The Effects of the Genre-Based Approach on Engineering Students’ Writing Ability

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Abstract

The present study aims at investigating the use of the genre-based approach (GBA) and its effects on the writing achievement and attitudes of Thai engineering students. The sample consisted of 40 fourth-year engineering students that were enrolled in an English for engineers course. The study subjects were divided into three groups (high, medium, and low) based on their pre-test scores. Three lessons directly related to writing content concerning engineering work (request e-mails, enquiry e-mails, and reports) were provided in 12 sessions. The post-test, attitude questionnaire, and interview were administered at the end of the experiment. The results of a one-way ANOVA analysis revealed that the writing ability of students in all three groups improved after the experiment with statistical significance. Regarding their attitudes, the findings showed that the students were satisfied with the teaching method, activities, and exercises. More importantly, they felt more confident in writing.

Keywords: genre-based approach, writing ability, second language writing
1. Introduction and literature review

Research in genre analysis, particularly in the academic context, has been conducted along with developments in genre theory (Miller, 1984; Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1991, 1993; Martin & Rothery, 1980, 1981; Hammond, 1989). The results have given language teachers at various educational levels an alternative approach to teach writing; namely, the genre-based approach (GBA), which includes focusing on the results of genre analysis, linguistic features, and social context. There are three schools or models of genre, focusing on different concepts: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), and New Rhetorical Genre (NR) (Hyon, 1996). Their similarities and differences are crucial since they affect practical teaching strategies.

In recent years, there has been discussion of the GBA as a teaching method. For example, Feedman (1994) and Leki (1995) question whether the explicit teaching of genres enhances learning. Additionally, Hyon (1996) suggests that researchers need to carry out more research on genre studies to see the effect of explicit teaching of genre on non-native students’ reading and writing performance. Most research related to the explicit teaching of genres has been conducted in the field of academic writing and the SFL genre (such as Henry and Rosebury, 1999; Mustafa, 1995; Kongphet, 2006; and Flowerdew, 2000). Nevertheless, some studies seem to indicate that the explicit teaching of genre helps students to write. For instance, Henry and Reseburry (1998) taught their students (L2) how to write tourist brochures, while Changpueng (2009) taught a group of Thai engineering students (EFL) how to write request e-mails with the GBA. These studies found that students of various language abilities not only improved their writing but also developed positive attitudes toward the teaching method.

However, a major point that scholars continue to debate concerns whom the GBA may be suitable for. Some proponents argue that the GBA fits beginning- and intermediate-level language learners more than advanced-level language learners. This is because learning with the GBA helps lower-level learners to release their anxieties about writing tasks and because when people learn something new, they usually rely on examples (Kay & Dudley Evan, 1998; Kim, 2007). However, not enough GBA related research has addressed this issue. Recognizing the need for clarification, the present study reports on the results of employing the GBA (ESP genre) to teaching three different groups of engineering students who study English as a foreign language (high-, medium-, and low-proficiency groups), divided according to their writing ability in English. The contents included writing request e-mails, inquiry e-mails, and investigation reports. The contents of this study were chosen based on the results of the needs analysis (Changpueng, 2009), which showed that these target genres were the top three required genres for engineers, engineering students, and ESP teachers.

Finally, this study reports on the attitudes of the students toward the GBA. Regarding the genre concept underpinning this study, this study relies on the ESP genre because the participants were engineering students. Swales (1990), a pioneer in the field of the ESP genre, discourse structure, and linguistic features of scientific reports, defines genre as follows:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert member of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choices of content and style. (p. 58)

This definition of genre has been influential in ESP work on genre analysis and has been used in the teaching of ESP and academic writing to ESL graduate students (Paltridge, 2004). As Hammond and Derewianka (2002) point out: “the overall concern of ESP is to assist students to gain access to the English language demands they encounter in their studies or professions” (p.
Moreover, other scholars also provide the meaning of genre and its pedagogical concept (such as Hyland, 2007 and Kay & Tony-Dudley Evans, 1998). For this study, the lessons were based on the work of Hyland (2003) and Kay & Tony-Dydley Evans (1998) and thus focused on raising the learners’ awareness about genre analysis results, purpose of each genre, the purpose and linguistic features of each move of each genre, and social context.

2. Research questions

The present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the writing achievement of students with different levels of English proficiency receiving writing instruction through the GBA?

2. What are the attitudes of students with different levels of English proficiency toward writing instruction based on the GBA?

3. Limitations of the study

1. One of the possible confounding variables of this study was extra tutors. It was possible that some of the students might attend extra writing courses since they need a high TOEFL score for their future study or work.

2. Another possible limitation was that students might practice writing these target genres during an internship. This was because most were fourth-year students and most of them had internship experience. Therefore, they may have had a chance to see or practice writing in these genres.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Participants

The students were 40 mechanical engineering students enrolled in one section of the English for engineers Course at King Mongkut’s University of Technology North Bangkok (KMUTNB) during the first semester of academic year 2010. These students were required to take three hours of English foundation courses per week for two semesters during the first year. In order to determine whether they had improved in writing and understood their attitudes toward the teaching method used, they were divided into three groups of 11 students of high, medium, and low ability based on their writing pre-test scores. The criterion set in dividing the number of students in each group was the 27% technique suggested by Wiboolsri (2008). This technique is normally used to differentiate high ability from low ability students. That is, the top 27% students were in the high ability group and the bottom 27% students were in the low ability group. And those in the middle were in the middle group. That is, 27% of 40 students were in each group. Therefore, there were 11 participants in each group and the number of participants at the end of the study was 33. The seven students that were excluded from the study were those that were in the middle-level group, and their pre-test scores were not clearly different from the students that were in the high-level and low-level group. However, it is important to note that these seven students were also taught with the GBA like their friends, but their post-test scores were not calculated as a part of the study. In this way, a relatively clear cut boundary among high, medium, low ability students can be observed systematically.
4.2 Teaching materials

As stated previously, the participants were enrolled in the English for Engineers course in which three writing lessons were provided during a 12-week period. The course syllabus was based directly on the content of engineering work. It was chosen from the results of the needs analysis, which revealed that the three genres that Thai engineers use most frequently were emails (requests and enquiries) and reports (Changpueng, 2009). The samples of their written work were collected from companies and analyzed based on Swale’s theory by the researcher of this study. These results were triangulated by two experts in linguistics and one in business English teaching (see the example in the Appendix 1). Most of the materials and exercises were created by the researcher of this study, while some were adjusted from Bhatia (1993). The materials were designed to support each step in teaching with the GBA, which made the students aware of the purpose and structural features of the genres. The structural features consisted of standards of organizational structure and linguistic features (Kim, 2007). That is, the lessons focused on the sequencing of texts or genres and linguistic features of each part of the text. In addition, the materials were also created to make students aware of how to use appropriate language (sociolinguistic knowledge) in different contexts and to use writing strategies to achieve their communicative purposes.

4.3 Teaching methods

Since the three lessons were taught with the same method (GBA), the explanation of the teaching method will be described based only on the request e-mail lesson. The lessons were designed with the teaching and learning cycle in mind. The teaching and learning cycle is a teaching model used in teaching writing based on the GBA, especially for the Systematic Functional Linguistics genre (SFL genre) (Hyland, 2007). Underpinning the teaching and learning cycle is the notion of scaffolding which relies on social constructivism language acquisition theory (Freeze, 2002; Hammond, 1992 as cited in Kongpetch, 2006: 11). Although the teaching and learning cycle was designed for the SFL, it was possible to employ it for these lessons which were based on the ESP genre. This was because both the SFL and ESP genres rely on the concept of scaffolding. The second reason for choosing is genre analysis, which is the core of the ESP genre, is also a part of the second stage of the teaching cycle although details relating to genre analysis in the SFL and ESP genres may be somewhat different. One of the most straightforward representations of this cycle is offered by Freeze (2002), as shown in Figure 1.
The main purpose of the cycle is to ensure repeated opportunities for learners to engage in activities which require them to reflect on and critique their learning by developing understanding of texts (Hyland, 2007). Details of each stage are given below (Feeze, 2002; Hyland, 2007). Also, the concepts of gradual approximation, providing learners with the means to understand how the text is organized and then to create the new texts (Widdowson, 1978), and consciousness-raising was utilized to create activities for the second stage of the teaching and learning cycle.

1. **Building the context**

This stage reveals the purpose of a genre and the setting in which it is commonly used. The emphasis in this step is placed on the functions of language and how meanings work in contexts. Thus, responses were elicited from students to questions such as who is the writer, for whom was it written, for what purpose, and what kind of relationship exist between the writer and reader? (See Appendix 2)

2. **Modeling and deconstructing the text**

The activities at this stage helped students to understand the text thoroughly. This step focused on involving the teacher and students in discussing and exploring the whole text (clauses and expressions), the key grammatical and rhetorical features used to express specific functions, and the social relationship between the reader and the writer, including writing strategies. For example, they were asked to analyze the samples themselves using move analysis and lexicogrammar and were provided with worksheets to help them complete these tasks (See Appendix 3). For writing strategies, they were asked to do exercises to help them think and plan to write (See Appendix 4).

3. **Joint construction of the text**

Before writing independently, the teacher and students worked together to construct whole examples of the genre. This helped the students to become familiar with the GBA to writing and to develop writing confidence. Each group of students was asked to outline a writing situation and...
to write a first draft with teacher support. Finally, students revised their work based on an editing and revising checklist before re-submitting it to the teacher.

4. Independent construction of the text

Independent writing is the ultimate goal of the L2 writing class. The purpose of this step was for students to apply what they had learned from the GBA in class to write a text independently, while the teacher supervised, encouraged, and advised them.

5. Linking related texts

This stage gave students the opportunity to investigate how the genre they had been studying was related to other texts that appeared in the same or similar context, to other genres they had studied, and to issues of interpersonal and institutional power and ideology. This could only be successfully conducted after students had learned and understood the target genres provided in the classroom as that provided them with a basis to make comparisons.

4.4 Data Collection

The Pre- and Post-tests

To determine the effectiveness of the GBA as a teaching method in terms of student learning, the students needed to complete the pre-test (during the first week of teaching) and post-test to reveal how much they had improved after attending the course. The test lasted one hour and thirty minutes. The test was subjective (a criterion-referenced test). The test consisted of three items (request and enquiry e-mails, and reports). In this study, the construct of the present test was based on the components of the ESP test (i.e. Target Language Use (TLU), language ability, and background knowledge) and the GBA principle (Bachman and Palmer, 1996; Douglas, 2000; Hyland, 2007). Inter-rater reliability had to be considered since there were two raters that marked this test (Alderson, 1996). The reliability of the two raters was assessed by correlating the marks given by two or more raters for the same students. The results of their grading were then calculated using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Wuboolsri, 2008) and independent samples t-test. The correlation values between the two raters of the test (items 1-3) were .96, .98, and .94, respectively. In addition, the index of difficulty of the test (items 1-3) was .37, .58, and .45, respectively.

Questionnaire

An attitude questionnaire was designed to evaluate the attitudes of the students toward the GBA. The form was written in Thai in order to prevent a language barrier and was verified by a panel of three experts. Students enrolled in the course were asked to express their attitudes toward the teaching method at the end of the course. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: attitudes of students after studying with the GBA and comments about the teaching method. The first part (close-ended questions) consisted of three sections, namely, teaching method, teaching activities, and writing achievement. The second part was an open-ended question that asked the subjects to express their opinion and offer suggestions on the teaching method (See Appendix 5).

Interview

The interview questions were somewhat similar to the questions in the questionnaire in terms of the topics, and consisted of three components: teaching method, teaching activities, and writing achievement. Five students from each level group of students were randomly chosen to
be interviewed one day after they expressed their attitudes in the questionnaire. Five students were suitable because they were almost fifty percent of all students in each group.

4.5 Data Analysis

To determine the writing achievement of the students, the scores from the pre-test and post-test were compared by using a dependent samples t-test along with an ANOVA. Moreover, in order to gauge the attitudes of the three different groups of students towards the GBA, the mean scores were compared by using an ANOVA as well. In addition, the answers from the respondents in the interview session were analyzed by means of content analysis.

5. Findings and Discussion

5.1 Writing achievement

The first main findings of the study are presented in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Comparison between the pre-test and post-test writing scores using t-test among three groups of engineering students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Pre-test SD</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test SD</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>49.23</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>15.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>48.27</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>25.39*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45.65</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>19.92*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05

Table 1 compares the pre-test and post-test scores among the three groups of engineering students. The results revealed that the mean scores of the post-test were higher than those of the pre-test in each group. It was also found from the t-test results that the students writing achievement scores from the post-test in each group were significantly higher than those obtained from the pre-test (p< 0.05). This may mean that the GBA was effective as a method of teaching writing.

Table 2: Comparison among the post-test writing scores of three groups of engineering students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>62.32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31.16</td>
<td>3.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>278.59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>340.91</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p< 0.05

According to Table 2, it was found from the ANOVA results that the writing achievement scores from the post-test among the three groups of engineering students that were taught with the GBA were significantly different. It was also found that there was a difference between groups. There was a significant difference in the writing achievement scores between the high-level group and low-level group. However, there was no significant difference in writing achievement scores between the high- and medium-level groups or between the medium- and low-level groups.
This means that the writing achievement of the three groups of engineering students improved after receiving the GBA instruction.

5.2 Participants’ attitudes towards the GBA

According to the research findings, it seemed that most of the students of the three groups favored the GBA, as shown in Tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3: Mean scores of attitude towards teaching writing with the GBA among three groups of engineering students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the mean score of attitudes of three groups of engineering students towards teaching writing through the GBA. Wiboolsri (2008) suggests that the acceptable value of the mean representing a positive attitude has to be higher than 3.5 for each question of the questionnaire. It was found that the mean scores of the high-, medium-, and low-level groups were 4.04, 4.05, and 4.18, respectively. Thus, it can be said that all three groups of students had positive attitudes towards the GBA.

Table 4: Comparison of attitudes towards teaching writing with the GBA among three groups of engineering students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05

Table 4 shows another result from the questionnaire that there was no significant difference in attitudes toward teaching writing with the GBA among the three groups of engineering students. This means that these three groups of students were satisfied with the GBA. Analysis of student comments on and responses to the questionnaire revealed positive attitudes toward the GBA as well. These results were confirmed by the results of the qualitative data (interview).

The students thought that the GBA was useful because their writing ability had improved after attending the course, and they felt more confident in writing. In addition, they felt that the method was not too difficult to understand. The results from the interview also indicated that the students liked the GBA. For example,

I thought that the GBA was a good teaching method since this method helped improve my writing ability. This made me feel more confident. (S3, M group)

I liked the teaching method because it was quite easy to follow. The contents of the lessons were also useful since they related to the work of engineers. (S5, H group)
With respect to the teaching activities and exercises, it was found from the questionnaire that the three groups of students had favorable attitudes towards the activities and exercises. However, some students in the high- and medium-level groups preferred a greater variety of activities, while the low group was satisfied with the variety of activities provided. Moreover, the three groups of students agreed that the lessons should provide more writing samples. The results from the interview confirmed these findings.

I thought all activities were suitable because they suited my English background knowledge. (S3, L group)

Overall, the activities and exercises were fine for me but I preferred more varied activities and genre samples. (S1, H group and S4, M group)

In addition, the students in the three groups thought that having them remember moves and steps, analyze samples of written texts, and then asking them to practice writing in class, in pairs, in groups, and individually, was suitable for engineering students. The following excerpts were taken from the records of the interviews.

Studying writing with the GBA was suitable for engineering students since remembering patterns was easy for us. We adjusted what we wanted to write according to the patterns of writing different genres. This way of teaching helped us write with direction because before studying in this course we had no idea how to organize written texts and what we should write. (S1, M group)

Although we have quite good English background knowledge, we do not know how to write appropriately in the community of engineers. Remembering patterns of moves and steps helped us organize our ideas. Now I can write better and I know that I can differently focus in writing each move. Also, I did not fix the order of moves and steps. It depended on what I focused. (S1, H group)

In addition, it was found from the questionnaire that most students in the three groups were satisfied with analyzing samples of texts because it helped them to write better. These results were confirmed by the interview results as well. Most students in the low- and medium-level groups agreed that analyzing samples of texts was important. Three students in the high-level group also had similar thoughts, while two interviewees from the high-level group had different ideas. They thought that analyzing samples of text was not necessary for them. For example,

Analyzing samples of texts was what we needed. This might be different from students who were good in English because they could express their thoughts according to what they wanted. For students who are poor in English, we need to analyze sentences since we can see more samples of sentence structures. We can learn from those samples of sentences. We remembered them and used them. (S5, L group)

Although I can write quite well, I think analyzing samples of texts was required because I still needed to learn from the samples. For me, I didn’t feel bored or tired in analyzing those sentences. I thought I learned new vocabulary and sentence structures from those samples. (S2, H group)
Remembering move patterns was enough for me to write the target genres. It was not necessary to analyze sentences because we can combine the knowledge of move patterns with our English background knowledge. (S1 and S3, H group)

In brief, it was found that the three different groups of engineering students had positive attitudes toward the GBA since they had favorable attitudes towards the teaching method, activities, and exercises. Moreover, they felt that the GBA had helped them to improve their writing and made them feel more confident.

6. Discussion

This study revealed that there was a statistical difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of each group of engineering students that attended the GBA lessons. This suggested that the GBA is an effective method to teach writing. This was possible because the GBA helped the students to understand clearly the rhetorical move structure of the target genres. In other words, the GBA offers writers an explicit understanding of how target texts are structured and why they are written in the way they are (Hyland, 2007). Also, the GBA helps students to identify the moves and strategies normally used to meet their communicative purposes (Swami, 2008). This is crucial because one of the difficulties faced by EFL students when asked to produce a written academic text was that they often have an inadequate understanding of how texts ought to be organized to convey their purposes (Hyland, 1990). The result of the present research supports previous studies (Swami, 2008; Henry & Roseburry, 1998, 1999; Mustafa, 1995). Another possible reason supporting the conclusion that the GBA helps improve students’ writing was the development of the students’ cognitive processes after they had done the required activities and exercises reflecting and thinking critically about the order of moves, the communicative purposes of each move, linguistic features, and sociolinguistic knowledge. This is because understanding the ordering of moves, the communicative purposes and linguistic features of each move, help familiarize students with the parts of authentic texts written by people in the engineering community, with the expectation that students will, in turn, be able to write similar texts with all necessary parts/moves. In addition, students can also use the appropriate linguistic feature for each move and suitable language in terms of sociolinguistic knowledge. The impact of the development of these cognitive processes could be seen in the students’ ability to transfer their awareness of the move analysis results of each genre in writing effective request e-mails, enquiry e-mails, and reports. Swami (2008) mentions that effective improvement in writing requires doing tasks that helps to develop cognitive processes.

It was also found that the attitude of the students towards the GBA was positive, a finding confirmed by previous studies (Henry & Roseburry, 1998, 1999; Flowerdew, 2000; Udomyamokul, 2004; Swami, 2008). Probably, this was because the participants noticed improvements in their writing ability, which added to their confidence to write and to handle different genres. Moreover, the contents of the lesson were directly related to the work of engineers. Their favorable attitudes towards the activities and exercises, especially the sentence analysis activities, derived from their knowledge that the activities were helping them to write better.

As noted, some scholars have suggested that the GBA fits beginning and intermediate language learners more than advanced learners because they usually need to refer to samples that they can rely on (Kay and Dudley Evan, 1998; Kim, 2007). This means that advanced learners may not need to do sentence structure analysis activities since they can use those structures well. However, the findings of this study somewhat questions this argument because the results revealed that not only did students in both the low and high level groups have a positive attitude toward the sentence analysis activity, but that the students in the high level group also learned how to write from sentence samples.
7. Implications

The results of this study provide benefits to EFL teachers, especially those that teach English writing to Thai engineering students. First, with respect to the teaching activities, the results indicate that more emphasis should be placed on using a greater variety of activities. Comparing several examples of each genre and reviewing vocabulary can be examples of additional teaching activities. Moreover, asking students to categorize the grammar points, sentence structures, and sociolinguistic knowledge that they can use in each move of each different genre can also help students to see the extent to which they understand the linguistic features and sociolinguistic knowledge of each move. In order to prevent students from feeling bored with analyzing sentence samples, the number of samples of text in the second and third lessons should be fewer than in the first lesson. Additional samples of each genre in the appendix of the course textbook should also be added. Students can learn about sentence structures, grammar, and vocabulary by reading and analyzing those examples by themselves. Second, in order to make sentence analysis easier for low proficiency English students, reviewing sentence structures and grammar should be undertaken at the beginning of the course. As a result, students who are in the medium- and low- levels should have attended a basic writing course before taking the English for engineers course. In addition, it would be better if students learned how to write narrative and descriptive texts. This is because they need the skills of describing situations, features of equipment, and retelling events that happened in writing e-mails and reports.

Finally, more research should be conducted in the area using the GBA in teaching speaking skills to engineering students. This is because there are various genres in the area of speaking that engineers normally use in their work, such as presenting the results of their work, telephoning, and discussing problems at work.

8. Conclusion

This study revealed that the GBA was effective in enhancing writing abilities. The students learned how to write from explicit teaching and developing cognitive processes, which helped them become aware of the outline of each genre, communicative purposes, linguistic structures, and sociolinguistic knowledge. In addition, the positive attitudes towards the GBA of the three groups of students with different levels of proficiency supported the effectiveness of the GBA. Also, it was found that this study did not support the argument that the GBA fits beginning and intermediate language learners more than advanced learners (Kay and Dudley Evan, 1998; Kim, 2007). This was because most students thought that learning from sentence samples was a great help to them. As a result, it can be concluded that the GBA could be an effective alternative to teaching writing to students with different levels of proficiency.

References


Appendix 1

List of Moves and Steps of e-mail request written by engineers

**Move 1 Opening Salutation** (obligatory)

**Move 2 Establishing Correspondence chain** (optional)
   *Any one of the following steps is acceptable; any combination of the following steps is possible.*

   - Step 1 Referring to the previous events/contacts
   - Step 2 Introducing themselves
   - Step 3 Greeting

**Move 3 Introducing Purposes** (obligatory)

   - Step 1 Requesting
   - or/and Step 2 Providing information

**Move 4 Attaching Documents** (optional)

**Move 5 Closing Correspondence chain** (obligatory)
   *Any one of the following steps is acceptable; any combination of the following steps is possible.*

   - Step 1 Soliciting response
   - or/and Step 2 Ending positively

**Move 6 Closing salutation** (obligatory)

   Note :(Moves 3 and 4 are flexible; they can occur anywhere)

(Changpueng, 2009)
Email No. 1
In the following e-mail the parts not in order. Reorder these parts by providing the numbers in the blanks.

Situation: a senior engineer of a car seat company in Europe & an engineer of a branch office in Thailand.

To: Choakchai/ Company name
Subject: C346 FSB Breakdowns
Date: 08/06/2008 06.23 PM

Choakchai,

Thanks in advance. (a) __________
Please forward breakdowns to support these prices, and provide Frame Assy details THB 30.510.in Excel format (preferable in PDF). (b) ______
Referring to your mail dated July 7 providing information on breakdowns from Wisdom about FSB, the subsequent review in Thailand identified different prices:

1………………
2………………
3………………

(b) ______

Brandon Bucher
Position
Company name
Address
Complete version of e-mail no.1

Situation: a senior engineer of a car seat company in Europe & an engineer of branch office in Thailand.
To: Choakchai/ Company name
Subject: C346 FSB Breakdowns
Date: 08/06/2008 06.23 PM

Choakchai,

Referring to your mail dated July 7 providing information on breakdowns from Wisdom about FSB, the subsequent review in Thailand identified different prices:

1………………
2………………
3………………

Please forward breakdowns to support these prices, and provide Frame Assy details THB 30.510. in Excel format (preferable in PDF).

Thanks in advance,

Brandon

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Comprehension Questions

1. Why did Brandon write to Choakchai?
2. What was the problem?
3. What did Choakchai do on 7 July?
4. What was the special requirement from Brandon?
5. Which word has the similar meaning to the word ‘give’?
6. Which word has the similar meaning to the word ‘regarding/mentioning’?
## Appendix 3: Worksheet for genre analysis

### Worksheet no. 1 for analyzing e-mail no. 3

**Writing context:**

1. What is the text about?
2. What is the tone of the text? (Formal, Informal)
3. Who is the author of the text?
4. Who is the intended reader of the text?
5. What is the relationship between the author and reader?

**Move Analysis:**

6. How many moves does the sample consist of and what are the move details?
7. What are the steps in each move?
8. What are the linguistic features of the request step?
9. What are the grammatical points of each move?

### Tenses:

**Modal:**

10. What are verbs in each move?
11. What are the language choices used in terms of sociolinguistic knowledge (formality, informality?)
12. What are the writing tactics (strategies) used in the sample?
Appendix 4: Sample of writing strategy exercise

Exercise 8: Read the request e-mails or working situations provided below (exercise A-B) and write or add reasons to make the requests stronger.

A. Email no.4
Situation: engineer manager of paint dept. of an automotive company in Japan & an engineer of purchasing department of the branch in Thailand
Instruction: Rewrite this request e-mail to the same reader and ask for the same action. Add one more reason to make the request stronger.

Dear Yatabae san,

Could you please decide ASAP on the estimate total cost for packaging additional information because the maker needs lead time. We are concerned that HCAT may not finish on time if we do not get started urgently. I would appreciate your urgent response.

Best Regards,
Nuchporn
Engineer (purchasing dept.)

B. Situation 1: You are a test engineer. You would like to request a special tester time for program debugging and proving-in your samples HIUY-2 from the supplier. You are going to write to the factory manager who you have known for about 2 years. HIUY-2 is your new code and also belongs to one of your key customer. Think of reasons or strategy you should explain to the factory manager to be sure that he will provide tester time for you because the tester is very busy.
Appendix 5: Attitude survey questions

Part I: Attitude on the teaching method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Level of attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. There is a wide variety of activities and exercises.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Activities and exercises in each unit can improve my writing ability in each type of genre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Activities and exercises of each unit in general are suitable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Activities and exercises of each unit are suitable for my English background knowledge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The teaching method of having students analyze samples of written texts and then asking students to practice writing in class, in pair, in groups, and individually are suitable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Studying through analyzing samples of genre before the independent writing stage helps me to write well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can write because I understand and remember the genre analysis results.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Practicing thinking and using writing strategies are useful because it helps the writer plan writing organization and its details appropriately.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. This course provides enough opportunities to write.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I like the way that the teacher provides broad instruction because students are free to create the details of what they want to communicate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Her teaching methodology helps students understand the lessons easily.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I think that I can write English better.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I feel confident in working as an engineer in the future.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Awareness of relationship between readers and writers is important because it help us use appropriate language.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part II: Suggestion on the teaching method
Hidden Challenges that Radio DJs Present to ESL/EFL Listeners

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Abstract

Language learners can learn a lot by listening to radio broadcasts in the target language. With the spread of English worldwide through forces of globalisation, it is not uncommon for learners to have access to English language broadcasts from both local radio stations and international broadcasters such as the BBC. Language teachers often make use of radio broadcasts as sources of listening materials for their classroom activities. This paper considers one type of discourse commonly found in radio broadcasts yet rarely used as listening materials in language classrooms: DJ talk. For learners who spend hours listening to the radio, it is often DJ talk that interests them most. Such talk, therefore, merits closer consideration both as a discourse type, and as a suitable source of teaching materials. In particular, DJ talk can help learners develop critical listening skills, an important yet underdeveloped area of ESL/EFL teaching and learning. Using Goffman’s (1981) theoretical framework for analysing radio talk, this paper explores the discourse of DJs and some consequent implications for language teachers.

Keywords: DJ talk, critical listening, ESL/EFL listening, Goffman
1. Introduction and literature review

It has been noted in the ELT literature that listening tends to be the neglected macro-skill in both listening comprehension research and in second or foreign language teaching (Graham, 2009). On the research side, notable works have included the survey of the field by Lynch (1998), Buck’s (2001) account describing listening skills in order to enable their assessment, and Rost’s (2011) authoritative account of both teaching and researching listening. Dunkel (1991) draws linkages between L1 and L2 listening with a view to informing L2 pedagogical practice. Brindley (1997) proposes a taxonomy of listening skills for language learners, adapted from those provided by Rost (1993) and Weir (1993). Field (1998) notes the importance of listening strategies and their compensatory role to listening skills; while Renandya and Farrell (2011) note the lack of evidence of success in following a strategies-based approach with lower proficiency learners. Field (2008) is explicitly concerned with what teachers need to do in terms of teaching listening comprehension skills in language classrooms.

In our view, the main problems in teaching listening to ESL/EFL learners can be summarised as (1) finding suitable materials; and (2) using those materials in a suitable way. In the case of the former, teachers often rely on course books (whose developers have themselves decided what counts as suitable materials) or they may be more concerned with particular target language use domains such as specific academic disciplines or professions, or teachers may draw from more general ‘real world’ discourse as found across a range of contemporary media broadcasts. In the case of the latter, teachers are concerned with the authenticity of the task (i.e. is it ‘real-life’ or ‘artificial’?), and covering the range of skills (and sub-skills) commonly identified in listening skill taxonomies. One of the goals of this paper is to present an approach to solving a particular problem related to using listening materials in a suitable way. Before we address our specific concern, however, it is useful to first consider the wider context of teaching and learning ESL/EFL listening skills as understood from current theory.

Richards (2008) notes the practice of viewing listening skills as either ‘bottom-up’ or ‘top-down’, and the different treatment that each type receives in the language classroom. Bottom-up processing refers to the “use of input as the basis for understanding a message” (Richards, 2008, p. 4), which implies that comprehension of the input (words, sentence boundaries, contractions, individual sounds, and sound combinations) is through decoding – a difficult mental activity. Any activities that are difficult to process may aggravate the effects of classroom contextual problems (such as large class sizes and students’ differing proficiency levels, motivations, needs, preferences, etc.) and may well demotivate students. Bottom-up processing also assumes that the things a listener needs to understand are all included in the input. However, decoding works well only when the learner has a large vocabulary and good working knowledge of sentence structure. In instances where learners have limited vocabulary and poor knowledge of sentence structure (as in the case of lower-level ESL/SFL students) bottom-up processing may not be an effective approach to teaching.
listening. Indeed, bottom-up processing of input can pose a formidable challenge to ESL/EFL learners.

In top-down processing, the listener’s knowledge-based schemata (such as cultural constructs, topic familiarity, discourse clues, and pragmatic conventions) are activated (Celce-Murcia, 1995; Hinkel, 2006; Mendelsohn, 1994; Rost & Ross, 1991). In other words, this approach relies on the “use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message” (Richards, 2008, p. 7), and focuses on “teaching learners how to cope with authentic language and real life situations as part of the communicative approach” (Wilson, 2003, p. 335). (Hinkel, 2006) notes, however, that in the context of language classroom teaching and learning, these ‘coping’ strategies are often not actually geared towards language learning. Rather, they are ‘survival’ strategies that a language learner can use to pass examinations.

At present, teacher education textbooks covering the essentials of language instruction include material on how to address bottom-up and top-down abilities of learners (see, for example, Adger, Snow & Christian, 2002; Brown, 2001; Carter & Nunan, 2001; Celce-Murcia, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nunan, 1999, 2003; Richards, 2003, 2008; Wilson, 2003), but none of these books explicitly mention the development of cognitive strategies associated with critical thinking. Critical thinking is an individual “competence in whatever is thought about” (Smith, 1992, p. 103) (see also McPeck, 1981), and its inseparableness from language makes it an indispensable and crucial component to be addressed in ESL/EFL classrooms. Critical thinking provides an opportunity to explore meanings beyond what is visible/audible at the surface level in authentic language. The considerable progress gained in recent years from studies of spoken corpora and conversation analysis have been “illuminating the complexity of oral discourse and language” (Hinkel 2006, p. 117), which suggests that authentic listening materials (such as DJ talk) offer more than simply providing instances for learning L2 either through bottom-up or top-down processing. The complexity of oral discourse also presents an opportunity to develop critical thinking skills while listening, which is not provided by bottom-up or top-down approaches to listening.

2. Radio broadcasts as sources of listening materials

None of the published research referred to above has given much if any serious thought to the various discourses of ubiquitous radio broadcasts and the challenges they present to language learners. Learners of a second or foreign language have often found that listening to radio broadcasts improves their listening skills and comprehension. Indeed, their language teachers often use excerpts from radio broadcasts in their teaching (see, for example, Hafernik & Suroguine 1979; Morrison, 1989). Language teachers also promote radio listening as a useful extra-curricular activity for students to take up. After all, it is cheap, it potentially offers a great variety of speaking registers, styles and accents, and it is often available to learners around the clock. The listening skills in French of one of the authors of this paper benefited enormously from listening to radio newscasts in that language when he was a lower-intermediate learner of French. That personal experience, and the published accounts
of the types of radio broadcast materials used in language classrooms highlight the fact that teachers tend to select for their listening activities broadcast excerpts which are generally accessible (for example, newscasts and certain types of advertisements), and avoid excerpts which are more challenging (for example, naturally occurring speech).

While it is true that using materials that are appropriately graded for language learners of a particular level is ‘good’ teaching practice, it also deprives learners of opportunities to improve their comprehension of more natural and difficult discourses which are also commonly heard in real life. Herron and Seay (1991) noted the improvement in listening comprehension of language learners who were exposed to unedited radio discourse, in contrast to learners who were not. This is an under-researched area of both the listening research literature and the ELT literature, and the purpose of the present paper is to consider the issue of radio discourses more fully, and what the implications for learners and teachers might be.

3. Problematizing DJ talk

According to Priestman (2004), DJ talk is contextualized such that it attracts attention, prepares ears for listening rather than just hearing, reminds listeners (e.g. of the station they are tuned in to), persuades listeners (e.g. to use a service or product) and engages the audience with conversations that sustain their loyalty. These various functions are achieved by a DJ’s use of vocal timbre, colloquial speech, and a quirky or memorable style of address, which permit the DJ to display intimacies that appeal to listeners at an individual and personal level despite the fact that broadcasts are aimed at a mass audience (Coyle, 2000: 63). Indeed, as Rost (2011, p. 256) notes, “the listener plays a vital role in creating the meaning in all discourse situations [including] …indirectly, as in audience design used in preparing one-way discourse such as media programmes”. These characteristics of DJ talk suggest a complexity in the discourse not immediately evident to the casual listener of radio broadcasts.

While language teachers who direct their learners to radio listening as a useful outside-class activity may have some concern about their students learning too much informal language or, by extension, misapplying an informal spoken register to situations where more formality is needed, they generally view radio broadcasts in English as unproblematic: a few people in the radio studio talk and many people across a city or country listen. While it is true that language learners stand to improve their listening comprehension skills considerably through listening to talk on the radio, as noted above the talk they hear is often not as straightforward as it may sound. (The focus of this paper, it should be stressed, is not concerned with the ‘real but unhidden’ challenges of naturally occurring discourse, such as speech rate, false starts, and idiomatic language). Indeed, it is quite likely that language teachers themselves may not be fully aware of aspects of DJ talk that make it particularly challenging for ESL/EFL learners to understand. To see why this is so, we can turn to sociologist Erving Goffman’s theoretical framework for describing radio talk.
4. A framework for describing radio talk

Goffman (1981) investigates forms of talk, including a study of radio talk. In particular, he deals with examples of ‘misspeaking’ that sometimes take place in live radio broadcasts which, through their exceptionality, enable a lot to be said about what is ‘normal’ talk in everyday life. Goffman is particularly interested in unpacking the terms ‘speaker’ and ‘hearer’ because they mask different social roles taken up in interactional discourse. He provides two different perspectives on analysing what is said in radio broadcasts, the first being what he calls ‘speech production bases’, and the second being ‘production formats’. Let us consider each of these perspectives in turn.

4.1 Recitation, aloud reading, fresh talk

Goffman identifies three speech production bases in radio talk: (1) recitation; (2) aloud reading; and (3) fresh talk. Recitation occurs, for example, when a DJ is providing program or station identification.

Example 1: You’re listening to the Banana Zone on Love FM 97.5 in Phnom Penh, where we play the music that makes you feel great.

Aloud reading occurs, for example, when a DJ is reading an advertisement to his or her listeners.

Example 2: Well guys, just a reminder that we use TeleSurf at Love FM and you can too. Visit the TeleSurf website at www…and check out TeleSurf’s new plans and promotion. TeleSurf – Value for Money.

Fresh talk is unscripted talk, and occurs, for example, between songs.

Example 3: Alright, there you go Lady Marmalade, hmm yeah, I enjoyed that song. That was pretty good. And you know what? The Sugar Babes, they did a pretty good job of that, but when LaBelle came out, wow, she just like brought it up about, well, a few notches, that’s for sure. And you know what? She sounds like the same. She’s much older now and boy she really kicks it out. She’s like, the end of the song there, wow, look out, yeah LaBelle still rules!

Each of these three types of speech places different demands upon the listener, and these are essentially to do with the degree of ‘scriptedness’: recitation and aloud reading are highly scripted and, therefore, easier for a listener to understand. They recur in their same form on multiple occasions, sometimes even within a program of an hour’s duration.

Fresh talk, by contrast, is essentially unscripted and therefore more difficult to understand. What is said is certainly not repeated in the same form, if at all. As illustrated in Example 3 above, because of its qualities as an unscripted utterance, there is redundancy, ambiguity and incoherence in the discourse. Indeed, language
teachers who have not given much thought to the quality of English that is regularly broadcast on radio might be alarmed by such speech and the possibility that their students might use it as a model for their own speech. The main point to be made here, however, is different. Being able to distinguish whether the DJ is reciting, reading aloud, or engaging in fresh talk is something that proficient listeners can manage without much difficulty; however, that may not be the case for the less proficient. At a minimum, they may be troubled by the fact that sometimes they are able to understand a DJ quite easily, while at other times, they struggle to clearly understand anything he or she says. This was certainly the case for the author in his own experience as a learner of French. In terms of self-esteem, radio-listening can both boost and crush students’ morale.

4.2 Animator, author, principal

Let us now consider Goffman’s other perspective for analysing radio talk. His ‘production formats’ for radio talk are also comprised of three categories: (1) animator; (2) author; and (3) principal. Unlike speech production bases which, as we have seen, are concerned with the degree of ‘scriptedness’, production bases are concerned with the notion of ‘voice’, and whose discourse the listener is actually hearing. Goffman defines ‘animator’ as the one who speaks, and ‘author’ as the one who scripted the speech. Thus, the DJ may be either simply animator or both animator and author. Referring back to Examples 1 and 2 above, in recitation and aloud reading we can see that the DJ is animator of someone else’s script (unless, of course, the DJ is also engaged in writing the copy of jingles and advertisements). In fresh talk, by contrast, the DJ is clearly both animator and author since it is his or her voice we hear, and the script is ‘written’ as it is spoken, i.e. in real-time direct from the DJ.

The category of ‘principal’ presents a greater challenge, and is defined by Goffman (1981), rather vaguely, as the ‘agent’ ‘…whose position is established by the words that are spoken, someone whose beliefs have been told, someone who is committed to what the words say’ (p. 144). Despite his interest in language, Goffman was not a linguist; and he did not exemplify this term in ways which would clearly facilitate a linguistic analysis. In essence we can say that the principal is the one whose position is supported by the speech and, with this definition in mind, some illustrations of principal can be quite clear. For example, when a DJ is reciting his or her radio station’s identity, it is the radio station that benefits from this sort of ‘reminding’ to the listener that they are tuned to it and not to a rival station. By extension, the owners of the station also stand to benefit if a loyal listening audience can be retained since, among other things, this increases the station’s attractiveness for potential advertisers who may pay a lot of money to have their products or services advertised on the station’s broadcasts.

Let us consider two further examples of ‘principal’, each connected with the other types of production base. First, where a DJ reads aloud an advertisement, the principal is clearly the company whose product or service is being advertised. In this instance, the DJ is animator, the copywriter is author, and the advertiser is principal. Second, where a DJ in fresh talk is advocating a particular position or point of view, it is possible that she/he is invoking a principal even more hidden than those just
described in recitation and aloud reading. Referring back to Example 3’s illustration of fresh talk above, it is quite easy to think that the DJ’s enthusiastic endorsement of Patti LaBelle could, depending upon the influence the DJ has on his or her audience, result in an increase in record sales for that artist. Indeed, it is clearly the case that one of the principal roles of DJs is to promote the music they play, in order to generate increased sales of that music.

5. Hidden challenges presented by DJ talk

It should be clear from the above descriptions that Goffman’s production format ‘voices’ are an important component of radio talk, and that an ability to fully understand such radio talk necessarily entails an ability to discern when the DJ is animating something authored by someone else and for the purpose of supporting yet another person’s or corporation’s position. Less proficient listeners of radio talk will hear the DJs voice, and may understand much of what is said, but they may have no appreciation of the fact that this sort of discourse is ‘institutional’ rather than ‘everyday’ talk, and that its production involves non-present authors and principals with agendas. It would be an unwitting mistake, therefore, for language learners to adopt the spoken manner of DJ role models without an appreciation of the fact that DJ talk is meant to sound natural and everyday (and DJs are very skillful in their ability to achieve this effect), but is actually a highly institutionalised discourse with its own set of social (and commercial) objectives (see, for example, Drew & Heritage, 1992).

To sum up, language learners who listen to DJ talk on the radio need to cope with two sets of phenomena: the scriptedness of DJ talk (recited; read aloud; fresh), and the voice behind the message (animator; author; principal). While these kinds of talk do also occur in face-to-face encounters in real life, the radio listener is at a disadvantage with scriptedness since he or she cannot see the speaker and, therefore, know whether the speaker is or is not reading aloud. Similarly, the radio listener is at a disadvantage with discerning ‘voice’ in DJ monologues since he or she cannot interact with and impact on what the DJ says, as would be the case in a face-to-face exchange where clarification could be sought as to the degree the animator has authored the utterance and for what purpose this was done. Clearly, then, speech production bases and production platforms provide evidence that listening to the radio can be a lot more challenging than meets the eye (or ear), and language teachers should be aware of this situation.

6. Implications for English teachers

The analyses of DJ talk presented in this paper have many implications for English teachers. Four of the most significant are discussed below.

First, the various taxonomies of listening skills (for example, Buck, 2001; Brindley, 1997) are useful in providing categorisations of skills and a discrete set of sub-skills that language learners undoubtedly need to develop and, therefore, that teachers need to cover. However, none of them seems to adequately account for the type of critical listening that is required for a more complete understanding of radio talk. For example, in Brindley’s taxonomy, Goffman’s category of ‘principal’ might
seem to fall within the category ‘Understanding meaning not explicitly stated’, or, it might equally be placed in the first category, ‘Orienting oneself to spoken text’, where it could be described as a new sub-category ‘Identify underlying ideological stances of utterances’. Current taxonomies do not address critical listening skills adequately, in our view, because such skills are difficult to describe and therefore difficult to pigeonhole in a taxonomy. However, to the extent that they can be described, they can be taught and learned. If critical listening skills (or any other aspect of listening) are overlooked by a taxonomy-based syllabus then the learner is missing out on something that could turn out to be very important to them. While taxonomies have their uses, especially in declaring distinct and exclusive categories, they do not appear sufficient in themselves to identify all the listening comprehension skills required of proficient language users.

Second, in terms of the ongoing debate about the use of authentic materials in language classrooms (see, for example, Flowerdew & Miller, 2005), radio broadcasts provide an easily accessible and limitless source of authentic listening materials. In contrast to the common use of unnatural, often decontextualized listening texts in ESL/EFL language classes, the use of DJ talk can help bridge the world of the classroom with the real world outside it. Goffman again is helpful in unpacking the notion of ‘hearership’ into ratified/unratified and addressed/unaddressed axes. As Flowerdew and Miller (2005) observe, learners often play the role of ‘overhearers’ (i.e. unratted and unaddressed) in most listening activities in ESL/EFL classes. That is, ‘they listen to recordings of conversations between other people or monologues directed at audiences other than themselves’ (p. 89). However, in the case of radio broadcasts, DJ talk ratifies listeners as part of the ongoing ‘conversation’, and provides learners with a more grounded experience of the target language as authentic rather than contrived for language learning purposes.

A third and related implication of this paper’s analysis concerns the basis on which radio broadcast materials are selected for use in language classrooms. The preference of language teachers to use relatively easy-to-understand excerpts from radio broadcasts reflects a focus on ideational content rather than interpersonal relations. Montgomery (1986) notes that newsreaders are typically foregrounding the ideational aspect of what they say, whereas DJs are typically foregrounding the interpersonal aspect of how they say what they say. Language teachers who are more attuned to this distinction stand a better chance of addressing it in their selections of listening materials and in the tasks they set for their students.

Fourth, there is no reason why teachers could not use Goffman’s framework in their teaching of listening skills if and when they use radio broadcasts as sources of listening texts. For example, students could be asked to listen to a radio segment and then judge whether the discourse was recitation, reading aloud, or fresh talk; and why they have thought so. Whilst such an activity might appear at first sight to be of little value to a language learner, in respect of mediated discourse (including radio, television and internet broadcasts) scriptedness is a distinctive feature that, if recognised, can assist the listener in taking their first ‘critical’ steps to more fully appreciate and understand the depth and complexity of meanings being conveyed. For the same listening segment or a different one, students could be asked to identify the
animator, author and principal, and discuss/defend their reasons in making those judgements. If ESL/EFL learners are to become ‘critical listeners’ they need to learn how the aural construction of interpersonal texts is positioning them at the same time as they are learning to access the meanings via the spoken language in English. Goffman’s production formats (animator, author and principal) provide a framework for teaching critical listening where ‘literacy’ requires the literate consumers of text to adopt a critical and questioning approach through which listeners are encouraged to actively analyse text as a social construct for uncovering underlying messages. Critical listening skills are an important component in developing academic literacy yet, as with listening comprehension skills more generally, they remain under-researched and often neglected in classroom teaching. This is a pity because these skills stand to serve learners well as they make their way through the ever-evolving English-rich media landscape afforded by current technologies, and nurtured by the latest cultural practices.

7. Conclusion

The development of good listening skills is an indispensable need of all language learners. A good ability to understand spoken English broadcast by radio (and other media technologies) is, for many language learners, part of that need. Although teachers may well have their own preferences for the sources of listening materials they use in their teaching activities, they should give at least some thought to the preferences of their students. DJ talk is a type of radio discourse that many learners of English spend a lot of time listening to, and language teachers should accept and acknowledge this by, for example, drawing on DJ talks as a source of listening materials for teaching. While DJ monologues (and dialogues, for that matter) present challenges to learners in terms of their being natural spoken texts (for example, in speech rate; false starts; idiomatic language; and slang), these important aspects are outside the scope of the present paper which has attempted to show how Goffman’s (1981) framework for analysing radio talk can contribute to a better understanding of DJ talk through identifying the hidden challenges such talk presents for ESL/EFL listeners, and suggesting how teachers can help their learners to better understand this type of popular discourse.

1 All examples given in this paper have been drawn from broadcast data collected from a local radio station in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in January 2008.

References


Scaffolding in PhD Supervisory Talk

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Abstract

Adopting Vygotsky’s socio-cultural perspective, this case study aims to explore and describe how a supervisor’s scaffolding create learning opportunities for a student to practise critical thinking and responding ability in PhD face-to-face supervisory talk. Data was collected through audio-taping which was then used as the basis for a stimulated recall interview with the supervisor to identify purposes. Types of scaffolding were identified inductively from the supervision transcript through a process of recursive categorisation and were then matched against the stated purposes. The findings suggest that a supervisor plays a focal role in guiding, challenging for clarification, supporting and shaping contributions so that the PhD student receives opportunities to express, reflect on and reason out her research ideas, and to learn from the unfolding interaction through constant meaning negotiation and knowledge construction. Limitations and recommendations are discussed for future research on supervision practice.

**Key words:** socio-cultural theory, scaffolding, PhD supervision, PhD supervisory talk
1. Introduction

Supervision as an essential component of postgraduate study is becoming an important research area (Wisker et al., 2003). Academic research on supervision has attracted considerable interest from various scholars and institutions in western countries like Canada, the US, UK and Australia in the last three decades. The existing research covers a wide range of topics, such as supervisory relationships with regard to personal problems/difficulties, mismatches of expectations concerning cultural differences or academic experience, the effectiveness of supervisory functions (Wisker, 2005; Zhao, 2001, 2003), conceptual models of supervisory roles (Lee, 2007; 2008; Gatfield, 2005; Clarke & Collins, 2004), supervisory styles and their effects on student outcomes, supervisors’ management of differing roles during stages of students’ candidature, candidates’ experiences, supervisors’ experiences, evaluation of supervision, epistemologies of supervisory practice, and other issues associated with supervision (Latimer, 2005; Calma, 2007). Most studies have explored supervisors’ and students’ perceptions of supervision rather than looking at the actual interactions in supervisory talking processes. To date, supervisory talk as negotiation of meaning-making process has received little attention in the supervision research literature. However, Wisker et al. (2003) argue for the value of supervisory talks between supervisors and PhD students as a means of promoting collaboration and interaction with a view to empowering students to be responsible for their own research. In order to investigate the value of supervisory talks, a qualitative naturalistic case study was conducted to investigate how a supervisor’s scaffolding strategies can create learning opportunities to facilitate a PhD student’s thinking and responding ability during a routine face-to-face supervisory meeting. The theoretical framework is based on Vygotsky’s socio-cultural perspective.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Definition of PhD Supervisory Talk

Doctoral supervision is a profound and lengthy joint venture involving both the supervisor and student’s interactive, complete, personal and professional commitment to nurture the development of a competent, autonomous researcher to make contributions to the academic community (Delany, 2009; Latimer, 2005; Shannon, 1995). Nowadays, with the development of high technology, different types of supervision can be categorized into two modes: written (e.g., hard-copy files; email exchanges; text messages via mobile phone) and spoken (e.g., face-to-face talk, web-based talk, telephone conversations). In this study, PhD supervisory talk refers to face-to-face dialogues naturally occurring between a supervisor and a PhD student aiming to question and discuss research ideas, realise problems, achieve shared understanding, and construct knowledge on a certain area of research.

2.2 Conceptualisation of ‘Scaffolding’ in PhD Supervisory Talk

PhD supervisory talk involves extensive interactions. Therefore, the investigation of such talk should be founded in theories of teaching and learning which prioritise interaction.
Vygotskian sociocultural theory attaches great importance to social interaction in learning (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Lantolf, 2000; Kinginger, 2002). Under sociocultural theory, the process of teaching and learning is described as "much more than the simple transmission of prescribed knowledge and skills" (Daniels, 2001, p.2) but rather emphasizes dialogue and co-construction of knowledge (Wells, 1999) through teacher-learner interaction and communication. One crucial notion in the Vygotskian framework concerning learning is known as scaffolding, namely the guided support provided to the less knowledgeable partner (the novice) as s/he collaborates with a more knowledgeable partner (the expert) (Nassaji & Swain, 2000). The origin of scaffolding as a teaching strategy can be traced from Lev Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory and the goal of using the scaffolding teaching strategy is to help students to become independent and self-regulating learners and problem solvers (Van Der Stuyf, 2002). Scaffolding possesses three important characteristics. The first is the dialogic nature of joint problem solving (Wells, 1999). The second characteristic is the notion of intersubjectivity (Newson & Newson, 1975, cited in Tan et al., 2004), which is to say that when individuals collaborate with one another, they undertake a process of seeing each other’s differences and achieving shared understanding with respect to the common task. The third characteristic is self-regulated learning orientation. Through collaboration with more knowledgeable experts, students receive guidance which fosters their ability to learn and extends their self-regulation in learning activity (Tan, et. al., 2004).

Since PhD supervisory talk aims to inquire about ideas and solve problems in order to achieve a shared understanding on a certain research topic, it manifests the characteristics of scaffolding mentioned above for three reasons: 1) It is a dialogue between supervisors (experts) and students (novices) to solve problems at a particular stage of thesis research; 2) Supervisors and students work collaboratively to negotiate meanings and achieve shared understanding of the discussed issues; 3) The purpose of supervisory talk is to guide students to be self-regulated in thinking and reasoning about the problems. At this point, *Scaffolding in PhD supervisory talk* in this study can be conceptualized as the supervisor’s discourse strategies like questions, prompts, and comments which help the PhD student to think critically and thereby figure out reasons to solve problems.

### 2.3 Contextualisation of ‘Learning Opportunity’ in PhD Supervisory Talk

Research supervision as a form of training and learning occurs not only in relation to knowledge of the research topic but also of interpersonal skills. In Australia and the UK, this is often termed as ‘generic’ or ‘employable’ skills (Pearson & Brew, 2002). For example, among a list of thirteen postgraduate generic skills from an Australian industry view, the top two are ‘good communication/presentation skills’ and ‘good work practices and collaborative skills’ (Mullins & Kiley, 1998:4). PhD research supervision is acknowledged as “the crucial element of learning – a fascination with questioning the world, ways of enquiring, solving problems, creating and innovating and developing discourse, strategies and interpretations” (Wisker, 2005, p.1). Among these, critically using reflection strategies such as scrutinizing and questioning prevailing ideas requires higher order of thinking and deep approaches to learning. Meanwhile, research supervision as language-mediated interaction among supervisors and research students is perceived as a process intended to advance
learning and communication at the highest level (Laske & Zuber-Skerritt, 1996). According to Starr (2000), Vygotsky’s concept of scaffolding is based on ‘Socially Mediated Dialogical Learning’. Under this concept, dialogue is crucial to encourage learners to organize their thinking while talking (Bruner, 1990, cited in Walsh, 2006) and thereby acquire new knowledge (Ahmed, 1994). Since PhD research supervision is by nature intended to be different from that at Master’s level with its goal being to foster students’ capacity to be critical, innovative, and collaborative in academic and social contexts. Since PhD students have already gained academic experience through studying for their previous degrees, it would tend to be more facilitative than directive. In this sense, PhD supervision can be viewed as a process of empowerment of generic skills and research knowledge at both professional and interpersonal levels. At this point, scaffolding can be either produced by the expert or negotiated in bi-directional interaction (Bernstone, 2009; Panselinas & Komis, 2009). The idea that scaffolding can be a negotiated process indicates a level of contribution of the less expert in this scaffolding relationship.

Nussbaum et al. (2009) report that being engaged in a reciprocal talk helps to foster learners’ metacognitive awareness, which refers to one’s understanding of and control over one’s own cognitive processes. This reciprocal process requires supervisees to propose their own ideas, and to defend their ideas through clarifying and justifying them. This kind of reciprocal talk where ideas are compared with those of another person in order to co-construct understanding is more complex than simply reaching consensus on an agreed answer and thus may contribute to learner’s thinking and communicative ability. Lee (2007:689) recognizes that being critical in thinking is similar to the Socratic Method, which ‘is a methodical questioning and cross-examining, peeling away layers of half-truths, exposing hidden assumptions…assumes a position of co-operative inquiry and accepts that there is no right answer’. Among the many identified scaffolds in literature, the significance of questioning, coaching and modelling in learning contexts is commonly acknowledged (Duangkaew, 2007; Ho, 2005; Lee, 2007, 2008; Watson Todd, 1997). Walsh and Sattes (2005) identify the following as some characteristics of quality questions that could result in transformational thinking:

...words and phrases that cue students to respond at the intended cognitive level, prompt students to see relationships and patterns, demonstrate understandings and make connections, engage student thinking, ask students to process knowledge and prompt students to see connections. (p.24)

In this study, we investigated the notion of scaffolding as a means to provide learning opportunities in PhD supervisory talks in order that PhD students might develop their ability to think critically and to respond appropriately while doing research. To the best of our knowledge, no research has been done on the actual face-to-face PhD supervisory meeting by conceptualizing “scaffolding” based on a negotiation of meaning inquiry process from a socio-cultural perspective. This case study hopes to address this gap.
3. **Research Focus and Questions**

This study focused on exploring how a supervisor’s scaffolding create learning opportunities for a PhD student to think, to formulate relevant questions about emerging problems, and to apply appropriate information in face-to-face PhD supervisory talk. Two research questions are addressed: 1) What types of scaffolding were used by the supervisor? 2) In what aspects did those scaffolds create learning opportunities for the PhD student in the supervisory talk?

4. **Research Methodology**

4.1 **Research Design, Setting and Participants**

A qualitative naturalistic case study research paradigm was adopted. The study was conducted in an Applied Linguistics international programme in Thailand. There were two participants in this study: one is a Thai supervisor who had four and a half years of experience of studying abroad and the other was a Chinese PhD student (the first researcher) who had three-year experience of studying in Thailand. The PhD student was in the first academic semester and she was required to take three courses and develop a clear focus for her thesis research.

4.2 **Description of PhD Supervisory Talk**

At the beginning stage of the PhD student’s studies, the supervisor, as a more knowledgeable expert, was responsible for helping the PhD student to develop the focus of her thesis research and in each face-to-face meeting to check whether or not her proposed research ideas were justifiable. Since the PhD student was also doing course work, the supervisory talks also involved issues concerning course assignments but only if these were relevant to her thesis research. The supervisory session studied was the third meeting between the supervisor and the PhD student. In the previous two sessions, they had mainly discussed what aspects of the PhD student’s proposed area of research regarding ‘intercultural miscommunications between international supervisors and their students’ could be explored. In this selected segment, the supervisor was trying to help the PhD student to explore what factors may lead to miscommunications and why it is significant to explore intercultural miscommunications.

4.3 **Data Collection and Data Selection**

Data were collected by audio taping a naturally occurring supervision session. An MP3 was centered optimally to capture the supervisor and the student’s verbal utterances as comprehensively as possible. The whole supervision session lasted 34 minutes in total. Prior to audio taping, permission was obtained for the recording to take place during the routine supervision session and the stimulated recall interview which followed it. The supervisor was informed that the session would be recorded for research purposes; she was not informed that the focus of the research was on her scaffolding. The purpose of this was to ensure that the supervisor’s scaffolding would be completely natural.
Data selection was employed to limit the volume of data analysed in view of the limited scope of the present preliminary study. Immediately after collecting data consisting of the whole supervision session, the researcher listened to the recording in order to thoroughly understand the supervisory talk and designed a form for the supervisor to keep running notes in the follow-up stimulated recall interview. The 34-minute recording was sifted through for a segment rich in the supervisor’s scaffolding. The data selected for analysis satisfy the following criteria: a) clear in terms of voice quality; b) rich in the supervisor’s scaffolding; and c) a discussion of a PhD research issue which involved the student frequently responding to the supervisor’s scaffolding. Based on these criteria, a 7-minute 49-second segment was selected from the 34-minute data.

The stimulated recall interview was conducted on the same day as the data collection and selection in order that the participants’ opinions and the explanations of the supervisor’s scaffolding could be collected while their memories of what had been said were fresh. The interval between the audio-taped supervision session and the stimulated recall interview session was 3 hours. Conducting the stimulated recall interview allowed the participants to think, speak and be heard and have an in-depth discussion on identified scaffolding. During the stimulated recall interview, once the supervisor identified her scaffolding, the recording was paused for cross-checking about the scaffolding from the two parties. The mutually-recognized scaffolding was noted down and commentaries about the student’s responses were added by the researcher.

4.4 Data Analysis

Firstly, the 7-minutes and 49-seconds of data consisting of PhD supervisory dialogue was fully transcribed (see Appendix for transcription conventions) for scrutiny by the first researcher in order for her to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. Secondly, the transcripts were collated with the notes about the supervisor’s purposes obtained from the stimulated recall interview and the PhD student’s reactions. Thirdly, the collated transcripts were presented to the supervisor for confirmation of their accuracy. Fourthly, the themes of the supervisor’s scaffolding were identified and the PhD student’s responses were also analyzed in order to establish how the supervisor’s scaffolding had guided the PhD student through the supervisory talk. A thematic framework was developed based on the stimulated recall interview protocols and the researcher’s running notes. The whole stage involved frequently analyzing the transcripts, making preliminary interpretations, keeping running notes, and documenting emerging themes.

5. Findings

To answer the research questions, extracts and interpretations are presented in this section. We investigated the notion of scaffolding as a means of facilitating the negotiation of meaning process and tried to identify the learning opportunities presented by the supervisor’s scaffolding, particularly those which fostered the PhD student’s ability to constantly inquire, criticize and reframe ideas during the supervisory talk. The italicized remarks are information obtained later from the stimulated recall interview. While these comments are not exhaustive, they do
comprise a distinctively-hued lens through which to bring the supervisor’s scaffolding to the student’s learning into focus.

Three extracts are presented and examined in the following sections to explore the supervisor’s scaffolding and the learning opportunities thus created during the supervisory talk. T stands for the supervisor and S refers to the PhD student.

Extract 1

1 12'55`` → **T**: ↑Why do you want to (.) or ↑why did you want to do this topic in the FIRST place?

2 13'02`` **S**: Er: the first place (. ) as I told you it is my personal interest. As an international student, from very beginning, anyway not suffered but I experienced a lot of difficulties [**T**: Em]. And I was worried if I bring these questions to my supervisors, I will be stupid. My supervisors will be (***)

Er:: so, whether it is (. ) it is kind of cultural shock, we are not (. ) I am not sure (. ) but finally (. ) I tried to (. ) ok (. ) make myself clear first and went to talk to them. Maybe feel more worried about miscommunication. What I did was to prepare and along the process I learned a lot.

3 13'43`` → **T**: Em (. ) What about HERE? Do you feel the ↑same?

4 13'50`` **S**: Em:: I feel better than I did my MA (. ) but still have kind of worry [**T**: ok] because the academic culture may be different.

5 13'55`` → **T**: And ↑why do you think it is different now?

6 13'58`` **S**: Em (. ) yeah (. ) for the different levels (. ) for the PhD students, we are supposed to do more [↑**T**: Em.] and I:::

7 14'06`` → **T**: ↑Why do you think there is LESS miscommunication now than before?

8 14'11`` **S**: Em::: I have some experience in doing research (. ) maybe (. ) with the knowledge about research (. ) and I am a little bit confident than before (***)

9 14'21`` → **T**: So (. ) ↑now (. ) you think that NOW you have more confidence in doing research. [**S**: Yeah. (***)]

10 14'38`` → **S**: ↑Are you saying the problems with you?

11 14'38`` ↑Yeah. And (. ) for the experience, it is so different (. ) for the MA degree, I didn’t have any experience in doing research at all, everything started from zero. And here, my worry is, as told you (. ) during the interview, we have (. ) we had some kind of MIScommunication about plan A and plan B [**T**: ↑Em:::, qualitative and quantitative, should we try both? So this is kind of academic culture differences, [**T**: Em. Ok.] So, at this point, the experience, the previous experience in doing research will be helpful? Or, is kind of something we have to readjust?

In Extract 1, T begins by asking two questions about S’s reasons for investigating intercultural miscommunications between supervisors and supervisees and her research background (Lines 1-2). *T said she intended to direct S’s awareness*
of the focus/problem of her research because she knew that S wanted to investigate the supervision process, but at that moment she said she was thinking that S was out of focus. Upon the two questions, S justifies her proposed research topic on ‘intercultural miscommunication’ by rationalizing her chosen topic on the basis of her personal experience. In Line 13, by emphasizing and increasing intonation, T elaborates the previous question to ‘What about HERE? Do you feel the ↑same?’ T’s purpose was to guide the S to figure out a clear focus and confirm whether the original ideas are worth doing by setting a link between the prior problems and current situation and see what’s missing and identify why. In line 14, S tried to locate the differences between her previous and current studies. Using a rather lengthening ‘I:::’ signaling her struggling to think out ideas and a modal verb ‘may’ (Line 15) indicates her lack of confidence about her idea of different academic cultures. Building on S’s idea of ‘different’, T rephrases her previous question (Line 13) to direct S to make a link between S’s past and present learning situations. S attempts to justify her ideas about ‘different’ by predicting that greater efforts are needed at PhD level. However, it is observable that S can’t see and explain clearly what the differences are. As a result, she ends up defending with a rather lengthening ‘I:::’ (Line 18). Here, the first instance of S’s flight is noted since the PhD student showed that she was struggling and ended up without giving any explanation. Realizing S is experiencing difficulty in seeing the link, T asks ‘↑Why do you think there is LESS miscommunication now than before?’ (Line 19) to recast the point ‘feel better’ mentioned previously. An emphatic stress was used by T to direct S’s awareness to the links/differences between her previous and current learning situations. With a very lengthening hesitation (Line 21), S attempts to justify her points, but she laughed away her reasons in the end with uncertainty (Line 23). This is the second instance of S’s observed flight. Noticing that S still cannot see the clear focus of her research, T analyses (Lines 24-25) and provides clues (Lines 26-28) to guide S to think and reflect about the links and differences from her own past. Being guided, S tries to reason out her ideas with examples from her experiences in both learning situations.

Extract 2

40 15'20" → T: Ok. So, was the miscommunication before MAINLY

41 15'33" S: Em::: ((noticeable struggle for ideas)) miscommunication

42 15'33" (.) mainly:: anyway (.) I was not clear about many::

43 15'42" (.) many ideas [T: Many things] (.) many ideas [T: Em],

44 15'51" → T: I wonder why it was such (.) it was a cause of the

45 16'11" S: Yeah (.) you know (.) for the MA level, mostly (.)

46 16'14" at the very beginning, I was waiting for my supervisors

47 16'14" to give me ideas (***) [T: Em. Ok] Because my

48 16'14" tradition (.) Chinese tradition, we were waiting and

49 16'14" I was waiting for my supervisors to tell me you need

50 16'14" to do this you need to do that.

51 16'14" → T: But ↑why was it miscommunication?

52 16'14" S: Em (.) but for Aj (.) my supervisors (.) they got

53 16'14" rich experience before, they know how to supervise.

54 16'14" They will not give me any ideas directly. And every

55 16'14" time I brought some ideas there, they just said ok,
you should try something else, they would not
give me (. ) yeah (. ) black-and-white answers (. )
about this is good or this or bad. Yeah, they said something
good, but they said, ok, you should try something differently.
Sometimes I was a little bit disappointed about myself,
not (. ) not from the comment from my supervisors. I thought
I did a lot and I tried to make me very clear but when I go to
(. ) went to talk to them (. ) I was still not clear.

In Extract 2, a series of questions (Lines 40, 45, 53, 66) are used by T to challenge S to think deeply about and to discover where the miscommunication/problems came from and to distinguish between various concepts of miscommunication. In response, S reasons out her concept of miscommunication based on different learning cultures by referring to her Chinese tradition (Lines 47-52). Being challenged for a clear discrimination of concepts, S continues her ‘different learning culture’ concept by reframing her ideas at length but she does not produce a clear justification (Lines 54-65). Being aware that the S still lacks a clear concept, T continues to challenge S in Line 66. Regrettably, S shows her confusion with an apparent lengthening utterance ‘In terms of:::(Line 67). In view of S’s uncleariness, T gives a clue to provide alternatives for S to search for more problems ‘Not the way you were trying to express yourself?’ (Line 68). Contrary to T’s expectations, S comes up with ‘linguistic problems’. T expresses surprise denoted by a prolonged
‘↑Oh:::’ with a high intonation (Line 71), which showed T’s surprise because T said she didn’t expect the linguistic problem was a cause of intercultural miscommunication in the S’s MA study. It is worthy of attention that this is an exceptional instance and can be termed as paralinguistic scaffolding which hasn’t been covered in the literature. The follow-up elaboration from S (Line 72) confirms the identification of T’s paralinguistic scaffolding. Seeing S’s confusion and struggling, T produces a long turn to guide S towards a clear focus and clear concepts by means of conceptualising (Line 74), evaluating and analysing (Lines 76-81), summarising (Line 81-86) and challenging for more possible ideas (Line 87).

**Extract 3**

93 18’38"  →  **T:** Ehn. Because now I think that you actually (.) if we
94 talking about (.) you really want to investigate the
95 →  supervision problems rather than anything else. You will
96 identify the problems during the supervision, or you
97 will identify difficulties or discomforts as a research student
98 [**S:** Em, em.] Right?
99 19’09"  **S:** If we see my original ideas (.) and if I can try this at the
discourse level. Actually, now I feel a little bit worried and
tomorrow uncomfortable about the miscommunication this word.
100 →  **T:** Em. ↑Yeah, me too.
101 19’22"  **S:** Actually (.) within this personal contact, I don’t think there
will be many communications. This is the point (.)
102 I also (.) I don’t want find out anyone’s problems.
103 Actually (.) you are right, I just do some self-reflection.
104 →  **T:** And the main thing we haven’t talked about is personality
issue.
105 19’35"  **S:** ↑Em, ↑yeah. Oh::: ((a prolonged ‘oh’ was
noticed here)).
106 19’37"  **T:** You have a personality to compromise a lot [**S:** Er (***)].
108 And I think you cannot (.) you know, you can’t do your
research without mentioning the personality issue.
110 →  **S:** Yeah, learner differences, indi- (.) [**T:** Individual.]
112 19’58"  individual differences. ↑It is. Because this may be from
my personal experience and what I observed from many of
my
114 Chinese friends at PSU. They got a lot of problems [**T:** Em,
em.]
116 (***)This may be my ideas from (.) from their terrible
117 experience, I mean terrible because of them not (.) my
118 understanding all the time, not because of the supervisors.
119 20’35"  **T:** I think now (.) we just (.) we should focus on the assignment
for now (.) for the course. But, I think we need to find out
120 what you really want to do.
122 20’44"  **S:** Yeah, So, this is the point not only for this assignment but
also for this one (her PhD research topic). And the reason
124 why I try to link scaffolding and other assignments to my
125 research is we will criticize two articles. I think if can do
126 something relevant, that will be useful.

In Extract 3, it seems that T still doesn’t see the clear focus of S’s research, therefore she continues to elicit a fuller and more accurate response by using
conceptualising (Line 93) and cluing (Lines 95-98) in order to shape a clear focus and concepts of S’s research. It is interesting that, S tends to surrender to T’s allusion and agrees that miscommunication may not be worth researching saying that there will be less miscommunication in S’s new learning situation (Line 99, Lines 103-106). S’s surrender is confirmed by T’s evaluating remark ‘Em. ↑Yeah, me too’ (Line 102). So far, it seems that T has successfully scaffolded S to scrutinize her research focus critically and reason out her positions logically. S’s response (Line 106) can be viewed as a flight because she doesn’t continue to defend/fight for her initial ideas. In Line 107, T suggests S consider an important factor for her research focus—the ‘personality issue’. It is obvious that this is out of S’s expectation since her prolonged ‘↑Em, ↑yeah. Oh:::’ with a strikingly high intonation here. S showed her awareness and interest for details upon the supervisor’s suggestion. T identified her scaffolding here as conceptualising and directing/rationalising progression of the supervisory talk. S’s paralinguistic response can be counter- scaffolding to the supervisor’s scaffolding. As T elaborates (Lines 109-111) her point, S extends T’s ‘personality issue’ to ‘individual differences’ (Lines 112-118). In the end, T direct S’s awareness to the assignment which is going to be a pilot study for S to shape her PhD research topic by directing/rationalising progression of the supervisory talk (Lines 119-121). S’s appears to immediately accept this by her ‘Yeah’ but finally produces resistance (Lines 122-126). This is confirmed by S’s reaction as S continues to justify why she chose to do this topic by linking it to her course assignment, which indicates S’s willingness to keep on talking about her research ideas. The following talk between S and T which was not selected for analysis in the current study was in fact about why and how to make linkages between course assignments and the PhD student’s future research.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings reveal that ten types of scaffolding strategies were employed by the supervisor, namely directing student’s awareness, elaborating, rephrasing, analysing, providing clues, paralinguistic scaffold, conceptualising, evaluating, challenging, summarising and directing/rationalising progression of the supervisory talk.

First, the two most common forms of scaffolding used by the supervisor are 40 conceptualizing (Line 74, Line 93, Line 107) and providing clues (Lines 26-28, Line 68, Lines 95-98) which were both used three times and therefore top the list of the identified forms of scaffolding. Paralinguistic scaffold (Line 71) appeared only once. The most salient issue concerning the forms of scaffolding used, therefore, is their variety. Rather than relying on one or two types of scaffolding frequently, the supervisor appears to choose scaffolds to suit immediate purposes. Thus the variety of scaffolds used may be indicative of the supervisor’s attempts to reach a range of goals through means appropriate to the immediate context of the interaction.

To better understand learning opportunities in supervisory talk, the PhD student’s responses to the supervisor’s scaffolds are worth exploring. Instances of defending were identified as a dominant pattern of the PhD student’s responses. This indicates that the PhD student made constant efforts to defend her positions and negotiate meanings with her supervisor. However, three occurrences of flight (Line 18, Lines 21-23, Line 106) were striking responses from the PhD student. The PhD student’s flight responses can be attributed to two factors: her cultural background and
research stage. For one thing, as a Chinese, the PhD student was respectful of the knowledge authority of the supervisor. For another, as the PhD student was at the beginning stage of her PhD thesis research, she was compromising and agreeing because of her lack of expertise and confidence in her underdeveloped research topic.

It is worth noting that the main focus of the supervisor’s scaffolding in PhD supervisory talks is to develop the PhD student’s generable research skills (e.g., critical thinking, reasoning, self-criticizing) rather than specific research knowledge. Scaffolding helps this happen by allowing the student to interact with the supervisor through constant questions, extension and reformulation in order to shape a clear research focus. The identified supervisor’s scaffolding was primarily to facilitate the PhD student to think critically and reflect on her ideas, see the problems, and locate a clear topic for her thesis research. The findings are in agreement with Sharpe’s (2006:222) results showing that the teachers’ feedback moves act as pivots ‘inviting students to explain, justify and amplify their responses rather than merely (being) evaluated by the teachers’. These moves constitute a genuine dialogic meaning negotiation and mutual knowledge construction processes. Thus, this type of talk provides opportunities for supervisors and students to critique, justify, and more importantly, to build knowledge by a process of collaborative inquiry. In this sense, it might be reasonable to say that the supervisory talk provided the PhD student with a good opportunity to practice her thinking ability by forcing her to defend and justify her ideas. However, occurrences of flight should also be perceived as learning opportunities since flight does not necessarily mean there is no room for learning. On the contrary, it shows that there are knowledge gaps between the more capable supervisor and the novice PhD student or, alternatively, there is a distance between the PhD student’s current knowledge and her potential development. At these points, the PhD student’s responses indicate her reflecting and thinking critically about the knowledge gaps she noticed during the course of the discussion. The three instances of flight identified in the data also provide learning opportunities for the PhD student to fill gaps in her knowledge of conducting academic research.

As a result, a conclusion can be drawn from this study that the supervisor’s scaffolding during the supervisory talk created learning opportunities for the PhD student to develop both her critical thinking and her ability to reason logically while doing academic research, through constructing knowledge collaboratively and negotiating meaning with the supervisee. This implies that the supervisory talk provides support for formulating problems, for thinking through ideas and making them approachable as objects of scrutiny, for dialogue that is democratic and includes a diversity of ideas, for constructive criticism and analysis, for extending ideas into larger wholes, and for filling gaps noticed. Throughout the supervisory talking process, the PhD student was given opportunities to express herself, reflect on and reason out her research ideas and learn from the unfolding interaction through constant meaning negotiation and knowledge building.

6. Recommendations

Video-taping may help to capture a more comprehensive picture of behavior through both verbal and non-verbal channels during the supervisor’s scaffolding and the student’s response and therefore, a deeper insight of the learning situation in supervision talks might be presented. Additionally, due to the short-term nature of the
case study, the data of the current supervisory talk does not allow the findings concerning scaffolding to be generalised. Thus, longitudinal studies would provide an insightful view of supervisory talks since various types of scaffolding strategies might be observed in different sessions and may spiral at different research stages in different contexts and domains. Although this study is a small-scale qualitative case study, the findings are interesting and beneficial. We have identified ten types of scaffolding employed during the negotiation of meaning during a supervisory dialogue and provided empirical data to conceptualise scaffolding in PhD supervisory talks. Hopefully, this study may help to raise awareness of academic research supervision as a teaching and learning process, encourage the sharing of practices amongst supervisors and enable students to reflect and learn from research and scholarship.

Acknowledgements
We are grateful for the reviewers’ insightful comments on our manuscript. The first author also wishes to acknowledge Dr. Pattamawan Jimarkon, Dr. Richard Watson Todd, and Dr. Pornapit Darasawang for their guidance throughout the process of making this paper for publication.

Appendix: Transcription convention

T Supervisor
S Student
(.) Untimed perceptible pause within a turn
Underline Stress
CAPS Very emphatic stress
↑ High pitch on word
. Sentence-final falling intonation
? Yes/no question rising intonation
- A glottal stop or abrupt cutting off of sound
: Lengthened vowel sound (extra colons indicate greater lengthening)
→ Highlights point of analysis
[ ] Overlapped talk
(( )) Additional information (e.g. non-verbal action)
(*** Inaudible utterance (e.g. background noise caused by air conditioner or drowned out by turn competing if it appears at the end of a turn

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*Australian Universities Review*, 37, 12-15.


A Course Evaluation of Foundation English Courses taught at the Language Institute Thammasat University

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Abstract

This research paper aims to examine students’ and instructors’ opinions towards the 3 levels of foundation English courses taught at the Language Institute, Thammasat University in the academic year 2009. Statistical results yielded from instructors and students through the means of a questionnaire will be a valuable resource for the Language Institute to further develop foundation courses of use for all. Instructors and students were observed (observed how?) in the area of their opinions towards the physical learning, teaching environment and learning equipment, course content, textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course and their satisfaction of the course. The population of this research involved all students taking foundation English courses conducted at the Rangsit campus in the 2009 academic year and 98 instructors. Results revealed that EL070, EL171 and EL171 students and instructors have high opinions on the physical and teaching environment and learning equipment, the textbook/ supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course and their satisfaction of the course. However, it is important to note that the students rated the opinion scale to be higher than the instructors in nearly all of the aspects.

**Keywords:** students’ opinions, instructors’ opinions, foundation English courses
1. Introduction

Established in 1985, the Language Institute of Thammasat University (LITU)’s mission is to provide quality English language education for students of all faculties in the Tha Prachan, Rangsit and Lampang campuses. Each semester, LITU accommodates thousands of freshmen required to take foundation courses the beginning (EL 070), intermediate (EL171) to the advanced level (EL 172). Lessons focus on the four language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, which provides the groundwork for the students to further develop their language skills in ESP courses and other elective English courses in their upper years.

1.1 Background

EL 070 English Course 1 is the remedial course, designed especially to review and prepare first-year students for more advanced courses. Although it is a non-credit course, students are evaluated through exams, assignments, and active participation in class.

EL 171 English Course 2 is the intermediate course which aims to develop the four English skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students are required to have more practice in listening comprehension, reading various printed materials, and writing short paragraphs.

EL 172 English Course 3 is the advanced course aimed to develop students’ English skills. Students are required to listen to news and dialogues, speak, read more complex passages, and write various types of paragraphs.

As these foundation English courses have been taught for many years, suggestions on ways to upgrade the courses are very valuable for the new curriculum planning and development process. Both students’ and teacher’s opinions provide insight on the area which need to be updated.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The purposes of this study were as follows:

1. To obtain students’ opinions towards EL 070, 171, 172 in various aspects of the courses regarding the physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/supplementary worksheets, course lecturers, assessment and evaluation, and benefit of the courses.

2. To obtain instructors’ opinions towards EL 070, 171, 172 in various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, and benefit of the courses.
1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the students’ opinions towards EL 070, 171, 172 concerning the aspect of physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/supplementary worksheets, course lecturers, assessment and evaluation and benefit of the courses?

2. What are the instructors’ opinions towards EL 070, 171, 172 regarding the physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, and benefit of the courses?

1.4 Scope of the study

The subjects of this study consist of two groups of participants. 4,431 undergraduate students taking one of the three levels of foundation English courses offered by the Language Institute, Thammasat University, Rangsit campus in the academic 2009 represent the student group. In addition, the instructors group consists of 98 full-time foundation English course teachers.

2. Review of the Literature

Several studies on course evaluation have been conducted in different contexts for various courses during the past few years so as to find ways to improve curriculum. A number of factors have contributed to effectiveness of language teaching and learning. Some of the main factors include teachers, materials, teaching methodology, and the learning environment.

Sinlarat (1988) states that teaching and learning need to be improved and developed in accordance with social changes, the needs of the learner, and academic growth. Curriculum reform and instruction improvements are consequently emphasized to enhance educational quality.

2.1 The physical learning and teaching environment

The physical learning and teaching environment or the classroom plays an important role in the language learning process. This idea is supported by Wald (2000), mentioning that “Classroom setup can dramatically affect students' attitudes toward the habits of learning. Students need an environment that is organized, stimulating, and comfortable in order to learn effectively. Creating such an environment entails arranging a practical physical layout, supplying diverse materials and supplies, and encouraging students to have a sense of belonging and ownership”.

2.2 Course Content

The Language Institute has put continuous efforts in designing and upgrading foundation course contents and the syllabus to meet the goals of the university and at the same time the needs of students. LITU’s course content design complies with
Richard (2006)’s belief that “Meaningful communication results from students processing content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting and engaging”.

2.3 Textbook, supplementary worksheets and materials

The main textbook used in all foundation courses are in-house textbooks which are written by a team of Language Institute staff. Since the textbook will serve students from all faculties and majors, the authors attempt to incorporate different themes and topic areas which will be of interest to everyone. To name a few, there are units on the impact of music, (a topic in which all students are interested in) plastic surgery, (a current fashion trend) and preparing for job interviews (which will be useful for them in the future). The variety of topics included in the textbook coincides with Kitao (1997) stating that “Content English textbooks should be useful, meaningful and interesting for students. While no single subject will be of interest to all students, materials should be chosen based, in part, on what students, in general, are likely to find interesting and motivating”.

2.4 Evaluation

The evaluation of the Foundation courses at Thammasat University is done through various means to get a clear and accurate feedback of the students’ progress such as through the speaking, listening, reading, writing vocabulary and grammar test. Spandel & Stiggins (1990) suggested that “Observation, conferencing, oral and written product assessment, and process (or performance) assessment may be used to gather information about student progress”.

2.5 Benefits of the course

Learning a second language does not only involve acquiring the language itself, but it is believed that it leads to other areas of developments such as the understanding of the new target language culture, gaining new knowledge which is indirectly taught through the language and proven by many research studies to aid in the learner’s cognitive development.

2.6 Relevant research

Suwandecha, et al. (2002) conducted a research study to evaluate the syllabus of the foundation English courses at Sripatum University, Chonburi campus. Three major areas were studied: goals and objectives; teaching and learning process; and student assessment and their course effectiveness. Data were collected using two sets of questionnaires distributed to English teachers and students to find their opinions towards the three areas mentioned. Results suggested that most students had a “high” opinion on the sub element of “teachers” in the actual situation. Overall, the teachers’ opinions towards the sub element “teaching methods and activities” were rated “high” on both actual and expected situations.

Thompson (2011) did a study to evaluate an English for Tourism program at Payap University. The participants included students taking an ESP course, university
officials from the international college, and the instructors of the course. Four types of instruments were used in this research: a questionnaire, interviews, a teacher’s log, and learning materials. Results revealed that the learners responded positively to in-class listening and speaking tasks that they felt manageable and relevant to their future ambition. However, there were negative responses towards textbook and outside readings; the learners viewed these as non-essential towards their goals. In addition, the stakeholders viewed the program as a vital part of the curriculum, but felt that the learners’ backgrounds were hindering the overall program development.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Tool

This study used the questionnaire with the 5-point Likert scale to gather information on participants’ opinions towards the different aspects of each of the foundation courses. The questionnaire distributed to the participants consists of two parts. Part 1 consists of questions asking for the subjects’ personal information and Part 2 consists of students’ and instructors’ opinions on the five aspects of the courses being studied.

3.2 Population and Samples

The samples of this study included the whole student population studying the foundation courses and instructors teaching the courses in both the first and second semesters in the academic year 2009. EL 070 participants consisted of 606 students and 6 instructors, whereas those from EL 171 consisted of 2,138 students and 48 instructors. EL 172 participants comprise 1,687 students and 44 instructors.

3.3 Data collection

Two separate forms of questionnaire were distributed to the students and the instructors in the first and second semesters of the academic year 2009. Students asked to complete the questionnaire and handed in the copies to their instructor during their classes.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed using the SPSS program version 11.5 for Windows. Statistical devices that were used to analyze the responses to the questionnaires concerning the subjects’ opinions on each course aspects are the mean average. As for the subjects’ personal information, the percentage and frequency distribution were used as the means for data analysis.

To assess the subjects’ opinions on each detailed item of each of the aspects of the foundation courses, the 5-point scale was utilized. The following is the 5-point scale evaluation criteria and its interpretation.
Rating scale of opinions

1 = Not at all
2 = Not really
3 = To some extent
4 = A lot
5 = Very much

Interpretation of the mean range in relation to the scale value is portrayed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean ranges</th>
<th>Interpretation (Level of satisfaction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.50 - 5.00</td>
<td>highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.50 - 4.49</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50 - 3.49</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50 – 2.49</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 1.49</td>
<td>lowest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Findings

The findings of this study are divided into three parts: (1) demographic characteristics of students and instructors; (2) students’ opinions on various aspects of the courses; and (3) instructors’ opinions on various aspects of the courses.

4.1 Demographic characteristics of students and instructors

The tables below show the characteristics of the surveyed students, consisting of gender, year of study, faculty, attendance and type of course taken.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Students by gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 1, there were more female students than male students studying all of the three levels of English Foundation Courses, namely EL070 (Remedial English 1), EL171 (English Course 2) and EL172 (English Course 3).
As shown in Table 2, the majority of students taking all three levels of English foundation English courses were first-year students. The remainders were sophomores, juniors, seniors and fifth-year students.

Table 3: Students by faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th></th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th></th>
<th>EL172</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce and Accountancy</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Administration</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism and Mass communication</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology and Anthropology</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health Science</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture and Urban Planning</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,138</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Table 3, EL070 students were from fourteen faculties, whereas both EL 171 and EL172 students were from seventeen faculties. While some EL 171 and EL 172 students were from the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Dentistry and the Faculty of Nursing, none of the students from those three faculties studied EL070.

Table 4: Students by attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th></th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th></th>
<th>EL172</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Attendance</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 absences</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 absences</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not indicated</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,308</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>1,424</td>
<td>84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,138</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4, many students who studied EL171 and EL172 did not mention how frequently they attended the class. On the other hand, every student studying EL070 gave his/her response on this matter.

Table 5: Students by type of courses taken.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th></th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th></th>
<th>EL172</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirement</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>1,173</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>1,016</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required elective</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,138</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the students studied foundation English courses as their requirement, while only a small number of them studied foundation English courses as their minor, elective or required elective.

In addition, the tables below record the characteristics of the surveyed instructors, consisting of gender, age range, the highest level of education, academic position and teaching experience.
Table 6: Instructors by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 6 there were more female than male instructors teaching each English Foundation Courses.

Table 7: Instructors by age range

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of age range, as shown in Table 7, most instructors who taught EL070 and EL171 were between 31-40 years old, while most instructors who taught EL172 were between 41-50 years old.

Table 8: Instructors by the highest level of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 8, most instructors teaching EL 070, EL171 and EL172 obtained Master’s degree as their highest level of education. The remainder obtained their Bachelor’s degree or Ph.D.
Table 9: Instructors by academic title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic position</th>
<th>EL070 Frequency</th>
<th>EL070 %</th>
<th>EL171 Frequency</th>
<th>EL171 %</th>
<th>EL172 Frequency</th>
<th>EL172 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>68.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most foundation English course instructors have not obtained their academic titles. Less than half of EL171 and EL172 instructors were associate professors and assistant professors. None of the foundation English Course instructors were professors.

Table 10: Instructors by teaching experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching experience</th>
<th>EL070 Frequency</th>
<th>EL070 %</th>
<th>EL171 Frequency</th>
<th>EL171 %</th>
<th>EL172 Frequency</th>
<th>EL172 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most EL 070 and EL171 instructors have 11-15 years of teaching experience, while most EL172 instructors have 5-10 years of teaching experience.

4.2 Students’ opinions

Students’ opinions on various aspects of courses, i.e. physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/ supplementary worksheets, course lecturers, assessment and evaluation, and benefit of the course are summarized in the following tables.
### Table 11: Students’ opinions on physical and teaching environment and equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL172</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The classroom environment enhances teaching and learning</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The classrooms and locations are appropriate</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The classrooms have a high standard of cleanliness</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The classrooms are sufficiently equipped with learning support devices such as computers, projectors, and stereos.</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>These learning support devices are up to date</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported in table 11, the findings clearly revealed that the mean for EL172 students’ opinion on physical and teaching environment and equipment is ranked as the highest among the three groups of students (M=4.36, S.D.=0.71), followed by that for EL171 students (M=4.33, S.D.=0.79), and that for EL070 students (M=4.29, S.D.=0.70). Overall, the mean regarding students’ opinions on all of the foundation courses on the aspect of physical and teaching environment and equipment is in the high level of satisfaction.

### Table 12: Students’ opinions on course content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL172</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The course content is appropriate for the class schedule.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The course content is appropriate for credits awarded for the course.</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The course content is consistent with course objectives</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The course content is up to date and relevant to the current real-world situations.</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The course content helps promote learners’ professionalism.</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The course content is presented in a clear and systematic way.</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The course content enhances learners’ ethics and morals</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The course content supports knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The course content supports knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings in table 12 clearly showed that the mean for EL070 students’ opinion on course content is ranked as highest among the three groups (M=4.08, S.D.=0.74), followed by that for EL171 students (M=3.99, S.D.=0.73), and that for EL172 students (M=3.92, S.D.=0.76). All students’ opinion on the course content aspect can be considered as high.

**Table 13: Students’ opinions on the textbook/ supplementary worksheets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets cover the course objectives.</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets encourage learning.</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets are reliably referenced.</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The textbook and supplementary materials are attractive in appearance.</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported in table 13, the findings clearly revealed that the mean for EL070 students’ opinion on the textbook/ supplementary worksheets is ranked highest (M=4.14, S.D.=0.72), followed by that for EL171 students (M=4.10, S.D.=0.72), and that for EL172 students (M=4.06, S.D.=0.75). Students from the entire foundation course group consider the textbook/ supplementary worksheets to be at the high level of satisfaction.

**Table 14: Students’ opinions on course lecturers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The lecturer teaches the course content as mentioned in the course outline</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The lecturer uses teaching methods which suit the course content.</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The lecturer arranges the course content in an appropriate order.</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The lecturer uses suitable teaching materials.</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The lecturer uses technology in teaching properly.</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The lecturer questions and involves students in activities which enhance their thinking skills.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The lecturer questions and involves students in activities which enhance their thinking skills.</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The lecturer gives students opportunities to participate in activities.</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicated in Table 14, the findings clearly revealed that the mean for EL070 students’ opinion on course lecturers is ranked highest (M=4.33, S.D.=0.68), followed by that for EL171 students (M=4.32, S.D. =0.66), and that for EL172 students (M=4.22, S.D. =0.75). Similar to the aspects already mentioned, all students’ opinion towards the lecturer is also high.

**Table 15: Students’ opinions on assessment and evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assessment is in line with course objectives.</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The scores in assessment and evaluation are allocated in appropriate proportions.</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The approaches to assessment and evaluation are appropriate</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The length of the examination is compatible with the time allowed to sit the exam</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Evaluation includes assessment of students’ thought processes.</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Evaluation includes a focus on assessing the students’ application of knowledge.</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings in table 15 clearly showed that the mean for EL070 students’ opinion on assessment and evaluation is ranked highest (M=4.14, S.D.=0.67), followed by that for EL171 students (M=4.00, S.D. =0.73) and that for EL172 students (M=4.00, S.D. =0.74). The students’ levels of satisfaction on the assessment and evaluation aspect for all of the groups are once again reported to be at a high level.

**Table 16: Students’ opinions on benefit of the course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The course provides students with language knowledge and skills according to the course objectives.</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course is applicable to students’ further study.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>4.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The knowledge from this course enables continuous self-development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course can be utilized to assist other people in society.</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course can be utilized efficiently in daily life.</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course can be utilized efficiently in professional life.</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 16, the findings clearly revealed that the mean for EL070 students’ opinion on benefit of the course is ranked as the highest (M=4.17, S.D.=0.70), followed by that for EL172 students (M=4.01, S.D.=0.77), and that for EL171 students (M=3.92, S.D.=0.65). Students from all the course levels had a “high” level of satisfaction on the aspect of benefit towards the foundation courses.

Table 17: Students’ level of satisfaction with each course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Satisfaction with the course</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported in table 17, the findings clearly revealed that the mean for EL070 students’ satisfaction with the course is ranked the highest, (M=4.08, S.D.=0.65), followed by that for EL172 students (M=3.93, S.D.=0.65), and that for EL171 students (M=3.92, S.D.=0.65). Generally, students from all the groups have high satisfaction levels concerning the courses.

4.3 Instructors’ opinions

Instructors’ opinions on various aspects of courses, i.e. physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/ supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, and benefit of the course are summarized in the following tables.

Table 18: Instructors’ opinions on physical and teaching environment and equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The classroom environment enhances teaching and learning.</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The classrooms and locations are appropriate.</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The classrooms have a high standard of cleanliness.</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The classrooms are sufficiently</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
equipped with learning support devices such as computers, projectors, stereos, etc.

These learning support devices are up to date.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported in table 18, the findings clearly revealed that the mean for EL171 instructors’ opinion on physical and teaching environment and equipment is ranked highest (M=4.36, S.D.=0.77), followed by that for EL172 instructors (M=4.27, S.D.=0.69), and that for EL070 instructors (M=3.83, S.D.=0.68). In general, the mean of instructors’ opinions on physical and teaching environment and equipment is in a high level.

Table 19: Instructors’ opinions on course content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL172</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The course content is appropriate for the class schedule.</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The course content is appropriate for credits awarded for the course.</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The course content is consistent with course objectives</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The course content is up to date and relevant to the current real-world situations.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The course content helps promote learners’ professionalism.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The course content is presented in a clear and systematic way.</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The course content enhances learners’ ethics and morals</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The course content supports knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from table 19 clearly suggested that the mean for EL171 instructors’ opinion on course content is ranked as the highest (M=3.85, S.D.=0.70), followed by that for EL070 instructors (M=3.67, S.D.=0.73), and that for EL172 instructors (M=3.65, S.D.=0.76). Instructors from all the groups considered the course content to be at a high level of satisfaction.
Table 20: Instructors’ opinions on the textbook/supplementary worksheets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070 Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL171 Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL172 Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets cover the course objectives.</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets encourage learning.</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets are reliably referenced.</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The textbook and supplementary materials are attractive in appearance.</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.77</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.60</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.97</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.69</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.97</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.76</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported in table 20, the findings clearly revealed that the mean for EL171 instructors’ opinion on the textbook/supplementary worksheets (M=3.97, S.D.=0.69) is the same as the mean for EL172 lecturers’ (M=3.97, S.D.=0.76), followed by that for EL070 instructors (M=3.77, S.D.=0.60). In general, the mean regarding instructors’ opinions on all of the foundation courses on the textbook and supplementary worksheet is in a high level.

Table 21: Instructors’ opinions on assessment and evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070 Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL171 Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>EL172 Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assessment is in line with course objectives.</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The scores in assessment and evaluation are allocated in appropriate proportions.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The approaches to assessment and evaluation are appropriate</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The length of the examination is compatible with the time allowed to sit the exam</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Evaluation includes assessment of students’ thought processes.</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Evaluation includes a focus on assessing the students’ application of knowledge.</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.71</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.38</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.98</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.65</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.87</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.87</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings in table 21 clearly revealed that the mean for EL171 instructors’ opinion on assessment and evaluation is ranked highest (M=3.98, S.D.=0.65), followed by that for EL172 instructors (M=3.87, S.D.=0.87) and that for EL070 instructors (M=3.71, S.D.=0.38). Instructors from all the groups considered assessment and evaluation to be high.
Table 22: Instructors’ opinions on benefit of the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The course provides students with language knowledge and skills according to the course objectives.</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course is applicable to students’ further study.</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course enables continuous self-development.</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course can be utilized to assist other people in society.</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course can be utilized efficiently in daily life.</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The knowledge from this course can be utilized efficiently in professional life.</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 22, the findings clearly revealed that the mean for EL172 instructors’ opinion on benefit of the course is ranked the highest (M=3.68, S.D.=0.90), followed by that for EL070 instructors (M=3.64, S.D.=0.78), and that for EL171 instructors (M=3.57, S.D.=0.65). All instructors’ opinions on the benefit of the course can be considered as having a high level of satisfaction.

Table 23: Instructors’ satisfaction with each course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070</th>
<th>EL171</th>
<th>EL172</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Satisfaction with the course</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Satisfaction with the students</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Satisfaction with the textbook</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results in table 23 suggested that the mean for EL172 instructors’ satisfaction with the course is ranked the highest, (M=3.65, S.D.=0.64), followed by that for EL171 instructors (M=3.62, S.D.=0.70) and EL070 instructors (M=3.62, S.D.=0.61). Regarding satisfaction with the students, the mean for EL172 instructors is ranked the highest as well and is followed by the mean for EL070 and EL171 instructors. The mean for EL070 instructors’ satisfaction with the textbook is ranked the highest, (M=3.75, S.D.=0.77), followed by that for EL171 instructors (M=3.56, S.D.=0.64) and EL172 instructors (M=3.45, S.D.=0.69). As a conclusion, we can say that in general, all instructors’ have high levels of satisfaction toward the courses they are teaching. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that while EL070 and EL172 instructors’ satisfaction with the students are in a high level, EL171 instructors’ satisfaction with the students is in a medium level only. Similarly, EL172 instructors’ satisfaction with the textbook is medium, whereas EL070 and EL171 instructors’ satisfaction with the textbook is in a high level.
Table 24: The summary of course evaluation from students’ and instructors’ opinions on different course evaluation aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070 students</th>
<th>EL070 instructors</th>
<th>EL171 students</th>
<th>EL171 instructors</th>
<th>EL172 students</th>
<th>EL172 instructors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Physical environment</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Course content</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The textbook/supplementary worksheets</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Course lecturers</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Assessment and evaluation</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Benefits of the course</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As summarized in Table 24, the students from all the three groups, namely EL070, EL171, and EL172 agreed that all aspects of the course evaluation were appropriate at the high level. Likewise, the instructors from all three groups, namely EL070, EL171 and EL172 had a high opinion level towards all of the course evaluation aspects except that EL171 instructors had the medium level of satisfaction towards their students. Moreover, EL172 instructors’ satisfaction towards the textbook is at the medium level only.

Table 25: The summary of students’ and instructors’ satisfaction towards the main features of the course evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>EL070 students</th>
<th>EL070 instructors</th>
<th>EL171 students</th>
<th>EL171 instructors</th>
<th>EL172 students</th>
<th>EL172 instructors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Satisfaction with the course</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Satisfaction with the students</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Satisfaction with the textbook</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As summarized in Table 25, the students from all the three groups, namely EL070, EL171, and EL172 showed high levels of satisfaction for all of the main features of the course evaluation. Likewise, the instructors from all three groups, namely EL070, EL171 and EL172 had the high level of satisfaction towards almost all of the main features except that EL171 instructors had the medium level of satisfaction towards their students and EL172 instructors’ satisfaction towards the textbook is at the medium level only.
5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

In this section, summative discussions of results for the student and instructor populations will be presented. Significant results regarding the samples’ opinions in some aspects of the foundation courses will be examined in comparison to previous research findings.

4.2.1 Discussion of results for the student sample group

Results of the study on the aspect of students’ opinion on the lecturers showed that they had a high level of satisfaction. This coincided with Suwandecha et al.’s study in 2002 that the majority of English foundation students at Sripatum University, Chonburi campus had a “high” opinion on the sub element “teacher” of the main element “teaching and learning process. Students stated that the teachers prepared well for each teaching session, made opportunities for students to ask questions, and made the subjects interesting.

Students in this study also showed that they had a high level of satisfaction for the course content and textbook and supplementary worksheet aspect. In comparison to the same study conducted by Suwandecha et al. (2002), there is a difference in the results for this aspect. While Thammasat students were satisfied with the course content and materials, Sripatum students were not satisfied as they had higher expectations. Students wanted the contents to be focused more on the listening and speaking skills and they mentioned that there should be sufficient materials for students that matched their needs. On the other hand, Thompson (2011)’s study on ESP English course complies with the case of Thammasat University’s students. Results revealed that the majority of learners reacted favorably to most materials in the course, with exception to some outside readings and textbooks.

4.2.2 Discussion of results for the instructor sample group

The outcome of the study on instructors’ opinions showed that for all aspects, foundation English course instructors at Thammasat University had high levels of satisfaction. On the other hand, Suwandecha et al.’s study in 2002 revealed that teachers were not satisfied with the sub elements of “content”, “materials and resources”, “assessment” and “course effectiveness” This may result from their belief that the four communicative language skills were not clearly specified and that the textbook was inappropriate for the students and the learning resources were insufficient. Instructors from both universities share a medium level of satisfaction towards their students.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 Students’ opinions

Students taking foundation English courses had high levels of satisfaction regarding physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content,
the textbook/supplementary worksheets, course lecturers, assessment and evaluation, and the benefit of the courses. They mentioned that all the aspects of the evaluation were appropriate and that they agreed with the benefits of the course. Generally, all students had high levels of satisfaction with the courses.

5.2.2 Instructors’ opinions

Foundation English course instructors had high levels of opinions concerning physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation. All aspects were at the appropriate level and instructors agreed with the benefit of the courses. While EL070 instructors had high satisfaction with the course, the textbook and also the students, EL171 instructors had a high level of satisfaction with the course and the textbook but had a medium level of satisfaction with the students. EL172 instructors were highly satisfied with the course and the students, but showed a medium satisfaction level on the textbook aspect.

5.3 Recommendations for further studies

Since this course evaluation was carried out with only foundation English course students and instructors at the Language Institute, Thammasat University, Rangsit Campus, future research could be conducted at the Tha-Phra Chan and Lampang campus in order to represent the entire Thammasat University population. Future research of a similar nature to find out the needs of specific groups of students on each aspect of the course for other courses provided by the Language Institute, Thammasat University is recommended. For detailed analysis, future research could be conducted to find out the opinions of students from different faculties on various aspects of the course as well. For in-depth information on how to improve the foundation courses, means of qualitative data should be included in the study to portray detailed suggestions through class observations and interviews.

References


An Evaluation of English for Specific Courses Offered by the Language Institute of Thammasat University

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**Abstract**

This study aimed to investigate the opinions and satisfaction of instructors and students at the Language Institute of Thammasat University regarding the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses offered by the Institute. Questionnaires on 26 ESP courses were completed by the participants. The results revealed that both the instructors and the students were very satisfied with all aspects of the courses, including physical learning and teaching environment, course content, textbooks and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, and benefits of the course.

**Keywords:** students’ opinions, instructors’ opinions, ESP
1. Introduction

Officially established on December 27, 1985, the Language Institute of Thammasat University (LITU) has catered to all students of Thammasat University with the main aim to improve their skills of English. Enjoying the same status as that of a faculty, LITU mainly offers English courses for general and specific purposes at both undergraduate and post-graduate levels.

At the undergraduate level, LITU offers a wide range of courses in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) specially designed and customized for students from diverse faculties and departments. For instance, English for Sociologists and Anthropologists is a compulsory course for students from the Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, although students from other faculties are also allowed to take the course as an elective one. Most of the ESP courses offered by LITU are divided into two levels, one being the pre-requisite for the other. English for Sociologists and Anthropologists 1 (EL281) and English for Sociologists and Anthropologists 2 (EL381), for example, are offered with the former being the pre-requisite for the latter, and both of them are required courses for students majoring in sociology and anthropology.

In addition to the required courses, certain courses are offered merely as elective courses for all majors at Thammasat University. Among them are English for Work and English for Airline Business, the two elective courses that have continuously gained a great deal of popularity as they are perceived by many students as very useful for their future careers.

Most ESP courses are aimed at developing students’ integrated language skills. Therefore, each ESP course focuses on the teaching of all English skills although a few courses, such as English for Airline Business, mainly focus on the development of aural and oral skills. Some ESP course books were compiled by LITU’s faculty members, while others are commercial course books published by various publishers. Each year there are approximately 100 sections of the ESP classes and in each class, there are approximately 25 students. All the students who can enroll in ESP courses are required to pass the foundation courses or are exempted from them.

The ESP courses are normally taught in English by full-time or part-time, Thai or native-speaking teachers. Apart from lectures, group discussion is usually a major activity conducted during classes. In courses that focus on the development of listening and speaking skills, oral presentations and role plays are also assigned. In courses that emphasize the development of reading and writing skills, students are required to read and discuss the materials, and write paragraphs, essays, or various types of documents in response to the prompts provided. Quizzes and/or examinations are the primary assessment methods in all ESP courses.

To ensure that all the ESP courses offered by LITU still meet the standards of university-level English courses, and satisfy the needs of both the students and the instructors, LITU undertook an evaluation program during the first and second semesters of the 2010 academic year. The program was expected to enhance the ESP
syllabus at LITU while keeping abreast of the current developments of English instruction in the areas of English as a foreign language and English as an international communication.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the instructors’ and the students’ opinions about the current ESP courses
2. To identify the instructors’ and the students’ level of satisfaction regarding the current ESP courses

1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the instructors’ and the students’ opinions about the current ESP courses?
2. What are the instructors’ and the students’ level of satisfaction regarding the current ESP courses?

2. Literature Review

Curriculum has numerous meanings. In general senses, curriculum includes all courses of academic studies offered by an educational institution. Curriculum can also be defined as the group of subjects studied in a school, college, etc. (Cambridge International Dictionary of English, 1995). Curriculum is the formal and informal content and process by which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills, and alter attitudes, appreciations, and value under the auspices of that school (Doll, 1995, p. 15). Curriculum can refer to decision-making processes and products that focus on preparation and assessment of plans designed to influence students’ development of insights related to specific knowledge and skills (Armstrong, 2003).

A curriculum evaluation is needed to achieve improved teaching and learning, and better education programs. The term evaluation is defined by Weir and Roberts (1994) as the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of curriculum, and assess its effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the participants’ attitudes within a context of particular institutions involved. According to Doll (1996), evaluation may be defined as a broad and continuous effort to inquire into the effects of utilizing educational content and process to meet clearly defined goals. Evaluators need to determine, make judgments or decisions about the worth, merit and value of the object of evaluation according to appropriate criteria (House, 1993:1; Kiely and Rea-Dickins, 2005; McGregor and Meiers, 1983; McMillan and Schumacher, 1997: 541; Scriven, 1991).

The objects of evaluation as mentioned above are different depending on disciplines and areas of concerns. Weir and Roberts (1994) say that the scope of evaluations can vary greatly because an educational evaluation may have a number of possible focal points, according to the decisions it is designed to inform and the assumptions of participants. The object of evaluation therefore may include teaching materials, staff, student needs, or student performance. According to McGregor and
Meiers (1983), the object of evaluation may be the operation of the whole program, course objectives, organisation, resources, context, methods, student assessment and student learning. Whatever the objects of evaluation are, the common purposes of evaluation are to improve, justify, or change the object of evaluation (Calder, 1994; House, 1993:1, McGregor and Meiers, 1983; McMillan and Schumacher, 1997; Scriven, 1991).

Weir and Roberts (1994) suggest that different stakeholders should participate in program evaluation because an evaluator cannot provide a comprehensive account of a program on his own. As a consequence, in this evaluation project, an evaluation of the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curriculum at LITU, different stakeholders were invited to participate in the evaluation. Those stakeholders included (1) instructors who were involved in the design and delivery of the language programs and (2) students who were the clients of the programs. The reported experiences and perceptions from these different stakeholders were able to increase the understanding of the ESP curriculum at LITU.

There are many methods of evaluation. The evaluators can choose the most appropriate one(s) based on the purposes, focuses, duration, and timing of evaluation. The evaluation may involve tests, course statistics, classroom description, document analysis, diaries, logs, interviews, observations, self-assessment checklists, materials checklist evaluation, or case study. In this evaluation project, questionnaires were used to seek out the opinions of different stakeholders with regard to different elements of ESP courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment; course content; textbook and supplementary materials; assessment and evaluation; and benefits of the course. According to Weir & Roberts (1994), questionnaire is one of the data collection methods that can be used in evaluation. It can elicit reactions to both course content (aims, objectives, materials) and methodology. It can also provide information through self-assessments and attitude measurement. Questionnaire can be administered to students, directors of studies, teachers, and other stakeholders. The value of the questionnaire is that it enables course providers to distinguish a generally held point of view from purely individual reactions and opinions.

3. Methodology

In this study, the evaluation of the ESP courses offered at LITU was conducted quantitatively. The questionnaire used in this study was originally developed in three different versions to be used with the instructors, the students, and the experts from other faculties in Thammasat University. The questionnaires for the students and the experts were in Thai, whereas the English-translated version was used for both Thai and international instructors. The questionnaires were piloted in the second semester of the academic year 2009. Then the actual study was carried out during the 2010 academic year. The 26 ESP courses are divided into 5 categories in accordance with their content and objectives.
1. English for Academic Purposes
   1.1 EL 217 Speaking and Listening for Academic Purposes
   1.2 EL 317 Reading and Writing for Academic Purposes

2. English for Social Sciences
   2.1 EL 216 English for Lawyers 1
   2.2 EL 231 English for Political Scientists 1
   2.3 EL 331 English for Political Scientists 2
   2.4 EL 241 English for Economists 1
   2.5 EL 341 English for Economists 2
   2.6 EL 256 English for Social Workers 1
   2.7 EL 271 English for Mass Communications 2
   2.8 EL 281 English for Sociologist and Anthropologists 1
   2.9 EL 381 English for Sociologist and Anthropologists 2

3. English for Business Purposes
   3.1 EL 201 English for Airline Business
   3.2 EL 202 English for Work
   3.3 EL 212 English for Job Applications
   3.4 EL 221 Communicative Business English
   3.5 EL 226 English for Import-Export Business
   3.6 EL 321 Communicative Business English 1

4. English for Health Sciences
   4.1 EL 211 English for Health Science 1
   4.2 EL 311 English for Health Science 2
   4.3 EL 213 English for Nurses
   4.4 EL 313 English for Health Communication

5. English for Applied Sciences
   5.1 EL 210 English for Engineering 1
   5.2 EL 295 English for Science and Technology 1
   5.3 EL 395 English for Science and Technology 2
   5.4 EL 296 English for Mathematicians & Computer Scientists 1
   5.5 EL 396 English for Mathematicians & Computer Scientists 2

Both LITU instructors and the students were highly cooperative in the course evaluation project resulting in a high return rate. Questionnaires were obtained from 46 instructors who taught in the 26 ESP courses and from 3,056 students who were enrolled in the 26 ESP courses. The following discussion of the findings will be based on the data gathered from these participants.

4. Findings

Based on the questionnaire, the results of this study are divided into two major parts as follows:
Part 1: Details about the instructors and students
Part 2: Instructors’ and students’ opinions on various aspects of the courses

4.1 Details about the instructors and students
Table 1 presents details regarding the instructors including gender, age range, level of education, academic position, and teaching experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Details of the Instructors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>58.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Age range</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Level of education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>56.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Academic position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>58.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teaching experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teaching staff at LITU consisted of a group of full-time and part-time Thai and international instructors. As can be seen from Table 1, there were slightly more female instructors (58.69%) than male instructors (41.30%). In terms of age range, most of the teaching staff members were between 31- 40 (36.95%).
Regarding the educational level, more than half of the instructors had Master’s degrees (56.52%). Most of the international staff had Bachelor’s degrees (23.91%). There were 9 Thai instructors with Ph.D (19.56%). Among all the teaching staff members, more than half had no academic titles (58.69%). Most of the instructors with academic titles were assistant professors (28.26%) while the rest were associate professors (13.04%).

With regard to the number of teaching experience, most of the instructors taught at LITU for less than 5 years (34.78%), while the remainder had more than 20 years of experience teaching at LITU (21.73%) and between 16-20 years of the experience (19.56%).

Table 2 presents details of the students including gender, year of study, faculty, and the nature of enrollment can be presented in Table 2.

**Table 2 Details of the Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Personal Information</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2,160</td>
<td>70.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>29.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Year of study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,222</td>
<td>39.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>28.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>19.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>01.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2 Details of the Students (Cont.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Personal Information</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce &amp; Accountancy</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>16.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>13.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>9.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Administration</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism &amp; Mass Communication</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology &amp; Anthropology</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Technology</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>16.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>11.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health Sciences</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The students who took part in the study were from various fields of study. With reference to Table 2, most of the respondents were female students (70.68%). The majority of the ESP students participating in this study were in their second year (39.99%), followed by third-year students (28.04%) and fourth-year students (19.90%). Most of the respondents were from the Faculties of Commerce and Accountancy (16.88%) and Science and Technology (16.62%). Most of the students were required to be enrolled in the ESP courses (86.65%) and a few of them took these courses as electives (8.12%).

### 4.2 Instructors’ and students’ opinions on various aspects of the courses

Table 3 presents the findings from the second part of the questionnaire, which reflects both instructors’ and students’ opinions on various aspects of the ESP courses including the physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/supplementary worksheets, and assessment and evaluation. The evaluation criteria range from 5 (strongly satisfied) to 1 (strongly dissatisfied). Mean scores are interpreted with regard to the satisfaction level as follows:

- 4.50-5.00 means strongly satisfied
- 3.50-4.49 means very satisfied
- 2.50-3.49 means weakly satisfied
- 1.50-2.49 means dissatisfied
- 1.00-2.49 means strongly dissatisfied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the ESP courses</th>
<th>Instructors’ Opinions</th>
<th>Students’ Opinions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>SD.</td>
<td>Mean Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Physical learning and teaching environment and equipment</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Course content</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The textbook/supplementary worksheets</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assessment and evaluation</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Benefit of the course</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen from Table 3, the mean scores showing the instructors’ and students’ opinions on the five aspects of the ESP courses are all within the range of 3.50-4.49. This reveals that both the instructors and the students were very satisfied with all the major aspects of the courses. The instructors were the most satisfied with the teaching and learning environment ($M = 4.28$) and were the least satisfied with assessment and evaluation ($M = 3.59$). Similarly, the students were the most satisfied with the teaching and learning environment ($M = 4.31$). However, they were the least satisfied with the course content ($M = 3.91$) and the supplementary worksheets ($M = 3.91$). Moreover, it can be seen that the students were more satisfied with most aspects than the instructors. They were only slightly less satisfied with assessment and evaluation than the instructors.

Table 4 presents the findings from the final part of the questionnaire, which reflects both the instructors’ and the students’ opinions regarding the course, the students, the instructors, and the textbooks. In this section, the instructors’ and the students’ questionnaires were designed slightly differently. That is, the instructors were asked to rate the level of satisfaction towards the course they were currently teaching, the students they were teaching, and the textbook they were using, whereas the students were asked about the course they were enrolled in and their instructors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of satisfaction</th>
<th>Instructors’ Opinions</th>
<th>Students’ Opinions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>SD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Level of satisfaction towards the course</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Level of satisfaction towards the students</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Level of satisfaction towards the instructors</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Level of satisfaction towards the textbook</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 4, the instructors were very satisfied with the students ($M = 3.82$) and the courses they were teaching ($M = 3.72$), while they were weakly satisfied with the textbooks they were using ($M = 3.33$). The students were very satisfied with the instructors ($M = 4.28$) and the courses they were enrolled in ($M = 3.91$). Overall, the students were more satisfied with all the aspects than the instructors.

5. Discussion and Recommendation

Overall, both instructors and students were very satisfied with all aspects of the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Courses offered by the Language Institute of Thammasat University, namely physical learning and teaching environment, course content, textbooks and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, and
benefits of the course. The aspect that received the highest level of satisfaction by both
groups of participants was the physical learning and teaching environment.

Physical environment is simply the physical characteristics of the room. This
refers to things like the size of the room, how dark or light it is, what the temperature
is like, whether it has carpeting or just concrete, etc. The major importance of the
physical environment is that it can affect students’ comfort and, to some extent, their
ability to learn. Students who are uncomfortable are unlikely to learn as well as those
who are comfortable. In addition, the environment can affect the morale of students. If
they feel their classroom is physically worse than others’, for example, they might be
discouraged, upset, and less willing to learn.

According to Nikolic and Cabaj (2000), classrooms should be spacious and
clean. Besides, they should have lots of board and wall space, good lighting and
ventilation, and good climate control. LITU was well aware of the importance of
physical environment to learning and teaching. Several strategies have been
implemented to enhance conducive learning and teaching environment. One is the
 provision of necessary physical facilities. Each classroom at LITU is equipped with a
computer, an LCD projector, a screen, a white board, and a microphone. This set of
equipment facilitates both instructors and students tremendously. Moreover, each
room has enough space to accommodate 30-35 students. It contains movable lecture
chairs, so that the classroom atmosphere is flexible. Students and instructors can move
freely and rearrange the chairs in any configuration to meet their needs. For instance,
the instructors can foster their students’ interaction and collaboration by asking the
students to arrange their seating in a group layout. Each classroom is also enclosed and
equipped with an air conditioner, so it is free from outside distraction. Furthermore,
LITU provides the facilities for self-study through the Self-Access Language Learning
Center (SALC). Therefore, students can learn whatever, whenever, and however they
prefer. These facilities help promote autonomous learning and student-centered
learning. This physical environment was conducive to learning and so contributed to
students’ and instructors’ highest level of satisfaction.

Another aspect that received a very high level of satisfaction is the instructors.
All of the LITU instructors have degrees relevant to teaching English language skills,
namely Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), English, Literature,
Education, and Linguistics. Moreover, they had a lot of opportunities to develop
themselves professionally through workshops, trainings or seminars offered by LITU
or other institutions. Therefore, it is most likely that the LITU instructors are
competent in teaching English, contributing to the very high level of satisfaction of
students. According to Soontornwipast (2008), effective EFL teachers should possess
the following skills and qualities:

• Technical skills which include the theoretical knowledge and skills of the English
  language, e.g., phonology, vocabulary, morphology, syntax; the knowledge of
  language acquisition and development; an awareness of culture and the knowledge of
  its nature and role; and the ability to use the language.
• Pedagogical skills which include the knowledge and skills of pedagogical methods, e.g., planning and implementing lessons, managing classes, using resources effectively, problem solving, an awareness of students’ needs, organizing a conducive classroom atmosphere, and assessment.

• Interpersonal skills which include an awareness and acceptance of learners’ differences, e.g., in opinions, cultures, and abilities; other personalities, e.g., enthusiasm, fun, warmth, sense of humor, friendliness, etc.

• Personal qualities which include being well-organized, reliable, flexible, creative; and having high morals and adhering to the code of Ethics and Principles of Professional Conduct of Teachers.

• Professionalism which includes engaging in professional development which helps strengthen competence in linguistics, culture, reflection; engaging in life-long learning; being aware of the value of foreign language learning; and having positive attitudes towards the profession.

To maintain the students’ high level of satisfaction with instructors, the above characteristics should be enhanced in the instructors through workshops and seminars.

Of all the aspects of the ESP courses that were rated satisfied, the aspect that received the lowest satisfaction level was textbooks. For each ESP course, a core textbook is assigned. Some textbooks are commercially developed, while others are developed by LITU instructors. An academic committee is responsible for designing the course content and selecting a book for each course. Most of the instructors are rarely involved in the course design and course book selection process. As a result, when they teach the course, whether it is voluntary or not, they might find that it was not what they and the students want and that it did not match their teaching styles. In addition, needs of clients have rarely been assessed in the development of each course. Therefore, the content and course book chosen for each course might not satisfy or meet the needs of the students. This adversely affected the satisfaction of students. According to Robinson (1991), the selection of specialist texts should not in itself make a course an ESP course. What is more important is a demonstrated need, which may be for specialist texts or for some other kind of material. Therefore, to make the course as relevant to students as possible which in turn will increase the level of satisfaction, needs assessment should be conducted. Thornbury (2006) suggests that the design of an ESP course should be dictated by the practical, communicative needs of the learners, rather than abstract linguistics description. Needs analysis can be conducted using quantitative means such as structured surveys, structured interviews, or tests. It is also possible to use qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews, focus group and so on (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2000).

In this evaluation, the data were collected through questionnaires from two groups of stakeholders: instructors who were involved in the design and delivery of the language programs and (2) students who were the clients of the programs. To gain more understanding of the ESP courses at LITU, data should be sought out from every group of stakeholders – experts in each study field, faculty members from the school
that the students were studying, and so on. Further, to gain more in-depth data regarding the ESP courses, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations should be conducted by evaluators. Moreover, a curriculum evaluation should be conducted every four or five years, and the results should be presented to the administration to generate the improvement plan for each ESP course.

6. Conclusion

This evaluation of the ESP courses offered by LITU was part of the LITU curriculum evaluation project. It provides implications for the improvement of the English curriculum used in the Institute. It will also lead to teaching and learning improvement, which in turns yields higher English proficient students.

References
An Evaluation of English Courses for Graduate Students of Thammasat University

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate two English courses for graduate students: TU 005 and TU 006 at Thammasat University in the B.E. 2553 academic year (2010). The participants included two TU 005 lecturers, fifty-one TU 005 students, five TU 006 lecturers, and eighty TU 006 students. A questionnaire was used to collect information from the lecturers and students. The questionnaire probed the lecturers’ and students’ opinions on the learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, textbooks and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, the benefits of the course, plus their overall satisfaction with the course, the students or lecturers, and the textbook. The results revealed that both TU 005 and TU 006 students and TU 005 lecturers responded at the high level to all aspects; however, TU 006 lecturers responded at the high level to virtually all aspects except that they were satisfied with the textbook to some extent.

Keywords: graduate students’ opinions, lecturers’ opinions, English courses for graduate students
1. Introduction

The Language Institute of Thammasat University (LITU) was officially established as a university faculty in 1985 to serve the ever-growing need for English language training for students in all faculties at Thammasat University. LITU conducts 3 types of courses for both undergraduate and graduate students at Thammasat University’s academic campuses: Tha Prachan and Rangsit. The three groups are (1) undergraduate foundation courses, (2) English for Specific Purposes (ESP), courses for 2nd –year up students and (3) remedial graduate courses (TU 005 and TU 006) for those who cannot get the required score for qualified graduates set by Thammasat University. Qualified graduate students must have at least 550 of 1,000 TU-GET (Thammasat University General English Test) full scores.

1.1 Background to the Research

The students entering any graduate program at Thammasat University, apart from those who pass the TU-GET, have to pass TU 005 and TU 006 courses before graduation.

TU005, English 1, is designed to improve students’ reading skills. Students will have extensive practice in vocabulary-building and reading comprehension. Therefore, this course emphasizes all important reading skills: previewing and predicting, identifying main ideas and topics, using context to guess meaning, identifying supporting details, recognizing patterns of organization, making inferences, distinguishing fact from opinion, and identifying purpose and tone. When this course was evaluated, the textbook Ready to Read More by Karen Blanchard and Christine Root was employed.

TU 006, English 2, is designed to improve students’ writing skills. Emphasis is placed on developing the skill of writing sentences and paragraphs. This course mainly focuses on essential writing skills, namely paragraph development, narration, description, cause and effect, giving examples, and comparison and contrast. The textbook, Communicative Writing, an in-house coursebook written by Pratin Pimsarn and another supplementary workbook written by a LITU staff were used during the course evaluation.

This B.E. 2553 Academic Year (2010) was suitable for the TU 005 and TU 006 course evaluation, the objectives of which were to provide information to improve the courses and to provide a basis for decisions about curriculum adoption and the effective use of these courses (?) in the future.
1.2 The Objectives of the Study

The purposes of this study were to:

1. obtain the lecturers’ opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course and their satisfaction with the course, the students and the textbook.

2. obtain the students’ opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course and their satisfaction with the course.

1.3 Research Questions

This research study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the TU 005 and TU 006 lecturers’ opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course and their satisfaction with the course, the students and the textbook?

2. What are the TU 005 and TU 006 students’ opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course?

1.4 Scope of the study

The samples of this study were two TU 005 lecturers, fifty-one TU 005 students, five TU 006 lecturers and eighty TU 006 students in the first semester of 2009 academic year at Thammasat University. The results from this study, therefore, cannot be applied to students in other faculties, nor can they be generalized to students in subsequent semesters.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Definitions of Curriculum Evaluation

A curriculum can be defined as a set of materials or planned experiences designed to accomplish certain stated or implied objectives (Wayne W. Welch: 1969,
and as an attempt to communicate the essential features of educational programmes, preferably using specific objectives and a systematic approach to the design and management of teaching and learning. The curriculum, therefore, should be relevant to both teachers’ and learners’ needs, be feasible given the working environment, adequately communicate intent and purpose, guide planning strategies for implementation and be capable of being used as a basis for improvement (Singla and Gupta: 2011).

Curriculum evaluation can thus be understood as the gathering of information after using the curriculum for the purpose of making decisions on its effectiveness. It is concerned primarily with questions of utility that involve value and judgment.

Curriculum evaluation serves two important functions. Firstly, it provides a means of obtaining information that can be used to improve a course. Secondly, it provides a basis for decisions about curriculum adoption and effective deployment. The first kind of assessment is generally called “formative evaluation”; the second is referred to as “summative evaluation.” (Scriven, 1997 cited in Darussalam, 2010, p. 59) Formative evaluation is made during an ongoing programme, while summative evaluation is made at the end of a programme and aims to collect information as a means of deciding whether or not to continue a programme, or after a programme ends to assess its overall effectiveness.

Fleischman and Williams (1996) proposed a framework for evaluating an instructional programme, combining an outcome evaluation with a process evaluation. The outcome evaluation attempts to determine the extent to which a programme’s specific objectives have been achieved, whereas the process evaluation seeks to describe an instructional programme and how it was implemented, and through this, attempt to gain an understanding of why its objectives were or were not achieved. Accordingly, an evaluation should be designed in which evaluation questions, data collection and analysis, address students, instruction and outcomes. The information on the background of the students involved includes grade level, age, socioeconomic level, aptitude and achievement (grades and test score). The component of instruction describes how the key activities of the curriculum or instructional programme are implemented, including instructional objectives, hours of instruction, teacher characteristics and experience. The component of outcomes concerns the effects that the program has on students, and to what extent the programme has met its stated objectives.

2.2 Components of English Instructional Management

2.2.1 The physical environment of the classroom

Brown (2000, pp. 192-194) states the physical environment for learning, the classroom itself, including sight, sound, and comfort profoundly affect students. For
example, classrooms should be neat, clean, and orderly in appearance. Brown also mentions the influence of equipment on learning. For instance, the equipment should fit comfortably into the room, everyone should be able to see (and/or hear) the visual/auditory stimulus, and all machinery should actually work.

2.2.2 Course content for reading and writing courses

Jeremy Harmer (2001, pp. 201-202) identifies different skills involved in reading, such as identifying the topic, predicting and guessing, reading for general understanding, for specific information, for detailed information and for the interpretation of a text. Brown (2000, pp. 306-310) suggests ten strategies for reading comprehension such as identifying the purpose in reading, using graphemic (sorry, I’m not aware of this term – is it correct?) rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding, using efficient silent reading techniques for relatively rapid comprehension, skimming the text for main ideas, scanning the text for specific information, using semantic mapping or clustering, guessing when you aren’t certain, analyzing vocabulary, distinguishing between literal and implied meanings, and capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationships.

According to Harmer (2000, pp. 257-258), there are a number of different approaches to the practice of writing skills both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers can choose whether to focus on the process of writing or on the product. When concentrating on the product, teachers are interested in the aim of a task and in the end result. Those who advocate a process-focused approach spend time with learners on pre-writing phases, editing, redrafting and finally “publishing” their work.

2.2.3 Teachers’ roles

Harmer (2001, p. 213) describes the different roles of the teacher when asking students to read intensively as organiser, observer, feedback organiser and prompter. As an organiser, the teacher needs to tell the students exactly what their reading purpose is, give them clear instructions about how to achieve this, and how long they will have to do this. While students are reading, teachers can observe their progress to see how well they are doing individually and collectively. When the students have completed the task, teachers can lead a feedback plenary to check that they have completed the task successfully. This may involve having them compare their answers in pairs or asking them to say where in the text they found the information for their answers. As a prompter, the teacher can encourage them to notice particular language features in the text they have just read.

Harmer (2001, pp. 261-262) identifies the three main roles of a writing teacher as motivator, resource, and feedback provider. Teachers motivate their students to create the right conditions for the generation of ideas, to persuade them of the usefulness of a particular activity, and to encourage them to apply effort for maximum benefit. Teachers also act as a resource to supply information and language when
necessary. As a feedback provider, teachers should provide constructive feedback on the content of the students’ own writing.

2.2.4 Textbook /supplementary worksheets

Brown (2000, p. 142) suggests textbook evaluation criteria adapted from Robinett (1978, pp. 249-51). These criteria are goals of the course, background of the students, approach, general content, quality of practice material, sequencing, vocabulary, general sociolinguistic factors, format, accompanying materials including workbook, tapes—audio and/or video, a set of tests, and teacher’s guide. Are they useful and sufficient? According to Harmer (2000, pp. 301-306), the “assessment” of a coursebook is an out-of-class judgment as to how well a new book will perform in class. Coursebook evaluation, on the other hand, is a judgment on how well a book has performed in fact. Harmer presents a three-stage procedure that allows teachers to assess books on the basis of their own beliefs and their assessment of their students’ needs and circumstances, including selecting areas of assessment, stating beliefs, and using statement for assessment (meaning unclear). Similarly, evaluation of materials can be approached in three stages: teachers’ records of how successful different lessons and activities have been, teachers’ discussion, and student responses that can be collected by asking them if they enjoyed the material they have just been using or asking them for a written response to the following:

- What was your favorite lesson in the book this week? Why?
- What was your least favorite lesson?
- What was your favorite activity?
- What was your least favorite activity? Why?

Harmer proposes options for coursebooks in the following table (adapted from Harmer, 2000, p. 306):

**Table 1: Options for coursebook use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use the coursebook extract?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td></td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>add</td>
<td></td>
<td>omit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rewrite</td>
<td></td>
<td>replace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>replace activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>re-order</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation

Harmer (2001, p. 326) suggests the following direct test item types for reading and writing. Reading test item types include: multiple choice questions to test comprehension of a text; transferring written information to charts, graphs and maps; choosing the best summary of a paragraph or a whole text, and matching jumbled headings with paragraphs. Writing test item types are writing compositions and stories.

Major Changes in Approaches to Language Teaching

Jacobs and Farrell (cited in Jack C. Richards.) suggest eight major changes in approaches to language teaching. These changes are: 1) learner autonomy this means learners may have greater choice to choose the content and process of their learning, and they might employ these choices, such as the use of small groups or self-assessment; 2) The social nature of learning learners can interact with others through cooperative learning; 3) Curricular integration English is not seen as a stand-alone subject but is linked to other subjects in the curriculum; 4) Focus on meaning this becomes the driving force of learning; 5) Diversity: Learners learn in different ways and have different strengths; 6) Thinking skills students do not learn language for its own sake but in order to develop and apply their thinking skills in situations that go beyond the language classroom; 7) Alternative assessment can be used to build up a comprehensive picture of what students are capable of doing in a second language; new multiple forms of assessment such as observation, interviews, journals and portfolios are needed to replace traditional multiple-choice and other assessment formats that test lower-order skills; and 8) Teachers as co-learners and facilitators who are constantly trying out different alternatives, i.e., learning through doing.

Relevant Research

Adisa Benjarattananon’s (2010) study of the BA in English curriculum at Prince of Songkla University, Pattani: considered the three dimensional perspectives of instructors, graduates and employers. She analyzed levels of satisfaction at content, teaching and learning methods and instructors’ qualifications from 13 instructors’ points of views, satisfaction of content, instructors’ qualifications, benefits and applications of the subjects for higher education and work performance from 42 graduates’ points of view, and satisfaction of the graduates’ characteristics, including academic and professional abilities; professional morality and attitude; personality and interpersonal relationship from 24 employers’ points of view. The study discovered that the three sample groups had high levels of satisfaction towards all items in the objectives. A comparison of the three groups of samples also revealed no difference.

Jenna Lee Thompson (2011) conducted an evaluation of a university level English for tourism program. The participants included fifteen students who enrolled in the course, two university officials from the international college and the instructor of the course. Four types of data collection were used: questionnaires, interviews, a
teacher’s log and learning materials. The results revealed that learners responded positively to in-class listening and speaking tasks that they felt were manageable and relevant to their future ambitions. However, there were negative responses towards textbook and outside readings; the learners viewed these as non-essential to meeting their goals. In addition, the stakeholders viewed the program as a vital part of the curriculum.

Sayananon and Padkate (2011) conducted a study on age and English instruction, and factors affecting satisfaction and dissatisfaction when studying English. This research aimed to understand EFL students’ learning achievement in relation to many factors such as different starting ages of EFL learners and the reasons behind learning satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This study involved two thousand Naresuan University first-year students. It was found that many reasons concerning student learning satisfaction were 1) kind, friendly, and experienced lecturers 2) the benefits to the future careers, and 3) interesting content and materials.

3 Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study consisted of two TU 005 lecturers, fifty-one TU 005 students, five TU 006 lecturers and eighty TU 006 students both from Tha Prachan and Rangsit Campuses at Thammasat University in the academic year 2009.

3.2 Materials

The research instrument in the study was a questionnaire divided into three parts: 1) personal information, 2) the participants’ opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/ supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, lecturers and benefits of the course, and 3) other opinions and suggestions.

3.3 Procedures

The questionnaire was distributed before the end of the courses in September, 2010.

3.4 Data Analysis

The completed questionnaires were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 12.0 for data analysis. Descriptive statistics (percentage, mean frequency and standard deviation) were used to measure and analyze all the indicators of the study.
4 Results

4.1 Personal information

This part of the study analyzes the students’ personal information consisting of gender, year of study, faculty, grade point average, frequency of attendance and types of the courses. It was found that the majority of the TU 005 students (N=51) are female (62.7%), studying in the first year (43.1%), studying the faculty of nursing (35.3%), followed by the students of in the faculties of science and technology, of engineering (27.5%/each), having grade points average at 2.01-2.50 (43.1%) and 3.01-3.50 (31.4%), attending all classes (74.5%) and studying TU 005 as a compulsory course (88.2%).

Similarly, most of the TU 006 students (N=80) are female (73.8%), studying in the second year (70%), studying in the faculty of political science (28.8%), of mass communication and journalism (23.8%), of medicine (22.5%), having grade points average at 3.01-3.50 (55%) followed by at 3.51-4.00 (37.5%). Most students attended all classes (51.3%), while 47.5 percent of them were absent from class between once and three times. Eighty percent of them studied TU 006 as a compulsory course.

In addition, this part includes the lecturers’ personal information including gender, age range, the highest level of education, academic position and teaching experience. Two TU 005 lecturers were female age between 31 and 40, having a master’s degree as their highest level of education, and having teaching experience between 5 and 10 years. In the like manner, all TU 006 lecturers (N=5) were female age between 21 and 60, having a master’s degree as their highest level of education, having academic positions as assistant professors and associate professors equally (40%) followed by 20% in the associate professor position and the majority (60%) had teaching experience more than 20 years.

4.2 Summary of lecturers’ and students’ opinions towards various aspects of the courses

Table 2: Lecturers’ and students’ opinions towards physical learning and teaching environments and equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinions</th>
<th>TU 005 lecturers</th>
<th>TU 005 students</th>
<th>TU 006 lecturers</th>
<th>TU 006 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The classroom environment enhances teaching and learning.</td>
<td>4.50 0.70</td>
<td>4.35 0.65</td>
<td>4.20 0.44</td>
<td>4.22 0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The classrooms and locations are appropriate.</td>
<td>4.50 0.70</td>
<td>4.49 0.54</td>
<td>4.60 0.54</td>
<td>4.08 0.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The classrooms have a high standard of cleanliness.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TU 005</th>
<th></th>
<th>TU 006</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The classrooms have</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a high standard of</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cleanliness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The classrooms are sufficiently equipped with learning support devices such as computers, projectors, stereos, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TU 005</th>
<th></th>
<th>TU 006</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The classrooms are</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sufficiently</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipped</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with learning</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support devices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are up to date.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TU 005</th>
<th></th>
<th>TU 006</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 2, all TU 005 lecturers had highest level opinions of the physical learning and teaching environment, and the appropriateness and modernity of equipment. However, TU 005 and TU 006 students as well as TU 006 lecturers agreed at only the high level.

**Table 3: Lecturers’ and students’ opinions towards course content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinions</th>
<th>TU 005</th>
<th></th>
<th>TU 006</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course content is appropriate for the class schedule.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course content is appropriate for credits awarded for the course.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course content is consistent with course objectives.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course content is up to date and relevant to the current real-world</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>situations.</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course content helps promote learners’ professionalism.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course content is presented</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The course content enhances learners’ ethics and morals.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.00</th>
<th>1.41</th>
<th>3.88</th>
<th>0.68</th>
<th>3.80</th>
<th>0.44</th>
<th>3.66</th>
<th>0.77</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The course content supports knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.50</th>
<th>0.70</th>
<th>3.88</th>
<th>0.73</th>
<th>3.60</th>
<th>0.54</th>
<th>3.80</th>
<th>0.71</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Average  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.38</th>
<th>0.70</th>
<th>4.06</th>
<th>0.67</th>
<th>4.05</th>
<th>0.54</th>
<th>3.92</th>
<th>0.72</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 3 shows that TU 005 lecturers agreed at the highest level that the TU 005 course content was appropriate, up to date, relevant to the current real-world situations, that it was presented in a clear and systematic way, and that it supported knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures. TU 006 lecturers agreed at the high level that the TU 006 course content was appropriate and consistent with course objectives. In addition, both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that the course content was appropriate. On average all participants were very satisfied with the course content.

Table 4: Students’ opinions towards lecturers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinions</th>
<th>TU 005 students</th>
<th>TU 006 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lecturer manages the lessons as specified in the course outline.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lecturer uses appropriate techniques for the content.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lecturer arranges the content in a systematic way.</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lecturer uses proper teaching materials.</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lecturer uses educational technology appropriately.</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lecture uses questions to stimulate and uses activities to develop the thinking skill.</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lecturer let students participate in activities.</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen from Table 4, TU 005 students agreed at the highest level that their lecturers managed the lessons appropriately, used appropriate techniques, and let them
participate in activities. TU 006 students agreed at the highest level that their lecturers let them take on active roles during activities. On average both were very satisfied with their lecturers.

**Table 5: Lecturers’ and students’ opinions towards the textbook and supplementary worksheets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinions</th>
<th>TU 005 lecturers</th>
<th>TU 005 students</th>
<th>TU 006 lecturers</th>
<th>TU 006 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets cover the course objective.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets encourage learning.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The textbook and supplementary worksheets are reliably referenced.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The textbook and supplementary materials are attractive in appearance.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 reveals that all TU 005 students, TU 006 lecturers and students agreed at the high level that the textbook and supplementary sheets covered the course objective, encouraged learning, and that they were reliably referenced and attractive in appearance, while TU 005 lecturers agreed with the first three aspects at the highest level. On average all participants were very satisfied with the textbook and supplementary worksheets.

**Table 6: Lecturers’ and students’ opinions towards assessment and evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinions</th>
<th>TU 005 lecturers</th>
<th>TU 005 students</th>
<th>TU 006 lecturers</th>
<th>TU 006 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment is in line with course objectives.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The scores in assessment and evaluation are allocated in</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

89 | Page
appropriate proportions.

| The approaches to assessment and evaluation are appropriate. | 4.50 | 0.70 | 4.03 | 0.66 | 4.20 | 0.83 | 4.13 | 0.67 |
| The length of the examination is compatible with the time allowed to sit the exam. | 4.50 | 0.70 | 3.96 | 0.84 | 3.20 | 0.83 | 3.60 | 1.00 |
| Evaluation includes assessment of students’ thought processes. | 3.50 | 0.70 | 4.19 | 0.60 | 3.40 | 0.89 | 4.03 | 0.77 |
| Evaluation includes a focus on assessing the students’ application of knowledge. | 3.50 | 0.70 | 4.03 | 0.69 | 3.80 | 0.44 | 4.05 | 0.76 |
| Average | 4.10 | 0.42 | 4.10 | 0.67 | 3.88 | 0.71 | 4.01 | 0.76 |

Table 6 shows that both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that assessment was in line with course objectives, the scores in assessment and evaluation were allotted in appropriate proportions, the length of examination time was appropriate, the evaluation incorporated the students’ thought process and their application of knowledge. In contrast, TU 005 lecturers agreed at the highest level that the approaches to assessment and evaluation, and the length of examination time were appropriate. However, TU 006 students thought that the length of examination time was appropriate only to a certain degree. On average all participants were very satisfied with assessment and evaluation.

Table 7: Lecturers’ and students’ opinions towards the benefits of the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>opinions</th>
<th>TU 005 lecturers</th>
<th>TU 005 students</th>
<th>TU 006 lecturers</th>
<th>TU 006 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course provides students with language knowledge and skills according to the course objectives.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The knowledge from this course is applicable to students’ further study.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The knowledge from this course enables continuous self-</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The knowledge from this course can be utilized to assist other people in society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TU 005</th>
<th>TU 006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The knowledge from this course can be utilized efficiently in daily life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TU 005</th>
<th>TU 006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The knowledge from this course can be utilized efficiently in professional life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TU 005</th>
<th>TU 006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows that both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that they obtained knowledge from this course that could be applied in their study and utilized efficiently in both their daily and professional life. However, TU 006 lecturers thought that the knowledge from this course could be utilized to assist other people in society to a certain degree. On average all participants were very satisfied with the benefits of the course.

Table 8: Lecturers’ and students’ satisfaction towards each course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TU 005</th>
<th>TU 006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the course</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the students</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the textbook</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 reveals that TU 005, TU 006 students were very satisfied with the course. Similarly, TU 005 lecturers were very satisfied with the course, the students and the textbook, while TU 006 lecturers were very satisfied with the course and the students. In contrast, TU 006 lecturers were satisfied with the textbook to a certain degree.

4.3 Other lecturers’ and students’ opinions and suggestions

TU 005 students’ opinions and suggestions (N= 51, the number in parentheses represents the frequencies of responses):

- Teachers should encourage students to talk in English while studying. (1)
• The teaching schedule should be changed from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Monday to 1:30 on Wednesdays because we (nursing students) have other classes (7), and we are sleepy when studying in the evening (2).
• We were satisfied with the course because of good lecturers (12) who provided groupwork activities applicable to our daily lives (8) and other subjects, a good atmosphere (7), better understanding of English (4), revision of English(3), and English development (2) respectively.
• There should be a remedial examination and an answer key for the midterm exam. (1)

TU 006 students’ opinions and suggestions (N= 80, the number in parentheses represents the frequencies of responses):

• There should be a security guard after class at 8:30 p.m. (1)
• The content is too difficult (5).
• The time for the exam should be changed from 2.30 hours to 3 hours (4).
• The teachers should teach and speak more slowly (4).
• The teaching schedule should be changed from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. to 5:30 – 8: 30 p.m., or to 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. on Saturday or Sunday (4).
• The LCD projector doesn’t work properly, so we cannot see what the teacher is teaching clearly (2).
• The restroom is not clean and convenient (2).
• Even though this is a writing course, we should practice speaking, watch a movie, fun story or cartoon in other media. (2)
• Current news or situations, other illustrations such as pictures, charts, diagrams, various fonts should be added to the text. (1)
• We were satisfied with the course due to its application to future work (17), its application to the composition of English articles (12) and good lecturers who provided fun classes and sufficient supplementary sheets (12), appropriate content (4), and good atmosphere (4) respectively.
• Students who were moderately satisfied with the course said their lecturers were knowledgeable, but they could not explain some topics clearly; they gained more knowledge when doing exercises but not as they expected, they could not keep up with other students and lecturers, they did not understand, they could not apply their knowledge when taking the exam, and their lecturers did not focus on the textbook.
• Students who were little satisfied with the course said their lecturers spoke fast, and they asked students to do exercises while they were explaining. Therefore, they could not take notes.

TU 006 lecturers’ opinions and suggestions (N=5, the number in parentheses represents the frequency of each response):
We are satisfied with the good students who participate well in class, make great effort, or ask when they do not understand (3).

We have a good atmosphere. (1)

The textbook is good because there are various topics and exercises with different types of paragraph. (1)

The textbook is not up-to-date and has difficult examples for students to understand, so more examples should be added. (1) (meaning unclear; I have adjusted in relation to assumed meaning only)

Some articles and chapters are quite easy. (1)

5 Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Summary of the results:

1. Overall, not only TU 005 lecturers but also TU 006 lecturers had the opinions at the high level on course content, the textbook and supplementary materials, assessment and evaluation, that the benefits of the course were appropriate, and that they were very satisfied with the course and the students. However, the TU 006 lecturers were satisfied with the textbook only to a certain degree.

2. Overall, the TU 005 students and TU 006 students evaluated at the highest level the physical environment, the course content, the textbook and supplementary materials, assessment and evaluation, that the benefits of the course were appropriate, and that they were very satisfied with the course.

5.2 Discussion

Five main areas are discussed in this section: the physical environment of the classroom, course content, teachers’ roles, textbook/supplementary sheets, assessment and evaluation, and the application of research findings when improving the TU 005 and TU 006 English courses with approaches to language learning.

Regarding the physical environment of the classroom, it was found that both TU 005 and TU 006 lecturers and students were very satisfied because they agreed that the physical learning and teaching environment and equipment are appropriate and modern. This is because the two classes are taught in Language Institute classrooms equipped with up-to-date educational tools such as LCD projectors, computers connected with LAN, and microphones. In addition, the officer is available when there are any technological problems. As Brown (2000) states, the physical environment for learning profoundly affects students. Brown also mentions the influence of equipment on learning.
Regarding course content, it was found that both TU 005 and TU 006 lecturers and students were very satisfied because they agreed that the TU 005 course content was appropriate, up to date, relevant to current real-world situations, and it was presented in a clear and systematic way and supported knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures, while TU 006 lecturers agreed at the high level that the TU 006 course content was appropriate and consistent with course objectives. In addition, both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that the course content was appropriate. All opinions are attributed to what the students have studied. For example, the TU 005 course is designed to improve the students’ reading skills such as previewing and predicting, identifying main ideas and topics, using context to guess meaning, identifying supporting details, recognizing patterns of organization, making inferences, distinguishing fact from opinion, and identifying purpose and tone. As Jeremy Harmer (2001, pp. 201-202) mentions, different skills are involved in reading such as identifying the topic, predicting and guessing, reading for general understanding, for specific information, for detailed information and interpreting text. Additionally, the TU 006 course is designed to improve the students’ writing skills such as paragraph development, narration, description, cause and effect, giving examples, and comparison and contrast as Harmer (2001, pp. 257-258) states that there are a number of different approaches to the practice of writing skills both inside and outside the classroom. Since TU 006 aims to advocate a process approach, lecturers spend time with learners on pre-writing phases, before editing, redrafting and writing a final draft.

For the teachers’ roles, it was found that TU 005 students agreed at the highest level that their lecturers managed the lessons appropriately, used appropriate techniques, and let them participate in activities. TU 006 students agreed at the highest level that their lecturers let them take an active role in activities as Harmer (2001, p. 213) states the roles of the teacher when asking students to read intensively as an organiser, observer, feedback organiser and prompter. Harmer (2001, pp. 261-262) mentions the additional roles of a writing teacher as motivator, resource, and feedback provider. These findings accorded with the students’ open-ended opinions saying, “we (TU 005 students) were satisfied with the course because of good lecturers (12 responses, N = 51) who provided groupwork activities”, and “we (TU 006 students, N = 80) were very satisfied with good lecturers who provided fun classes and sufficient supplementary sheets (12 responses).

According to textbook/supplementary sheets, it was found all TU 005 students, TU 006 lecturers and students agreed at the high level that the textbook and supplementary sheets covered the course objective, encouraged learning, and they were reliably referenced and attractive in appearance, while TU 005 lecturers agreed with the first three aspects at the highest level. This accorded with the findings of Jenna Lee Thompson (2011), who conducted an evaluation of a university level
English for Tourism program and found that the participants (fifteen students enrolled in the course, two university officials from the international college and the course instructor), had negative responses towards textbook and outside readings, because the learners viewed these as non-essential to meeting their goals.

Regarding assessment and evaluation, it was found that both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that assessment was in line with course objectives, the scores in assessment and evaluation were allotted in appropriate proportions, the length of examination time was appropriate, the evaluation covered the students’ thought process and their application of knowledge. In contrast, TU 005 lecturers agreed at the highest level that the approaches to assessment and evaluation, and the length of examination time were appropriate. However, TU 006 students thought that the length of examination time was appropriate to a certain degree. This accorded with the open-ended suggestions of TU 006 students, who said, “The duration of the exam should be changed from 2.30 hours to 3 hours.” (4 responses, N = 80).

The findings of this research should be applied when the Language Institute revises its curriculum in the near future. Furthermore, these findings also provide guidance to improve the courses and provide a basis for decisions about curriculum adoption and effective use in the future. The new curriculum should consider Jacobs and Farrell’s (cited in Jack C. Richards) eight suggested changes to language teaching: 1) learner autonomy; 2) the social nature of learning; 3) curricular integration; 4) focus on meaning; 5) diversity; 6) thinking skills; 7) alternative assessment; and 8) teachers as co-learners. Most importantly, it was found that TU 006 lecturers were satisfied with the textbook only to a certain degree. Lecturers who will teach the TU 006 course in the future should therefore discuss which available textbook is most appropriate and efficient to use.

5.3 Recommendations for the Future Course Evaluation

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made for future course evaluations. First, future studies should utilize a wider range of information sources such as asking for opinions from lecturers, current students and/or lecturers in the related fields of current students, and/or graduates, since the present study drew on questionnaire answers from lecturers and current students only. Second, for triangulation, future studies should use different means of data collection, such as interviews, focus groups, teachers’ logs (records), and students’ logs of what they like and dislike while studying.

References


Comparative Rhetoric of the Discourse Structure of News Stories between News Articles Published in Thailand and in the U.S.A.

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Abstract

This article presents the results of a study which was conducted to investigate the differences in discourse structure between English news stories published in Thailand and those published in the U.S.A. Three news articles from The Bangkok Post, The Nation, and The New York Times were analyzed. The news discourse structure model proposed by Bell (1996) was employed to conduct this analysis. The results of the study revealed that there are significant differences between news articles reported by different news agencies. The New York Times presents many more events than The Bangkok Post and The Nation when reporting the same story. In addition, source attribution and news actor are presented differently by each news agency.

Keywords: English news articles, discourse analysis, macrostructure of news discourse
1. Background

News has long been regarded as an important social institution which reports and analyses various aspects of culture, politics and everyday life. News discourse is crucial because it reveals much about society and represents its fundamental character. With respect to the field of linguistics, news tells us much about the power and evolution of language. Understanding how news reportage works is important to our understanding of the function of language in society (Bell, 1996). News is also classified as a discrete genre of writing. Genre analysis is a framework for analyzing the form and rhetorical function of non-literal discourse news (Swales, 1990). Incidents related to the political demonstrations of 2010 were reported by various newspapers published in Thailand as well as the rest of the world. In the United States of America, a number of news articles on Thailand’s political conflict during the period of unrest were published in several newspapers. This study aims to identify differences in the discourse structure of news articles between English language newspapers published in Thailand and those published in the United States of America.

2. Review of the Literature

Van Dijk (1983) has defined news organization as the indirect representation of news discourse expressed by headlines and leads. The headline of a news report acts as its title. It usually presents the most essential part of the story in order to hook the readers’ interest, and to signal a particular perspective or framework for interpreting what is to follow. The headline shows the most important general knowledge and beliefs which are interesting enough to be reported as news. The lead is regarded as an abstract and means of orientation in relation to a story. Regarding the news macrostructure and organization, a subsequent sentence reported shows the details of an event which is less important than what is reported in the previous sentences. In addition, the organization of news discourse is derived from the cognitive operations of journalists and readers. The understanding of a news discourse depends on text structures, cognitive information, the process of interpretation and representation. Bell (1996) also maintains that news stories conform to the basics of storytelling, represented most typically by the journalist’s ‘five Ws and an H’: who, what, when, where, why, and how.

Several studies of news discourse have been conducted in Thailand. For example, Navarat (1989) studied a comparison of the business journalism styles in The Nation, an English language newspaper in Thailand, and The Wall Street Journal, an American English newspaper. One of the results of this study showed that The Nation’s business journalism style is more formal than that of The Wall Street Journal. In addition, Trakulkasemsuk (2007) made a comparative study on the analysis of linguistic aspects of English feature articles in magazines published in Thailand and in the U.K. The study found that sentences found in articles of English language magazines in Thailand are frequently complex sentences with a lot of descriptive information, while British English news articles tend to avoid such complicated structures.
The study of news discourse in relation to news structure was conducted first by Schokkenbroek (1999). This study examined the structural breakdown of news stories into elements such as composition, time structure, and evaluation. Regarding composition, the main difference between news structures and narrative structures concerns the use of verbs at the clause level. Regarding time and event structure, narratives usually present more than one event and order these events chronologically. Regarding evaluation, the narrator may insert some evaluative information into the narrative structure, but evaluative comments may come from the news writer or a third person.

3. **Research Question**

What are the differences in the macrostructure of news discourse between English news articles published in Thailand and in the United States of America?

4. **Methodology**

Three different news articles reporting the evacuation of patients from Chulalongkorn hospital were selected for this study. The news articles were published in *The Bangkok Post*, *The Nation*, and *The News York Times*. This study employs the analytical framework of discourse structure proposed by Bell (1991). This framework was developed from the notion of news discourse proposed by Van Dijk (1988). Bell (1991) puts forward his model of news discourse for analyzing news macrostructure (see figure 1).
Figure 1
Model discourse structure for news texts (Bell, 1991)
Figure 1 shows an analytical framework which can be used to understand the structure of a news story. Elements in the framework describe the discourse structure of news stories. In general, a story consists of attribution, abstract, and story. Attribution is not always made explicit. It can give credit to a news agency or a journalist’s byline, and may also state place and time. An abstract consists of the lead sentence and a headline. The lead covers the central event of the story and consists of one or more secondary events. A news story comprises one or more episodes, which consists of one or more events. Events describe an actor and an action that expresses a setting of time and place, and may include explicit attribution to an information source. Episodes are clusters of events which share a common location or set of news actors.

There are three additional components of a news story: background, commentary and follow-up. These represent the past, present, and future of the events described in the main action of the story.

This study, therefore, attempts to find out whether there are any differences at the macrostructure level of news genre between English language newspapers published in Thailand and those published in the United States of America.

5. Results and Discussions

From the analysis of news texts which reported the evacuation of patients from Chulalongkorn hospital, the results can be shown as follows:

5.1 Story attribution structure

First, regarding the attribution structure of the news stories in question, each news agency is credited explicitly in the first line of the each news text. Journalists’ bylines indicate the news writer is credited in The Nation, and The News York Times. For instance, Pongphon Sarnsamak, a journalist for The Nation, was given credit within the body of the article. Likewise, Seth Mydans, from The New York Times, was also given credit. Place attribution is only provided in The News York Times, the international newspaper. This is so its worldwide readership can understand the particular setting of the news situation being described. Bangkok, where the news incident occurred, was specified only in The New York Times article.

5.2 Abstract structure

With respect to the abstract structure, which consists of the headline and the lead, the events which take place in the headline and the lead must be considered. Moreover, the relationship between the headline and the lead should also be considered because most readers read the headline and then interpret the brief story regardless of the lead. The events depicted in the lead are reported more than the headline does. The lead elaborates on the details of the basic situation, such as time and setting, whereas the headline specifies only the news actors and the main action. For example in The Bangkok Post article, the lead section stated two events. The first event was that Chulalongkorn hospital began evacuating patients on Friday, and the
other event was that Red-shirts stormed the hospital on Thursday. However, the headline only mentioned the first event.

When considering the comparison of structure of headline and lead in three different agencies, *The News York Times* expands more on the details of the news event in its headline and lead than Thai news agencies do. *The News York Times* provides more particulars about the events itself and its background in the lead, while the Thai press focuses solely on the main event.

The relationship between the headline and the lead in the abstract structure is such that the headline covers an aspect of the event and some of the details presented in the lead. Events are presented in the lead within a single-sentence paragraph. This unique characteristic of news articles can be found in all three news agencies. Therefore, with regard to the headline and the lead structure of news discourse, there is a slightly different structural relationship between headlines and leads in reportage by Thai and American news agencies. American English news articles tend to elaborate more on the details of a particular news story in the headline and lead than their Thai counterparts.

### 5.3 Story structure

The story structure consists of one or more episodes in the body, and the episode consists of many events. Events explain news actors and actions, express setting of times and places, and may have explicit attribution to an information source. Episodes are clusters of events which share a common location or set of news actors. For example, in *The Bangkok Post* articles, there are two episodes. The first episode provides the main news situation, whereas the second episode provides the subordinating news situation. Three events were presented in the first episode, and two minor events were presented in the second episode.

A comparison of story structure in three different agencies reveals that *The News York Times* presents many more news events than *The Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. This demonstrates that American news writers tend to report more events than Thai news writers do. Using news text analysis of the hospital raid story, we can see that *The New York Times* presents thirteen events, while *The Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* present five and ten events, respectively. The dissimilarity lies in the fact that American news articles report news incidents that have happened around the world and that their readership is drawn from several countries. Events must therefore be reported in a manner that clarifies a particular news situation and helps to build more understanding. Conversely, Thai news agencies mainly report local news. Their readership is mostly Thai citizens or foreigners and expatriates living in Thailand. This kind of news reader is familiar with the local news situation and pursues news from other kinds of sources. This explains why some events are not reported: readers already have background information. Moreover, the number of words in an American news article is normally higher than that of Thai news agencies. It is possible that American news writers have more space to elaborate news by reporting many more news events than Thai news writers.
5.4 Source attribution structure

The source attribution is another required component of news discourse structure because a news writer often quotes details of a given situation from involved parties. The analysis of source attribution from news texts is likely to help identify the hidden ideology of the news writers or agencies producing the piece. The analysis of source attribution in this study of three news texts found that source attribution was derived from multiple parties: the government, especially the prime minister; the antigovernment demonstrators, especially the Red-shirt protest leaders; and the affected parties, especially the Chulalongkorn Hospital staff. Thai news reporters mostly used government sources in their source attribution, while American news reporters mostly used the protesters. It is possible that Thai news reporters can easily access government sources and that the Thai government tends to release information about news situations to home-based reporters. Thai news agencies may also function as a speaker for the government. In addition, the accessibility to government information is safer than access to the demonstration source. Conversely, it is probable that American news reporters are more familiar with sourcing information from dangerous places such as protest sites and war zones. Protesters tend to be more inclined to give information to international news agencies because they believe international news agencies are unbiased. Moreover, they can use such agencies to reach an international public.

5.5 News actor structure

News texts are usually governed by the journalist’s ‘five Ws and an H’: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Who involves the news actors mentioned in the texts such as people, organization, nation, etc. In the three news texts being analysed for this study, different news actors are identified as involved parties, and in different frequencies. Most of the news actors that appear in *The Bangkok Post* are demonstrators, while *The Nation* mentions alternative news actors such as hospital staff and members of the public, for example Twitter users. *The New York Times* identifies its news actors as the affected party such as patients, an injured man, and hospital staff. Therefore, with regard to the selection of news actor, all three news agencies choose a different ‘personal’ focus, while identifying Chulalongkorn hospital and the general public as organization entities within their coverage.

5.6 Background structure

Background covers any events prior to the current situation. If background narrates beyond the recent past, it is classed as “history”. The discourse structure analysis of the three texts in this study reveals that *The Bangkok Post* describes only one event as history background. *The Nation*, on the other hand, describes six events as background to the current event, ranging from events to those termed a history. *The New York Times* describes nine events as background. Therefore, it can be said that international news agencies tend to use many more events as background in news texts than local agencies. This is because international newspapers have a wider variety of readers who perhaps do not follow a localized news situation as closely or frequently as readers of local newspapers covering the same episode. For that reason, background events are used more often by the international news agencies than local ones.
5.7 Commentary structure

Commentary provides the news reporter’s or news actor’s present-time observations on the action, and thus allows for an interpretative framework of the event itself. Commentary can be stated by context, thereby assisting understanding of the events, by evaluation which comments on the action of the particular events, and by expectation of how the situation will develop. The comparative study demonstrates that American writers provide much more commentary than Thai writers do, particularly in relation to context and the inclusion of evaluative comments. Often American writers not only report a news situation but also comment, criticize, evaluate and make predictions based on the current situation which leads readers to follow the news situation and to be aware of its consequences.

5.8 Follow-up structure

Follow-up covers a story in future time. This refers to any situation subsequent to the main action of an event. Follow-up can be stated by the consequence subcategory that occurs as a result of the main action, or reaction subcategory (see figure 1). The results of this study reveal that three news agencies rarely use commentary in the text, though still observable.

The summary of distinctive features in the macrostructure of news reports derived from different news agencies is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse Structure</th>
<th>The Bangkok Post</th>
<th>The Nation</th>
<th>The New York Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story attribution</td>
<td>News agency is credited, but journalist’s byline is not.</td>
<td>Both news agency and journalist’s byline are credited.</td>
<td>Both news agency and journalist’s byline are credited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place attribution</td>
<td>Place attribution is not provided.</td>
<td>Place attribution is not provided.</td>
<td>Place attribution is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story structure</td>
<td>Two episodes with five events were presented.</td>
<td>Three episodes with ten events were presented.</td>
<td>Two episodes with thirteen events were presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source attribution</td>
<td>Mostly came from the government.</td>
<td>Mostly came from the government.</td>
<td>Came from both the government and the protester side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>Distinctively fewer events as background.</td>
<td>Distinctively fewer events as background.</td>
<td>Distinctively more events as background.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Conclusions

The study reveals the analysis of discourse structure of news genre. According to the model for discourse structure for news texts (Bell, 1991), this analysis shows that the structure of news discourse between English language news articles published
in Thailand and those published in the United States of America is different. Place attribution is credited only in international newspapers. Many events supporting a particular news story are reported in more depth in American newspapers than in Thai newspapers. As a means of illustration, events which are relevant to the main news incident are more frequently featured in support of the news in American newspapers. Such secondary events are regarded as background and either cover the history of an event or mention previous episodes relevant to the main story being discussed.

The study of news discourse structure also provides valuable insight into how news articles are composed and the meanings they convey. Some of those findings are as follows:

1. News discourse structure has an inverted pyramid structure, a distinctive feature of news stories. The essence of information is in the first sentence, and the less important information is reported in subsequent sentences. An event is introduced and often returned to in more detail further on in the article.

2. Another distinctive feature of news stories can be found when analyzing the lead structure. In a lot of news articles, stories consist of only a single sentence in the lead paragraph which commonly expresses little linkage between sentences (Bell, 1996). The single sentence in a lead paragraph is also an appropriate proxy for examining the structure of longer stories in general. A single sentence in the lead consists of many events and very complicated syntax.

3. The study reveals the differences in news discourse structure between English news articles published in Thailand and in the U.S.A. Readers should be aware of these different news discourse structures in order to have a better understanding of news reports. When reading similar news incidents from different agencies, readers can identify and interpret the news discourse and therefore begin to analyze the ideologies of different news agencies.

Reference


Appendix

Model discourse structure for news texts: Chulalongkorn Hospital evacuates patients

NEWS TEXTS

Attribution

Source

News Agency

The Bangkok Post

Abstract

Headline

Actor

Hospital

Action

evacuate

d

Lead

Event 1

Actor

Chula

Action

began evacuating patients

Setting

Setting

Setting

on Friday

hospital

on Thursday

Story

Episode 1

Episode 2

Event 2

Actor

Red-shirts

Action

stormed
(Continued)

Story

Episode 1

Event 1

Actor: 200 UDD
Action: searched
Setting: hospital
Follow up: Patients were being transferred
Reaction: Hospital closed its out-patient service
Consequences: PM spoke in a televised address and consulted with hospital officials
Evaluation: PM spoke in a televised address and consulted with hospital officials
Commentary: Evaluation
Expectation: PM spoke in a televised address and consulted with hospital officials
Background: Hospital was used as a hideout
Event 2

Actor: UDD
Action: left and threatened

Event 3

Actor: UDD
Action: reprimanded
Setting: This morning

Expectation: PM consult about the measure and take legal action. Hospital ask protesters
(Continued)

Episode 2

Event 1
- Actor: Weng
- Action: apologized to the public
- Setting: On Friday

Event 2
- Actor: Suporn
- Action: Agreed with the protesters
Anxiety in English Public Speaking Classes among Thai EFL Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

English public speaking courses have long been offered to Thai EFL undergraduates; however, student anxiety is still a problem in these courses. This research aimed to investigate the level of anxiety at different stages of public speaking, which were pre-preparation, preparation, pre-performance and performance, among Thai EFL undergraduate students in English public speaking classes. The participants in this study were 208 undergraduate students from both private and governmental universities who completed a questionnaire. It was found that most students had different levels of anxiety in English public speaking courses. Nevertheless, the study results revealed that the highest level of anxiety was found in the performance stage of public speaking.

Keywords: English public speaking, anxiety, Thai EFL students, undergraduate students
1. Introduction

At present, it is unquestionable that oral fluency skills in English are very essential for people around the world. Due to the importance of English-speaking proficiency, the demand for workers who are proficient in English oral skills has been increasing; as a result, people with stronger English oral skills are likely to have greater job opportunities. Therefore, different kinds of English speaking courses, including public speaking, are offered in many universities in non-English speaking countries in order to increase students’ English speaking competence. Although there have been many research studies on English speaking for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, there has been little research done on English public speaking focusing on Thai EFL undergraduate students.

In Thailand, English public speaking courses are offered to EFL undergraduate students as both a required and an elective course in many universities. However, most students avoid enrolling in this course because they are afraid to give a speech in public, even though it is just a speech presented in class. As a result, when students graduate from universities without good oral skills, they may face problems when making presentations in their workplace. Therefore, it is valuable to investigate the public speaking anxiety that Thai EFL undergraduate students encounter when they have to give a speech in public speaking classes in order to eliminate any future problems caused by anxiety when they need to speak in public in their careers.

2. Research Question

The research question is:

What is the level of anxiety at different stages of public speaking among students in English public speaking classes?

3. Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to investigate the level of anxiety at different stages of public speaking among students in English public speaking classes.

4. Scope of the study

The study investigated the level of anxiety at different stages of public speaking for students in English public speaking classes. The participants were 208 undergraduate students from both private and governmental universities who were enrolled in English public speaking classes.

5. Review of Literature

5.1 Communication and public speaking

Communication can be defined as “the process of people sharing thoughts, ideas, and feelings with each other in a commonly understandable way” (Hamilton
and Parker, 1996, p. 4). Public speaking is one form of communication (Sellnow, 2005), which occurs when one prepares and performs a speech in front of an audience without being interrupted and which aims to inform, persuade or entertain the audience (Jaffe, 2007). McKerrow, Gronbeck, Ehninger and Monroe (2003) maintain that when speech skills are learnt and practiced, speakers will be able to take part in public events with minimal oral skill problems.

5.2 Anxiety

As cited in Kendall, Chansky, Kane, Kim, Kortlander, Ronan, Sessa and Siqueland (1992), Morris and Kratochwill (1985) define anxiety as “apprehension, tension, or uneasiness related to the expectation of danger, whether internal or external. Anxiety may be focused on an object, situation or activity that is avoided, as in a phobia, or it may be unfocused” (p. 1). Anxiety can be categorized into two types, state anxiety and trait anxiety. Reiss (1997) states that “state anxiety, which is situational in nature, is often observed through behaviors, physiological events, and cognitive symptoms, while trait anxiety, which relates to the personality of an individual, is often not observed” (p. 204). As cited in Finn, Sawyer and Behnke (2009), the two works by Bhenke and Sawyer (1998) and Sawyer and Behnke (1999) mention that “speaker trait anxiety has been shown to be generally stable from one presentation to another, while speaker state anxiety fluctuates considerably before, during, and following performances” (p. 418).

5.2.1 Foreign language anxiety

MacIntyre & Gardner (1991) explain the foreign language anxiety students experience can be clearly defined as foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA). They state that FLCA is viewed as situational anxiety occurring in the foreign language classroom. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1991) conceptualize FLCA as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p.31).

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) found that students express their foreign language anxiety when they avoid interpreting complicated messages in foreign language, when they show their lack of confidence, and when they forget vocabulary or grammar that they have learned before. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1991) discovered that students with foreign language anxiety find it difficult to listen and speak in class despite being well prepared to give a speech. Prince (1991) examined students’ language anxiety in class. The results confirmed that all students were anxious when they had to speak a foreign language in front of other students.

5.2.2 Public speaking anxiety (PSA)

O’Hair, Rubenstein and Stewart (2007) state that public speaking anxiety (PSA) is fearfulness when speakers give a speech in public. There are many elements resulting in PSA: inadequate experience, being unfamiliar with the audience and an unwillingness to be the center of attention. A speaker can be nervous at any time
when giving a speech and the nervousness can occur during any of the following four periods of time: pre-preparation anxiety, which occurs when a speaker realizes that he/she is required to do public speaking in the future; preparation anxiety, which occurs when a speaker starts to prepare a speech; pre-performance anxiety, which occurs when a speaker rehearses his/her speech; and performance anxiety, which occurs when a speaker does the actual public speaking.

With regard to the example of the research study on English public speaking focusing on EFL students, Chen (2009) conducted research on EFL undergraduate students’ English oral presentation anxiety. The purpose of the study was to investigate the level of graduate students’ anxiety and the sources of anxiety for academic oral presentations. The participants were 18 graduate students. Her findings showed that Taiwanese EFL students’ public speaking anxiety was at a moderate level, indicating that students’ anxiety level was not too severe for them to manage.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Participants

The participants in this research study consisted of 208 undergraduate students from both private and governmental universities who took public speaking as either a required course or an elective.

6.2 Material

The questionnaire was adapted from the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety developed by McCroskey (1970) and was divided into four parts, constituting the four stages of public speaking. In each part, there were four statements designed using a five-point Likert scale to find out the participants’ level of anxiety in public speaking. Then, the questionnaire was pilot tested with three people comparable with the research participants and adjusted before being distributed to the respondents.

6.3 Procedures

The questionnaires were distributed to the 208 participants, who were asked to complete them within 20 minutes. Then, upon completion, they were required to return them to the researcher in class.

6.4 Data analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used. The mean values of the data derived from each statement in the questionnaire were interpreted as having the following levels of anxiety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>4.21 – 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>3.41 – 4.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moderately high = 2.61 – 3.40 points  
Low = 1.81 – 2.60 points  
Very low = 1.00 – 1.80 points

7. Results

The results of this research study are divided into two parts, which are the personal information of the participants and the level of anxiety at different stages in English public speaking classes.

7.1 Information of the participants

Regarding participant demographics, it was found that the majority of students who enrolled in English public speaking classes were female (76.9%). Most students were third year students (70.7%), followed by fourth year students. A few participants were first (1.4%) and second year students (1.0%). Regarding students’ majors, it was found that most students were English majors (86.1%), while the rest were non-English major students (13.9%). Most students had taken less than two English speaking subjects each semester (43.3%), with most of their grade point averages ranging between 3.00-3.59 (38.0%).

7.2 Levels of anxiety at different stages in English public speaking

Regarding the data obtained from the questionnaires, the participants showed different levels of anxiety at different stages in English public speaking. Table 4.1 shows the level of anxiety at the pre-preparation stage of English public speaking. The overall mean score for the level of pre-preparation anxiety of the participants in this study was $\bar{X} = 3.60$, showing that students had a high level of anxiety in the pre-preparation stage of public speaking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel tense when I see the words “speech” and “public speech” on a course outline when studying.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I get anxious when I think about an upcoming speech.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. When the instructor announces a speaking assignment in class, I can feel myself getting tense.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel anxious when the teacher announces the date of a speaking assignment</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-preparation anxiety</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 illustrates the level of preparation anxiety in English public speaking classes. The overall mean score for the preparation anxiety of the participants in this study was $\bar{X} = 3.06$, revealing that students expressed anxiety in the preparation stage at a moderately high level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. While preparing to give a speech, I feel tense and nervous.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am unhappy when preparing a speech.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have trouble falling asleep the night before a speech.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. When preparing a speech, I feel anxious and have trouble concentrating on what I am doing.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 presents the level of pre-performance anxiety in English public speaking classes. The overall mean score for the pre-performance anxiety of the participants in this study was $\bar{X} = 3.24$, which indicates that students had a moderate level of anxiety in the pre-performance stage of public speaking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel anxious while rehearsing a speech.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel uncomfortable and stressed while rehearsing a speech.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am in constant fear of forgetting what I prepared to say while rehearsing a speech.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My heart beats very fast while I rehearse a speech.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 describes the level of performance anxiety in English public speaking classes. The overall mean score for the performance anxiety of the participants in this study was $\bar{X} = 3.85$, indicating that students experienced anxiety at a high level in the performance stage.
Table 4.4: Level of performance anxiety in English public speaking classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My hands shake and some parts of my body feel very tense when I am</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delivering a speech.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My heart beats very fast when I am giving a speech.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. While giving a speech, I get so nervous that I forget facts that I</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actually know.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. When I make a mistake while giving a speech, I find it hard to</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concentrate on the parts that follow.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 explains the comparative levels of anxiety at different stages in English public speaking. As can be seen, most participants had the highest anxiety at the performance stage ($\bar{X} = 3.85$) followed by anxiety in the pre-preparation, pre-performance and preparation stages, respectively ($\bar{X} = 3.60$, $\bar{X} = 3.24$ and $\bar{X} = 3.05$). This could be interpreted that students showed a high level of anxiety in the pre-preparation and performance stages, while they expressed a moderate level of anxiety in the preparation and pre-performance stages.

Table 4.5: The comparative level of anxiety at the four different stages in English public speaking classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of anxiety</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-preparation anxiety</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation anxiety</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-performance anxiety</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance anxiety</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Discussion

8.1 Pre-preparation anxiety

As seen in Table 4.5, most students had a high level of anxiety in the pre-preparation stage of public speaking. Most of them agreed that they felt anxious when they realized that they must get involved in English public speaking. The finding is similar to that of Behnke and Sawyer (1999), who found that the highest level of speech state anxiety occurred when students were assigned a public speaking task in class. Behnke and Sawyer (1999) claimed that once students anticipated anxiety related to an upcoming public speaking situation in class, they would express avoidance behavior, such as dropping the course or skipping the speaking task.
In the present study, most students were required to enroll in the speaking course, so it is possible that they may have been worried due to a negative impression the students acquired before actually taking the course. This might have been because English is not their mother tongue, so learners felt anxious once they realized that they must get involved in any English-speaking course.

8.2 Preparation anxiety

In the preparation stage of public speaking, it was found that students showed a moderately high level of anxiety. This finding was congruent with the study of Behnke and Sawyer (1999), who found that the levels of trait and state anxiety of students in the preparation stage were lower than anxiety in the pre-preparation and performance stages. Menzel&Carrell (1994) mentioned that the speech preparation stage showed some positive relationship with the quality of the speech. That is, the more students prepared for their speech, the better speech performance they could achieve.

In the present study, anxiety in the preparation stage was not high; thus, it may be possible that students did not feel much anxiety as their speech preparation might have made them more confident in the quality of their speech.

8.3 Pre-performance anxiety

The findings revealed that like in the preparation stage of public speaking, in the pre-performance stage, students also had a moderately high level of anxiety. In the pre-performance stage, it was possible that students had time to rehearse a speech that they had already prepared so their anxiety was not very high. It may be possible that speech rehearsal was important in building students’ confidence in public speaking and decreasing their anxiety level. This supports the study of Menzel and Carrell (1994), which showed that oral rehearsal contributes to students’ success in their actual speech performance.

8.4 Performance anxiety

The highest level of anxiety in public speaking was found in the performance stage. Most students agreed that they felt anxious when they performed an actual speech in class. This finding was similar to the findings of Behnke and Sawyer (1999), which revealed that students showed the highest level of anxiety when performing a public speech.

Interestingly, as most students in the present study had taken less than two English speaking courses, it is possible that the number of English speaking courses might have contributed to the anxiety students felt when performing a speech as they did not have an adequate chance to practice English speaking skills; this may have then led to anxiety when they were required to speak English in any academic speaking course, such as a public speaking course.

9. Implications of the study

Since the present study revealed that Thai EFL undergraduate students showed anxiety in different stages of public speaking, it is important that public speaking
course instruction take students’ unique level and type of anxiety in each stage of public speaking into consideration.

In terms of the pre-preparation stage of public speaking, it is important that the teacher find ways to change students’ attitude towards English public speaking courses. For instance, the teacher or the course developer might provide students with a course orientation so that they can have a more positive attitude towards English public speaking courses. To motivate students to enroll in English public speaking courses, the teacher could invite professional public speakers to explain the importance of English public speaking skills so that students might have a better impression of English public speaking courses.

Regarding the performance stage of public speaking, in which students showed the highest level of anxiety, it is very important that the teacher find ways to decrease students’ anxiety when they perform an actual speech in English public speaking classes. For example, the university should provide them with more English speaking courses each semester to enable them to have some practice in English oral skill; this might be able to minimize students’ anxiety when they actually enroll in an English public speaking course.

Although the students did not show a high level of anxiety in the preparation and pre-performance stages, teachers still need to focus on both stages. In the preparation stage of public speaking, the teacher should give students more speech preparation time and offer instruction on how to prepare for a speech. For example, the teacher should teach students how to manage the timeframe for their speech preparation step by step so they will understand the proper way to effectively prepare for a speech. In addition, in the pre-performance stage of public speaking, the teacher should assist students by giving advice on the proper way to rehearse a speech. For instance, the teacher might suggest rehearsing without reading the script, while at the same time trying to memorize some important content so they can speak naturally during the actual speech. With the teacher’s advice, students can eventually reduce their anxiety in English public speaking classes.

10. Recommendations for further research

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are presented for future research.

- The number of participants in this study was limited to only 208 undergraduate students from the central part of Thailand. Therefore, more participants from other parts of Thailand and from other levels of education are needed so as to increase the generalizability of the research results.

- As this study investigated only the level of anxiety at different stages of public speaking, further research on the methods that students use to manage their anxiety is needed in order to find ways to help students cope with their anxiety; this will lead to effective English public speaking among Thai students in the long run.
References


This book has been designed in an attempt to provide not only English teachers but also learners with an essential knowledge of vocabulary. With ten chapters on different, but related, topics, the book offers some very useful information on exactly how words play their unique and significant role in language learning and teaching. The topic includes how vocabulary is closely related to grammar, how learners acquire second language vocabulary, and what should be the focus of vocabulary instruction. Each chapter has three sections: Part A: What do we know about this? Part B: What are the problems for learners?, and Part C: How do we teach it? The writers logically support their viewpoints of vocabulary pedagogy with several previous studies on vocabulary acquisition undertaken by well-known scholars in the field.

Whereas Chapter 1 is an introduction to vocabulary in general, e.g. word formations, phonological aspects of words, vocabulary size appropriate for pedagogy and acquisition, Chapter 2 primarily concerns lexical semantics, i.e. how words and their meanings are connected. The concepts of synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and register and connotation are presented. The writers also mention how cognates, words in two different languages derived from the same origin, can sometimes lead learners to develop vocabulary learning problems (McCarthy, 1990). Furthermore, the chapter discusses which kinds of words should be directly introduced to students and suggests various methods of teaching abstract vocabulary, sense relations, etc.

In Chapter 3, the notion of collocation, “how likely it is that two words will occur next to each other, or very near to each other (p. 28)”, is dealt with. In particular, collocations and meaning, register and collocations and differences between weak and strong collocations are clearly explained and exemplified. Learners’ collocational errors seem to emanate from native language influence (Nesselhauf, 2003), overuse and underuse of collocations, and word creation through merging words together or bottom-up. In terms of collocation instruction, teachers are encouraged to adopt both deductive and inductive approaches. The former concentrates on an explanation of the principle first, followed by examples, while the latter pertains to data-driven learning, where learners are given plenty of examples so that they themselves can constitute rules or frequently-and naturally-occurring combinations.

Grammatical relationships between words are the main focus in Chapter 4. The concept of colligation, which is the way words co-occur in grammatical patterns, is contrasted with collocation, which, instead, highlights lexical patterns. Modern corpus-based dictionaries are regarded as a truly useful source for EFL/ESL learners since they supply learners with word meanings as well as grammar. A significant
number of scholars in lexicography agree that grammar and lexis are inseparable and the instruction of one at the expense of the other is not at all advisable (Biber et al, 1999; Carter & McCarthy, 2006). In addition, negative transfer from learners’ L1 is apparently a major source of problems. Teachers, accordingly, should develop lessons and materials based on the “actual” typical errors resulting from their students’ L1; this may, in fact, enhance the students’ vocabulary learning skill as well.

Chapter 5 discusses multi-word items, e.g. compounds, prepositional phrases, phrasal verbs, and lexical chunks. There are several difficulties for learners with regard to multi-word items, e.g. transparency of meaning, fixedness, frequency and usefulness, pronunciation, syntax, and guessing meaning from context (Willis, 2006). The suggested multi-word item instruction methodology is that teachers should consider context and level. “With advanced learners, a more inductive approach can be adopted, whereby learners are left to work things out on their own.” (p. 58). In contrast, when teaching lower-level students, teachers need to offer more support and guidance on function and pronunciation.

Chapter 6 deals with idioms, whose meanings are difficult to identify from each individual component word. Idioms can be placed on a continuum, from more transparent, i.e. easy to understand, to more opaque. Idioms are also fixed in their form; some occur very frequently, whereas some do not. What seems to be the problem for learners studying idioms is that they tend to learn words separately rather than as a chunk. Moreover, learners are often unaware of them. One of the suggestions is teachers should introduce common idioms, together with frequent chunks, downplaying obscure, rare ones.

Chapter 7, links back to some of the key concepts introduced in Chapter 2, and involves word relations, including synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, homonyms, and metaphors. Learners evidently have problems with these words due to a lack of one-to-one correlation between words. For instance, many synonyms do not share the same collocates, word partners, which may account for why learners often misuse collocations that are more likely to occur with one synonym but not another. The authors recommend that teachers avoid or reduce teaching words and their relations in isolation because doing so “runs the risk of generating errors of overgeneralization” (p. 84).

Chapter 8 describes the relationship between vocabulary and discourse analysis. Lexis is crucial for text unity construction, and a good number of features are involved: lexical cohesion, lexical chains and topics, stance, and register. Learners are apparently faced with problems of the four English skills when it comes to an analysis and production of continuous spoken or written English. From a pedagogical viewpoint, learners are expected to be given strategies to enable them to process and produce new language, such as inferencing, identifying lexical relations, and dictogloss.

In Chapter 9, mental lexicon or words in the mind is the focal point. Much like a computer, a learner’s mind functions like a hard disk processing, storing, and
retrieving words. Looking at how the mind organizes vocabulary, this chapter presents the different processes that determine the ways in which mental lexicon is organized: input, storage, and retrieval. The problems pestering students are the sheer volume of new words with which they have to deal. Furthermore, word elements are also problematic for them, such as spelling, pronunciation, form, meaning, derivation, collocation, and connotation and register (Schmitt, 2010). To tackle such problems, theories in second language acquisition (SLA) are reviewed, including Behaviorism, Cognitivism, The Lexical Approach, etc.

Chapter 10 is centered around the sociolinguistic aspects of vocabulary. The influence of media on how people use language, and the vocabulary used in spoken and written genres are discussed. What poses problems for learners is an “awareness deficit”: whether a word is taboo, sexist, or politically incorrect. In addition, learners often fail to use words appropriately according to varieties and registers (Gilquin & Paquot, 2008). Instructional device is to have students work with pairs of words from contrasting registers, encouraging them to utilize dictionaries and other resources, such as the Internet, to identify to which registers the words belong. Teachers may also find it very helpful to explicitly promote strategy learning in vocabulary classroom, placing an emphasis on social use of words.

Readers of *Vocabulary Matrix: Understanding, Learning, Teaching* should find the book readable, accessible, and insightful. The contents are arranged in a well-organized and systematic fashion, helping even learners who are new in lexicology easily follow. EFL/ESL teachers are also expected to considerably benefit from the pedagogical implications provided at the end of each chapter, and they can grasp certain magnificent ideas or tips to ameliorate their vocabulary teaching. Apart from learners and teachers, researchers interested in vocabulary study may also use this book as a stepping stone to enter into the research realm of lexis due to the fact that basic concepts are well illustrated, and the references are comprehensively given for subsequent study.

**References**


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