

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDY

This chapter presents a summary of the study and a discussion of the findings. In addition, application for teaching and recommendations for further study are provided.

#### Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate English teachers' background knowledge and understanding of cultural contents in Compass 1, to raise awareness in teachers that some cultural aspects of Thai and British/ American are different, and equally important, to provide teachers with a basic knowledge, so that they can apply that knowledge with their students.

The subjects of this study were English teachers who teach in expanding secondary schools under the jurisdiction of the Office of Phitsanulok Provincial Primary Education, and use Compass 1 as the textbook. The total population was 46 English teachers who were teaching in Mathayomsuksa 1 (grade 7) in the academic year 1999.

The test developed by the researcher was used as the instrument for data collection. From the study of cultural contents, many linguists such as Brooks (1964: 90-95), Chastain (1971: 389-392), and Finocchiaro and Bonomo (1973: 60-63) suggest that culture needs to be taught in the classroom. In summary, the mentioned linguists proposed the same 17 categories of the cultural contents. The cultural contents in Compass 1 were investigated and it was found that there were 10 categories. Finally, a test containing 80 items was constructed with multiple choice answer. The phrases or words to be investigated were typed in bold and in English, but the four multiple choices were typed in Thai for better understanding the intended message.

Then, the test was submitted to 46 English teachers who teach in expanding secondary schools under the jurisdiction of the Office of Phitsanulok Provincial Primary Education, and use Compass 1 as the textbook. Data from the answer sheets were computed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the data analysis were presented in tables with statistical procedures and an explanation of the findings in Chapter IV.

### Discussion on the Findings

From the statistical data obtained to answer the research question, there were some interesting points to be discussed as follows:

1. The teachers do not have adequate knowledge of cultural terms for any of the topics. The best understood topic is related to 'places associated with food and drinks' (77.75%). The least understood topic is related to 'education' (35.60%).
2. The English teachers indicated that they had the problems in cultural contents while they were teaching because the teachers' manuals, which come with the textbooks, do not provide sufficient information.

Hence, the information obtained in the glossary (Appendix C) can be applied directly as guidelines for developing English teaching to help teachers understand cultural contents presented in Compass 1.

### Findings

According to the findings, the best understood topic is related to 'places associated with food and drinks' (77.75%). The least understood was about 'education' (35.60%). The results show that the teachers do not have adequate knowledge of cultural terms for any of the topics. It can, then, be concluded that the English teachers should be provided further training concerned with the background knowledge and understanding of cultural contents in Compass1 for success in English teaching.

Rank order from best understood to least understood of the 10 categories indicated the teachers' best understood was for 'Places associated with food and drinks'. The teachers are quite familiar with those words, which are often borrowed into Thai and appear on most signs in English as well as the native Thai words. The lowest score was for the category of 'Education' for which the percentage obtained was 35.60%. This follows the finding of "A Study of Teachers' Problems on Cultural Content in Discoveries (Students Books 1-3)" by Somsakyothin (1994). The results revealed that the content about 'Education' caused the highest level of problems.

The English teachers' background knowledge and understanding of cultural contents was further discussed for each item in 10 categories.

The first category is 'Names of people'. It can be seen that the teachers had background knowledge and understanding of the names of famous people at the level of 80% for only four items: 'Bill Clinton', 'Madonna', 'Queen Elizabeth II' and 'Princess Diana'. These famous people are always on TV's news or in the newspapers. Consequently, the teachers know them from media reports. The least understanding was for the item 'Steffi Graf' who is the German queen of tennis and has been the champion of the French Open six times. It showed that sports news might be out of the teachers' area of interest.

The next category was for 'Food'. It showed that the teachers had greatest competency for the item 'biscuits' and 'doughnuts'. This is most likely because these two kinds of food are in their daily life; department stores and many stalls sell this kind of food for children in front of the schools. Moreover, the teachers might be familiar with these foods from the promotions of the producers. The least competency was shown for the item 'hamburger'. A typical hamburger made from a patty of ground meat may appear on the menu in a restaurant or hotel, but it is very expensive. Consequently, the teachers might not recognize 'hamburger' in the western style.

In the category of 'Places associated with food and drinks' for which the teachers' scored highest, the teachers had the greatest competency for the item 'cafeteria'. This word is often borrowed into Thai and appears on most signs in English as well as the native Thai word. The least competency in this category was for the item 'snack bar'. In England 'snack bar' refers to a lunch counter or small

restaurant where light meals are served. These are more familiar with the word fast food than snack bar.

For the category of 'Travel and transport', the teachers' highest level competency was for the item 'rocket' which is the simple word they often see in a news from TV, or a newspaper. Besides, the word 'rocket' was often used in the names of the shuttles sent into space. The least competency was for the item 'tube'. This might be difficult because 'tube' is a special word that stands for the London underground, which is a 'subway' in American English. The teachers might be unfamiliar with this word.

In the category of 'Sports', the greatest competency was for the item 'football'. It can be seen that this word was recognized by all of the teachers because 'football' is very popular in Thailand and all over the world. Therefore, this item received the highest score in the test. The least competency in this category was for the item 'Superbowl'. Each year in late January on a Sunday (Super Bowl Sunday) the Superbowl decides which team of American football is the overall winner (champion) in American professional football. It is a special kind of football, which is very popular in U.S.A. According to the results from the category of "Names of people", the teachers are not interested in sports news. 'Superbowl' is basically dealing with people who are interested in sports rather than teachers, therefore, most of the teachers might be unfamiliar with this word.

The next category was for 'Buildings and Places'. This category contained 24 items, but the teachers have adequate knowledge for only 4 items. Those items are 'Hollywood', 'Pyramids', 'Disneyland', and 'Empire State Building'. This was most likely because those tourist attractions are well known as the symbols of their countries. In addition, most of them are always in films or in the brochure of the Tourism Authority so, the teachers should be familiar with them. However, the teachers lacked adequate understanding for the other 20 items and the least competency was for the items 'Sydney Opera House' 10.87 %. This might be because those buildings and places are rarely in film or in the news. This follows the finding of a study about "The Need in Culture Contents of Kasetsart University Undergraduate Students" by Arayaskul (1995). The results indicated that there was a great need for information about tourist attractions.

For the 'Music' category, it can be seen that the item 'Heavy metal' received the highest percentage. It might be that this kind of music is popular among Thai teenagers. There are many concerts by both Thai bands and famous bands from the other countries. The teachers always see them in entertainment magazines or on TV. They do not know 'Pet Shop Boys' which is the name of an UK pop duo. It might be that this name is popular only in Great Britain.

The next category was for 'Mass Media'. The results show that the teachers do not have adequate knowledge of cultural terms for any of the topics. This might be because the teachers might be unfamiliar with those words though there are many varieties named for TV's program in Thailand. The item 'Quiz show' received the highest percentage. The teachers might recognize the name of 'Quiz show' from TV programs such as 'LG quiz' which is on TV channel 9 at 12 A.M. on Saturday, or 'A E I for you' from TV channel 9 at 4.30 P.M. on Saturday. These programs are good for the students and the teachers usually give an assignment for students to watch and take notes from these programs.

In the category of 'Education', the highest level of competency was for the item 'Comprehensive School'. This word is often borrowed into Thai and stands for a secondary school that has both boys and girls. The other three items are the names of the subjects, used only in England. It is likely that the teachers are unfamiliar with those subjects. The least understood was about 'Junior School'; a school for children aged between 7 and 11 years old. For this level, Thais always uses the word 'Primary School' or 'Elementary School'.

The last category was for the words or phrases, which are not related to other categories. It was found that the teachers do not have adequate knowledge of cultural terms for any of the topics. The best understood item related to the windmill, which is quite familiar to the teachers. The windmill is the symbol of The Netherlands and teachers might have seen them from pictures or films. The least understood was about 'Nessie'; the name given to a very large animal, supposed to live in Loch Ness (a large, very deep lake in N Scotland) which people say does not look like any other animal alive today. The story of 'Nessie' appears in the mystery magazines such as 'Tuay Toon' or 'Loke Pitsadan', which might be out of the teachers' area of interest.

x In summary, the results of this study indicate the need to provide supplementary notes about specific terms and phrases relating to western culture so the teachers can understand the content and context for the words and phrases used in Compass1. The researcher has provided a glossary for the 80 words and phrases, which can be found in Appendix C. x

### A Recommendation for Further Study

On the basis of this study, the English teachers lack adequate background knowledge and understanding to explain all of the cultural terms that appear in Compass 1, future research is needed as follows:

1. The teachers' manuals for Compass 1 do not provide sufficient information. Therefore, it is truly worthwhile for the authorities of the Office of Phitsanulok Provincial Primary Education to develop a handbook of cultural content to accompany the teachers' guide.
2. Further investigation of English teachers' background knowledge and understanding of the cultural contents in Compass 2 and Compass3 should be conducted to relate to the findings found in the present study.
3. Further research should be undertaken on the topic of a study of comparing the achievement between teaching by using a glossary for the cultural contents in Compass 1 in an experimental group and control group without a glossary.
4. Lastly, further investigation of English teachers' background knowledge and understanding of the cultural contents in the other textbooks that are used in the expanding secondary school should be conducted.