). Students have to study English concurrently with other subjects in the educational curricula each year. In addition, when students enter into the tertiary education level, they will encounter English as a compulsory course.

There are differences in the way people think and good at, as Howard Gardner formulated in his list of nine intelligences (1983). The linguistic intelligence and the logical-mathematical intelligence are typically valued in schools (Gardner, 1999). However, these two types of intelligence rarely occur in one person; a person typically would have just one type of intelligence predominantly. It is also evident that the least English ability mostly occurred in business students according to the overall students' performances in English courses in universities in Thailand. The business students' English courses results are lower than those of who are studying in the Faculty of Sciences, Engineering, or Nursing etc. in average. There is much research trying to investigate teaching methods which result in success in language learning. Since the trend of learning has shifted from teacher-centered approach to the learner-centered approach, these

factors which influence learners' behavior have become the focus (Oxford, 1998). Some studies were conducted in order to find relationship between learners' language learning strategies and their proficiency in second language or foreign language learning (McGroarty and Oxford, 1990; Oxford and Nyikos, 1989 ; Phillip, 1991). Because the learning strategies can improve language learning performance, the appropriate use of learning strategies enables students to enhance learner autonomy, independence, and self-direction (Oxford & Nyiko, 1989). It is found that there is no any research focusing on how the mathematical skillful people operate their language learning as well. Hence, this study will focus on those who are not skilled at linguistic intelligence or language learning, called 'business students'.

### Purposes of the Study

To study the use of language learning strategies employed by the two groups of business students: high and low-language-proficiency learners, in the in-class and the out-of-class settings in Thailand.

To investigate the relationships between the use of language learning strategies employed by Thai business students and their different majors; Accounting, Marketing, and Management in the in-class and out-of-class settings.

To identify the overall language learning strategy use of business students studying English as a foreign language in Thailand.

### Scope of the Study

The six language learning strategies proposed by Oxford in 1998 are used as criteria in this investigation. These strategies are Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective,

and Social strategies.

The data is collected in the form of written questionnaires from the second-year-business students studying at the Faculty of Accountancy and Management, Mahasarakham University, Thailand.

The participants are studying for these three majors: Accounting, Marketing, and Management, which are in the field of business. Although, there are many universities in Thailand where business education is provided and various majors are presented differently among those universities, those three majors mentioned are the most often seen almost everywhere.

## Research Methodology

### Subjects

#### The pilot study

There were 20 second-year business students randomly selected from each three majors: Accounting, Marketing, and Management, studying at the Faculty of Accountancy and Management at Mahasarakham University (MSU). This pilot study group was definitely excluded from the sample group.

#### The sample group

There were also three sub-categories of business students participating in the investigation. The first group comprised 48 students majoring in Accounting, the second group comprised 30 students majoring, and the third group comprised 49 students majoring in Management.

All of the subjects enrolled in the Basic English courses provided by the university. No test of English language proficiency was undertaken on the subjects; however, their proficiency was categorized by their grades.



## Instruments

Biodata questionnaire used to get individual background information such as grades in the English courses that they had studied previously. Language learning strategy questionnaire based on Oxford's SILL (1990) and the Questionnaire for Language Learning Strategy Study by Nisakorn Prakongchati (2007)

### Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview was used as an additional instrument. It was administered with only the pilot study group in order that the subjects were able to give their opinions or ideas of how they really use the language learning strategies in their authentic situation both within the classroom and outside the classroom. Furthermore, the data were rechecked whether or not it was what the participants actually thought and to make sure that they did not misunderstand the intention of the questions in the questionnaires.

## Data Collection and Procedure

In collecting data, two groups of participants, the pilot study group and the sample group, were administered the written questionnaires and some of them were asked to participate in the interview. Some of the second-year business students majoring in Accounting, Marketing, and Management, called the pilot study, studying in the second semester of the academic year 2010 at the Faculty of Accountancy and Management, Mahasarakham University, were randomly asked to respond to the questionnaires in their classrooms during their usual classes. The returned questionnaires from students who got B, C+ and C were sorted out in order to classify the rest students' English language

proficiency into two groups; a high- and a low-proficiency levels. In this phase, the questionnaires from 10 high-proficiency level and 10 low-proficiency level students from every major were randomly collected by means of simple random sampling. Some of them were called to be interviewed on how they interpreted the questions or what they thought about the items in the questionnaire. The researcher could check the reliability of the instrument and misunderstanding questions happened after these informants had completed the questionnaires given in order to revise the questions.

The questions in the questionnaires were revised in case of misunderstanding of the content in each item. Then, the revised items were administered by the same pilot study group to make sure that the informants understood the content of the questionnaire more clearly. The informants were asked to be interviewed again about the revised items, and the most recently revised questionnaires became the final instruments used in the research. Rest of the second-year business students majoring in those three were asked to fill in the questionnaires after being informed of the purposes of the research. After all the students in the in this phase returned their questionnaires, their proficiency levels were classified. All 62 high-proficiency level students, which were considered as 100% met the requirements, were selected based on their grades (A and B+) appearing on the biodata questionnaire to be the sample group by means of stratified random sampling while 65 low-proficiency level students were chosen by means of simple random sampling from those three majors.

## Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was used in the calculations. Frequency, standard deviation, percentage, pos-hoc, and MANOVA were employed as descriptive statistics in order to analyze the demographic data and the language learning strategy use. The data were compared and analyzed in in-class and out-of-class settings according to their English language proficiency; high- and low-proficiency levels, their majors of the study; Accounting, Marketing, and Management, and their overall use of the English language learning strategies.

## Overall Language Learning Strategies Employed by High- and Low-Proficiency Level Students

In accordance with the classification of language learning strategies proposed by Oxford (1990), there are two main categories: direct strategy and indirect strategy. The direct strategy group influences language learners using strategies to improve their performance while the indirect one helps the learners use other factors in order to become familiar with the language and the language use. There are three subcategories in each main category. Memory, Cognitive and Compensation are considered to be the direct categories whereas Metacognitive, Affective and Social are considered to be the indirect categories.

Table 1: Implementation of the Six Strategy Groups Employed by High- and Low-Proficiency Level Students

| Strategy Group | Usage (percentage) |      |                      |      |              |     |              |      |
|----------------|--------------------|------|----------------------|------|--------------|-----|--------------|------|
|                | In-Class Setting   |      | Out-of-Class Setting |      | Both Setting |     | None Setting |      |
|                | H                  | L    | H                    | L    | H            | L   | H            | L    |
| Memory         | 27.6               | 30.8 | 45.5                 | 45.5 | 2.2          | 1.1 | 24.7         | 22.6 |
| Cognitive      | 24.6               | 24.8 | 46.5                 | 43.6 | 1.9          | 0.7 | 27.0         | 30.9 |
| Compensation   | 29.6               | 31.3 | 42.8                 | 43.2 | 4.5          | 1.1 | 23.1         | 24.4 |
| Metacognitive  | 32.2               | 33.0 | 37.2                 | 39.2 | 4.3          | 0.7 | 26.3         | 27.1 |
| Affective      | 32.9               | 35.5 | 33.7                 | 35.5 | 2.4          | 0.8 | 31.0         | 28.3 |
| Social         | 20.8               | 25.3 | 33.6                 | 31.5 | 0.4          | 0.3 | 45.2         | 42.8 |

The in-class setting means the respondents used those strategies only when they were in their language classes. Using strategies wherever they were except in their classes refers to employing strategies in the out-of-class setting. If the students used strategies while they were in the classrooms and outside, this expresses the use in both settings. However, for some strategies which have never

been used before, the strategies are considered to be used in none of settings. Table 1 displays the overall use of the six strategy groups by high- and low-proficiency level students.

All of the high-proficiency level students employed the strategies in the out-of-class setting most frequently when compared to the other three settings, excluding the Social group. Strategies



that are used in the both setting are rarely seen in every strategy group. The strategy groups in the main direct category are employed most often in the out-of-class setting whereas the use in the settings of in-class and none can be seen almost equally and the average percentages tended to be half of the used in the out-of-class setting. The strategies in the main indirect category are evenly used in the settings of in-class, out-of-class and none. Nonetheless, the Social group has never been used significantly as it shows 45.2% - approximately two times more often than appearing in the settings of in-class and out-of-class. The Affective group is the most often used in the in-class setting at the percentage of 32.9% while the most frequently used in the setting of out-of-class belongs to the Cognitive strategies at 46.5%.

All of the low-proficiency level students employed all strategy groups in the out-of-class setting most frequently when compared to the other three settings, excluding the Affective strategies. This is similar to what happened in the use of the high-proficiency level students. Strategies in every strategy group that are used in the both setting are less seen than those in the both setting employed by the high-proficiency level students. The strategies in the groups of Cognitive and Social are never used more than in the other four strategy groups. The Affective group is the most often used in the in-class setting at the percentage of 35.5% while the most frequently used in the out-of-class setting belongs to the Memory strategies at 45.5%. Furthermore, 42.8% of the students never use the Social group which is the most frequently expressed by the students.

Similar to the strategies used by the high-proficiency level students, the low-proficiency level students employ the strategies in the Affective group most frequently in the in-class setting. Inconsistent with Chang et al.'s (2007) study, Compensation strategies are considered to be the most often used strategies and Affective strategies are least often used. Besides, the strategies in the Social group are considered to be used least often in the out-of-class setting by both groups of students. This is consistent with Zhang's (2005) study of EFL college students' language learning strategies in the Chinese context, that the students use Social strategies least often. The high-proficiency level students; however, use the strategies in the Social group least often in both in-class and out-of-class settings, while the low-proficiency level students use the strategies in the Social group least often only in the out-of-class setting. In the in-class setting, the low-proficiency level students use the Cognitive strategies least often.

In the following table, the overall differences between the strategy uses by the high- and the low-proficiency level students are shown. The statistics mentioned in the following table are Hotelling's Trace Value, F and Significance.

**Table 2 : Differences in the Strategy Use by High- and Low-Proficiency Level Students based on the statistics: Hotelling's Trace Value, F, and Significance**

| Strategy Group | Hotelling's Trace Value | F    | Significance |
|----------------|-------------------------|------|--------------|
| Memory         | .047                    | .495 | .903         |
| Cognitive      | .097                    | .392 | .995         |
| Compensation   | .011                    | .216 | .971         |
| Metacognitive  | .104                    | .486 | .973         |
| Affective      | .021                    | .413 | .869         |
| Social         | .043                    | .495 | .890         |

As seen in Table 2, it indicates the differences between the strategy uses by the high- and the low- proficiency level students. In accordance with the determined significant level at .05, it reveals that

there is not any strategy groups perceived the significance less than .05. Therefore, there seems to be no significant difference between the two groups.

**Table 3: Implementation of the Six Strategy Groups Employed by Accounting, Marketing and Management Students**

| Strategy Group | Usage (percentage) |      |      |                      |      |      |              |     |     |              |      |      |
|----------------|--------------------|------|------|----------------------|------|------|--------------|-----|-----|--------------|------|------|
|                | In-Class Setting   |      |      | Out-of-Class Setting |      |      | Both Setting |     |     | None Setting |      |      |
|                | Ac                 | Mk   | Mn   | Ac                   | Mk   | Mn   | Ac           | Mk  | Mn  | Ac           | Mk   | Mn   |
| Memory         | 29.9               | 27.9 | 30.3 | 45.1                 | 46.9 | 45.1 | 1.6          | 2.6 | 1.0 | 23.4         | 22.6 | 23.6 |
| Cognitive      | 24.7               | 23.9 | 25.1 | 44.5                 | 45.9 | 44.9 | 1.3          | 2.4 | 0.6 | 29.5         | 27.8 | 29.4 |
| Compensation   | 30.7               | 30.7 | 30.2 | 44.1                 | 37.8 | 45.3 | 1.8          | 5.7 | 1.8 | 23.4         | 25.8 | 22.7 |
| Metacognitive  | 33.7               | 29.5 | 33.6 | 38.9                 | 37.0 | 38.4 | 1.2          | 5.5 | 1.7 | 26.2         | 28.0 | 26.3 |
| Affective      | 33.8               | 36.5 | 33.2 | 36.6                 | 30.9 | 34.9 | 1.0          | 3.9 | 0.7 | 28.6         | 28.7 | 31.2 |
| Social         | 23.6               | 19.0 | 25.2 | 33.4                 | 33.8 | 30.9 | 0.5          | 0.7 | 0.0 | 42.5         | 46.5 | 43.9 |

According to the data in Table 3, all of the Accounting students employed the strategies in the out-of-class setting most frequently when compared to the other three settings, excluding the Social group. Strategies that are used in the both setting are seldom seen in every strategy group. The

strategy groups in the main direct category are employed most often in the out-of-class setting whereas the use in the settings of in-class and none can be seen almost equally. The strategies in the main indirect category are evenly used in the settings of in-class, out-of-class and none. The



Affective strategy group is the most frequently used in the in-class setting at 33.8%, and the Memory group is considered to be the most often used in the out-of-class setting at 45.1%. Nonetheless, the Social group has never been used most significantly as it shows 42.5% while there have been 23.6% of the students used the strategies in the in-class setting and 33.4% in the out-of-class setting.

The Accounting students employ the strategies in the Affective group in the in-class setting and the strategies in the Memory group in the out-of-class setting most frequently. On the contrary, Bremner's (1999) investigation revealed that the Cantonese teachers studying a language and communication skill course employed strategies in the Affective and Memory groups least often. Moreover, Yu (2003) reported that the non-English majors used Memory strategies least frequently. The Social strategies are considered to be used least often in both in-class and out-of-class settings, inconsistent with Griffiths and Parr's (1999) study in an EFL learning context in New Zealand that the students used Social strategies most often.

Furthermore, all of the Marketing students employed the strategies in the out-of-class setting most frequently when compared to the other three settings, excluding the Affective group. Strategies that are used in the both setting are still rarely seen in every strategy group. Nevertheless, the students employed the Affective Strategies in the in-class setting more than in the out-of-class setting, dissimilar to the usage of other groups in the same setting. The Affective strategy is employed most often in the in-class setting at 36.5%, and the Memory group is considered to be the most used in the out-of-class setting at 46.9%. There are a few more students use strategies both in the in-class

and out-of-class settings when compared to the use in the both setting by the Accounting students. The strategy groups of Memory and Cognitive are employed more obviously often in the out-of-class setting. Nonetheless, the Social group has never been used significantly as it shows 46.5%.

Similar to the most and least often used strategies by the Accounting students, the Marketing students employ strategies in the Affective group as the highest ranking order and Social strategies are considered to be least often used in the in-class setting. Furthermore, Memory strategies are also most frequently used in the out-of-class setting as reported by the Accounting students. Nonetheless, the least often used strategy in the out-of-class setting is not in the group of Social strategies as reported by the Accounting students. The Marketing students employ Affective strategies least often in the out-of-class setting. This corresponds to Saitakhamb (2009) who previously concluded that the least frequently used strategy by the postgraduate international students in China was the Affective strategies.

All of the students employed the strategies in the out-of-class setting more frequently than in the in-class setting. Strategies used in the both setting are hardly seen in every strategy group. The students employed the Metacognitive Strategies in the in-class setting most often at 33.6%, consistent with Shmais (2000) who conducted a survey of English language learning strategies used by Arabic-speaking English-majors enrolled at An-Najah National University in Palestine. Shmais (2000) revealed that an-Najah English majors employed Metacognitive strategies as the highest rank. The Compensation group is most frequently used in the out-of-class setting at 45.3%. This is similar

to Zhang's (2005) study of non-English major students who used Compensation strategies most often and Social strategies least frequently. There are still just few students used strategies both in the in-class and out-of-class settings. Moreover, the strategy group of Social strategies has never been used at 43.9%.

In summary, the students similarly use strategies for language learning, however, the Management students seem to use strategies differently. For example, they use Metacognitive strategies

frequently in the in-class setting while the other two majors employ Affective strategies most often in this setting. In the out-of-class setting, the Accounting and Marketing students, furthermore, use strategies in the Memory group most frequently whereas the Management students consider Compensation strategies to be the most often used. Therefore, the strategies used by the Accounting and Marketing students are likely to resemble each other, but the Management students employ strategies in a slightly different way.

**Table 4:** Differences in the Strategy Use by Three Different Majors' Students Based on the statistics :  
Hotelling's Trace Value, F and Significance

| Strategy Group | Hotelling's Trace Value | F    | Significance |
|----------------|-------------------------|------|--------------|
| Memory         | .069                    | .356 | .997         |
| Cognitive      | .206                    | .409 | 1.000        |
| Compensation   | .099                    | .969 | .479         |
| Metacognitive  | .234                    | .537 | .992         |
| Affective      | .043                    | .419 | .955         |
| Social         | .056                    | .315 | .998         |

Table 4 illustrates the differences between the strategy uses by the Accounting, the Marketing and the Management students. Due to the determined significant level at .05, it reveals that there is not any strategy groups perceived the significant value less than .05. Therefore, there seems to be no significant difference among the three groups.

#### Overall Language Learning Strategies Employed by Business Students

The language learning strategies used by the business students are presented in the following table based on the Oxford's language learning strategies: Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective and Social.



Table 5 : Implementation of the Six Strategy Groups Employed by Business Students

| Strategy Group | Usage (percentage) |                      |              |              |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|
|                | In-Class Setting   | Out-of-Class Setting | Both Setting | None Setting |
| Memory         | 29.2               | 45.5                 | 1.6          | 23.7         |
| Cognitive      | 24.7               | 45.1                 | 1.3          | 28.9         |
| Compensation   | 30.4               | 43.0                 | 2.8          | 23.8         |
| Metacognitive  | 32.6               | 38.3                 | 2.5          | 26.6         |
| Affective      | 34.2               | 34.5                 | 1.6          | 29.7         |
| Social         | 23.1               | 32.6                 | 0.3          | 44.0         |

As shown in Table 5, it reveals that all students employed the strategies in the out-of-class setting more frequently than in the in-class setting. Strategies used in the both setting are hardly seen in every strategy group. The students employed the Affective Strategy in the in-class setting most often at 34.2% while the Memory group is the most frequently used in the out-of-class setting at 45.5%. There are still just few students used strategies both in the in-class and out-of-class settings. Additionally, the business students have never been used the group of Social strategies obviously as it shows 44.0%.

The business students employ strategies in the Affective group most often in the in-class setting. This is definitely different from the strategies used by Chinese postgraduate students in the Saitakham's (2009) study since he claimed that Affective strategies were considered to be the least frequently used. Besides, Chang et al. (2007) also asserted that Taiwanese college EFL learners used strategies in the Affective group least often. Investigations conducted in the past present similar results, that language learners reported using Memory strategies least often (Griffiths and Parr, 1999; Yu, 2003; Han and Lin, 2000; Nisbet & Shucksmith,

1986; Yang, 1993; Oh, 1992 and Bremner, 1999); however, the students employ strategies in the Memory group most frequently in the out-of-class setting. The students use Social strategies least often not only in the in-class setting but also the out-of-class setting which is consistent with Zhang (2005).

Nonetheless, Griffiths and Parr's (1999) study shows that Social strategies were the most frequently used in an ESL learning context in New Zealand.

### Conclusion of the Study

The high-proficiency level students prefer to use strategies in the Affective group the most in the in-class setting, followed by Metacognitive, Compensation, Memory and Cognitive strategies. The group of Social strategies is the least frequently used. Meanwhile, the low-proficiency level students employ the strategies in the Affective group the most the same as the high students do, followed by Metacognitive, Compensation, Memory and Social strategies, whereas the strategies in the Cognitive group are the least often used. In the out-of-class setting, the Cognitive strategy group seems to be the most frequently used by the high-proficiency level students, followed by Memory, Compensation,



Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies. The most often used strategies employed by the low-proficiency level students belong to the group of Memory strategies, followed by Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies. In the none setting, the high-proficiency level students agree to use strategies in the Social group the least, followed by Affective, Cognitive, Metacognitive, Memory, and Compensation strategies. The least employed strategy group by the low-proficiency students is the Social strategies as well, followed by Cognitive, Affective, Metacognitive, Compensation and Memory strategies. Overall, the language learning strategies used by the high- and the low-proficiency level students are different but not at a significance level of  $p < .05$

Classifying strategies used in the in-class setting by the three majors, the Accounting students prefer to use the Affective strategy group the most, and then followed by Metacognitive, Compensation, Memory and Cognitive strategies, where as strategies in the Social group seem to be used least often. Similarly, the Marketing students employ the Affective strategy group the most frequently, followed by Compensation, Metacognitive, Memory, Cognitive and Social strategies. The Management students use strategies in the group of Metacognitive most often, followed by Affective, Compensation, Memory, Social and Cognitive strategies. In the out-of-class setting, strategies employed by the Accounting students can be ordered from the most frequently used to the least used as follows: Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social strategies. The Marketing students prefer to use Memory strategies the most, followed by Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive,

Affective and Social strategies. The Management students use strategies in the Compensation group the most often, followed by Memory, Cognitive, Metacognitive and Affective strategies. Social strategy group is the least frequently used by all three groups of students. The Accounting students show the strategies in the Social group as the least frequently used in the none setting, followed by Cognitive, Affective, Metacognitive, and Memory and Compensation strategies. The Marketing students employ Social strategy group as the least often used as do the Accounting students. Furthermore, the remaining least often used strategies are as follows: Affective, Metacognitive, Cognitive, Compensation and Memory strategies. The Management students use Social strategy group the least often and then followed by Affective, Cognitive, Metacognitive, Compensation and Memory strategies. In summary, the strategies used by the Accounting and Marketing students are likely to resemble each other, but the Management students employ strategies in a slightly different way. There is not a significant difference in overall language learning strategies used among those three groups of students at a confidence level of .05.

Thai business students participating in this investigation reveal that among the strategies employed in the in-class setting, the Affective strategy group is the most frequently used, followed by Metacognitive, Compensation, Memory, and Cognitive strategies. Social strategy group is considered to be the least often used. Their most often used strategy when they are outside their classrooms belongs to strategies in the Memory group. Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive,



Affective and Social strategies are less often used. The strategies never used by the business students are as follows: Social, Affective, Cognitive, Metacognitive, Compensation and Memory strategies. That is, the Social strategy group is considered to be the least often used strategy. Thai business learners of English language reported that they use Affective strategies, concerning temper and anxiety, in the in-class setting because they realize that they are not proficient at English language and they may fear to face it in the studying or testing atmosphere. However, they feel free to learn the language without the pressure from others, that is, they can remember English words when they face them by chance. Thai business students are afraid of asking or practicing English with others to improve their English perception and performance. Similar to what Gardner (1985) stated that attitudes and motivation are the important factors influencing individual language learning, they hardly believe that English is essential for them or it has an impact on their daily life due to their field of study is focusing on numeric value rather than English language.

### Suggestions of the Study

#### Suggestions for Language Practitioners

As language learning strategies influence language learners' perceptions and performances, they should be taken into consideration for the development of teaching methods and teaching materials, such as worksheets, activities, or assignments. Not only for business students, as studied in this investigation, but anyone who is impacted by languages should efficiently utilize the appropriate language learning strategies in appropriate situation.

Teachers and instructors are considered to be

important keys in providing learners with learning strategies as part of normal classroom instruction. They are the people who know how their students learn best; therefore, they can provide their students appropriate strategy instructions and training that are suitable and useful. Learning languages possibly occurs both inside and outside classes, teachers can help students by putting learning strategies in teaching processes such as activities during the class and other assignments that students have to do by themselves. Good training and instructions of how to use language learning strategy efficiently should be explicitly taught as well because English, a foreign language in Thai context, has to be acquired at all levels.

On the other hand, students themselves should become aware of what can encourage them to get better learning performances and utilize language learning strategies. Absolutely, one of those methods is using appropriate language learning strategies in appropriate contexts. Each language learner contains distinctive characteristics and style of learning, thus students should seek suitable strategies for themselves, not only the strategies that teachers provide for them. When students gradually realize how to apply learning strategies in order to achieve their language goals by themselves, they will become language learners who are motivated to learn, and have a sense of being autonomous learners. More importantly, students with ability to use strategies efficiently gain confidence in dealing with language issues, they acquire language content and perform language tasks better than those who lack strategies. Neither activities performed during a class nor tasks assigned to be done outside a class are barriers of their language learning.

### Suggestions for Further Study

1. Many studies have been conducted on language learning strategies; however, the results from each study are not consistent in the exact same way. For example, significantly different factors influence learners' strategy use, but some research still shows insignificant results. Moreover, different language learners employ language learning strategies differently. Therefore, more research should be carried out on various types of factors relating to strategy use in order to reveal the wide range of relationships between learners and factors affecting their use of language learning strategies and their language performance.

2. Each strategy should be included in the learning process. Teaching staff can provide students with language learning strategies while teaching in class and also encourage them to use strategies both in class and outside the class. These are means to arouse students' awareness of language learning strategies which they generally use and some strategies that they have never used before, so that the students are able to cope with language learning problems and to improve their language use and performance as well.

3. Teachers should do research to find relationships between their students and appropriate language learning strategies because different strategies suit different learners, as mentioned above. Teachers will realize what kinds of strategies students most often use and rarely use, thus lessons, activities and assignments can be adapted and tailored for appropriate strategy use.

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