

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, implications of the study, and recommendations for further research.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The results of this study answer the four research questions and can be summarized as follows:

1. The students under investigation had mixed learning styles and different levels of preference for each style. They strongly preferred to learn by *analytic* style, preferred to learn by *visual*, *intolerant of ambiguity*, *global*, *group*, *auditory*, *tactile*, *tolerant of ambiguity*, *impulsive*, *reflective*, and *kinesthetic* styles, and moderately preferred to learn by *individual* style. The students' learning style profile consisted of four correlates of learning styles, ranging from the correlate preferred strongly to that preferred moderately: **authority-oriented**, **concrete**, **communicative**, and **analytic**.

2. The teachers in this study also taught with mixed teaching styles with different levels of practice of each style. They mostly taught by these two styles: *analytic* and *tolerant of ambiguity*. The teachers also frequently taught through *intolerant of ambiguity*, *tactile*, *group*, *visual*, *impulsive*, *reflective*, and *global* styles. In addition, they moderately taught through *individual*, *auditory*, and *kinesthetic*

styles. The teachers' teaching style profile consisted of four correlates of teaching styles, ranging from the most practiced correlate to the moderately practiced: **authority-oriented, analytic, communicative, and concrete.**

3. The results show that there was a significant congruence between learning and teaching styles at a moderate level ($r= 0.475, p<0.01$). That is, to a certain extent, the teachers' teaching styles matched the students' preferred ways of learning, but the congruence between the low achievers' learning styles and their teachers' teaching styles was higher than that between the high achievers' learning styles and their teachers' teaching styles.

4. There was no relationship of the congruence between learning and teaching styles to the English language achievement ($p<0.05$.)

5.2 Implications of the Study

The findings about the learning and teaching style profiles, the congruence between learning and teaching styles, and the relationship between learning and teaching styles to the English language achievement will be beneficial and valuable for teachers of English in the four following ways.

1. The findings that the students under investigation liked the authority-oriented correlate of learning styles in which they were spoon-fed and the teachers did teach them in corresponding way indicated that something must be done because this correlate of learning styles usually promoted undesirable characteristics of language learners: quiet, inactive, introverted, and dependent. A large number of Thai students are familiar with the traditional approach which is authority-oriented and the teachers also are used to teaching with that approach. It's time for a change in both learning

and teaching. That is, the students have to improve their learning habits and adopt more communicative learning style. They have to think, to do, to search for knowledge, and to communicate more. The teachers' roles have to change from spoon-feeders to facilitators, helpers, and observers. This may help students become successful language learners.

2. The findings that the congruence between the students' learning styles and the teachers' teaching styles in low achievers group was relatively higher than that in high achievers one implies that the low achievers were more satisfied with their teachers' styles because they had more chance to learn in their preferred ways. It seemed that the high achievers' learning styles were less focused on in the classroom. They seemed to have to learn in the way they did not prefer. To make all students in a class satisfied with learning and teaching, teachers should help all students to learn in the ways they like and eventually lead them to adopt more effective learning styles.

3. Though we found the congruence between learning styles and teaching styles, such congruence did not relate to the English language achievement because most students had low proficiency. Teachers should find other ways to increase students' proficiency and achievement and have their students learn at their own pace. For the low achievers, the teachers should suggest them to work harder inside and outside class, doing extra-curricular activities such as going to the library, watching soundtrack movies, listening to English songs or doing other activities which will facilitate the development of their language skills. This may help them learn more happily so their proficiency and achievement may increase. For the high achievers, this study showed that their achievement still increased in spite of low congruence between learning and teaching styles. If possible, the teachers should teach the high achievers differently from the low ones so that they can learn in their preferred ways. This may significantly improve the achievement in the high achiever group.

4. If possible, the school should place students into different ability groups and with just a small number of student with similar learning styles in one class. So the teachers can handle the class more easily and design activities to suit the particular group of learners. Then, the teachers can guide and advise all students in a class. In reality, if classes are still big and consist of students with different abilities and learning styles, the teachers need to work harder in order to cope with the situation, which is rather difficult to do.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings of this study, recommendations for further research can be made as follows:

1. Learners' and Teachers' Profiles

In this study, the students' learning style profile consisted of four correlates of learning styles: *authority-oriented*, *concrete*, *communicative*, and *analytic* while the teachers' teaching style profile consisted of four correlates of teaching styles: *authority-oriented*, *analytic*, *communicative*, and *concrete*. Both the learners and the teachers were in the same *authority-oriented* correlate of styles, which reflects the ELT situation at Songkhla Business Administration College. The teaching and learning situation here may be based on the traditional method rather than communicative approach. For further research, it is interesting to investigate what approach in ELT is mostly used in Vocational schools and elsewhere in Songkhla and to find ways to cultivate communicative approach in language teaching in vocational education.

2. Level of Matching between Learning and Teaching Styles

In this study, the subjects were only from Songkhla Business Administration College. It may be useful to investigate students' learning styles and teachers' teaching styles in other institutions and compare them to see if there is any congruence between learning and teaching styles.

3. Relationship of the Congruence between Learning and Teaching Styles to the English Language Achievement

Since we found no relationship of the congruence between learning and teaching styles to the English language achievement, a study should be conducted among groups of high proficiency students to see if congruence between their learning styles and their teachers' teaching styles exists.

However, despite this finding, we still believe that it is important that teachers give learners opportunities and some freedom in exercising their preferred ways of learning. They will probably do better than those who find themselves forced to learn in ways which are not their preferred ones. In addition, teachers should try every possible way to adjust their own teaching styles to meet the students' preferred ways of learning, or at least, they should respond to the learning styles most common to the students in the class.