

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in order to investigate the reading problems of Second year English major students who enrolled in AE203. The research designs and methods are discussed as follows:

1. Subject
2. Instruments
3. Data collection
4. Data Analysis

3.1 Subjects

The subjects of this study are the English major students who are required to take course AE203: Reading I in the first semester of the 2003 academic year. The samples are selected from the population by using simple random sampling. Two sections only are selected; one is taught by native speaker and the other is taught by non-native speaker. Fifty samples are asked to do the reading comprehension test, to complete the questionnaire and to be interviewed in order to obtain what their reading skills problems are. Twenty-five students are selected from the total number of samples. They are the students who failed the reading comprehension test. The others are drawn from the total number of samples.

Furthermore, the formal instructors are also to be interviewed after teaching this course for two months.

3.2 Instruments

Three types of instruments, reading comprehension test, questionnaire and interviews were employed. The details of each instrument are discussed as follows:

3.2.1 A Reading Comprehension Test

It is used to investigate students' reading abilities in four reading comprehension skills. Those skills include identifying main ideas, guessing the meaning, making inferences and drawing conclusion. A multiple-choice test is designed to cover the reading comprehension skills. The difficulty level of the test is similar to the text in AE203 course. Since the researcher does not know the students' level of skills, choosing the standardized test is appropriate with the students' level. "Entrance Examination" is selected as a test because this examination test the overall knowledge and most students are familiar with this examination. Therefore, this test can help check the students' reading abilities. Regarding the marking scheme, one point is given to a correct answer and zero is given to an incorrect answer, no answer, or more than one answer per test item. The complete reading comprehension test is shown as in appendix A.

3.2.1.1 Stages of constructing and developing reading comprehension test

1. Study the course description and objectives of AE203
2. Search and study textbook, and research the theories on how to construct a test
3. Select reading passages from the entrance examination
4. Request specialists to check the appropriateness of the text

3.2.2 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is used to survey the reading problems in AE203 course. The questionnaire consists of 27 items. The Likert scales, a summated rating method is employed in the question to check the students' attitude and opinion towards the reading course (Seligar, 1997, p.173). The five point- Likert scales used for questions are as follows:

1= I have no experience

2= Strongly Disagree

3= Disagree

4= Agree

5= Strongly agree

The reading strategy part has been taken from the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS). SORS is an instrument used to collect information about the various techniques the subjects use when they read academic materials in English (such as textbooks, journal articles, class notes, etc).

Each of the statements use a 5- point Likert scale ranging from 1-5 and each number means the following:

'1' means that 'I never or almost never do this'.

'2' means that 'I do this only occasionally'.

'3' means that 'I sometimes do this'. (About 50% of time)

'4' means that 'I usually do this'.

'5' means that 'I always or almost always do this'.

(Mokharti & Sheorey, 2002)

The subjects are asked to read each statement and check the number that applies to them. The results indicate the frequency with which they use the reading strategy implied in the statement. Thus, the higher the number, the more frequent the use of the strategy concerned.

To minimize confusion having to do with language, and to avoid errors in data, a Thai version of the question was created and given to the samples. Both the Thai and English version can be seen in appendix C and D. The researcher should be in the class to check whether the students complete all questions or not. If they do not complete all items, the researcher can ask them to complete it (Seligar, 1997, p.173; Jamornmarn, 1997, p.74).

3.2.2.1 Stages of constructing and developing the questionnaire

1. Set the objectives of the questionnaire
2. Decide how to construct the questionnaire and how to analyze the statistics
3. Review the literature and the other theses to state the questions
4. Write the questions

5. Proof-read
6. Try the questions with the other students who are not the part of sample group establish the validity
7. Find the weaknesses in the questions and correct them
8. Rewrite the questionnaire

3.2.3 The Interview

The teachers and the students of the reading course are interviewed in order to assess what the reading problems of the students are and also how they can get the answers for each item. The questions in the interview are open-ended questions. The students are interviewed after they finish the reading comprehension test. The teachers are interviewed after teaching for two months. The interview questions are shown in appendix F. A semi-structured interview is used in this research (Siligar, 1997, p.167).

3.2.3.1 Stages of constructing and developing the interview

1. Set the objectives of the interview
2. Select the questions from the questionnaire
3. Set the questions
4. Tape-record and take notes from the interview

3.3 Data Collection

There were three types of data collecting instruments: (1) the reading comprehension test will be given. This test was distributed in the first period of the semester; (2) the questionnaire was be given on the first week after completing the test to investigate the students' opinions on the reading course; (3) the interview was used when the students finished both instruments questionnaire and reading comprehension test. The teachers' interviews was recorded after they finish teaching for 2 months.

3.4 Data Analysis

The scores was gathered from the reading comprehension test to analyze the students' abilities in reading skills. This result will reveal the students' reading problems. The SPSS program interpreted the students' opinion (the statistic Package for Social Science). The mean levels of the scores of the statements are specified as follows:

Scales	Level	Range
1	No Experience	1.00-1.50
2	Strongly Disagree	1.51-2.50
3	Disagree	2.51-3.50
4	Agree	3.51-4.50
5	Strongly agree	4.51-5.00

(Kannasoot, 1982, p.41)

The mean levels of the reading strategies has been taken from The Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS). The mean levels of the scores of statement are specified as follows:

Range	Interpretation
3.50 or higher	High
2.50 – 3.40	Moderate
2.40 or lower	Low

(Mokharti & Sheorey,2002)

The data from the teachers' and students' interview was recorded and analyzed in the written form. The researcher analyzed the data from the observation tasks to determine causes for students' problems with reading.