

A STUDY OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD USING ENGLISH  
TEXTBOOKS: A CASE STUDY OF 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN  
MAHA SARAKHAM PROVINCE



Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Arts Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language  
at Srinakharinwirot University

May, 2013

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A STUDY OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD USING ENGLISH  
TEXTBOOKS: A CASE STUDY OF 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN  
MAHA SARA KHAM PROVINCE



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Ladaporn Srakang. (2013). *A Study of Teachers' Perceptions Toward Using English Textbooks: A Case Study of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English Teachers from Maha Sarakham Province*. Thesis, M.A. (Teaching English as a Foreign Language). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Thesis Advisor: Dr. Anchalee Jansem.

This study explored how 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers perceived the use of English textbooks. The participants of the study consisted of 12 English teachers from 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level in Maha Sarakham Province, selected by purposive sampling. The instruments used for collecting data included questionnaires, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews.

The results of the study revealed that teachers who had pro-textbook views believed that their teaching could not be conducted effectively without using English textbooks. Some of the pro-textbook teachers expressed the opinion that English textbooks should go hand in hand with supplementary teaching materials to serve learners' needs. By contrast, teachers who had anti-textbook views believed that English textbooks were ineffective. Ultimately, the findings elucidate problems with English textbooks, which dramatically affect their use in teachers' classroom practices.

Keywords: Teachers' perceptions, English textbooks, English teachers

การศึกษาความรู้ลึกของครูที่มีต่อการใช้แบบเรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ: กรณีศึกษาของครูภาษาอังกฤษ  
ชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 4 ในจังหวัดมหาสารคาม



เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทร์วิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา  
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ

พฤษภาคม 2556

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การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาความรู้สึกของครูภาษาอังกฤษชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 4 ในจังหวัดมหาสารคามต่อการใช้แบบเรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ กลุ่มตัวอย่างของการศึกษาในครั้งนี้คือครูภาษาอังกฤษชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 4 ในจังหวัดมหาสารคาม จำนวน 12 คนที่ได้มาจากการสุ่มตัวอย่างแบบเจาะจง (Purposive Sampling) เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการการวิจัยครั้งนี้ประกอบด้วยแบบสอบถามการสังเกตการณ์ในห้องเรียนและการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้าง

จากผลการวิจัยพบว่าครูที่เห็นด้วยกับการใช้แบบเรียนเชื่อว่าการสอนภาษาอังกฤษจะไม่สามารถเกิดขึ้นได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพโดยปราศจากการใช้แบบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ โดยครูที่เห็นด้วยกับการใช้แบบเรียนส่วนหนึ่งให้ความเห็นว่าควรมีการใช้แบบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษควบคู่ไปกับสื่อการเรียนการสอนอื่น ๆ เพื่อสนองความต้องการของผู้เรียน อย่างไรก็ตามครูที่ไม่เห็นด้วยกับการใช้แบบเรียนเชื่อว่าการใช้แบบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นการเสียเวลา นอกจากนี้ผลการวิจัยยังชี้ให้เห็นถึงปัญหาของการใช้แบบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษซึ่งส่งผลอย่างมากต่อการสอนของครู

คำสำคัญ: ความรู้สึกของครู, แบบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ, ครูภาษาอังกฤษ

The thesis titled

“A Study of Teachers’ Perceptions toward Using English Textbooks: A Case Study of  
10<sup>th</sup> Grade English Teachers in Maha Sarakham Province”

by

Ladaporn Srakang

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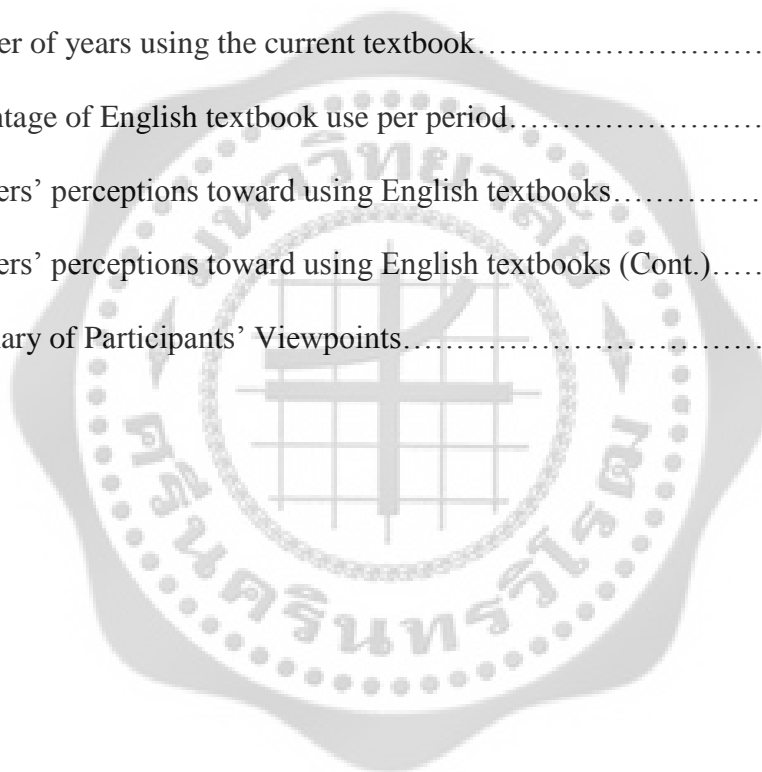
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Background

Teachers are the key element in the teaching and learning process and there has been extensive research focusing on teachers and their classroom practices. Over the past decade, educational researchers have given their attention to investigations into teachers' psychological processes including their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions (Taimalu & Oim, 2005). Many educators have highlighted the particular importance of exploring teachers' perceptions because these influence their practice, judgment and decision making processes (Barcelos, 2000; Pedersen & Liu, 2003; Yu, 2004). Explorations therein therefore reveal detailed information valuable for educational development (Zacharias, 2003).

Previous research into teachers' perceptions has focused on teaching methodologies, educational policy, language evaluation and instructional materials. These studies have been aimed at gaining insights into actual occurrences in real educational settings. For instance, Manajitt (2008) attempted to investigate in-depth the perceptions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers concerning the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in Thailand. The results of the study revealed some shortcomings and difficulties in implementing CLT which reflected educational failures in Thailand. Similarly, Wang (2008) conducted a research study focusing on examining teachers' perceptions of language policy implementation in a Chinese tertiary context. The outcomes of the study indicated a drastic discrepancy between policy makers' intentions and teachers' practice. In the area of instructional materials, there has been some research investigating the perceptions of teachers about

using instructional materials such as computer software, visual aids and textbooks (Aminuddin, 2009; Dolati & Richards, 2012; Kurniawati, 2006). The findings of these studies have yielded important data beneficial for school settings, policy makers, material developers and teacher educators.

Instructional materials can be defined as coming under the scope of anything used as a tool to teach learners in the teaching-learning processes (Tomlinson, 1998). Kitao and Kitao (1997) assert that instructional materials have considerable influence in classroom instruction. Instructional materials generally take three forms: printed materials, non-printed materials, and a combination of printed and non-printed materials (Richards, 2001). Printed materials include textbooks, workbooks, photocopied handouts and newspapers. Non-printed materials can be in the form of cassettes, videos or CD-ROMs. Materials from the Internet are considered a combination of printed and non-printed materials.

Even though the availability of innovative instructional materials is increasing and those innovative instructional materials have become more popular among teachers, textbooks are still the most used teaching materials for most language classrooms (Aytúg, 2007). Wang (2005) points out that textbooks strongly predominate in most instructional situations. Christenbury and Kelly (1994) show that ninety-one percent of teachers regularly use textbooks in classrooms. In addition, Stein, Stuen, Carnine and Long (2001) mention that textbooks engage up to approximately ninety percent of classroom instruction.

In English language teaching situations, textbooks play a crucial role in all types of educational institutions all over the world (Lamie, 1999). The prominence of textbooks appears so expansive that they are an almost universal element in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). These researchers further



claim that teaching and learning processes will not be carried out effectively without relevant textbooks. Thus, textbooks are considered an essential component for teaching and learning and are a valuable source for both teachers and learners (Lawrence, 2011; Litz, 2005; Tsiplakides, 2011). Textbooks ensure language content coverage if followed systematically (Richards, 2001; Ur, 1998). Importantly, Cunningsworth (1995) claims that since textbook writers hold varied assumptions about syllabus designs, they include different styles of syllabuses in their textbooks that can be utilized as essential tools for learners' goals.

Although there is strong evidence of the advantages of textbooks, their disadvantages and limitations have also been noted. Richards (2001) and Ur (1998) point out that textbooks are often produced for worldwide markets; hence, no textbooks can fulfill every learner's needs and interests and topics which are too removed from learners' interests can cause them boredom. Furthermore, language items such as dialogs and other aspects of contents appearing in textbooks tend to be inauthentic and unrelated to real language use (Cunningsworth, 1995; Richards, 2001). As a result, learners are often not directly exposed to language as it is used in the real world.

In view of the above, textbook evaluation has become essential for teachers because it is an effective way to help them to select suitable textbooks for their teaching and learning contexts. Consequently, many researchers have conducted research about textbook evaluation, the following in elementary and secondary schools: Arsairach, 2007; Chandran, 2003; Litz, 2005; Meesupsang, 2006; Riad, 2008; Riasati & Zare, 2011; Richards & Mahoney, 1996; Sophitthammakun, 2009; Thúy, 2010; Tok, 2010. These research studies have mainly focused on analyzing and judging quality, cultural issues, skills, supplementary materials and the suitability of English textbooks. The issue of how teachers perceive the use of English textbooks has scarcely been addressed.

It is, therefore, of interest to closely investigate teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks. Particularly, the researcher is interested in gaining an understanding of the underlying reasons for using English textbooks in teaching and learning situations as this can reveal information useful for teaching and learning development. Furthermore, since the relationship between teachers and textbooks is inseparable, scrutinizing teachers' perceptions can provide a significant understanding of many aspects of using English textbooks. That is, how teachers perceive the use of English textbooks reflects how they use these textbooks in real contexts, so this study can reveal ways of improving the quality of their use from a teacher's viewpoint.

## **2. Objectives of the Study**

1. To investigate the perceptions of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers towards using English textbooks.
2. To examine the roles of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English textbooks in actual classrooms.
3. To identify problems raised by 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers concerning the use of English textbooks.

## **3. Research Questions**

1. What are teachers' perceptions towards using English textbooks?
2. How do teachers use English textbooks in actual classrooms?
3. What problems do teachers encounter while using English textbooks?

## **4. Significance of the Study**

The results of this study may provide useful data for schools or headmasters when selecting textbooks. The findings may also be beneficial for material developers, textbook writers, and developers and publishers in developing textbooks and teaching materials which are more practical and suitable for actual teaching and learning situations in Thailand. Moreover, the findings of the study may provide important information to

policy makers, teacher educators and teacher developers in the area of teacher development.

## **5. Scope of the Study**

### **Population and samples**

The population of the study was 70 English teachers teaching 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level from 35 secondary schools under Secondary Educational Service Area Office 26, Maha Sarakham province. A purposive sampling procedure was used and the sample was 12 English teachers from six extra-large government schools teaching 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level.

### **6. Definition of Terms**

The terms used in the study are defined as follows:

1. Teachers' perceptions refer to the combination of beliefs, attitudes and opinions which reflect how teachers see, feel about or understand something. Specifically, in this study, teachers' perceptions refer to the beliefs, attitudes, and opinions of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers toward English textbooks.

2. English textbooks refer to printed materials locally made and/or imported, which have been authorized by the Ministry of Education and are used by students and teachers in the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English Core Course in Maha Sarakham Province.

3. 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers refer to Thai teachers of English who teach 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Thai students in Maha Sarakham Province.

## **7. Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter has explained the background of the study including the importance of exploring teachers' perceptions, the significance of textbooks and the reasons for conducting this research effort. The objectives, research questions, significance of the study and scope of the study were also addressed. Finally, the definition of terms

specifically used in this study was described at the end of the chapter. The next chapter will present a review of relevant literature.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter presents a review of the relevant literature and research that forms the background of this study. Related topics include the role of textbooks in EFL classrooms, textbook evaluation, the concept of perceptions and the significance of teachers' perceptions.

#### **1. The Role of Textbooks in EFL Classrooms**

It has been widely accepted that textbooks play an essential role in many language classrooms (Richards, 2001). However, there has been a significant amount of debate on the actual role of materials in EFL classrooms in terms of the potential and the limitations of using textbooks. Opinions on whether textbooks foster or actually obstruct teaching and learning processes appear to be polarized (Lawrence, 2011).

##### **1.1 Potential of Textbooks.**

Textbooks serve as syllabuses which provide teachers with material to teach in classrooms. Cunningsworth (1995) mentions that textbooks serve as syllabuses that reflect pre-determined learning objectives. Additionally, textbooks function as syllabuses which have been systematically planned and developed (Richards, 2001). Textbooks also provide explicit frameworks which guide teachers and learners in terms of what they have done and what they will do (Ur, 1998). Textbooks can be sources of direction and idea banks for teachers about how lessons can be delivered (Tomlinson, 2008). Well-designed and structured textbook chapters can provide a blueprint for how lessons should be conducted (Edge & Wharton, 1998).

Cunningsworth (1995) and Ur (1988) point out that textbooks can act as guidance and support for inexperienced teachers who are insecure about their language

knowledge and have not yet gained confidence in the job. Richards (2001) further states that textbooks and teacher's manuals have a teacher-training role. They can initially train less-experienced and inexperienced teachers to be more confident in planning lessons and teaching in classrooms. Ansary and Babaii (2003) identify security, guidance, and support as important roles for textbooks with regard to less-experienced teachers.

O'Neill (1982), Sheldon (1988) and Ur (1988) mention that textbooks are efficient tools in terms of time and money. Textbooks reduce time in material preparation so teachers can devote more hours to teaching. Additionally, good textbooks can assist teachers by providing interesting activities and they do not require too much preparation (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). Ansary and Babaii (2003) assert that textbooks are program regulators and time controllers. Besides, textbooks are relatively inexpensive when compared to other materials such as learning kits, photocopied worksheets or computer software (Ur, 1998).

In addition to being good guides for teachers, textbooks are regarded as sources which learners can use to boost their knowledge and language skills (Cunningsworth, 1995). Textbooks serve as major sources of language input for learners supplementing the input provided by teachers. O'Neill (1982) indicates that using a particular textbook not only allows learners who have missed lessons to catch up but also helps learners to prepare for future lessons beforehand. Cunningsworth (1995) and Ur (1998) agree that textbooks help with self-directed learning or self-assessment since learners can use textbooks as resources for learning new materials, and for reviewing and monitoring their learning progress. Therefore, textbooks play a role in providing learners' with more autonomy than they would otherwise have.

## 1.2 Limitations of Textbooks.

Massive use of textbooks is considered as educational failure (Swales, 1980).

Richards (2001) reveals that textbooks contain inauthentic language, which is not representative of real language use, because texts, dialogs and other aspects of content are likely to be written to support teaching points. Textbooks also fail to properly depict real life issues. Controversial topics are generally avoided in order to make textbooks acceptable. Besides, textbooks may not suit students' needs as they are often written for global markets. Richards (2001) further claims that if teachers use the textbook and teacher's manual as the basis of their major instructional decisions, they reduce themselves to the status of a technician merely presenting materials to students. Finally, he states that commercial textbooks may become a financial problem for students in many parts of the world since they are expensive.

Similarly, Ur (1998) asserts that textbooks are inadequate in terms of supplying every learner's learning needs. Moreover, topics in the textbook are often irrelevant or uninteresting in the actual classes. A textbook may hinder a teacher's initiative and creativity because of its set structure and sequence. This tends to cause learners' boredom and paucity of motivation. Ur (1998) also claims that textbooks do not usually provide a wide range of levels of ability and knowledge of learning styles and strategies since they tend to be based on their own singular teaching/learning approach. She finally suggests that teachers who use textbooks may end up serving only as mediators who follow them uncritically without using their initiative.

Moreover, Tomlinson (2008) states that due to the great potential of textbooks, teachers may place too much reliance upon them and spend less time preparing lessons. As a result, the teacher ends up teaching the book instead of teaching the language itself (McGrath, 2002). Textbooks reflect the pedagogical, psychological and linguistic

preferences and biases of textbooks writers which makes them too inflexible (Allwright, 1981). Porreca (1984) asserts that many English as a Foreign Language (EFL)/ English as a Second Language (ESL) textbooks contain abundant examples of gender bias, sexism and stereotype.

In conclusion, researchers or teachers who are in favor of using textbooks believe that textbooks can serve as course syllabuses, guidance and sources for both teachers and learners. Furthermore, textbooks are efficient because they can save time in material preparation. However, those who are against the use of textbooks claim that such use results in negative outcomes. For example, they may neither serve learners' needs nor contain authentic language. Besides this, textbooks may deskill. Lastly, the topics presented in textbooks may be irrelevant and uninteresting for learners.

With the potential and limitations of textbooks having been critically discussed, textbook evaluation is here recognized as an effective process to select textbooks which contain much potential but few limitations. Recently, many research studies have revealed that textbook evaluation has become essential in language classrooms and can facilitate teachers in successfully selecting the most suitable textbooks for their classrooms.

## **2. Textbook Evaluation**

Due to there being extensive numbers of textbooks on the market, teachers and others responsible for evaluating and selecting them need to be able to make informed decisions in this process (Richard, 2001). In order to choose the most appropriate textbook for individual teaching and learning situations, many processes of textbook evaluation have been put forward.

The work of Cunningsworth (1995) provides two types of evaluation. The first is "Impressionistic Overview" in which teachers quickly look at textbooks in terms of how



attractive the cover is, what other materials come with the textbook, and how the textbook is structured and sequenced. Unsuitable textbooks can be filtered out during this process (McGrath, 2002). The second is called “In-depth Evaluation”, which is subsequently carried out to closely examine specific areas such as language skills, and to provide exercises etc.

Grant (1987) proposes three-stages of textbook evaluation. The first stage is “Initial Evaluation”, which helps teachers to quickly screen out unsuitable textbooks. He also suggests that in order to avoid too hasty judgments, the CATALYST test should be applied. The eight letters represent the following eight criteria: Communicative, Aims, Teachability, Available Add-ons, L-Level, Y-Your impression, S-Student interest and T-Tried and tested. “Detailed Evaluation” is the second stage aimed to pilot the chosen textbook after the use of the CATALYST test. In this stage, a questionnaire can be of great assistance for teachers in deciding whether the selected textbook is suitable for their classrooms. The last stage is “In-use Evaluation” which is a continuous process of re-evaluating the adopted textbook. This will provide the premises upon which teachers can base their conclusions about whether to continue using or to replace the textbook.

Similarly, McGrath (2002) refers to the “Impressionistic Method”, the “Checklist Method” and the “In-depth Method” as important in evaluating textbooks. The Impressionistic Method, which is similar to Cunningsworth’s Impressionistic Overview, aims at analyzing general impressions gained from reading the blurb and the contents page and then by skimming through the book to check organization, topics, layout and visuals. The Checklist Method involves checking off a list of criteria in a certain order. This method is convenient for comparing different textbooks and is not time-consuming. The In-depth Method suggests a close investigation of features such as the design of one particular unit or exercise, or the treatment of particular language elements.

Many researchers have expressed different views about when a textbook evaluation should take place (Lawrence, 2011). Generally, there are three different stages in the textbook evaluation process, which include “Pre-use evaluation”, “Whilst-in-use evaluation” and “Post-use evaluation”. Pre-use evaluation is seen as a quick and useful way for selecting textbooks if it is done by experienced teachers (Tomlinson, 2003). Whilst-in-use evaluation can facilitate teachers in examining the suitability of the textbooks being used (Mukundan, 2007; Tomlinson, 2003). Post-use evaluation involves a thorough assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of textbooks to facilitate decisions about whether or not to continue using them (McGrath, 2002; Tomlinson, 2003).

Harmer (2001) further clarifies the three stages of textbook evaluation. He states that the impressionistic method is recommended for the pre-use stage as it allows an assessment of how well the textbook will perform. After that, the whilst-in-use and post-use evaluation is aimed at determining how well the textbook has performed. Allwright (1981), McGrath (2002) and Mukundan (2010) suggest that textbook evaluation should be a cyclical process in which the pedagogical value and suitability of textbooks should be periodically evaluated.

To sum up, textbook evaluation involves three methods. The Impressionistic overview/Impressionistic method aim at gaining a general impression from the textbooks. The In-depth evaluation/Detailed evaluation/Checklist method involve a more detailed assessment of the textbooks. In-use evaluation/Whilst-in-use evaluation involve a close examination and re-evaluation of the adopted textbook. Also, textbook evaluation should be carried out continuously to ensure that any textbooks used remain pedagogically effective.

### **Related studies on Textbooks Evaluation.**

In light of criticisms of the potential and limitations of textbooks, many researchers have conducted research in order to discover whether textbooks are appropriate in specific teaching and learning contexts. Some of those research studies are presented as follows.

Wen-Cheng, Chien-Hung and Chung-Chieh (2011) who focused on a reading textbook evaluation checklist used at elementary level and based on a meta-analysis of a checklist published internationally and locally show that textbook selection is probably the most important decision made by EFL educators. They also found that the evaluation process could result in a more systematic method of textbook selection and could enhance outcomes for learners, teachers and administrators.

Riasati and Zare (2011) evaluated the 'New Interchange' textbook series using the checklist method of evaluation. The aims of the study were to determine the textbook's suitability and appropriateness in an Iranian context and to discover, using survey techniques, the shortcomings of the series according to teachers' perceptions. The teacher participants of this study included 35 English teachers from different institutions. The results demonstrated the strong point of the series which included practical considerations such as the reasonable price, its accessibility and the existence of a teacher's guide and audio tape. The balance of activities concerning the four skills and the adequate communicative practice provided in the series were noted as well. However, some weaknesses were also pointed out such as the lack of supplementary teaching materials, the inappropriate language level and cultural issues.

Likewise, Tok (2010) examined the effectiveness of the textbook 'Spot On' from the perspectives of 46 English teachers working in various primary schools in Turkey. The research used a descriptive model and the textbook was evaluated in terms of layout

and design, activities and tasks, language type, subject, content and skills and overall suitability. The findings revealed that even though 'Spot On' demonstrated valued characteristics such as integrated-skill syllabus provision and realistic, interesting, challenging and motivating content, it also had deficiencies. It could not serve students' language-learning aims and it was not able to boost students' interest in further language study.

In an attempt to determine the overall pedagogical value and suitability of the textbook 'English Firsthand 2', Litz (2005) conducted a study in Sung Kyun Kwan University in South Korea. Eight intermediate English course instructors and five hundred students were surveyed via questionnaires. The study came to the conclusion that English Firsthand 2 "actually stood up reasonably well to a systematic in-depth analysis and that the positive attributes far out-weighed the negative characteristics" (p.34).

Another investigation relating to teachers' beliefs and practices in using textbooks was conducted by Richards and Mahoney (1996). The researchers surveyed ESL teachers in secondary schools to see how they used English textbooks in the ESL context of Hong Kong. Their study found that teachers believed that the textbook could effectively facilitate their teaching. However, teachers neither taught exclusively from the textbook nor devoted the entire lesson to it. The study concluded that teachers took a critical attitude towards their textbooks.

Chandran (2003) investigated teachers' feelings, beliefs, values and perceptions in relation to their use of prescribed textbooks in English and Malay medium schools. She found that teachers rarely used the prescribed textbooks. Instead, they selected commercial instructional materials because the prescribed textbooks did not expose learners to examination-type questions. The researcher suggested that this issue could be

dealt with by supplementing their teaching with examination-type exercises extracted from commercially published materials.

Riad (2008) evaluated the suitability and effectiveness of the course book 'At the Crossroads' used in the first year of a secondary school in Algeria. The two questionnaires were employed in order to glean precise information from teachers and students about their use of the coursebook. The findings of this study indicated that even though 'At the Crossroads' served the objectives of the Ministry of Education, it did not match teachers' and students' expectations. It did not, for example, suit teenagers' interests. The researcher finally concluded that coursebook adaptation was necessary.

In addition, Thúy (2010) attempted to determine the overall pedagogical value and suitability of the textbook 'English 10' in relation to the prescriptions of the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training. The researcher intended to evaluate the textbook, which was being used in Vietnamese upper secondary education, through the use of document analysis, survey questionnaires and informal interviews. The study found that there were both advantages and disadvantages to the use of 'English 10'. Nonetheless, the areas which were problematic could be modified, adapted, replaced and supplemented to make the textbook more applicable to the aims of the relevant language programs and the different needs of different classrooms.

In Thailand, many educators have set out studies in order to analyze and evaluate textbooks in many different areas. For instance, Arsairach (2007) analyzed and evaluated English textbooks for 4<sup>th</sup> Grade students, which were being used in primary schools throughout Supanburi Province. The purposes of the study were to analyze the contents, exercises, activities and organization of the textbooks and to survey teachers' and students' opinions toward them. The samples of the study were: 1) The English textbooks "Project: Play & Learn 4", "Say Hello 4" and "Smart Kids 4"; 2) 305 of 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

students; and 3) 24 English teachers. A questionnaire was used to obtain data. The results indicated that the teachers and the students rated all three textbooks at a moderate level of quality.

Similarly, Meesupsang (2006) analyzed an English textbook titled ‘Smart Choice 2’. The analysis covered 7 factors: aims and approaches, topics, skills, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and social and cultural values. The investigation was undertaken using a checklist developed by the researcher. The results showed that the textbook was durable and attractive due to its interesting and rich content. It contained various topics and content that covered in-school and out of school knowledge, which was contemporary and generalizable for ESL/EFL learners. Moreover, it was well-organized, the instructions were clear and covered all necessary skills and linguistic features, and language skills were integrated with cognitive skills. Authentic texts and tasks, along with colorful pictures helped to provide students with learning tools relevant to real-life situations.

Additionally, Sophitthammakun (2009) conducted research aimed at studying the opinions of English teachers, students in the Gifted Programme and students in the regular program at Bangkok Christian College towards “The Growing World of Fiction” textbook. The study investigated the effectiveness of the textbook in terms of activities, language skills, language type and subject and content from both teachers’ and students’ points of view. 25 English teachers and 30 students from the 10<sup>th</sup> grade were included as subjects. A questionnaire was used as a research instrument. The research results revealed that although the English teachers were not fully satisfied with the activities, the balance of skills and the language type, they nevertheless agreed to use the textbook. Moreover, the students in the Gifted Programme were fully satisfied with almost all aspects of the textbooks while the students in regular class regarded the textbook as unsuitable for them.

This research evidence demonstrates the aforementioned potential and limitations of textbooks. Nonetheless, there have been few studies regarding the roles of textbooks in teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning. Teachers' perceptions should be thoroughly studied since they provide substantial contributions to educational development and teacher practice.

### **3. The Concept of Perceptions**

The concept of perceptions varies from person to person and it has been defined differently by many theorists. The following are some experts' conceptions of perception upon which the current study is based.

Perception can be defined from physical, psychological and physiological perspectives. Perception as defined from a psychological viewpoint refers to the process of selecting, organizing and interpreting input from receptors. Through perception, the inner capacity of a person, including their attitudes, feelings and points of view can be determined (Baron-Cohen, 1995). Perception can also be described as a process that involves people organizing and interpret their sensory impressions with the aim of giving meaning to their environment (Robbins, 2005).

According to Rundell (2007), perception refers to “a particular way of understanding or thinking about something, the ability to notice something by seeing, hearing, smelling etc. and the ability to understand and make good judgments about something”. Moreover, perception refers to “an idea, belief, or an image that you have as a result of how you see or understand something” (Hornby, 2005).

From Pajares's (1992) point of view, the word 'belief' bears close relation to the word 'perception'. Hence, it can be inferred that the words 'belief' and 'perception' can be used interchangeably (Moloi, 2009). Pudi (2002) analyzed the basic assumptions of the

perceptual tradition proposed by many educators and came to the conclusion that the word 'perception' is very synonymous to the word 'attitude'.

According to Jalilah (2010), perception refers to "someone understanding, beliefs, feeling about persons, situations and events as his/her learning experience which will be the major determiner of the stimuli to which he/she responses". Jalilah concludes that perception refers to someone's opinions about something.

In view of the existing literature, the researcher defines perceptions as the combinations of beliefs, attitudes and opinions, which, in terms of the study, reflect how teachers see, feel about or understand the use of English textbooks.

#### **4. Significance of Teachers' Perceptions**

In the field of ELT professionals, the significant role of teachers' perceptions has been identified in many ways. According to Yu (2004), teachers' perceptions influence what teachers do both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers therefore need to be cautious about their beliefs about teaching and learning. Barcelos (2000) agrees that language teachers' perceptions influence what they do in classrooms. Teachers' perceptions relate to how teachers deal with shortcomings in their teaching situations (Moloi, 2009). Moreover, Pedersen and Liu (2003) assert that decisions teachers make and actions teachers take in the classrooms depend entirely on their beliefs or perceptions. This means that perceptions are generally a basis for teachers to form judgments or to make decisions. According to Kurniawati (2006), teacher's beliefs are tools for understanding more about their practice and values in teaching. When uncovering teachers' belief or exploring teachers' mental experiences, factors underlying teachers' actions can be uncovered thus illuminating an understanding of language teaching from the perspective of teachers. Jia (2004) states that it is believed that, as behavior is led by thought, exploring teachers' perceptions and beliefs helps in gaining a deeper



understanding of their behavior in classrooms as well as provide a guide for enhancing teachers' practices.

In brief, teachers' perceptions play a crucial role in teaching and learning processes due to the fact that they not only influence teachers' actions and teachers' decision making but also provide significant insight into many aspects of education.

### **Related studies on Teachers' Perceptions.**

The role and importance of teachers' perceptions have been studied in several key areas of interest to ELT professionals. Jeon and Hahn (2006) explored EFL teachers' perceptions of task-based language teaching in secondary school in Korea. The data were collected through questionnaires completed by 228 middle and high school teachers. The survey revealed that the majority of respondents had a high level of understanding of task-based language teaching concepts but also had some negative views on implementing this method of teaching in practice. Additionally, some useful implications of teachers' perceptions, which could help teachers and teacher trainers to construct and implement task-based language teaching more effectively, were discovered.

Manajitt (2008) investigated the conceptualization and practice of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) of Thai EFL secondary school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand. 58 EFL teachers teaching Grade 7 to Grade 12 in public secondary schools participated in this study. A questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used to gather data. The research showed that the participants had an accurate conceptualization of CLT and were enthusiastic in acquiring knowledge about it from different sources such as media, research studies, and seminars. However, they didn't always employ CLT in practice. This was due to large classes, lack of equipment, and time constraints. The findings of the study suggested that more training opportunities

should be given to teachers and courses and exams should be more flexible and responsive.

In the areas of language policy, Wang (2008) investigated teachers' perceptions of language policy implementation in the Chinese tertiary context. The data were collected through classroom observations and follow-up interviews of two English language teachers. The findings revealed a discrepancy between policymaker intention and teacher execution i.e. teachers completely failed to implement the language policy in actual classrooms. Instead, they mainly considered students' language proficiency, class size and institutional evaluation as the major factors influencing their practice.

Dolati and Richards (2012) studied the effectiveness of using visual aids in fostering students' vocabulary. The research, carried out in primary schools, specifically aimed to investigate how dual coding theory could assist in changing language teachers' perceptions towards the use of visual learning aids in their language classrooms. The participants of this study were 15 experienced teachers who were studying at the UTM Faculty of Education and who were enrolled in the Teaching English as a Second Language program there. Focus group interviews were used to collect data. The results showed that teachers tended to have positive attitudes about using visual aids in their classrooms especially in the area of communication skills.

The issue of teachers' perceptions has been explored here, but most of the discussion has concerned aspects of language teaching such as perceptions of language teachers toward their professional development, perceptions toward teaching approaches, or perceptions of teachers toward the use of particular teaching and learning activities rather than perceptions towards textbooks, a subject with regard to which less in-depth research has been conducted although a few cases are described below.

Research conducted by Kurniawati (2006) reported how EFL teachers used English textbooks in their classroom instruction and how students perceived teachers' use of textbooks in actual classrooms. The researcher conducted the study with four EFL teachers and students at one of the high schools in a high school district in the Municipality of Bandung, West Java province, Indonesia. Data was gained via observations, questionnaires and interviews. The results show that teachers' beliefs about textbooks greatly reflected the frequency of their use of particular textbooks in the classrooms as well as their ways of using them. It was also found that although the textbooks seemed to cover all the skills students needed, they could not develop those skills at the same time. Instead, the skill that could be most developed was the one that teachers focused on most during their teaching.

Aminuddin (2009) investigated how teachers used and applied instructional materials (textbooks) and lesson plans in language classrooms, and how students responded to teachers' use of said instructional materials. The research was carried out with eight English teachers and students at the Language Centre of the State School of Administration Sciences, Indonesia. The researcher used document analysis, classroom observations and interviews to collect data. It was found that teachers regarded textbooks as not conducive to fully serving their and students' needs as they lacked content appropriateness. Students, on the other hand, mostly agreed that learning materials could serve their needs, meaning that teachers had successfully implemented these instructional materials in the classrooms.

In summary, many studies have examined the potential and the limitations of textbooks through evaluating and analyzing their language contents, i.e. grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and also other aspects of content such as exercises and activities, aims and approaches, social and cultural values and organization. There are,

however, only a few studies that have explored teachers' perceptions of the use of English textbooks. This study focuses on these teachers' perceptions of English textbooks in actual classrooms in order to gain further insight into this issue.

### **5. Summary of the Chapter**

In this chapter, the researcher explored the teaching and learning of English in Thailand and the roles of textbooks in EFL classrooms. Then, the potential and limitations of textbooks, textbook evaluation and some relevant research studies were discussed. The last part of the chapter elucidated the significant roles of teachers' perceptions in education. In light of the literature review above, this study attempts to investigate how teachers perceive the use of English textbook in order to reveal information pertinent to textbook selection and development. The next chapter addresses research methodology, data collection procedures and data analysis.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in this study and the participants, instruments, procedures and data analysis are discussed.

#### **1. Research Design**

In order to be able to explicitly answer the research questions, the researcher employed characteristics of the mixed method and case study design. As explained by Creswell (2009), a mixed-method design is a method whereby the researcher collects, analyzes, and integrates both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in multiple studies. In this study, the researcher applied both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather, analyze and interpret data within a single case study.

#### **2. Population and Participant Selection**

The population of this study consisted of 70 English teachers from 35 extra-large government schools supervised by Secondary Educational Service Area Office 26, Maha Sarakham Province. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants. As explained by Silverman (2000), purposive sampling singles out members for the sample who can give insights into particular issues of the phenomenon being researched. Additionally, as Patton (1990) explains, purposive sampling aims to seek a greater understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The participants of this study were 12 English teachers from six extra-large schools who taught 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level. The reasons for selecting this particular group of teachers are described as follows.

Firstly, prior to conducting the study, the researcher observed many schools in Maha Sarakham Province and found that these six extra-large schools used English textbooks which had been approved by the Ministry of Education. Secondly, these six

extra-large schools had many classes and provided varied programs for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. Consequently, the researcher had more opportunities to observe and collect data from different classroom practices that could affect teacher perceptions toward using English textbooks thus allowing the obtainment of in-depth information. Lastly, having examined the existing research studies, the researcher had found that there were only a few studies about teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks conducted with English teachers in Maha Sarakham province. Importantly, most of the previous research was conducted more than ten years ago and most of the English textbooks used in that research are now out of date making the results possibly inapplicable for current teaching and learning situations. The numbers of participants from each school is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 *Numbers of the participants*

| School                 | Numbers of teachers |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Sarakhampittayakhom    | 2                   |
| Phadongnaree           | 2                   |
| Borabu                 | 2                   |
| Burabuwittayakan       | 2                   |
| Phayakkaphumwittayakan | 2                   |
| Wapipathum             | 2                   |
| Total                  | 12                  |

### 3. Research Instruments

The research instruments employed in this study included questionnaires for quantitative data, and classroom observations and semi-structured interviews for qualitative data.

### 3.1 Questionnaire.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), a questionnaire is a common technique for collecting data and it is used to elicit reactions, attitudes or beliefs.

Moreover, a questionnaire is an instrument commonly used to elicit information about a variety of different issues (Richards, 2001). Therefore, the researcher decided to apply a questionnaire as the primary tool for collecting data on the perceptions of teachers.

To construct the questionnaire, the researcher undertook the following steps:

1. A review of basic concepts, a definition of terms, information on the existing roles of textbooks, and textbook evaluation frameworks proposed by researchers from Thailand and abroad as were presented in the Literature Review.

2. A drafting of the questionnaire was prepared by adapting and developing Ur's criteria for coursebook assessment (1998) and Wongkaew's questionnaire (2009). The questionnaire allowed participants to share their beliefs, attitudes, and opinions demonstrating their perceptions toward English textbooks. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts: (a) Background Information and (b) Teachers' Perceptions toward English textbooks (see Appendix A).

#### *Part A: Background Information*

This part contained 6 items designed to give information on the backgrounds of teachers concerning factors such as gender, educational background and teaching experiences.

#### *Part B: Teachers' Perceptions toward using English Textbooks*

This section consisted of 35 items dealing with the evaluation and roles of textbooks. A Likert scale, ranging from 1-5, was employed to reflect participants' level of agreement with a list of statements. The mean value was classified into: 5) strongly agree, 4) agree, 3) neutral, 2) disagree 1) strongly disagree.

3. The questionnaire was validated in consultation with three experts in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. The three experts were asked to evaluate each item in the questionnaire using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC).

4. The questionnaire was revised based on the IOC scores given by each expert. Items earning IOC scores between 0.51-1.00 were approved. The remaining items having scores lower than 0.51 were revised.

5. The questionnaire was trialed in order to ensure its practicality. This was done with 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers who were excluded from being participants in the main part of the study.

### **3.2 Classroom observation.**

Classroom observation was carried out to obtain authentic data on how teachers used textbooks in their classroom practices. Merriam (2009) explains that an observation helps an observer to notice things that have become routine and that lead to understanding in context. She further states that conducting an observation also provides some knowledge of context or specific issues which can be used as reference for subsequent interviews (see Appendix B).

In this study, the researcher decided to observe classes to gather deeper data. Entire lessons conducted by each participant were observed. The classroom observation protocol was used as a guide to facilitate the researcher in effectively noticing and recording classroom events. The classroom observation protocol included aspects derived from two sources; the research questions, and responses from the questionnaires. Video recording was also applied to ensure data accuracy.

### **3.3 Semi – Structured Interview.**

DeMarrais (2004) defines an interview as a process in which a researcher and participant have a conversation about issues regarding a research study. Similarly,



Spradley (1979) states that an interview is a method aimed at seeking more understanding of people's point of views. By using interviews, the researcher is able to understand how participants interpret a situation or an issue in a way that cannot be achieved through observation (Merriam, 2009). An interview is, therefore, a useful tool which provides additional information missing in observation. It can also be used to check the accuracy of observation (Maxwell, 1996). The researcher therefore decided to employ the semi-structured interview technique. By this form of interview, the researcher could gain deeper answers and cross check the accuracy of observational data.

To construct the interview questions, the researcher undertook the following steps:

1. A review of basic concepts, definition of terms, information on the existing roles of textbooks, and textbook evaluation frameworks proposed by researchers from Thailand and abroad as were presented in the Literature Review.

2. A draft of the interview questions based on the aforementioned literature review. All open-ended questions were derived from the research questions and were mainly aimed at gaining greater depth of data about participants' perceptions toward English textbooks (see appendix C).

3. A validation of the interview questions by consulting three experts in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. The interview questions were reviewed by three experts and the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) were calculated for each question. This helped determine the clarity and comprehensibility of the questions.

4. A development and revision of the interview questions with regard to the IOC scores given by each expert. Items which yielded IOC scores between 0.51 – 1.00 were approved. The remaining items earning scores lower than 0.51 were revised.

5. A trial of the interview questions so as to ensure practicality. The interviews were trialed with 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers excluded from being participants in the main part of the study.

#### **4. Data Collection**

The data collection was conducted at the beginning of August 2012. The researcher sent a consent letter administered by the Graduate School of Srinakharinwirot University to each school, asking permission to conduct the research. After permission was granted, the researcher contacted the schools and scheduled the dates and times with each 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teacher for the administration of the questionnaires. On the scheduled dates and times, the researcher visited each school, explained the objectives of the study to each teacher participant and administered the questionnaires. The teacher participants were asked to response to the questionnaires by putting a mark in a box containing one of the following categories: 5: Strongly agree, 4: Agree, 3: Neutral, 2: Disagree, and 1: Strongly disagree. The responses to questionnaires from the teacher participants were then quantitatively analyzed.

Classroom observation was then carried out three times with each teacher participant. The observation was conducted only after each teacher participant had completed the questionnaire because responses from questionnaires would be involved in determining what the researcher needed to observe in the classrooms. The role of the researcher was as non-participant observer because the researcher did not become involved in the teaching and learning processes but instead used classroom observation protocol as an instrument to gather data which was as detailed and concrete as possible. Video recording of classes was also used to provide a more explicit and reliable record of what happened in the classrooms.

Finally, a semi-structured interview was conducted in order to get more insightful answers and to complement data from questionnaires and classroom observations. Each teacher participant was individually interviewed with open-ended questions at different times. The languages used in the interviews were Thai and English. Each interview took approximately 30-45 minutes depending on teacher participants' answers. The whole interviews were recorded and transcribed later.

## 5. Data Analysis

The data gained from the questionnaires, the classroom observations and the semi-structured interviews were analyzed and merged to fulfill the objectives of the study. First, the responses from the questionnaires were analyzed by using means and standard deviations. The mean values were interpreted as follows:

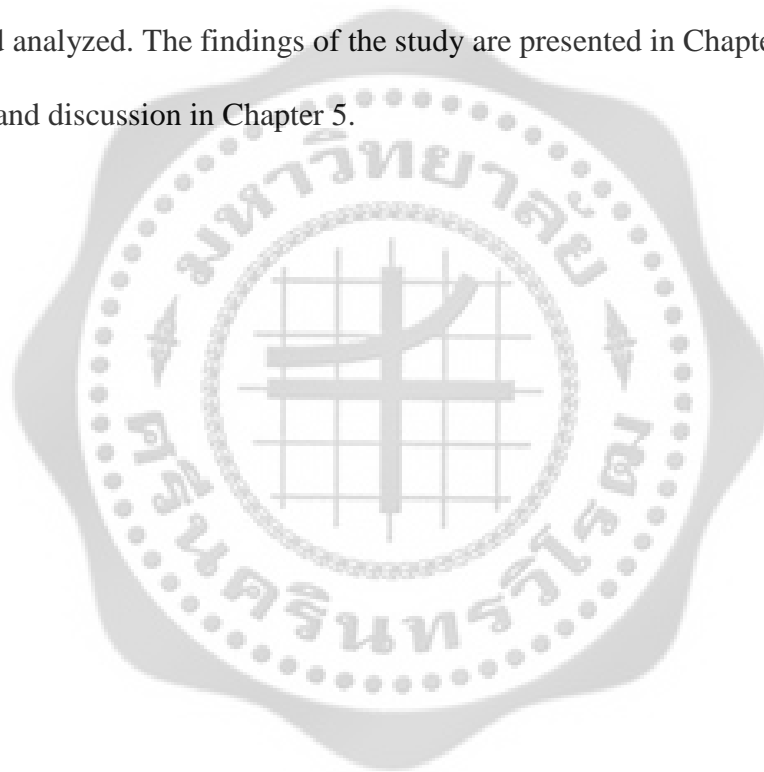
|             |                   |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 4.50 – 5.00 | Strongly agree    |
| 3.50 – 4.49 | Agree             |
| 2.50 – 3.49 | Neutral           |
| 1.50 – 2.49 | Disagree          |
| 0 – 1.49    | Strongly disagree |

Second, the qualitative data gained from the observations was analyzed based on Merriam's (2009) ideas as follows. The process began with the transcribing of data from video recording into texts. Then the researcher read through the written data from observation protocols and the transcribed data from the video recordings in order to make notations (Category Construction) which were relevant to the answering of the research questions. After that, the researcher put similar notations into groups or categories (Sorting Categories and Data) and differentiated each category by giving its names (Naming Categories). Finally, the sorted data in each category was interpreted. The researcher used the same process to analyze data from the interviews. Finally, the results

from questionnaires, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews were combined and merged to answers the research questions.

## **6. Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter presented the research methodology including a description of participants, research instruments and data collection and analysis. The chapter started with participant selection followed by a detailed description of the research instruments and the construction of each instrument. The last part described how the data was collected and analyzed. The findings of the study are presented in Chapter 4 and conclusions and discussion in Chapter 5.



## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

This chapter presents an analysis of the quantitative data derived from the questionnaire and a qualitative analysis of the classroom observations and semi-structured interviews.

#### 1. Analysis of Quantitative Data: The Questionnaire

The quantitative data was derived from questionnaires consisting of two sections. The first section included six statements aimed at gathering information on the background of the teachers who participated in the study. The second section aimed at reflecting the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers' perceptions of the use of English textbooks and the roles of English textbooks in their classroom practices. The background information is presented below followed by the results of the second section of the questionnaires.

##### 1.1 Background information on the teacher participants

General background information on the teachers is presented in this section. The responses to the six statements in the first section of the questionnaires were as follows.

Table 2 *Gender of the teachers*

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Male   | 1         | 8.34       |
| Female | 11        | 91.66      |
| Total  | 12        | 100        |

Table 2 shows that of the total teachers, 11 (92%) were females and only one (8%) teacher participant was male.

Table 3 *Educational background of the teachers*

| Educational background | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Bachelor's degree      | 8         | 66.66      |
| Master's degree        | 4         | 33.34      |
| Doctoral degree        | 0         | 0          |
| Other                  | 0         | 0          |
| Total                  | 12        | 100        |

Table 3 indicates that eight (66.66%) of the teachers reported having a bachelor's degree as their highest qualification while four (33.34%) of them reported having a master's degree. There were no teachers who held doctoral or other degrees participating in the study. This indicates that a majority of the teachers who taught 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level in Maha Sarakham Province were qualified.

Table 4 *Number of years in teaching professions*

| Number of years in teaching profession | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Less than a year                       | 0         | 0          |
| 1-5 years                              | 2         | 16.66      |
| 6-10 years                             | 0         | 0          |
| More than 10 years                     | 10        | 83.34      |
| Total                                  | 12        | 100        |

It can be observed from Table 4 that most of the teachers had more than 10 years of English teaching experience, (83.34%) of the teachers indicated that they had English teaching experience of ten years or more while two (16.66%) of the teachers indicated they had English teaching experience of between one to five years.

Table 5 *Number of years in teaching 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level*

| Number of years teaching<br>10 <sup>th</sup> Grade level | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Less than a year   | 3         | 25         |
| 1-5 years  | 3         | 25         |
| 6-10 years   | 1         | 8.34       |
| More than 10 years                                       | 5         | 41.66      |
| Total  | 12        | 100        |

It can be noted from Table 5 that the teachers' experience of teaching 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level varied. Three (25%) of the teachers had been teaching 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level almost a year while another three (25%) had been teaching this level for one to five years. Five (41.66%) of the teachers had taught 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level for more than ten years whereas only one (8.34%) of them had six to ten years of teaching English at this level.

Table 6 *Number of years using the current textbook*

| Number of years using the<br>current textbook | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Less than a year                              | 4         | 33.34      |
| 1-2 years                                     | 1         | 8.34       |
| 3-4 years                                     | 5         | 41.66      |
| More than 4 years                             | 2         | 16.66      |
| Total   | 12        | 100        |

Table 6 indicates that four (33.34%) of the teachers had been using the current English textbooks for less than a year while only one (8.34%) of them had been using it for one to two years. Five (41.66%) of the teachers had been using the current English

textbooks for 3-4 years and two (16.66%) of them had more than four years' experience using them.

*Table 7 Percentage of English textbook use per period*

| Percentage of English textbook use per period | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Less than 25%                                 | 2         | 16.66      |
| 25-49%  | 3         | 25         |
| 50-74%  | 2         | 16.66      |
| 75-90%  | 4         | 33.34      |
| More than 90%                                 | 1         | 8.34       |
| Total   | 12        | 100        |

Table 7 indicates that two (16.66%) of the teachers used English textbooks less than 25% of the time in each period while three (25%) used English textbooks between 25-49% of the time. It was also found that two (16.66) used English textbooks between 50-74% of the time in each period while four (33.34%) indicated that they used English textbooks between 75-90% of the time. The rest of the teachers (8.34%) reported using English textbook more than 90% of the time in each period.

### **1.2 Teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks**

The second section of the questionnaires consisted of 35 statements. The mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the teachers' responses to the statements. The findings from the questionnaires are shown in Table 8.



Table 8 *Teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks*

| Statements   | $\bar{X}$ | S.D. | Level of Agreement | Ranking |
|--|-----------|------|--------------------|---------|
| <b>Evaluation on English textbooks</b>   |           |      |                    |         |
| 1. The approach recommended in the textbook is educationally and socially acceptable to the target community.              | 4         | 0    | Agree              | 4       |
| 2. The objectives are explicitly laid out in an introduction and implemented in the textbook.                              | 3.92      | 0.90 | Agree              | 7       |
| 3. The layout and design is attractive and easy to read.   | 4         | 0.85 | Agree              | 4       |
| 4. The instructions are clearly stated.  | 4.25      | 0.62 | Agree              | 2       |
| 5. The topics and tasks are interesting and motivating.  | 4         | 0.60 | Agree              | 4       |
| 6. There is a variety of topics and tasks provided for different learner levels, learning styles and interests.            | 3.67      | 0.65 | Agree              | 17      |
| 7. The content is clearly organized and graded (sequenced by difficulty).  | 3.83      | 1.03 | Agree              | 8       |
| 8. The subjects and content are relevant to learners' needs.   | 3.58      | 0.99 | Agree              | 18      |
| 9. There are periodic review and test sections provided.   | 3.83      | 1.03 | Agree              | 8       |
| 10. There is plenty of authentic language.   | 3.33      | 0.65 | Neutral            | 27      |
| 11. There is an appropriate balance of the four language skills.   | 3.50      | 1    | Agree              | 22      |
| 12. Pronunciation explanation and practice are suitably presented.   | 3         | 1.04 | Neutral            | 32      |
| 13. Vocabulary explanation and practice are clearly presented.   | 3.17      | 0.83 | Neutral            | 11      |
| 14. Grammar presentation and practice are clearly presented.   | 3.42      | 1.16 | Neutral            | 23      |
| 15. The textbook provides adequate activities and practice.  | 3.33      | 1.07 | Neutral            | 27      |
| 16. The textbook encourages learners to develop their own learning strategies and to become independent in their learning. | 2.92      | 1.16 | Neutral            | 33      |
| 17. The textbook provides adequate guidance for the teacher; not too heavy preparation load.                               | 3.83      | 1.03 | Agree              | 8       |

Table 9 *Teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks (Cont.)*

| Statements   | $\bar{X}$ | S.D. | Level of Agreement | Ranking |
|--|-----------|------|--------------------|---------|
| 18. The textbook is accompanied by good audio cassettes, CDs, Supplementary materials and Teachers' Guide. | 4.42      | 0.66 | Agree              | 1       |
| 19. The textbook is readily available locally.   | 3.25      | 0.96 | Neutral            | 29      |
| 20. The price of the textbook is reasonable.   | 3.58      | 0.66 | Agree              | 18      |
| 21. The culture presented in the textbook is appropriate for Thai context.                                 | 3.58      | 0.99 | Agree              | 18      |
| 22. The subject and contents are relevant to the school curriculum.  | 3.83      | 1.03 | Agree              | 8       |
| <b>Roles of English textbooks</b>  |           |      |                    |         |
| 23. The textbook serves as a syllabus.   | 3.25      | 0.75 | Neutral            | 29      |
| 24. The textbook helps planning daily instruction.   | 3.75      | 0.86 | Neutral            | 12      |
| 25. The textbook serves as a source of assessment items.   | 3.42      | 0.99 | Neutral            | 23      |
| 26. The textbook serves as a source of homework.   | 3.42      | 0.90 | Neutral            | 23      |
| 27. The textbook serves as an essential source for teacher.  | 3.75      | 0.75 | Agree              | 12      |
| 28. The textbook serves as an essential source for learners.   | 3.75      | 0.86 | Agree              | 12      |
| 29. The textbook helps teachers to teach English effectively.  | 3.58      | 0.90 | Agree              | 18      |
| 30. I follow the sequences of contents provided in textbook.   | 3.42      | 0.79 | Neutral            | 23      |
| 31. I teach exclusively from the textbook.   | 3.75      | 0.86 | Agree              | 12      |
| 32. I rely on the textbook when teaching.  | 2.42      | 0.66 | Disagree           | 34      |
| 33. I use the textbook as the only source for teaching materials.  | 1.67      | 0.49 | Strongly Disagree  | 35      |
| 34. I fully understand the content presented in the textbook.  | 4.17      | 0.57 | Agree              | 3       |
| 35. I fully understand cultural issues presented in the textbooks.   | 3.75      | 0.75 | Agree              | 12      |
| Total  | 3.53      | 0.81 | Agree              |         |

Table 8 and table 9 represent the mean and standard deviation of teachers' responses of each statement. The total mean was 3.53, which demonstrates that the teachers had positive perceptions toward using English textbooks and toward the roles of

the English textbooks they used. The findings show that the teachers tended to agree that the English textbooks were necessary teaching materials and played a variety of roles in their classroom practices. The five ranks of teachers' perceptions can be described as follows. The highest rank indicates that the teachers clearly perceived the English textbooks as providing good supplementary materials such as audio cassettes, CDs and Teachers' Guides. The second highest rank indicates that the teachers believed that the English textbooks provided clear instructions for them. The third highest rank indicates that teachers understood the content presented in the textbooks. The fourth highest rank indicates that teachers believed that the approach presented in the English textbooks was educationally and socially acceptable to their school settings. The results of the questionnaires further indicate that the teachers deemed that the English textbooks provided attractive and easy-to-read layouts and designs as well as interesting and motivating topics and tasks. Lastly, the fifth highest rank demonstrates that the teachers perceived that the English textbooks stated explicit objectives in every section of the textbook.

The overall mean and standard deviation values of the questionnaire showed that the teachers valued using the English textbooks, perceiving their roles as essential. However, these mean scores should be carefully regarded because there were some statements rated at a neutral level. Those teachers who marked at a neutral level neither fully disagreed nor supported the statements. In addition, problems the participants may have had using English textbooks were not clearly revealed in the results of the questionnaires. The researcher further investigated these potential problems using class observations and semi-structured interviews. The presentation of data from class observations and semi-structured interviews are as follows.

## 2. Analysis of Qualitative Data: The Classroom Observation and The Semi-Structured Interview

In addition to quantitative analysis, a qualitative analysis was conducted to clarify and complement the data from the questionnaires and to gain detailed insight into teachers' perceptions toward the use of English textbooks including the roles of these textbooks. Moreover, problems about using the textbooks, which were not clearly identified from the findings of the questionnaires, could be elicited from data obtained from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. After the 36-hour classroom observations and the semi-structured interviews, the participants' viewpoints can be summarized as follows.

Table 10 *Summary of Participants' Viewpoints*

| Name         | The Pro-Textbook views | The Anti-Textbook views |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Teacher 1    | √                      |                         |
| Teacher 2    | √                      |                         |
| Teacher 3    | √                      |                         |
| Teacher 4    |                        | √                       |
| Teacher 5    |                        | √                       |
| Teacher 6    |                        | √                       |
| Teacher 7    | √                      |                         |
| Teacher 8    | √                      |                         |
| Teacher 9    | √                      |                         |
| Teacher 10   |                        | √                       |
| Teacher 11   | √                      |                         |
| Teacher 12   |                        | √                       |
| <b>Total</b> | 7                      | 5                       |

## **2.1 The pro-textbook views.**

The pro-textbook views refer the perceptions of the teachers who believed that English textbooks were necessary teaching materials and using English textbooks helped them to teach English effectively. The reasons why these teachers perceived using English textbooks as essential are summarized as follows.

### ***2.1.1 Frameworks, guidelines and sources of direction.***

The teachers who had the pro-textbook views considered English textbooks as instructional frameworks because the English textbooks assisted them when preparing lessons. The teachers regarded the English textbooks as guidelines for their courses since the English textbooks illustrated what they had done and what would be done in each lesson. The English textbooks also served as idea banks for the teachers about how lessons could be delivered. The teachers mentioned that without the English textbooks, their teaching would be very difficult. In addition to the interview data, the observational data directly revealed that the pro-textbook teachers always used the English textbooks while teaching in their classrooms. It was evident from classroom observations that even though the teachers did not strictly follow the English textbooks page by page, they did mostly use the sequences presented in the chapters. Those who preferred textbooks used them in every phase of teaching and learning. A teacher mentioned that:

This English textbook is a good guideline for me. It gives me a big picture of how lesson will be conducted and in what way. If we do not use textbook, we will not have any framework to follow. Without textbook, our courses will not go smoothly.

### ***2.1.2 Effective tools to save both time and money.***

The pro-textbook teachers believed that the English textbooks considerably reduced their teaching preparation time because they provided detailed

activities and exercises for the teachers. The teachers, therefore, did not need to spend time on creating in-house materials which might take more of their time. The teachers further mentioned that they had plenty of extra responsibilities assigned by schools to deal with over and above their daily instruction. Consequently, using the English textbooks was the best way for them to create more preferable teaching and learning activities in a limited time. Moreover, these teachers thought that the textbooks were worth their money. They stated that the textbook packages with teaching supplementaries such as CDs and teachers' manuals were cheaper than photocopied worksheets or computer software. In essence, it was revealed from the 36 hour observations that the pro-textbook teachers used the majority of exercises provided in the English textbooks. Some teachers also often used supplementary materials provided by publishers such as audio CDs and PowerPoint Presentations to supplement their teaching. Two teachers respectively stated that:

The English textbook is an effective teaching tool which helps reduce my workload. As we know, teachers nowadays have more responsibility. We are not only assigned to teach but also handle extra tasks. We do not have huge amount of time in material preparation so textbook helps a lot here.

and

The English textbooks can help us to pay less because we buy them only once a year. Moreover, textbooks are durable and can be used longer when compared to handouts or worksheets which are easily damaged.

### ***2.1.3 Approved teaching and learning materials.***

The teachers who preferred the textbooks pointed out that they had been tried, tested and developed by experts and language specialists so they were reliable and effective tools, and they helped them to meet the goals and learning standards prescribed in the current Basic Education Core Curriculum, 2008 (which aimed at ensuring that learners in different classes would receive similar content and be assessed in the same

way). Classroom observations helped to show that the teachers mainly followed the English textbooks' section descriptions with few details added. Furthermore, the teachers gave explanations based on those provided by the textbooks. The pro-textbook teachers deemed the English textbooks reliable and necessary. One of the teachers stated that:

The English textbook is very essential in language teaching and learning in Thai context. This English textbook provides a framework for teachers who teach in the same level to follow. It is a good idea to create our own teaching materials but how can teachers ensure that learners in the same level will be taught and assessed in the same way by different teachers. Without English textbook, teachers do not have any standard to measure learners' achievement. Teachers cannot measure learners' achievement fairly if teachers use different teaching materials.

In summary, the pro-textbook teachers perceived the English textbooks as essential teaching and learning materials. They saw the English textbooks as serving as not only as instructional frameworks, guidelines and sources of direction but also as both time-saving and money-saving tools. In addition, the pro-textbook teachers regarded the English textbooks as approved teaching and learning materials, which were reliable and effective. Nevertheless, there were the teachers who did not belong to the pro-textbook views. Their perceptions of English textbooks were as follows:

## **2.2 The anti-textbook views.**

The anti-textbook views refer to the perceptions of teachers who believed that using the English textbooks was a waste of time. The reasons the teachers perceived the use of the textbooks as unsuccessful are summarized as follows.

### ***2.2.1 Inadequacy for learners' needs.***

The teachers who had overall anti-textbook views strongly believed that the educational system in Thailand was an exam-oriented system, and that the textbooks failed to provide learners with what they needed in this respect. Generally speaking, the

aim of Thai learners in learning English is to pass a university entrance examination but the textbooks did not do enough for them in that respect. They did not, for example, give insight into language items and structures. The anti-textbook teachers also claimed that the English textbooks contained little explanation, and inadequate language items and examples. This was because the textbooks currently available in the market mainly focused on communicative approach activities or drills which did not appear in university entrance exams. Importantly, the classroom observations revealed that the teachers had supplementary worksheets which included detailed grammar explanations and plenty of language items and extra exercises to maximize learners' language input. Those worksheets normally included examples of a university entrance exam paper or one from previous years. One of the teachers stated that:

The English textbooks do not suit learners' needs at all. The goal of Thai learners in learning English is to pass a university entrance exam so what they need is what they will see in entrance exam paper. However, what inside textbooks is not what includes in a university entrance exam paper at all.

### ***2.2.2 Irrelevance of subjects, content and topics to learners' language proficiency and experiences.***

The anti-textbook teachers indicated that the subjects and content of the English textbooks was partially relevant to their learners' needs. As previously stated, Thai learners needed to learn what would appear in a university entrance examination paper. As clearly noted from observation of classroom practices, some teachers employed their own styles of presentation and rarely followed the English textbooks' descriptions. They also added as much additional explanations and language input as they could. Moreover, the teachers said that the topics provided in the English textbooks did not match learners' interests. Some of the topics were not relevant or interesting in their classes. The teachers who had anti-textbook views mentioned that some topics were too



far beyond their learners' interests and language proficiency. In addition, due to the different cultural settings, topics dealing with cultural information of native countries were uncomfortable for some learners to study. It was observed from classroom practices that the anti-textbook teachers rarely used the English textbooks in their teaching. Instead, they placed great importance on their own teaching materials. One teacher stated that:

I notice that topics found in reading passages are too far beyond learners' background knowledge or their language proficiency. For example, this passage talks about the island situated in England. It is too far from learners' daily lives. There's nothing learners need to do with it. What they really need is what they will see in a university entrance exam. I normally use my own worksheets so that learners could learn more.

### **2.3 Problems concerning the use of English textbooks.**

The major problems about using English textbooks found in this study can be divided into two types; direct and indirect problems.

#### **2.3.1 Direct problems.**

Direct problems refer to the problems about the English textbooks, which teachers frequently found during their use. These problems were reported as follows:

##### ***2.3.1.1 Inadequacy and irrelevance to Thai learners' needs.***

The preceding anti-textbook discussions demonstrate that the English textbooks failed to serve learners' needs. The teachers clearly stated in the interviews that the English textbooks were generally produced following the desires of textbook writers and developers to meet what the Ministry of Education prescribed in the current Basic Education Core Curriculum. Nonetheless, what was presented in the English textbooks tended to lack focused points. The teachers emphasized that the English textbooks available in the market nowadays could not serve learners' needs. While a major need of Thai learners of English was to pass a university entrance examination, the English

textbooks did not expose learners to this type of examination. The teachers further mentioned that the textbooks did not expose learners to examination-type questions at all. Furthermore, the teachers revealed that they needed textbooks which could be used as tutorial kits which could train learners in doing entrance examinations. One teacher stated that:

English textbooks should provide a variety of what a university entrance exam covers. We need English textbooks which can be sources of exam practice or even tutorial kits for learners. The more learners practice, the better they become.

### *2.3.1.2 Cultural Issues*

Another issue, which the teachers perceived as a problem related to the English textbooks, was cultural. The anti-textbook teachers stated that they had difficulties dealing with the cultural content presented in the textbooks. Some teachers confessed that they often skipped reading passages talking about culture or issues relevant to culture. They said that they were not confident to talk about the target language culture because they were not familiar with it. Moreover, some teachers stated that they did not have any sources to seek cultural explanations since the English textbooks and Teachers' Guide did not contain adequate cultural information. A few teachers also noted that they felt uncomfortable with topics about male and female relationships. For instance, the teachers thought that the passages about having a date or having a party at a night club were difficult to address. A teacher revealed that:

The target language culture is quite difficult for me to deal with honestly. Even though I ask native teacher to explain about culture content beforehand, it is not enough. My students are curious to know more than what native teachers explain to me. Some topics are not suitable for our contexts.

### **2.3.2 Indirect problems.**

Indirect problems refer to problems related to other factors which the teachers considered as reducing the effectiveness of the use of the textbooks. Interestingly, some teachers clearly stated that the English textbooks themselves did not cause any intractable problems. Instead, there were a few factors that hindered the teachers from using the textbooks effectively. The indirect problems are presented below.

#### ***2.3.2.1 Learners' language proficiency.***

The teachers remarked that most of their learners had inadequate English language proficiency. This was a serious hindrance to utilizing the textbooks effectively. The teachers mentioned that the average learners' language proficiency was very low so what was provided in the textbooks was too difficult for them to get through. The teachers said, for example, that activities such as writing projects and role playing conversations were very interesting yet their learners were not able to do them. This resulted in them omitting or skipping these types of exercises. The teachers sometimes immediately told the answers to exercises to learners without having them practice. However, four teachers concluded that the English textbooks did not cause these problems, but the learners did. A teacher revealed that:

The textbook is not a problem but learners are. English textbooks provide what learners need to learn in each level regarding to what prescribed in the Basic Education Core Curriculum. However, our learners can't catch up with the textbooks because they do not have enough English language proficiency.

#### ***2.3.2.2 Large classes.***

The teachers mentioned that having large classes affected the use of English textbooks. They considered that activities focusing on speaking practice which assigned learners to pair and group work were not suitable for their classes since they took too

much time. As a result, the teachers would normally transform pair work or group work activity into whole class activity. Additionally, it was found from the classroom observations that teachers rarely assigned learners pair work or group work during the lessons even though these types of activities were provided in the English textbooks they used. Instead, the teachers randomly asked learners to share answers or work together as a whole class. One teacher said that:

Honestly, I would like learners to practice what textbooks provide because it's very useful but I can't manage to have them all practice at once. I can't get them out in front of the classroom and ask them to say or share one by one. It wastes of time.

#### *2.3.2.3 Time constraints due to curriculum change.*

It was found from interviews that the time allotment for core English for 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level had been decreased from four periods per week to two periods per week. The teachers explained that this was because of changes to the current Basic Education Core Curriculum. As a result, teachers had to rush to cover learning objectives in a short period of time. Observational data shows that anti-textbook teachers often merged or rearranged sequences of English textbooks so that they could finish classes faster. A teacher pointed out that:

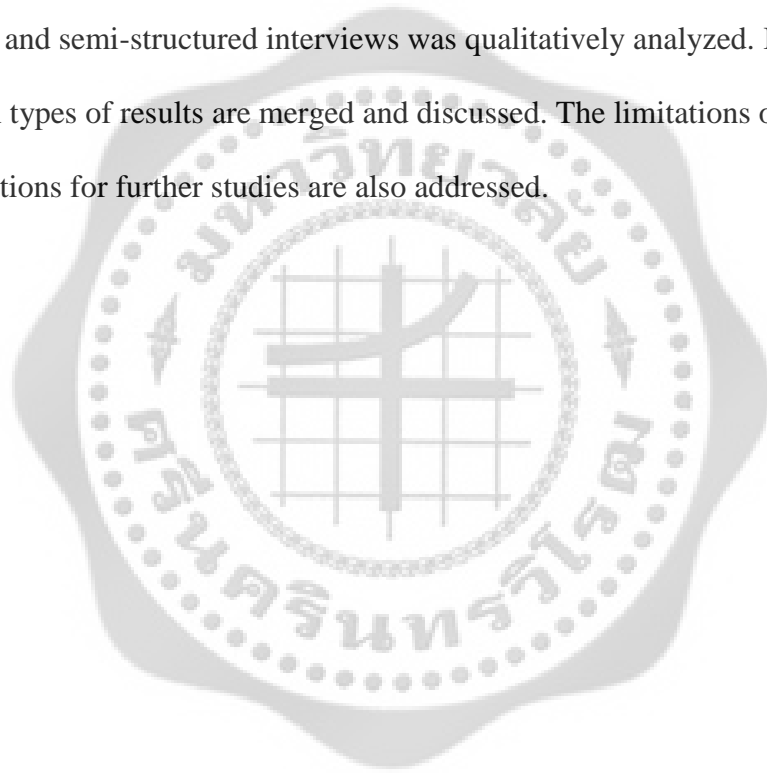
It's absolutely impossible to teach everything included in the textbook. No matter how useful the activities are, I have to omit or skip those activities so that I can catch up with the school schedule. In fact, policy makers should come and observe what's going on in the real situation so that they can have much more understanding. How come that they give only two periods a week for core English!

Teachers in the anti-textbook camp raised issues about using English textbooks. Those issues were identified as direct and indirect problems. Direct problems were directly related to the English textbooks while indirect problems were related to

other factors which potentially hindered teachers from being able to use the textbooks effectively.

### **3. Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter presented the findings of the study concerning teachers' perceptions of English textbooks, the roles of English textbooks in classroom practices, and problems raised by English teachers about using English textbooks. The data obtained from questionnaires was quantitatively analyzed while the data gained from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews was qualitatively analyzed. In the next chapter, both types of results are merged and discussed. The limitations of the study and recommendations for further studies are also addressed.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study, the research methodology and a discussion of the main research findings. In addition, the limitations of the study and recommendations for further study are discussed.

#### 1. Summary of the Research

This study was designed by employing some characteristics of the mixed method research design. The objectives of this study were to: (1) investigate the perceptions of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers toward using English textbooks; (2) examine the roles of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English textbooks in actual classrooms; and (3) identify problems concerning the use of English textbooks raised by 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers. The participants of this study included 12 English teachers in 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level from six extra-large secondary schools supervised by Secondary Educational Service Area Office 26, Maha Sarakham province and selected via purposive sampling. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher employed three research instruments including questionnaires, class observations and semi-structured interviews. The teacher participants were required to rate the questionnaires to reflect their perceptions of using English textbooks. Then classroom observations were conducted three times with each teacher to discover the actual roles of English textbooks and to gather other relevant details regarding the research questions. Finally, semi-structured interviews were carried out with all teachers individually to gain in-depth information on their perceptions of using the textbooks including on their problems when using them. The data obtained through questionnaires was quantitatively analyzed using mean and standard deviation measurements whereas the data from class observations and semi-structured interviews were qualitatively

analyzed. Finally, the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis were presented.

## **2. Summary of the Main Findings**

Teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks, the roles of English textbooks in classroom practice and problems concerning the use of English textbooks can be summarized as follows. The pro-textbook teachers stated that the English textbooks not only served as instructional frameworks, guidelines and sources of directions for them but also functioned as effective tools to save both time and money. The teachers who held pro-textbook views further stated that the textbooks had been approved by educators and language specialists so they were reliable. In line with these views, the textbooks played an essential role in the pro-textbook teachers' teaching processes and their classroom practices. Nevertheless, those who had anti-textbook views indicated that the English textbooks failed to suit learners' needs. They asserted that subjects, content and topics included in the English textbooks were not relevant and did not match their learners' language proficiency and life experiences. Classroom observations showed that the textbooks rarely had any roles in the anti-textbook teachers' daily instruction or their classroom practices. Furthermore, the problems concerning the use of these textbooks could be divided into two types; direct and indirect problems. Teachers reported that the direct problems were that the English textbooks were inadequate and irrelevant to Thai learners' needs and the cultural issues covered therein were too difficult and unsuitable for the Thai context. They further indicated that indirect problems occurred due to learners' lack of language proficiency, large classes and time constraints. These findings are discussed in detail below.

### **3. Discussion of the Research Findings**

The aim of this study was to investigate teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks, the roles of these English textbooks, as well as problems about using them raised by 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers. In the discussion, the researcher not only discussed statements which had high mean scores but also gave attention to statements which showed low mean scores. This was because the researcher believed that if these statements were individually examined, it could reveal a significant amount of detailed information of importance for the study. The findings from quantitative and qualitative analysis revealed the following factors for discussion.

#### **3.1 The pro and the anti-textbook views.**

Many educational researchers put forward both pro and the anti-textbook views concerning the use of these textbooks in English Language Teaching settings. The former argue for the potential and necessity of textbooks while the latter emphasize the limitations of such textbooks. According to Hutchinson and Torres (1994), textbooks are seen as a universal element in the language classroom. They note that without textbooks teaching and learning situations are incomplete. Ur (1998) reports that textbooks provide explicit frameworks which let teachers and learners know what they have already done and what is coming next. She further mentions that textbooks are the cheapest teaching materials compared to other types of instructional materials and require less preparation time. Similarly, O'Neill (1982) and Sheldon (1988) assert that textbooks considerably reduce time in materials preparation. In addition, Harmer (2001) believes that textbooks are products of years of research so they can be effective sources of knowledge for teachers and learners. In this study, the qualitative data reveals that the pro-textbook teachers regarded the English textbooks as instructional frameworks, guidelines and sources of direction. Additionally, the findings from the quantitative data show that most



of the teachers agreed that the textbooks provided good supplementary materials and adequate guidance and lesson preparation, served as essential sources of information and helped in the planning of day-to-day instruction. The findings from the quantitative and qualitative analysis are, therefore, consistent with the findings of the researchers mentioned above. Also, the recorded perceptions of teachers, which indicated that the English textbooks were effective teaching materials, which saved them time and money, correspond to findings by O'Neill (1982), Sheldon (1998) and Ur (1998).

Even though many researchers agree that textbooks have extensive advantages, important limitations have also been noted. Ur (1998) claims that textbooks do not fulfill learners' needs. She further states that the topics covered in textbooks are not relevant for or interesting to learners. Similarly, Richards (2001) and Sheldon (1998) add that textbooks are generally designed for worldwide markets. Richards (2001) goes on to state that those involved in textbook preparation are not the same people involved in conducting research in language learning and teaching. As a result, there has been a mismatch between what textbook writers provide and what is needed in real educational settings. The quantitative data in this study suggests that some teachers did not rely solely on their English textbooks when teaching. From these findings it could be inferred that the English textbooks the teachers used could not provide what them with the materials they really needed. The findings from the qualitative analysis, which reveal that the teachers complained that the English textbooks failed to serve learners' needs are consistent with the findings of Ur (1998), Richards (2001) and Sheldon (1998). Furthermore, the teachers observations about the irrelevance of the subject, content and topics of the English textbooks with regard to learners' interests and proficiency is also in line with those findings. The findings of this study are close to those of Aminuddin

(2009) who concluded that teachers found English textbooks unable to serve learners' needs because they lacked content appropriateness.

Interestingly, a more critical finding from the qualitative analysis shows that some pro-textbook teachers stated that supplementary materials were needed to provide the language input needed by their learners. These teachers decided that the English textbooks should go hand in hand with other supplementary teaching materials to serve learners' needs. In this sense, this study shares findings with Richards and Mahoney's (1996) investigation on how English as a Second Language teachers used English textbooks in their teaching and learning processes. Moreover, the findings are consistent with Chou's (2010) finding that since textbooks did not provide sufficient language exposure, teachers were required to consistently plan and develop other activities so as to create more effective learning. Nevertheless, the researcher found that these teachers rarely used supplementary materials and insisted that they preferred using the English textbooks to other teaching materials.

From the analyzed data, it is evident that the teachers who had pro-textbook views perceived the English textbooks as being essential teaching materials in their teaching and learning processes due to the advantages they offered. The teachers who were against the textbooks believed that their limitations prevented them from being useful support. Thus, the English textbooks played significant roles in the pro-textbook teachers' classroom practices whereas, in the anti-textbook teachers' classrooms, they appeared to be unnecessary as they were scarcely used. It could be inferred, at this point, that the teachers' perceptions reflected how they judged and used the English textbooks. This would be consistent with Barcelos, (2000), Pedersen and Liu (2003) and Yu (2004) who propose that teachers' perceptions influence teachers' practice, judgment and decision-making.

### **3.2 Problems about using English textbooks.**

According to the anti-textbook views, using English textbooks can potentially obstruct teachers from success in teaching. In this study, teachers raised issues about inappropriate language level, cultural issues and inadequacy of language input for the university entrance examination. These issues are consistent with what Chandran (2003) found in her study, which aimed at evaluating English textbooks used in a Malaysian context. She showed that teachers did not use the prescribed English textbooks because these textbooks did not expose their learners to examination-type questions. In the area of cultural issues, the findings of this study are in line with the findings of Riasati and Zare (2011). Their research results indicated that teachers felt that textbooks contained inappropriate cultural information for the Iranian context.

The findings of this study also revealed problems derived from other factors including learners' language proficiency, class size and time constraints. These factors proved also to be a major hindrance to teachers to utilizing English textbooks effectively. The teachers pointed out that their learners' language proficiency did not match the level of language input in the textbooks. Large classes were another possible problem for teachers when using the textbooks in class. These findings are supported by Richards (2001), Sheldon (1998) and Ur's (1998) who assert that textbooks cannot meet the varied needs of learners and language classes around the world, and by Tok (2010) who concluded from his study that English textbooks used in Turkey could not serve students' language-learning aims.

### **3.3 Suggestions on textbook adaptations.**

Interestingly, some teachers from the pro-textbook camp proposed some ideas concerning textbook adaptations. They pointed out that to make the most use of the textbooks and to fully take advantage of them; adaptations could be done. These teachers

accepted that due to the inflexibility of the English textbooks, they did not perfectly suit their teaching and learning context but felt that this minor limitation could be overcome through these adaptations. This view is similar to the findings of Thúy (2010) who showed that unsuitable aspects of textbooks, which potentially caused difficulties to teachers, could be adapted, modified and replaced so that the textbooks could work well in particular teaching and learning contexts. Also, a study by Riad (2008) indicates that to achieve teachers' and learners' objectives, adapting and supplementing textbooks was necessary.

#### **4. Limitations of the Study**

In order to achieve the aims of the study, the researcher decided to use the case study method to do a detailed investigation which involved only a specific setting and participants. Purposive sampling was then applied to recruit participants who could give rich information to the study rather than other methods, which may have involved a larger number of participants. In addition, due to time limitations, data collection was undertaken within the short period of eight weeks. Considering those factors, the generalizability of research results is questionable.

#### **5. Recommendations**

The recommendations for teachers concerning the use of English textbooks and for further studies are presented below.

##### **5.1 Recommendations for Practice**

5.1.1 Teachers should look at English textbooks more critically. That is, since English textbooks contain both potential and limitations, teachers should be able to take advantages and make the most use of English textbooks by going beyond the textbook and thinking of alternate ways to enhance the teaching and learning practices. That is, they need to adapt and modify English textbooks where necessary.

5.1.2 Teachers should supplement English textbooks with other teaching materials such as teacher-made or authentic materials that give learners exposure to what is covered in the university entrance examination paper.

## **5. 2 Recommendations for Further Studies**

5.2.1 This study was conducted with twelve 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Thai teachers of English from six extra-large schools in Maha Sarakham Province. A larger number of participants should be involved in further studies in order for reliability to be increased.

5.2.2 Further studies should take account of participants' years of teaching experience to see whether this will result in different findings.

5.2.3 Further studies could focus on learners because, besides teachers, learners are the major users of textbooks.

5.2.4 The duration of classroom observations should be expanded to see whether longer observations will yield different findings.

## **6. Epilogue**

This study intended to uncover information about how Thai teachers of English perceived the use of English textbooks in their classroom practices, about the roles of these textbooks and about the problems found when using them. As stated in the preceding discussions, the findings of this study may be beneficial for textbook writers and developers, teacher educators and policy makers. The implications are described below.

The findings of this study reveal the discrepancy between what is included in English textbooks designed for worldwide markets and the needs of Thai teachers of English in a Thai context. The teacher participants of the study perceived English textbooks to have generally been produced on the assumptions of textbook writers and developers, a situation which ultimately failed to serve what was needed in the Thai

teaching and learning context. It is important, therefore, for textbook writers and developers to be aware of teachers' perceptions toward the use of English textbooks so that they can help English teachers to use them more effectively. To be more specific, textbook writers and developers should provide more precise explanations about cultural content and provide information about how to adapt and modify tasks where necessary. In essence, textbook publishers should realize that teachers need help and consultation when they are required to use new English textbooks. They should, therefore, provide some training for teachers in order to maximize the effectiveness of the textbooks.

For teacher educators, it is important to put more emphasis on developing teacher education programs to provide pre-service teachers with the ability to deal with textbook adaptations. That is, teacher educators should be responsible for giving training to pre-service teachers concerning alternative ways of using English textbooks effectively through the use of textbook adaptations. For instance, there should be courses that equip pre-service teachers with comprehensive knowledge of textbook adaptations and materials development so that they can make the most use of English textbooks in their particular teaching and learning situations. Moreover, there should be continuing teacher development that helps teachers to be better consumers of English textbooks. In particular, teacher developers should give teachers trainings, hold seminars and provide workshops for teachers about how to select and use English textbooks in order to help them to make informed decisions concerning the selection, utilization, adaption, and supplementing of these textbooks.

The results of this study also provide useful information for policy makers. Generally speaking, the Ministry of Education is in charge of approving English textbooks, and it is important for them to be able to make informed decisions based on teachers' reflections about using English textbooks in real educational settings.

Furthermore, it should be noted that when there are changes in educational policy or curricula, teachers are primarily affected. Policy makers should therefore be aware of how they constitute policy in relation to English textbooks used in schools.

### **7. Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter focused on a summary of the findings drawn from quantitative and qualitative data. An extensive discussion on the main research findings was addressed. The results indicated that 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers in Maha Sarakham Province were split into two camps in terms of their perceptions towards the use of English textbooks. The pro-textbook teachers recognized the textbooks' positive attributes while the anti-textbook teachers believed that textbooks contained various limitations. The results also identified problems about the use of the textbooks including their inadequacy and irrelevancy in terms of Thai's learners' needs, including the inappropriateness of some cultural content, lack of fit with learners' language proficiency, class size and time constraints. Teachers reflected that these problems hindered them in using the English textbooks effectively.



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**APPENDICES**





**APPENDIX A**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### Teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks

This questionnaire is one of research instruments. The aim of this questionnaire is to investigate teachers' perceptions toward English textbooks. All respondents' data will be beneficial for the development of English language teaching.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Section A: Background information

**Directions:** Mark  $\surd$  in the box in front of your answer.

1. Gender
 

|                               |                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Female |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
2. Educational background
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Master's degree              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral degree   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) ..... |
3. Number of years in teaching professions
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lower than a year | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 5 years        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 10 years      | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 10 years |
4. Number of years in teaching 10<sup>th</sup> Grade level
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lower than a year | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 5 years        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 10 years      | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 10 years |
5. Number of years in using the current textbook
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lower than a year | <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 years         | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 4 years (Please specify) |
6. Percentage of English textbook use per period
 

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 25% | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-49% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 50-74%        | <input type="checkbox"/> 75-90% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than 90% |                                 |

## Section B: Teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks

**Directions:** Please indicate the level of your agreement with the following statements by marking  $\surd$  in the boxes.

- 5 = strongly agree  
 4 = agree  
 3 = neutral  
 2 = disagree  
 1 = strongly disagree

| Statements   | Level of agreement |       |         |          |                   |
|--|--------------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
|  | 5                  | 4     | 3       | 2        | 1                 |
|  | Strongly agree     | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| <b>Evaluation on English textbooks</b>   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 1. The approach recommended in the textbook is educationally and socially acceptable to the target community.              |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 2. The objectives are explicitly laid out in an introduction and implemented in the textbook.                              |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 3. The layout and design is attractive and easy to read.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 4. The instructions are clearly stated.  |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 5. The topics and tasks are interesting and motivating.  |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 6. There is a variety of topics and tasks provided for different learner levels, learning styles and interests.            |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 7. The content is clearly organized and graded (sequenced by difficulty).  |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 8. The subjects and content are relevant to learners' needs.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 9. There are periodic review and test sections provided.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 10. There is plenty of authentic language.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 11. There is an appropriate balance of the four language skills.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 12. Pronunciation explanation and practice are suitably presented.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 13. Vocabulary explanation and practice are clearly presented.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 14. Grammar presentation and practice are clearly presented.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 15. The textbook provides adequate activities and practice.  |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 16. The textbook encourages learners to develop their own learning strategies and to become independent in their learning. |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 17. The textbook provides adequate guidance for the teacher; not too heavy preparation load.                               |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 18. The textbook is accompanied by good audio cassettes, CDs, Supplementary materials and Teachers' Guide.                 |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 19. The textbook is readily available locally.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 20. The price of the textbook is reasonable.   |                    |       |         |          |                   |

| Statements   | Level of agreement |       |         |          |                   |
|--|--------------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
|  | 5                  | 4     | 3       | 2        | 1                 |
|  | Strongly agree     | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| 21. The culture presented in the textbook is appropriate for Thai context. |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 22. The subject and contents are relevant to the school curriculum.        |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| <b>Roles of English textbooks</b>  |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 23. The textbook serves as a syllabus.                                     |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 24. The textbook helps planning daily instruction.                         |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 25. The textbook serves as a source of assessment items.                   |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 26. The textbook serves as a source of homework.                           |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 27. The textbook serves as an essential source for teacher.                |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 28. The textbook serves as an essential source for learners.               |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 29. The textbook helps teachers to teach English effectively.              |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 30. I follow the sequences of contents provided in textbook.               |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 31. I teach exclusively from the textbook.                                 |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 32. I rely on the textbook when teaching.                                  |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 33. I use the textbook as the only sources for teaching materials.         |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 34. I fully understand the content presented in the textbooks.             |                    |       |         |          |                   |
| 35. I fully understand cultural issues presented in the textbooks.         |                    |       |         |          |                   |

Thank you very much



**APPENDIX B**  
**CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL**

### An Observation Protocol

School \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Time \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

#### How teachers use English textbook in the actual classroom

| Points  | Remarks/Details/Notes |
|---|-----------------------|
| <b>1. Degrees of frequency of using textbook per period</b><br>- In what phase?<br>- For how long?  |                       |
| <b>2. Activities and exercises teacher uses/How?</b><br>- Every activity and exercise?<br>- Delete/Edit/Adding/Replace some activities and exercises?<br>(all) activities and exercises/most/a majority of/some/rarely/none<br>- Use additional activities/exercises?   |                       |
| <b>3. Sequences</b><br>- Follow page by page?<br>- Rearrange sequence?<br>- Omit/Skip?  |                       |
| <b>4. Structure and content presentation</b><br>- Explanation based on textbook?<br>- Additional explanation?<br>- Follow textbook's descriptions<br>- Employ some descriptions and teacher's own style of presentation<br>- Employ teacher's own style of presentation |                       |



**APPENDIX C**  
**INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

### An Interview Protocol

School \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Time \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Guided questions

1. What do you think about using textbooks?
2. How do you plan to use textbook for each lesson?
3. When you prepare for the lesson, do you always rely on textbook? Why? Why not?
4. When you prepare for the lesson, do you use/rely on any other resources or external references? Why? Why not?
5. Do you supplement the current textbook? If yes, indicate each type of supplementary material that you have used with reasons.
6. Do you have difficulties using textbook? If yes, please specify.
7. Do you have difficulties understanding cultural content presented in textbook? If yes, please specify.





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