# CHAPTER V

# DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter Five presents a summary of the study and conclusions and discussions of the findings from previous chapter as well as their interpretation. In addition, some suggestions for student, together with the recommendations for further studies were also presented.

## Summary of the Study

The purposes of this study were to investigate students' English reading anxiety and CALL anxiety in blended learning. This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent did students have English reading anxiety in blended learning?

2. To what extent did students have CALL anxiety when they use e-learning?

3. What were the students' perceptions towards using e-learning in their reading course?

The populations of this study consisted of 75 third-year students majoring in Biology who enrolled in the Reading Academic English course in the first semester of the academic year 2011 at Naresuan University, Phitsanulok. The instruments used to collect data in the study consisted of the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS), the CALL Thoughts Survey, and a focus group interview. The study was conducted for testing the reliability of the questionnaires. The result revealed that the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the FLRAS reached the 0.85 level. Similarly, the CALL Thoughts Survey showed an internal consistency coefficient of 0.83 (n=75). This meant that the questionnaires were highly reliable.

The results of the data analysis were presented in tables with statistical procedures. The findings can be summarized as follows:

1. The students revealed the anxiety in two levels: high and moderate from asking 10 questions on the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS). Overall, they had English reading anxiety in blended learning at the "moderate" level with the mean score of 3.47. Besides, all 75 students were classified into two groups by the average of the mean scores. Students with higher than average level consisted of 44 students, but the remaining 31 students fell in the lower than average level.

2. All 75 students were asked to complete 20 items of the CALL Thoughts Survey to illustrate the CALL anxiety. They were classified into three classes depending on the level of CALL anxiety from the mean value (mean score of 2.63) as low, moderate, and high. Overall, Students had CALL anxiety when they used e-learning at "moderate" level with the mean score.

3. Seven participants were asked about their perceptions towards using e-learning in the reading course by the focus group interview. Their perceptions were classified in two main points: advantages and concerns. Under the advantages of using e-learning, three categories were specified as self-paced learning, online learning facility and providing immediate feedback. In addition, ideas on having some concerns were presented in two categories: limited accessibility and reading difficulty.

Students revealed that they had positive feelings to use e-learning in a reading course although there were two different concerns because using e-learning in English reading course was quite a new technique for them.

## Discussions and Conclusions

From the data analysis for three research questions, the results of this current study increase more understanding of foreign language reading anxiety and CALL anxiety in blended learning as well as the students' perceptions towards using e-learning in an English reading course. The findings were discussed and interpreted as follows:

### Discussions of Finding One

Normally, learning language is quite difficult for second language learners. It is true to have anxiety during learning. Anxiety occurred may depend on various variables involved. Research question one aimed to investigate the extent to which students had English reading anxiety in blended learning. According to the result of

the data analysis with statistical procedures, students had English reading anxiety in blended learning at the moderate level with the mean score of 3.47 in overall. However, students revealed high frequency of high foreign language reading anxiety as was presented in Table 2. In other words, students revealed the mean value with a little upper value from the minimum range of the high level. Besides, separating students by the mean value which was shown on Table 2, the average was used to display students into two groups by level of foreign language reading anxiety (higher than average and lower than average) as on Table 3. As can be seen from the table, it illustrated the students with higher than average levels which consisted of 44 students, but the remaining 31 students fell in the lower than average level. This could be implied that most of them had high English reading anxiety.

The result of this research question was consistent with the view on the previous background knowledge of the foreign language reading anxiety. Various reasons were involved with reading anxiety for second language learners. Young (2000) examined several interacting variables including anxiety, comprehension, self-reported comprehension, text features, and reading ability with four different non-literary reading passages such as magazines, newspaper, etc. The finding reported a significant relationship between second language reading anxiety and second language comprehension with two of four passages utilized in the study (Brantmeier, 2005). Moreover, Saito, Horwitz and Garza (1999) indicated that unfamiliar scripts and writing systems and unfamiliar cultural material seem to have great potential for eliciting anxiety. They also revealed that anxiety increased with students' perceptions of the difficulty of reading in a foreign language as well. Similar to the finding in Vande Berg's research, Vande Berg (1993) found that the unfamiliar cultural concepts and writing systems encountered in her introductory French literature class. Sellars (2000) mentioned in a study on reading anxiety that reading anxiety is a distinct variable in foreign language learning. Students with higher levels of overall foreign language learning anxiety reported higher levels of reading anxiety. Sellars also found a negative relationship between reading anxiety and second language reading comprehension when students read a magazine article (Horwits, 2001; Brantmeier, 2005). Tanyeli (2009) proposed that students usually have fears and worries about not succeeding to learn when the native language is not English. In addition, MacIntyre

and Gardner (1989) reported that anxiety affects students at every stage of learning during language learning, whether during input, processing, or output.

In conclusion, second language learners reported that anxiety affects their language learning. They had fears and worries about not succeeding to learn from various variables as showed in the previous studies had cited.

**Discussions of Finding Two**

Students today have grown up on computers and are familiar with using the Internet, and teachers are increasingly aware of integrating technology into the instruction for meaningful learning (Koehler, et al., 2004). Educators recognize that the computer technology and language learning programs may enhance language acquisition from both independent and collaborative learning environments, and language experiences (Kung, 2002 as cited in Wang, 2008). This study used e-learning as a supplementary material to an English reading course to see the extent of CALL anxiety of the students.

Research question two aimed to explore the extent to which students had CALL anxiety when they use e-learning. Overall, students had CALL anxiety when they used e-learning at the moderate level with the mean score of 2.63. It was very interesting that there was none at the high level of CALL anxiety, but some of the students had anxiety at the low level. This could be discussed that there was a relationship between computer anxiety and computer-related variables which reflected the negative reactions to computer technology which has been found in some educators' studies on the relationship between computer anxiety and computer experiences; in addition, some looked into relationship to age, gender, culture, attitudes, computer performance, self-efficacy, or cognitive abilities as well (McIlroy, et al., 2001; Tekinarslan, 2008; Mahar, Henderson and Deane, 1997; Beckers, Rikers and Schmidt, 2006; Meier and Lambert, 1991; Rosen, Sears and Weil, 1987; Beckers and Schmidt, 2001; 2003; Rosen and Weil, 1995a; 1995b; Henderson, et al., 1995; Raub, 1981).

In today's society, the use of technology and the Internet is rapidly increasing in teaching language environments. Language teachers use the World Wide Web as the effective instructional materials especially in teaching language and culture (Chen, 2008). Students today have grown up on computers and are familiar with using the

Internet, and teachers are increasingly aware of integrating technology into the instruction for meaningful learning (Koehler, et al., 2004). Besides, it has been consistently found in research that computer anxiety can affect student acceptance of computer-based training support tool and it can mediate the effect of perceived ease of use of e-learning as well (Wagner and Flannery, 2004; Jashapara and Tai, 2006 as cited in Chien, 2008).

This could be concluded that students revealed the CALL anxiety at the low level because of today rapidly increasing of the use of technology and the Internet. Most of the students usually use computers and the Internet in their daily life. As can be seen from this research, the arguments above could be supported the result of this research question.

### Discussions of Finding Three

Research question three aimed to find the students' perceptions towards using e-learning in their reading course. Using e-learning as a supplementary to the English reading course was quite different for the students. Some of them had a computer and the Internet at home, however, some did not. They perceived various perceptions during using e-learning in their study. The finding from the interview protocol was translated in two main points: advantages and concerns.

Three categories were specified under the advantages. Self-paced learning was the first advantage which the participants revealed that e-learning helped them to enhance their learning because they could learn on their own pace and time, they could get new vocabularies from e-learning, and they could get some techniques to find topic and main idea from a reading passage and some techniques in quick reading as well. The second one was about online learning facility. Most of the participants pointed to the advantage of translation new vocabularies because of the translation program on e-learning which was convenient for their reading. The third advantage was the providing immediate feedback. The participants showed that it was convenient to know their competence level right away after finishing the exercises.

Perceptions on the advantages of using e-learning on this research are relevant to researches in the past. Singhal (1999) proposed that the study on hypertext reading strategies among university students found that after Web-based reading instruction, students' reading comprehension improved and their use of reading

strategies also increased (Huang, Chern and Lin, 2009). Moreover, it has been found in a research that computer anxiety can affect student acceptance of computer-based training support tool and it can mediate the effect of perceived ease of use of e-learning as well (Wagner and Flannery, 2004; Jashapara and Tai, 2006 as cited in Chien, 2008).

The other main point was about the concerns of using e-learning. Having some concerns during the course was not surprising because it was quite a new technique for students to use e-learning as a supplementary material to the reading course. Ideas on this topic were presented in two categories. The first one is about the limited accessibility. Some of the participants did not have a computer and the Internet at home. They learned online at the Internet café which was not convenient for them. The other problem on the limited accessibility was about the password for logging into e-learning which made them unable to log in to do the exercise in time. The second concern was about reading difficulty. Two different difficulties were about feeling dizzy when scrolling the screen up and down while reading and about feeling unconfident to translate the reading article into Thai by themselves.

Nevertheless, using the Internet or technology in blended learning should be careful for being a selective choice for an effective learning or teaching process. It should not cause some concerns as presented on this research. Archer, Garrison and Anderson (1999) proposed that the Internet has been considered to be a disruptive technology that requires a careful consideration of the educational goals, structures, and process (Garrison and Kanuka, 2004). As well as from a teacher's perspective, Deghaidy and Nouby (2008) said that a blended e-learning approach required new pedagogical skills in order that the students gain the most from the presented course. In addition, for online reading, it also becomes a selective process that requires special skills to scrutinize the Internet's abundant visual and non-textual features (Coiro, 2005; Schmar-Dobler, 2003 as cited in Huang, Chern and Lin, 2009). For more effective process, scholars proposed that the use of the Internet in learning required some technological skills and knowledge from both teacher and student (Warshauer, 1997; Brandl, 2002 as cited in Sagin Simsek, 2008). In consequence, consideration of other factors which could cause learning or teaching process is significantly important for not only the blended learning, but also for other learning process.

Overall, the participants revealed their perceptions of using e-learning as a supplementary material to the reading course in a blended learning in the positive attitudes. Some concerns were presented; nevertheless, they were not about the anxiety of using e-learning at all. These argued Fuller's view of using e-learning that computer anxiety played a significant role in a learning process. Individuals with high computer anxiety are likely to remain in that state of high computer anxiety in the future, and experience greater anxiety with repeated exposure to computers. They are at risk for resisting the use of computer technology and an inability to gain learning benefit over the anxiety cost of an e-learning environment (Fuller, et al., 2006 as cited in Chien, 2008).

**Recommendations**

From this study, some interesting points and aspects about using e-learning as a supplementary material to an English reading course were derived; thus, the recommendations are given as follows:

The current study investigated students' English reading anxiety and CALL anxiety in blended learning. Therefore, it is suggested that using blended learning as a supplementary material to an English reading course is quite a new technique for language learning today. However, it is not too hard for new generation to use a computer or e-learning to help promote or enhance their learning with less or without anxiety. As Internet and technology are noteworthy for today and future learning, it is hard to decline these educational aids. Using the Internet in an instruction is an excellent choice to enhance students' knowledge and proficiency not only in language learning, but also in other subjects. Nevertheless, for further studies, instructors or researchers should be careful of difficulties of using the Internet or e-learning in any blended learning such as the limited accessibility and designing the e-learning program. In addition, more qualitative as well as quantitative studies should be conducted to explore foreign language reading anxiety in various groups of students especially integrating the Internet to a foreign language course is noteworthy for today learning. All findings would benefit the teachers, instructors, and researchers to achieve their goals.