CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Preliminaries

English Language is playing a dominant role in the present world as a global village. In Thailand, English is taught from fifth standard to twelfth standard. Since Thai language is the medium of instruction for all government schools, English turns out to be one of the subjects to be taught.

The objective of the present research is to view, critically, the present situation of English language teaching especially in Muang District, Suphanburi Province, which is the central part of Thailand. It is an attempt at evaluation of English language teaching programs in general, its efficiency, its weaknesses and its ability to achieve the aspirations of English language teaching course particularly in Muang District, Suphanburi Province and generally in Thailand.

3.2 Scope of the Research Study

The present study aims to approach the English Language Teaching (ELT) situation in the Secondary Schools in Thailand. The approach is firstly from the point of view of teachers who are teaching English and the approach is secondly from the point of view of students who are learning English as a subject at Upper Secondary School level. The main task of the study is to obtain data related to independent variables such as the aims of ELT in Thailand and the process of teaching English that is operating to fulfill the goals of English language teaching.

This research also aims at studying the instruction process, problems and needs of the English teachers in the Upper Secondary Schools in Muang district, Suphanburi province of Thailand.
3.2.1 Population
The population under study was of 43 teachers who taught English subject in six different schools and 259 students who were studying English subject in the first semester of the academic year 2011 at 10th-12th Standards in Muang district, Suphanburi province of Thailand. Of the 259 students, 79 students were from Class X, 100 from Class XI and 80 students from Class XII.

3.2.2 Samples
The study determined the samples by using Krecie and Morgan’s table. The subjects in the study were 43 teachers and 259 students. The samples were randomly selected from the small, medium and large-sized schools.

3.2.3 Duration
The study was conducted from May to October in the first semester of the academic year 2011.

3.3 Educational Scenario
The Ministry of Education is responsible for promoting and supervising all levels and types of education under the administration of the state. Educational administration and management in Thailand is conducted by the state, local administration organizations, and the private sector. It is as follows -

1. Education in Thailand is administered and managed by the government through central agencies, educational service areas, and by educational institutions at all levels of education. The state is responsible for supervising administration and management as well as for monitoring the quality and structures of private educational institutions, both providing general education and those offering vocational education.

2. Administration and management of Education by the Private Sector. There are two categories of private educational institutions:
1) Private educational institutions that provide general education which range from kindergartens to primary school, secondary school, college and universities; and

2) Private educational institutions that provide vocational education. At present, most private educational institutions are missionary schools, with a few prestigious schools still associated with Christian denominations.

To recapitulate, at the stage of schooling in Thailand, there are two patterns of schools:

1. The Government Schools
2. Private Schools

The dominant pattern is the Government Schools. The reason for choosing government schools is the necessity to have a homogeneous sample in the study. The school year in Thailand is divided into two semesters, and primary and secondary schools generally begin on or around 15 May and end in March. It is from June to March for Higher Education. It has a two or three week break between the two terms in September. The long summer break coincides with the hottest part of the year and Songkrant, the traditional Thai new year celebrations. Schools enjoy all public and Buddhist religious holidays and Christian and international schools usually close for the Christmas-New Year break.

To make a fairly representative sample, the researcher has selected six Upper Secondary Schools in Muang district, Suphanburi province where the questionnaires for the teachers are distributed. The schools comprise the teachers belonging to Government, Private, and different socio-economic backgrounds. Both male and female teachers are represented.

3.4 Preparation of Tools

The method for studying the ELT in Thailand is based on the survey of English language teaching. The researcher states that the survey is a non-experimental,
descriptive research method. Surveys can be useful when a researcher wants to collect data on phenomena that cannot be directly observed. Data are usually collected through the use of questionnaires of the English teachers and students. Surveys are probably the most common form of research method. Nick Moore (1987:p.33) says,

“The primary function of surveys is to collect information which can be analyzed to produce conclusions and results.”

Therefore, the term survey suggests the compiling of evidence relating to existing conditions. According to Sukhia Mahrotra (1983:p.2) the survey method

“gathers data from a relatively large number of cases at a particular time.”

Keeping in mind all the important aspects of the survey method, and so as to ensure objectivity, the researcher decided that it will be an appropriate method for the purpose of this study and therefore he decided to adopt it for accomplishing this present research. In order to achieve the objective of the research the following tools are prepared.

3.4.1 Preparation of Questionnaires

The questions are divided into two parts; one is questionnaires for the English teachers and the other is questionnaires for the students. Two data collection instruments were administered in this study. The first instrument was the teacher questionnaire designed to investigate the information regarding the teaching personnel, the conditions of English language learning- teaching, the planning of teaching English, measurement and evaluation of learning, problems and needs of teachers who teach English etc. The second instrument was an individual semi-structured questionnaire conducted with the sample Upper Secondary School teachers. It was used to explore their English language teaching practices. The questionnaire is used to explore the English language teaching. Conceptualization
of the English teachers in part one has divided into sub-five parts. Part 1 consisted of checklist items concerning background information of the teacher participants, such as gender, age, educational level, level of the classroom taught, English teaching experience, participating in seminar or training courses for teaching, abilities of English language usage. Part 2 consisted of 6 items concerning curriculums and teaching materials. Part 3 consisted of 2 main items and 11 subheading items concerning the contents of English subject as a foreign language. Part 4 consisted of 3 main items and 12 subheading items concerning teaching-learning activities of the English teachers and Part 5 consisted of 4 main items and 28 subheading items concerning the problem and need of the English teachers.

The conceptualization of students under the present study in part two has divided into two sub-parts. Part I consisted of 7 items consisting of the background information of the respondents. Part II consisted of 30 items consisting of the English teaching-learning as a foreign language.

To conclude, the aim of the questionnaire from Part 1 is to get information on actual occurrences of teachers who teach English at Upper secondary school level. The aims of questionnaire from Part 2 are to investigate into co-curricular activities used to develop English language proficiency, and to suggest the ways in solving the problems of English language teaching and learning at upper secondary school level. The aims of questionnaire from Part 3 are to study the aims and objectives of English language teaching in Suphanburi province, to investigate into methods of teaching ELT, to study the availability and use of audio-visual aids, and to study the methods of evaluation and assessment. The aims of questionnaire from Part 4 are to understand the advantages of teaching English language at Upper Secondary School level, to offer useful suggestions for development of the English language teaching, and to develop an eclectic method to enhance the quality of teaching of English language. The aims of teacher questionnaires from Part 5 are to survey the opinions of teachers in language learning theory or
language acquisition, to know the situation of ELT in *Suphanburi* province at present, and to understand the advantages and disadvantage of the Methods and Approaches used in ELT at Upper Secondary School level.

The questionnaire of the teachers illustrates the characteristics of the items used in Part 1. They are as follows;

### 3.4.2 Questionnaire for the English Teachers

The Questionnaire for the English Teachers specially designed for the present research work has five parts. The first part of the Questionnaire seeks responses on the respondent teacher’s background information. There are eleven questions in this part which have the multiple choice pattern. The eleven questions are meant to make a survey of the background details of the respondent teachers. The first three questions seek information on personal details like gender, age and educational qualifications. The next three questions are concerned with teaching experience. The intention behind teaching English, the length of teaching experience and the classes taught are the areas which are covered by these three questions from 4 to 6. The seventh question is on the size of or the numbers of students in the class. The eighth question is about the person or other source consulted by the teacher concerned in the times of difficulty. The next two questions are about the participation in seminars or training courses by the teachers. The eleventh question seeds self-assessed rating in respect of the proficiency in the four basic language skills.

The second part is about Curriculum and Teaching Materials. There are six questions which seek responses in the five-point scale. The six questions are about the knowledge and understanding of the 2008 Curriculum, suitability, adequacy and use of curriculum materials, the use of language in teacher’s handbook and research on content and techniques of ELT in Thailand.

The third part is about the Contents of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). There are two main questions the first on knowledge and understanding of the
contents of English as a subject and the second on areas that are problematic to the students. The second question has listed eleven such areas - nouns, articles, adverbs, adjectives, tenses, voices, sentences, clauses, relative clauses, question tag and punctuation.

The fourth part of the Questionnaire is about Problems in Teaching-Learning Activities. There are three main questions on studying teacher’s handbook for preparation to teach, problems in students’ language practice in the four basic skills and students’ interest in the activities. The second question has twelve items related to the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

The fifth part of the Questionnaire is about Problems and Needs of English Teachers. It has four sections. The first section is of ten questions on problems in the preparation for teaching. The second section is of six questions on problems of media and equipment. The third section is of five questions on need of help from others and the fourth section has seven questions on techniques or tools in managing English teaching activities. There are three questions at the end of the Questionnaire which seek suggestions from the teachers on the content of the course of English as a foreign language, the teaching and learning activities in schools and on the organization of individual skills, syllabus, lessons and activities. The Questionnaire seeks seventy-four responses in all from the teachers. This is Appendix B.

3.4.3 Questionnaire for the Students

The Questionnaire for the students has two parts. The first part contains seven questions on personal information. The information collected will offer facts about gender, age, class, faculty, duration, the first person to teach English and liking for English. The second part consists of thirty statements and the students’ responses on the five-point scale indicating (5) always, (4) frequently, (3) moderately, (2) little, (1) least. This is Appendix C.

This type of tool is selected for accomplishing the survey as
“Questionnaires are extremely flexible and can be used to gather information on almost any topic from large or small numbers of people.”

Best J.W. and Kahn J.V. (1992: p.10) consider a questionnaire as the “Most appropriate and useful data-gathering device in a research project.”

This survey is conducted through the questionnaires. It is designed in such a way that it enables the researcher to ascertain English language teachers’ academic and professional qualifications, the student’s academic qualifications, the aims and priorities in teaching-learning different aspects of English language, the curriculum used in its teaching-learning and the extent to which teaching-learning facilities are adequate or otherwise. It is logical to suppose that the English teachers and students have ambiguous opinions and confusing assumptions and ideas underlying their teaching-learning of English as to why and how to teach and learn English language. Though the teachers are always keen and conscious about the standard of English language, they never view the whole establishment of English language teaching as well as the students in Muang district, Suphanburi province of Thailand.

It seems that for accomplishing the study of English Language Teaching (ELT), some survey has to be made to examine the situation, to probe the present situation of ELT, and to discover the problems and weaknesses in its teaching so as to suggest measures that would promote the English language teaching and learning. Therefore, the researcher administered the questionnaires to the teachers of English at the Upper Secondary School level.

3.5 Validation of the Questionnaires for the Teachers and Students

The questionnaires were prepared and administered in various parts of Muang district, Suphanburi province. This ensured that an adequate representative rate of
response will reflect the true state of views among those most directly involved in the teaching and learning of English in the province.

The researcher has made all attempts to administer the questionnaires through personal contact. Forty three copies of questionnaires were sent to the school teachers and two hundred and fifty nine copies were sent to the students. All the questionnaires had been returned. The percentage of responses is 100%.


“Response rate of 50 percent is adequate, 60 percent good, 70 percent very good.”

Therefore, the rate of response, in general, is ‘very good’ as far as the Upper Secondary School level is concerned and it helped the researcher to derive the required generalization concerning the teaching and learning of English in Muang district, Suphanburi province of Thailand.

Table 01: A table showing Number of Questionnaires Administered and Received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>No. Administered</th>
<th>No. Received</th>
<th>% of return</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Teachers</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 Scoring Criterion

The data from questionnaire were then being scored. The questionnaire was developed to explore the status of English language teaching of the teachers conducted on a five-point rating scale. The rating scale in the questionnaire was based on Likert’s idea (Best and Kahn, 1993: 246-250).

The descending order was as follows:

For the teachers-

- The most problematic was equivalent to 5 points
- Very problematic was equivalent to 4 points
Slightly problematic was equivalent to 3 points
Problematic was equivalent to 2 points
No problematic was equivalent to 1 point
For the students- 5- Always, 4-Frequently, 3-Moderately, 2-Little, 1-Least

3.7 Research Instruments

The research instrument was the questionnaires prepared by the researcher based on concepts, textbooks and related researches. The questionnaire concerned learning and teaching English, problems and needs of the English teachers in the stated province.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part one, the questionnaires for English teachers, has categorized into sub-five parts as shown below:

Part One concerned with the information in general.
Part Two consisted of 6 items concerning curriculum and teaching materials.
Part Three consisted of 2 main items and 11 subheading items concerning the contents of English subject as a foreign language.
Part Four consisted of 3 main items and 12 subheading items concerning teaching-learning activities of the English teachers.
Part Five consisted of 4 main items and 28 subheading items concerning the problem and need of the English teachers.

Part two, the questionnaires for students, has divided into two sub-parts as shown below:

Part One consisted of 7 items undertaking the general information.
Part Two consisted of 30 items on the teaching of English as a foreign language.

3.8 Preparation of Research Instruments

The steps followed in the preparation of research instruments are explained step-wise in the seven steps. The theory and related ideas on the problems and needs of
the teachers of English and the students were studied. The related research works on the problems and needs of ELT were studied. Two comprehensive questionnaires— one for the teachers and the other for the students — were prepared under the guidance of the Supervisor. Completed questionnaires were checked by the researcher. Specialists were consulted to find out content validity and appropriateness of language. The corrected questionnaires were then tried out with 30 non-sample teachers. Individual items were analyzed to find out discrimination power. The questionnaires were then analyzed by the means of Pearson’s product moment correlation. The items with the .20 discrimination power upwards were selected. The questionnaires were analyzed to find out confidence power by using Alpha co-efficient of Cronbach. (Cronbach, 1990:pp.202-204). The entire confidence was .92. The questionnaires were then used to gather data. In the preparation of research instruments, seven steps followed were: (i) study of the problems and needs of the teachers of English and students, (ii) study of related research on the problems and needs, (iii) preparation of questionnaires, (iv) checking contents validity and appropriateness of language of each item of the questionnaires, (v) tryout and analysis of discrimination power through Pearson’s product moment correlation, (vi) analysis of confidence power through Cronbach; Alpha co-efficient and (vii) the use of the two questionnaires for collecting data.

3.9 Data Collection

- The researcher had requested the Abbot of Wat Thungkhru in Thungkhru district, Bangkok 10140 to issue a formal letter. The same letter was then sent to the schools in Muang district in Suphanburi province.
- The researcher distributed the questionnaires to be completed by respondents in the schools under study and then collected the completed questionnaires.
- The researcher collected the questionnaires for analysis. All the questionnaires had been returned, accounting for 100% feedback.
3.10 Data Analysis

For Data Analysis, the researcher had undertaken the following steps:
1. Examining the completion of all 43 questionnaires of English teachers and 259 questionnaires of students that were distributed.
2. Categorizing the questionnaires according to the respondents’ information to find out frequency and percentage.
3. Evaluating part two main parts of the questionnaires to get statistics by using SPSS for Window.
4. The criteria in examining the problems and needs of the teachers are as follows:
   - Mean Scores 4.50 - 5.00 means the most problematic
   - Mean Scores 3.50 – 4.49 means very problematic
   - Mean Scores 2.50 – 3.49 means slightly problematic
   - Mean Scores 1.50 – 2.49 means problematic
   - Mean Scores 1.00 – 1.49 means no problems
5. The criteria in examining the problems and needs of the students are as follows:
   - Mean Scores 4.50 - 5.00 means always
   - Mean Scores 3.50 - 4.49 means frequently
   - Mean Scores 2.50 – 3.49 means moderately
   - Mean Scores 1.50 – 2.49 means little
   - Mean Scores 1.00 – 1.49 means the least

3.11 Statistics in Data Analysis

The data collected is to be presented through the statistical procedure.

1. Frequencies of the responses are to be recorded. Each response along with the details of its frequencies should be recorded, tabulated and to be presented graphically.
2. Percentages of the frequencies highlight the data presentation through its proportionate percent-wise display of the relevant data and its break-up in percentage.
3. The statistical finding of the Mean ($\bar{X}$) of the score is to be presented through the tabular format. The formula for finding Mean of the score is

\[
\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma x}{N}
\]

In this, $\bar{X}$ refers to Mean, $\Sigma x$ refers to the total scores of the population and $N$ refers to the number of the population. The calculation of the decision of the total scores of the population by the number of the population brings out Mean Score.

4. The next significant statistical finding is to calculate Standard Deviation (S.D). The formula for finding out Standard Deviation is:

\[
SD = \sqrt{\frac{N\Sigma x^2 - (\Sigma x)^2}{N(N-1)}}
\]

In this, S.D refers to Standard Deviation, $\Sigma x^2$ refers to the total scores of the population, $(\Sigma x)^2$ refers to sum of the square scores, $N$ refers to the number of the respondents. The number of respondents into the total scores of the population will deduct the sum of the square scores and this sum will be divided by the number of respondents minus one. That will realize S.D. The statistical analysis of data will inform about the frequencies of responses, their percentage, their Mean Score ($\bar{X}$) and their Standard Deviation.

3.12 Limitations of the Study

This study investigates factors relevant to the teaching-learning process of English language in Muang district in Suphanburi province of Thailand. It is an evaluative study of English language teaching (ELT) in the province. Various aspects of English teaching-learning such as teachers’ training courses and qualifications, conditions of English language learning-teaching of the English teachers, problems and needs of teachers who teach English and the students who learn English, teaching-learning activity and evaluation were taken into consideration because it
is within the scope of this research. The researcher did not investigate the situation of English teaching in any other district in Suphanburi province.

The present study has included 43 Thai English teachers in Upper Secondary Schools in Muang district, Suphanburi province. The questionnaires investigating English language teaching-learning conceptualization were administered with the sample teachers and students, while the semi-structured individual interviews investigating English language teaching conceptualization and practice of the teachers and students were conducted with the sample teachers and students. The relationship between the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews could thus be fairly beneficial for the data collection and analysis of the present study.

3.13 Conclusion

It is accepted in the National core Curriculum of 2008 that the English language has played and will be playing a dominant role in transforming the world of today and the world of tomorrow into a compact global village. It is therefore intended to view from a critical perspective the present situation of English language teaching in Thailand. The approach has made use of the dual perspective of viewing the present English language teaching situation from both the points of view- firstly from the point of view of teachers who are teaching English and secondary from the point of view of students who are learning English as a subject at Upper Secondary School Level. The methodology of the study is the procedure followed in obtaining the data related to the processes involved teaching and learning English in Thailand. The methodological details about the population of the study 43 teachers and 259 students from six Upper Secondary Schools in Muang district of Suphanburi province in Thailand – are given. Sampling and surveying are the methods used in the study. The preparation of tools is stated step-wise right from the selection of the topic of research. The research tools used are the two Questionnaires prepared- one for the teachers and the other for the students. The brief sketch of the two Questionnaires is outlined as both the Questionnaires are
reproduced in the Appendices. The research instruments are briefly desecrated and the stages of the preparation of the Questionnaires have been presented. The details of data collection, data analysis and the use of statistical methods are given to bring out the methodology of the study. The two Questionnaires have been responded with a 100% feedback which has enabled the researcher to present and analysis the data methodically in Chapter Four.