

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents the summary of the study, discussion of the results, conclusion, implications and recommendations.

#### Summary of the Study

As has been noted earlier, the main problem that affects the learning process in Thailand is a teacher factor, particularly the teacher-centered system which has regrettably made students uncomfortable, if not tense in learning a new language. The teacher should have been the main person who would help the students realize the importance of learning a foreign or second language which can serve as their language of wider communication, such as the English language. Thus, the second language teacher should make the class enjoyable, not frightening. A supportive teacher surely makes a difference in the class. An approachable teacher should have a good relationship with students, which in turn, leads to a comfortable atmosphere in the class. In general, Thai teachers tend to put themselves on a higher level than their students. They expect the students to respect and believe in everything they say. They play favoritism with their students. Normally, the teachers like students who do well in the class because they make the class easy to control. Regrettably, students who do not do well are neglected, if not openly insulted or criticized, and even physically maltreated in some cases.

This study has tried to point out that teachers should keep in mind that every student is a human being, just like the teacher; therefore, they should be treated like human beings, not left alone to sink or swim under the pressure and demands of school life, without caring.

Teachers should treat all students equally and fairly in the class. Most of the time, students have fear toward teachers because they are made to think teachers have power over them.

Teacher-centered education is still the main system in Thailand. In moving toward the learner-centered system, the teachers need to change their perspective considerably regarding the role of teachers. Teachers should realize that learning would be more effective when they understand the needs of their learners. They should realize that they should change their relationships with their students into a positive one in order to improve learning effectiveness. Many teachers like to show power over students. They believe that the teacher can control the students if they are afraid of the teacher, and consequently, students would behave well if afraid. They do not realize that while they might be able to use fear on younger students, this would generally create negative attitudes toward the teacher or toward learning in general. In fact, on the whole, inflicting fear on the students is counter-productive.

Furthermore, teachers do not consider how their students learn and how they could apply their knowledge in real life. They focus more on making the students perform well in tests. Therefore, students have no encouragement or ambition to acquire a further level of English education. They only focus on passing the examinations, and not going to see the teacher anymore after the course. This situation is due to lack of human relationships between teachers and students.

A large number of parents are concerned about the capabilities of many teachers. Consequently, they are willing to invest in home study for their children in order to avoid the problem brought about by teacher inadequacies. However, Thailand is not open to this system yet.

Grades in general play a very important role in motivating the learners' success. Good grades could lead to further education and careers. However, it cannot be certainly claimed that the students who get the highest score will be the most successful ones. This study also attempted to employ a no-grade context in order to discern the quality of learning in such a condition. Hence, this researcher attempted to investigate the effects of these two facts on learning, namely; (1) positive human relationship between the teacher and the students, and (2) teaching-learning without using grades.

Throughout this study, the researcher has attempted to fulfill the following objectives, namely: (1) to find out if positive human relationships in a no-grade context can improve the oral facility of the learners in the classroom; (2) to find out if positive human relationships in a no-grade context can help the learners to communicate more effectively in the real world; and (3) to find out students' opinions on whether grades as part of the learning process affect the students' learning.

The findings are that the students' performance regarding oral communication in the classroom and in real-life has improved. They have a chance to communicate with speakers of other languages than Thai who attend the church. Their opinions regarding grades show that they are not affected by grading. Instead, they believe that a grade is the way that they can measure their abilities. If they get low grades, that means they have to work harder in order to improve themselves and get good grades.

The participants of the study were 20 students from COC, Chiangmai, Thailand. The majority (17) of them were ethnic language minority students. They share the same goal and motivation which is to work in a Christian ministry.

The instruments used in this study were: (1) informal interview; (2) the pre-test and post-test to find out the differences of students' oral facility before and after the course; (3)

questionnaires to find out students' experiences in three different English classes with three English teachers; (4) questionnaires to find out students' attitudes toward the same three English teachers, toward the English classes and toward English language; (5) question-answer to find out the students' opinions toward grading; (6) a self-evaluation (checklist) to check students' understanding after each lesson; (7) the interview rating (Likert scale) from Harris (1969) used for analyzing the pre- and post-tests; (8) the t-test was used to calculate the pre- and post-tests; (9) a text book **Voyages: Getting Started**; (10) authentic materials created by the teacher (researcher) such as pictures, post cards, and others.

The instruments used were sufficient to get the needed information to support the assumption of the study.

The methodologies employed in the teaching were TPR and the communicative approach. TPR was used for the first six hours of teaching to help the learners get familiar with the lessons, teacher, atmosphere, and build relationship between the teacher and learners. Later, the communicative approach was introduced. Some speakers of other languages than Thai were invited to the class to make the lessons more exciting. Moreover, songs were used in order to create a relaxed atmosphere and for the students to learn vocabulary. Music was used as motivation for them because they could gain more confidence in attending English worship since they use the same music. An expert musician was invited to play music that the students enjoyed very much. The students were delighted by this time because they could practice singing in English, and thereby look forward to attending the English service on Sunday more confidently.

Furthermore, extracurricular activities and informal situations were used which the researcher found essentially in this study. The teacher and the students' relationships improved a great deal when they had a chance to do activities (especially social activities)

together outside of the classroom. The students feel comfortable when they have contact with the teacher outside of the classroom because they experience different roles.

The findings in this study are: (1) a positive human relationship between the teacher and students is essential in teaching. The learners need a teacher who is kind, approachable, encouraging, and is comfortable for students to be with; (2) the no-grade context did not affect the students' performances. The students were used to the formal educational system in which grading is the main measurement. Therefore, they did not think that the no-grade system is helpful in their learning; (3) a positive human relationship is a direct way of creating a real positive relationship with learners. It also helps to reduce behavior problems because the students want the teacher, whom they like, to see that they are doing well and are good students. (4) When the students have an opportunity to communicate with speakers of other languages than Thai during the class time, it would become easier for them to say the same thing in authentic situations outside the classroom. (5) A negative attitude toward an unfavorable (unlikable) teacher creates a negative attitude toward the subject, which leads to a negative effect on students' further education and life in general. On the other hand, an experience with a favorable (likable) teacher leads to positive attitudes toward the subject, further education, and hopefully, toward life in general.

#### **Discussion of the results**

The following will discuss the results of this study: (1) the interview before the course; (2) the results of the pre-test and the post-test; (3) the students' experiences with teachers in English classes; (4) the students' attitudes toward English teachers, toward English classes and towards the English language; and (5) the students' opinions regarding grading.

### *The interview*

The students were delighted to give information openly regarding their previous experiences in English classes and with English teachers at their former schools. The majority have experienced cruel teachers or teachers who did not care whether or not they learned something. Many of the students felt that the teachers looked down on them because they are from minority language groups. They gave the same response to the question : what kind of teacher they wanted to have. They want a teacher who is kind and would treat them equally with other non-ethnic students. They want a teacher who cares and gives them attention whether they learn or not learn. They also want to have a comfortable atmosphere in the class. Therefore, the class, provided by this study, was successful and the teacher was the kind of teacher that the students wanted to have.

### *The result of the pre-test and the post-test*

The results of the tests confirmed the researcher's expectation that the instruction of this study would help the learners to improve their oral skills. The tests were conducted in oral interviews. The t-test was used to analyze the results because it is the most significant test for analyzing a small sample. The post-test result has higher score in all areas, namely: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The results indicate that the students' pronunciation improved even though it did not show very much progress because pronunciation is a difficult area to improve. The greatest improvement was in their comprehension. Besides, their fluency also improved much, which indicates that the instruction was effective. The students find the grammar part difficult, but they also improved in that area. The learners also improved quite much in vocabulary, which

indicates that these students perform as normal language learners. It is accepted that many factors are involved such as time and effort to improve this area.

#### *The Students' Experiences*

The students' responded concerning their experiences with three teachers, namely: the teacher who is conducting this study (Tx), the most recent previous teacher (T2), and the former teacher before the most recent one (T1). The results show that the students experienced an enjoyable class with Tx. They liked the class and wanted to participate in the activities. None of them experienced punishment with Tx. On the other hand, the students' experiences with their T2s and T1s show that they found the classes only sometimes or seldom enjoyable. They also experienced corporal punishment such as being hit on their hands by both teachers.

#### *The Students' Attitudes*

The Students' attitudes toward English teachers, toward English classes and toward English language show that: the majority of the students rated Tx as very encouraging, very helpful, and very approachable, while they rated T2s and T1s more with rather and somewhat encouraging, helpful or approachable. This result indicates that the students learn well when they have positive attitudes toward their teacher.

#### *The Students' Opinions Regarding Grades*

The responses to the questions indicate that the students do not mind being graded in their studies. In fact, they thought that grading would help them to improve in their studies because they would work harder when they find out they get low grades.

### Conclusion

Positive Human Relationship made a difference in teaching and learning. The result of the study shows that the students have improved in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension after the course provided by this study. The teacher who is conducting this research has a good relationship with the students. The students feel comfortable communicating with the teacher as well as with each other. There is no gap between them. Furthermore, the students realized that they are having fun while learning. They are also aware of the fact that education is not necessarily limited to sitting in the classroom, listening to the teacher, and finally taking an examination.

Even though the participants did not think that grading affects their learning, they have experienced a better atmosphere in learning. They have discovered a teaching-learning situation that enables them to use their knowledge acquired from the class in real life. They finally found a teacher that has qualities they have been wanting. Therefore, this study could conclude that the students are happier and learn better with a teacher with whom they have a positive human relationship.

Moreover, it can also be concluded that the students' role before the course was limited to simply listening to the teacher while the teacher was a controller. The students performed according to the teacher's commands. After the course, the students perceived the teacher's role as a facilitator, friend and counselor. In this changing role of teacher, the students are encouraged to participate in all activities.

In addition, the researcher has realized that the participants of this study share the same goal and motivation, that is, to work in a Christian ministry. Therefore, it may be added that religion may be an imbedded factor that supports the learning process.



## **Implications and Recommendations**

### *Implications*

“Student-centered” education has been a current issue in Thailand. It is a good sign that many teachers and other people who are involved in education have become aware of its importance. However, in practice, it brings fear to many teachers that they would lose control of and the respect of their students. For centuries, Thailand’s educational system has been very teacher-centered, therefore, the change (learner-centered system) is hoped to make an impact on the Thai education system.

Positive human relationship is a crucial factor that will enable the student-centered context to work more effectively. From the result of the study, the researcher hopes that positive human relationship could enable Thai teachers to have a new view of teaching, and start to create an enjoyable environment of teaching and learning so that the students would not only learn the English language effectively, but also enjoy using the living language outside of the classroom.

### *Recommendations*

In view of the implications of the findings of this research, the researcher would like to recommend some ideas or actions to be taken by the following:

1. To the Ministry of Education. It should help teachers and school administrators to look more closely at the learners and what makes them motivated to learn. Schools should stop making rules that have to be followed strictly, without considering the impact of such rigidity on the learners and the learning process. The ministry should support more people in doing further research on this issue as well as finding ways to

develop strategies by employing positive human relationship among teachers. For instance, they could hold training seminars by inviting people who are expert and experienced in positive human relationship to train teachers.

2. To school administrators: they should educate the teachers more on their roles as well as their students' roles. Help them to be more open minded to the needs for wider communication, so that they would be aware of current changes in education. For instance, send them to a special training program.
3. To the teachers: teachers should have a new perspective of the current educational context. They should be aware of the current changes and adjust their perspectives in order to make the teaching-learning context more enjoyable. Teachers should reduce the social hierarchy or gap between them and their students, so that their relationships would improve to a positive one.
4. To the students: they should also be aware of the new learning context and adjust themselves to the new system. They should be active in finding strategies of learning more effectively because people around them are supportive and would place them at the center of education. They should not take advantage of the student-centered system in a negative way, but take it to empower themselves as learners to get the most out of the learning process and opportunities.
5. To the parents: they should also pay closer attention to education and try to get involved in and cooperate with schools so that their children could benefit to the highest degree possible. Many parents leave the responsibility for education entirely to the schools without realizing that the "home" is the "heart" and is the best motivating factor of learning. When the students are happy at home, and the parents

understand and support what they are learning, the children will surely learn more effectively.

6. To the general society/ organizations/ other institutions: if we aim to see a reformation of the Thai educational context, everybody should take part in the responsibility of providing our learners wholesome and congenial learning situations.

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