

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter begins with the summary of the study and the summary of the findings. Then, discussions of the findings are presented. Finally, recommendations for further research are offered.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to identify the language learning strategies used by M.5 students with different English achievement at Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Secondary School, to compare the language learning strategies used by M. 5 students with different English achievement and to find whether there is a relationship between students' language learning strategies and their achievement in studying English.

5.1.2 The hypotheses of this study are:

- 1) The overall use of English language strategies of M.5 Students at Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Secondary School is at the moderate level.
- 2) Students with very high and high English achievement use language learning strategies more frequently than students with medium and low English achievement.
- 3) Students with very high and high English achievement use language learning strategies differently from students with medium and low English achievement.
- 4) There is a relationship between student's language learning strategies and their achievement in studying English.

5.1.3 Subjects, Materials and Procedures

Subjects – The subjects were 168 Mathayom suksa 5 (M.5) students at Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Secondary School in Bangkok.

Materials – The research instrument in the study was the 50-item Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) questionnaire Version for Speakers of Other

Languages Learning English, developed by Rebecca L. Oxford (1990), version 7.0 (ESL/EFL).

Procedures – The SILL questionnaire was translated into Thai and then the questionnaires were distributed to students in the beginning of February, 2010. Students were requested to answer the questionnaire individually in their English class, using a 5- point Likert-scale that ranged from 1 through 5. The time limit to complete the questionnaire was 15-20 minutes.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the finding can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 With respect to hypothesis no.1: the overall use of English language learning strategies of M.5 Students at Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Secondary School is at the moderate level.

The overall use of English language learning strategies of M.5 students at Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Secondary School was at the moderate level ($\bar{X} = 3.09$ and S.D. = .54). None of six English language learning strategies were found being used in the high or low level. The most frequently used was Metacognitive strategy (3.31), followed by Compensation strategy (3.27), Cognitive strategy (3.16), and Social strategy (3.05), Affective strategy (2.87) and Memory strategy (2.81).

Regarding individual strategy use, the study reveals that 38 out of 50 strategies were reported average at the medium range and 8 strategies were used at the high level. Only 4 out of 50 strategies were reported as used at the low level. The most frequent individual strategy which students used was in the Cognitive strategy category: “I watch English language TV show spoken in English or go to the movies spoken in English.” and the least frequently individual strategy which students used was in Memory strategy category: “I use flashcards to remember new English words.”

5.2.2 With respect to hypothesis no.2: students with very high and high English achievement use language learning strategies more frequently than students with medium and low English achievement.

The study reveals that the students with high English achievement used English language learning strategies most frequently (3.17) and the mean score was

slightly higher than the mean score of students with very high English achievement (3.15), while students with medium English achievement (3.00) used almost all English language learning strategies more frequently than students with low English achievement (2.84).

5.2.3 With respect to hypothesis no. 3: students with very high and high English achievement use language learning strategies differently from students with medium and low English achievement.

The study indicates that students with high and very high English achievement used English language learning strategies: Metacognitive, Compensation, Cognitive and Memory strategies, more frequently than students with medium and low English achievement. However, students with high and medium English achievement used Affective and Social strategies more frequently than students with very high and low English achievement. Furthermore, students with low and medium English achievement used both Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies differently from high and very high English achievement.

5.2.4 With respect to hypothesis no. 4: there is a relationship between student's language learning strategies and their achievement in studying English.

The result of this study indicates that Cognitive, Compensation and Metacognitive strategies had positive correlations with students' English achievement. However, the level of correlations was relatively low. The correlation between the use of Cognitive strategies and their English achievement was .299 while the correlation between the use of Metacognitive strategies and their English achievement was .238. The correlation between the use of Compensation strategies and their English achievement was .207.

5.3 DISCUSSION

This section concerns the identification and the extent of English language learning strategies employed by M.5 students at Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Secondary School, the similarities and differences in strategies used by students with different English achievement, and the examination of whether there is a relationship between students' language learning strategies and their achievement in studying English.

5.3.1 The study reveals that M.5 students at Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Secondary School employed overall English language learning strategies in the medium range. No strategies were used at the low level. The result of the study is consistent with previous studies conducted in Thailand (e.g. Anchalee Pravitraturak (1994); Jaratsri Thepphaya (2003); Patcharaporn Kheowruenromya (1994); Pawinee Onwattana (2000); and Zhao (2009). The average medium level use of English language learning strategies reflects that M. 5 students at CUD employed English language learning strategies occasionally.

The results of the study indicate that M.5 students at CUD used Metacognitive strategy category the most, followed by Compensation, Cognitive, Social, and Affective strategy category respectively. Memory strategy category was the least frequently used. This result is consistent to the results of the study of Jaratsri Thepphaya (2003) and Narisa Tirabulkul (2006). Narisa Tirabukul (2006, p. 29) also revealed that Metacognitive strategy category was the highest strategy use of students in the MA in TEFL Program, Thammasat University. Moreover, Metacognitive strategies are the strategy category which successful learners tend to use. The good language learners employed Metacognitive strategies to assist them in assessing their needs, evaluating process and giving to their learning, so that they can manage their own learning (Ellis, 1994).

On the other hand, many studies on language learning strategies use of Thai students reported Metacognitive strategy in the second or third rank while the most frequently used strategy category was Compensation (Attapol Khamkien, 2006; Narisa Tirabulkul, 2006 Arwuth Wajasath, อารุท วาจาสิทธิ์, 1990).

It may be concluded that most subjects of this study had relatively high ability in English since 65% of the subjects had high and very high English achievement. Although 35% of the subjects had medium and low English achievement, they might be more proficient than students with the same average grade from any other schools in Bangkok. Since Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Secondary School is a laboratory school for teacher students and instructors of the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, most CUD instructors hold at least Master Degrees in teaching or related fields. Therefore, the teaching methodology and curriculum of CUD probably promote students' efficient learning.

5.3.2 The study reveals that students with very high and high English achievement use language learning strategies more frequently than students with medium and low English achievement. The finding of this study is consistent with the studies of Nyikos and Oxford, 1993 (as cited in Chamot, 2001, p. 30); Green and Oxford, 1995 (as cited in Larson-Freeman, 2001, p. 22) and Griffith, 2003 (as cited in Griffiths, 2004, p. 13) that the higher proficiency learners use a greater variety and more frequency of learning strategies than lower proficiency learners.

Moreover, it seems that successful language learners have the ability to orchestrate and combine particular types of language learning strategies in effective ways, according to their own learning needs (Oxford, 1990). Teachers may introduce those strategies used more frequently by successful learners to poor learners, so that the lower achievers can benefit from the effective strategies used by good language learners to improve their English proficiency.

5.3.3 Students with very high and high English achievement use Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies differently from students with medium and low English achievement at significant level of 0.05. The result of the study is consistent with the finding of Arwuth Wajasath (อรุณ วาจาสดิย์ม 2533, p. 79) that four groups of students classified by the grades they received (such as A, B, C and D) used learning strategies significantly differently at 0.05 level. However, Arwuth Wajasath's study indicated the use of Cognitive, Metacognitive and Compensation strategies was reported to be used differently by students with different grades.

5.3.4 There is a relationship between English learning strategies and students' achievement in English. Cognitive, Compensation and Metacognitive strategies had positive correlations at significant level 0.01. It can be assumed that the more frequently students used these language learning strategies, the higher grade they gained. The result of the study is consistent with some previous studies (e.g. Griffiths, 2003 (as cited in Griffiths, 2004, p. 13 and Mullins, 1992). Mullins indicated that Metacognitive strategies use correlated with students' language course grades, while Compensation strategies use correlated with language placement scores. However, both high and low English achievement students used Compensation strategies more frequently than other strategies probably because of the ease of use.

In order to facilitate student's language learning, English teachers require the understanding of language learning strategies and to become more aware of their students' language learning strategies. It can be useful for less successful learners to use English language learning strategies to assist them in learning English effectively and become more successful learners.

5.3.5 Collecting data using the SILL questionnaires is the easiest way and the SILL questionnaires by Oxford, 1990 is the standardized measure with version for ESL/EFL (Chamot, 2001, p. 27). Using the SILL questionnaires has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are the ease of administration, since the questionnaires can be distributed to a large group of participants. Next, the participants feel at ease to report answers regarding the use of English language learning strategies by rating the frequency which they use a particular strategy on a Likert scale. However, there are some disadvantages which are that the SILL may not cover all aspects of strategies used in learning English and the participants may not understand the intent of a question. The problems of misinterpretation may occur. The participants may answer according to their perception of the "right answer"; therefore the questionnaire may not fully elicit all of a respondent's strategies. Chamot (2001) stated that "Learning strategies are directed toward a goal and as a mental procedure" (p. 25). Consequently, they may not be directly observed, though some strategies may result in specific behaviors.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be drawn from the discussion above.

5.4.1 M.5 students at CUD applied overall English language learning strategies at the moderate level. None of six English language learning strategies was found being used in the high or low level. Metacognitive strategies were the most frequently use followed by Compensation strategies, Cognitive strategies, Social strategies and Affective strategies. The least frequently use was Memory strategies.

5.4.2 M.5 students with very high and high English achievement at CUD used language learning strategies more frequently than students with medium and low English achievement.

5.3.3 M. 5 students with very high and high English achievement at CUD employed Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies differently from students with medium and low English achievement at significant level of 0.05.

5.3.4 There is a relationship between English learning strategies and students' achievement in English. Cognitive, Compensation and Metacognitive strategies had positive correlations at significant level 0.01. It can be assumed that the more frequently students used these English language learning strategies, the higher grade they acquired. Therefore, less successful learners should be encouraged to use English language learning strategies to assist them in learning English effectively so they may become more successful learners. However, a wide range of English language learning strategies should be employed, not only the specific strategy.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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

5.5.1 Replications of this study should be conducted in other academic institutes with different levels and a larger group of participants.

5.5.2 The students' raw scores from English courses or the scores from the standardized test such as TEFL, TOEIC, CU-TEP and TU-GET should be employed to find the relationship between the English achievement and English language learning strategies use.

5.5.3 The investigation should include more procedures or combine various qualitative approaches such as think-aloud protocol, in-depth interview, observation and diaries in collecting data in order to obtain more detailed descriptions of participants' use of English language learning strategies. Moreover, longitudinal studies will provide more information about the use of English language learning strategies over a period of time.

5.5.4. The study of the effect of instruction on language learning, outside class learning strategies, and the relationship between English exposure and English proficiency may enhance students' language learning.

5.5.5 English learning strategies depend on a large number of factors such as educational setting, teaching methodology and learning tasks. (Oxford, 1990)

Therefore, research on the factors contributing to students' choice of language learning strategy use and what factors contribute to students' English learning achievement would also be interesting to conduct.