

Abstract

This thesis is “A Discourse Study of Communication Problems in an English Classroom” and the research questions are (1) what kinds of miscommunication occur between teachers and students in the classroom discourse, (2) how does the teacher overcome the problems of misunderstanding and (3) how can discourse studies help improve students understanding. Students are the first year Basic English learners at Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand. The majority of students are Thais and there are averagely 25 students in class and each class lasts 90 minutes. Teachers are graduate students at Assumption University in the English Language Teaching Master Degree program. They are from different countries such as Cambodia, China, India, Taiwan, and Vietnam. English is a second language and the target language of learning and teaching for both teachers and students.

The data of this research includes audio recording, videotapes and teacher’s journal. The chunks from audio recording provide the interaction between teachers and students and the videotapes offer the verbal and non-verbal communication. The teacher’s journal reflects the teaching attitude toward the class. According to the data, this research tries to find the kinds of miscommunication occurring between students and teachers and how the misunderstanding can be overcome by teachers to improve

the teaching and learning process more effectively. The analysis of this thesis tries to seek for a better solution to minimize the chance of miscommunication and searches for the better ways of communication to avoid possible miscommunication and misunderstanding in English Language Teaching classroom.

The types of miscommunication problems found in this research such as the lack of speakers' or teachers' background knowledge, the lack of students' feedback, pronunciation, how repetition is used in class, the lack of proper feedback or encouragement from the teacher, expression not well organized, cultural background factors and the aim or subject of the class is vague. According to different types of problems, this thesis searches for the solutions to help teachers to overcome the difficulties in miscommunication and improve students understanding.

