

## ระดับความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองของนักเรียนนานาชาติ ระดับมัธยมต้นในประเทศไทย

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### บทคัดย่อ

ความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองเป็นที่ยอมรับมายาวนานกว่าสามทศวรรษว่าสำคัญอย่างยิ่งต่อผู้เรียนภาษา เพราะความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองสามารถพัฒนาประสิทธิภาพในการเรียนและนำไปสู่การเรียนรู้ตลอดชีวิต กลยุทธ์ในการเรียนภาษาสนับสนุนและส่งเสริมความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองเป็นอย่างดี ดังนั้นวัตถุประสงค์การวิจัยนี้คือ เพื่อหาระดับความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองของนักเรียนนานาชาติในระดับชั้นมัธยมต้นและความสัมพันธ์ของระดับความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองและกลยุทธ์ในการเรียนภาษาของนักเรียนไทยที่ศึกษาในโรงเรียนนานาชาติ กลุ่มตัวอย่างในงานวิจัยคือนักเรียนนานาชาติในระดับชั้นมัธยมต้นที่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศซึ่งอิงจากสัญชาติจำนวน 136 คน ใช้วิธีการวิจัยแบบผสมผสานเชิงคุณภาพและเชิงปริมาณที่ใช้ทั้งแบบสอบถามและการสัมภาษณ์ งานวิจัยนี้ใช้แบบสอบถามทั้งหมด 2 ชุด คือ แบบสอบถามความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองประกอบด้วย 4 ด้าน คือ “ความเต็มใจในการรับผิดชอบตนเองต่อการเรียน” “ความมั่นใจในการเรียนด้วยตนเอง” “แรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ” และ “ศักยภาพในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเอง” และแบบสอบถามกลยุทธ์ในการเรียนภาษา ผลการวิเคราะห์แสดงให้เห็นว่าโดยเฉลี่ยระดับความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองอยู่ในระดับสูง (ค่าเฉลี่ย 3.77 ค่าส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน 0.55) และแสดงให้เห็นว่ามีความสัมพันธ์ในระดับปานกลางระหว่างระดับความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองและกลยุทธ์ในการเรียนภาษา ( $r_{xy}=0.47$ )

**คำสำคัญ :** ความสามารถในการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเอง กลยุทธ์ในการเรียนภาษา นักเรียนนานาชาติระดับมัธยมต้น

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## The Level of Learner Autonomy of International Junior High School Students in Thailand

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### Abstract

It has been well proved for more than three decades that learner autonomy (LA) is crucial for language learners. It is unanimously accepted that learner autonomy improves the overall performance of language learning and develop life - long learning. Due to the complex term of autonomy, language learning strategies (LLS) are one of the factors that significantly enhance and support autonomy. The objectives of this study were to investigate the level of LA of international junior high school students and to find out the relationship between the level of LA and the range of LLS use perceived by Thai junior high school students. The subjects were 136 non-native English junior high school students who use English as a foreign language. This study took the form of explanatory mixed methods design using 2 sets of questionnaires to collect quantitative data, and a semi-structured interview to gain insights. The questionnaire of autonomy composes of 4 main domains including “students’ willingness to take responsibility”, “students’ self - confidence to learn autonomously”, “students’ motivation to learn English”, and “students’ capacities to learn autonomously”. Also, Strategy Inventory for Language Learning questionnaire was employed to find the range of LLS. The findings revealed that on average, the level of LA is in a high level ( $M=3.77$ ,  $SD=0.55$ ) and there was a moderate correlation between the level of LA and the range of LLS use perceived by Thai students ( $r_{xy}=0.47$ ).

**Keywords** : Learner Autonomy, Language learning strategies, International junior high school students

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## 1. Introduction

A global movement has called for a new model of the 21<sup>st</sup> - century learning. The traditional formal education must be transformed to enable new forms of learning which required to follow complex global challenges. Thailand 4.0 promotes interactive learning which aims to transform students in the traditional formal education from quietly sitting at a desk taking notes or passive observers, to be students who are aware of learning styles, learning strategies, and interact with the teacher and materials actively (Srifā, 2017). Both in the 21<sup>st</sup> - century learning and Thailand 4.0 clearly support learner autonomy (LA) and language learning strategies (LLS). To elaborate, LA and LLS are considered to be the essential competencies and skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> - century learning development. LA and LLS can be practiced and performed through the activities that cultivate students to learn to know, learn to do, learn to be, and learn to live together in the society (Scott, 2015). Moreover, problem - based learning in Thailand 4.0 requires students to experiment and solve problems by themselves which are the foundation of LA development (Thepouyporn, 2017). Additionally, Thailand 4.0 also aims to teach students to use more LLS, especially while they are learning English language, as LLS excellently help students understand four English skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) better both in and outside the classroom (Soranastaporn, 2017). Hence, students should be taught to take responsibility for their learning, know their LLS and become autonomous learners.

Researchers all agreed that the improvement of language learning and the preparation for life - long learning are resulted from the employment of LA (Camilleri, 2007; Cotterall, 1995; Borg, 2012). Moreover, LA helps students become more self-reliance, confidence, independence and pedagogically mature which are the foundation of

learning success (Little, 2003). According to Benson and Lor (1998), LA is a precondition for effective learning since it develops more critical thinking and more learning responsibility. Hence, it can be said that LA is the ultimate goal of every educational institution as it positively relates to successful English learning, particularly in the institution that follows the 21<sup>st</sup> - century learning pathway.

Qui-fang (1993) found that differences in English LLS have a decisive impact on performance and any properly LLS are more likely to make language learning successful. According to Oxford (1990), successful language students can combine and orchestrate types of LLS efficiently regarding their learning needs. However, teachers should keep in mind that LA and LLS are not something that teachers do to students instead teachers should help and facilitate learners to become autonomous and assist them in discovering their LLS (Dickinson, 1995). To facilitate and develop language learning for students, LA and LLS are the primary factors for teachers to pay attention to.

Notwithstanding a learner-centered approach and lifelong learning are crucial features for Thai education policy, as yet they hardly happen in practice in many institutions. To explain, there were difficulties in putting policy into practice. For instance, teachers find obstacles when implementing learner - centered or providing an opportunity for students to exercise autonomous skills including students' capacity, time-limited and the policy mandated (Inthapthim, 2010). As a result, the autonomous knowledge acquiring the skill of primary and secondary students in Thailand was lower than the standard (Swatevacharkul, 2014) even though autonomy is the ultimate goal for every school since 1999. To the most of my knowledge, there was a few researches investigating the level of LA and the range of LLS of junior high school students especially in the international school in Thailand. Therefore, the scarcity of research on LA

and LLS in an international learning context have encouraged the researcher to investigate the present study.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

2.1 To explore the level of learner autonomy perceived by junior high school students;

2.2 To find out the relationship between the level of learner autonomy perceived by Thai junior high school students and their range of language learning strategies

## 3. Research Questions

3.1 What is the level of learner autonomy perceived by junior high school students?

3.2 Is there any relationship between the level of learner autonomy perceived by Thai junior high school students and their range of language learning strategies?

## 4. Hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between the level of learner autonomy perceived by Thai junior high school students and their range of language learning strategies.

## 5. Review of Related Literature

### 5.1 Learner Autonomy

The term autonomy is notoriously difficult to define precisely because there are many concepts involved in the term. The term which has been widely accepted is from Holec (1981) who defined LA as 'the ability to take charge of one's own learning. Additionally, Benson and Voller (1997: 2) added that Holec's definition has been used at least five different ways in language learning includes situations where students study on their own; a set of skills essential to self - directed learning which can be learned; an inborn capacity suppressed by institutional education; the exercise of students' responsibility over their learning; and the rights of students to determine their learning direction. Later, Benson (2001) shifted the focus to be the attribute

of students. He described LA as it is not a method of learning. Instead, it is an attribute to students' approach to the learning process. Moreover, it is widely accepted that to develop LA, some degree of freedom in learning is required. However, freedoms conferred by LA are never absolute; they are always conditional and constrained (Little, 1991).

LA is a great tool to promote language learning as Cotterall (1995) mentions that once students become autonomous learners, they overcome the obstacles in language learning. As time goes by, these students become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses and also become more willing to learn which will finally lead to life-long learning. According to Little (1991) and Dam (1995), language learning is significantly enhanced when students are allowed to select the content and control the goals of the course. Moreover, autonomy also improves students' responsibility for their own learning and become more self-reliance and independence (Little, 2003). This implies a reflective involvement which underpins a process of planning, monitoring, and evaluating autonomy.

### 5.2 Components of Learner Autonomy

Wilson (2017) presents factors that positively or negatively affect LA which are capacity; personality; LLS; motivation; willingness to communicate; willingness to learn; confidence; responsibility; and previous experiences. Similarly, components of LA in this research study include "students' willingness to take responsibility", "students' self-confidence to learn autonomously", "students' motivation to learn English", and "students' capacities to learn autonomously".

According to Littlewood (1996), ability and willingness are the crucial components to develop LA in language learning. Moreover, in order to develop LA further, willingness to learn more independently is required. (Wilson, 2017).

Autonomous learners need to have self-confidence because it facilitates students to learn, become self - direct or manage their learning better in different situations. Also, students who have high self - confidence are more likely to be capable of working independently without teachers (Wenden, 1991).

According to Littlewood (1996), he states that capacity of students are required as the basic components of LA. Once, students have the capacity to learn autonomously, they can learn more effectively and aware of their own learning roles better (Wenden, 1991). Therefore, LA requires a capacity to take responsibility for independent and active learners.

Motivation is the option of the reason why learners decide to do something (Dornyei, 2001). According to Ushioda (1996), she defines autonomous learners as those who are motivated learners. It can be seen clearly that motivation is essential for LA development and enhancement (Dickinson, 1995).

### 5.3 Language Learning Strategies

There are many researchers define LLS differently. To begin with, Rubin and Wenden (1987) state that sets of plans, steps, operations, and routines employed by learners to help them obtain, facilitate, storage, retrieval and use of new information are defined as LLS. Then, O'Malley and Chamot (1990:1) define LLS as "the behaviors or special thoughts that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information." Then, Oxford (1990:8) identifies LLS which have been considered to be the most comprehensive definition as "specific actions taken by learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self - directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations."

MacIntyre and Noels (1996) revealed that LLS is helpful to understand the process of learning and LLS can also reduce confusion and

anxiety for students, which will keep their learning enthusiastic and motivated. Generally, in order to process new information and perform a task in a language class, students have to use different LLS depends on each situation (Zare, 2012). Hence, LLS are a good signal to show students to complete given tasks or solving problems during the process of language learning. Also, language students who are capable of using a variety of LLS properly resulted in improving language skills in better ways (Hismanoglu, 2000; Zhao, 2009; Namwong, 2012; Shuang, 2014; Hungyo, 2015). Additionally, Shuang (2014) adds that LLS will improve students' learning attitude and enhance their learning motivation which will pave the way for life-long learning.

### 5.4 Classification of language learning strategies

This study applied Oxford's (1990) classification of LLS. She divided the strategies into direct and indirect. Direct strategies deal with the new language in different situations or tasks directly. Direct strategies include memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. Indirect strategies are for general management of language learning comprise of metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies.

### 5.5 Relationship between Learner Autonomy and Language Learning Strategies

LA is a multidimensional term because it encompasses many areas such as LLS, motivation, and affective factors. When searching for solutions in one of these areas, one might find answers for others (Silva, 2008). This is supported by Wenden (1991) who stated that autonomous learners are those who have acquired LLS, the knowledge about learning and the attitude that enable them to use these skills confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher. Similarly, Rubin and Wenden (1987) perceived that cultivation of LLS

resulted from fostering LA. Interestingly, during the learning path towards the success, language learners move from one stage of autonomy to the other and this movement is originated by the establishment of LLS. In other words, how autonomous a learner becomes highly depends on how solid and effective LLS are (Elizondo & Garita, 2013). Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of LA and LLS in this study.

## 6. Research Methodology

### 6.1 Subject

The subject were 136 international junior high school students who are non - native English speakers. The subject study in Year 8 to Year 10 or Mattayom 1-3 in Thai education system. Their ages were from 12-15 years old. There were two main groups of the subject; 66.90% Thai and 33.10% non -Thai students. There were 9 nationalities as follows; Thai, French, Japanese, Korean, Nepalese, Israeli, Chinese, Ukrainian and Spanish. In terms of gender, 52.21% were female and 47.79% were male.

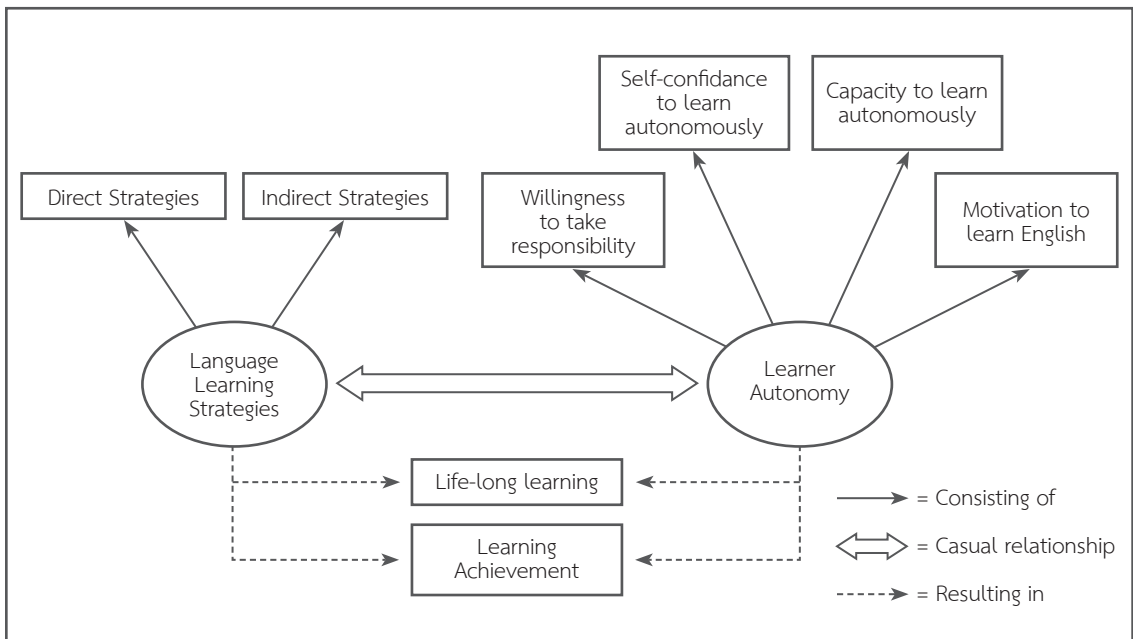


Figure 1 The Conceptual Framework

### 6.2 Research Design and Procedure

This study applied explanatory mixed methods design. Quantitative research was used to collect responses from the questionnaire 5-point Likert Scale to investigate the level of LA and the range of LLS. Then, qualitative research was

employed to support quantitative research by collecting data from semi-structured interviewing. All the information was gathered at just one point in time. The explanatory mixed method design model of this study is shown in Figure 2.

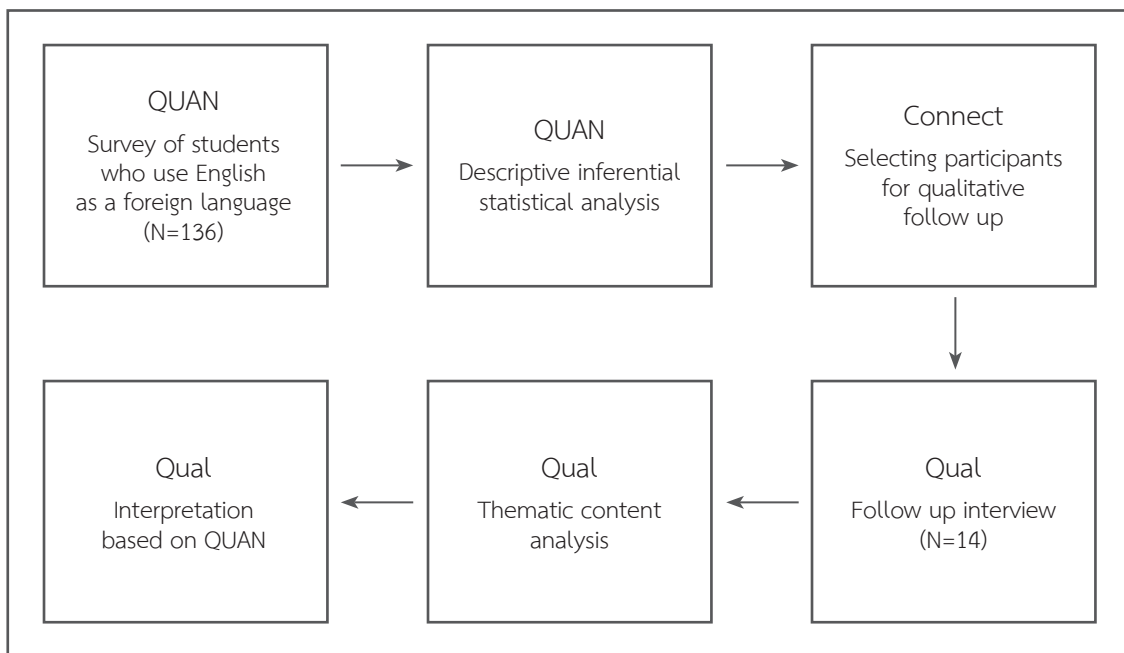


Figure 2 The Explanatory Mixed Method

### 6.3 Instruments

Research tools were implemented to collect data for this study which were two sets of questionnaires and a semi-structured interview.

#### 6.3.1 The Learner Autonomy Questionnaire

The English questionnaire to measure LA developed by Swatevacharkul (2014) was applied to investigate the attitudes towards LA of the students which can reveal their level of LA. The Learner Autonomy Questionnaire consisted of four main components which were students' willingness to take responsibility (5 questions); students' self-confidence to learn autonomously (4 questions); students' motivation to learn English (10 questions), and students' capacities to learn autonomously (10 questions). The construct validity was reported 0.80. Moreover, CFA's result reported that the Chi-square value was 314.57 and there was no statistical significance at a level of 0.01 ( $p=0.46$ ). Root mean squared error of approximate (RMSEA) was equal 0.00 which was less than 0.05 (Swatevacharkul, 2014). Therefore, the validation process of this

present study was well checked and well-defined guarantees for accuracy and consistency. The subjects were asked to rate among 'strongly agree,' 'agree,' 'uncertain,' 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' on each statement for the learner autonomy questionnaire. The evaluation criteria of the questionnaire were as follows: 0.00-1.50 means the level of learner autonomy is 'very low', 1.51-2.50 means 'low', 2.51-3.50 means 'moderate', 3.51-4.50 means 'high', and 4.51-5.00 means 'very high'.

#### 6.3.2 Strategy Inventory for Language Learning Questionnaire (SILL)

To investigate the range of LLS, SILL version 7.0 invented by Oxford (1989) was selected because this version was created for second and foreign language students. In total, SILL in this study consisted of 30 questions, 6 components and 5 question each. The six components are memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. SILL was the most

efficient instrument in the area of LLS as Mohammadi and Alizadeh (2014) revealed that the SILL score was test-retest reliable, displaying excellent reliability from Pearson’s correlation  $> 0.8$  with total scores not being significantly different across administrations. Additionally, the alpha coefficients have been well above an acceptable alpha value 0.94 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). Hence, SILL had an excellent accuracy and consistency. The subject were asked to rate among ‘always or almost always true of me,’ ‘usually true of me,’ ‘usually not true of me,’ ‘somewhat not true of me’ or ‘never or almost never true of me’. SILL the evaluation criteria of the questionnaire were as follows: 1.0-1.4 means the range of LLS is ‘very low’, 1.5-2.4 means ‘low’, 2.5-3.4 means ‘medium’, 3.5-4.4 means ‘high’, 4.5-5.0 means ‘very high’.

#### 6.3.3 A Semi-Structure Interview

An English semi-structured interview was conducted with 14 students (5 Thai students and 1 of each nationality to ensure that all the findings obtained from every nationality) by employing

purposive sampling technique. The qualitative data obtained from the interview method was exploited to support the findings obtained from the questionnaires and to strengthen discussions of the findings. There were 6 interview questions and the subject’s answers were noted down.

#### 6.4 Data Collection and Procedure

In order to collect the data from the questionnaire, both sets of the questionnaire were given to the students during an English lesson via the Google form. The questionnaires were given into two separate days, one day for LA and another day for LLS, to ensure that students had adequate time to spend on each question without any rush which might affect their responses.

### 7. Data Analysis and Results

Scores of 5 - point Likert Scale questionnaires were computed to find mean scores and stand deviation (SD). To find the relationship in RQ2, Correlation coefficients (Spearman’s Rho) was calculated. For a semi-structured interview, a thematic content analysis approach was employed. The results are known in Table 1-3.

**Table 1** The Level of Learner Autonomy

Domain	n	Mean	SD	The Level of LA
1. Willingness to take responsibilities	136	3.78	0.71	High
2. Self - confidence to learn autonomously	136	3.53	0.77	High
3. Motivation to learn English	136	4.00	0.59	High
4. Capacity to learn autonomously	136	3.77	0.64	High
Total Domain of LA	136	3.77	0.55	High

Table 1 indicates that on average students are categorized as a high level of LA. The mean (M) is 3.77 and standard deviation (SD) is 0.55. To elaborate, students are highly motivated to learn English (M=4.00, SD=0.59). They also have high willingness to take their learning responsibilities

(M=3.78, SD=0.71). Similarly, students are highly capable to learn autonomously (M=3.77, SD=0.64) and they have high self-confidence to learn autonomously (M=3.53, SD=0.77). Next, Table 2 will show the range of LLS.



**Table 2** The Range of Language Learning Strategies

Domain	N	Mean	SD	The range of LLS
Cognitive Strategies	136	3.54	0.65	High
Metacognitive Strategies	136	3.45	0.86	Medium
Compensation Strategies	136	3.21	0.68	Medium
Social Strategies	136	2.88	0.90	Medium
Affective Strategies	136	2.57	0.84	Medium
Memory Strategies	136	2.46	0.73	Low
Total Strategies	136	3.02	0.76	Medium

As noted, Table 2 indicates that on average the range of LLS of students is at a medium level. The mean (M) is 3.02 and standard deviation (SD) is 0.76. Students are high users of cognitive strategies (M=3.54, SD=0.65). Additionally, they moderately used metacognitive strategies (M=3.45, SD=0.86), compensation strategies (M=3.21, SD=0.68), social

strategies (M=2.88, SD=0.90), and affective strategies (M=2.57, SD=0.84) respectively. However, they are low users of memory strategies (M=2.46, SD=0.73). Table 3 presents the relationship between the level of LA and the range of LLS.

**Table 3** Correlation Matrix of Thai Students' Level of LA and Range of LLS

Factors	Level of LA	Range of LLS
Level of LA	1.000	.486*
Range of LLS	4.86**	1.000

\*\* p < 0.01

Table 3 shows that the moderate correlation coefficient between the level of LA and range of LLS is significant ( $p=0.05$ , QUOTE  $r_{xy}=0.486$ ). Hence, the hypothesis (there is a positive significant relationship between Thai students' level of LA and the range of LLS) is accepted. However, the magnitude of the correlation is moderate. To elaborate, Thai students who hold a high level of LA use LLS moderately.

## 8. Discussion

Research question 1 revealed that students hold a high degree of autonomy. Surprisingly, all four domains under the LA were rated as a high level. The present finding supports the findings from Harumi (2011) whose Japanese students also hold a high level of LA. The explanation might be as follows.

### 8.1 Student-Centered Learning

As noted, student-centered learning gradually paves the way for students to develop their learner autonomy. In each semester, the school of the study provides extra activities for students to collaborate with each other in the whole school to complete the different given task. For example, there is an annual international day where all students have to come up with an idea to promote and present their cultures. This year, 2017, they had to use recycled materials to create sustainable dress or suit (the project work given is different each year). This project work encourages creativity, self-reliance, collaboration among peers, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills which at the end are expected to develop learner autonomy. The role of the teacher is to be the facilitator who advises and instructs the direction. As a result, students have to teach, help each other, and use many skills to complete the task. It can be seen that students receive an opportunity to work as a group with older or younger friends to create a piece of task under the fun atmosphere. Throughout the year, there are many similar activities for students to learn, and enjoy outside the classroom setting in various aspects such as creating school poem, school logos, saving the environment and presenting their cultures identities. To sum up, the school curriculum might influence or gradually develop students to achieve the high level of LA.

Most of the international schools have a clear picture of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) which means that all teaching subjects such as science, history, and geography are taught in English. As a result, students have more opportunities to use English in all aspects of learning. Additionally, international schools implement student-centered where teachers allow students to think out of the box, experience new things by themselves, and encourage students to embrace their independence.

Frequently, students are directly and indirectly taught to become autonomous and apply the new variety of skills and strategies in each lesson. Hence, the curriculum set and the way of teaching greatly pave the way for students to achieve a high level of autonomy.

The implication is that apart from promoting the LA in the classroom, the school should also consider promoting LA outside the classroom setting. This way, students gain skills and knowledge from various sources not only in language aspects but also how students live their lives. An extra activity can greatly allow students to take a break from the actual classroom setting. However, they can learn and explore knowledge in the new learning environment. As a result, students learn how to work with different people, communicate, solve problems, accept differences, be creative, and be open - minded. These qualities cultivate the use of learner autonomy.

### 8.2 Students' Engagement in Learning English Language

According to Little (1991), autonomy does not entail an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher which correlates to present findings since 42.86% perceived that they need to cooperate with teachers as two-way communication. Additionally, students mentioned that both teachers and students are mutual important because teachers need to prepare well, understand, know students, and explain clearly while students need to be responsible, engage, pay attention, follow teachers' instructions, and willing to receive teachers' feedback. Interestingly, 35.71% perceived that students themselves are the most important person for language learning which is similar to the findings from Chen (2015) whose Taiwanese junior high school subject also perceived the same concept. It can be seen clearly that the subjects do not rely solely on teachers since the majority of them believe that both teachers and students are

the keys to language learning success and this awareness might possibly lead to the reason why their learner autonomy is high.

Moreover, students are encouraged to perform their independence learning to develop LA which is supported by Benson and Voller (1997) who mentioned that learner autonomy is the rights of learners to determine their learning direction. From this finding, 71.42% reported that they want to decide which topic or material should be used or taught. This is because they believe that they need to prepare themselves in advance which leads to better understanding and focus. As a result, they can learn things that they really enjoy rather than being forced to learn. This correlates to Holec's (1981) definition as he defines that autonomous learners should be able to define the contents and progression, determine the objectives, and select techniques and methods to be used. Hence, it could be concluded that preparation, enjoyment, and freedom are also crucial for learner autonomy development. The present findings also support the statement from Little (1991) who agreed that some degree of freedom in learning is required to develop LA.

For the implication, teachers can start involving students in each lesson by with giving students choices or let them choose the material or activity. Once they are more master, teachers can let them come up with ideas by themselves under a teacher' supervision. As a result, their willingness to learn autonomously is expected to be higher since they can be a part of the lesson and enjoy their learning even more.

### 8.3 Learning Motivation

The findings revealed that among the four domains under LA, motivation is a domain that received the highest mean score of 4.00. These findings appear to corroborate with the definition of LA defined by Ushioda (1996) who states that autonomous learners are motivated learners.

The subjects hold a high degree of extrinsic motivation as can be seen that "Studying English can be important for me because I will need it for my future education" was the only domain highly rated as very important. This might be because the majority of the subject are motivated to study abroad or continue to study in the international program. Similarly, 50% mentioned in the interview that becoming proficient in English is very important and 47.79% rated it as important. Interestingly, the subject holds an extrinsic motivation in the form of pressure mainly made by themselves. For example, students mentioned that "I just feel like I have to try my best because I do not want to disappoint my parents.", and "When I receive a good grade, I feel great and proud of myself." As can be seen that students are motivated to try their best in a language learning under pressure from friends, parents and themselves.

The enjoyment of learning English is considered to be an intrinsic motivation as 81.62% mentioned that they enjoy English language learning. However, there were 18.38% revealed that they do not enjoy English language learning and the main reason was boredom which might be the obstacle to autonomous learning. Hence, the affective dimensions of learning experience have powerful effects on LA development. It can be said that once students enjoy learning English or holding a high degree of intrinsic motivation, their willingness to learn English is also high. According to Benson (2006), students' greater responsibility for learning enhances motivation independently and it also broadens students' willingness to engage in language learning processes. It is also supported by Swatevacharkul (2010) who revealed that learners with intrinsic motivation are more able to establish learning goals which lead to more willingness to take responsibility for their own learning and for the learning outcome in the long term.

The implication is on a teacher's responsibility to develop students' motivation in order to develop LA in the language learning. Especially, an intrinsic motivation since it depends solely on a student himself and it can build a long-term advantage to students. To conclude, teachers should know students and their reasons for learning English in order to take advantages of it.

#### 8.4 Relationship between Learner Autonomy and Language Learning Strategies of Thai Students

The findings reveal that there is a moderate correlation between the level of LA and the range of LLS use by Thai students. This present finding supported the findings from Chen's (2015) which revealed that there is also a moderate correlation between Taiwanese junior high school students' LA levels and the range of LLS. Moreover, the findings of this study excellently support the statement from Chen (2015) who mentioned that students who are more autonomous for English language learning are very likely to use cognitive strategies often. Furthermore, it also correlates to Wienstein and Mayer's (1986) statement that a series of LLS is the key to maximize learner autonomy.

Rubin and Wenden (1987) mentioned that fostering LA involves cultivation of LLS. The findings possibly can explain that even though students currently hold a high level of LA, they are in the process of developing the medium range of LLS which is expected to be higher when they are more master in the language proficiency or become older. This is supported by Elizondo and Garita (2013) who mentioned that in the learning path towards the success, the EFL students move from one stage of LA to the other and the establishment of LLS originates this movement. Therefore, it can be concluded that how autonomous a learner becomes moderately depends on how solid and effective language learning strategies are.

It is worth noting that, LA and LLS are two related topics which can be taught and improved together since they support and enhance each other. To conclude, LA and LLS should be employed together by learners since they are essential tools for effective language learning.

#### 9. Recommendations

For further research, experimental research employing a Think Aloud technique is suggested to collect data on LLS use. Furthermore, similar studies should be conducted to compare and to strengthen the reliability of the findings. Also, investigating and comparing LA and LLS at different age would also be beneficial to the foreign language teaching field. Moreover, comparison between LA and LLS of international and Thai students is suggested.

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