

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

This chapter presents a summary of the major finding of the study. The discussion of the suggestions as well as recommendations for further research is also included.

#### 5.1 Summary of the findings

The first research question addressed in this study is:

##### **1. What Communicative-Language-Teaching classroom factors motivate students from Myanmar to greater communications in oral interaction in the English learning classroom?**

According to the data collected, it was found that most of the teacher-student interaction occurred as a result of teacher's initiated questions. At the same time, student-student interaction occurred when they were assigned group work, pair work and role plays. It was apparent that students interacted with their teacher or each other freely although they sometimes tended to use Burmese language with bilingual teachers when they found difficulty in expressing their ideas. While learning with English native teacher, they also used Burmese language during group discussion or exchanging ideas for role play. However, when they had to express their ideas or do role play in front of the class, they just spoke out in English, and did not use even a word of Burmese language. That is why using Burmese language sometimes could help students to prepare speaking English and it was one of the factors that motivated students to participate in oral interaction. If they were not allowed to use it, it would be very difficult for them to participate in oral interaction without preparation due to their low proficiency level.

Another factor was the use of task types and activities. If the activity was of their interest, they tended to participate actively but also had to be aware of the number of students participating in group work. If there were more than three in a group, maybe one was silent and that task was not effective. It was however expected that all the students would make some output. The type of teacher questions was also important. Instead of asking what teachers wanted, they had to consider what student would want to answer, especially English native teacher could not ask them complex questions or the boring one. If they were not interested or did not understand, they would keep

silent. It could also happen that, if the student was introverted and he or she had language anxiety, it could also be a barrier to participating in classroom activities. Thus teacher's facilitation and behavior also played an important role in encouraging students' oral interaction.

In addition, materials employed in the classrooms are one thing to take account of. The school curriculum was set by the program administrators. They used different text books but the teachers also had freedom to use authentic materials. Articles related to the student's study of online sources, novels concerning migrant issues, newspapers, magazines from the school library, modern songs which were of students' interest were used time to time in the classroom. According to the interview data, both the teachers and students appreciated those kinds of authentic materials better than the text book. However, they also had to study text books set by the program too as it was the school's policy. The students claimed that they were more or less satisfied with the materials employed. Though they appreciated it, it would sometimes be beyond their knowledge and difficult to produce output because of their limited knowledge of vocabulary. Activities for them became top-down and they had to take time to discuss that kind of topic at once. Thus, the type of task and activities, topic of the lesson, classroom atmosphere, choice of materials, understanding students' English background level, their attitude towards learning English, teachers' behaviour and personalities could be factors that influence students' oral interaction in a Communicative Language Teaching classroom in Beam Education Foundation. The second research question addressed in this study is:

## **2. How can teachers encourage learners to participate in oral interactions?**

Providing situations for students to participate orally, the teachers showed that teachers' behavior provide optimal conditions for the students to participate in activities enthusiastically. Teachers tried to pay attention not only to the whole class but also to individual students, since there were a maximum 12 students in the classroom and all did not attend classes regularly. This condition of few students in the classroom meant that the teacher could give full attention to individual learners. Both English native teacher and bilingual teacher provided enough support to those who were not ready to participate orally. They created a friendly atmosphere with students in the classroom; they acted as facilitators and not teacher who had authority, gave example of construction of sentences, giving ideas of different situations and people, explained synonyms, drew pictures on the board, showed the map in the classroom, gave positive corrective feedback on their pronunciation occasionally, gave students enough time to think or discuss, patiently waited for the students' responses, encouraged the students' answers by clapping or giving complimentary remarks and managed different activities on learners' behalf to ensure that they were not bored during teaching time.

As the teachers were able to provide comfortable techniques of questioning, correcting errors and modifying input, the students enjoyed learning and were eager to express output for oral interaction. All the observation data, questionnaires and interview data showed that students were satisfied with teachers' facilitation though each teacher used different techniques and had different personalities. During observation, students responded to the teachers willingly with smiling faces and they participated in group work, pair work, and role play actively. Again in the questionnaire data, 19 students appreciated those kinds of communicative learning activities though their choices were slightly different for each activity. The last data of interview proved that those kinds of activities encouraged them to speak out more and made them to have confidence as the teachers' behavior and personalities were very friendly, encouraging and helped them build up their confidence. As a result, it can be concluded that the teacher's behavior is very important in supporting students to participate in oral interactions.

## **5.2 Suggestions for Further Research**

In investigating factors that motivate students' participation in oral interaction in a Communicative-Language-Teaching classroom, this research study also observed the use of more than one language in the classroom. It was assumed one of the motivating factors that encourage student to interact more in the English language teaching classroom. However, the investigation regarding the extent to which mother tongue could be used in a Communicative Language Teaching classroom, is suggested to future researchers.

In addition, all the 24 students in these two classrooms were ethnic minorities from Burma and they are trilingual students. The majorities are Shan, and the others were Karen, Karani, Kachin, and Lahu. They speak their own language as mother tongue; Burmese is their second language and now studying English as a third language. It was noticed that when they were requested to answer questionnaires and volunteer in interview data, they had to be assisted with translations before they could understand. Although bilingual speaking teachers sometimes helped them in answering their questions in Burmese in the classroom, it was still doubtful whether they understood fully or not.

It could further enhance our understanding of the teaching-learning situation of ethnic minority students from Myanmar studying English to conduct studies on the possible benefits of using the Burmese language in class. Although in the present study English has been framed as a second language, some of the participating students may well have been bilingual speakers even before starting to learn English. In Myanmar, ethnic minorities learn both the Burmese language and their 'mother tongue' (and often also, to some extent, other local vernaculars) through informal acquisition at

home. When they start learning English at school, they already know perhaps 70% of two or more languages. For the participating students, therefore, the present investigation was more specifically a study in teaching English as a third language to bilinguals/multilinguals. While the study of metalinguistic awareness in multilinguals has been largely confined to Western societies (see Chapter 2, Jessner 1999), it would be interesting and advantageous if comparable research were conducted in the multilingual societies of South-East Asia.

As a further point for future study, it is worth mentioning that students were not satisfied with all the learning materials used – especially the text books. In order more fully to meet the goals of the communicative, learner-centered classroom – to the benefit of the teachers, the students and the school – the materials should be subjected to systematic evaluation.

PAYAP UNIVERSITY