

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents a summary of the study, a summary of the findings, discussions, conclusions, recommendations for the English training course of non-academic staff of KMUTT, and recommendations for further research.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

##### **5.1.1 Objectives of the Study**

This study aimed at investigating the factors that affect English learning of non-academic staff of KMUTT who have already attended English courses offered by the university. In addition, the study was conducted to obtain information about the learners' perception of English learning for improvement of English instruction for KMUTT staff, and to find out new training courses relevant to the staff's needs in their work.

##### **5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures**

The subjects of this study consisted of 100 out of 293 non-academic staff of KMUTT who have attended the English training courses organized by the university from 2004 to 2006.

The questionnaire was used as the instrument in this study. The questionnaire consisted of four parts and comprised closed-ended and open-ended questions. The first part was about the background information of the respondents, the other two parts focused on their attitudes towards English and attitudes towards factors affecting English learning. The last part concerned the suggestions and opinions of the respondents.

The questionnaires were distributed randomly to the non-academic staff of KMUTT who have attended the English training course organized by the university during the first week of January, and were collected a week later. The data collected from the questionnaire was processed by the SPSS version 12 program. Then the results were analyzed and reported.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

### **5.2.1 Background Information**

The results obtained showed that the majority of the subjects were female. Most of them were in the age group of more than 45 years old. Furthermore, the majority of them had a bachelor degree, and were engaged in educational/student services.

It was found that almost all of the subjects often used English in their work and/or in other activities. They felt that their level of English before attending the English training course was fair. They obtained 70-79 percent from the post-test of the English training course. Additionally, their proficiency has been improved after attending the English training course because the course was interesting and beneficial. However, most of the respondents who thought their English proficiency had not been improved after attending the English training course because the course was not relevant to their needs. More than half of the subjects (51.0%) had a good attitude toward the English training course.

The subjects wanted to learn more speaking skills followed by listening skill, writing skill, and reading skill.

Most of the subjects who had reading skill problems was because they have a limited knowledge of vocabulary and they did not use English in reading. Moreover, they had listening skill problems because they had a limited knowledge of vocabulary. In addition, they had writing skill problems because they had a limited knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Moreover, they did not have to use much this skill in their routine work. Although some of them use speaking skills in their job, they had problem in communication because of a limited knowledge of vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary tended to be a major problem among the respondents.

### **5.2.2 The Respondents' Attitudes toward English**

It was found that most of the subjects had a good attitude toward English. The subjects liked English because they could make use of it, i.e. communication with foreigners and job promotion. They liked English because it was the media of all disciplines, and they also enjoyed studying English. Nevertheless, the subjects did not like reading English books, for example extra-curricula books.

### 5.2.3 The Respondents' Attitudes Toward Factors Affecting English Learning

The results revealed that most of the subjects had good attitudes toward instructors and they made strong efforts and had the motivation to learn English. However, they were uncertain with a course that was difficult, and whether they had ability to learn English, respectively. The results can be summarized as follows:

- ***Learners' Ability***

Most of the subjects were uncertain of their ability to learn English because they were not sure whether they could write the assignments in English, read the course materials in English, and express ideas in spoken English well. However, they agreed that they had a limited ability at English to understand the content of the course; they had problems about the meanings of vocabulary; and they had difficulty in understanding lectures in English.

- ***Learners' Efforts***

Most of the subjects stated that they made efforts in learning English because they tried to study the difficult words if they did not know the meanings of the words, they tried to read the course materials until they understood them, they tried to understand the difficult unknown words, and they regularly reviewed the subject content after class.

- ***Learners' Motivation***

The study showed that most of the subjects had a high motivation to learn English. They attended English training courses because they wanted to broaden their skills and knowledge, and they also enjoyed a class where the lecture was in English. However, the subjects were uncertain as to whether the reason they attended English training course was to get job promotion.

- ***Course Difficulty***

The study revealed that some of the subjects thought that the content of the course was complicated because there were many course materials to read and the vocabulary was quite difficult. Therefore, they sometimes could not follow the lecture.

- ***Instructors***

Most of the subjects had good attitudes toward the instructors of the course. They agreed with the fact that instructors had adequate knowledge of the

course offered; the instructors encouraged them to participate in practicing listening; speaking, reading and writing skills; and to ask questions and listened to them with interest. The instructors had good teaching techniques/ methodology and tried to check their understanding. The instructors could explain the content of course and the difficult points clearly.

#### **5.2.4 Suggestions and Other Opinions**

It was found that most of the subjects wanted to learn English speaking course for making/receiving phone calls, writing letters/memorandum, movie English, reading for pleasure and summarizing and writing minutes of meeting. Some of them stated that attending English training course should not be a requirement for their career path as it causes stress among them.

### **5.3 DISCUSSIONS**

This section discusses the results of the study as follows:

5.3.1 According to the background information of the subjects, it was found that most of them often used English in their work and/ or other activities. Their English proficiency was developed after attending the training course. The results also reflected that they had good attitudes toward English and the English training course. They stated that the training course was interesting and beneficial. They enjoyed studying English and believed that they could make use of it, i.e. communicate with foreigners and get job promotion. They liked English as it was the media of all discipline.

According to Wall (2006) and Brown (1994), they agreed that attitudes were crucial for success in language learning. The positive attitudes benefits language learners while negative ones may cause poor learning achievement. Consequently, the results from the study were in accordance with this statement.

However, despite the good attitudes toward the training course, the subjects stated that the major problems among them in using English were their limited knowledge of vocabulary and speaking skills. As reflected in their opinions and suggestions, they wanted to study English speaking courses. As a result, the training courses should be designed and developed to meet the needs of the learners.

5.3.2 The results of the study revealed that the positive points affecting English learning of the subjects were learners' motivation, learners' effort, and instructors.

From the results, it could be assumed that the subjects had a high motivation as they studied English to broaden their skill and knowledge, and enjoyed a class where the lecture was in English. This corresponded with Brown (1994) and Gray (2003) who claimed that motivation was an important factor in the success of language learning. If the learners lacked the motivation, they would not learn a thing even if it was interesting. In addition, the subjects made efforts in learning English. For instance, they tried to read course materials until they understood them, they tried to understand the difficult unknown words, and they regularly reviewed the content after class. Ellis (1994) cited that effort of the learners was associated with intrinsic motivation (learners' interest or favorite to study a particular field) that it could lead to language achievement. Moreover, the subjects were satisfied with the instructors. They agreed that instructors had adequate knowledge of the course offered and had good teaching methods. The instructors also encouraged them to participate in practicing English skills and in asking questions. The results supported the idea of Graith (2002) that instructors' personality and teaching method create not only environment in the classroom, but also the learners' good attitude toward learning.

5.3.3 The results showed that there were two drawbacks learnt from this study: learners' ability and course difficulty.

For the learners' ability, Mcloughlin (2003) and Harley & Hart (2002) claimed that if the learners had ability, they could learn in any language learning context/ situations. Ability is one of the factors that affect language learning. The findings showed that most of the subjects were uncertain about their ability at learning English. They were not sure that they could write the assignments, read course materials, and express ideas in spoken English. Moreover, they had limited ability at English to understand the course content, they had problems with vocabulary and finally they had difficulty in understanding the lecture in English.

As shown in the results, the subjects thought that the course was likely to be difficult because the content was complicated, there were a lot of course materials to read and they were difficult, especially the vocabulary. In addition, they were not likely to be able to follow the lecture in English. This may hinder the English learning of the subjects as cited in Robinson (2001) that if the course

difficulty is much beyond the learners' ability, learners' thinking ability might not be developed optimally. However, it is significant to note that to create a course to develop learners' ability, the difficulty of the course should be a little bit beyond the learners' ability because it is challenging and helps encourage the learners' to think and learn.

5.3.4 According to the suggestions and opinions of the subjects, they wanted to study English speaking courses instead of studying grammar. To achieve maximum benefits and continuing development, the English training course should be offered continuously and regularly. In addition, although the results reflected that they had good attitudes toward the English training course, some of them did not agree that the University should force them to study it as a requirement for their career paths.

## **5.4 CONCLUSIONS**

The non-academic staff of KMUTT who have attended English training courses organized by the university have good attitudes toward English and the English training course. As the study focuses on the factors affecting their English learning, it can be concluded that there are factors that are positive and negative in English learning of the non-academic staff. The factors that positively affected the English learning achievement were their motivation, their effort, and the instructors of the course. Among these factors, the factors related to the instructor were considered to have the highest effect on their learning ( $\bar{x}=4.08$ ). For the negative points, learners' ability and course difficulty, the results showed that the difficulty of the course hindered most their English acquisition. This suggests that the training course should be improved. The learners should be provided with the suitable courses, which should not be much beyond their ability.

In addition, following the suggestions of the respondents, they proposed that the course developers should provide courses that focus on English speaking rather than grammar.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for future research.

5.5.1 Future researchers should conduct replications of this study among non-academic staff with a larger group of subjects to obtain deeper information.

5.5.2 The same research instrument and procedures used in this study should be applied to all staff (both academic and non-academic staff) and should compare the attitudes and factors hindering English learning among them.