

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes methodology utilized in this study in the sense of (1) the subjects, (2) the materials, (3) the procedures used in the process of data collection, and (4) the data analysis.

3.1 SUBJECTS

60 Mathayomsuksa 5 students in the Science-Mathematics program at Benjamarachutit School were subjects in this study. English proficiency was the criterion for categorizing the subjects. Therefore, 30 high proficient students and 30 low proficient students participated in this study. In the study, English proficiency was measured by scores from midterm and final examinations of the Foundation English course, Semester 1/2007, graded by English teachers in Benjamarachutit School. Items on grammar, collocations, vocabulary, conversations and reading comprehension were included in both examinations. The maximum score of each examination was 20 marks. As a result, the total score was 40 marks. Since none of the students scored fewer than 20 marks and those who scored 35-40 marks were less than 10, in this study, students who received 20-25 marks were considered low proficient students and those who got 30-35 marks were classified as high proficient students. By cluster sampling, 15 high proficient students and 15 low proficient students were assigned in the control group, while another 15 high proficient students and 15 low proficient students were used as the experimental group.

Students participating in the present study were between 16-17 years of age. Their native language is Thai and they have not been taught by any native speakers of English during their 2 academic years in Benjamarachutit School. All of the subjects studied English for 8 hours per week (4 hours for the English Foundation course and 4 hours for an elective course).

Before conducting the research study, proficiency scores from the midterm and final examinations of the subjects were compared by an independent-sample t-test. The result shows that $t_{58} > -0.330$ and significance level $t = 0.743$, $p \leq 0.05$. Therefore, on average, scores of the control group ($X = 27.65$, S.D. = 4.321) and those of the

experimental group ($X = 28.05$, $S.D. = 5.052$) are more or less the same ($p \leq 0.05$). As a result, both groups are capable of being compared with the other.

3.2 MATERIALS

Materials used in this study consisted of a 50-minute lesson plan for the control group, a 50-minute lesson plan for the experimental group, a clip, a world map and an atlas, a reading passage, the Reading Comprehension Test and a questionnaire. The lesson plan for the control group followed the reading instruction given by English teachers in the English Department, Benjamarachutit School. However, pre-reading activities to enhance students' background knowledge were added in the lesson plan for the experimental group. In addition, a Reading Comprehension Test and the questionnaire were constructed by the researcher with the assistance from the advisor and teachers in English Department of Benjamarachutit School.

3.2.1 Lesson Plan for the Control Group

The traditional methods of reading instruction were applied with the control group. Generally, pre-reading activities were not employed and new vocabulary was discussed after the while-reading procedure. After students silently read the passage, students asked the teacher to explain unfamiliar vocabulary items and the teacher gave out the meanings or examples. Time was located as follows:

Warm-up	3 minutes
While reading/vocabulary discussion	17 minutes
Post-reading activity	30 minutes

3.2.2 Lesson Plan for the Experimental Group

Semantic mapping, a clip, a world map, and an atlas were applied as pre-reading activities to reinforce the background knowledge and motivation of students. As students were not taught about Irish culture, a 3-minute clip about Ireland, lives of the Irish and tourist attractions in Ireland from DiscoverIreland.com was shown to give students an overview on Ireland. Next, the teacher showed a world map and an atlas and asked students to identify the geographic setting of Ireland. After that, the teacher wrote 'Ireland' on the white board and circled it to make the center of the semantic mapping.

Then, the teacher elicited vocabulary from students. After the semantic mapping was finished, the teacher made some comments. While-reading and post-reading activities were then followed. Time was allocated as follows:

Pre-reading activities	13 minutes
While reading	7 minutes
Post-reading activity	30 minutes

3.2.3 A 3-Minute Clip

A clip taken from DiscoverIreland.com was implemented as the first pre-reading activity. The clip contains famous tourist sites such as the Giant's Causeway in County Antrim, and marvelous architectures in Dublin. Popular sports in Ireland, for instance, Gaelic football and sailing, are also shown in the clip. Besides, the clip portrays lives of Irish people both in the city and in the country. At the end of the clip, nightlife of the Irish including pubs, famous dark beers and Irish traditional dance are depicted.

3.2.4 A World Map and an Atlas

A world map and an atlas were utilized to enhance and activate background knowledge of the subjects in terms of geographical settings and history of Ireland. The world map and the atlas were introduced after students finished watching the clip. Firstly, the teacher showed the world map to the subjects and asked the subjects to locate Ireland. After that, the teacher used the atlas to show the page containing only United Kingdom and Ireland to further briefly discuss Irish history and relationships between England and Ireland. Finally, the teacher opened the atlas to the page of Ireland to discuss succinct history of Northern Ireland and Ireland.

3.2.5 A 500-Word Reading Passage

An abstract from a reading passage entitled *A guide to the Irish* written by David O'Brien from Hot English Magazine (Ireland Special issue) was used in the study. This 500-word passage looks at the cultural context of Irish people and Irish culture. The passage was re-checked by a native speaker of English. In addition, the context was checked with the subjects' English teachers and Social Science teachers in

Benjamarachutit School to make sure that the subjects were not familiar with the contents in the passage and thus the passage was appropriate to be exploited.

3.2.6 Reading Comprehension Test

In constructing the tests, the following steps were carried out:

3.2.6.1 Choosing the test types

The chosen type was the multiple-choice test as this method of test is objective and thus is a highly valid and reliable method of measuring (Alderson, 2000; Hughes, 2003). The test contained 10 multiple-choice items, each with 4 choices.

3.2.6.2 Constructing the test

1. The researcher studied the English and Social Science curriculum of the upper secondary school level set by the Ministry of Education.

2. The researcher found the reading passage. The reading passage concerning cultural aspects of Irish people was taken from *Hot English Magazine*. The passage was selected because backgrounds of Irish people and Ireland are not in the curriculum of the upper secondary school level. Students may be taught that Dublin is the capital city of Ireland but no further details is discussed neither in English nor in Social Science courses.

3. The researcher constructed the test with the help of the advisor as well as two teachers from the English Department, Benjamarachutit School. Organization of the test was arranged as follows:

Item 1 tests the main idea of the passage

Item 2 tests minor details of the passage

Items 3-6 test main details in each paragraph

Item 7 tests cultural vocabulary

Item 8 tests vocabulary in context

Item 9 tests reference

Item 10 tests inference

4. To make sure that no item would yield an unexpected response, the test was informally trialed on a British speaker so that items proven difficult for native speakers were revised or replaced.

3.2.7 Questionnaire

Information in the questionnaire was not applied as the major source for answering the research questions. Instead, the questionnaire was constructed to see overall reading behavior and motivation of the subjects, background knowledge on the text and recall. The questionnaire was divided into 5 parts as follows:

Part 1: Reading habits of the subjects.

Part 2: A question whether the student has read the passage prior to the research study or not.

Part 3: Opinions on the passage.

Part 4: Reading strategies employed while taking the test.

Part 5: Recall of the passage

Criteria in scoring recalls were as follows:

5 marks: subjects correctly gave sufficient details of 4 major parts in the story: introduction, kinds of Irish, weather and drinking habit of the Irish.

4 marks: subjects properly gave sufficient details of 3 parts in the story or did not give adequate or correct details of 4 parts of the story.

3 marks: subjects gave sufficient and correct details of 2 parts in the story or did not give adequate or correct details of 3 parts of the story.

2 marks: subjects gave sufficient and correct details of 1 part in the story or did not give adequate or correct details of 2 parts of the story.

1 mark: subjects gave insufficient details of certain parts of the story but the given information was partly correct.

0 mark: subjects failed to give accurate information.

3.3 PROCEDURES

3.3.1 Research Design

As the experimental group was compared with the control group, experimental research design was employed in this research investigation. The Posttest-Only Control-Group Design was applied in this study as follows:

R	O	X
R	--	X

3.3.2 Data Collection

The test score from the Reading Comprehension Test of each subject was collected as follows:

3.3.2.1 On December 17, 2007, subjects in the experimental group were instructed in the third period (9:50 – 10:40 a.m.) and subjects in the control group were taught in the sixth period (12:20 - 13:10 p.m.) by the researcher. Each period lasted for 50 minutes. The reading passage is the same passage used in the test administration. Instruction of each group of subjects was according to the lesson plan for each group.

3.3.2.2 The Reading Comprehension Test was administered to all subjects on December 19, 2007, two days after reading instruction. Two English teachers at the English Department, Benjamarachutit School, proctored the test. The test lasted for 20 minutes. After that, the questionnaire was distributed to the subjects. The subjects then filled out the questionnaire without having the reading passage.

3.3.2.3 All answer sheets were scored manually by two test-raters, an English teacher at the English Department, Benjamarachutit School, and the researcher. A correct answer was worth 1 point and there was no penalty for a wrong answer. The maximum possible score of the test was 10.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

After scoring all items in the Reading Comprehension Test and calculating as well as scoring certain items in the questionnaire, the SPSS/PC program (Version 15) was used to compute means, standard deviations, and certain statistics tests as follows:

3.4.1 Tested the significance of difference of the two test scores between the control and the experimental groups using an independent-sample t-test.

3.4.2 Tested the significance of students' English proficiency levels and students' background knowledge in the Reading Comprehension Test by using two-way (2×2) ANOVA.