

THESIS TITLE Communicative Strategies Employed by Thai
Learners English at University Level in
Interaction with Native Speakers

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated communicative strategies (CSs) employed by Thai learners of English. It was designed to find out what communicative strategies Thai learners use and whether there is any significant difference among those of relatively high and low proficiency. The effectiveness of each strategy and factors which might account for its effectiveness are also examined.

Fourteen second year science students of Mahidol University, seven of whom had relatively high proficiency and seven of whom had relatively low proficiency were chosen to be the non-native speakers. Fourteen Americans were chosen to be the native speakers in this study; twelve of

them had stayed in Thailand less than two months and two had stayed in Thailand about one and a half years. Students made use of communicative strategies when narrating a story to the native speakers. It was found that these non-native speakers made use of the communicative strategies of appeal, approximation, avoidance, borrowing, clarification, contextualization, literal translation, paraphrase, partialization, and mime. Among these, there are three newly-observed strategies: clarification, contextualization, and partialization. From the data analysis it was shown that students of both groups made use of the same types of CSs but there were differences in the number of occurrences of each CS used. Significant differences were found in the use of avoidance, appeal, borrowing, literal translation, and mime. CSs which were highly effective were mime and paraphrase. CSs which were not effective were avoidance and partialization. Factors influencing the effectiveness were NS sensitivity, amount and correctness of information, background knowledge, and pronunciation. It is suggested that CSs should be taken into consideration and practiced in foreign language teaching in order to help NNSs improve their communication ability when facing the problem of insufficient target language knowledge.