

Factors and Reasons Influencing Thai EFL University Students' Use of Language Learning Strategies

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Abstract

The present study has the following goals: 1) To consider the variety of language learning strategies and their relative frequencies as chosen by English majors studying at public universities in the northeast of Thailand; 2) to understand what may be the underlying factors that guide these choices as reported by the participants; and 3) to answer why those strategies and their frequencies. The participants were 579 students at 6 public universities in the northeast of Thailand, all of whom majored in English. The tools to gather the data were a background information questionnaire, LLS questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. A selective sample of 30 participants took part in the guided lightly-structured interviews. The tools used for a quantitative analysis were obvious descriptive data and factor analysis. Further analysis of the qualitative results were done using content and thematic analyses. The quantitative results tell us that their overall use of language learning strategies were at a predictable moderate frequency of overall use and only small variations at category levels. At the individual level, high frequencies were reported for 6 strategies, moderate usage for 37 strategies and infrequent to zero usage were shown for 2 strategies. Four underlying factors were derived from a factor analysis. The qualitative results revealed that 16 reasons can be ascertained for the frequent use of certain strategies, and 3 reasons for infrequently used strategies.

Keywords: Language learning strategies, University students, Undergraduate students, Factors influencing language learning strategy use