



# Factors Affecting Language Learning Strategy Reported Usage by Thai and Vietnamese EFL Learners

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## Abstract

This paper is a report on an investigation into the relationship between three variables and language learning strategy use by Thai and Vietnamese university students using Oxford's 80 item Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). Two main objectives of this study are: 1) to determine three factors: how gender, motivation and experience in studying English affect the choices of language learning strategies; and 2) to compare the roles of these factors and the pattern of language learning strategy used by Thai and Vietnamese students. The analysis revealed that, amongst these three factors, motivation is the most significant factor affecting the choice of the strategies, followed by experience in studying English, and gender, respectively. Following the taxonomy of Oxford's language learning strategies, the analysis also showed that lowly-motivated and inexperienced Thai female students tend to use the six strategy categories less than their Vietnamese counterparts. This study's findings would be beneficial to Thai and Vietnamese educational planners and methodologists in general, and classroom teachers in particular, facilitating the better understanding of the roles of crucial variation in learning English exiting between male and female, motivation and experience in studying English.

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## 1 Introduction

Within the realm of second language acquisition and learning, a large number of research bodies (e.g. Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990) have agreed that language learning strategy use is one of the most important factors in the second language acquisition process. Many studies of second language learning (e.g. Green & Oxford, 1995; Griffiths & Parr, 2001; Oxford, 1990; Park, 1997; Wharton, 2000) have extensively documented how successful learners seem to use a wider variety of language learning strategies than unsuccessful learners. Meanwhile, several studies (e.g. Bruen, 2001; Cohen, 1998; Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Purpura, 1997; Shen, 2005; Wharton, 2000) have revealed that selecting appropriate strategies could enhance the learners' performance of second language learning. Therefore, it is clear that the choices of strategies used by second language learners plays a vital role in second language learning.

Likewise, scholars and researchers in second language acquisition are also interested in determining the effect of strategy use on success in learning another language. Oxford (1989), for example, suggests that the variables that seem to influence language learning strategy choice include age, sex, attitudes, motivation, language learning goals, motivational orientation, learning style, aptitude, career orientation, national origin, language teaching methods, task requirements, language being learned, duration, and degree of awareness. Among these variables, gender, motivation, and experience in studying a language are claimed to have discernible influences on the

choices of language learning strategies (Dörnyei, 2001; Goh & Kwah, 1997; Gu, 2002; Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006; MacIntyre, 1994; Mochizuki, 1999; Wharton, 2000; Yutaka, 1996).

Despite the fact that the published research mentioned above shows that over the past decades, researchers investigated effective language learning strategies and variables contributing to the use of strategy, certain criticisms of this line of research have been raised. First, different scholars and researchers have investigated learning strategies from different settings, reaching somewhat different conclusions as well as pedagogical implications. In addition, the incongruent results lead to questions of the reliability and application of the analysis. Then, despite the enormous number of learning variables studies, many studies tend to focus on one factor to investigate in a study. Finally, Wharton (2000) noted that the use of different types and numbers of strategies might depend on the characteristics and setting in which learning occurs and the language task to be completed. In this light, there is very little research on effective language learning strategies which is conducted in more than one country in a real international setting.

In Thailand and Vietnam, even though English has the status of foreign language, there are several similarities and differences in their English teaching and learning context. In 1992, Ak-sornkul (1980) reported that, in Thailand, English was first taught as a foreign language in schools by British Missionaries in 1845, but the Thai government continued reforming the education system for a long time to improve the Thai students' English proficiency. This has led to a situation where English is taught to Thai students from Grade 1 onwards. However, whilst this is the case for Thai students, in Vietnam, according to Thinh (1999), the teaching and learning of English is very limited. English was first taught twenty years ago. The importance of English in Vietnam was recognized when Vietnam adopted its Doi Moi policy in 1986. Since then, English has been taught as a foreign language to students from Grade 6 through secondary school. Although there are differences in the history and development of teaching and learning English in these two countries, it is very interesting that English education in Vietnam has rapidly improved as demonstrated by the fact that Vietnamese students scored higher in several standardized tests when compared with Thai students' scores (Bolton, 2008). Since there is a substantial body of evidence to support the positive contribution of language learning strategies to improvement in learning a foreign language, an examination of how students in the Thai and Vietnamese context employ these strategies and the effects of variables on these choices of strategies is very critical. These reasons suggest a need for more studies in this research area.

Despite the preponderance of research on language learning strategies within English as a second and foreign language (e.g. Green & Oxford, 1995; Griffiths & Parr, 2001; Gu, 2002; Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006; Oxford, 1990; Park, 1997; Wharton, 2000), to the best of our knowledge, no study yet explored the context of Thai and Vietnamese students' language learning strategies. Given the importance of learning strategies in language acquisition, two pertinent questions emerge: 1) How are these two groups of students different regardless of their use of language learning strategies?; and 2) what are possible factors affecting their choice of strategies? Moreover, along the line of the limitations mentioned earlier, Oxford's taxonomy and other researchers' work in language learning strategies have been essential in popularizing the importance of understanding how learners learn a second language and what factors have an influence on learning process. To fill the gap in this area of research, the objectives of this study are twofold: 1) to determine three factors: how gender, motivation and experience in studying English affect the choices of language learning strategies reported by Thai and Vietnamese undergraduate students; and 2) to compare the effects of these factors on their language learning strategy use. The results of this present study are beneficial to Thai and Vietnamese teachers, helping boost better understanding of learning strategies used by Thai and Vietnamese undergraduates through illustrating the intricate relationship existing between gender, motivation, and experience in learning English, affecting their learning strategies choices. An insight from the analysis of language learning strategies within the context of academic English in Thailand and Vietnam will be used to determine a range of learning strategies to be explicitly taught to Thai and Vietnamese learners, and to improve both English learning processes and final learning outcomes.

## 2 Literature review

This section provides a description of English Education in Thailand and Vietnam. Subsequently, a definition of language learning strategies is presented, which is followed by a review of studies which have investigated the roles of language learning strategies on gender, motivation and experiences in studying a language.

### 2.1 *English education in Thailand*

English in Thailand was first taught as a foreign language in schools by American Missionaries in the reign of King Narai the Great (1824-1851 A.D.). However, knowledge of English was limited to higher court officials and administrators. There was also no written curriculum for English as a subject until 1890. According to Aksornkul (1980) 1890 should be regarded as the starting point for the formal teaching of English in Thailand because in this year the Examination Act was enacted and was used as the guideline for educational management. Moreover, English was systematically taught in schools established by American Missionaries, where ordinary people could equally study English.

Later, in 1895, English language was assigned to be studied as an optional subject taught in secondary schools. The major change, then, occurred in 1909 when English was assigned to be studied in primary schools. Later in 1921, English became a compulsory subject for students beyond Grade 4. Aksornkul (1980) astutely stated that the objectives of this change were twofold: to produce modern thinkers for the country, and to provide students with sufficient knowledge of English to be able to function in classrooms.

In 1960, there was a change in the English syllabus for secondary schools. That is, English language was started in the Upper Elementary Education Curriculum to be a compulsory subject at the upper elementary level. Another major change was witnessed in the 1978 curriculum, which classified the English subject as optional again, and English subject was grouped together with Work Oriented Experience Area in the Special Experience Group. As for 1980 national curriculum, the English subject was classified as an elective in primary schools and compulsory subject from Grade 7 or in secondary schools.

Then, the revised English language curriculum was introduced in 1996. According to Khamkhien (2006), although English was still an elective in primary schools, the Thai government put a lot of effort into every government school to start learning English at Grade 1 onwards because there was a gap in terms of English standard between students studying English in private schools and those from government schools. The purpose of this revised proficiency-based curriculum was to provide students with the opportunity to continue their English education without interruption and to facilitate life-long learning. At this stage, emphasis was placed on the development of the students' language proficiency to fulfill a number of purposes: communication, acquisition of knowledge, use of English in socio-cultural functions, career advancement, etc. In terms of approach to language teaching, the approach was focused on functional-communicative with an eclectic orientation (Wongsothorn, Hiranburana, & Chinnawong, 2003).

The currently used English curriculum was introduced in 2001 when the Ministry of Education introduced the national foreign language standard and benchmarks. The motivation for this revision was to be consistent with the changing world and globalization. That is, all Thai citizens should have equal rights of 12 year-basic education. With this change, the 2001 system integrated primary and secondary into a single stream, which was divided into four sub-levels: Preparatory Level: Pratomsuksa 1-3 (Grades 1-3); Beginning Level: Pratomsuksa 4-6 (Grades 4-6); Expanding Level: Matayomsuksa 1-3 (Grades 7-9); and Progressive Level: Matayomsuksa 4-6 (Grades 10-12). At this point, six English credits are now required as part of a general education program. The current curriculum allows for 800-1000 sessions (20 to 30 minutes) in each academic year in Pratomsuksa, and 1200 sessions (50 minutes) for Matayomsuksa. Foley (2005) asserted that this cur-

rent English curriculum places an emphasis on learner-centered culture and life-long learning through cognitive, emotional, affective, ethical, and cultural growths within the Thai context.

At the university level, both public and private Thai universities reformed English language curriculum in order to meet the demands for English language skills in the workplace. According to Foley (2005), English is now required for twelve credits instead of 6 in university education, namely, 6 in general English and the other 6 in English for academic or specific purposes. Moreover, Wongsathorn, Hiranburana and Chinnawongs (2003) reveal that the English curriculum in Thailand can be viewed as a paradigm shift from English as an elective to English as a compulsory subject, focusing on independent work, autonomous learning, innovations and new technology in English language teaching (ELT), such as self-access learning, performance standards of general English and English for academic and specific purposes.

In conclusion, in Thailand, English is the most popular foreign language taught in schools. Since the introduction of English language teaching in Thailand, many substantial changes have been made to the curriculum in order to make Thailand's economy more competitive in the global market, and to meet the international community's expectations and demands.

## **2.2 *English education in Vietnam***

The emergence of foreign languages in Vietnam is different from that in other Southeast Asian countries due to the escalating Vietnam War (1954 to 1975). Historically, at this decisive time, Vietnam was separated into two parts: the communist North and the capitalist South (Thin, 2006). For the North of Vietnam, Russian and Chinese was the major language of communication, whereas in the South, French and then English were deep-rooted at many social strata. These languages were the main foreign languages to be taught as required subjects in secondary and post-secondary education. Until the national reunification in 1975, according to Be and Crabbe (1999), Russian was the national first foreign language for a number of years, and little attention was paid to the teaching of both English and French.

Inevitably, since all schools in Vietnam were nationalized after the reunification, hundreds of private English language centers were closed as an immediate result of the weakening of commercial ties with capitalist nations. In this period, Thin (2006) indicated that English was only taught in a limited number of classes in high schools. For example, English language was only taught in some classes of schools in towns or in large urban areas.

Later, in order to reform the country and adopt a market-oriented economy both in Southeast Asian countries and English-speaking countries, Vietnam decided to expand its relations with all foreign countries irrespective of different political systems (Canh, 1999). Hence, the Vietnamese government pursued an open-door policy, Doi Moi, in 1986. Thin (2006) illustrated that this policy helped attract a considerable number of English-speaking visitors as tourists and business people to Vietnam. Social demands have forged the reemergence of English as the language for broader communication and cooperation. As a result, even though foreign languages such as French, Russian, Chinese, Japanese and German are still taught in secondary schools and universities, English is in great demand and the most popular language being taught across the country. English, thus, has become the first foreign language taught and used in Vietnam. Moreover, as far as the importance of English in Vietnam is concerned, English has become the passport to a better paid job not only in the tourism and hospitality industries, but in many other enterprises.

Concerning English language instruction in Vietnam, according to Be and Crabbe (1999), English has been made compulsory in the secondary school curriculum. The teaching of English is now established in almost all secondary schools in 61 provinces and cities throughout Vietnam. However, a shortage of teachers of English still occurs in a number of schools located in the remote rural areas and in the highlands. Normally, students learn English for three 45-minute periods a week, except in Grade 6, when they learn for four periods a week.

In summary, for a long time, Vietnam did not have a dominant foreign language until recently. Foreign interventions and the subsequent use of foreign languages as the national or official lan-

guage overwhelmed most of the nation's history (Thin, 2006). English is one of the important foreign languages, especially in the South of Vietnam. In the past two decades, after Vietnam adopted Doi Moi Policy, the importance of English was emphasized more as the first foreign language taught in formal education until now. However, English language education in Vietnam is popular only in the big cities, and is still limited in the remote areas.

### 2.3 *Language learning strategies*

In the past two decades, researchers and practitioners have attempted to define and explain language learning strategies. Although they have proposed different classifications and conceptualizations of language learning strategies, for example, O'Malley & Chamot (1990) divided language learning strategies into three categories: cognitive, metacognitive, and social-affective, Oxford (1990) developed the most comprehensive, detailed and systematic taxonomy of strategies. She neatly proposed the point that "they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. They are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (1990, p. 8). In this regard, Oxford also categorized language learning strategies into two domains: "Direct Strategies and Indirect Strategies. Direct Strategies mean language learning strategies that directly involve the target language. All direct strategies require mental processing of the language." (1990, p. 37) The three groups of direct strategies are as follows:

1. *Memory strategies* – techniques specifically tailored to help the learner store new information in their memory and retrieve it later on, e.g. placing new words in context, using keywords and representing sounds in memory, etc.
2. *Cognitive strategies* – skills that allow students to better comprehend and produce language in different ways, e.g. note-taking, repetition, summarizing text, etc.
3. *Compensation strategies* – behaviors used to compensate and help them to employ the language, e.g. guessing while listening or reading, or using synonyms or paraphrasing while speaking or writing.

As opposed to Direct Strategies, "Indirect Strategies provide indirect support for language learning through focusing, planning, evaluating, seeking opportunities, controlling anxiety, increasing cooperation and empathy, and other means" (1990, p. 151). The three sets of indirect strategies are as follows:

4. *Metacognitive strategies* – behaviors used for arranging, planning and evaluating one's learning, e.g. overviewing and linking with already known material.
5. *Affective strategies* – techniques which regulate emotional behaviors and motivation, e.g. using relaxation techniques, singing songs in a target language to lower one's anxiety, etc.
6. *Social strategies* – actions allowing better learner interaction with other people in the language learning process, e.g. asking questions, cooperating with peers, and developing empathy towards target language speaking people, etc.

### 2.4 *Gender*

As evidenced by a number of research studies, among several factors such as motivation, age, proficiency level, etc., gender difference is deemed worthy investigation on the influence on language learning and acquisition (e.g. Chamot & Keatley, 2004; Goh & Kwah, 1997; Gu, 2002; Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006; Mochizuki, 1999; Wharton, 2000). A number of studies reported significantly more use of learning strategies than their male counterparts (e.g. Goh & Kwah, 1997;

Green & Oxford, 1995; Gu 2002). These studies postulated that female students used Compensation and Affective strategies more frequently than male ones.

Several studies have established the existence of gender differences in the use of language learning strategies. In a recent study, Hong-Nam and Leavell (2006), for example, investigated learning strategy use of 55 students learning English as a second language (ESL) with differing cultural and linguistic background: Brazil, China, German, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Togo. The results showed the students preferred to use Metacognitive strategies, whereas they depicted the least use of Affective and Memory strategies in overall strategy. Mean differences revealed that females engaged in strategy use more frequently than males. Also, female participants reported using Social and Metacognitive strategies most and Memory strategies the least, while males favored the use of Metacognitive and Compensation strategies most and Affective strategies the least.

While considerable foreign language and second language studies using the SILL in various countries have found significantly more frequent strategies used by females, Wen and Wang (1996) employed self-designed questionnaires with tertiary second-year non EFL-majors in China to determine a relationship between learner variables and scores on English as a foreign language achievement test. Again, they found that six factors affecting directly EFL achievement scores included: gender, first language proficiency, second language proficiency, vocabulary learning, ambiguity tolerance, and mother tongue avoidance. Wen and Wang's findings correspond to Green and Oxford's (1995) study, demonstrating that gender was one of factors affecting the choices of language learning strategies. That is, females used Memory and Metacognitive strategies more frequently than males.

In sharp contrast, some studies designate that males used learning strategies more than females when learning a language (Tran, 1988; Wharton, 2000). For instance, a recent study that involved language learning strategies and affective factors was conducted by Wharton (2000). 678 university students learning Japanese and French as foreign languages in Singapore participated in this study. Using Oxford's 80-item SILL with this group of students, he found that more proficient learners used diverse strategies to succeed. Additionally, this study pointed out that types, numbers, and frequency of use of language learning strategies, cultural background, language studied, stage of learning, age, motivation, language learning goals, settings, previous language learning experience, and language learning style are factors affecting students' language learning. Particularly, in terms of gender difference, the finding showed that males used a greater number of strategies significantly more often than females. This finding confirmed the results of Tran's (1988) study of adult Vietnamese refugees, demonstrating that males were more likely to use a variety of learning strategies than females.

Nonetheless, other studies pointed out that gender might not be one of key variables affecting the choices of language learning strategies. For example, Griffiths (2003) investigated the relationship between course level and frequency of language learning strategies used by 114 male students and 234 females. Employing the 50-item SILL, a significant relationship between strategy use and course level was found, while there was no statistically significant differences according to either gender or age with strategy use. Congruent with Griffiths' findings, Ma (1999) revealing that gender had no significant effect on the choices of such strategies as Memory, Metacognitive and Affective strategies. However, a significant difference was found in strategy choice by students of different majors. In this regard, it can be said that the relationship between gender and learning strategies are not explicit due to conflicting results generated by previous studies. For example, given the fact that the participants in Ma (1999) and Wen and Wang's (1996) studies are from the same tertiary EFL in China, the studies reported conflicting results even in a single country.

Although research studies on learning strategies and gender are common, reflecting a distinction in strategy use between males and females, the relationship between gender and learning strategies are not explicit due to conflicting results generated by previous studies. Therefore, more studies are needed to verify the role of gender in determining learning strategies.

## 2.5 *Motivation*

Despite the frequent recognition given in the literature to the potential relationship between affective factors and strategy selection, to date, research studies on motivation have increased in number. According to Gardner (1985), motivation and attitudes are the primary sources contributing to individual language learning. Gardner has described the phenomenon of motivation as consisting of four components: a goal, effort, want, and attitudes toward the learning activity. In addition, the concept of motivation can be classified into two orientations of reasons: instrumental and integrative. The former refers to the individual's willingness and interest in having social interaction with members of the L2 (second language) group. This orientation occurs when students wish to truly become part of the culture of the language being learned. An instrumental orientation is more self-oriented, described as when students have utilitarian reasons such as they want to pass an exam or they want to get a job. This statement was supported by Gardner and MacIntyre (1993), concluding that both instrumental and integrative orientations lead to more proficiency, but integrative orientation motivated students to learn more.

Dörnyei (2001), one of the well-known leaders within the field of motivation also states, generally, motivation can be a matter explaining why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it. Similarly, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) indicate that the learners with high motivation to learn a language will likely use a variety of strategies. Therefore, in terms of language learning, achievement can be viewed as one of indexes of motivation since motivation can lead to and support all activities.

As far as the concept of motivation is considered to be an important feature in language learning, researchers have placed greater emphasis on classroom issues. This has resulted in researcher's proposing a number of studies on the relationship between language learning strategies and motivation. For instance, a comprehensive study conducted by Pintrich and Schunk (2002) pointed out that motivation involves all activities in the classroom, affecting learning of new behaviors and the performance of earlier learned behaviors. Mochizuki's (1999) study, for example, indicated that, after being assured by the Second Grade Test of the Society of Testing English Proficiency (STEP) and the 80-item SILL, 44 second-year and 113 first-year Japanese students used Compensation strategies the most often and Affective ones the least. The study also reported that motivation affected the learner's choices of strategies the most strongly of all the factors: major course, self evaluation of English proficiency, enjoyment of English learning, and gender.

Congruent with Mochizuki, Yutaka (1996) investigated 24 Japanese learners of a second language's learning strategies used and the effect of experience of studying or living abroad. The study designated that, in terms of motivation, centering learning, and evaluating learning strategies had the influence on learning strategy use. The study also indicated that students' gender, integrative motivation, and instrumental motivation affected choices of strategies significantly, but major, personality, and proficiency did not. Experiences of both studying and living abroad significantly also seem to affect strategy choices.

However, from the previous research studies mentioned above, it should be acknowledged that motivation in the Japanese context is somewhat specific, which focuses on a desire to travel and a desire to make international friends. The primary focus is not on instrumental elements such as grades and future job orientations as confirmed by Irie (2003) and Yashima's (2000) studies. Taken together, it should be noted that the results of the effect of experiences of studying and living abroad in Yutaka's study are not supported by other studies yet since there are few research studies on the differences in the foreign language situation. Moreover, given that there is little published work on motivation and language learning strategies in the Thai and Vietnamese context, further research in this area is needed.

## 2.6 *Experiences in studying a language*

Experience in studying language is also regarded one of the factors that it is claimed may affect the choices of language learning strategies. However, a small number of studies have been carried out investigating the relationship between the experience of English study and language strategy use. Purdie and Oliver (1999) reported the language learning strategies used by bilingual school-aged children coming from three main cultural groups: Asian (predominantly Vietnamese or Chinese dialect speakers), European (children who spoke Greek and those who identified themselves as speakers of Macedonian), and speakers of Arabic. The results showed students who had been in Australia for a longer period of time (3 or less years and 4 or more) obtained significantly higher mean scores for Cognitive strategies and for Memory strategies. These findings, thus, can serve as the insight that experience in studying a language can affect the language learning strategy choices.

Purdie and Olive's study highlights the importance of experience in studying a language as one of the factors affecting the choices of language learning strategies. Their study also confirmed the findings of Opper, Teichler, and Carlson's (1990) comprehensive study investigating studying abroad programs in Europe and The United States. As a result of their study, studying abroad is deemed to have an influence on students' thought and learning style, especially in their actual ability in language learning. Several areas of impact on participants e.g. academic effects, effects on foreign language proficiency, cultural impact, change in attitudes and views are also indicated as factors contributing language learning strategy choices. These findings are congruent with Oxford's (1996) conclusion, exerting that there are other factors including culture and nationality that can influence on learning strategies' choice. However, in the light of the influence of studying or staying abroad on language learning strategies, these studies confirm the roles of experiences in studying a language as an important factor affecting the choices of language learning strategies.

## 3 Method

### 3.1 *Participants*

Two groups of university students were drawn from two public universities in Thailand and Vietnam. They had to fulfill four main criteria to be qualified for the study. First, a participant was, at the time of study, either first or second-year students, studying fundamental English courses. Second, their age ranged from 17 to 21 years. Next, as arbitrarily established, all of them had no more than 4-month experience abroad. Finally, all students had at least 6 years of experience of English instruction since Thai students learn English as a compulsory subject from Grade 1 onwards, while English is a compulsory subject from Grade 7 to Grade 12 in Vietnam.

In order to recruit participants from these two universities, 200 copies of questionnaires were distributed to first and second-year students of each university. The returned questionnaires which met the criteria as established were recognized the participants of the present study. To this end, the total number of the participants was 136 undergraduates. The Thai participants were 84 Thai EFL students—26 males (31.0%), and 58 females (69.0%). The Vietnamese participants were 52 undergraduate students—24 males (46.2%) and 28 females (53.8%). All of them, at the time of study, were studying English in mixed ability classes.

### 3.2 *Instruments*

The 80-item Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) developed by Oxford (1990) and a background questionnaire (see Appendix) were employed in this study. The SILL contains 80 items of learning strategy statements classified into six categories: Memory category, Compensation category, Cognitive category, Metacognitive category, Affective category, and Social cate-



gory. Scores for each item was assigned on a Likert scale, ranking from (1) never or almost never did this to (5) always or almost always do this.

To gain information about factors affecting the choices of language learning strategies which the present study aimed to determine, the background questionnaire was adapted. In the process of adapting the background questionnaire, all items related to the language learning enjoyment were excluded because they are not directly relevant to the present study. Since this study focuses on investigating the role of gender, motivation, and experience in studying English, two items together with their sub-questions focusing on variables were added: motivation (no. 12: Why do you want to study English?), and experience in studying English (no. 13: Your experience in studying English). In addition, to facilitate the understanding of the participants, the phrase “learning a new language” in the SILL was changed into “learning English” in every item. In this case, the adapted version (see Appendix) was checked for clarity and consistency by the two scholars whose expertise was in English and applied linguistics.

### 3.3 Data analysis

In order to identify the language learning strategy patterns used by Thai and Vietnamese students when learning English, the scores gained from the SILL was calculated. To determine the three factors, the data obtained from the background questionnaire were analyzed. First, the questionnaires in each group were divided into two groups according to gender—male and female. Second, in terms of motivation, all questionnaires from both groups were analyzed according to the answers to the question “*Why do you want to learn English?*” (no. 12) to separate highly-motivated and lowly-motivated students based on the scores of each sub-question. Through this stage, the scores assigned for the answers “*strongly agree*” and “*moderately agree*” are 2 and 1 points, respectively (see Appendix). The students who got more than 15 points (60%) were regarded as highly-motivated students, whereas those of less than 15 points were grouped in lowly-motivated group. The cut-off point may seem a bit high. As arbitrarily established, the rather high cut-off score would be beneficial in enhancing the distinction between the two groups of students by motivation. Then, focusing on experience in studying English of each student group, the answers to the question “*Your experiences in studying English*” (no. 13) were analyzed. In this regard, the questionnaires were separated into two groups: group 1 – those from the respondents with experience from language center and those from going abroad in an English speaking country but no more than 4 months; group 2 – those who had no experience from these two sources.

To obtain descriptive and inferential statistics, data analysis was carried out using the SPSS 15 statistical program. Means and standard deviations of the data were also computed. In addition, the t-test was calculated to determine the influences of gender, motivation, and experience on studying English in the strategies and to determine whether there were any significant differences among learners with regard to strategy use.

## 4 Results

The data of the two groups of students on the SILL, as classified based on gender, highly-motivated and lowly-motivated students, and students experienced in studying English in international schools and/or programs and by students inexperienced in those were analyzed. The following sections present the results of the analysis using t-test through means, standard deviations, and the significant difference, including the discussion.

### 4.1 Gender

For both Thai and Vietnamese students, after the data elicited by the SILL were analyzed according to gender, a number of intriguing points were found. The results of the choices of strategies by gender among the two groups of students are presented in Table 1.

Strategy category	Thai Students			Vietnamese Students		
	Males (N=26)		Females (N=58)	Males (N=24)		Females (N=28)
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Sig.	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Sig.
Memory	2.86 (0.43)	2.70 (0.58)	0.21	3.05 (0.44)	3.09 (0.59)	0.80
Cognitive	3.05 (0.39)	3.23 (0.58)	0.03*	3.28 (0.45)	3.31 (0.69)	0.86
Compensation	3.72 (0.46)	3.65 (0.59)	0.55	3.53 (0.51)	3.65 (0.60)	0.45
Metacognitive	3.31 (0.59)	3.21 (0.72)	0.56	3.53 (0.47)	3.48 (0.64)	0.79
Affective	3.09 (0.70)	3.06 (0.70)	0.84	3.56 (0.49)	3.36 (0.74)	0.98
Social	3.23 (0.66)	3.21 (0.71)	0.89	3.56 (0.55)	3.54 (0.68)	0.91
Average	3.29 (0.53)	3.18 (0.65)	0.51	3.42 (0.49)	3.40 (0.59)	0.80

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 1: Variation in use of strategy category by gender within Group**

As shown in Table 1, for Thai students there was no statistically significant difference in the overall use of strategy categories between male and female except Cognitive category ( $p=0.03$ ), with males reporting higher use of Cognitive category than females. As for Vietnamese students, there was no statistically significant difference in all of the six categories of language learning strategies used by Vietnamese male and female students.

The results of the comparison are not consistent with several studies (e.g. Green & Oxford, 1995; Griffiths, 2003; Ma, 1999; Oxford, Park-Oh, Ito, & Sumrall, 1993) reporting that female students made a significant gender differences. However, it is noteworthy that gender difference is a gray area in many research studies. That is, judging from the literature, there is no clear-cut answer about which gender uses a wider range of learning strategies in learning a language. Furthermore, there are inconsistent results from the studies reviewed. One possible explanation for this line is that there may be something beyond gender issue that has an influence on learning strategies' choice. Other factors influencing an individual's learning may be partly represented by age, attitudes toward learning, expectancy, interest, and needs, which can ebb and flow throughout an individual's lifetime. Obviously, if this is the case, such factors cannot be controlled in the present study.

Further analysis was conducted to find out whether there was the relationship between the choices of language learning strategies used by the same gender across nationalities. The following table demonstrates the comparison of the use of language strategies made by Thai and Vietnamese by gender.

Strategy category	Males		F	Sig.	Females		F	Sig.
	Thai (N=26)	Vietnamese (N=24)			Thai (N=58)	Vietnamese (N=28)		
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)			Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		
Memory	2.86 (0.43)	3.05 (0.44)	0.50	0.13	2.70 (0.58)	3.09 (0.59)	0.02	0.01*
Cognitive	3.50 (0.39)	3.28 (0.45)	0.01	0.06	3.23 (0.58)	3.31 (0.69)	0.97	0.56
Compensation	3.72 (0.46)	3.53 (0.51)	0.41	0.16	3.65 (0.59)	3.65 (0.60)	0.30	0.99
Metacognitive	3.31 (0.59)	3.53 (0.47)	1.94	0.16	3.21 (0.72)	3.48 (0.64)	0.10	0.10
Affective	3.09 (0.70)	3.56 (0.49)	5.58	0.13	3.06 (0.70)	3.36 (0.74)	0.69	0.07
Social	3.23 (0.66)	3.56 (0.55)	0.75	0.07	3.21 (0.71)	3.54 (0.68)	0.13	0.04
Average	3.29 (0.53)	3.42 (0.49)	1.53	0.12	3.18 (0.65)	3.40 (0.59)	0.37	0.30

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 2: Variation in use of strategy category by gender across nationalities**

From Table 2, t-test shows no statistically significant difference in all of the six strategy categories, indicating that both Thai and Vietnamese male students do not differ on the use of learning strategy. For female students, the t-test shows that there is no statistically significant difference in the use of the six strategy categories except Memory and Social categories ( $p=0.01$  and  $p=0.04$ , respectively). That is, Vietnamese female students reported significantly more use of such categories than Thai female students.

In addition, it was found that, when compared across nationality, there were the statistically significant differences in the use of Memory and Social categories between Thai and Vietnamese female students, with Vietnamese female students reporting higher use of such strategies than Thai female students. Given Vietnamese people have been influenced by Confucianism which was generated from Chinese culture (Canh, 1999), using memorization in learning English is probably rooted in Vietnamese people' behavior and thought. Moreover, in terms of the use of Social category, the finding can be explained by the fact that, since the communicative method is employed in classroom instruction, Vietnamese students use more this strategy category than Thai students.

## 4.2 Motivation

In order to successfully determine and get a clearer picture of the roles of motivation on language learning strategy choices, the SILL questionnaires completed by Thai and Vietnamese students were coded into two groups of students, highly-motivated and lowly-motivated students, particularly. The difference in the use of six language learning strategy categories by highly-motivated and lowly-motivated Thai and Vietnamese students is shown in Table 3.

Strategy category	Thai Students			Vietnamese Students		
	Highly (N=51)	Lowly (N=33)		Highly (N=26)	Lowly (N=26)	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Sig.	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Sig.
Memory	2.83 (0.52)	2.61 (0.56)	0.07	3.11 (0.59)	3.03 (0.44)	0.59
Cognitive	3.46 (0.50)	3.08 (0.52)	0.00*	3.41 (0.64)	3.18 (0.50)	0.17
Compensation	3.78 (0.57)	3.51 (0.47)	0.00*	3.50 (0.64)	3.68 (0.45)	0.25
Metacognitive	3.46 (0.63)	2.90 (0.62)	0.00*	3.68 (0.51)	3.32 (0.56)	0.02*
Affective	3.31 (0.60)	2.71 (0.68)	0.00*	3.41 (0.58)	3.31 (0.71)	0.56
Social	3.44 (0.69)	2.87 (0.53)	0.00*	3.65 (0.52)	3.44 (0.69)	0.22
Average	3.38 (0.59)	2.95 (0.56)	0.02*	3.46 (0.58)	3.33 (0.46)	0.30

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 3: Variation in use of strategy category by motivation within group**

For Thai students, as shown in the table, the t-test shows no statistically significant differences in the use of language learning strategies in all of the six categories ( $p < 0.05$ ) except Memory category. As for Vietnamese students, a statistically significant difference was only found in the use of Metacognitive category ( $p = 0.02$ ). This finding indicates that overall the highly-motivated and lowly-motivated Vietnamese students are not different in the use of learning strategy categories except the use of Metacognitive category, with the highly-motivated students reporting higher use of Metacognitive category than the lowly-motivated students.

Apparently, motivation is a significant factor contributing to the choices of language learning strategies, especially for highly-motivated Thai students. In sharp contrast, for Vietnamese counterparts, motivation does not have a great influence on using learning strategies. In this case, it is evident that motivation is a significant factor for highly-motivated Thai students in learning English, which can cause action and effort to be put forth during the learning process. If this is the case, this would be a proof that motivation is a factor leading to the difference in English proficiency between the highly-motivated and lowly-motivated student group. An explanation for the highly-motivated students' language learning strategies used by motivation is that they have strong goals in learning English such as in order to complete course requirements and to study abroad, when compared to the lowly-motivated student group.

The situation for Vietnamese students, as shown in Table 3, can be observed that most of both highly-motivated and lowly-motivated student groups have a stronger motivation than their Thai counterparts in learning English. This result supports Canh's (1999) conclusion that Vietnamese people who can communicate in English will get a better job than those who cannot. Both groups of Vietnamese students, thus, had to make a great effort in learning equally in order to be accepted in workplaces when they graduate.

The following table summarizes the results of the further analysis on the relationship between the pattern of language learning strategies and motivation across nationalities.

Strategy category	Highly-Motivated		F	Sig.	Lowly-Motivated		F	Sig.
	Thai (N=51)	Vietnamese (N=26)			Thai (N=33)	Vietnamese (N=26)		
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)			Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		
Memory	2.83 (0.52)	3.11 (0.59)	0.38	0.01*	2.61 (0.56)	3.03 (0.44)	1.69	0.00*
Cognitive	3.46 (0.50)	3.41 (0.64)	1.66	0.96	3.08 (0.52)	3.18 (0.50)	0.37	0.44
Compensation	3.78 (0.57)	3.50 (0.64)	1.82	0.08	3.51 (0.47)	3.68 (0.45)	0.04	0.16
Metacognitive	3.46 (0.63)	3.68 (0.51)	0.72	0.13	2.90 (0.62)	3.32 (0.56)	0.27	0.01*
Affective	3.31 (0.60)	3.41 (0.58)	0.06	0.48	2.71 (0.68)	3.31 (0.71)	0.02	0.00*
Social	3.44 (0.69)	3.65 (0.52)	0.95	0.21	2.87 (0.53)	3.44 (0.69)	5.44	0.00*
Average	3.38 (0.59)	3.46 (0.58)	0.93	0.31	2.95 (0.56)	3.33 (0.46)	1.31	0.10

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 4: Variation in use of strategy category by motivation across nationalities**

Table 4 illustrates that the t-test results revealed that a statistically significant difference in the use of Memory category for the highly-motivated Vietnamese students over the highly-motivated Thai students ( $p=0.01$ ). As for both lowly-motivated Thai and Vietnamese students, the statistically significant differences were found in the use of Memory, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social categories ( $p < 0.05$ ). This finding indicates that lowly-motivated Thai and Vietnamese students are significantly different in using learning strategies in all of the six categories except Cognitive and Compensation categories. Thus, it can be said that highly-motivated Thai and Vietnamese students are not significantly different in using the six categories of language learning strategies except the use of Memory category. However, for lowly-motivated Thai and Vietnamese groups, they significantly differ in the use of language learning strategies, reflecting that lowly-motivated Vietnamese students use a wider variety of language learning strategies particularly Memory, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social categories than the lowly-motivated Thai students. It is possible that Vietnamese language students have a stronger motivation in studying English than Thai students in general. More precisely, lowly-motivated Vietnamese students are more interested and motivated, resulting in their endeavors to learn to fulfill their life in the future than lowly-motivated Thai group.

The results of the current study are consistent with Mochizuki (1999) and Wharton's (2000) study delineated that motivation affected the learner's choices of strategies the most strongly of all the factors. As mention elsewhere, these results confirm Oxford's (1996) conclusion, exerting that there are other factors including culture and nationality that can influence on learning strategies' choice.

### 4.3 Experiences in studying English

In determining the roles of experience in studying English affecting the choices of language learning strategies, all returned questionnaires were coded into two groups of each country according to their experience: (1) students with additional experience from studying in a language center and/or going abroad in an English-speaking country but not more than four months and (2) students without additional experience from those. The results of the analysis of the use of lan-

guage learning strategies in each of the six categories of each student group are presented in the following table.

Strategy category	Thai Students			Vietnamese Students		
	With Additional Experience (N=22)	Without Additional Experience (N=62)	Sig.	With Additional Experience (N=30)	Without Additional Experience (N=22)	Sig.
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	
Memory	2.86 (0.48)	2.71 (0.56)	0.26	2.94 (0.47)	3.25 (0.45)	0.03*
Cognitive	3.52 (0.39)	3.23 (0.57)	0.03*	3.18 (0.58)	3.45 (0.56)	0.87
Compensation	3.82 (0.54)	3.62 (0.54)	0.14	3.51 (0.58)	3.70 (0.51)	0.23
Metacognitive	3.51 (0.65)	3.15 (0.67)	0.03*	3.43 (0.55)	3.60 (0.58)	0.30
Affective	3.25 (0.75)	3.01 (0.68)	0.17	3.26 (0.63)	3.49 (0.65)	0.20
Social	3.36 (0.60)	3.16 (0.71)	0.26	3.47 (0.62)	3.65 (0.61)	0.29
Average	3.39 (0.57)	3.15 (0.62)	0.15	3.30 (0.57)	3.52 (0.56)	0.32

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 5: Variation in use of strategy category by experience within group**

For Thai students, as shown in Table 5, two significant differences were identified in the use of Cognitive and Metacognitive categories ( $p=0.03$ ). That is, Thai students who had additional experience in studying English in the language center and/or of going abroad for not more than four months used Cognitive and Metacognitive categories significantly more frequently than those who had no additional experience. For Vietnamese students, the t-test revealed that a statistical difference was found in the use of Memory category ( $p=0.03$ ), with the students without additional experience reporting higher use of Memory category than the additional experienced student group.

These results noted that Thai students experience in studying English has an effect on the choices of language learning strategies, particularly in the use of Cognitive and Metacognitive categories in learning English. As for Vietnamese students, experience in studying English has a slight influence on the choices of language learning strategies because a statistically significant difference was found only in the use of Memory category.

It is noteworthy that the experience in studying English in this study refers to going abroad, particularly an English-speaking country, and learning from a language center. One possible explanation for the significant use of Memory category of the students without additional experience is that strategies used in an English-speaking country most likely dealt with communicative strategies such as Social strategies—interacting with others, or asking for help, and Compensation strategies—guessing when the meaning is not known, or using synonyms or gestures to express meaning of an unknown word or expression more than other strategy categories. In this regard, as suggested by Grainger (1997), English background students preferred to use Social and Metacognitive strategy categories most, whereas the preferred strategy for students of European background was Social and Compensation categories. Taken this into consideration, it is tenable that students with additional background were influenced by such strategies, and used less Memory category than those without additional background.

In order to obtain more in-depth information on the difference of language strategies used by these two groups of students, a further analysis was conducted. The variation in strategy category used by experience across nationalities is illustrated in Table 6.

Strategy category	With Additional Experience		F		Without Additional Experience		F		Sig.	
	Thai (N=22)	Vietnamese (N=30)			Thai (N=62)	Vietnamese (N=22)				
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)						
Memory	2.86 (0.48)	2.94 (0.47)	0.11	0.56	2.71 (0.56)	3.25 (0.54)	0.02		0.00*	
Cognitive	3.52 (0.39)	3.18 (0.58)	1.53	0.02*	3.23 (0.57)	3.45 (0.56)	0.03		0.12*	
Compensation	3.82 (0.54)	3.51 (0.58)	0.59	0.06*	3.62 (0.54)	3.70 (0.51)	0.00		0.53	
Metacognitive	3.51 (0.65)	3.43 (0.55)	0.45	0.64	3.15 (0.67)	3.60 (0.58)	0.26		0.01*	
Affective	3.25 (0.73)	3.26 (0.63)	0.81	0.94	3.01 (0.68)	3.49 (0.65)	0.03		0.01*	
Social	3.36 (0.60)	3.47 (0.62)	0.07	0.53	3.16 (0.71)	3.65 (0.61)	0.18		0.01*	
Average	3.39 (0.57)	3.29 (0.57)	0.58	0.46	3.15 (0.62)	3.52 (0.50)	0.08		0.11	

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 6: Variation in use of strategy category by experience across nationalities**

Table 6 demonstrated that statistically significant differences in the use of Cognitive and Compensation categories were found between the Thai and Vietnamese students with additional experience, with the Thai students reported higher use of Cognitive and Compensation categories. Another comparison was made among the students without additional experience of the two groups of Thai and Vietnamese students. These groups of Thai and Vietnamese students show differences in the use of Memory, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social categories ( $p < 0.05$ ). These findings indicate that the Vietnamese students without additional experience engaged in all strategy categories use more frequently than those of Thai students except Compensation category.

The results revealed that experience in studying English has the significant main effect on the choices of the six categories of language learning strategies support those of Purdie and Oliver's (1999) study. The results of the present study are also congruent with Opper et al. (1990) indicating that studying abroad had an influence on students' thought and learning style, especially in their actual ability in language learning.

For Thai students, it is plausible that the students with additional experience group used language learning strategies in each category more than the students without additional experience. It is presumable is that the students with additional experience know and/or apply special learning strategies obtained from studying in a language center or going abroad in an English-speaking country where they can use English outside the classroom and in authentic situation. Furthermore, they may have more opportunity than Vietnamese students with additional experience to practice Cognitive and Compensation strategy categories.

Nevertheless, for Vietnamese students, the fact that the student group without additional experience employed the six categories of language learning strategies more than Thai students with additional experience is intriguing. One possible explanation is that Vietnamese students who recognize themselves less additional experienced in studying English, when compared to peers or counterparts, make efforts and their contribution to studying English. Taken together, they may try

harder to push themselves because they determine to be successful in their life Canh (1999). As a result, this issue can reflect their use of language learning strategies, which they make use of all of the six categories except Compensation category more than the Thai students with additional experience.

## 5 Discussion and conclusion

This paper examined the roles of three variables; namely, gender difference, motivation and experience in studying English, and how this affected the choices of language learning strategies reported by Thai and Vietnamese undergraduate students. The comparison suggested that these two student groups shared both similarities and differences due to a number of factors.

The results of the present study remain inconclusive. With respect to gender, the findings of the present study are consistent with the previous studies in this area, confirming that gender difference was not one of the variables contributing to the differences in the choices of language learning strategies (Goh & Kwah, 1997; Gu, 2002; Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006; Mochizuki, 1999). Since the analysis showed that Thai male and female students are different in the use of Cognitive category only, while there is no difference between Vietnamese male and female students in the use of learning strategies, gender is not a factor that affects the choices of learning strategies. There are two possible explanations for these findings in this regard. First, the different pattern and frequency of strategies use by gender in the current study are probably affected by other variables such as ethnic background, cultural background, language learning environment, etc. Second, the number of participants of each gender is another factor that cannot be controlled in the present study.

With respect to motivation, the analysis showed a significant effect on the use of language learning strategies due to motivation between the two groups of students in general, and in Thai students in particular. The results of this study are congruent with a number of the previous SILL research findings, such as the study conducted by Dreyer and Oxford (1996) and Yu (2003). Therefore, the consistency of the finding designates that motivation in studying English could lead some benefits to learning a language. However, it is noteworthy that the cut-off (60%) used in this study is arbitrary. Further in-depth investigations need to verify this factor in order to add more evidence about the roles of motivation and the use of learning strategies.

Additional experience in studying English has a great influence on the two groups of students, especially on Thai students. This is because Thai students with additional experience used more strategies than those without additional experience. Moreover, when compared to the Vietnamese students without additional experience, the Thai students without additional experience use the six categories of language learning strategies less than Vietnamese counterparts. The results of the study confirmed Oppen et al. (1990) and Purdie and Oliver's (1999) findings showing that the more experienced students obtained significantly higher mean scores for Cognitive strategies and for Memory strategies than those who had less experience. As a result, the Thai students who had less experience in studying English should be taught how to use strategies to promote their English learning advancement. However, it should be noted that the criteria used to classify the students with respect to their experience in this study is arbitrary. Other factors such as the role of exposure to English such as passive listening to English songs, watching movies, etc. which can affect the choices of language learning strategies cannot be overlooked. These factors, again, cannot be controlled in the present study. The findings concerning experience in studying English, affecting the choices of learning strategies, therefore, should be carefully interpreted.

Although the results of the present are not claimed to be exhaustive, the study highlights the significance of language learning strategies in learning process. Identifying learning strategies use and understanding factors that might affect learning their learning strategy pattern is one of the many possible ways classroom teachers employ to help students become successful learners. The results generated from this study also provide Thai and Vietnamese language teachers with deeper



insights into how they should aware the use of students' learning strategies and how to design more effective learning tasks as well as activities to suit Thai and Vietnamese university students.

## 6 Limitations of the study

In light of the exploratory nature of this study and the number of the participants, the results should be interpreted carefully. First, given the limited number of the students, the findings of this study remain inconclusive and call for subsequent studies analyzing a larger group of participants. Next, as mentioned earlier, it is possible that learning strategies identified might be influenced by other variables e.g. nationality, age, field of study, etc. Therefore, further studies could investigate whether students from different background make full use of learning strategies in their language learning. In addition, there is a limitation in using the SILL to elicit language learning strategies, which should be supplemented with other research tools and techniques such as think-aloud protocols concurrent with conducting interviews, written diaries, and other methods which might provide and support the actual use of strategies and more sample-specific data. Further investigation, thus, should include studies which combine various qualitative approaches to substantiate and verify the findings obtained from using the SILL as a main instrument.

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## Appendix

### Background Questionnaire

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Sex  Male  Female 4. Mother tongue \_\_\_\_\_
5. Language(s) spoken at home \_\_\_\_\_
6. How long have you been studying English? \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ months.
7. How do you rate your overall proficiency in English as compared with the proficiency of other students in your current class? (Choose one)
  - Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor
8. How do you rate your overall proficiency in English as compared with the proficiency of native speakers of the language? (Choose one)
  - Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor
9. How important is it for you to become proficient in English? (Choose one)
  - Very important  Important  Not so important
10. Do you enjoy learning English?
  - Strongly agree  Moderately agree
  - Moderately disagree  Strongly disagree
11. Language(s) you have studied: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Why do you want to study English? Strongly agree Moderately agree  
(From 12.1 – 12.13, check all that apply)
  - 12.1 To work in an English speaking environment.  
In Thailand, for example, a foreign company.
  - 12.2 To get a good career or job.
  - 12.3 To communicate with people from English speaking countries, for example, the UK, the USA, Australia.
  - 12.4 To communicate with people from non-English speaking countries, for example, Japan, Indonesia, Italy.
  - 12.5 To learn to think and behave as English speakers do.
  - 12.6 To speak like a native English speaker.
  - 12.7 To get new ideas and knowledge from English speaking people.
  - 12.8 To meet different kinds of people.
  - 12.9 To get a qualification / degree.
  - 12.10 To travel.
  - 12.11 To promote self-esteem.
  - 12.12 To have fun.
  - 12.13 Others (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
13. Your experiences in studying English:  
(Check all that apply)
  - Study English at a language center (only after entering university)  
How long? \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ months.
  - Experience in an English speaking country, for example, the USA, Australia, New Zealand.  
How long? \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ months.
  - Use English to communicate.
    - Everyday  2 or 3 times a week
    - Once a week  2 or 3 times a month
    - Once a month  2 or 3 times a year
    - Others (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

- Watch movies with English sound track.
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Everyday                | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a week  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week             | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month            | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a year  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others (specify): _____ |   |
- Listen to English music.
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Everyday                | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a week  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week             | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month            | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a year  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others (specify): _____ |   |
- Take notes in English.
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Everyday                | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a week  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week             | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month            | 2 or 3 times a year                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others (specify): _____ |   |
- Study in an international school / program.
- How long? \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ months.
- Others (specify): \_\_\_\_\_