

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the summary of the study, discussion of the findings, and limitations of the study. Also, pedagogical implications, suggestions for future research studies, and conclusion are presented as well.

Summary of the study

This study was a single group pretest-posttest experimental research study that examined the effects of collocation vocabulary instruction on writing ability of lower secondary school students. The collocation vocabulary instruction was ten weeks long and was implemented at Nonthaburipittayakom School. The participants of the study were thirty-six eighth grade students who enrolled in a reading-writing course in the second semester of the academic year 2007. The instruments used in this study consisted of two parallel forms of English writing ability tests. The tests were administered to examine the participant's writing ability before and after receiving collocation vocabulary instruction as the pretest and posttest respectively.

The two English writing ability tests were developed by the researcher. Each test was comprised of three writing tasks to examine three difference types of writing ability. Each task was scored using Beginning Writer's Continuum or BWC (NWREL) which focused on seven aspects of writing ability as follows:

1. Ideas
2. Organization

3. Voice
4. Word Choice
5. Sentence Fluency
6. Conventions
7. Presentation

Each aspect can receive a score ranging from 0 to 5; therefore each writing task can obtain a maximum score of 35. The total score of each test was 105.

The findings from the comparison of the overall mean scores from the two English writing tests showed that the participants' English writing ability was enhanced after they received collocation vocabulary instruction. The mean score in the posttest was significantly higher than the mean score in the pre test. Also, the participants' writing ability enhanced in all aspects of writing ability as well especially in voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. Moreover, when considering in writing tasks that have different writing objectives, the participants could get higher scores for all writing tasks.

Discussion

As mentioned earlier, the findings from the two English writing tests showed that collocation vocabulary instruction enhanced the participants' writing ability. The results from the present study are consistent with those of Gough (1997), Wei (1999), and Woolard (2001). In these studies, the researchers also employed collocation vocabulary instruction in their instruction and found that the instruction could foster the development

of the students' productive abilities. According to Kozlowski and Seymour (2003), one way of helping students to improve their writing is to get them to focus on their awkward language and to replace it with appropriate collocations. The findings from the present study and these previous studies lend support to Lewis (1993) that teaching collocation could foster productive vocabulary and effective communication particularly in writing skill.

The positive effects of the collocation vocabulary instruction on students' writing ability may result from the instructional activities employed in the present study which are individual collocation teaching, whole class discussion, and doing collocation notebook. With the use of these activities, the participants engaged in studying productive vocabulary and new combinations of vocabulary explicitly.

First, with the use of individual collocation teaching, the participants studied new combination of vocabulary in contexts. Hill (2001) proposed that teachers should present collocations to students as an individual word. In this present study, the participants were stimulated to be aware of individual collocations appeared in the reading texts. In the class, the teacher let students to find the words that were the focus of the lesson from the texts. When the students found the focused collocations, the teacher gave an explicit instruction of the collocations. In this activity, the students were shown examples of how words were used and what words they collocate with. By observing how individual collocations were used in various contexts, the students were asked to induce the grammatical rule by the collocations. According to Hill (2001), learning vocabulary as collocation in this way can help enhance students' writing ability because the students not only learnt the meaning of the words but they also learnt the grammatical structure of the

words at the same time. Consequently, their ability to use those words are likely to be enhanced.

Moreover, the students in this study also had a chance to have whole class discussion about the collocations they used in writing. First, students discussed about the use of collocations when they wrote sentences using the collocations they studied in step 3 in each lesson. After writing sentences, the students were asked to show the sentences to the class and the class discussed whether there was any incorrect use of the studied collocations. This step helped the students to learn about collocations according to Kozlowski & Seymour (2003). Wei (1999) also found that class discussion about collocation errors could help learners understand the collocations clearly. This discussion activity may have helped the participants to understand how to use each collocation well and helped them choose to use appropriate collocation vocabulary in their writing tasks.

Last activity that seems to help enhance the students' writing ability is the recording. Importantly, students had to record of collocations in collocation notebooks. In this study, the students were asked to record the collocations they learned both from classes and elsewhere in their collocation notebooks. In the collocation notebook, the students collected the vocabulary, the grammatical structures of the vocabulary, and the sample sentences. Hill (2001) supported that it was essential for students to store collocations because they can study the collocation again after the class. Comparing with the notebook that contains only the vocabulary and its meaning, the collocation notebook is more useful for students to store and study.

In conclusion, with the use of individual collocation teaching, whole class discussion, and collocation notebook, the collocation vocabulary instruction helped enhance the students' writing ability significantly.

Limitations of the study

The limitation of the present study lied in the limited number of texts used to observe collocations. In this study, the participants learned collocations mainly from the texts the researcher used in the class. They did not have much time between classes to find other texts to study collocations on their own. Therefore, the collocations they learned during the period of the study may be limited to develop further their language knowledge. To study collocation, it needs to have enough sources to study the language pattern. One article that contained the target collocations may was not enough for students to collect and study the pattern of language. Therefore, the teacher had to add more sentences after the students found the sentences from the article to study the vocabulary explicitly.

Pedagogical implications

The findings of the study led to the following suggestions for English teachers.

First, the teacher should give enough example sentences to students when teaching collocations. The students need to observe plentiful examples of how collocations are used to be able to induce any rule.

Besides, the students should have their own collocation notebook to learn collocations by themselves. The collocation notebook is very essential for studying

collocation because the students can note the collocations they learn from class and by themselves and study the collocations on their own. Collecting collocations is a good way to increase knowledge of collocations.

Suggestions for further research

The suggestions for further research include two points. First, further research should be conducted with students at different levels to see whether collocation vocabulary instruction can help the students improve their writing ability, or not.

Next, further research should study the relationship between collocations and other skills such as speaking skills.

Conclusion

The present study showed that collocation vocabulary instruction was very effective in enhancing students' English writing ability; therefore English teachers in Thailand should consider conducting this kind of instruction in their class. Since communicative ability is the goal for English classes, implementing collocation vocabulary instruction in English class is worth considering. English teachers can implement the collocation vocabulary instruction as a whole or integrate the concept in other kinds of communicative lessons.