

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated VHS students' English learning motivation and behaviors and also looked into the relationships between their English learning motivation and English learning behaviors. In addition, the researcher examined differences in English learning motivation and English learning behaviors between VHS students of different English achievement levels. The researcher also examined the relationship between in-class and outside-class English learning behaviors. At last, the researcher tried to find out if English learning motivation can be used to effectively predict VHS students' in-class and outside-class English learning behaviors, and if the resulting predictive relationships would vary according to the students' English achievement levels.

This chapter concludes the study by first summarizing its major findings following the order of the six research questions of the study, and then presenting pedagogical implications for VHS English teachers. Finally, the chapter ends with limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

Summary of the Major Findings

This section summarizes the major findings of this study to answer the six research questions of the study listed as follows:

1. What is VHS students' self-rated degree of their English learning motivation? Are there any significant differences in their English learning motivation between students of higher and lower English achievement levels?
2. What are VHS students' self-rated in-class English learning behaviors? Are there any significant differences in the in-class English learning behaviors between students of higher and lower English achievement levels?
3. What are VHS students' self-rated outside-class English learning behaviors? Are there any significant differences in the outside-class English learning behaviors between students of higher and lower English achievement levels?

4. Is there a significant relationship between VHS students' in-class and outside-class English learning behaviors?
5. Is there a systematic, significant relationship between VHS students' English learning motivation and their in-class English learning behaviors? Does such a relationship vary according to VHS students' English learning achievement levels?
6. Is there a systematic, significant relationship between VHS students' English learning motivation and their outside-class English learning behaviors? Does such a relationship vary according to VHS students' English learning achievement levels?

Vocational High School Students' English Learning Motivation

The results of the English Learning Motivation Questionnaire indicated that the participants of this study reported only moderate degree of English learning motivation ($M = 3.25$). Besides, with regards to three subcategories of VHS students' English learning motivation, they had the highest scores in attitudes towards learning English, followed by desire to learn English, and motivational intensity. These results suggested that VHS students in general have positive attitudes in English learning, but they neither show strong desire nor make enough efforts to learn English.

In addition, the grand mean of the higher achievers' English learning motivation in this study was comparatively higher than that of the lower achievers. Furthermore, based on the SD results, the high English achievers' English learning motivation was the most centralized, whereas the low English achievers' English learning motivation varied the most among the three achiever groups. At last, the one-way ANOVA results showed significant differences found among all three achiever groups in their English learning motivation. That is, the participants in this study indeed varied significantly in their English learning motivation between students of higher and lower English achievement levels. The results suggested that VHS students with higher English achievement levels are likely to show stronger motivation in learning English learning motivation than those with lower English achievement levels.

To sum up, in general VHS students in Taiwan do not manifest strong motivation to learn English. However, higher English achievers appear to have stronger English learning motivation than do lower achievers.

Vocational High School Students' English Learning Behaviors

In this study, VHS students' English learning behaviors were divided into in-class and outside-class English learning behaviors. The researcher would summarize the findings of VHS students' English learning behaviors in the following sections.

In-Class English Learning Behaviors

The results of the English Learning Behaviors Questionnaire showed that the grand mean of the participants' in-class English learning behaviors were slightly above the average ($M = 3.07$). These results suggested that VHS students do not actively engage in English learning activities and most of them seem to show a passive learning attitude in their English classes. In addition, based on the means of the three subcategories, VHS students are likely to engage themselves more in cognition-based and affect-based than in memory-based English learning activities in their English classes.

In addition, the grand mean of the higher achievers' in-class English learning behaviors was comparatively higher than that of the lower achievers' in-class English learning behaviors. Likely, higher English achievers tend to demonstrate more in-class English learning behaviors than do lower achievers. Furthermore, the SD results showed that the mid-level English achievers' in-class English learning behaviors were the most centralized, whereas the low English achievers' in-class English learning behaviors varied the most among the three achiever groups.

At last, the one-way ANOVA results also showed significant differences found among all three achiever groups in their in-class English learning behaviors. That is, the participants in this study indeed varied significantly in their in-class English learning behaviors between students of higher and lower English achievement levels. The results suggested that VHS students with higher English achievement levels tend to

engage in more English learning activities in their English classes than do those with lower English achievement levels.

Outside-Class English Learning Behaviors

The results of the English Learning Behaviors Questionnaire showed that the participants got very low scores on most of the questionnaire items on outside-class English learning behaviors ($M = 2.37$). Quite consistently, the means of the three subcategories of outside-class English learning behaviors were all below 3 as listed in the following order from the largest to the smallest: individual schoolwork-oriented, individual non-schoolwork-oriented, and interactive English learning behaviors. These results suggested that all in all, VHS students do not actively engage in English learning activities outside their English classes. However, most VHS students are likely to be test-oriented. Therefore, if they do take on outside-class English learning tasks, these tasks tend to be mainly geared towards preparation for their schoolwork. Moreover, they are less likely to interact with their classmates or friends in English, since such activities are less directly helpful to their schoolwork. All in all,

In accordance with the findings on VHS students' English learning motivation and in-class English learning behaviors in this study, higher achievers are inclined to demonstrate more outside-class English learning behaviors than lower achievers. In addition, the SD results showed that the high English achievers varied the most in their outside-class English learning behaviors.

At last, the one-way ANOVA results showed that no significant differences were found between the high and mid as well as between the mid and low achievers in their outside-class English learning behaviors; significant difference was found only between high and low achievers. These results suggested that VHS students with relatively high English proficiency are more inclined to carry on their English learning outside their English classes than those with relatively low English proficiency.

Vocational High School Students' In-Class and Outside-Class English Learning Behaviors

The result of Pearson correlation analysis showed a positive significant correlation found in this study between the participants' in-class and their outside-class English learning behaviors. This positive correlation result suggested that the more VHS students engage themselves in English learning activities in their English classes, the more they carry on their English learning by involving themselves in English learning events, either individually or with others, outside their English classes.

In addition, the grand mean of the participants' in-class English learning behaviors was comparatively higher than that of their outside-class English learning behaviors. It can be inferred that VHS students are inclined to engage in more English learning activities in their English classes than outside their English classes.

To sum up, in general VHS students do not actively engage in English learning behaviors either in or outside their English classes. However, relatively speaking, they tend to engage in more in-class than outside-class English learning behaviors. At the same time, higher English achievers are likely to show more in-class English learning behaviors than do lower English achievers, whereas similar behavior pattern seems to exist systematically only between rather high and rather low English achievers when it comes to outside-class English learning behaviors.

Relationships between English Learning Motivation and English Learning Behaviors

The simple regression analysis results showed significant regression relationships found between the participants' English learning motivation and their in-class as well as their outside-class English learning behaviors in all three achiever groups and in the overall group. That is, English learning motivation proved to effectively predict their in-class as well as outside-class English learning behaviors in all four groups.

Besides, moderately-high positive correlation coefficients were found between the participants' English learning motivation and their in-class as well as outside-class English learning behaviors. To be more specific, English learning motivation accounted

for 55% and 49% of the variance in all the participants' in-class and outside-class English learning behaviors, respectively. These results suggested that VHS students' English learning motivation tend to account for more than half of the variance in their in-class English learning behaviors and nearly half of the variance in their outside-class English learning behaviors.

To sum up, VHS students' English learning motivation can be used to effectively predict the degree of their engagement in English learning behaviors both in and outside their English classes. Furthermore, such a predictive relationship between English learning motivation and English learning behaviors does not vary according to VHS students' English learning achievement levels.

Pedagogical Implications

This study found that with regards to VHS students' English learning motivation, motivational intensity appears to be the least influential factor among the three motivational subconstructs. These findings imply that VHS English teachers may try to improve classroom learning activities and curriculum designs to encourage students to be more active in learning English. It is expected that through incorporating more stimulating classroom activities and appealing teaching materials, the students' attitudes, desire, and effort for learning English will all be elevated.

This study also found a significant relationship between VHS students' in-class and outside-class English learning behaviors. These findings imply that in addition to in-class English learning activities, Taiwan's VHS English teachers need to design and incorporate more outside-class English learning homework into the curriculum. In this way, VHS students will be encouraged to take more part in English learning once they step out of the classroom. It is expected that through the awareness and enforcement of their outside-class English learning behaviors, VHS students' English proficiency will greatly increase. In addition, higher English achievers appear to demonstrate more English learning behaviors than lower achievers. Therefore, VHS English teachers may try to promote cooperative learning work between higher and lower achievers so that

lower achievers can witness the successful English learning experiences of higher achievers. Furthermore, lower achievers can be encouraged to learn English more effectively through copying the more successful learners' English learning behaviors and experiences. At the same time, all students can be encouraged to engage in English learning behaviors through taking part in learning activities designed by their teachers and receiving positive feedbacks from their teachers. At last, to encourage students to demonstrate more in-class and outside-class English learning behaviors, teachers may try to cultivate students' autonomy, language learning strategy, critical thinking, and self-fulfillment in English learning.

Finally and equally importantly, English learning motivation was proven to be the least influential variable for the mid achievers' in-class as well as outside-class English learning behaviors. It is suggested that English teachers may try to use various ways to help mid-level English achievers engage in more English learning behaviors other than just trying to increase their motivation.

Limitations of the Study

This study aimed at examining VHS students' English learning motivation, their English learning behaviors, and also the relationships between English learning motivation and English learning behaviors between higher and lower English achievers. Although the research questions in the study have been answered, the study was carried out and completed subject to the following limitations.

First, despite a good sample size, all the participants were from one vocational high school, National Taichung Industrial High School in Taichung City. Therefore, limited representativeness of the sample may hinder the generalization of the findings of this study to VHS students who come from schools that have quite distant profiles from that of National Taichung Industrial High School.

Second, the data used and analyzed in this study were collected entirely through self-report questionnaires. Hence, the participants might not have offered completely honest responses when filling out the questionnaires.

Third, this study was conducted solely based on a quantitative research method. As a result, the researcher was unable to take into account individual characteristics of each of the participants in the study. Potential drastic variation in learning motivation and learning behaviors due to individual differences was therefore not in the research scope of this study.

At last, variation in gender differences in English learning motivation and English learning behaviors was not included in the study due to a distant gap in the proportion of male and female students in this vocational high school. Consequently, variation in learning motivation and learning behaviors subject to gender differences was not in the research scope of this study.

Suggestions for Further Research

Given the aforementioned limitations of this study, the researcher provided the following suggestions for further research.

First, researchers may employ both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques such as self-report questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations to put together a more complete profile of VHS students' English learning motivation and English learning behaviors. Such combined approaches can enrich the data, triangulate the data, facilitate the interpretation of the data, and hence better ensure the validity and reliability of the studies.

Second, researchers may include a larger and more representative sample to replicate the study and see how well the findings of the present study can be generalized. To do so, researchers need to recruit their participants from both urban and rural schools in different parts of Taiwan can be included to see.

Third, researchers may try to recruit about the same number of male and female participants to replicate the present study. By doing this, researchers will be able to examine effects of gender differences on VHS students' English learning motivation and their English learning behaviors.

Fourth, in addition to English learning motivation, researchers may try to incorporate other variables to examine their links with VHS students' English learning English learning behaviors. As mentioned in Chapter 4, other variables such as anxiety, learning strategy training, learning preferences, or learning styles can be selectively incorporated to achieve a more comprehensive research scope.

Finally, researchers may conduct experimental or semi-experimental studies by incorporating stimulating activities, learning strategy training, or appealing curriculum design into VHS English classes. By doing this, researchers will be able to examine effects of such treatments on VHS students' English learning motivation as well as their English learning behaviors.