CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology used in this study. It consists of four parts:

3.1 subjects of the study

3.2 research instruments

3.3 description of respondents

3.4 data analysis

This study employed survey and observation as the methods to collect data. The following sections describe the details of the methodology used.

3.1 Subjects of the Study

1. The population of English teachers who taught in Matthayomsuksa 4 and Matthayomsuksa 5 from 39 government secondary schools in Songkhla in the academic year 2004 was taken as the subjects of this study. They were 156 English teachers in educational regions 1, 2 and 3 (See Appendix F: Schools Profile). All were asked to respond to the questionnaire.

2. Three classes of students were selected for observation to investigate classroom practice, one from each of the three educational regions in Songkhla. Matthayomsuksa 5/5 at Mahavajiravudh School was a representative of Educational Region 1. Matthayomsuksa 4/1 at Hat Yai Pittayakom School was a representative of Educational Region 2, and Matthayomsuksa 4/2 at Kobkulwittayakom School was a representative of Educational Region 3. Each class comprised 30-40 students. Classes met 2 periods a week and each period was 50 minutes.

3.2 Research Instruments

A five-point Likert Scale questionnaire and field-notes were used to collect data for the study. They can be described as follows.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was designed and mailed to all Mattayomsuksa 4 and Mattayomsuksa 5 English teachers in government secondary schools in Songkhla to gather information about their views on the 2001 English curriculum, the implementation of the curriculum and problems in English teaching according to the new curriculum. In the construction of the questionnaire, a preliminary study was conducted to gather information for constructing questionnaire items. Then the questionnaire was tried out and the results were used to revise it. The detailed description is shown in the following sections.

3.2.1.1 Preliminary Study

Before the researcher started constructing the questionnaire, the related literature and the 2001 curriculum were reviewed to gather details about the role of English in the globalization era, the curriculum statements and English teaching problems in the past. These were used for writing items in the questionnaire. Moreover, five English teachers in Matthayomsuksa 4 and Matthayomsuksa 5 from Mahawajiravudh School, Woranarichaloem School and Nawamintarachutit Taksin School in Songkhla were interviewed informally. They were asked to express their opinions about 2001 curriculum and to identify factors causing problems in their teaching under 2001 curriculum. The information obtained from the literature review and the informal interview was used as a basis in writing items to be asked in the questionnaire.

3.2.1.2 Questionnaire Construction

A drafted questionnaire was written based on the statements in the curriculum (8 standards and 28 benchmarks provided in the curriculum), the information from the interviews and related research. The questionnaire written in Thai was divided into three parts. Part 1 consisted of 2 main items related to teachers' views on the curriculum statements (No. 1, Items 1.1-1.4), and their perception of their implementation (No. 2, Items 2.1-2.4). The statements written in part 1 were based on the 8 standards (See pp. 12-15). The content of items 2.1-2.4 was paralleled to that of items 1.1-1.4 in order to see the relationship between the teachers' views on the curriculum and their perception of its implementation. In this part, the teachers were asked to rank the rating scale from 5 "strongly agree" to 1 "strongly disagree" according to their views on the curriculum and from 5 "very high degree of implementation" to 1 "very low degree of implementation" according to their perception of the curriculum.

Part 2 consisted of 15 items related to teachers' perception of the curriculum in practice (Items 1-15). This part of the questionnaire was constructed as an elaboration of part 1, no. 2 to further investigate the extent of implementation. Therefore, the items in this part were based on the 28 benchmarks provided in the curriculum (See pp. 12-15). Specifically, these 15 items concerning teaching methodology and activities used in classroom were specified by Phiboonchol (2001) according to the results from her analysis of the 2001 English curriculum for students at the higher secondary level. In this part, teachers were asked to respond to the five-point rating scale from 5 "very high degree of implementation" to 1 "very low degree of implementation".

Part 3 consisted of 19 items related to problems obstructing the implementation of the curriculum (Items 1-19). The teachers were asked to rank the rating scale from 5 "most serious problem" to 1 "least serious problem" to see the degree of seriousness of each problem. This drafted questionnaire was checked by two experienced teachers and revised as suggested. Then it was tried out.

3.2.1.3 The Tryout of the Questionnaire

To find out if there may be any ambiguities of the items on the questionnaire, the questionnaire was tried out with 25 English teachers in Mattayomsuksa 4 and Mattayomsuksa 5 from different schools, namely, Satriphattalung School in Phattalung province, Sapharachinee School and Princess Chulabhorn's College in Trung province, Benjamarachutit School and Kanlayaneesithammarat School in Nakhon Si Thammarat province. The teachers were asked to answer the questionnaire, to specify any ambiguous items there may be and to give comments or suggestions about the questionnaire. The comments were "items are too long" and "more than one issue in one item". They suggested that the researcher should modify the statements in part 1, no. 1 and no. 2, which originally consisted of more than one issue in one item. Taking the comments and suggestions into account, the researcher revised the questionnaire accordingly. An example of revision is shown as follows.

Before	After
1. English instruction is a tool for understanding the relationship between language and culture of the native speakers, similarities and differences between the native speakers and Thai in terms of language and culture.	1. English instruction is a tool for understanding the relationship between language and culture of the native speakers. 2. English instruction is a tool for understanding the similarities and differences between the native speakers and Thai in terms of language and culture.

The major change was in Part 1 where the number of items under number 1 and number 2 was modified from 4 to 7 statements (See Appendix D). The final version of the questionnaire is shown in Appendix A.

The final version of the questionnaire together with a letter from the Head of the Department of Languages and Linguistics, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University, Hat Yai campus were mailed to 156 English teachers in Mattayomsuksa 4 and Mattayomsuksa 5 in government secondary schools in Songkhla. A questionnaire package was sent to each of the school directors. A letter from the investigator was also enclosed with the questionnaire to all participants to explain the objectives, significance of the study and request for the English teachers' participation. All packages were sent to 39 schools at the same time. The director of each school was requested to send back the completed questionnaires to the Department of Languages and Linguistics, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University, Hat Yai campus within one month.

3.2.1.4 Reliability of the Questionnaire

This study investigates the degree of support of the curriculum statements, the degree of their implementation and problems in English language teaching according to the current curriculum using a questionnaire as a means to collect the information. To ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire, follow-up procedures were conducted to obtain the relationship of scores between the first and the second administration of the questionnaire. Forty English teachers, representing 25 percent of the population who first responded to the questionnaire were asked to answer the same questionnaire for the second time to see whether their answers were still the same. This was conducted two weeks after their first response. The teachers were informed, in the cover letter, the purpose of testing the reliability of the questionnaire and the consistency in answering the questionnaire. Thirty out of 40 questionnaires were returned with complete responses. A correlation of the scores and information obtained from the first and second administrations of the questionnaires was then performed. The results obtained indicated that all variables used in this study from both administrations of the questionnaire are significantly and positively correlated at a high < 0.001 degree of confidence. From the results of t-tests, all variables were also found to be significantly of the same distribution statistically at a high 1.00 to a low 0.60 degree of confidence. This implies that the data obtained by means of the

questionnaire designed for this study are highly reliable. The results of the testing of the reliability of the questionnaire are presented in Appendix E. As for the observation field-notes, their reliability was checked through the data analysis procedure.

3.2.2 Field-notes

The classroom observations were recorded in the form of detailed field-notes by the researcher who acted as a non-participant observer. Permission was granted by the school directors, teachers and students to observe 3 classes at different schools. The schools are large, medium and small. Participants were informed of the purposes of the observation and agreed to participate in the study. The researcher spent 4 periods in each school. The total number of observations of the three groups were 12 periods. Each class was a two-period lesson within which one topic or one lesson was covered. In the field-notes, the researcher recorded all events occurring in the classes chronologically. The details or content in the field-note covered activities, lesson content, classroom organization, materials used, classroom interaction, amount of L1 and L2 used in classes, and amount of time used for classroom activities. An excerpt from observation notes are shown in Appendix C. The data gathered from the field-notes were analyzed to find out topics and activities which reflected particular curriculum statements to further clarify and enrich the data from the questionnaire. An example of field-notes analysis is shown as follows.

An example of field-notes analysis

Detail in the field-notes	Topic & activities compared with Phiboonchol (2001)' s document	Related curriculum statement
8.45 am…T asks class "have you ever stayed in a hotel?" Then, T writes the question on the board and explains S that the question needs the Yes/No answer and tells the meaning of the question. T also emphasizes the way to answer the question correctly "Yes, I haven. / No, I haven't." T calls one S to answer the question. S who has ever stayed in a hotel is asked another question "What is the name of the hotel?" and "How long did you stay there?" S answers T's questions. Then, T asks another S the same question. T asks SS who have stayed in a hotel "Did you reserve the room?" Then, T tells the meaning of the word "reserve" and has SS pronounce it.	Topic: the hotel room reservation Language skill: listening and speaking Activity: answering questions	1, 2, 3

3.3 Description of Respondents

Of all 39 government secondary schools, 34 schools returned the questionnaires within the requested period of time. The number of questionnaires received in the study was 140 out of 156, representing 89.74 percent of the population. The responses were all complete.

The respondents can be classified as follow:

1. Forty-eight out of 58 questionnaires were received from the Educational Region 1, representing 82.75 percent of the population of this area.

2. Sixty-two out of 66 questionnaires were received from the Educational Region 2, representing 93.93 percent of the population of this area.

3. Thirty out of 32 questionnaires were received from the Educational Region 3, representing 93.75 percent of the population of this area.

Table 3.1 illustrates number of the respondents.

Table 3. 1 Number of the Respondents

Region	Population	Number received	Percent
Educational region 1	58	48	82.75
Educational region 2	66	62	93.93
Educational region 3	32	30	93.75
Total	156	140	89.74

3.4 Data Analysis

To answer the four research questions, data from the completed questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The following statistical devices were employed in analyzing the data of the study.

Research question 1: To what extent do English teachers support the 2001 English curriculum statements?

To answer the first research question, descriptive statistics were used to compute the average scores and standard deviations. To facilitate data analysis, the means were interpreted as follows:

1.00-1.80	=	Strongly disagree
1.81-2.60	=	Disagree
2.61-3.40	=	Uncertain
3.41-4.20	=	Agree
4.21-5.00	=	Strongly agree

In addition, the rank order scores on individual items were calculated to determine their relative importance as perceived by teachers in each educational region. Correlation coefficient was also employed to examine the relative degree of the support for the curriculum statements of three educational regions.

Research question 2: What is the extent of implementation of the 2001 English curriculum in Matthayomsuksa 4   and Matthaayomsuksa 5 as perceived by English teachers?

In order to examine the extent of the perceived implementation, descriptive statistics were employed to obtain the average mean scores and standard deviations. To see the relative degree of the perceived implementation among three educational regions, the rank order scores on individual items together with correlation coefficient were utilized. The degree of the perceived implementation was interpreted as follows:

1.00-1.80   =   Very low degree of implementation
1.81-2.60   =   Low degree of implementation
2.61-3.40   =   Moderate degree of implementation
3.41-4.20   =   High degree of implementation
4.21-5.00   =   Very high degree of implementation

One-way analysis of variance was also utilized to further explore the significance of differences of the mean scores on the perceived implementation among the teachers in three educational regions.

Research question 3: What is the relationship between the extent of support for the curriculum and the degree of the perceived implementation?

To determine the significant differences between the degree of support for the curriculum and the perceived implementation, paired-sample t-test was used.

Research question 4: What are the problems obstructing the implementation of the curriculum?

To investigate the extent of the problems obstructing the implementation, descriptive statistics were used to compute the average scores and standard deviations. To facilitate data analysis, the means level was interpreted as follows:

1.00 -1.80 = Least serious problem

1.81-2.60 = Slightly serious problem

2.61-3.40 = Fairly serious problem

3.41-4.20 = Very serious problem

4.21-5.00 = Most serious problem

In order to probe whether there were any significant differences of problems among the three educational regions, one-way analysis of variance was used.

To further clarify and enrich data from the questionnaires, the observation filed-notes were analyzed and interpreted. The data from the field-notes were studied in depth by going through the process of examining, analyzing and categorizing information relevant to the curriculum implementation. Relevant data were coded in terms of topics, language skills and activities as the reflection of each curriculum statement. The analysis procedures and results obtained from the field-notes were rechecked by two experienced teachers to assure the validity. Findings from questionnaire and observation notes are shown in chapter 4.