

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter reports the results of the study. The research questions addressed in chapter one provide the organization of the presentation of the findings. The answer to each research question is based upon the data collected from the university students of Naresuan University. All the data obtained are computed and analyzed, and the results are presented below.

Research Question One: What are the views held by students at Naresuan University towards the appreciation of hip hop songs?

In order to understand the results presented in the tables below, it is important to know how students rated a given statement, and how the mean values of the rate are interpreted. The scale of the extent of agreement for students' views was weighed according to the following criteria:

5	=	extremely agree
4	=	strongly agree
3	=	moderately agree
2	=	disagree
1	=	strongly disagree

Mean scores derived from the scale above were calculated and interpreted based on the criteria below (Piyasuang Kulmala, 2004. p. 40).

5.00 – 4.50	=	extremely agree
4.49 – 3.50	=	strongly agree
3.49 – 2.50	=	moderately agree
2.49 – 1.50	=	disagree
1.49 – 1.00	=	strongly disagree

The results on students' views of song appreciation were presented in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 next page.

Finding One

Table 1.1: Students' views towards the appreciation of hip hop songs.

(The high percentages are written in bold letters.)

Item/Students' views	Extremely agree %	Strongly agree %	Moderately agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
1. I like to listen to English songs.	50.6	23.4	19.5	6.5	-
2. I like to listen to hip-hop songs.	10.4	26.0	41.6	18.2	3.9
3. English songs have an influence on learning English.	33.8	42.9	18.2	5.2	-
4. Hip-hop songs have an influence on learning English.	7.8	33.8	40.3	16.9	1.3
5. I like a teacher to teach English through songs.	28.6	33.8	29.9	7.8	-
6. I like a teacher to teach English through hip-hop songs.	7.8	29.9	40.3	16.9	5.2
7. When I don't understand a statement/vocabulary in English songs, I try to find its meaning.	24.7	42.9	26.0	3.9	2.6
8. When I don't understand a statement/vocabulary in hip-hop songs, I try to find its meaning.	10.4	19.5	35.1	31.2	3.9
9. I can identify the differences between Standard English and African American Vernacular English in hip-hop songs.	1.3	15.6	35.1	40.3	7.8
10. Besides Standard English, it's important to know other English dialects for efficient communication.	48.1	33.8	14.3	3.9	-
Average	22.34	30.13	30.00	15.06	2.47

N=77

Table 1.2: Mean and Standard Deviation of University students' responses to the statements. (The data are arranged according to the numeral of mean scores.)

Rank by Mean Values	Views of University students (N=77)		Views
	\bar{x}	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	
10. Besides Standard English, it's important to know other English dialects for efficient communication.	4.26	0.849	Strongly agree
1. I like to listen to English songs.	4.18	0.970	Strongly agree
3. English songs have an influence on learning English.	4.05	0.857	Strongly agree
5. I like a teacher to teach English through songs.	3.83	0.938	Strongly agree
7. When I don't understand a statement/vocabulary in English songs, I try to find its meaning.	3.83	0.938	Strongly agree
4. Hip-hop songs have an influence on learning English.	3.30	0.889	Moderately agree
2. I like to listen to hip-hop songs.	3.21	0.991	Moderately agree
6. I like a teacher to teach English through hip-hop songs.	3.18	0.983	Moderately agree
8. When I don't understand a statement/vocabulary in hip-hop songs, I try to find its meaning.	3.01	1.045	Moderately agree
9. I can identify the differences between Standard English and African American Vernacular English in hip-hop songs.	2.62	0.889	Moderately agree
Average	3.55	0.935	Strongly agree

The data from Tables 1.1 and 1.2 show that students realize that it is important to know other English dialects for efficient communication ($\bar{x} = 4.26$). They highly appreciate English songs ($\bar{x} = 4.18$) and also think that English songs have an influence on learning English ($\bar{x} = 4.05$). In addition, they like a teacher to teach English through songs ($\bar{x} = 3.83$).

However, students fairly think that hip hop songs have an influence on learning English ($\bar{x} = 3.30$) and they moderately appreciate hip hop songs ($\bar{x} = 3.21$). They tend to have difficulty in understanding the difference between AAVE and SAE ($\bar{x} = 2.62$).

As the students know the importance of English dialects, other than the standard language, and they enjoy listening to songs but have difficulty understanding AAVE features, these imply that the learners need a guideline to understand AAVE features and they also need help for the differentiation between AAVE and SAE. Whether or not a teacher of English will offer them the guideline and introduce them to other English dialects is a serious topic to take into account. An actual use of AAVE songs in a classroom, together with grammatical and semantic explanations for particular features found in the songs may verify the view point mentioned above.

Research Question Two: To what extent can students at Naresuan University identify AAVE slang words in popular hip hop songs?

This question is related to part two in the questionnaire that was designed to examine students' understanding of AAVE slang words contained in popular hip hop lyrics. This part comprised of matching tests which were completed by students at two levels: freshmen and juniors.

In response to research question two, the results are revealed in Table 2 below.

Finding Two

Table 2: Students' understanding hip hop songs, based on the questionnaire on matching AAVE slang words and their meanings.

AAVE Slang words	Class levels				Total	
	Freshmen		Juniors			
	Correct answers		Correct answers		Count (N=77)	%
	Count (N=32)	%	Count (N=45)	%		
chill	26	81.3	38	84.4	64	83.1
boo	13	40.6	26	57.8	39	50.6
gangsta	13	40.6	30	66.7	43	55.8
nigga	13	40.6	19	42.2	32	41.6
sprung	10	31.3	4	8.9	14	18.2
homie	8	25.0	5	11.1	13	16.9
fag	4	12.5	10	22.2	14	18.2
busta	2	6.3	5	11.1	7	9.1
crunk	1	3.1	4	8.9	5	6.5
grill	1	3.1	3	6.7	4	5.2

According to Table 2, the best understood words for freshmen were *chill* – relax, mellow (81.3%), *boo* – a term of endearment, like baby (40.6%), *gangsta* - a criminal or a style of rap (40.6%), and *nigga* - a curse word used originally by white people taken

over by black people as a name to show their pride (40.6%), respectively. The least understood words were *crunk* - hype or to have a good time (3.1%) and *grill* - protect your face from getting punched or front of a car (3.1%).

The best understood words for juniors were *chill* - relax, mellow (84.4%), *gangsta* - a criminal or a style of rap (66.7%), and *boo* - a term of endearment, like baby (40.6%), respectively. The least understood word for juniors was the same as the least understood word for freshmen.

According to a t-test, there is no significant difference between freshmen's and juniors' responses ($t = .874, p > .05$). This result suggests that the number of years of English study in the EFL classroom setting does not affect students' understanding of AAVE slang words. This is possibly due to the lack of introduction of the words to the students, and the students themselves lack the ability to comprehend the meanings of unknown words via the context. It is also possible that the students merely listen to the rhythm and pay less attention to the lyrics. In addition, the students are less likely to look up unknown words in hip hop lyrics in a dictionary, compared to those in Standard English songs, as shown in Table 1.2, items 7 and 8.

Last, it is plausible that students have a little understanding of slang in any variety of English because, like idioms, slang words in general do not share basic meaning with common words found in a dictionary.

Research Question Three: To what extent can students at Naresuan University identify AAVE grammatical features in popular hip hop songs?

This question is related to part three in the questionnaire that was designed to examine students' understanding of AAVE grammatical features contained in popular hip hop lyrics. This part consisted of true or false tests which were completed by students at two levels: freshmen and juniors.

In response to research question three, the results are revealed in Table 3 below.

Finding Three

Table 3: Students' understanding of AAVE grammatical features in hip hop songs, based on the questionnaire of True or False statements.

Item/AAVE grammatical features	Class levels				Total	
	Freshmen		Juniors			
	Correct answers		Correct answers		Count (N=77)	%
	Count (N=32)	%	Count (N=45)	%		
1. "To get wit my friends we can be friends." From this utterance, "wit" means "intelligence" in Standard English.	27	84.4	34	75.5	61	79.2
2. "Whassup, whassup, SHUT UP!" From this utterance, "Whassup" has the same meaning as "What is going on" in Standard English.	27	84.4	36	80.0	63	81.8
3. "Ya'll know what dis is...So So Def" has the same meaning as "You will know what this is" in Standard English.	27	84.4	43	95.6	70	90.9
4. "Leave em outside of your door." From this utterance, "em" has the same meaning as "them" in Standard English.	26	81.3	41	91.1	67	87.0
5. "It's getting late lil mama" from this utterance, "lil" has the same meaning as "little" in Standard English.	25	78.1	36	80.0	61	79.2

Table 3 (continued)

Item/AAVE grammatical features	Class levels				Total	
	Freshmen		Juniors			
	Correct answers		Correct answers		Count (N=77)	%
	Count (N=32)	%	Count (N=45)	%		
6. "I'm never coming back home, baby I'm gone. Don't cha know?" From this utterance, "Don't <i>cha</i> know?" has the same meaning as "Don't <i>you</i> know" in Standard English.	25	78.1	43	95.6	68	88.3
7. "The princess is here. She's here, Ciara. This be it" From this utterance, "This <i>be</i> it" has the same meaning as "This <i>is</i> it" in Standard English.	24	75.0	32	71.1	56	72.7
8. "Yo we bout to start an epidemic wit dis one." From this utterance, "Yo" means "You" in Standard English.	23	71.9	29	64.4	52	67.5
9. "Betta be street if he lookin' at me." From this utterance, " <i>betta</i> " has the same meaning as " <i>bet</i> " in Standard English.	22	68.8	39	86.7	61	79.2
10. "You're the type of woman, deserves good thangs." From this utterance, "good <i>thangs</i> " has the same meaning as "good <i>things</i> " in Standard English.	21	65.6	33	73.3	54	70.1
11. "Ain't nothing let you do it fo sho." From this utterance, " <i>fo sho</i> " has the same meaning as " <i>four shows</i> " in Standard English.	21	65.6	40	88.9	61	79.2
12. "She got me doin da dishes." From this utterance, " <i>da</i> " is the abbreviation of " <i>deca</i> " which means ten times.	21	65.6	39	86.7	60	77.9
13. "Cause I ain't neva had nobody do me like you" has the same meaning as "Cause I have never had nobody do me like you" in Standard English.	20	62.5	30	66.7	50	64.9

Table 3 (continued)

Item/AAVE grammatical features	Class levels				Total	
	Freshmen		Juniors			
	Correct answers		Correct answers		Count (N=77)	%
	Count (N=32)	%	Count (N=45)	%		
14. "What I want y'all out there to do for me is say this..." has the same meaning as "What I want you will out there to do for me is say this" in Standard English.	15	46.9	23	51.1	38	49.4
15. "Is ya man on the flo?" has the same meaning as "Is your man on the flow?" in Standard English.	14	43.8	26	57.8	40	51.9
16. "Right about now it's yo boy, ya heard, back again." From this utterance, "yo" and "ya" have the same meaning as "your" in Standard English.	12	37.5	11	24.4	23	29.9
17. "There ain't nothin to it," has the same meaning as "There is not nothing to it" in Standard English.	9	28.1	13	28.9	22	28.6
18. "I ain't got nothin" has the same meaning as "I have got nothing" in Standard English.	8	25.0	28	62.2	36	46.8
19. "I ain't got nothin to say to you" has the same meaning as "I haven't got nothing to say to you" in Standard English.	7	21.9	7	15.6	14	18.2
20. "I be sure all I gotta do is call my man" has the same meaning as "I'm sure all I gotta do is call my man" in Standard English.	3	9.4	12	26.7	15	19.5

According to Table 3, the best understood statements for freshmen were (1) "To get wit my friends we can be friends." ("wit" means "with" in Standard English) (84.4%), (2) "Whassup, whassup, SHUT UP!" ("Whassup" has the same meaning as "What is going on" in Standard English) (84.4%), (3) "Ya'll know what dis is...So So Def", which has the same meaning as "You will know what this is" in Standard English (84.4%), and (4) "Leave em outside of your door." ("em" has the same meaning as "them" in Standard English) (81.3%), respectively. The least understood statement was "I be sure

all I gotta do is call my man", which has the same meaning as "I'm sure all I gotta do is call my man" in Standard English. (9.4%)

The best understood statements for juniors were (1) "Ya'll know what dis is...So So Def" ("You will know what this is" in Standard English) (95.6%), (2) "I'm never coming back home, baby I'm gone. Don't cha know?" ("Don't cha know" means "Don't you know" in Standard English) (95.6%), (3) "Leave em outside of your door." ("em" has the same meaning as "them" in Standard English) (91.1%), (4) "Ain't nothing let you do it fo sho." ("fo sho" has the same meaning as "for sure" in Standard English) (88.9%), (5) "Betta be street if he lookin' at me." ("betta" has the same meaning as "better" in Standard English) (86.7%), and (6) "She got me doin da dishes." ("da" is "the" in Standard English) (86.7%)

The least understood statement for juniors was "I ain't got nothin to say to you" which has the same meaning as "I have got nothing to say to you" in Standard English (15.6%). As seen, the juniors had many more correct responses in several statements than the freshmen did (6:4), and even their least understood statement had a much higher percentage than the least understood statements for the freshmen. These show that the different years of English study effect students' knowledge of AAVE grammatical features.

According to a t-test, there is a significant difference between freshmen's and juniors' responses ($t = 3.470$, $p < .05$). The juniors had more correct responses than the freshmen did. This may result from different levels of English proficiency and students' experience outside classroom. The results from this part indicate that AAVE grammatical features are learnable in EFL study in natural settings. However, it is not true for AAVE slang, as reported earlier (Finding 2).

Research Question Four: *Is there any significant difference between the knowledge of freshmen (first year students) and that of juniors (third year students)?*

This question is served for a comparison of knowledge of AAVE slang words and grammatical features between freshmen and juniors in popular hip hop lyrics.

In response to research question four, the results are revealed in Table 4 below.

Finding Four

Table 4: Knowledge of freshmen versus juniors, based on the questionnaire part 2 and 3.

AAVE features	Freshmen		Juniors		<i>t-value</i>	<i>significance</i>
	\bar{x}	<i>S.D.</i>	\bar{x}	<i>S.D.</i>		
Grammar	11.75	2.396	13.47	1.714	3.470	.037
Slang words	2.84	1.668	3.18	1.642	.874	.951
Both grammar and slang	14.59	3.301	16.64	2.707	2.989	.474

The data from Table 4 indicate that there is no significant difference between freshmen's and juniors' responses in AAVE slang words but there is a significant difference between freshmen's and juniors' responses in AAVE grammatical features. The difference may result from educational experiences. Nevertheless, the similarity of responses in AAVE slang by students in both groups may result from the difficulty by nature of slang words in any variety of language.

However, there is no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence in freshmen and juniors' knowledge of both AAVE slang words and grammatical features. This result is left for an EFL teacher's consideration of whether to teach part and parcel of AAVE features and slang words to his or her students.