

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLES

This research is conducted as a descriptive research, for it describes the main communication strategies that Chinese students use during English conversations, but without considering the correlations between the strategies and participants or the other features. This result is reflected by analyzing the frequency and percentage of different types of communication strategies that appear in the conversations.

Table 6 Basic Information of Participants

No.	Gender	Major	Age (NA)	Years of English Study (NA)
1	F	Tourism	21	16
2	F	Tourism	21	13
3	F	Tourism	22	14
4	F	Tourism	22	15
5	F	Tourism	20	16
6	F	Tourism	24	17
7	F	Tourism	20	15
8	F	Tourism	23	16
9	F	Tourism	21	15
10	F	Tourism	NA	14
11	F	Tourism	21	14
12	F	Tourism	22	15
13	M	Tourism	21	16
14	M	BA	26	16
15	M	BA	26	17
16	M	BA	24	15
17	F	BA	23	12
18	F	English	27	18
19	F	English	NA	NA
20	M	English	25	18

* NA: Not Available

Participants are selected based on two requirements, which are they are Chinese speakers and they can communicate in English. This table shows the main information of each student in details. The participants are 20 Chinese students (5 males and 15 females) who study at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in different majors during academic year 2012-2013. Among them, 13 students (12 females and 1 male) who major in tourism had studied in Yulin Normal University at China for 2 years, and the third year (June, 2012-March, 2013) in HCU. Except the Thai language class, all other classes are taught in English. Another 4 students (3 males and 1 female) who major in Business Administration (BA) are studying their fourth year in HCU, for them, all the classes are lectured in English, and they meet the class 21-24 hours per week. The other 2 female students who major in English are also in their fourth year at HCU. The last subject is a male student who majors in Master Degree of English program, and he has been attending the English course here for 1 year (June, 2012-March, 2013). All these participants come from the South China (such as Yulin, Guangxi, Yunnan, etc.), and all of them are voluntary.

All these participants began to learn English since primary school or even kindergarten. It means that, they have been learning English for more than ten years., but English was not the main subject in high school for these participants. However, in college, they study different majors (some majors are lectured all in English, but some other students don't have that much chances to encounter English) and their English proficiencies are different.

3.2 Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is interview. The questions concern about the participants' opinions about the school life in HCU and in China; the participants' experiences and feelings about the Thai culture, such as the weather, food, people, animal and so on; some situations about the participants' families and hobbies. These ten semi-structured questions are the main ones, and they are prepared for every participant. Examples are as follows:

- When did you come to Thailand?
- How did you feel when you first arrive here?
- What do you think about your teachers at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University (HCU)?
- What do you think of Huachiew Chalermprakiet University, compared to the universities you know in China?
- What Thai food do you like?
- Have you tried an elephant ride?
- Have you seen any ladyboy in Thailand?
- How are your parents now?
- Do you have any pets?
- Have you booked your ticket to China yet?

These questions are picked by some principles. First, the questions should be familiar for the participants; then, the questions should be easy. As we know, the purpose of using World Englishes is to go through the meaning, so the questions should be easy for the subjects to comprehension. All these participants have the study experience in HCU, and life experience in Thailand. These questions are close related with their daily activity, so the students are quite familiar with the questions and they can answer them without too much difficulty. The researcher also shares the experience in HCU and in Thailand, so the researcher can comprehend the participants' answers well. Based on these principles, the questions are semi-structured, because sometimes the interviewers have to describe more information or add more questions to make the participants understand clearly. As a result, the questions are not exactly the same, but semi-structure used.

All these rules of the questions are made to be correspond with Tarone's Framework, for example, the students may use "Avoidance" Strategy when answering "Have you seen any ladyboys in Thailand?", because it is improper to talk about the others behind. Although these questions are supposed to reflect all the strategy use, there are some weak points also. The participants have to answer the questions

which are already designed, so they may be unbalanced for each strategy, especially for the four new appeared strategies, and the result may be affected.

Even though there are some shortcomings, these questions are set by aiming to reveal the communication strategies that Chinese students use during English communication. The recorded Audio-clips are used for the transcribing and data analyzing.

3.3 Data Collection

The participants were interviewed in March 2013, and the questions were similar. Students were told that the interviews would be audio recorded for data collection and research analysis. The 13 tourism students' interviews were made one by one in the morning of March 6 in the separate room of the library, and one English major student was asked in the afternoon of the same day. The left students were interviewed next to HCU female students' dormitory on March 9 afternoon. Considering the convenience of the participants, the interviews were not arranged on the same day or same place. According to the situation of each student, each interview lasted for 8 to 13 minutes, and they were interview once separately. Then the recordings were administered by the author after the completion of all the interviews.

All data were transcribed using slightly modified standard orthography. Pauses, repetitions, laughs, etc., were marked since they could have significance in the identification of communication strategies. Criteria for identifying strategies were also facial expressions and intonation which often signaled "Appeal for Assistance", while, this research only analyzes the intonation since the facial expressions could not be audio recorded.

3.4 Data Analysis

The recordings were transcribed and then the communication strategies were classified into different groups according to Tarone (1978) definitions, and the data were analyzed by three judges who are the advisor of the author, one American professor of English program in HCU and the author herself. After that, statistical Excel software was applied to calculate the collected data. Descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage were used to analyze the data.