

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

The term pronoun reference has come to be used to refer to the replacement word reflecting a meaning previously expressed to make their reference immediately clear (Gorrell & Brown, 1972). A pronoun must therefore clearly mention an antecedent; otherwise, the listeners may misunderstand what the speaker is trying to convey (Brown, A.C., Nilson, J., Shaw, F.W. & Weldon, R.A., 1984). Dictated by M. A. K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan from the book “Cohesion in English”, there are mainly three forms of reference: personal, demonstrative, and comparative. Personal reference denotes the reference in term of function used in speech situations, over the category of person such as I, You, We, They, He, She, It, my, your, our, their, and so on. Demonstrative is normally the reference used in terms of location, on a scale of closeness such as this, that, these, those, and so on while the comparative is the reference used indirectly in term of identity or similarity such as other, different, same, etc.

According to the study done by various researchers e.g. Kral (2004), Almor and Nair (2007), MacMillan (2007), Freeman (1986), Haswell (1988) and Macedo (2001), pronoun reference effects students’ ability in reading comprehension, spoken language and students’ writing production. In reading, Garrod’s study (as cited in Kral, 2004, p. 17) has concluded that pronoun reference is a vital phase in sentence comprehension that is possible to occur at the initial point in reading or spoken language comprehension. Students probably have trouble interpreting the pronoun reference since the references appear to be rather ambiguous. The readers may be confused with the positions in which they have to look backward and forward tracing the referent (Nuttall, C., 1989). She also suggested the strategies to teach students how to better insight the difficulty of the pronoun reference shown in the context by having students practice locating the referents using different kinds of text.

In writing, pronoun reference has played a crucial role in making written discourse become more coherent, Gordon & Scearce (as cited in Kral, 2004, p. 8). As indicated by Greenberg, K.L. (1988), each point in writing must be coherent meaning

the writer should revise the sentences and paragraphs in an essay so that they are connected to one another in ways that support readers to track them effortlessly. To achieve this, four ways are recommended—irrelevant details should be deleted, transitions should be used, key words should be repeated and the use of pronouns to refer back to key words. In the study conducted by Alan (Maceo, A.R; *Written Discourse*, 2001), he has analyzed the problems in organizing text constructed by the students and let them rewrite that text into more satisfactory forms. He lastly proposed due to the result of his study that it is a good idea to scrutinize some language-teaching strategies to practice the elements of discourse including pronoun reference. Moreover, he has claimed that activities should consider all processing and production of verb forms, reference, repetition, lexical chains, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction.

Interestingly, as presented in the book “Teaching language in context” by Hadley (2001) the receptive skills—speaking and listening, and productive skills—reading and writing, are related to each other; for example, in order to carry out some specific purpose or function, the listener or reader might need to get all of the small details of the text for more understanding. At this point, I myself have become interested in the connection between writing and reading as Kral (2004) has suggested that learning to identify pronoun references through reading may have good effect in writing. Besides, it is noted by Guy Cook (1989) that some difficulties concerning grammatical structure at sentence level have arisen from problems with cohesion counting pronoun reference. They both affect production and processing which can lead to isolation, incoherence and inappropriateness of language. It is also pointed out by Kroll (1997) who presented some hypotheses based on the connection between writing and reading in the writing classroom that, reading is an appropriate input which supports writing acquisition. Writing can by means of reading be inferred and learned.

However, what I focus on in this paper is merely the use of personal reference registered by Halliday & Hasan (1976) because in English, personal reference represents a gender distinction which doesn't occur in all languages (such as Chinese and Thai) and according to Haswell (1988) who completed the research study of

“Error and Change in College Student Writing”, his findings revealed that the most common error found in pronoun reference section was third person.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

1.2.1 Will the students use pronoun more accurately in their writing after learning how to identify the pronoun reference through the means of reading?

1.2.2 Will there be any relationship in terms of pronoun reference between reading and writing skill?

## **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1.3.1 To investigate the relationship between pronoun reference and writing skill.

1.3.1 To find the effect of pronoun reference on writing.

## **1.4 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

Definitions of the terms of this study are the following:

Students: refers to the students who are currently studying in Matayom five at Amatyakul School.

Pronoun reference: refers to personal pronouns as indicated by Halliday & Hasen (Cohesion in English, 1976:44)

Teacher: refers to the researcher who will be teaching the subjects.

## **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

1.5.1 This study was done with the samples chosen from Matayom 5 students. Their English proficiency level ranged fair to excellent. The total subjects were 20 students out of 25 who were studying at Amatyakul School.

1.5.2 This study aims only at investigating the effect of pronoun reference on writing after learning pronoun reference through reading whether or not the students have improved their writing using more accurate pronouns.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The significance of the study is as follows;

1.6.1 If it is found that learning to identify the pronoun reference can enable students to use more accurate pronouns in their writing, it will become useful for the students to be aware of using pronouns.

1.6.2 If it is found that learning to identify the pronoun reference doesn't enable students to use more accurate pronouns in their writing, teacher can use other strategies instead of teaching pronouns through the means of reading, such as focusing on pronoun position, that often precedes the noun, have students do a lot of writing exercises, etc.

## **1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The study of pronoun reference and its effect on writing is divided into five chapters as follows;

1.7.1 Chapter one provides the details of the introduction in background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, definitions of terms, scope of the study, significance of the study and organization of the study.

1.7.2 Chapter two deals with a review of literature which was separated into 5 main subtopics—what pronoun reference is, how the pronoun reference is related to writing and reading, strategies for teaching pronoun reference through reading, the connection between writing and reading skill and related research studies.

1.7.3 Chapter 3 describes the methodology in the area of subjects, material, procedures and data analysis used in the study

1.7.4 Chapter 4 informs the results of the study

1.7.5 Chapter 5 explains the conclusions, discussions and recommendations of the study in detail, including a summary of the study, a summary of the findings, discussions, conclusions and recommendations for further research.

1.7.6 Reference presents the list of the books, articles and the names of websites used in this study.

1.7.7 Appendixes give the samples of the material used in instruction and test.