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Abstract
This study aimed to investigate learning strategies used by high and low English proficiency students in the department of Applied English to find out differences between high and low English proficiency Applied English majors in terms of the use of learning strategies. A total of 242 participants from juniors and seniors in Applied English department in one university of technology in southern Taiwan took part in this study. Quantitative method was used to study differences in strategy use between these two groups of students. The participants self-reported their frequency of strategy use on the Modified Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford, 1989).
The results showed that students with high English proficiency reported higher frequency of use of learning strategies than did low English proficiency students. Both high and low English proficiency students used cognitive strategies most frequently. However, high English proficiency students seldom used memory strategies; low English proficiency students also employed memory strategies the least frequently. Moreover, significant differences between high and low English proficiency students were found in frequency of use of memory, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies. Specifically, it appeared that high English proficiency students used 17 strategies significantly more frequently than low English proficiency students did. In addition to differences in frequency of use of learning strategies, differences were also found in the ways high and low English proficiency students used some learning strategies. The findings of this study suggested teachers should not only encourage low English proficiency students to use learning strategies, but also inform them of the ways to use the strategies. Pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research were provided at the end of the study.
Key words: Applied English majors in university of technology, high English proficiency students, low English proficiency students, language learning strategies,
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