

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study primarily intends to identify judgment on complement and adjunct structures in simple declarative and interrogative sentences of Thai learners studying in three distinguishing levels at Assumption College. This chapter consists of information about subjects, materials, procedures and data analysis of the study.

3.1. SUBJECTS

The subjects in this study were divided into 3 groups, consisting of 20 eighth grade students, 20 tenth grade students, and 20 twelfth grade students at Assumption College, Bangkok, Thailand, in the academic year 2008. In order to determine the most consistent results, the researcher randomly selected all the subjects in the study. As a result, 60 out of 500 students participated in this study. All of these subjects had been studying English since kindergarten and had been taught English in the same school from the primary level. However, it is noteworthy that while English is taught as a foreign language at school, Thai is predominant at home. All of them studied English as a foreign language, and most of them spoke Thai at home with their parents and at school with their friends.

3.2. MATERIALS

The instrument employed in this study was a grammaticality judgment task consisted of 48 sentences, including 6 fillers which are irrelevant to the point tested. The entire 48 test items were presented with pairs of alternative sentences which differed in one grammatical dimension, and subjects were asked to choose between the following options: a) both correct, b) only first sentence correct, c) only second sentence correct and d) both incorrect.

Six transitive verbs, which were *check*, *meet*, *watch*, *find*, *hit*, and *sell*, were employed in the study. All of the six verbs were chosen based on the following criteria. Firstly, the subjects knew all of them without pre-teaching. Secondly, all of these verbs require complements. Thirdly, all of them can accommodate locative adjuncts. Fourthly, they all are monosyllabic.

For the complement type of sentences, the grammatical version requires the presence of a complement while the ungrammatical version lacks a complement as shown in (1a) and (1b) below.

(1a) The clerk checked the bill.

(1b) The clerk checked.

For the adjunct type of sentences, the adjuncts are all locative PP's appearing at sentence final position. The learners' judgment on complements and adjuncts that appear in two sentence types: declaratives and interrogatives (i.e. Yes/No questions) were investigated. Both versions consisting of all locative PPs are grammatical: in one version an adjunct is added; in the other, the adjunct is omitted as shown in (2a) and (2b) below.

(2a) The boy hit the ball in the park.

(2b) The boy hit the ball.

The alternative pairs of the 6 fillers which are irrelevant to the point tested were both wrong so that the D choice had to be chosen. All of these were randomized within the 48 items. Two practice sentences were provided in the items (I) and (II) so that subjects understood how to do the task. An example of the fillers is as follows:

- I. A) The workers believe that them can get higher pay.
B) The workers believe that him can get higher pay.
 - a) Only A is right.
 - b) Only B is right.
 - c) Both A and B are right.
 - d) Both A and B are wrong.

3.3. PROCEDURES

3.3.1 Administration

The GJ task was administered to the first, the second and the third groups respectively at room 901, Assumption 2003 Building, Assumption College. Subjects were told they were allowed 15 seconds to choose the correct answer from each item. Since there were five items on each page, they were told to open each page at the same time every one minute and fifteen seconds. It took approximately 16 minutes in total to finish the task.

3.3.2 Scoring

The researcher assigned a score only to the correct choices and no score to the wrong choices. The test was corrected in order to provide detailed information for the analysis of the data.

3.4. DATA ANALYSIS

ANOVAs with repeated measures were utilized to determine if (a) the subjects judged the complement and adjunct structures differently and (b) if the subjects judged the interrogative and declarative structures differently.