

# EFL Learning Strategy Use of Junior High School Students

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## ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at investigating junior high school students' English learning strategy use in an EFL learning environment and the relationship between students' English learning strategy use and four factors – gender, year of study, fondness of English, previous ESL experience, and school location. Participants in this study were 240 first- year to third-year students from Shi Yuan Junior High School in Taichung City and Homei Junior High School in Changhua County. All the participants have once studied English curriculums at elementary school for at least two years before entering Junior High School. The instruments for this study included two sections. First section is personal background information with six items; second section is a Chinese questionnaire with fifty Likert-scale items mostly adapted from Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) items. To collect data for the study, all the participants were asked to complete a copy of the junior high school students' English Learning Strategy Use Questionnaire under the supervision of English teachers during class time. Before beginning to fill out the questionnaire, teachers briefly explained the purpose of the study to the participants by an oral approach and showed them how to respond to the items and mark their responses on the questionnaire. Every participant had approximately 3-5 minutes to complete the questionnaires. In this study, 240 questionnaires in total were returned and identified as valid. The questionnaires were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS 12.0). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the participants' frequency and percentage on gender, year of study, fondness of English, previous ESL experience, and school location. The correlation between background variables and 50 items of SILL was analyzed by ANOVA and MANOVA. Significance at  $p < .05$  is to be reported throughout this study. The major findings of the study are summarized as follows. First, junior high school students seldom use English learning strategies frequently. However, among the six categories of English learning strategies, compensation strategies are most-used, while affective strategies are least-used for participants in this study. Second, female students tend to have better language learning strategy use than male students. Third, second year students are likely to employ English learning strategies more frequently than third year students and first year students. Fourth, students who like English seem to employ learning strategies more frequently than those students who dislike English. Fifth, students who had previous ESL experience seem to use learning strategies more frequently than those students who had no previous ESL experience. Finally, students who study in Taichung City used learning strategies more frequently than those who study in Changhua County. The result found that four variables – year of study, fondness of English, previous ESL experience, and school location have significant differences on strategy use. In addition, the variable of gender has a significant interaction effect on the use of strategy categories as well.

Keywords : English learning strategies、 strategy use、 junior high school students.

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