CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study aims at studying the effect of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction on students' English writing ability and how self-monitoring writing strategies instruction affect students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies

Research Design

The design of this research was divided into two major phases. The first phase was the development of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction model. The second phase was one-group pretest-posttest experimental design which investigated effect of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction. A single group was measured not only after being exposed to self-monitoring writing strategies instruction, but also before. This design attempted to use the subjects as their own controls and to eliminate the need for a control group design (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). Accordingly, the subjects in this study were measured twice on the dependent variables. In short, Figure 3.1 presented a diagram of the design of the study.

Phase 1: Preparation Phase

Stage 1:   The development of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction

> Step 1 studying and synthesizing from relevant theory and pedagogical to propose the component of important key teaching step
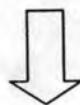>
> Step 2 proposing the teaching procedures
>
> Step 3 validating the teaching procedures

Stage 2: The construction of research instruments

> Step 1 studying the theory and pedagogical relevant to the research instruments
>
> Step 2 constructing the instruments
>
> Step 3 validating the research instruments

Phase 2: To investigate the effect of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction using one group pretest-posttest design

O	X	O
Pretest:	*Treatment:*	*Posttest*
English Writing ability, The use of self-monitoring writing strategies	Self-monitoring writing strategies instruction	English writing ability, The use of self-monitoring writing strategies
(Dependent variables)		(Dependent variables)

Figure 3.1 Research design and research development

Apart from investigating writing ability between the pretest and the posttest, the researcher observed the use of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction to find how this strategy helped students improved their English writing ability. Also, English writing journals and the students' interviews examined to become more in depth information on students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies.

Population and sample

The population for this study was the five hundred and twenty two third year pre-cadets who were studying at Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School in Nakornnayok Province in the academic year 2007. They were representatives of four services: Army, Navy, Air Force, and Police. The third year pre-cadets at the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School are equivalent to grade 12 in regular schools. The sample of this study was 31 pre-cadets who enrolled in the Self-Monitoring English Writing Strategies course offered by the researcher. The course was designed as an extra course which the pre-cadets could enroll in to improve their English writing ability. All participants were 17-18 years old. They had taken two required English courses in their first and second year: Foundation English and English for Military respectively. The first course was a two contact hours course and the latter was a three contact hours course.

All sample had high GPA. 29.03% of the samples earned GPA between 3.6 and 3.8 while the rest got GPA between 3.81 and 4.00. All of them got an average English grade from the two courses they took in their first two years between 3.5 and 4.00. From students' GPA and their English grade, they assumed that all students were in the upper-intermediate level. Additionally, some students got a scholarship to study English abroad for a summer camp. To get the scholarship, students were required to take the multiple choice English test and English writing essay.

Regarding the investigation of students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies from learners' journal and interviews, the researcher selected three students who gained the highest improve scores from the pretest to the posttest in order to examine in depth data on their use of self-monitoring writing strategies.

Concept underpinning of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction

Self-monitoring writing strategies course was carried out for ten weeks. There were two contact hours each week. Students in this course were trained to check their content and organization, and verify form of their writing. They were guided to correct errors in multiple drafts after checking content and organization, and verifying the form. The design of self-monitoring writing strategies highlights concepts of:

1. raising awareness of paragraph

2. introducing and reviewing writing issues

3. teaching strategies (modeling, scaffolding, and practicing)

4. editing paragraph.

The teaching procedures for these concepts will be explained as follows.

First week, students were introduced the course description (See course syllabus on Appendix H) and paragraph writing in order to raise awareness of paragraph. Also, they were asked to write the journal for further findings on students' English writing ability and their use of self-monitoring writing strategies.

In the second week, the researcher introduced the elements of paragraph and modeled how to use a checklist (adapted from Robitaiile & Connelly, 2004: 389) (See Appendix A) and the guideline for checking content and organization (See Appendix C). The checklist provided guidelines for students to read and assess the content of their writing in order to *identify* the elements of paragraph. From the checklist, students were guided through clear and specific instruction on what to look for. The students were asked to underline or circle the elements of a paragraph (if they had those elements). After students did the checklist, the teacher then gave them the guideline of checking content and organization (See Appendix C) and modeled to follow each step. The guideline was a *model* for students to check their content and

organization, and how to revise for their later paragraphs. Also, the researcher taught students edit their mistakes on content based on the checklist and the guideline.

Similar to the second week but focusing on the form aspect, in the third week, the researcher introduced the target grammars which were learned in the class and modeled how to follow the guidelines for verifying the form (Raimes, 1988) (See Appendix D). The guidelines questioned for the students to answer step by step so as to help them examine their writing more precisely. The sample guidelines were those common mistakes EFL students often had; for example, verb tense, word choice, agreement, present/past participles, articles, punctuation, and nouns. Students had to follow each guideline and they had to circle or underline the errors of form. At the end of the class, the researcher taught students how to edit their mistakes on form aspect based on the guidelines for verifying the form.

In weeks 4-9, the researcher had a role to review the topics, content area, target grammars, and some common problems found in the students' previous work. In addition, the researcher would model specific different content and grammar aspects each week. Unlike the researcher, the students had an important role to scaffold their knowledge on content and form. They practiced on the exercise given by the researcher in group or individually. Later, they had to practice using the checklist and guidelines for identifying content and verifying the form respectively. Last, they revised their paragraphs based on the checklist and the guidelines. The researcher then graded the final draft of each assignment and made comments on errors the students still had in their final draft. If the errors were very common, the researcher showed them how they would be revised in class again during the instruction. Students were given scores based on Jacob and others (1981) at the end

of each assignment to reveal whether they improved their English writing ability after learning self-monitoring writing strategies.

However, weeks 6 and 9, students were asked to write the journal one more time in order to see the progress of learning English writing and the use of self-monitoring writing strategies.

Week 10 as the last class, teacher summarized what students learned in the class before asking them to do the posttest.

Table 3.1 presents the long range plan of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction

Table 3.1

Long range plan of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction

Week	Topic	Content	Research instruments
1.	Pretest	- overview of paragraph writing	- English writing test - Journal writing
2.	My Vacation	- how to use the checklist and how to follow the guideline for checking content and organization	
3.	My Vacation (continue)	- how to use the guidelines for verifying the form	

Table 3.1 (continued)

Week	Topic	Content	Research instruments
4.	My Uniform Impression	- using the checklist to identify topic sentence and concluding sentence - using the guideline for verifying agreement	
5.	My Style of Fashion	- using the checklist to identify supporting details - using the guideline for verifying word choice/ word order	
6.	A Song That Means A Lot To Me	- using the guidelines for verifying punctuation, nouns and articles	- Journal writing
7.	My Favorite Musical Group/Singer	- using the checklist to identify the organization by using transitional words - using the guideline for verifying verb tense	
8.	The Place Where I Was Born	- using the guideline for verifying present/past participle	

Table 3.1 (continued)

Week	Topic	Content	Research instruments
9.	My Field Trip	- using the checklist and the guidelines for practicing revising content and form	- Journal writing
10.	Posttest	- summarization	- English writing test

Research instruments and the instrument validation

According to the instructional plan, there were three instruments which were evaluated by the experts. They consisted of topics of writing, lesson plans, the checklist for checking content and organization, the guideline for identifying content and organization, and the guidelines for verifying the form. Details of these instruments validation were explained as the following.

1. Topics of writing

There were eight topics used to investigate the effect of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction. Students were asked to write a paragraph for the first topic as a pretest. Then students wrote 6 topics as assignments to practice with self-monitoring writing strategies instruction. Also the assignments showed how the self-monitoring writing strategies helped students improved their English writing ability. Students then wrote the eighth topic as a posttest.

The researcher began the selection of writing topics by studying the English writing textbooks of the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory school and the course description for the courses of the school. Then eight topics were chosen based on

their relation to what students learned in the regular class. As the course was a new course proposed for this research, the researcher had to clarify the course objectives and contents were relate to the students' overall English course.

Three specialists' approvals of the topics were sought before the experiment (See list of experts on Appendix I). The initial list of topics of writing, theme, and time of distribution were given in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

The initial list of topics of writing, theme, and times of distribution

Topic	Theme	Times of distribution
My Vacation	Holiday	Pretest
My Uniform Impression	Fashion	Assignment 1
My Role Model	Fashion	Assignment 2
A Song That Means A Lot To Me	Music	Assignment 3
My Favorite Musical Group/Singer	Music	Assignment 4
The Place Where I Live	Holiday	Assignment 5
A Ghost Story	Holiday	Assignment 6
My Unforgotten Dream	Holiday	Posttest

To validate the appropriate topics to the level of the students and theme, the specialists evaluated it by using the topic evaluation form (See Appendix E). On the evaluation form, there would be two parts- a written suggestion and a three rating scores for each statement according to the following criteria:

+1 means   the topic is appropriate

0 means   not sure

-1 means   the topic is not appropriate

Then IOC (Item-Objective Congruence Index) used to find the consistency of statement.

$$IOC = \frac{R}{N}$$

IOC means   the index of congruence

R means   total score from the opinion of the specialists

N means   numbers of the specialists

If IOC was higher than or equal 0.50, it inferred that the topics were appropriate to the level of the students and the theme. Contrarily, IOC was less than 0.50, the topics were not appropriate to the level of the students and the theme.

According to the experts' validation, Table 3.3 shown below was the result of topic evaluation obtained from three experts.

Table 3.3

The result of topic evaluation obtained from three experts

Topic	$\bar{x}$
1	1.00
2	1.00
3	067
4	1.00
5	1.00
6	1.00
7	0.00

Table 3.3 (continued)

Topic	$\bar{x}$
8	0.33

From the results above, it revealed that the first, second, third, forth, fifth, and sixth topic were greater than 0.50; topics were accepted from the experts. On the other hand, the seventh and eighth were less than 0.50; topics were not appropriate and they needed to be revised.

Although the third and sixth there were accepted by the experts, they were modified according to the experts' written suggestion.

For the third topic, My Role Model could mislead students so that they wrote something off the theme. Thus, the topic changed to "My Style of Fashion" which suited to the theme of fashion.

For the sixth topic, the specialists suggested to change into "The Place Where I Was Born." It helped students to generate their idea easier than "The Place Where I Live" because some people wrote off the topic such as writing about the school where they have lived recently.

The seventh topic was not accepted by the experts because it was out off the theme. The researcher changed it into "My Field Trip" because students had to go on a field trip on their long weekend during this class assignment in that semester. It was better if they wrote about what they did during the field trip.

The eighth topic, the posttest, was not accepted by the experts so it was edited as well because it was more difficult than the topic for the pretest. Also the topic misled the students to write either their dream when they slept or dreamt in the future. The topic was revised to "My Favorite Place I Used To Go."

The final list of topics of writing, theme, and times of distribution after revising according to the experts' suggestion illustrates in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

The final list of topics of writing, theme, and times of distribution

Topic	Theme	Pretest
My Vacation	Holiday	Pretest
My Uniform Impression	Fashion	Assignment 1
My Style of Fashion	Fashion	Assignment 2
A Song That Means A Lot To Me	Music	Assignment 3
My Favorite Musical Group/Singer	Music	Assignment 4
The Place Where I Was Born	Holiday	Assignment 5
My Field Trip	Holiday	Assignment 6
My Favorite Place I Used To Go	Holiday	Posttest

Inter-rater reliability was used to find reliability of two raters for grading students' writing in both pretest and posttest by using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. After students completed both tests, the researcher and another rater read pretest and posttest and gave them scores. The scores from the two raters were analyzed using the criteria of Jacob and others (1981) (See list of a rater on Appendix I). There were 100 points for the paragraph evaluation. These points were divided into five parts, content (30 points), organization (20 points), vocabulary (20 points),

language use (25 points) and mechanics (5 points). Table 3.5 illustrates the result of inter-rater reliability obtained from the pretest and posttest.

Table 3.5

The result obtained from grading the pretest and the posttest between the researcher and a rater

Rater	Pearson Product Moment	
	Pretest	Posttest
$R_1 + R_2$	0.90	0.91

According to Table 3.5, the Pearson correlation between the scores related by the researcher and another rater of pretest and posttest were 0.90 and 0.91 respectively. It implied that grading students' writing from two raters were reliable.

2. The lesson plans

To achieve the self-monitoring writing strategies instruction, ten lesson plans were designed in order to help the teacher conduct the course effectively through self-monitoring writing strategies instruction. Each lesson plan included title of a lesson, content objectives and procedure (See Appendix F). The researcher constructed the lesson plan then three experts were sought to evaluate the lesson plans (See list of experts on Appendix I). Each expert was asked to evaluate a few samples of the lesson plans consisting of lesson plans1, 2 and 3. For each lesson plan, the experts had to evaluate the terminal and enabling objectives, overall objectives, teaching procedures, the overall procedures, and the overall of the lesson plan. The Item-Objective Congruence Index was employed to summarize the experts' opinion about the lesson plans. The instrument validity procedures described on page 56 used here as well. To validate the appropriate of the lesson plans, the specialists evaluated it by using the lesson plan evaluation form (See Appendix G). The result was revealed that

IOC on all aspects in the lesson plan 1-3 were 0.67 which were greater than 0.50, they implied that these lesson plans were acceptable for the study.

3. The checklist for checking content and organization

The checklist used to identify students' awareness and being as the self reports. In order to validate the checklist, the researcher constructed the checklist adapted from Robitaille and Connelly (2004). Then three experts were sought to evaluate the checklist and comments on the content of the checklist (See list of experts on Appendix I). The checklist given to the experts consisted of 9 questions based on 3 items (3 topic sentences, 3 supporting details, and 3 concluding sentences). The checklist evaluation form was given in Appendix B. The Item-Objective Congruence Index was employed to summarize the experts' opinion about checklist. The instrument validity procedures described on page 56 were also employed at this stage.

The result from the experts showed that the mean score of all items were 1.0 which were greater than 0.50; thus, all experts agreed on the checklist. It implied that the questions given in the checklist were appropriate. To respond to the experts' written suggestions, the researcher added one more question in the item of concluding which was "Does a concluding sentence refers back to the topic sentence?" While the ninth question which was in the concluding sentence item, "Does the paragraph have the required organizational pattern?" was moved into the new item which was organization item. A column which labels "not sure" was added in the form in case students did not understand the elements of paragraph and feel uncertain about their content and organization (See checklist on Appendix A).

4. Guideline for checking content and organization

The researcher conducted the guideline for checking content and organization (See Appendix C) then gave it to three experts to validate (See list of experts on Appendix I). The Item-Objective Congruence Index was employed to summarize the experts' opinion about the guideline for checking content and organization. The instrument validity procedures described on page 56 was also employed here.

From the experts' validation, the result showed that IOC of the checklist was equal 0.67 which was greater than 0.50; therefore, the guideline was appropriate. The experts also suggested to edit the language in some contents to make students better understand.

5. The guidelines for verifying the form

The guidelines for verifying the form were conducted then given to the experts to validate (See list of experts on Appendix I). The forms consisted of word choice/word order, nouns, verb tense, agreements, articles, present/past participle forms, and punctuation. The Item-Objective Congruence Index was employed to summarize the experts' opinion about guidelines for verifying the form. The instrument validity procedures described on page 56 used here as well.

The result showed that IOC of the word choice/word order was 0.67 while other form aspects got 1.0. Thus, the forms were accepted from the experts because IOC was greater than 0.50. Not only the experts' validation, the experts suggested that there were only two aspects to consider. First, the experts edited the sentences in the box to help students understand clearly. Second, the experts suggested the researcher to try the guidelines before collecting the data because they were probably difficult and complex for students to learn.

6. English writing journals

Students wrote the journals three times in order to perform their use of self-monitoring writing strategies. The first time of writing started with the beginning of the class. The second was during instruction which was in week 6. The last time occurred after learning self-monitoring writing strategies which was in week 9. The aim of the writing journals was to show students' development of using self-monitoring writing strategies.

Before learning self-monitoring writing strategies, students would be asked to write the journal according to the following questions (from O'Malley & Pierce, 1996):

- When you had problems writing or get stuck, what did you do?

Unlike the first writing journal, the journal at the second time and the third time were different because the first journal asked about their background of the study while the last two asked about their development of learning self-monitoring writing strategies. The questions asked in these two journals adapted from Darasawang, (2000); Srimavin and Darasawang (2003) were as follows.

- What and how much have you learned in this lesson?

- What helps you to learn successfully in this lesson?

7. The learner interviews

The learner interviews were conducted with three students who gained the highest improved scores between their pretest and posttest at the end of the course. The reason of selecting 3 students was that, at first, the researcher picked nine students: three students who improved the most scores from the pretest to the posttest, three students who improved at average scores, and three students who improved the

least scores. These nine students represented 30% of 31 pre-cadets which this percentage was accepted statistically as the appropriate samples. Finally, the researcher selected only three samples who gain the most improve scores to analyze. These three students were interviewed in order to get more data on students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies. Interview used in this study was unstructured interview. This interview provided the interviewees with broad freedom of expression and elaboration and often resembled informal talks. It allowed greater depth, and one question led to another without a pre-planned agenda of what would be asked (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989:167). Take for example, the researcher asked two of the questions:

1. How often did you use the checklist for checking content and organization?

2. Did you always check and revise your content and form after composing?

The Pilot Study

After the revision of the instruments, the researcher piloted the instruction and research instruments with 31 third-year pre-cadets who were studying at Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School in academic year 2007 but not those who enrolled in the course. The instruments and lesson plans were revised based on the information learned from the pilot study.

From the pilot study, the researcher found that lesson plans needed to be more organized to be concise because students could not finish their tasks in time. Some exercises could be shortened due to time.

Data Collection

The data collected from both quantitative and qualitative to examine the effect of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction and students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies. The data collection was administered to 31 students at the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School in the semester 1 of academic year 2007. The data was collected in three phases; before, during and after the experimental study as the following.

1. English writing tests were given before and after self-monitoring writing strategies instruction.

2. During the process of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction, students were asked to complete the checklist.

3. English writing journals written by all students three times: before (week1), during (week 6), and after (week9) learning self-monitoring writing strategies were collected to examine the students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies.

4. At the end of the study, 3 pre-cadets who improved their writing scores the most were interviewed in Thai for their use of self-monitoring writing strategies.

5. The researcher spent 10 weeks collecting data while she was teaching the course.

Data Analysis

1. The data obtained from pre and post English writing ability tests were analyzed by means of arithmetic mean and t-test to see the effect of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction.

2. The checklist for checking content and organization were analyzed for frequency and percentage.

3. Three English writing journals were analyzed by content analysis looking at how the subjects responded to the questions given as guidelines for studying students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies. To analyze the content of the journals, the researcher read the journals and looked for key ideas in each area on which the students reflected. The learner interviews data were translated from Thai to English and analyzed by content analysis.

The relationship between research questions, objectives, instruments, and data analysis presents in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6

Relationship between research questions, objectives, instruments, and data analysis

Research questions	Objectives	Instruments	Data analysis
1. How does the self-monitoring writing strategies instruction help students improve their English writing ability?	To study the effect of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction on students' English writing ability.	- English writing tests	Analyzed by means of arithmetic mean and t-test to see the effect before and after self-monitoring writing strategies instruction

Table 3.6 (continued)

Research questions	Objectives	Instruments	Data analysis
2. How does the self-monitoring writing strategies instruction affect students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies?	To study how self-monitoring writing strategies instruction affect students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies	- The checklist for checking content and organization - The writing journals - The learner interview	- Checklist was analyzed for frequency and percentage of answering the questions - The writing journals and learner interview were analyzed by content analysis.

Summary

The study aims to study the effect of self-monitoring writing strategies instruction on students' English writing ability and how the self-monitoring writing strategies instruction affect students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies. The research was conducted with 31 pre-cadets for 10 weeks. The study compared pre-cadets' English writing ability mean scores before and after receiving a self-monitoring writing strategies instruction. Furthermore, the students' use of self-monitoring writing strategies was evaluated through writing journals and interviews. The research results and findings for each research question will be presented in Chapter 4.