

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a summary of the study with a discussion of the findings from the previous chapter, as well as an interpretation of them. In addition, some recommendations for EFL teaching and further studies are provided at the end.

Summary of the study

The purposes of this study were as follows: (1) to investigate university students' understanding of African American Vernacular English in hip hop songs, (2) to raise awareness in teachers or students, who read this study, that besides Standard American English there is an important dialect, AAVE, which is spreading around the world through hip hop songs, and (3) to provide EFL teachers and students with a basic knowledge that they can apply AAVE knowledge to use in real-life situation.

The subjects of this study were 77 university students who majored in English. They were 32 freshmen and 45 juniors at Naresuan University in the academic year 2005.

The instruments used to find the answers to the research questions was a questionnaire on the understanding of AAVE features and slang words in top 50 hip hop songs on the Billboard chart in 2005. The questionnaire format was based on the Research Strategies for Education, which was created by Douglas C. Wiseman, and the content was based on Ibrahim's study (1999). The questionnaire was tried out with 30 university students at Rajabhat University in Kamphaengphet province before it was administered with the target subjects. All the participants answered all items within thirty minutes. After the data were analyzed, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), the results showed that there was no significant difference between freshmen and juniors' understanding of AAVE slang, but there was a significant difference in AAVE grammatical features. That is, juniors received more score in the AAVE features test than freshmen did.

From this study most students agreed that to know other English dialects was important in the world of communication. They also appreciated songs, including hip hop songs, and thought that songs could encourage them to learn English. This finding supports what Kannika Martom et al., (2004) and Ronnapop Klomkiang (2002) mentioned in their study that students agreed that song was one way to communicate to other people, and they were encouraged to involve in learning through songs. Also, this result was conformed to Beliaevsky (2001), who pointed out that ESL learners needed authentic content in classrooms and songs could encourage ESL students to have a motivation to learn English.

However, the results indicated that the students could not recognize AAVE, which supported Ibrahim's study (1999). It might be said that because the students were not in real-life English-speaking countries, and had a little exposure to AAVE, including its people and culture.

Discussion on the findings

From the findings, the interesting points to consider from the study are as follows:

First, the English major students at Naresuan University, who were subjects of the study, recognized that it was important to know other English dialects for communication, and they were pleased to learn English through songs, including hip hop songs.

Second, the English major students at Naresuan University indicated that they lacked knowledge of AAVE slang, but they rather understood the different grammatical features between AAVE and SME in the study.

Moreover, the average mean score on the agreement of student's views about hip hop songs indicated that the students recognized that English songs including hip hop songs had an important role in EFL learning and teaching ($\bar{x} = 3.55$).

The results of this study also showed that both the freshmen and the juniors had too little knowledge of AAVE slang. The word that they best understood was at 81.3 percent but the rest of the words obtained lower than 50 percent of the total score. The least understood word received only 5.2 percent of the total score.

In addition, based on the test of AAVE grammatical features: Distributive be, Double Negative, and Neutralization, the best understood item was *"Ya'll know what dis is...So So Def"*, which has the same meaning as *"You will know what this is"* in *Standard English* (90.9%). Also, students lacked adequate understanding for *"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* (18.2%). It can be implied that students can recognize AAVE grammatical feature better than AAVE slang words.

Lastly, all the subjects obtained low scores in AAVE slang words. In contrast, juniors performed better than freshmen in AAVE grammatical features.

Comments on AAVE and EFL teaching

As the majority of students reported that they realized the importance of English dialects, including AAVE, they needed the ability to comprehend the meanings of AAVE slang words via hip hop songs. Even though the juniors performed better than the freshmen in the AAVE grammatical features section, there was no significant difference between freshmen's and juniors' knowledges of both AAVE slang words and grammatical features. The juniors may have chances to receive AAVE in hip hop songs more often than the freshmen. Moreover, the number of years of English study can help the juniors to differentiate AAVE from SAE, even if they are not familiar with this special grammar of AAVE.

We cannot deny that Standard English is necessary in English teaching and learning, especially in academic circumstance. However, we use language to communicate with other people in the world, and they do not use the same English dialect. AAVE becomes important when it spreads around the world through hip hop songs. The results of this study are left for EFL teachers' consideration of whether to introduce AAVE features and slang words to their students.

Recommendations for EFL teachers and researchers.

In accordance with the results from the study of university students' understanding of AAVE in hip hop songs, there remain some interesting aspects that need to be considered.

For teachers of English as a foreign language

1. Teachers should try to teach English through hip hop songs in class room and to introduce other dialects of English that exist in the world.
2. Teachers should use hip hop lyrics to teach the differences between AAVE and SAE and as tools for students to practice the listening skill.

For researchers

1. Other variables, for example, gender, age, and grade point average should be used to compare students' understanding of AAVE.
2. A survey of songs in other genre should be done, for example, Latin, country, jazz, and others.

