Learning English of Thai Tertiary Students: From Learners’ Recounts and Experiences

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Abstract

This study investigates English learning as experienced and perceived by Thai university students majoring in Business English. Taking a social perspective of language learning and by adopting an interpretive research inquiry, this study aims to broaden research into second language learning by exploring the learners’ views of learning English in the classroom and within the wider social context of university.

293 students participated in the study. A questionnaire survey and focus group interviews were the forms of data collection. Findings from the study indicate that the learners did not seem to have clear conceptions of their experiences of learning English and issues that affected them as learners and their learning English. The learners appeared to believe in participating actively in their learning and constructing knowledge with their English teacher and peers. The learners also indicated supportive features of school experiences where opportunities for English language use outside of the classroom seemed sufficient.

The implications from the study suggest that English language teachers need to reconceptualise learners and English language learning in the attempt to provide learning experiences that would help the learners become effective English language users.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language (EFL); Thai Tertiary Students; Learning Experiences

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