A Study of Language Learning Strategies Used by

Thai Tour Guides for Developing Their English

Oral Communication Competence

Kamolwan   Chittangwattana

การศึกษาวิธีการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของมัคคุเทศก์ไทย
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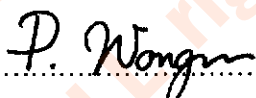| **Kamolwan Chittangwattana**	**2003**
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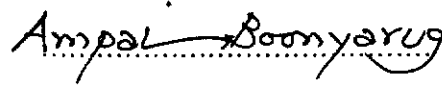|	
Thesis Title	A Study of Language Learning Strategies Used by Thai Tour Guides for Developing Their English Oral Communication Competence
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate language learning strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English oral communication competence The ways in which the factors of "gender", "age", "educational background", and "years of work experience" affect the use of these strategies were also examined. The sample consisted of 154 Thai tour guides from seven inbound tour operators in Bangkok focusing on native English-speaking tourists (American, Australian, Canadian, English, and New Zealanders) as their main clients. An interview questionnaire with a Likert-type scale was used for data collection. The content of the questionnaire was validated by

four specialists in the field of tourism, and its reliability analysis (Alpha) yielded a

coefficient value of .79. Means, standard deviation, t-test and one way ANOVA (F-test)

were used for data analysis.

The major findings of this study are as follows. First, cognitive, metacognitive,

social/affective strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English oral

communication competence occurred at a moderate frequency level. Of these three

language learning strategies, the social/affective strategies were used most frequently,

followed by cognitive strategies, and by metacognitive strategies respectively. The

social/affective strategies were used at the "Very often" level while the other two

strategies, cognitive and metacognitive, were used at the "Sometimes" level. Second,

there was significant difference in the exclusive use of metacognitive strategies by

Thai tour guides according to years of their work experience at a 0.05 probability

level. Significant differences were found between the following pairs of the subjects'

years of work experience: (a) 11-15 and 1-5 years, 11-15 and 6-10 years, 11-15 and

16-20 years; and (b) 16-20 and over 20 years. Implications for language learning

strategies in developing the English oral communication competence of Thai EFL

learners and tour guides were also suggested.

หัวข้อวิทยานิพนธ์	การศึกษาวิธีการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของมัคคุเทศก์ไทยที่ใช้เพื่อพัฒนาความสามารถในการสื่อสารด้านการพูดและการฟัง
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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาวิธีการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของมัคคุเทศก์ไทย ในการพัฒนาความสามารถในการสื่อสารด้านการพูดและการฟัง และตรวจสอบว่า เพศ อายุ พื้นฐานการศึกษา และประสบการณ์ในการทำงาน มีผลต่อการใช้วิธีการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของมัคคุเทศก์ไทยเพื่อพัฒนาความสามารถในการสื่อสารด้านการพูดและการฟังอย่างไร กลุ่มตัวอย่างของการวิจัยครั้งนี้คือ มัคคุเทศก์ไทยจำนวน 154 คน จากบริษัทนำเที่ยวที่ให้บริการแก่นักท่องเที่ยวชาวต่างประเทศที่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาประจำชาติ 5 ประเทศ ได้แก่ นักท่องเที่ยวจากประเทศสหรัฐอเมริกา ออสเตรเลีย แคนาดา อังกฤษ และนิวซีแลนด์

เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยคือ แบบสอบถามชนิดปลายปิด เป็นมาตราส่วนประเมินค่า (Likert Type Scale) ซึ่งผู้วิจัยใช้วิธีสัมภาษณ์เพื่อการเก็บข้อมูล เครื่องมือดังกล่าวได้รับการตรวจความเที่ยงตรงเชิงเนื้อหาโดยผู้ทรงคุณวุฒิจำนวน 4 ท่าน และได้รับการวิเคราะห์ความเชื่อมั่นโดยมีค่าสัมประสิทธิ์ของความเชื่อมั่นที่ระดับ .79 สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล ได้แก่ ค่าเฉลี่ย ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตราฐาน ค่าสถิติ (t-test) และค่าสถิติ (F-test) ด้วยการวิเคราะห์ค่าความแปรปรวนแบบทางเดียว (One-way Analysis of Variance)

ผลจากการวิจัยที่สำคัญสรุปได้ว่า

1) มัคคุเทศก์ไทยใช้วิธีการหลักในการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษทั้ง 3 วิธีการได้แก่ Cognitive Metacognitive และSocial/Affective ในการพัฒนาความสามารถในการสื่อสารด้านการพูดและการฟังเฉลี่ยโดยรวมแล้วอยู่ในระดับปานกลาง โดยที่มัคคุเทศก์ไทยส่วนใหญ่ใช้วิธีการ Social/Affective ในระดับมาก ในขณะที่ใช้ Cognitive และ Metacognitive ในระดับปานกลาง

2) ประสบการณ์ในการทำงาน มีผลต่อการใช้วิธีการ Metacognitive ในการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อที่จะใช้ในการพัฒนาการสื่อสารด้านการพูดและการฟัง ที่ระดับนัยสำคัญ .05 ความแตกต่างระหว่างกลุ่มอย่างมีนัยสำคัญพบได้ในกลุ่มต่อไปนี้ (ก) กลุ่มมัคคุเทศก์ที่มีประสบการณ์การทำงาน ระหว่างกลุ่ม 11-15 กับ 1-5 ปี และ 11-15 กับ 6-10 ปี และ 11-15 กับ 16-20 ปี และ (ข) ระหว่างกลุ่ม 16-20 กับ มากกว่า 20 ปีขึ้นไป

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"Situational Leadership: A Manual for Thai Tour Guides" and to follow a real tour, both helped me gain a better understanding of the tourism and tour guide contexts through first-hand experience.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is widely accepted that communication is an essential tool for organizations, since increased global contact has brought about a new network based society. Language has therefore become a vital medium for relaying messages and news in the communication process. The more internationally unlimited communication grows, the more the English language is used. As a lingua franca, English is the preeminent language of wider communication; as such, it is employed as the language for mutual understanding and meaningful communication among all nations. Furthermore, due to the fact that international business is now highly competitive, English has become extensively utilized as a core complement of business communication all over the world, especially in international tourism, education, mass media, and in the area of technological innovations.

Thailand, one of the developing countries, is building up its economy and improving the living conditions of its people. Therefore, English is of primary importance

for global business as a key to overcome the economic struggles of the future. Knowing

how to communicate in English is quickly becoming a necessity in general business

organizations. Increase in the use of English leads, naturally, to a demand for people

with knowledge of and ability in English. It is undeniable that nowadays a large number

of Thai people need to be equipped with high level English competence to have a

better opportunity of obtaining employment. The use of English will benefit Thai

business communicators while their business organizations continue to expand into the

global market. Increased international business opportunities have broadened and have

oriented communicators among countries toward social interaction. Consequently, the

high-level English capabilities that Thai people should have will enable them to access

international business communication in the fast-moving globalized world.

The tourism industry, especially, is an important business sector, which greatly

helps in developing the country. This is because it has presently become one of the

most prosperous industries throughout the world. Many countries have willingly

recognized the importance of tourism because of its rapid global progress. As the

preeminent means of global communication, English has become indispensable to

tourism in Thailand as well as in other countries.

Thailand faced a financial and economic crisis in 1997. Since then, to cope with this critical situation, the government has promoted the tourism industry intensely in order to bring in revenue and increase employment. Particularly, the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2002) reported that Thailand is becoming one of the world's favorite tourism destinations in South East Asia. The greater the number of foreign tourists visiting Thailand, the greater the revenue generated in the country. This industry therefore has an economic and social impact that cannot be ignored. As tourism is an immense source of foreign exchange earnings, its rapid growth has produced high economic returns, hence stimulating the nation's economy, creating jobs, encouraging investments, distributing income, and raising the standard of living.

As part of developing high quality human resources in the tourism sector, English competence that matches the needs of future tourism professionals and employers is essential for meeting foreign tourists' requirements. This, of course, will benefit not only the relationships and interactions between Thai tour guides and foreign tourists, but also the tourism industry as a whole. With a good command of English listening and speaking skills, Thai tour guides can create a good impression of being

well-informed and service-oriented. Both listening and speaking are required for and relevant to the communicative tasks of the tourism industry.

A survey of the need for the use of English conducted by Kanchanasatitya (1980) found that English is needed by people in business enterprises; specifically, listening and speaking are the language skills most needed. Additionally, a director of the marketing promotion department at the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) said that most leading tourism professionals in Thailand faced the problem of inadequate English communication. This problem was related to both knowledge of English and English communicative competence, in which listening and speaking skills were vigorously emphasized (Kongjaroen, 1991).

Moreover, English oral communication is valuable for obtaining employment and for successful job performance in the tourism industry. Undoubtedly, English oral communication is an indispensable ability in the tourism sector, because it is associated with communicating or interacting with others or foreign tourists on a daily basis.

As English oral communication competence is a two-way process, it depends on a good relation between speaker and listener; it also needs understanding and the ability to respond to impromptu situations. Yet, effective English oral communication

competence seems to be rather tough for most Thai people who are EFL learners. Some EFL learners in Thailand, like Thai tour guides, have performed quite well, while some EFL learners have been unable to attain English oral communication competence. Therefore, it would be interesting to find out why Thai tour guides can achieve more when interacting with foreigners than other Thai people can.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

English is neither the first nor the second language in Thailand. As non-native speakers of English, Thais learn English as a foreign language (EFL). English language learning and teaching tend to emphasize reading and writing, especially structure, with less attention paid to speaking and listening skills. Although EFL learners study structures thoroughly, most of them are unable to speak English fluently or accurately.

The other two factors that further impede their oral communication ability are cultural inhibitions and surroundings. Cultural inhibitions cause diffidence, and thus prevent EFL learners from active oral communication. In addition, in the Thai environment, opportunities for foreign language practice are limited, and the context of constant listening to and speaking English throughout the day is missing. As a result,

Thai learners learn only English as an object of study but hardly have any chance to

practice and use it effectively.

Nevertheless, English for interaction with other nationalities is needed as a

consequence of not only of the requirements of education, but also the demands of

career orientation. As a result, oral communication has become increasingly important

to all business organizations in both the government and the private sectors. It is not

surprising therefore that English oral communication competence is required for career

advancement.

More specifically, an immense expansion of the tourism industry, a vital sector

of Thailand's economy, has created a need for tour guides to develop high-level English

oral communication competence. This is because they are considered as cultural

ambassadors of their country. They have to provide knowledge and information in

English, thus enabling foreign visitors to have a clear understanding of Thailand and to

be positively impressed by Thai culture and the Thai way of life.

Basically, tour guides have to interact with foreign tourists everyday; as a result,

English oral communication is an essential ingredient of their daily work. They should

be able to comprehensively, fluently, and confidently communicate with native English-

speaking tourists, even though they may not perform English oral communication as the same level as native speakers. Thai tour guides learn English as a foreign language. However, they apparently do not have any problem when communicating with native English-speaking tourists. Inaccuracy in pronunciation, stress, intonation, and grammar can be commonly found among Thai tour guides, but their English oral communication is quite adequate. One explanation may be that their attainment of English oral communication competence relies on their personal language learning strategies.

Unfortunately, scientific and systematic research into the foreign language learning strategies of Thai tour guides has not been undertaken yet. This caused the researcher to be very interested in Thai tour guides' learning strategies for developing their English oral communication which led to their comprehension while listening and fluency in speaking. Therefore, a study of the language learning strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English oral communication competence is necessary.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The outcome of this proposed study would provide valuable information for Thai tour guides to enhance the caliber of their English oral communication strategies.

Additionally, oral communication learning strategies found in this study would be very beneficial for the effectiveness of their English oral communication. Moreover, the results of this study could be used for organizing an English training course to serve the Thai tourism industry's needs and for revising the English for tourism curricula offered by Thai educational institutions. Besides, the findings may have a further advantage of continually improving oral proficiency, with practical implementations for not only Thai tour guides themselves, but also for all Thai EFL learners.

More importantly, though, a lot of previous studies have been generally based on students' learning strategies; they focused exclusively on language teaching and learning issues. Therefore, conducting a study on the language learning strategies needed by Thai tour guides would add new knowledge to the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

1.3 Purposes of the Study

1. To investigate the language learning strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English oral communication competence.

2. To examine whether "gender", "age", "educational background", and "years

of work experience" affect the use of these strategies.

1.4 Research Questions

1. To what degree do Thai tour guides use language learning strategies for

developing their English oral communication competence?

2. How do "gender", "age", "educational background", and "years of work

experience" affect the use of these strategies?

1.5 Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

Due to time and budget constraints, this study was conducted with randomly

selected subjects from inbound tour operators located exclusively in Bangkok. Those

tour operators registered with the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and members of

the Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA) were selected. The subjects were Thai

tour guides from inbound tour operators whose market groups of travelers are from

five native English-speaking countries, consisting of America, Australia, Canada,

England, and New Zealand.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Inbound Tour Operators: Leading incoming travel companies that create package tours and perform tour services, handling market groups of native English-speaking tourists. They sell their package tours both through travel agents and directly to clients.

Language Learning Strategies: In this study, language learning strategies refer to procedures or techniques used by Thai tour guides to develop their English oral communication competence. These strategies consist of three main categories: cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective.

Cognitive Strategies: Strategies that operate directly on incoming information and are applied to a particular learning task. Typical strategies that come into the cognitive category are:

- **Rehearsal:** Imitating a language model by overt practice and silent practicing.

- **Organization:** Classifying words or concepts according to their attributes.

- **Inferencing:** Using context clues to guess meanings of unfamiliar or unknown words.

- **Summarizing:** Making a mental or oral summary of information gained through listening.

- **Deduction:** Applying rules to producing or analyzing the foreign language.

- **Imagery:** Relating new information to visual concepts in memory via familiarization.

- **Transfer:** Using previous linguistic knowledge or prior skills to enhance comprehension or production.

- **Elaboration:** Using prior knowledge to assimilate new information or ideas.

Metacognitive Strategies: Strategies that provide learners with an overall guide to their learning process. They involve an awareness of one's own mental processes and ability to reflect on how one learns. Typical strategies that come into the metacognitive category are:

- **Selective Attention:** Deciding in advance to focus on the important details, identify keywords, or observe relevant items, especially in the listening context.

- **Planning:** Developing an appropriate action plan to overcome difficulties that may interfere with successful completion of tasks.

- **Self-Monitoring:** Checking one's understanding while listening and identifying errors in speech production.

- **Self-Evaluation:** Judging how well one has learned, or checking both the results and the performance of one's own language learning.

Social/Affective Strategies: Strategies used when interacting with others or working independently in order to assist learning. Typical strategies that come into the social/affective category are:

- **Questioning for Clarification:** Eliciting additional explanation, rephrasing, examples, or verification from teachers or peers.

- **Cooperation:** Working together with peers to solve the problem, check a learning task, build confidence, or get feedback on oral performance.

- **Self-talk:** Reducing anxiety by using mental techniques that make one feel competent to accomplish learning tasks.

Native English-speaking Tourists: Visitors travelling to Thailand from five native English-speaking countries, which are America, Australia, Canada, England, and New Zealand.

Oral Communication: An interactive process in which an individual alternately takes the roles of speaker and listener.

Tourism Industry: Business of providing accommodation and services for tourists.

Thai Tour Guides: Those working for inbound tour operators in Bangkok and holding licenses issued by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). They take native English-speaking tourists on sightseeing, excursions or trips and use English as a means of communication when interacting with these tourists.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review of this study concentrates on the following areas: (2.1) prominence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), (2.2) EFL learners and oral communication competence, (2.3) language learning strategies, (2.4) factors influencing the use of language learning strategies, and (2.5) language learning strategies for developing English oral communication.

2.1 Prominence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

Many countries all over the world, including Thailand, are extremely interested in tourism development to serve foreign touring demands. Tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries, since it is a major foreign-exchange earner and job provider worldwide. Tourism also constitutes an opportunity for various investments in the economy, allowing monetary circulation, income distribution, thus bringing development to these countries. It is an unlimited source of income, which brings in major foreign currency and improves the nation's economy. Tourism is global; it is big

business and will continue to grow. Kongpolphrom (2001: 10) identified the positive

impacts of tourism on the quality of life of a nation, a province or a state or a

community as follows:

- Provides employment opportunities, both skilled and unskilled, because it is a labor-intensive industry
- Generates a supply of needed foreign exchange
- Increases incomes
- Creates increased gross national product
- Helps to diversify the economy
- Increases governmental revenues
- Improves the quality of life i.e. leads to a higher level of income and improves standards of living
- Reinforces preservation of heritage and tradition
- Creates a favorable worldwide image for a destination
- Promotes a global community
- Promotes international understanding and peace.

Because it has derived enormous benefit from this sector, Thailand has earned

a very high amount of foreign exchange and provided myriad employment opportunities

due to the great number of foreign visitors. According to the Tourism Authority of

Thailand's (TAT) monthly statistical report, in 1999 and 2000 the number of

international tourist arrivals to Thailand topped 8.65 million and 9.57 million

respectively, at the average growth rate of 10.72 %. Revenues from this industry are

thus a major factor in stimulating the economic recovery as well as reducing the severe

financial and economic crisis of Thailand. As pointed out by Chaisawat (2000), during

the economic crisis of the country, the Thai tourism industry earned foreign exchange

and maintained or increased jobs in the industry to absorb unemployed labor from other

sectors.

However, the tremendous expansion of the Thai tourism industry creates a

demand for an international language, which is a contributing factor in accessing global

communication. Indeed, English is without question the major international language in

the world. It is claimed to be the most widely used language in tourism as in other

business organizations, since it is the key to foreign currency and shared

understanding. Moreover, English is frequently used in international trade, diplomacy

and tourism; it is studied by more people than any other language. "Although other

languages are also taught for occupational reasons, English is still very much the lingua

franca of business and science." (Fischel, cited in Freudenstein, 1981: 177)

Collins (2000) also supported the idea that everybody expected that people

working in the field of tourism needed to speak several languages. This was true, but

there was work for people who spoke only English. Further, it was estimated that 80

percent of the world's tourism was handled in English. Thus, it is widely accepted that knowledge of the English language is of utmost importance for anyone entering the professional field of tourism.

As a result, English has become a key to getting ahead in business communication worldwide; knowing how to communicate in English is quickly becoming a necessity in the Thai tourism industry at the level of international relations. The Thai tourism sector needs employees who have abilities in English language use for communicating with foreign tourists as the tourism industry has continuously expanded. This can be seen in the research proposed to TAT by the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA), the Faculty of Applied Statistics (1993), about the present state and shortage of manpower in the Thai tourism industry; it referred to the need for employees who had an aptitude for foreign languages. It was found that all business practitioners in the tourism field, such as the travel agencies, resorts and hotels, restaurants, and transport operators, increasingly needed employees who had English language expertise.

Consequently, the Thai government has been quick to recognize the significance of tourism and subsequently drew up the Eighth Development Plan. This

plan particularly emphasizes developing human resources who have knowledge of

foreign languages, notably English. Chaisawat (2000: 5) referred to the Thai tourism

promotion and development policy 1997- 2001 as follows:

> The Eighth Tourism Development Plan (TDP) 1997-2001
> has set targets to promote tourism development in terms of
> quality and sustainable development. The main goal will
> focus on developing Human Resources throughout all levels
> of the industry. To balance economic, social, political and
> environmental development, planning will be developed for
> the management of tourism resources.

In order to develop the country and help recovery from its economic crisis, the

tourism sector is increasingly promoted. This industry has been supported by TAT by

some campaigns to attract tourists from other countries. The "Amazing Thailand 1998-

1999" campaign was undertaken by TAT to support the efforts of the government to

earn more foreign exchange and to achieve the targets of the national tourism plan.

Although the two-year Amazing Thailand campaign has ended, the number of

visitors has considerably increased. The Tourism Authority of Thailand officially

underwrites tourism promotion and development policies regarding human resources

and education in order to serve the needs of tourists, retain their interest in traveling to

Thailand, earn foreign exchange, and provide jobs. In addition, Chaisawat (2000:6)

stated that:

> In response to the changing situations, TAT has set tourism promotion and development policies beyond years 2001-2003. Two of the eleven policies related directly to human resources development. The first, related to the general public, is to encourage the development of national human resource to become proper tourists to help preserve and maintain tourism resources and the environment, as well as to be hospitable and cordial to tourists from elsewhere. The second, related to education, is to promote the production of personnel in the tourism industry in sufficient numbers to meet market demand and of international quality standard to cater to the opening of free trade in services, as well as to support the employment of more Thai manpower in the industry.

Specifically, in the beginning of 2002, the "Be My Guest in Thailand" grand

festival project has been initiated to persuade foreigners to visit Thailand. In accordance

with one main objective of the Eighth Development Plan, human resources have been

increased in terms of education, both quality and quantity. Thus, English for tourism is

definitely one of many professional areas that go to make up the world of English for

Specific Purposes (ESP).

In order to meet both the needs of the Tourism Authority of Thailand as well as

those of the many tourists who visit Thailand, ESP and general English were decreed

to be a compulsory core subject for tourism students at the diploma level in Thailand by

the Education Ministry (Kreutanu, 1998). Students of tourism require English for

Specific Purposes not only for their formal education, but also for their future

occupation, to have a proper command of everyday English and the more specific or

special English used in their daily work.

Likewise, the British Council English Teaching Information Center (1976)

discussed the English language teaching situation in Nepal. Among the educated

Nepalese, English has for a number of years been almost a second language. Its chief

uses are as a medium of instruction in certain subjects at degree level, as the principal

language for the growing tourist industry, and as a medium of communication between

Nepalese and all foreign agencies. English is compulsory through primary, secondary,

and tertiary (certificate and diploma) level.

As people in various occupations use English in different contexts and situations

and for different purposes, the language that they actually produce changes when these

elements change so that language use is adjusted to be appropriate for the conditions

of their careers. Carver (1983: 133) pointed that "the people faced with needs for

English in their careers have very specific purposes in learning the language and ESP

can follow the existing and emerging goals of their profession.

Similarly, Hutchison and Waters (1987: 8) defined the guiding principle of

English for Specific Purposes as "English that is specially needed by a particular group

of learners for their specialist area of work or study." Cheung and Hwong (1988) also

stated that ESP emerged in an EFL situation in response to the demands for specific

language skills for the specialist. It implied a clearly utilitarian purpose, with the

language serving mainly as a means to successful job performance.

In particular, tour guides are the kernel of the tourism sector because they

have a vital role in representing the country and they are the cultural ambassadors who

epitomize Thai people. They also foster good international relations. Therefore, English

for Specific Purposes is especially relevant for tour guides as much as for people who

work in other fields.

Zaliha (1991) stressed that English was the main language used for special

purposes such as communication in tourism, trade and industry and most important of

all in the academic setting, where it was needed for reference purposes. Students,

especially at the tertiary level, therefore, had to make extensive use of English for these purposes.

Furthermore, a survey on the teaching of English for Special Purposes at universities in the Bangkok metropolitan area in Thailand was reported by Sinhaneti (1994). ESP was of concern in higher education due to increased English use in business in Thailand. The survey covered five public and nine private institutions. It was found that all universities offered compulsory general English skills courses, most often integrating the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Both public and private universities offered a variety of business English courses, including courses devoted to business communication, technical vocabulary, and translation. A specialized English course was most offered in travel/tourism. The author presented data on four types of English courses offered (general, specific topics, general business English and English for occupational purposes) at each university, including information on the frequency of the offer and in some cases, the skills emphasized. It was noted that private English language institutes had also emerged to fill the need for occupation-related English training.

Moreover, Kaewsanchai's study (1988) proposed a program for teaching

English as a foreign language in Thailand. The proposed program emphasized

business English. The target audience for the proposed program consisted of (1) high

school graduates who wished to study English as their major for business and (2) part-

time students who needed to learn English to better perform at their jobs or in their

businesses. Among those who would benefit from improved English proficiency were

bankers, businessmen, tourist agents, hotels and restaurants. The study examined the

nature of the increasing need for business English in Thailand. The result of the

analysis indicated that the current EFL curriculum did not fully meet the educational and

professional needs of today's situation. Thus, suggestions for new courses such as

English for Tourism, English for the Hotel Business, and English for the Restaurant

Business were offered. The proposed courses may be adapted by instructors in order

to better serve the learners' needs.

Outside Thailand, Bergeman (1984) mentioned in his study that individual

language specialists, qualified English teachers and fluent speakers of English for a

variety of purposes such as tourism, trade, and diplomacy were being imported to help

meet Chinese students' increasing demands.

Eileen and Ayse (1991) discussed the development and use of an ESP textbook for Turkish police dealing with tourists to improve the job-specific communicative competence of police officers with a lower-intermediate level of English language proficiency. It used tourist police contexts in Turkey for practice in building performance-based skills. The article described the principles used in creating syllabus specifications, discussed the language learning theory underlying the textbook's design, outlined the pedagogical considerations in the preparation of the activities in the textbook, and described the book's contents. Syllabus specifications included identification of the situations in which the learners would need English, division of the situations into communicative functions or micro-skills needed for the target situation, and determination of linguistic structures and lexical items needed for the target situation. The cognitive and affective principles used in the textbook design and in designing learning activities were derived from previous work on the teaching of ESP.

Hence, these aforementioned principles of ESP have a substantial, direct application to Thai EFL learners who work in all business organizations, especially, Thai tour guides in the tourism industry.

2.2 EFL Learners and Oral Communication Competence

In fact, Thai tour guides must have foreign language abilities, in that their job description invariably implies contact with foreign tourists or travelers. In essence, the English language is mainly used by tour guides in communicating with foreign tourists, being an official, international language. Phumpanitch's study (1992) revealed that the English language was used by tour guides more than any other language.

The Tourism Services Development Department, the Technical Services and Training Division of TAT, disclosed (2002) that 581 candidates had attended a standardized examination in foreign languages (English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, German, and French) for Thai tour guides in 1/2002. 418 of the total number of candidates took the English language examination; as a result, it can be seen that English is the preferred foreign language of Thai tour guides in their occupation. The examination paper divided the foreign language skills into three groups and each group reflected foreign language use according to the guides' job description. Such aforementioned groups of foreign language skills in the examination comprised speaking and listening skills (70%), reading skills (20%), and writing skills (10%). The

examination paper was also separated into two sections: Section 1: Oral Communication Test, and Section 2: Paper Pencil Test. Both of these two sections strongly emphasized oral communication competence, speaking and listening skills.

To deal with native English-speaking visitors and present a good image of Thailand, spoken English is a fundamental requirement of a tour guide's profession, since it represents an international communication link between Thai tour guides and foreign tourists. One objective is to disseminate the wonders of Thai culture and tradition to a cosmopolitan public. This is largely possible due to the many places of interests and attractions, which make up Thailand's national heritage in the areas of history, literature, archeology as well as culture and art. Many of Thailand's historical places have been registered as world heritage sites by the United Nations.

English speaking and listening skills are mandatory for day-to-day communication in travel guides' working life. Phumpanitch (1992) also claimed that the tour guide was the first friend of foreign visitors while they were in Thailand because tour guides had the closest links with foreign tourists. Tour guides are responsible for being very hospitable, giving information about Thailand, solving problems, and making

foreign travelers comfortable. Thus English oral communication, both speaking and listening capabilities, is essential for basic communication in their real work situation.

With the expeditious growth rate of travel and tourism, foreign travelers are increasing in number and tour guides urgently need English oral proficiency to interact with them. Although reading and writing are significant for tour guides for enhancing their knowledge and contacting foreigners via the written form, developing English oral communication is more important than reading and writing. Nanakorn (1989: 4) depicted "spoken language as a basic form of communication, which provides direct access to other minds." It arose long before written language, as we can see, whereas writing was the formal manifestation of speech. When talking, people usually use a style which is more direct and easier to understand than the style in which they write.

This is also supported by Poza (2001: Paragraph 5) as follows:

> Language does not exist solely as a written medium. However, the spoken language is far more closely associated with "a basic understanding of daily living, manner, customs, and views." It often communicates feelings and attitudes more effectively than writing. It is reasonable to say that there is much more to be gained on the communicative level than from the written language alone.

Additionally, Maes, Weldy, and Icenogle's studies (1997) reported that the top three competencies required by college graduates entering the workforce were oral communication, problem solving, and self-motivation. The oral skills most important for entry level graduates were following instructions, listening, conversing, and giving feedback.

DiSalvo (1980) also summarized 25 studies identifying the kinds of oral communication skills necessary for success in the business world. The results of these studies revealed that oral reporting and informal interviewing were identified as the most frequently used communication skills in addition to listening, interpersonal and problem solving skills.

Likewise, Koika and Tanaka (1995) reported that a 1990 survey of college graduates disclosed that more than half of the respondents felt they would need English in their business careers, and more than three quarters felt oral communication should be emphasized at the high school level.

While effective English oral communication influences tourism and other business fields, the lack of fluency and accuracy can affect an individual's ability to secure employment or advancement in the workplace. As we approach the next

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millennium, we must enhance oral communication skills to deal with the changing

needs of the workplace (Folinbee, 1995).

Being non-native speakers of English or EFL learners, Thai people are required

to develop effective oral communication so that they are able to use the language

appropriately in social interactions. This notion is strongly supported by Shumin's study

(1997) disclosing that speaking a language was especially difficult for foreign language

learners because this skill required more than knowing the grammatical and semantic

rules of the language. Learners must also acquire the knowledge of how native-

speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange, with

which many factors interact. Age, aural medium, as well as socio-cultural and affective

factors, were considered important.

This is discussed by Brown and Yule, cited in Nunan (1991: 24):

> There are four clusters of factors, which can affect
> difficulty of oral language tasks. These relate to the speaker
> (how many there are, how quickly they speak, what types of
> accent they have); the listener (the role of the listener-
> whether a participant or eavesdropper- the level of response
> required, the individual interest in the subject); the content
> (grammar, vocabulary, information structure, background
> knowledge assumed); support (whether there are pictures,
> diagrams or other visual aids to support the text).

In addition, most of the instructors in Thailand are EFL and ESL users; the students also tend to use their native tongue inside and outside the classroom. Rivers (1968) showed that the surroundings strongly influence EFL learners' listening and speaking habits. Specifically, they practiced speaking and listening English only in the classroom. She also added that the constant listening to and speaking of English throughout the day were missing in the environment where opportunities for foreign language practice outside the classroom were limited.

Moreover, Porto (1997: paragraph 2) stated that:

> Developing oral skills is a real challenge for many EFL school teachers, since students do not live in an English speaking environment and most of them attended schools where English is taught as a curricular subject. It has traditionally been very difficult to achieve good standards of oral production because the input students receive is insufficient. There are too few classroom hours, and most teachers, although proficient in the target language, are not native speakers of English. In addition, it is difficult to find realistic situations, which motivated the students to communicate in the foreign language.

Though EFL learners complete a sequence of study of grammar and have a good ability at writing, speaking English is always a problem that non-native speaking

students encounter in their social environment because of the lack of practice. Brown

(1973) indicated that:

> Most adult second language learners are familiar with
> the knowledge of pronunciation, words, phrases, sentences,
> and grammar perfectly for classroom use, but they can not
> utilize what they had learned in the classroom to real life.
> Moreover, they do not aware that word stress, reduction,
> linking, rhythm, intonation are important speaking English
> components; vital factors causing these learners not to be
> able to perform well at English speaking and listening.
> Lacking an English-speaking environment and English-
> speaking patterns are reasons that account for language
> usage barriers. Therefore, many students come to an
> English speaking country to immerse themselves in an
> English-speaking environment.

Furthermore, Rivers (1968) claimed that the texts from which EFL learners

learned failed to emphasize the characteristic features of everyday spoken language;

cultural inhibitions also affected their speaking ability.

Additionally, Ferris and Tagg's study (1996) investigated college/university

professors' views on ESL students' difficulties with listening/speaking tasks. They found

that ESL students had great difficulty with class participation. They needed to overcome

cultural inhibitions (e.g. shyness) about speaking up in class, to learn to ask and

answer questions effectively, and to communicate more with native speakers of

English and less with speaker of their own language. They also suggested strongly that

ESL instructors strove for authenticity in their EAP (English for Academic Purpose)

activities, specifically, that they gave students opportunities to practise listening to real

lectures by a variety of speakers, interact with native speakers and cope with genre-

specific vocabulary, reading materials, and writing tasks.

No one can speak without hearing as speaking and listening go together. These

components of oral communication are absolutely related to each other. As defined by

Mead and Rubin (1985: paragraph 3), "oral communication is an interactive process in

which an individual alternately takes the roles of speaker and listener, and which

include both verbal and nonverbal components." Similarly, Emmert (1994) claimed that

listening was more than just hearing words. It was an active process by which learners

receive, construct meaning from, and respond to spoken and/or nonverbal messages.

Furthermore, the results of a study by Li (1996) disclosed that the oral

proficiency of Hong Kong students was low. There were also inadequacies in the

teaching of oral English for their future career and social life. Moreover, as oral

communication was a two–way process involving both the speaker and the listener

understanding and responding to each other as required, it was important that oral

English be taught in interactive contexts.

Further, the notion of oral communication as an interactive process was also

confirmed by Brown (1994) and Burns and Joyce (1997), who regarded speaking as an

interactive process of constructing meaning that involved producing, receiving and

processing information. They pointed out that its form and meaning were dependent on

the context in which it occurred, includin the participants themselves, their collective

experiences, the physical environment, and the purpose of speaking. Speakers needed

to be able to anticipate and produce the expected patterns or functions of specific

discourse situations. To develop speaking skills, EFL speakers must regularly practice

as "practice makes perfect" (Porto, 1997: 51).

Pinkert and Therkelsen (1997) pointed out that communication theories lay at

the heart of the approach to tourism. Tourism and intercultural communication were

closely related areas. Consequently, tour guides require the ability to use English

fluently and accurately. Effective English oral communication is very important in the

tour guide's occupation for communicating with foreign tourists confidently and

successfully. The use of language learning strategies will provide for better developing

English oral communication, so as to credit not only their profession, but also their organization's and country's images.

2.3 Language Learning Strategies

Because of language learning strategies, learners can approach and apply a wide variety of language learning tasks easily. A language learning strategy can be called a method or technique that facilitates language learning, aids problem solving, or accomplishes any task undertaken by learners. Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, and Robbins (1999: 2) stated that "language learning strategies are procedures or techniques that learners can use to facilitate a language learning task." Similarly, Richards and Platt (1992: 209) said that "language learning strategies are intentional behavior and thoughts used by learners while learning language so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information."

Therefore, learners can employ language learning strategies to apply to their tasks in both classroom and future workplace; they can carry them out easily and completely, since they rely on various methods. Schumaker and Deshler (1984) claimed that a language learning strategy was an individual's way of organizing and using a

particular set of skills in order to learn content or accomplish language tasks more effectively and efficiently in school as well as in a nonacademic setting.

In addition, Lessard-Clouston (1997) believed that language learning strategies were involved in all language learning, regardless of the content and context. He also concluded that learning strategies were thus used both in classroom settings and more informal learning environments. Obviously, language learning strategies refer to methods that students use to learn in their language learning process for better understanding in gaining new knowledge. Farch and Kasper (1983: 67) stressed that "a learning strategy is an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language."

Wenden (1987: 3) acknowledged that:

> Language learning strategies exist and influence second
> or foreign language acquisition. Since such learning
> strategies can assist students of English to become better
> learners, their use of strategies has a great impact on the
> successful learning of English.

Hismanoglu (2000) also added that language learning strategies were important because they can help EFL learners become better learners. Consequently, language

learning strategies are employed by EFL and ESL learners to enhance their acquisition

of the English language.

Likewise, Oxford (1990a) described foreign or second language learning

strategies as specific behaviors, steps, or techniques students used to improve their

progress in comprehending and using the foreign or second language. This is similar to

Rubin's notion (1987: 22), that "language learning strategies are strategies which

contribute to the development of the language system, which learners construct, and

which affect learning directly."

Hismanoglu (2000: paragraph 3) reported that "all language learners employ

language learning strategies either consciously or unconsciously when processing new

information and performing language tasks." Language learners were likely to face new

input and difficult tasks in using a second or foreign language, so they attempted to find

the quickest or easiest way to do what was required. In other words, using language

learning strategies is inevitable for language learners in a problem-solving environment.

Language learning strategies are certainly crucial for second or foreign

language learners. Similarly, Chamot and O' Mally (1987: 1) noted that:

Language learning strategies enable students to take command of their learning and to apply procedures that assisted them in retaining and using important language skills. Productive use of learning strategies, though, is an acquired skill.

Oxford (1990b: 8) emphasized that:

Language learning strategies stimulate the growth of communicative competence, as all appropriate language learning strategies are oriented toward the broad goal of communicative competence. Development of communicative competence needs realistic interaction among learners who participate actively and specific ways to encourage the development of communicative competence.

Basically, language learning strategies have been classified into three main subcategories by O' Malley et al. (1985: 582-584) as in the following list:

Cognitive Strategies operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning.

- *Rehearsal:* Repeating the names of items or objects to be remembered.
- *Organization:* Grouping and classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their semantic or syntactic attributes.
- *Inferencing:* Using information in oral text to guess meanings of new linguistic items, predict outcomes, or complete missing parts.
- *Summarizing:* Intermittently synthesizing what one has heard to ensure the information has been retained.

- *Deduction:* Applying rules to the understanding of language.
- *Imagery:* Using visual images (either generated or actual) to understand and remember new verbal information.
- *Transfer:* Using known linguistic information to facilitate a new learning task.
- *Elaboration:* Linking ideas contained in new information, or integrating new ideas with known information.

Metacognitive Strategies are higher order executive skills applicable to a variety of learning tasks. They are related to cognitive strategies in so far as individuals have some awareness of their thinking and learning processes.

- *Selective attention:* Focusing on special aspects of learning tasks, as in planning to listen for key words or phrases.
- *Planning:* Planning the organization of either written or spoken discourse.
- *Monitoring:* Reviewing attention to a task, monitoring comprehension of information that should be remembered, or monitoring production while it is occurring.
- *Evaluating:* Checking comprehension after completion of a receptive language activity, or evaluating language production after it has taken place.

Social/Affective Strategies represent a broad grouping that involves either interaction with another person or ideational control over affect.

- *Cooperation:* Working with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check notes, or get feedback on a learning activity.

- *Questioning for clarification:* Eliciting from a teacher or peer additional explanation, rephrasing, or examples.
- *Self-talk:* Using mental redirection of thinking to assure oneself that a learning activity will be successful or to reduce anxiety about a task.

Oxford et al. (1987), Hashim and Sahil (1994), and Merrifield (1996) observed that second and foreign language learners particularly used overall language learning strategies at the "Sometimes" level more than the "Always" or "Never" levels.

Griffith and Parr (2001) focused on the theory of language learning strategies (LLS) used by speakers of other languages (SOL) that had developed alongside other theories of language teaching and learning. This study aimed at discovering the kinds of LLS such speakers use. A survey questionnaire was constructed to collect the data. The findings illustrated that most frequently used were social strategies, followed by metacognitive strategies. Students ranked compensation and cognitive strategies in the middle-frequency range, while affective strategies came only one rank higher than memory strategies.

Sarawit (1987) investigated language learning strategies used by fourth year students majoring in English at Srinakharinwirote University (Phitsanulok). The

instrument was a learning behavior questionnaire. It was found that students only used three learning strategies: 1) Looking up words in the dictionary; 2) Listening carefully to their own pronunciation and trying to correct it; and 3) Asking the speaker to repeat if they did not understand.

2.4 Factors Influencing the Use of Language Learning Strategies

Oxford et al. (1988) suggested that second language learnin strategies were used by students to improve their progress in comprehending and using the second language. In addition, factors that influenced the choice of second language learning strategies, for example, motivation, gender, and learning style, were listed. Moreover, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) believed that motivation, gender, year of study, and other variables had a powerful effect on the choice of language learning strategies.

Ehrman and Oxford (1989) investigated learning strategies in relation to sex differences, career choice, cognitive style, and aspects of personality. Seventy-eight subjects took part in this study including thirty FSI students (Foreign Service Institute Offices, military officers, and their spouses), twenty-six FSI language instructors, and twenty-two professional language trainers with graduate degrees in linguistics or

equivalent experience. The instruments used were the MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) and the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning). The results indicated that females used more strategies than males. Professional language trainers used a wider variety of strategies than others in the sample. They definitely reported more frequent use of four learning strategies: authentic language use, searching for communicative meaning, formal model building, and affective strategies. Teachers reported greater use than did students for only one strategy: authentic language use. Furthermore, they showed no advantage for any strategy over professional language trainers. Relative to professional language trainers or teachers, students reported less use of all types of strategies.

Similarly, Kaylani's study (1996) investigated the influence of gender and motivation on the language learning strategies used by successful and unsuccessful English language learners in Jordan. The survey method was used in the form of questionnaires and interviews to collect data on a sample of 255 twelfth grade high school students in Amman. Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language learning and Gardner's attitude and motivation inventory were the primary instruments. Regarding the gender effect, the study showed that female students in the sample used

compensation, cognitive, affective and memory strategies to a significantly higher degree than male students. As for the influence of motivation, the results revealed that males were integratively motivated while females were instrumentally motivated.

Another study of Chinese ESL students' language learning strategy use influenced by their proficiency level and gender was conducted by Goh and Foong (1997). They surveyed the frequency of strategy use to determine how it was influenced by the learners' proficiency level and gender. The SILL questionnaire (Strategies Inventory of Language Learning) by Oxford (1990) was administered. It consisted of six categories: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social. Results from the survey indicated that metacognitive strategies were most frequently used, while memory strategies were least significantly used. Gender also played a role in influencing the kinds of strategy used; female students were found to use compensation and affective strategies significantly more often than male students.

Mochizuki (1999) examined the language learning strategies used by Japanese university students. The study attempted to investigate the kinds of strategies Japanese students used, the factors affecting the learner's choice of strategies, and the reliability of the learner's self-evaluation of English proficiency. The sample of this study was 44

second-year students and 113 first-year students. They were divided into three levels of

proficiency: the upper level, the intermediate level, and the lower level in accordance

with the score on the STEP Second Grade Test. All students did the SILL (Strategy

Inventory for Language Learning) and the questionnaire asking about the students'

motivation and self-evaluation. The findings revealed that Japanese university students

use compensation strategies the most frequently and affective strategies the least

frequently. Memory strategies are not used as frequently as was expected. The more

proficient level used cognitive and metacognitive strategies more frequently than the

less proficient students. The factors that affected the choice of strategies were

motivation, enjoyment of English learning, and gender. Self-evaluation of English

proficiency seemed unreliable in any proficiency level group.

Stevens (1982) further pointed out that many factors affected the choice of

language learning strategies such as degree of awareness, stage of learning, task

requirements, age, sex, nationality/ethnicity, general learning style, personality traits,

motivation level, and purpose for learning the language.

Conversely, Phillips (1990) explored the learning strategies of adult Asian

students and identified other variables, which were associated with learners' strategy

choice and frequency of use. The subjects were 141 Asian ESL students studying at

the university level. Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning and the TOEFL

test were used as instruments to explore learning strategies and determine the

subjects' proficiency level. The findings of this study indicated a relatively high use of

most of the strategies, particularly the metacognitive and social strategies. Students

with a mid range TOEFL score showed that they used learning strategies more than

the students with a higher or lower-range group.

Hashim and Sahil's study (1994) also examined learners' language learning

strategies. Their study aimed at investigating the kinds of language learning strategies

used by students at the tertiary level. The instrument for data collection was adapted

from the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning). The findings showed that

students sometimes used all the strategies listed in the SILL. It was also noted that

metacognitive strategies were used the most, cognitive strategies were used the least.

In addition, studies described in Politzer (1983) and Oxford (1990a) found

significant differences in language learning strategies use for age. Goh (1998) and

Macleod (2002) claimed that prior knowledge, or past language learning experience,

played a crucial role in the use of language learning strategies. Hong (1999) stated

that experience influences the use of learners' language learning strategies.

2.5 Language Learning Strategies for Developing English Oral Communication Competence

Previous studies of the second or foreign language learning strategies used in

developing oral communication are as follows:

Huang and Naerssen (1987) investigated the learning strategies in oral

communication used by Chinese EFL learners. The subjects, 60 of the approximately

120 graduating students of the English Department of the Guangzhou Foreign

Language Institute, were randomly selected. All 60 were given a questionnaire on

learner strategies, which consisted of three parts: Part 1, open-ended questions, and

close-ended questions in Part 2 as well as Part 3, and an oral communication test.

Based on the results of the oral test, the highest 10 (Group 1) and the lowest 10

(Group 3) were chosen for in-depth interviews to obtain more details about their

language learning strategies (Group 2). The results showed that students who were

more successful in oral communication employed functional practice more frequently

that the less successful ones. Differences between Group 1 and Group 3 were highly

significant for all groups of techniques except attending lectures and watching TV and

films. Significant differences were also found between Group 2 and Group 3 for

speaking with other students, teachers or native speakers and thinking in English. No

statistically significant difference was found for formal practice. Memorization technique

related to formal practice was common to all three groups. Reading and speaking were

significant groupings of techniques. Group 1 and Group 2 were significantly different

from Group 3 in practicing in speaking and reading, both at the .01 level. Moreover, the

results showed reading practice stood out as the strongest and most significant

predictor of oral proficiency. Some related results from other parts of the study

came out in the in-depth interview in which some students in Group 1 commented that

one of the basic techniques for improving their oral abilities was to talk a lot and not to

be afraid of losing face when making mistakes.

Djiwandono's study (1998) was aimed at describing the profile of learning

strategies of Indonesian learners when they were learning English for oral

communication skills in an ESP-based context. The study was carried out in a

sample of 65 students who were taking a 48-hour conversation class at Widya Karya

University. A simple random sampling was done to select 50 learners out of the entire population. The data collection was carried out via learning strategy questionnaires.

The strategy data from the instruments were coded by two analysts on the basis of an agreed guideline. The procedure yielded 32 kinds of strategies, most of which were of the cognitive type. The findings clearly illustrated that the use of cognitive strategies was predominant over metacognitive and social/affective strategies.

Huda (1997) also examined learning strategies used by ESL learners in developing speaking proficiency. The purpose was to examine the differences and similarities in strategies reported by good learners and fair learners, and by reflective and impulsive learners. The subjects were 30 college students majoring in TEFL at the Institute of Teacher Training Education and Education at Malang, Indonesia. A questionnaire was used to identify the learning strategies and learning styles of the subjects. The questionnaire consisted of 17 opened-ended questions asking about learning strategies used by the subjects in performing tasks related to speaking courses, the difficulties found in performing the tasks, and strategies used to overcome the learning difficulties. The findings of the study indicated that fair learners used a wider variety of learning strategies than did good learners and a significant number of

strategies were shared by good and fair learners. However, only good learners reported

use of the regularity strategy; the memory strategy was used by fair learners more than

by good learners.

Furthermore, Wongphothisarn's study (2001) investigated learning strategies

employed by successful and unsuccessful fourth-year students in developing their

speaking skills and made a comparison between those identified learning strategies.

Structured interviews were used to gather the data. The findings of this study pointed

to the case of personal strategies and other strategies used in the four stages of

preparation, rehearsal, delivery and self-monitoring. The results showed that both

groups used similar personal strategies by practicing listening and speaking more, while

reading was practiced less. As for the strategies used in the four stages of performing a

speaking task, the difference was in terms of writing outlines and drafts. The

successful students wrote their outlines and drafts only in English, whereas the

unsuccessful students wrote theirs both in English and Thai. The difference in the

rehearsal stage was that only the successful students used more effective self-

rehearsed strategies by thinking about questions and answers in advance,

practicing their performance in front of a mirror, and timing their performance. In the

delivery stage, the results revealed that the successful students reminded themselves

about gestures, tone of voice, and speed more than the unsuccessful students.

However, there was no difference in the strategies used by both groups in the stage of

self-monitoring. Both groups reported having little opportunity to practice English as

their major obstacle and handle this obstacle by finding every opportunity to practice

English in order to develop their speaking skills.

The study by O'Mally, Chamot, and Kupper (1989) emphasized the mental

processes second language learners use in listening comprehension, the strategies

they use in different phases of comprehension, and the differences in strategy use

between students designated by their teachers as effective and ineffective listeners.

The students in this were all from a Hispanic background, intermediate in English

proficiency, and were enrolled in ESL classes at the secondary level. Data were

collected using think-aloud procedures in which students were interrupted during a

listening comprehension activity and asked to indicate what they were thinking. Findings

indicated that the mental processes students used in listening comprehension paralleled

three theoretically derived phrases of the comprehension process: perceptual

processing, parsing, and utilization. Each phase was characterized by active processing

and by the use of learning strategies. Three predominant strategies, which differentiated

effective from ineffective listeners, were self-monitoring, elaboration, and inferencing.

Moreover, Goh (1998) investigated second language listeners' comprehension

strategies and metacognitive knowledge about learning to listen, and compared the

same in learners with different listening abilities. Data was obtained from 40 ESL

students through three introspective methods: immediate verbalizations, listening diaries

and small group interviews. In examining strategic processing, a strategy-tactic

framework that accounted for the broad strategic approach as well as individual

techniques or tactics was applied, which consisted of nine cognitive and six

metacognitive strategies, and forty-four comprehension tactics. High-ability listeners

used eleven strategies and they were often varied tactics within the same strategic

approach according to comprehensive goals. Low ability listeners, on the other hand,

applied seven strategies and fewer tactics, and they were often hampered by linguistic

constraints. The six most frequently used strategies were inferencing, fixation,

contextualisation, comprehension monitoring, directed attention and selective attention,

accounting for 70% of all cases of strategy application. Apart from producing a

taxonomy of listening strategies and tactics, the study also documented ways in which

individual tactics combined as text-processing strategies to achieve comprehension in real time. The findings on strategic processing showed that prior knowledge played a crucial role in learner comprehension. High ability learners revealed almost twice as much metacognitive knowledge as low ability learners. However, all 40 students showed rich metacognitive knowledge in the listening self, real-time problems, the nature of second language listening, factors affecting comprehension, methods for developing listening and useful comprehension tactics.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used in this study. It is composed of

the following sections: population, sample and sampling techniques, instrument, pilot

study, data collection and data analysis.

3.1 Population

The population of this study was Thai tour guides from seven inbound tour

operators. These inbound tour operators focus on native English-speaking tourists from

America, Australia, Canada, England, and New Zealand as their main clients. They are

registered with the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and are members of

the Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA). Since this study focused only on Thai

tour guides working for licensed inbound tour operators located in Bangkok, those

working outside Bangkok were ignored.

A name list of these inbound tour operators was obtained from the Thai Travel

Agents Directory 2001, consisting of Asia World Enterprise Co., Ltd., Destination Asia

(Thailand) Ltd., Diethelm Travel (Thailand), Marwin Tours (Thailand) Co., Ltd., Pacific

World (Thailand), Tour East (Thailand) Co., Ltd., and Turismo Thai Co., Ltd.

For each inbound tour operator, the personnel manager was contacted by the

researcher to ask about the actual number of Thai tour guides using only English to

contact native English-speaking tourists on excursions. The population of this study

consisted of 32 Thai tour guides from Asia World Enterprise Co., Ltd., 37 from

Destination Asia (Thailand) Ltd., 40 from Diethelm Travel (Thailand), 31 from Marwin

Tours (Thailand) Co., Ltd., 32 from Pacific World (Thailand), 40 from Tour East

(Thailand) Co., Ltd., and 38 from Turismo Thai Co., Ltd. Thus, the total number of the

population is 250 (Thai tour guides from seven inbound tour operators).

3.2 Sample

Following the Table of Determining a Sample Size from a Given Population by

Yamane (1970), 154 Thai tour guides from seven inbound tour operators were

randomly selected from the population size of 250 (Yamane Size of samples at 95%

Confidence Level). Since the total number of Thai tour guides who use English in their

career was almost equal for all seven inbound tour operators, the researcher divided

the total of 154 by 7, with the result of 22. Then, the operation manager of each of the

seven inbound tour operator randomly selected 22 Thai tour guides as subjects of this

study, giving a total of 154.

3.3 Instrument

The instrument used in this study is an interview questionnaire divided into two

parts. Part 1 is about personal data and part 2 deals with learning strategies used by

Thai tour guides for developing their English oral communication competence. Interview

questionnaires were employed to secure the sample's full responses, and to assure the

sample's correct comprehension and interpretation of all questionnaire items.

In the first part, subjects were asked to answer four questions regarding

gender, age, educational background, and years of work experience. In the second

part, subjects were requested to respond to statements of the frequency of use of

learning strategies for developing their English oral communication competence by

choosing one of the following five degrees specified in the Likert-type scale:

Always	=	$\geq$ 7 times/week	or	76-100%
Very often	=	5 - 6 times/week	or	51-75%

Sometimes	=	3 - 4 times/week	or	26-50%
Rarely	=	1 - 2 times/week	or	1-25%
Never	=	0 time/week	or	0%

From the seventeen-item questionnaire, the first ten items relate to cognitive strategies, the second four items to metacognitive strategies, and the last three items to social/affective strategies.

O'Mally et al. (1985: 582) divided language learning strategies into three major categories, which are cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective strategies. The interview questionnaire was designed to cover these three learning strategies and consists of seventeen items, which were adapted from the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) and based on previous studies, i.e., Chamot and O'Malley, 1987; Huang and Naerssen, 1987; Robbins and Chamot, 1996; Griffiths and Parr, 2000. Regarding the questionnaire items, items 1-10 are concerned with cognitive strategies, items 11-14 with metacognitive strategies, and items 15-17 with social/affective strategies. (See Appendix B for more detail of the items)

Its content was validated by the following experts in the field of tourism:

1. Dr. Somboon Duangsamosorn, Assistant Dean, ABAC Graduate School of

   Tourism Management

2. Dr. Thomas Herdin, Managing Director and Partner, "For You!"

   Travel Co. Ltd., a travel agency with a European clientele, operating in

   Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos,

   Malaysia, Southern China, Nepal, India and Indonesia

3. Mr. Preecha Saengkhajai, Guest Lecturer, The Tourism Authority of

   Thailand (TAT) and Specialized Tour Guide, Diethelm Travel

4. Ajarn Richard R. Martin, English Lecturer, Faculty of Humanities,

   The University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce.

With regard to the reliability of the questionnaire, the reliability analysis

(Alpha) was used to measure it and a coefficient value of .7916 was obtained.

3.4 Pilot Study

The interview questionnaire was piloted to check its clarity and completeness

before the actual data collection was carried out. Three out of seven inbound tour

operators were randomly selected. From each tour operator, ten tour guides were

randomly selected by the operation manager. Therefore, thirty tour guides from three

inbound tour operators were interviewed by the researcher. The entire interview period

took about two weeks.

All the feedback obtained from this pilot study was used to revise content

validity of the questionnaire and to check that the items were well-constructed. In

addition, all the data gained were analyzed to measure the reliability of the

questionnaire.

3.5 Data Collection

The data collection of this study was divided into two main steps:

Step 1. Data Collection

1.	Two cover letters dated 9 April 2002 were issued. One, from the Dean

of the Faculties of Humanities, The University of the Thai Chamber of

Commerce, asked for permission from an operation manager of each

inbound tour operator to collect data. The other, from the researcher,

asked for cooperation from the subjects.

2. The two cover letters were delivered by hand to each operation manager by appointment. After the operation manager had read the letter, the purposes and the procedures of the data collection were explained.

3. From each inbound tour operator, twenty-two Thai tour guides were randomly selected by the operation manager to be the subjects of this study. Thus, the total subjects from seven inbound tour operators were 154.

4. The researcher called to make an appointment with each subject for an interview at his or her office.

5. At the beginning of the interview, each subject was informed of the objective of the interview. After that, he or she was told to look through all of the questionnaire items. During the interview, the researcher read the interview questions to each subject and he or she had to answer questions and give suggestions in English.

6. Then, on the questionnaire document itself, the researcher ticked and wrote down all answers given by each subject.

7. The whole data collection procedure took about three months.

Step 2. Data Grouping

The data obtained from 154 questionnaires were divided into two groups. Group one consisted of personal data and group two of the language learning strategies used by Thai tour guides and their suggestions about how to develop English oral communication competence. All the data were coded for further statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) package.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed to answer the two research questions. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were employed to analyze the data from both parts of the questionnaire. Additionally, inferential statistics, including a t-test and ANOVA (F-test), were used to test for significant differences between two means and among three or more means, respectively.

For research question 1 (To what degree do Thai tour guides use language learning strategies for developing their English oral communication competence?),

means and standard deviation were used to find out the frequency of language learning

strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English for oral communication

competence. The results were tabulated by ranking the means of all items under the

three main language learning strategies from the highest to the lowest.

For research question 2 (How do "gender", "age", "educational background",

and "years of work experience" affect the use of these strategies?), a t-test was used to

determine the significant difference between the means of the use of each language

learning strategy classified by the gender of the Thai tour guides. Moreover, an F-test

was used to determine the significant difference among the means of the use of each

language learning strategy classified by the age, educational background, and years of

work experience of the Thai tour guides.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the study. It is divided into two parts.

Part one shows the frequency of use of the three major language learning strategies for developing English oral communication competence by Thai tour guides. The analyzed data obtained from this part are used to answer Research Question 1: To what degree do Thai tour guides use language learning strategies for developing their English oral communication competence?

Part two deals with the "gender", "age", "educational background", and "years of work experience" factors affecting the use of language learning strategies. The analyzed data obtained from this part are used to answer Research Question 2: How do "gender", "age", "educational background", and "years of work experience" affect the use of these strategies?

Part I: Demographic Data and Frequency of Use of Three Major Language Learning Strategies for Developing English Oral Communication Competence by Thai Tour Guides

This part presents the following tables:

Table 1: Gender of Thai Tour Guides

Table 2: Age of Thai Tour Guides

Table 3: Educational Background of Thai Tour Guides

Table 4: Years of Work Experience of Thai Tour Guides

Table 5: Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 6: Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 7: Use of Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 8: Ranking of the Use of Cognitive, Metacognitive, and Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Part II: "Gender", "Age", "Educational Background", and "Years of Work Experience": Factors Affecting the Use of Language Learning Strategies

This part presents the following tables:

Table 9: Effect of "Gender" on the Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 10: Effect of "Gender" on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 11: Effect of "Gender" on the Use of Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 12: Effect of "Age" on the Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 13: Effect of "Age" on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 14: Effect of "Age" on the Use of Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 15: Effect of "Educational Background" on the Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Table 16: Effect of "Educational Background" on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Part 1: Demographic Data and Frequency of Use of Three Major Language Learning Strategies for Developing English Oral Communication Competence by Thai Tour Guides

In this study, the ranges indicating frequency of use of the three major language learning strategies were determined as follows:

Always	=	4.21 - 5.00
Very often	=	3.41 - 4.20
Sometimes	=	2.61 - 3.40
Rarely	=	1.81 - 2.60
Never	=	1.00 - 1.80

Table 1: Gender of Thai Tour Guides

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	73	47.4
Female	81	52.6
Total	154	100

As shown in Table 1, the sample is composed of 81 female (52.6%)

and 73 male (47.4%) Thai tour guides.

Table 2: Age of Thai Tour Guides

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
Under 26 years old	19	12.3
26-30 years old	28	18.2
31-35 years old	38	24.7
36-40 years old	28	18.2
Over 40 years old	41	26.6
Total	154	100

As shown in Table 2, the over 40 age range is the largest, with 26.6% of the

total number of Thai tour guides. The next most frequently occurring age range is 31-35

(24.7%), followed by both the range 26-30 and 36-40 (18.2%). Those under 26 formed

the smallest group (12.3% of the total).

Table 3: Educational Background of Thai Tour Guides

Educational Background	Frequency	Percentage
Below Bachelor's Degree	31	20.1
Bachelor's Degree	114	74.0
Master's Degree	9	5.8
Total	154	100

As shown in Table 3, 114 Thai tour guides (74%) posses a Bachelor's Degree,

9 (5.8 %) have in addition a Master's Degree, while 31 Thai tour guides (20.1 %) have

not studied at university.

Table 4: Years of Work Experience of Thai Tour Guides

Years of Work Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 Years	50	32.5
6-10 Years	37	24.0
11-15 Years	36	23.4
16-20 Years	18	11.7
Over 20 Years	13	8.4
Total	154	100

As shown in Table 4, 50 Thai tour guides (32.5%) have 1-5 years of work

experience, 37 (24%) have 6-10 years of work experience, and 36 (23.4%) have 11-15

years of work experience. Those who have worked for more than 16 years as guides

formed the smallest group (31 of the total or 20.1%).

Table 5: Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

n = 154

Ranking	Cognitive Strategies		Mean	SD
	Related Questions	Sub-categories		
1	How often do you use knowledge gained from your experiences to understand new ideas?	Elaboration	3.9091	0.9453
2	How often do you think in English (without translation from Thai into English) while you are communicating with English native-speakers?	Transfer	3.7727	1.1057
3	How often do you memorize new English words from the radio, TV, films, or other audio-visual materials for developing your English listening-speaking skills?	Imagery	3.4416	0.9074
4	How often do you memorize new English words from newspapers, magazines, books, or other reading materials for developing your English listening-speaking skills?		3.4351	0.9069
5	How often do you analyze English conversation patterns from the radio, TV, films, or other audio-visual materials for developing your English speaking-listening skills?	Deduction	3.3247	1.0657
6	How often do you make summaries of information that you hear or read?	Summarizing	3.2468	1.0865
7	How often do you analyze English conversation patterns from newspapers, magazines, books, or other reading materials for developing your English listening-speaking skills?	Deduction	3.1883	1.0833
8	How often do you guess unfamiliar English words from their contexts or situations?	Inferencing	3.1623	1.0320
9	How often do you repeat the sounds that you have heard after English native speakers?	Rehearsal	3.1558	1.1034
10	How often do you find the meaning of English words by dividing them into parts (root, prefix, and suffix) that you can understand?	Organization	2.8896	1.1059

As shown in Table 5, for the cognitive strategies, the Thai tour guides developed their English oral communication competence at least to the "Sometimes" degree. For the "Very often" degree, they use their personal experience to understand new ideas (3.9091), thought in English while communicating with English native speakers (3.7727), and memorized new English words from both audio-visual materials (e.g., radio, TV, films) (3.4416) and printed materials (e.g., newspapers, magazines, books) (3.4351).

It is noted that under the cognitive strategies, learning to understand new ideas by their personal experience is classified as an elaboration sub-category, thinking in English while communicating with English native speakers as a transfer sub-category, and memorizing new English words from both audio-visual materials and printed materials as an imagery sub-category under the cognitive strategies. Thus, the top three sub-categories used by the Thai tour guides are elaboration, transfer, and imagery, in that order.

Table 6: Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Ranking	Metacognitive Strategies		Mean	SD
	Related Questions	Sub-categories		
1	How often do you learn from your mistakes to improve your English listening-speaking skills?	Self-monitoring	3.9286	1.0040
2	How often do you focus on keywords or concepts when you listen to someone speaking English?	Selective Attention	3.7403	1.1365
3	How often do you evaluate the outcome of your listening-speaking performance?	Self-evaluation	3.3377	1.0860
4	How often do you attend English conversation training delivered by English native speakers?	Planning	1.1234	0.3299

As shown in Table 6, for the metacognitive strategies, the Thai tour guides developed their English oral communication competence to the "Very often" degree by learning from their mistakes to develop listening-speaking skills (3.9286) and focusing on keywords or concepts when they listen to someone speaking English (3.7403). They evaluate the outcome of their listening-speaking performance to the "Sometimes" degree (3.3377).

It is noted that learning from their mistakes is classified as a self-monitoring

sub-category, focusing on keywords or concepts when they listen to someone speaking

as a selective attention sub-category, and evaluating the outcome of their listening and

speaking performance as a self-evaluation sub-category. Thus, under the metacognitive

strategies, the top three sub-categories used by the Thai tour guides are self-

monitoring, selective attention, and self-evaluation, in that order.

Table 7: Use of Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Ranking	Social/Affective Strategies		Mean	SD
	Related Questions	Sub-categories		
1	How often do you ask English native speakers to correct you when you make a mistake?	Questioning for Clarification	3.4805	1.1446
2	How often do you ask English native speakers when you are not sure about what you have heard?	Cooperation	3.4545	1.0103
3	How often do you try to relax whenever you encounter using unfamiliar English?	Self-talk	3.3247	1.1254

As shown in Table 7, for the social/affective strategies, the Thai tour guides developed their English oral communication competence to the "Very often" degree by asking English native speakers to correct them when they make a mistake (3.4805) and asking English native speakers when they are not sure about what they have heard (3.4545). Besides this, they use the strategy of trying to relax whenever using unfamiliar English in the "Sometimes" degree (3.3247).

It is noted that asking English native speakers to correct mistakes is classified as a question for clarification sub-category, asking English native speakers when they

are not sure about what they have heard as a cooperation sub-category, and relaxing

whenever they encounter using unfamiliar English as a self-talk sub-category. Thus, the

ranking of sub-categories under social/affective strategies used by the Thai tour guides

are questions for clarification, cooperation, and self-talk, in that order.

Table 8: Ranking of the Use of Cognitive, Metacognitive, and Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

n = 154

Ranking	Language Learning Strategies	Mean	SD
1	Social/Affective Strategies	3.4199	0.8813
2	Cognitive Strategies	3.3526	0.5492
3	Metacognitive Strategies	3.0325	0.6267
	Total	3.2683	0.5405

As seen in Table 8, it can be concluded that overall the three major language learning strategies were used "Sometimes". The social/affective strategies were employed "Very often" by the Thai tour guides, when compared with the cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which were used "Sometimes" for developing their English oral communication competence.

Part 2: "Gender", "Age", "Educational Background", and "Years of Work Experience": Factors Affecting the Use of Language Learning Strategies

Table 9: Effect of "Gender" on the Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Gender (n=154)	Cognitive Strategies				
	Mean	SD	t-test		
			t	df	p-value
Male	3.2877	0.5597	-1.397	152	0.164
Female	3.4111	0.5362			

P < 0.05

Based upon the results of the t-test shown in Table 9, there was no significant difference between the use of cognitive strategies by male and female Thai tour guides at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "gender" factor had no effect on the use of cognitive strategies.

Table 10: **Effect of "Gender" on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides**

Gender	Metacognitive Strategies				
	Mean	SD	t-test		
(n=154)			t	df	p-value
Male	2.9726	0.6609	-1.126	152	0.262
Female	3.0864	0.5931			

P < 0.05

Based upon the results of the t-test shown in Table 10, there was no significant difference between the use of metacognitive strategies by male and female Thai tour guides at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "gender" factor had no effect on the use of metacognitive strategies.

Table 11: Effect of "Gender" on the Use of Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Gender	Social/Affective Strategies				
	Mean	SD	t-test		
(n=154)			t	df	p-value
Male	3.4703	0.9293	0.673	152	0.502
Female	3.3745	0.8390			

P < 0.05

Based upon the results of the t-test shown in Table 11, there was no significant difference between the use of social/affective strategies by male and female Thai tour guides at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "gender" factor had no effect on the use of social/affective strategies.

Table 12: Effect of "Age" on the Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Age Range (n=154)	Cognitive Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
			F	df	p-value
Under 26 years old	3.4842	0.8915			
26-30 years old	3.3107	0.4693			
31-35 years old	3.3974	0.4705	0.490	149	0.743
36-40 years old	3.2929	0.5091			
Over 40 years old	3.3195	0.5026			

$P < 0.05$

Based upon the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 12, there was no significant difference in the use of cognitive strategies by Thai tour guides with different age ranges at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "age" factor had no effect on the use of cognitive strategies.

Table 13: Effect of "Age" on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Age Range (n=154)	Matacognitive Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
			F	df	p-value
Under 26 years old	3.0395	0.7133			
26-30 years old	3.0893	0.6132			
31-35 years old	3.0066	0.6962	0.443	149	0.778
36-40 years old	2.9107	0.5495			
Over 40 years old	3.0976	0.5913			

$P < 0.05$

Based upon the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 13, there was no significant difference in the use of metacognitive strategies by Thai tour guides with different age ranges at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "age" factor had no effect on the use of metacognitive strategies.

Table 14: Effect of "Age" on the Use of Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Age Range (n=154)	Social/Affective Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
			F	df	p-value
Under 26 years old	3.3333	0.7115			
26-30 years old	3.3929	0.8317			
31-35 years old	3.4474	1.0231	0.201	149	0.937
36-40 years old	3.3452	0.9749			
Over 40 years old	3.5041	0.8066			

$P < 0.05$

Based upon the result of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 14, there was no significant difference in the use of social/affective strategies by Thai tour guides with different age ranges at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "age" factor had no effect on the use of social/affective strategies.

Table 15: Effect of "Educational Background" on the Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Educational Background (n=154)	Cognitive Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
			F	df	p-value
Below Bachelor's Degree	3.3645	0.4255			
Bachelor's Degree	3.3377	0.5862	0.370	151	0.691
Master's Degree	3.5000	0.4555			

$P < 0.05$

Based upon the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 15, there was no significant difference in the use of cognitive strategies by Thai tour guides with different educational backgrounds at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "educational background" factor had no effect on the use of cognitive strategies.

Table 16: Effect of "Educational Background" on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Educational Background (n=154)	Metacognitive Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
			F	df	p-value
Below Bachelor's Degree	3.0323	0.6046			
Bachelor's Degree	3.0110	0.6392	0.921	151	0.400
Master's Degree	3.3056	0.5270			

P < 0.05

Based upon the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 16, there was no significant difference in the use of metacognitive strategies by Thai tour guides with different educational backgrounds at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "educational background" factor had no effect on the use of metacognitive strategies.

Table 17: Effect of "Educational Background" on the Use of Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Educational Background (n=154)	Social/Affective Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
			F	df	p-value
Below Bachelor's Degree	3.5699	0.8743			
Bachelor's Degree	3.3830	0.8982	0.560	151	0.573
Master's Degree	3.3704	0.6961			

P < 0.05

Based upon the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 17, there was no significant difference in the use of social/affective strategies by Thai tour guides with different their educational background at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "educational background" factor had no effect on the use of social/affective strategies.

Table 18: **Effect of "Years of Work Experience" on the Use of Cognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides**

Years of Work Experience	Cognitive Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
(n=154)			F	df	p-value
1-5 years	3.3320	0.6760			
6-10 years	3.3649	0.3967			
11-15 years	3.4889	0.4857	1.141	149	0.340
16-20 years	3.1722	0.4561			
Over 20 years	3.2692	0.6408			

$P < 0.05$

Based upon the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 18, there was no significant difference in the use of cognitive strategies by Thai tour guides according to years of their work experience at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "years of work experience" factor had no effect on the use of cognitive strategies.

Table 19: Effect of "Years of Work Experience" on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Thai Tour Guides

Years of Work Experience	Metacognitive Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
(n=154)			F	df	p-value
1-5 years	2.9950	0.6438			
6-10 years	2.8851	0.6280			
11-15 years	3.2917	0.5717	3.721	149	0.006*
16-20 years	2.7500	0.6002			
Over 20 years	3.2692	0.4617			

* $P < 0.05$

Based upon the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 19, there was a significant difference in the use of metacognitive strategies by Thai tour guides according to years of their work experience at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "years of work experience" factor had an effect on the use of metacognitive strategies.

From the results of a test of differences in means (F-test), as shown in Table 19, there was evidence of differences in the use of metacognitive strategies by Thai tour guides based on their years of work experience. A one-way ANOVA was therefore

used to compare significant differences in the mean ranks between paired groups by the Least Significant Differences (LSD) method, as shown in Table 20. The results revealed that significant differences at a 0.05 probability level were found between the following paired groups of subjects, according to years of work experience: (a) 11-15 years and 1-5 years, 11-15 years and 6-10 years, 11-15 years and 16-20 years; and (b) 16-20 years and over 20 years.

Table 20: Comparison between Paired Groups Using Metacognitive Strategies Classified by "Years of Work Experience"

Dependent Variable	Years of Work Experience	Years of Work Experience				
		1-5 year	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	Over 20 years
		p-value	p-value	p-value	p-value	p-value
Metacognitive Strategies	1-5 years					
	6-10 years	0.404				
	11-15 years	0.026*	0.005*			
	16-20 years	0.143	0.439	0.002*		
	Over 20 years	0.148	0.051	0.909	0.020*	

* $P < 0.05$

As shown in Table 20, the Least Significant Difference (LSD) was used to determine the minimum differences in the mean ranks between two groups. The result revealed that significant differences at a 0.05 probability level were found between the following pairs of the subjects' years of work experience: (a) 11-15 years and 1-5 years, 11-15 years and 6-10 years, 11-15 years and 16-20 years; and (b) 16-20 years and over 20 years.

Table 21: **Effect of "Years of Work Experience" on the Use of Social/Affective Strategies by Thai Tour Guides**

Years of Work Experience	Social/Affective Strategies				
	Mean	SD	ANOVA		
(n=154)			F	df	p-value
1-5 years	3.2933	0.7578			
6-10 years	3.4685	1.0407			
11-15 years	3.6204	0.9957	1.529	149	0.197
16-20 years	3.1111	0.5717			
Over 20 years	3.6410	0.7511			

$P < 0.05$

Based upon the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 21, there was no significant difference in the use of social/affective strategies by Thai tour guides according to years of their work experience at a 0.05 probability level. This suggested that the "years of work experience" factor had no effect on the use of social/affective strategies.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part presents a summary of the study and a discussion of the major findings. The second part describes the implication of this study with regard to language learning strategies to develop English oral communication competence. Suggestions for further studies are also included in this part.

5.1 Summary of the Study and Discussion of Major Findings

This study was designed to (1) investigate language learning strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English oral communication competence, and (2) examine whether "gender", "age", "educational background", and "years of work experience" affect the use of these strategies. The sample of the study was 154 Thai tour guides from seven inbound tour operators situated in Bangkok. Their main clients were native English-speaking tourists from America, Australia, Canada, England, and New Zealand. These tour operators are also registered with the Tourism Authority of

Thailand (TAT) and are members of the Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA).

An interview questionnaire, comprising of two parts (personal data and language

learning strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English oral

communication competence) was constructed for collecting data.

The following are the summary and discussion of the major findings, which

address the research questions posed in this study.

Research Question 1: **To what degree do Thai tour guides use language**

learning strategies for developing their English oral communication

competence?

The results of this study clearly revealed that the overall mean of the three

major language learning strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English

oral communication competence is at a moderate level or "Sometimes" level (mean =

3.2683). This result confirms those of Oxford et al. (1987), Hashim and Sahil (1994),

and Merrifield's studies (1996), which revealed that subjects in their studies typically

used language learning strategies at a medium or moderate level rather than a high or

low level.

Moreover, the findings of this study indicated that of the three sets of language learning strategies, social/affective strategies were used by Thai tour guides at the "Very often" level with a mean of 3.4199. The other two strategies, cognitive and metacognitive, were used at the "Sometimes" level with means of 3.3526 and 3.0325 respectively. The result supports the findings of Griffiths and Parr (2000) that students used social strategies most frequently and cognitive strategies in the middle frequency range, though affective strategies came higher only than the least used strategies.

The result concerning the use of social/affective strategies can be explained by the fact that in their real work contexts, Thai tour guides are likely to have a chance to practice their English oral communication with native English-speaking tourists nearly every day. This finding supports Alptekin's notion (1993) that in the situations they are familiar with, learners can relieve the stress of constant second language use, reduce anxiety caused by language and culture shock, and alleviate fear of loss of identity. Consequently, they gradually gain self-confidence and overcome fear, anxiety and nervousness.

Compared with social/affective strategies, cognitive and metacognitive were used less. These two strategies are like the rule-related practice frequently used by

university students rather than the military sample (Oxford et al.: 1989). It can be suggested that these two strategies are directly related to specific learning tasks that are required in a particular classroom. Furthermore, the type of tasks can be expected to influence the two strategies used to complete them. Wenden (1987: 109) noted that learners who emphasized the importance of learning about language tended to use cognitive strategies that help them to better understand and remember specific items of language.

Oxford (1990a) pointed out that social/affective strategies have been found less often in second language research. She further inferred that language learning strategy research had suffered from an overemphasis on cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which were admittedly very important, at the expense of other strategy types that were also very useful. This was because learners were not familiar with paying attention to their own feelings and social relationships as part of the foreign language learning process and environment. Since the use of language learning strategies was claimed to be influenced by language teaching method (Oxford et al.: 1989), the choice of language learning strategies reflects the approach used by the institution (Hashim and Sahil, 1994). Besides, previous research conducted by Bialystok (1979) and Nyikos

(1990) illustrated that classroom circumstances might foster the use of a limited range of learning strategies.

However, these findings are not consistent with those of Oxford and Nyikos (1989) and Djiwandono (1998), who showed that the use of cognitive strategies was predominant over metacognitive and social/affective strategies in language learning. This may be explained by the fact that social/affective strategies often used by Thai tour guides for developing their English oral communication competence rely on their working situation, which is different from classroom surroundings. As Oxford (1990a) stated, individuals who want to learn a target language mainly for interpersonal communication would use different strategies from learners who want to learn a target language merely to fulfill a graduation requirement.

Perhaps this may be explained by the fact that the frequency of strategy use of Thai tour guides might be affected by the circumstances of their working context. Also, it is likely that social/affective strategies are closely related to their profession, because of the social interaction with native English-speaking tourists. Wenden (1987) supported the idea that a particular language learning activity or context and a variety of social settings were parts of the choice in language learning strategy use.

Research Question 2: How do "gender", "age", "educational background", and "years of work experience" affect the use of cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies?

The findings of this present study revealed that the "gender", "age", and "educational background" factors did not affect the use of cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective strategies by Thai tour guides per se. These findings were inconsistent with those of previous studies, which reviewed the "gender" factor, e.g., Oxford et al. (1988), Ehrman and Oxford (1989), Kaylani (1995), Goh and Foong (1997), the "age" factor, e.g., Politzer (1983) and Oxford (1990a), and the "educational background" factor, e.g., Goh; (1998) and Macleod (2002). This can be possibly explained by the fact that these previous studies were conducted with students who had different personalities, purposes, tasks, and learning styles; hence it was likely that students with different gender, age, and educational background chose their language learning strategies to suit their individual personality, the nature of the task, language learning purpose, and learning styles which might occur with changes in academic environment and experience. Politzer (1983), Potilizer and McGroarty (1985), and Oxford (1989)

acknowledged that choice of language learning strategies also strongly related to learning objectives, tasks, and other factors. In addition, Blake (2001) claimed that learners will undoubtedly do best by choosing language learning strategies appropriate to their own personality, talents, skills, needs, and contexts, and equally appropriate to their specific task.

On the other hand, this study was conducted with Thai tour guides of different gender, age, and educational background. Even though they had different personality and learning styles, they worked in contexts with similar or the same job descriptions and work situations. Moreover, the identical nature of task, society, and language learning purpose encouraged their similar use of language learning strategies. That is Thai tour guides, regardless of their gender, age, and educational background, tended to use social/affective strategies most when in contact with native English-speaking tourists and also to attend tour guide training courses before embarking on their career.

Regarding the "years of work experience" factor, the results of this study suggest that it does affect the use of language learning strategies, particularly, metacognitive strategies. Indeed, the results of this study clearly demonstrated that Thai

tour guides who have 11-15 years of work experience use more metacognitive strategies than those who have 1-5, 6-10, and 16-20 years of work experience. Moreover, Thai tour guides who have 11-15 years of work experience use metacognitive strategies at the same level as Thai tour guides who have over 20 years of work experience. These results partially support Hoang's research (1999) concerning the language learning of Vietnamese learners whose "experience" factor affected the choice of their language learning strategies.

It is likely that Thai tour guides who have 11-15 years of work experience make their own personal sense of metacognitive strategy skills to monitor their progress, to evaluate how well they can interact with native English speaking tourists typically, and to correct their own problem solving approaches in order to become more reflective learners. Additionally, they tend to perceive the importance of metacognitive strategies for gaining self-knowledge, self-awareness, and self-confidence, as well as taking responsibility for their own learning after having more experience. This notion is consistent with Anderson's notion (2002: paragraph 1) saying that "the use of metacognitive strategies stimulates one's thinking and can lead to more profound learning and improved performance."

On the contrary, learners without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction and ability to review their progress, accomplishments and future learning directions (O'Malley et al.: 1985). Like those with over 20 years of work experience, Thai tour guides who have 11-15 years of work experience use metacognitive strategies most. Consequently, they are likely to be highly motivated to achieve their career goals. This can confirmsome previous literature. For instance, Oxford and Ehrman (1995: 375) considered "metacognitive strategies users as being intrinsically motivated". Similarly, Merrifield (1996: 5) suggested in her study that "the more motivated the learner, the greater use he or she makes of metacognitive strategies". Besides, Hoornstar (2002: paragraph 6) revealed that "most metacognitve strategies are used largely by learners who have a great deal of motivation to learn and to improve their learning styles".

It is likely that Thai tour guides who have 16-20 years of work experience should use metacognitive strategies as much as the two groups mentioned above (11-15 years and over 20 years). Surprisingly, the result of this study suggested quite the reverse. That is they used these strategies the least, as compared with others in this study. It may be possibly assumed that when they work for a certain number of years

(16-20 years), their motivation might be reduced. Perhaps, the decrease in the use of metacognitive strategies may be because they have already achieved their career goals. Consequently, they may not need to monitor or evaluate themselves, resulting in a reduction in their motivation. The prior research reviewed that the more motivation learners have, the more metacognitive stratigies they use. However, this does not suggest that Thai tour guides with 16-20 years of work experience will have less motivation than other groups. Since there has been no previous literatures supporting this result, appropriate explanations for this result cannot be given. Thus, future research should be conducted for clarification.

5.2 Implications and Suggestions for Language Learning Strategies to Develop English Oral Communication Competence

The result of this study demonstrates that social/affective strategies are the most frequent language learning strategy category used by Thai tour guides. It might be suggested that the circumstances of their work environment, apart from language teaching and learning in the institution, create many opportunities to practice social interaction for developing their English oral communication competence in an automatic

way, even though incorrect structures can be found among their English oral

communication.

However, they should add those two other strategies, cognitive and

metacognitive, to social/affective strategies for developing their English oral

communication pragmatically in terms of correctness and accuracy, since the use of

effective spoken English paves the way for tour guides seeking career advancement.

Thailand will soon join the General Agreement on Free Trade in Services (GATS),

which means that the Thai tourism sector will have to compete with native English-

speaking markets in the near future. Because of this, Thai tour guides need to upgrade

their standard of English oral communication skills, which is one of the crucial factors

for enhancing the service potential of the Thai tourism industry.

In general, the use of language learning strategies by Thai learners is influenced

by language teaching and learning methodology in Thailand; English oral

communication is missing in the EFL setting. As a result, language teachers should

improve their teaching techniques, which could stimulate and encourage students to

employ a greater variety of strategies, to achieve their English learning goals and

enhance their future career advancement.

The results of this present study have implications for the teaching and learning of General English and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Incorporating language learning strategies into the English for Tourism curriculum and General English courses is necessary for encouraging English for tourism students and EFL learners to learn how to develop English oral communication out of the classroom and create opportunities for making practice on their own. They then can use suitable language learning strategies for effectively and continuously developing their oral communication competence in the Thai environment.

Most of the empirical findings are derived from the English language teaching and learning area; hence it is reasonable to suggest that in order to develop highly qualified Thai tour guides to meet international standards, English for tourism proficiency is an area needing greater exploration and future research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTERS

มหาวิทยาลัยหอการค้าไทย
The University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

ที่ มศ. 102/44   คณะมนุษยศาสตร์

9 เมษายน 2545

เรื่อง ขอความอนุเคราะห์ในการเก็บข้อมูลเพื่อทำวิทยานิพนธ์
เรียน Operation Manager

      เนื่องด้วย น.ส.กมลวรรณ จิตตั้งวัฒนา นักศึกษาปริญญาโท หลักสูตร Master of Arts in English for Business and Technology กำลังดำเนินการศึกษาวิจัยเพื่อเสนอเป็นวิทยานิพนธ์ หัวข้อเรื่อง "A Study of Learning Strategies Used by Thai Tour Guides in Developing their English Oral Communication Competence" โดยมีข้าพเจ้าเป็นอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์ ในการนี้นักศึกษาจึงขออนุญาตเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลจากมัคคุเทศก์ในความดูแลของท่าน

      จึงเรียนมาเพื่อขอความอนุเคราะห์จากท่านได้โปรดพิจารณาอนุญาตให้ น.ส.กมลวรรณ จิตตั้งวัฒนา ได้ดำเนินการเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลดังกล่าว เพื่อประโยชน์ทางวิชาการ และขอขอบคุณ เป็นอย่างสูงมา ณ โอกาสนี้ด้วย

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

(ดร. สุพัตรา ประดับพงศ์)
คณบดี

สำนักคณบดี
โทรศัพท์/โทรสาร 02-276-2127

มหาวิทยาลัยหอการค้าไทย

The University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

April 9, 2002

Dear Respondent:

I am a graduate student in the MA Program in English for Business and Technology at the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce. Having completed my course work, I am now conducting a thesis on "A Study of Language Learning Strategies Used by Thai Tour Guides for Developing their English Oral Communication Competence".

The purpose of this study is to investigate language learning strategies used by Thai tour guides for developing their English oral communication competence. The result of this study would yield valuable information, which can help Thai tour guides develop their English oral communication for tourism. Furthermore, the results would be beneficial for developing English for tourism courses to meet the needs of the tourism industry.

Your response to this interviewed-questionnaire will greatly help me as to fulfill the objective of this study and also contribute new knowledge to the field of English for tourism. Please feel certain that your responses will be treated confidentially and will be used only in this study.

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,

Kamolwan Chittangwattana

Ms. Kamolwan Chittangwattana

(Graduate Student)

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire Survey

A Study of Learning Strategies Used by Thai Tour Guides for Developing their English Oral Communication Competence

Objective: This questionnaire was designed to investigate learning strategies Thai tour guides use for developing their English listening-speaking skills.

Part I: Personal Data

Directions: Please answer this questionnaire by ticking [✓] the appropriate choice of each item or writing your answer in the space provided.

1. What is your gender?

 [ ] Male [ ] Female

2. What is your age range?

 [ ] Under 26 years old [ ] 26 –30 years old [ ] 31 – 35 years old [ ] 36 – 40 years old [ ] Over 40 years old

3. What is your educational background?

 [ ] Below Bachelor's degree [ ] Bachelor's degree [ ] Master's degree

4. How many years of experience as a tour guide do you have?

 [ ] 1 – 5 years [ ] 6 –10 years [ ] 11 – 15 years [ ] 16 – 20 years [ ] Over 20 years

Part II: Learning Strategies Used by Thai Tour Guides for Developing their English Oral Communication Competence

Directions: Please tick [✓] the number that indicates the degree to which you use English listening-speaking learning strategies.

5	=	Always	≥ 7 times/week
4	=	Very often	5 - 6 times/week
3	=	Sometimes	3 - 4 times/week
2	=	Rarely	1 - 2 times/week
1	=	Never	0 time/week

Learning Strategies for Developing Listening-Speaking Skills	5 Always	4 Very often	3 Sometimes	2 Rarely	1 Never
1. How often do you repeat the sounds that you have heard after English native speakers*?					
2. How often do you find the meaning of English words by dividing them into parts (root, prefix, and suffix) that you can understand?					
3. How often do you guess unfamiliar English words from their contexts or situations?					
4. How often do you make summaries of information that you hear or read?					
5. How often do you analyze English conversation patterns from newspapers, magazines, books, or other reading materials for developing your English listening-speaking skills?					
6. How often do you analyze English conversation patterns from the radio, TV, films, or other audio-visual materials for developing your English speaking-listening skills?					
7. How often do you memorize new English words from newspapers, magazines, books, or other reading materials for developing your English listening-speaking skills?					
8. How often do you memorize new English words from the radio, TV, films, or other audio-visual materials for developing your English listening-speaking skills?					
9. How often do you think in English (without translation from Thai into English) while you are communicating with native English speakers?					
10. How often do you use knowledge gained from your experience to understand new ideas?					

*Note: Native English speakers consist of English speakers from America, Australia, Canada, England, and New Zealand.

Learning Strategies for Developing English Listening-Speaking Skills	5 Always	4 Very often	3 Sometimes	2 Rarely	1 Never
11. How often do you focus on keywords or concepts when you listen to someone speaking English?					
12. How often do you attend English conversation training delivered by English native speakers?					
13. How often do you learn from your mistakes to improve your English listening- speaking skills?					
14. How often do you evaluate the outcome of your listening and speaking performance?					
15. How often do you ask English native speakers to correct you when you make a mistake?					
16. How often do you ask English native speakers when you are not sure about what you have heard?					
17. How often do you try to relax whenever you encounter unfamiliar English?					

Suggestions:

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_____

Thank You for Your Kind Cooperation

BIOGRAPHY

Ms. Kamolwan Chittangwattana was born in Bangkok on October 13, 1975. In 1997, she received a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing Management, the Faculty of Business Administration, The University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce where she is currently a graduate student of the MA Program in English for Business and Technology. At present, she is also working for Srithai Food Service Co., Ltd. as an export assistant manager.