

## Oxford’s Strategy Inventory for Language Learning: English Learning of Chinese Students in Thai University

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| Abstract  |  |
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| Received<br>13/04/2022  | This study aimed to explore Chinese students' application of Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) in learning English, to investigate differences in English language learning strategies among students at different levels of English proficiency, and to report their perception of English learning through a semi-structured interview in the cross-cultural context in Thailand. The study combined quantitative data of questionnaires completed by a survey group of 244 Chinese students at a university in Thailand, and qualitative data from a semi-structured interview of 10 students from the same group. The results showed that Chinese students generally had a high level of engagement in SILL. The most frequently used strategy category was Compensation Strategies, followed by Social Strategies, Metacognitive Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, and Affective Strategies. The least frequently used strategy category was Memory Strategies. The findings revealed a significant mean difference in language learning strategies which varied |
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| significantly by English proficiency level. Participants' responses to the interview indicated that SILL was significant for their learning experience and expression in the cross-cultural context of Thailand, and that their speaking and listening skills were significantly improved. Findings of this research provided valuable inputs for further research on language learning in cross-cultural context. |
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## Introduction

Internationalization has been the subject of research and criticism in academic fields, including cooperative education (Reinhard & Gerloff, 2020). International cooperation in higher education has become a widespread phenomenon. With the rapid development of globalization, the number of international universities is increasing, and international university cooperation is no longer an option but an inevitable trend. In 2007, the Ministry of Education of China and the Minister of Education of Thailand signed the Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Academic Degrees between China and Thailand. After that, more and more Chinese students have entered Thai universities. Language is one of the essential influencers in international communication activities (Ahmadi & Reza, 2018). As globalization deepens, English has become the international language for academic exchanges, leading to a global phenomenon of using English as a medium of instruction to teach academic subjects in non-English speaking countries (Yang et al., 2019).

## Literature Review

Learning strategies are specific actions learners take to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, autonomous, and adaptable to new situations (Oxford, 1990). Second language learning strategies are complex, dynamic thoughts and actions, selected and used by learners with some degree of consciousness in specific contexts to regulate multiple aspects of themselves (such as cognitive, emotional, and social) for (a) accomplishing language tasks; (b) improving language performance or use; and (c) enhancing long-term proficiency (Oxford, 2016). English learning strategies refer to a series of behaviors, learning skills, in-class and out-of-class learning, specific English activities, and steps foreign language

learners use to achieve their learning achievements. For students learning English as a foreign language, strategies are considered facilitators or maps of language learning. Language learning strategies can enhance the learners' motivation, requirements, enjoyments, and other techniques of students in learning the English language. These monitors assist them to influence their language learning achievements (Souriyavongsa et al., 2013). Appropriate language learning strategies are considered conducive to foreign language learning goals. In addition, research has confirmed that language learning strategies help students become more effective in the classroom and encourage more effective mastery of the target language (Oxford, 2016).

Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) is a tool widely used for the study of EFL students' language learning strategies (Rianto, 2020). Since 1990, SILL has been the most influential instrument in language learning strategy research; It has been translated into 20 languages and used in many studies. The questionnaire was developed by Oxford (1990) to measure the use of language strategies and determine their relationship to other factors, such as age, gender, proficiency, learning style, and culture. It may be even more valuable when used in conjunction with the experience of those who learn English as a second language in a foreign environment (Alharbi, 2017). According to Oxford's (1990) taxonomy, language learning strategies are divided into two major classes: Direct Strategies and Indirect Strategies. These two classes are subdivided into a total of six groups. Memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies are under the direct system, while metacognitive, affective, and social strategies are indirect.

Memory strategies are specific devices (mnemonics) used by learners to make mental linkages, such as using a new word in a sentence in the target language.

Cognitive strategies help learners process and use the language for learning, such as writing notes, messages, letters or reports in the target language. The goal of cognitive strategies is the use of language.

Compensation strategies are intended to make up for missing knowledge while using the language, such as to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words in the target language.

Metacognitive strategies include the planning, organization, evaluation, and monitoring of one's own language learning, which lead to

coordinating own language learning, such as paying attention while someone is speaking in the target language.

Affective strategies are used during the learning of language in order to deal with emotions, motivations, and attitudes, such as trying to be relaxed while using the target language.

Social strategies are ways of interacting with other people in the context of language learning, such as asking questions in the target language, in the case of communication and social interaction.

According to previous studies, learning strategies significantly impact language learning. Many studies have found that language learning strategies involve many factors, such as English proficiency level, learning environment, learners' characteristics, educational background, culture, and experience (Kunasaraphan, 2015). The aim of language learning strategies study is to improve learning efficiency; therefore, it is essential to explore the relationship between language learning strategies and language learning results (Lee, 2010).

### Research Objectives

The main objectives of this study were to explore Chinese students' application of Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) in learning English, to investigate differences in English language learning strategies among students at different English proficiency levels, and report their perception of English learning through semi-structured interviews in a cross-cultural context of Thailand.

Thus, three research questions as below were formulated to guide the study :

- 1) What is Chinese students' application of Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) in English learning in the cross-cultural context of Thailand?
- 2) Are there any differences among the Chinese students in the cross-cultural context of Thailand in using the six SILL strategies in English learning?
- 3) What are the Chinese students' perceptions of English learning in the cross-culture context of Thailand?

## Significance of the Problem

Learning is a social process in which cognitive development occurs through interaction with other people and is influenced by an individual's circumstances. From a sociocultural perspective, learning environment and context affect individuals' language learning strategy orientation (Nguyen & Terry, 2017). Since language is a social medium and context, learners' use of language learning strategies may change with the change of the environment. Both teachers' and students' cultural and academic backgrounds may affect the classroom's actual teaching and learning process. However, weak language skills have been seen as causing academic and social problems among Chinese students (Wang, 2015). For Chinese students studying in Thailand, the language problems are even more challenging. They need to learn English well and use English as a learning tool to learn other knowledge. Therefore, their use of English learning strategies in the cross-cultural context of Thailand may have some influence. Therefore, it is necessary to understand this student group's English learning strategies and learning perception in the cross-cultural context of Thailand so that teachers and students can better cooperate and improve the teaching and learning results of this student group.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The research employed both qualitative and quantitative methodology. The quantitative part followed the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) version 7.0, designed to study Chinese students' English language strategies using their English learning in the cross-cultural context of Thailand. For the qualitative part, a semi-structured interview was designed to measure Chinese students' perception of their English learning in the cross-cultural context of Thailand.

### Participants

The study was conducted at Rangsit University in Thailand. 620 Chinese students were studying in the academic year of 2021 at Rangsit

University. According to Taro Yamane's formula, 244 students were calculated as the sample size for this questionnaire survey, and a simple random sampling method was adopted to select the questionnaire sample. After collecting the questionnaire results, the semi-structured interview questions were formulated in line with the findings from the questionnaire. After that, the researcher selected ten student volunteers at different language proficiency levels (2 Good English proficiency, 4 Fair English proficiency, and 4 Poor English proficiency) for the semi-structured interview using purposive sampling method.

In terms of geographical composition, the students came from 20 different Chinese provinces. Most of them came from Yunnan (32.79%; n =80), followed by Sichuan (8.20%; n = 20); The smallest numbers came from Hebei, Fujian, Guangdong, Hainan, Beijing, Liaoning and Hubei which each had four students, accounting for 1.64% individually.

Demographically, 176 participants were female (72.13%), and 68 were male (27.87%). 64 (26.32%) students were between the ages of 18-22, 128 (52.46%) between the ages of 23-27,, 44 (18.03%) between 28-32, and 8 (3.28%) were aged 32 or above; In terms of educational level, 128 students, representing a majority of 54.26%, held a bachelor's degree. The number of master's degree holders was 108,, equivalent to 44.26%, and that of doctoral degree holders was 8, roughly 3.28%. The participants' major distribution was as the following: Education (n=72; 29.51%), Art (n=28; 11.48%), Design (n=24; 9.84%), Media (n=20; 8.20%), International Business (n=52; 21.31%), Business Administration (n=36; 14.75%), Engineering (n=12; 4.92%). The numbers of participants who evaluated their own English proficiency level as poor, fair and good were 80, 112 and 52 respectively, which were 33.79%, 45.90% and 21.31% in terms of percentage.

## Instruments

In this research, the questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part concerned the participants' background information, such as degree study, major, gender, age and self-evaluation English level of proficiency. The second part questions created under the SILL concept consisted of 50 items which were divided into six sections: 1) Memory Strategies (question no.1-9 = 9 items), 2) Cognitive Strategies (question no.

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10-23 = 14 items), 3) Compensation Strategies (question no. 24-29 = 6 items), 4) Metacognitive Strategies (question no.30-38 = 9 items), 5) Affective Strategies (question no. 39-44 = 6 items), and 6) Social Strategies (question no. 45-50 = 6 items). The respondents' opinion was measured using a five-point Likert scale representing each English language learning strategy (Oxford, 1990).

The semi-structured interview was a qualitative study instrument for measuring students' perception of their English learning in the cross-cultural context of Thailand, and supporting and supplementing the questionnaire survey results. The semi-structured interview raised four questions to ten student volunteers at mixed proficiency levels (2 Good English proficiency, 4 Fair English proficiency, and 4 Poor English proficiency). The four questions were: 1) What strategies do you usually use to learn English? 2) Do you think English proficiency level impacts the use of English learning strategies? 3) How many years have you been studying in Thailand? Could you provide examples of how your studying and living experience in Thailand influenced your English learning strategy? Have you observed any differences in your language learning strategies before and after you came to Thailand as a result of the different linguistic, cultural, or social contexts? 4) How would you describe yourself (e.g. personality, learning style, learning motivation, learning attitude)? How do your personal traits influence your English learning strategy use?

### **Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments**

The questionnaire was submitted to three experts from Rangsit University to verify its validity using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC). IOC rated the questionnaire at a score range from -1 to +1. The validity score of the questionnaire was 0.90. The questionnaire was used in a pilot test with 30 participants at Rangsit University after receiving IOC approval. The researcher used Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) formula to ensure the reliability of the 30 questionnaires. The reliability check of the pilot test results of the 30 students was 0.973 ( $\alpha = 0.973$ ), indicating a high degree of internal consistency. Hence, the questionnaire of this research was valid and reliable.

## Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

In this study, the data collection process is divided into three steps: First, the researcher made an online questionnaire through the Wenjuanxing program and then distributed and collected the questionnaire through the WeChat group of Chinese students at Rangsit University. The students were informed that their responses would be kept confidential and would be used only for research purposes. Secondly, the questionnaire results were interpreted as numerical scores to read the students' responses. And thirdly, semi-structured interview was conducted on a mixed English level of proficiency interviewees, the interview questions were created according to questionnaire results. It took each interviewee for about 30 minutes to one hour through a WeChat video to collect their perception of English learning in the cross-cultural context of Thailand to support and supplement the questionnaire results.

For the ethical consideration in this study, the researcher strictly protected the anonymity of all participants and the confidentiality of their opinion throughout the study. The participants' answers and information were used for research purposes only; they were reported as the full results and not released individually.

## Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 25.0) program was used to analyze the quantitative data received from the questionnaires. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were calculated, and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. An ANOVA was used to compare the mean scores of three groups of students at different English proficiency levels SPSS program analyzed the use frequency, the mean and standard deviation of each English learning strategy. The mean score of each language learning strategy is then ranked to determine the high or low use of each language learning strategy. The frequency levels are explained by Likert's 5 points, ranging from 1 to 5.

A range of scores was interpreted (Oxford, 1990) as follows:



3.5 - 5.0 = the high use of that strategy,  
 2.5 - 3.49 = the medium use, and  
 1.0 - 2.49 = the low use.

Content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interview. First, the researcher analyzed the text in detail by looking at the opinion expressed by the interviewees. Then, ideas were grouped as themes, meaning that the same themes were grouped. In addition, the researcher clarified the participants' interview information to find out the methods they used in learning the English language and gathered details about their English language learning strategies to report the results. The research questions of this study were answered through the analysis and comparison of the two sets of data.

## Results

### Language Learning Strategies Used by Chinese Students' English Learning in the Cross-Cultural Context of Thailand

The Chinese students' use of overall Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and six sub-category strategies was demonstrated in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*The Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of SILL Use*

|                          | Samples | Mean Scores | Standard Deviations | Strategy Use |
|--------------------------|---------|-------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Memory Strategies        | 244     | 3.430       | 0.774               | Medium       |
| Cognitive Strategies     | 244     | 3.564       | 0.765               | High         |
| Compensation Strategies  | 244     | 3.705       | 0.748               | High         |
| Metacognitive Strategies | 244     | 3.656       | 0.722               | High         |

|                             | Samples | Mean Scores | Standard Deviations | Strategy Use |
|-----------------------------|---------|-------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <b>Affective Strategies</b> | 244     | 3.534       | 0.766               | High         |
| <b>Social Strategy</b>      | 244     | 3.675       | 0.805               | High         |
| <b>Overall SILL</b>         | 244     | 3.580       | 0.686               | High         |

Table 1 indicated that Chinese students studying at Rangsit University were frequent learners of language learning strategies because they generally used English language learning strategies at a high level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.580). The least used strategies were Memory Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.430), which were in the medium frequency bucket, while all the other strategies belonged to the high frequency bucket. Compensation Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.705) were the most frequently used, followed by Social Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3,675), Metacognitive Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.656), Cognitive Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.564) and Affective Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.534).

### Language Learning Strategies Used at Different English Proficiency Levels

The use levels of Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Chinese students at Rangsit University at a poor, fair and good level of English proficiency were demonstrated in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*The Mean Scores and the Standard Deviations of SILL Used by Poor, Fair and Good English Proficiency Students*

| Strategies                | Poor (n=80) |      |              | Fair (n=112) |      |              | Good (n=52) |      |              |
|---------------------------|-------------|------|--------------|--------------|------|--------------|-------------|------|--------------|
|                           | Mean        | S.D  | Strategy Use | Mean         | S.D  | Strategy Use | Mean        | S.D  | Strategy Use |
| <b>Memory Strategy</b>    | 3.13        | 0.67 | Medium       | 3.47         | 0.77 | Medium       | 3.79        | 0.82 | High         |
| <b>Cognitive Strategy</b> | 3.20        | 0.71 | Medium       | 3.67         | 0.69 | High         | 3.90        | 0.84 | High         |

| Strategies                    | Poor (n=80) |      |              | Fair (n=112) |      |              | Good (n=52) |      |              |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------|--------------|--------------|------|--------------|-------------|------|--------------|
|                               | Mean        | S.D  | Strategy Use | Mean         | S.D  | Strategy Use | Mean        | S.D  | Strategy Use |
| <b>Compensation Strategy</b>  | 3.27        | 0.80 | Medium       | 3.87         | 0.55 | High         | 4.02        | 0.78 | High         |
| <b>Metacognitive Strategy</b> | 3.54        | 0.65 | High         | 3.61         | 0.78 | High         | 3.92        | 0.67 | High         |
| <b>Affective Strategy</b>     | 3.32        | 0.74 | Medium       | 3.59         | 0.76 | High         | 3.75        | 0.79 | High         |
| <b>Social Strategy</b>        | 3.40        | 0.75 | Medium       | 3.70         | 0.80 | High         | 4.05        | 0.79 | High         |
| <b>Overall SILL</b>           | 3.30        | 0.61 | Medium       | 3.66         | 0.66 | High         | 3.90        | 0.73 | High         |

Table 2 presented the frequency levels of using Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by poor English proficiency students, fair English proficiency students and good English proficiency students. Details were as follows:

Poor English proficiency students used the overall English language learning strategies at a medium level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.30). The Metacognitive Strategies were used at a high level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.54), followed by other strategies employed at a medium level, namely Social Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.40), Affective Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.32), Compensation Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.27), and Cognitive Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.20), Memory Strategies were used least frequently ( $\bar{x}$ =3.13).

Fair English proficiency students used overall English language learning strategies at a high level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.66). The least frequently used strategy category was Memory Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.47) at a medium level. The other strategies were employed at a high level. The most frequently used strategy category was Compensation Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.87), followed by Social Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.70), Cognitive Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.67), Metacognitive Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.61) and Affective Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.59).

Students with good English proficiency used the overall English language learning strategies at a high level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.90). All strategies were employed at a high level. The most frequently used strategy category was Social Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.05), followed by Compensation Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =4.02), Metacognitive Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.92), Cognitive Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.90), Memory Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ =3.79) and Affective Strategies ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.75).

## Relationship Between Language Learning Strategies Use and English Proficiency

The relationship between using Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and English proficiency levels observed in the three student groups of different English proficiency levels at Rangsit University was demonstrated in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*The Comparison of English SILL Use among Poor, Fair and Good English Proficiency Students.*

| Strategies                | English proficiency level |      |              |      |             |      | F     | p           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------|--------------|------|-------------|------|-------|-------------|
|                           | Poor (n=80)               |      | Fair (n=112) |      | Good (n=52) |      |       |             |
|                           | Mea<br>n                  | S.D  | Mea<br>n     | S.D  | Mea<br>n    | S.D  |       |             |
| Memory Strategies         | 3.13                      | 0.67 | 3.47         | 0.77 | 3.79        | 0.82 | 3.165 | 0.050*      |
| Cognitive Strategies      | 3.20                      | 0.71 | 3.67         | 0.69 | 3.90        | 0.84 | 4.073 | 0.022*      |
| Compensation Strategies   | 3.27                      | 0.80 | 3.87         | 0.55 | 4.02        | 0.78 | 5.943 | 0.004*<br>* |
| Meta-cognitive Strategies | 3.54                      | 0.65 | 3.61         | 0.78 | 3.92        | 0.67 | 1.189 | 0.312       |
| Affective Strategies      | 3.32                      | 0.74 | 3.59         | 0.76 | 3.75        | 0.79 | 1.399 | 0.255       |
| Social Strategy           | 3.40                      | 0.75 | 3.70         | 0.80 | 4.05        | 0.79 | 2.746 | 0.073       |
| Overall SILL              | 3.30                      | 0.61 | 3.66         | 0.66 | 3.90        | 0.73 | 3.329 | 0.043*      |

\*  $p < 0.05$     \*\*  $p < 0.01$

As shown in Table 3, a variance analysis was used to study the differences in English proficiency in memory strategy, cognitive strategy, compensation strategy, metacognitive strategy, affective strategy, social strategy and overall SILL strategy: students with different English proficiency had no significant influence on metacognitive strategy, affective strategy and social strategy ( $p > 0.05$ ). The samples of different English proficiency show consistency in metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies, and there is no difference. In addition, there were significant differences in the English proficiency samples of memory strategy, cognitive strategy, compensation strategy and overall SILL strategy ( $p < 0.05$ ), that is, there were significant differences in the English proficiency samples of memory strategy, cognitive strategy, compensation strategy and overall SILL strategy.

### **Chinese Students' Perceptions of Their English Learning in the Cross-Cultural Context of Thailand**

Through interviews with students, it was learned that the cross-culture context of Thailand also impacted their English learning experience. Learning English in the cross-culture context of Thailand had significantly helped their English expression, listening and speaking. Studying in cross-cultural contexts, they had a more diverse social network, with more international students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Students who had not been in Thailand for a long time were still in the self-conscious stage of communication, especially when speaking in English. The students who had studied in Thailand for one to two years were in an active adaptation stage. Although they still cannot speak fluent English, they dare to express their ideas in English. In short, after entering Thailand, they all had the consciousness to express themselves, and considered it essential to develop English listening and speaking skills. They also wanted to understand the culture and thinking logic behind the English language and acquire knowledge comprehensively.

### **Discussion**

According to the research, Chinese students in Rangsit University general had a high frequency of using Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) in English learning. The lowest frequency

category was Memories Strategies, which were in the medium frequency, while other strategies were in the high frequency range. Compensation Strategies were the most frequently used, followed by Social, Metacognitive, Cognitive, and Affective Strategies. The findings aligned with Charoento (2017), who investigated 392 Thai undergraduates at a public university in Bangkok, Thailand. The findings showed that the strategies most used by learners were Compensation Strategies. Furthermore, Rismayana (2017) reported that Metacognitive Strategies and Social Strategies were used at a high frequency; Di Carlo (2016) studied the language learning strategies used by 69 students learning Spanish in the college teaching center, and the results showed that Affective Strategies and Memory Strategies proved to be the least used, which is consistent with the results of this study.

On the contrary, the results of this study also contradict some previous results (Rismayana, 2017; Phusum & Sucaromana, 2020) which reported that Compensation Strategies were the least frequently used strategies. Meanwhile, Syafryadi et al., S. (2020) investigated the Compensation Strategies used by competent and poor speakers to avoid communication gaps in speaking activities, and pointed out that "Compensation Strategies are extremely useful as guidance to avoid communication gap in speaking activities". The researcher considered that when Chinese students learned English in the cross-culture context of Thailand, they had to communicate in English whether they wanted to or not and use gestures and body language to supplement their English expressions, thus increasing their use of compensatory and Social Strategies. Different context and purposes may lead to differences in learners' use of learning strategies.

The survey showed differences in SILL among samples of different English levels. The results showed significant differences in language learning strategy use in SILL, Memory Strategies, Cognitive Strategies and Compensation Strategies, and there were no significant differences in Metacognitive Strategies, Affective Strategies and Social Strategies. These findings were consistent with those of Rismayana (2017) who investigated the correlation between language learning strategies and language proficiency level among English department students at Universitas Negeri Makassar (UNM) and concluded that there was a correlation between language learning strategies and language proficiency. Nevertheless, Rardprakhon (2016) compared language learning strategies used among

English academic achievement levels by 163 Thai engineering freshmen, and the results showed no difference between language learning strategies and high, medium, and low achievers. Therefore, the researcher considered that language proficiency level could affect learners' choice of language learning strategies, but it may also be affected by other factors and individual differences.

In order to supplement and expand the analysis results of the SILL questionnaire, the influence of cross-culture context and individual personality on the use of language learning strategies was briefly discussed in the interview. Based on semi-structured interviews, it was found that all participants at good, fair and poor English proficiency levels used SILL as their English language learning strategies, but there was also an additional English language learning strategy employed by the interviewees that did not fall under the Oxford classification-learning English through the Internet. They used the Internet for various models of research and learning (social media, translation apps, entertainment apps, and online courses, etc.) to help them learn English. The use of the Internet has increased the popularity of English education or learning for all students. The use of the Internet provides more access to English learning materials and allows students to interact with the content (Rardprakhon, 2016).

Moreover, personality was also of great help to English learning, especially in cross-cultural contexts. They had more diverse social networks and more international students from different language and cultural backgrounds, giving learners more opportunities to contact and learn English, which was more conducive to their learning. Cheerful and lively people prefer to express themselves, which was helpful for language expression and oral English. People who are not good at communication in the cross-cultural context need to rely on English as a medium of life and learning, whether active or passive, which increases their chances to use English and thus improve their English proficiency. Rardprakhon (2016) also believed that learning strategies did not function independently but were directly related to learners' potential learning styles and other variables related to learners' personalities.

## Conclusion

The results showed that Chinese students generally used Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) in English learning. The

most frequently used strategy category was Compensation Strategies, followed by Social Strategies, Metacognitive Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, and Affective Strategies. The least frequently used strategy category was Memory Strategies. In addition to using Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, they also learned English through the Internet (social media, translation apps, entertainment apps, online courses, etc.).

The findings revealed a significant mean difference in language learning strategies which varied significantly by English proficiency level. The use frequency of metacognitive strategies in the good English proficiency group, the fair English proficiency group and the poor English proficiency group are all at a high level, and the fair English proficiency group and the good English proficiency group also tend to use social strategies and compensation strategies. The memory strategy is the least frequently used by the three groups of students at different English levels. Therefore, curriculum developers and teachers should consider students' preference of learning strategies when organizing courses and classroom activities, that is, to provide students with learning activities in line with their preferred learning strategies to obtain the best learning results for students. New or present lessons should be metacognitive, compensation and social-based, not memory-based.

Furthermore, the instructor can design or provide some English activities and media courses, such as English movies, games, radio and TV programs. Some courses can be combined with websites that students can visit to motivate and guide them to become better learners. In order to improve Chinese students' English learning proficiency and better learning experience in the cross-cultural context of Thailand, it is suggested that Thai universities establish an effective communication platform for learners, such as the cross-cultural psychological center as a consulting center and academic support system for students.

However, this is a small scale study on English learning strategies of Chinese students studying at Rangsit University, Thailand. The results may not be generalized to all overseas Chinese students, and further research should be conducted with other nationalities and universities. In addition, the relationship between English learning strategies and nationality, learning style, motivation and other factors needs to be further studied. For the instrument, this study only studied the 7.0 (Oxford, 1990) version of language learning strategies and adopted students' self-



evaluation of English proficiency. Further research should be conducted with other instruments to evaluate the study's variables, such as including some language learning strategies of other researchers to provide a broader range of language learning strategies, and using the Professional English proficiency Test to evaluate language skills.

Finally, it is suggested that the further research should focus on such a generalization of all overseas Chinese students across Thailand to find out whether the results of the study will be the same or distributed other significant outcomes comparing to this article. Furthermore, it would be good if such future studies would adopt other questionnaires that are relevant to the difficulties of learning English of those Chinese students who study English in other countries in South East Asia whose English is not the official language.

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