



การใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยรัฐบาล ชั้นปีที่ 1

The Use of English Language Learning Strategies by Thai Government University Freshmen

นิศการ ประคงชาติ*

Nisakorn Prakongchat

บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อสำรวจการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษโดยรวมของนักศึกษาชั้นปีที่ 1 ในมหาวิทยาลัยรัฐบาลแห่งหนึ่งของประเทศไทย และศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษกับระดับความสามารถด้านภาษาอังกฤษ เพศ และประสบการณ์การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ กลุ่มตัวอย่างในการวิจัยครั้งนี้คือ นักศึกษาชั้นปีที่ 1 ปีการศึกษา 2554 จำนวน 287 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูล คือ แบบสอบถามที่สร้างโดยผู้วิจัย (Prakongchat, 2007) สอดคล้องบรรยายและการวิเคราะห์ความแปรปรวน ถูกนำมาใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล เพื่อหาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ กับตัวแปรทั้ง 3 ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นักศึกษารายงานการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อ 1) เตรียมพร้อมก่อนเข้าห้องเรียน 2) ทำความเข้าใจบทเรียนในห้องเรียน 3) พัฒนาทักษะภาษาอังกฤษ ของตนเอง และ 4) เพิ่มพูนความรู้ภาษาอังกฤษทั่วไป โดยรวมแล้ว ความลึกของการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ ของนักศึกษากลุ่มนี้อยู่ในระดับปานกลาง ยกเว้น กลวิธีการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อทำความเข้าใจบทเรียน ในห้องเรียนที่มีการใช้ในระดับสูง และความลึกของการใช้กลวิธีการเรียนมีความสัมพันธ์อย่างมีนัยสำคัญ กับประสบการณ์การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ และระดับความสามารถด้านภาษาอังกฤษ

คำสำคัญ : การใช้กลวิธีการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษ/นักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยรัฐบาล ชั้นปีที่ 1/
ระดับความสามารถด้านภาษาอังกฤษ/เพศ/ประสบการณ์การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ

Abstract

This investigation was designed to explore the overall strategy use of Thai university freshmen in the Academic Year 2011 in a government university in Thailand, and to examine the relationships in the frequency of students' reported language learning strategy use with reference to self-rated proficiency levels, gender, and language learning experiences. Two hundred and eighty seven students were multi-stage sampled to participate in the study. A researcher-generated questionnaire (Prakongchat, 2007) was used as the main data collection instrument. Simple descriptive statistics and an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used in the data

* อาจารย์ ดร. ประจำปีร์ แกรนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏกำแพงเพชร



analysis. The findings showed that these students used language learning strategies for: 1) preparing themselves for classroom lessons, 2) understanding while studying in class, 3) improving their language skill and 4) expanding their general knowledge of English. They reported high frequency of strategy use of language learning strategies in understanding while studying in class and the language learning strategies used at medium frequency were preparing themselves for classroom lessons, improving their language skills, and expanding their general knowledge of English. In addition, the frequency of the students' overall reported use of strategies correlated significantly in terms of previous language learning experiences and language proficiency levels.

Keywords: Use of English language learning strategies/Thai government university freshmen/self-rated proficiency levels/gender/language learning experiences

Introduction

Over the past two decades, there has been a great emphasis on how language learners deal with their target language learning. In response to this emphasis, the main purpose for language learning strategy research was to describe the “good language learners.” Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, and Todesco (1975), Rubin (1975), and Stern (1975) are the pioneering researchers carrying out their works to identify what ‘good’ or ‘successful’ language learners actually do when they learn their target languages; e.g. English, French, German. The strategies employed by those learners were proposed and then were suggested for unsuccessful language learners to apply in order to make them successful in learning languages. The three studies from Naiman et al. (1975), Rubin (1975), and Stern (1975) initiate an interest in many language researchers to continuously work at the achievement of

successful language learners (see Bialystok, 1981; O’Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Küpper, & Russo, 1985; and Politzer, 1983). Concerning the lack of attention given to how learner differences influence language learning strategy use and language achievement, there has been an increasing emphasis on how language learners’ characteristics relate to their language performance. Much research has later been carried out accordingly, e.g. Bialystok and Fröhlich, 1978; Ehrman and Oxford, 1989; Hong-Nam and Leavell, 2006; Magogwe and Oliver, 2007; Oxford and Ehrman, 1995; Wharton, 2000; Yang, 1999; and Yilmaz, 2010.

Similar to the Thai context, at first, language learning strategy research conducted with Thai EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners have documented language learning strategies in striving for academic success (e.g. Kaotsombut, 2003; Lappayawichit, 1998; Ounwattana, 2000; Sarawit, 1986). However,



there has been a prominent shift with greater emphasis being put on learners' affective factors, such as gender, types of academic program, learning styles, learners' perceptions of the usefulness of strategies, English learning experiences, and fields of study that can contribute to learners' language learning strategy use in relation to EFL proficiency (Intaraprasert, 2007; Prakongchati, 2007; Torut, 1994).

A review of the literature and research work also reveals that there remains a small amount of empirical research designed to investigate language learning strategy use of Thai university students with reference to their learning conditions. In order to reduce this gap, a series of variables in the present investigation has been carefully selected. Those variables appear to be likely neglected by most researchers (previous language learning experiences) together with the variables most frequently examined by most researchers (gender and language proficiency).

Research objectives

The present investigation aimed at identifying the language learning strategies that university students at a government university located in the north of Thailand, employed in learning English as a foreign language (EFL), and clarifying how the investigated variables (gender, language-learning experiences, and levels of language proficiency) related to the language learning strategies students employ in learning English.

Research questions

There were four research questions that framed this investigation:

1. What are the language learning strategies that are most frequently used by these students?
2. Do students' choices of language learning strategies vary significantly with their gender?
3. Do students' choices of language learning strategies vary significantly according to their English learning experiences?
4. Do students' choices of language learning strategies vary significantly according to their levels of language proficiency?

Methods of data collection

Two hundred and eighty seven students were multi-stage sampled from the total population of 2,551 freshmen enrolled in the Academic Year 2011. Cluster random and simple random samplings were administered in this study. The freshmen, from all five faculties: Science and Technology; Humanities and Social Sciences; Industrial Technology; Management; and Education, were randomly selected to participate in the study. In collecting data, the language learning strategy questionnaire was the main method to access the overall use of language learning strategies that they employed in general, as well as how the investigated variables, including gender and language learning experiences, related to the self-reported use of language learning strategies and levels



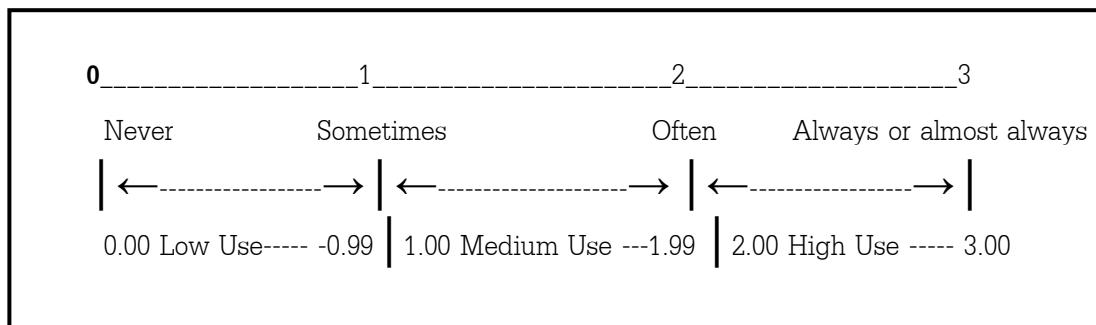
of language learning proficiency.

In order to identify the use of language learning strategies and learner-related factors, the questionnaire was employed to seek information (background and biographical information, knowledge and behavioral information) and to measure attitudes, values, opinions, or beliefs (Punch, 1998). Agreeing with Punch (1998), O'Malley and Chamot (1993), and Chamot (2001) have reported that the questionnaire is the instrument that provides the easiest way to collect data about students' reported use of language learning strategies. In this investigation, the questionnaire of Prakongchati (2007) was adopted because it was systematically generated for non-native English speaking students who use English as a second or foreign language. Its validity check was carried out with an association of the professional lecturers in the field of education. Then a pilot study was also conducted to principally increase the reliability, validity, and practicality of the questionnaire (Oppenheim, 1992). To check the internal consistency of the reliability of items in the strategy questionnaire, the Alpha Coefficient or Cronbach's Alpha was used. The reliability estimates were high at .95 when compared with the acceptable reliability coefficient of .70, which is the rule of thumb for research purposes (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993).

The questionnaire contained four main categories, including 44 individual language learning strategies i.e. 10 individual strategies in Category 1: Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons; 11 individual strategies in Category 2: Understanding while Studying in Class; 12 individual strategies in Category 3: Improving One's Language Skills; and 11 individual strategies in Category 4: Expanding One's General Knowledge of English. The frequency of students' strategy use was categorized as 'high', 'medium', and 'low'. This was organized by responses of the strategy questionnaire in which frequency of strategy use was measured on a four-point rating scale, ranging from 'never' which is valued as 0, 'sometimes' valued as 1, 'often' valued as 2, and 'always or almost always' valued as 3. So, the average value of frequency of strategy use could be valued from 0.00 to 3.00, with 1.50 being the mid-point of the minimum and the maximum values. The mean frequency score of strategy use of any categories or items valued from 0.00 to 0.99 was indicated as 'low use', from 1.00-1.99 'medium use', and 2.00-3.00 'high use'. Figure 1 below demonstrates the applied measure.



Figure 1: The measure of high, medium, and low frequency of strategy use



(criteria adopted from Intaraprasert, 2000)

Analyzing, interpreting, and reporting data

The data obtained through the language learning strategy questionnaires were analyzed to answer the research questions. Simple descriptive statistics were used to describe the level of frequency of strategy use while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was the main statistical method of the data analysis in seeking the relationship between the frequency of strategy use and the three investigated variables: gender;

language learning experiences; and levels of language proficiency.

Summary of the research findings

Tables 1 presents the breakdown of the number of 287 participating students related to each investigated variable in the data collection in order to give a context for the results obtained through the data analysis for the study.

Table 1: Number of students in terms of gender, language learning experiences, and language proficiency levels

Gender		Language Learning Experiences (8 years)		Language Proficiency Levels		
Male	Female	Less	More	Advanced	Intermediate	Elementary
56	231	38	249	0	127	160



The information in Table 1 shows the number of students in each group of the three variables. Of the three variables presented, there were 231 female students and 56 male students. “Previous English learning experiences” in this study were specially classified into two groups: more experienced and less experienced. The classification was based on the National Education Act of 1999, Thailand’s formal system of education. English language learning is compulsory from Upper Primary level; i.e. Pathom Suksa 6. That means children mostly formally learn English approximately 8 years before starting at the tertiary level. However, it would not say that every primary school in Thailand could follow this regulation, especially remote area schools. English language learning experiences, therefore, were divided into two groups: more experienced

(more than 8 year English learning); and less experienced (8 year English learning or less) due to an attempt to cover most learners as many as possible. In respect of students’ proficiency levels, it was found that no participant rated his or her language proficiency at the advanced level, so there were two self-rated proficiency levels in the study: 125 intermediate language proficiency students and 160 elementary language proficiency students.

Results of the first question: What are the language learning strategies that are most frequently used by these students?

On the basis of the results of the strategy analysis of the questionnaire items, four language learning strategy groups are demonstrated in Table 2, which presents a rank ordering of the strategies according to their frequency of use.

Table 2: Means and percentages of language learning strategy groups

Language Learning Strategy Category	Mean	%	Degree	Rank
Understanding while Studying in Class	2.00	69.7	High	1
Improving One’s Language Skills	1.97	88.5	Medium	2
Expanding One’s General Knowledge of English	1.73	82.9	Medium	3
Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons	1.67	68.6	Medium	4
Total score	1.84	77.4	Medium	



The descriptive statistics for the total score with respect to overall strategy use indicated that the participants were medium language learning strategy users. The mean and percentage of the table showed that the category Strategies for Understanding while Studying in Class had the highest mean (2) which indicates a high use of such strategies, followed by Improving One's Language Skills, Expanding One's General Knowledge of English, and Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons, respectively.

At the individual strategy level, it was found that students reported various levels of frequency use. For example, in Category 1: Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons, most of learning strategies used to prepare the classroom lessons were reportedly employed at the medium frequency level, and two learning strategies were found to be used at the high frequency level i.e. attempting to attend the class, and reviewing own notes/summary. One learning strategy, however, was used at the low frequency level: reviewing lessons. In Category 2: Understanding while Studying in Class, most of the learning strategies used were reportedly employed at the high frequency level. However, only one learning strategy was found to be used at the very low frequency level, trying to find ways to increase students' understanding through interaction with others. In Category 3: Improving One's Language Skills, there was no learning strategy used at the low frequency

level, and most of learning strategies were reportedly employed at the high and medium frequency levels. In Category 4: Expanding One's General Knowledge of English, almost all of the learning strategies were reportedly employed at the medium frequency level; however, only one learning strategy was found to be used at the high frequency level, using a dictionary for vocabulary enrichment.

Results of the second question: Do students' choices of language learning strategies vary significantly with their gender?

In response to this research question, the results of the ANOVA showed no significant variations in relation to the gender of the students in students' reported overall strategy use, as displayed in table 3 below.



Table 3: Results of the ANOVA for the differences in strategy use according to gender

Strategies	Gender	n	Mean	SD	Significance Level
Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons	Male	56	.75	.44	.25
	Female	231	.67	.47	
Understanding while Studying in Class	Male	56	.66	.48	.51
	Female	231	.71	.46	
Improving One's Language Skills	Male	56	.86	.35	.47
	Female	231	.89	.31	
Expanding One's General Knowledge of English	Male	56	.79	.41	.34
	Female	231	.84	.37	

Results of the third question: Do students' choices of language learning strategies vary significantly according to their English learning experiences?

The results of the ANOVA showed that significant variations in students' reported frequency of strategy use in relation to their English learning experiences were found in two strategy categories: Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons ($p < .05$) and Expanding One's General Knowledge of English ($p < .01$).

In using strategies for Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons, seven out of ten individual language learning strategies (70%) varied significantly according to this variable, with more experienced language learning students reporting more frequent overall strategy use than those with less language learning experiences. The results of the post hoc Scheffe

Test showed that the seven individual strategies were:

- 1) studying the course details before hand
- 2) attempting to attend the class
- 3) reviewing lessons after class
- 4) reviewing your own notes/summary
- 5) attempting to revise today's lessons
- 6) doing homework or assignments
- 7) approaching the teacher by asking him or her for clarification of what was learned in class

In using strategies for Expanding One's General Knowledge of English, ten out of eleven individual language learning strategies (91%) varied significantly according to this variable, with more experienced language learning students reporting more frequent overall strategy use than those with less language learning



experiences. The results of the post hoc Scheffe Test showed that the ten individual strategies were:

- 1) practicing English with a commercially packaged English program
- 2) playing games for vocabulary enrichment such as English crossword
- 3) seeking out information in English through surfing the Internet
- 4) having extra tutorials
- 5) taking any jobs to practice English
- 6) having your own language learning notebooks
- 7) translating English news, song lyrics, poems, etc. into Thai
- 8) using a dictionary for vocabulary enrichment
- 9) joining leisure or social activities to practice and improve English
- 10) giving tutorials to others like junior students, peers, or siblings

Table 4: Results of the ANOVA for the differences in strategy use according to language experiences

Strategies	English language experiences	n	Mean	SD	Significance Level
Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons	< 8 years	37	.54	.505	.04*
	> 8 years	249	.71	.456	
Understanding while Studying in Class	< 8 years	37	.68	.475	.78
	> 8 years	249	.70	.460	
Improving One's Language Skills	< 8 years	37	.86	.347	.69
	> 8 years	249	.89	.317	
Expanding One's General Knowledge of English	< 8 years	37	.68	.475	.008**
	> 8 years	249	.85	.356	



Results of the fourth question: Do students' choices of language learning strategies vary significantly according to their levels of language proficiency?

In response to this question, the researcher has made an attempt to examine students' self-rated proficiency levels, which were classified into three levels: advanced, intermediate, and elementary. From the questionnaire responses, there were two self-rated proficiency levels in the study i.e. elementary and intermediate.

The results of the ANOVA showed that significant variations in students' reported frequency of learning strategy use according to their levels of language proficiency were found in two learning strategy categories: Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons ($p = .05$) and Expanding One's General Knowledge of English ($p < .001$).

In using strategies for Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons, nine out of ten individual language learning strategies (90%) varied significantly according to this variable. Students with a higher level of language proficiency reported more frequent use of these strategies than those with lower language proficiency. The results of the post hoc Scheffe Test showed that the nine individual strategies were:

- 1) studying the course details before hand
- 2) preparing yourself physically
- 3) attempting to attend the class

- 4) reviewing your own notes/summary
- 5) doing a revision of the previous lessons
- 6) attempting to revise today's lessons
- 7) personally approaching the teacher by asking him or her for clarification of what was learned in class
- 8) practicing what was learned in class with the teacher
- 9) discussing L2 learning problems with the teacher

In using strategies for 'Expanding One's General Knowledge of English', ten out of eleven individual language learning strategies (91%) varied significantly according to this variable. Students with higher language proficiency reported more frequent use of these strategies than those with lower language proficiency. The results of the post hoc Scheffe Test showed that the ten individual strategies were:

- 1) practicing English with a commercially packaged English program
- 2) playing games for vocabulary enrichment such as English crossword
- 3) seeking out information in English through surfing the Internet
- 4) having extra tutorials
- 5) taking any jobs to practice English
- 6) having your own language learning notebooks
- 7) translating English news, song lyrics, poems, etc. into Thai



8) joining leisure or social activities to practice and improve English

9) practicing general English with your family members

10) giving tutorials to others like junior students, peers, or siblings

Table 5: Results of the ANOVA for the differences in strategy use according to language proficiency

Strategies	English language proficiency	n	Mean	SD	Significance Level
Preparing Oneself for Classroom Lessons	Elementary	125	.62	.49	.05*
	Intermediate	160	.73	.45	
Understanding while Studying in Class	Elementary	125	.65	.48	.10
	Intermediate	160	.74	.44	
Improving One's Language Skills	Elementary	125	.86	.34	.35
	Intermediate	160	.90	.30	
Expanding One's General Knowledge of English	Elementary	125	.75	.43	.00**
	Intermediate	160	.89	.32	

Discussion of the research findings

Overall use of language learning strategies

Based on the research findings, it seems that for these Thai government university students, striving for long-term achievement is not their ultimate goals in English learning, but only for the short-term one of exam-based achievement. They, therefore, reported the use of related language learning strategies at a medium frequency level to achieve those purposes, such as doing homework or assignments

in order to get the high scores in class, attempting to attend the class regularly as class attendance considered as one of the requirements for examination eligibility, and reviewing their notes/summary to prepare themselves for the examination.

Additionally, the issues regarding the utilization of supplementary resources and mass media were considerably involved in explaining how often Thai government university students used their language learning strategies to help improve their language skills and expand their



general knowledge of English. To do so, a lot of Thai government university students reported the frequent use of supplementary resources and media i.e. a dictionary, the Internet, and games. However, some kinds of mass media were not available, for example, radio programs in English. This might be because such radio programs have been insufficiently provided throughout the country, particularly in remote areas. Another cause of infrequent use of radio programs for English practice might be that nowadays there are more kinds of technology-aided English practice, such as computers, the iPod/iPad, and MP3/4s.

One more interesting issue to be discussed concerned with limited opportunities to practice English in an authentic environment. In the EFL context such as Thailand, learners rarely have an opportunity to use or practice English in the classroom, where teaching and learning English have been managed with the use of Thai as the main medium of instruction, but also outside the classroom where they use Thai for life and social activities. Therefore, the English classroom was likely the only chance for them to use and practice English. This is the reason why they reported low use of language learning strategies to improve their English skills through conversing English with teachers, peers, siblings, or foreigners outside the classroom.

Use of language learning strategies and the gender of students

The results of most previous studies in which the gender of students was taken into account have concluded that females employ certain strategies significantly more frequently than their male counterparts (e.g. Anugkakul, 2011; Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Prakongchati, 2007).

The major findings of the present investigation, however, demonstrated that gender did not have a profound influence on students' choices of strategy use. They were consistent with studies by Wharton (2000) and Intaraprasert (2000). The findings in this respect suggested that these language learners reported employing their language learning strategy use to more or less the same degree, irrespective of their gender.

Use of language learning strategies and the language experiences of students

Specifically in this study, “English learning experiences” were classified into two groups: more experienced (more than 8 years of language learning), and less experienced (8 years of language learning or less) based on the National Education Act of 1999, Thailand’s formal system of education; that is, children mostly formally learn English approximately 8 years before the tertiary level. However, this is not to say that every primary school in Thailand follows this regulation, especially in remote-area schools. The classification, thus, aims to cover as many learners as possible.



The findings of the study revealed that students with more English learning experiences reported employing both overall and individual language learning strategies to a significantly higher degree than those with less English learning experiences in the four main categories, especially those used to expand their general knowledge of English and to prepare themselves for classroom lessons.

Inconsistent with the findings, the difference in previous language learning experiences (in terms of more or less language learning experiences) manipulates students' use of language learning strategies. To support the findings of such a relationship, one common factor hypothesized to explain this phenomenon was students' favourite learning styles. Cohen (1998: 15) defines learning styles as general approaches to learning, and Gardner and Miller (1999: 157) consider learning styles as the ways learners like or dislike learning a language. The findings could imply that students' learning styles were independent by seeking extra practice outside the classroom. They were classroom well-prepared students, but passive participants and uncollaborative students in the classrooms.

Use of language learning strategies and perceived language ability of students

A great number of previous studies investigating the use of language learning strategies by students with different levels of language proficiency have concluded that higher-proficiency students generally reported

employing learning strategies significantly more frequently than did lower-proficiency students. Examples are Green and Oxford (1995), Intaraprasert (2000), Oxford and Nyikos (1989), Prakongchati (2007), and Wharton (2000). Based on the findings of the present investigation, higher-proficiency students reported greater overall strategy use than did lower-proficiency students. The findings showed significant differences among the students with different proficiency levels in all four main language learning strategy categories.

However, another argument concerning the relationship existing between strategy use and proficiency level has been discussed in various studies. A number of them have been devoted to discussing this argument, and then confirm a mutual relationship between language proficiency and strategy use (Green and Oxford, 1995; Wenden, 1987; Anugkakul, 2011). In other words, strategy use and proficiency are both causes and outcomes of each other; active use strategies help students to attain higher proficiency, which in turn makes it likely that these students will select these active use strategies. A similar argument in these studies comes from the findings of this study. Some hypothesized factors that could be cited to explain this complicated relationship involve not only learner-internal factors, e.g. motivation, beliefs, effort, and attitudes, but also learner-external factors, specifically the application of media.



Added to that, the present study discovered that higher-proficiency students expend more effort to increase language production opportunities by selectively employing certain types of language learning strategies to practice English through films, television programs, and other types of media. As early researchers proposed lists of strategies and other features presumed to be essential for all “good L2 learners,” e.g. Naiman et al. (1975), Rubin (1975), and Chamot and KÜpper (1989), successful language learners are likely to select strategies that work together in an effective way, tailored to the requirements of the language tasks. Additionally, as supported by the study of Wharton (2000), successful language learners are motivated tend to use more strategies than unsuccessful students, and the particular reason for studying the language is important in the choice of strategies. Similar to the findings of this study, higher-proficiency students tend to willingly invest their time and energy in English learning, even in their leisure time; they like watching English films and television programs, listening to English songs and tapes, or reading on-line English materials.

Limitations of the present investigation and recommendations for future research

Systematically-conducted research is valuable in addressing primary research questions to cover types of language learning strategies reported by Thai government university students, together with the

relationships between such learning strategies at different levels and each investigated variable. In carrying out the research, certain limitations have been apparent. The researcher will present them as follows for future research directions.

1. To shed light on L2 learning strategies, both quantitative and qualitative research should work together to produce larger, clearer pictures of what occurs in the Thai EFL context. The quantitative-based research carried out in this study uncovered deeper meanings in terms of the continuity of students' goals and strategy-use patterns over time. As a result, no direct evidence of development presented here. It would be interesting if truly rich research can emerge in the future to increase the understanding of government university students' strategy use in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Thailand. Examining the longitudinal stability of these patterns is strongly suggested as an alternative form of future research, in which students themselves have time to report on the process of their learning development during their time in higher education.

2. The next limitation issue that should also be discussed here results from the narrow focal point of the study i.e. the target participants. This is because this study aimed to study the language learning strategies specifically used by Thai students in a government university. The findings would be more useful if students were recruited from other types of universities, e.g. open admission



universities, private universities, vocational colleges, and so on, and then comparing their choices of language strategy use. In order to obtain a complete picture of the trends of Thai tertiary students' strategy use, tertiary students from different types of universities and during different years of study should be included in the future.

3. The use of self-rating language proficiency in this study was limited and based only on the individual respondent's perceptions. According to the findings of the study, none of the participants perceived his or her English proficiency level at advanced level. These perceptions might be a result of the Thai culture's value of modesty, or lack of self-confidence, or humility. The evaluation basis of their self-perception of English proficiency

also needs to be taken into consideration in future research. Further studies may be needed to investigate the differences between students' self-perceived proficiency levels and their objective proficiency levels, which perhaps could be evaluated via standardized tests, e.g. the TOEFL or IELTS.

Conclusion

The present investigation has contributed to the area of language learning strategy studies in light of language learning strategy use and the investigated variables. The researcher suggested the limitations of the present investigation and provided some recommendations for further research in order to guide this area to greater study of language learning strategies.

Biography

Anugkakul, G. (2001). A comparative study in language learning strategies of Chinese and Thai students: A case study of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. **European Journal of Social Scienc** 19 (2): 163-174.

Bialystok, E. & FrÖhlich, M. (1978). Variables of classroom achievement in second language learning. **The Modern Language Journal** 62: 327-336.

Chamot, A.U. (2001). The role of learning strategies in second language acquisition. In Breen, M.P. (Ed.). **Learner contributions to language learning: New directions in research**, 25-43. London: Longman.

Chamot, A.U. & KÜpper, L. (1989). Learning strategies in foreign language instruction. **Foreign Language Annals** 22 (1): 13-24.

Cohen, A. D. (1998). **Strategies in learning and using a second language**. New York: Longman.

Ehrman, M.E. & Oxford, R.L. (1989). Effect of sex differences, career choice, and psychological type on adult language learning strategies. **The Modern Language Journal**, 73 (1): 11-12.



Ellis, R. (1994). **The study of second language acquisition.** Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fraenkel, J.R. & Wallen, N.E. (1993). **How to design and evaluate research in education.** New York: McGraw Hill.

Gardner, D. & Miller, L. (1999). **Establishing self-access: From theory to practice.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Green, J. & Oxford, R.L. (1995). A closer look at learning strategies, L2 proficiency, and gender. **TESOL Quarterly** 29 : 261-297.

Hong-Nam, K. & Leavell, A. G. (2006). Language learning strategy use of ESL students in an intensive English learning context. **System** 34 : 99-415.

Horwitz, E.K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning foreign language student. **The Modern Language Journal** 72 (3): 283-294.

Intaraprasert, C. (2000). **Language learning strategies employed by engineering students learning English at the tertiary level in Thailand.** PhD. dissertation, School of Education, University of Leeds, the United Kingdom.

_____. (2007). Out-of-class language learning strategies and Thai university students learning English for science and technology. **Suranaree Journal of Social Science** 1(1): 1-18.

Kaotsombut, N. (2003). **A study of language learning strategies of graduate science students at Mahidol University.** Master thesis. Faculty of Science, Mahidol University, Thailand.

Lappayawichit, R. (1998). **An investigation of English language learning strategies and their relation to the achievement of the First-Year Arts Students at Chulalongkorn University.** Master thesis. Faculty of Science, Mahidol University, Thailand.

Magogwe, J. M. & Oliver, R. (2007). The relationship between language learning learners in Botswana. **System** 35 : 338-352.

Naiman, N., Maria, F., Stern, H.H., & Todesco, A. (1975). **The good second language learners.** Toronto, Ontario: Ontario Institute for Studying in Education, OISE Press.

O'Malley, J.M. & Chamot, A.U. (1993). Learner characteristics in second language acquisition." In Hadley, A.O. (Ed.). **Research in language learning: Principles, processes, and prospects**, 96-123. Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.

O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., Stewner-Manzanares, G., Küpper, L. & Russo, R.P. (1985). Learning strategies used by beginning and intermediate ESL students. **Language Learning** : 35 (1): 21-46.



Oppenheim, A.N. (1992). **Questionnaire design, interviewing, and attitude measurement.** London: Pinter.

Ounwattana, P. (2000). **The relationship between language learning strategies and abilities in English language speaking and writing of students at the Certificate of Vocational Education Level in Rajamangala Institute of Technology.** Master thesis. Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

Oxford, R.L. (1990). **Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know.** New York: Newbury House Publications.

Oxford, R.L. & Ehrman, M.E. (1995). Adult's language learning strategies in an intensive foreign language programs in the United States. **System** 23 (3): 359-386.

Oxford, R.L. & Nyikos, M. (1989). Variables affecting choice of language learning strategies by university students. **The Modern Language Journal** 73 (3): 291-299.

Politzer, R. L. (1983). An exploratory study of self-reported language learning behaviours and their relation to achievement. **Studies in second language acquisition**, 6 (1): 54-63.

Prakongchat, N. (2007). **Factors related to the language learning strategy use of Thai university freshmen.** PhD. dissertation, Institute of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand.

Prakongchat, N. & Intaraprasert, C. (2008). Thai university freshmen and language learning strategy use: A qualitative perspective. **Journal of Science Technology and Humanities of Burapha University** 6 (1): 33-45.

Punch, K.F. (1998). **Introduction to social research: Quantitative & qualitative approaches.** London: Sage Publications.

Rubin, J. (1975). What the "good language learner" can teach us. **TESOL Quarterly** 9 (1): 41-50.

Sarawit, M. (1986). A study of language learners' strategies. **Humanities, Sri Nakharinwirot University Phitsanulok** 2 (1): 77-85.

Stern, H.H. (1983). **Foundation concepts of language teaching.** Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Torut, S. (1994). **A comparison of language learning strategies of Thai university students in acquiring English proficiency.** PhD. dissertation, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, the United States.

Wenden, A. (1987). Incorporating learner training in the classroom. In Wenden, A. & Rubin, J. (Eds.). **Learner strategies in language learning.** 219-272. London: Prentice Hall ELT.



Wenden, A. & Rubin, J. (1987). (Eds.). **Learning strategies in language learning**. London: Prentice Hall ELT.

Wharton, G. (2000). Language learning strategy of bilingual foreign language learners in Singapore. **Language Learning** 50 (2): 203-243.

Yang, N. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. **System** 27 : 515-535.

Yilmaz, C. (2010). The relationship between language learning strategies, gender, proficiency and self-efficacy beliefs: A study of ELT learners in Turkey. **System** 682-687.