

Developments of Specific English Communication Skills for Thai Massage Therapists in Chiang Mai

Panadda Jeenpracha*

Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thailand National Sports University, Chiang Mai campus.

Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1. To create English lessons for developing English communication skills for Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai and to find out the effectiveness of the teaching package with them following the criteria 80/80 and 2. To study the opinions of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai towards English lessons to develop English language communication skills for 30 Thai massage therapists who are a sample of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai from Thai Traditional Medical Centre, Chiang Mai Municipality Hospital. The researcher used the purposive sampling method, especially for those who were interested in developing English language skills. This research is experimental research by studying one group, pre-test - post-test design).

The results showed that information about the knowledge and understanding of 30 Thai massage therapists: the highest scores of education were a knowledge that was beneficial to their career. (The average is 4.36) and the statistics of the English skill level was found that the average score level before the English skills training is 40.90 which is in the middle level. The standard deviation is 5.40 and the average after English language skills training is 53.10, which is good. The standard deviation is 5.79 and the statistical analysis used to compare the differences in the English language skills training score of Thai massage therapists for 3 months showed that scores and cognition after (Post-test) were higher than the scores before (Pre-test). There was a statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05. Thus, the average scores after training were higher than the average scores before training. Particularly, the post-test of cognitive scores after the course are over (72.58) before the pre-test (50.00), representing an average increase of 45.16 percent. Therefore, the experiment for the effectiveness of the instructional package with Thai massage therapists can develop the English communication skills and took the post-test better than the pre-test, based on the results of the test and the Thai massage therapists are very satisfied with the course.

Keywords: specific English communication skills/Thai massage therapists

Received: 2021-08-18

Revised: 2021-10-06

Accepted: 2021-10-10

Introduction

Since 2015, Thailand has entered into an ASEAN Economic Community Agreement. that our main responsibilities are concerned with tourism and aviation. As a result, accelerating the adjustment of visa regulations for foreign tourists coming to ASEAN and visa exemptions for ASEAN people traveling within ASEAN. For supporting the information dissemination on ASEAN tourism investment through the internet together with maintenance of tourist sites that are cultural heritage and establishing a collaborative network of academic institutions and related agencies to support in-depth tourism research. Besides, with the Cargo Open Skies Agreement makes the air transportation between them is quicker and easier and will affect the travel industry extremely so that every tourism sector will be ready to serve that. The growth of Thai traditional massage can be said to be a result of the trend in health care. Especially holistic health care is widespread throughout the world and the World Health Organization (2002-2005) announced a collaborative strategy to support traditional / folk medicine and alternative medicine (Junko 2005: 28).

Thai traditional medicine has developed until now, during the period of the 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan 2007 - 2011, there is a strategy for the development of Thai society and quality towards a society of wisdom and learning for ways of development by promoting well-being. Thai people are healthy, both physically and mentally in a pleasant environment, intending to maintain food security and preventative health care by developing alternative medicine and promotion. Thailand's plan focuses on research and development to improve the quality of life and create economic value, manage the protection of intellectual property arising from the development of personnel that can combine traditional Thai and alternative medicine with modern medicine. (Office of the Prime Minister, 2006)

In addition, Health Tourism is one of the tourism attached to health activities. Tourism in this form has been increasing rapidly. The trend of health care is currently strong and many countries in Asia including Thailand are promoting the expansion of the health tourism market. For Thailand, health tourism is an important channel that can increase a lot of income in the country. There is the opportunity to expand the market including investment widely. When the free service sector exposes the ASEAN Economic Community by taking advantage of the cheaper cost of medical services with international standards of treatment and the readiness of tourism resources.

The Ministry of Public Health is an important organization that is directly related to and concerned with the Thai traditional massage. From the policy to support Thai traditional

medicine in conjunction with modern medicine (Western medicine), there are services in various hospitals, resulting in Thai massage becoming popular and more practical use from local wisdom and the body of knowledge on the part of the physical therapist in Thai style as well. As a result, the Institute of Traditional Thai Medicine is established in the Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Public Health. (Institute of Thai Traditional Medicine: 42)

However, the development of Thai massage therapists has obstacles or problems such as using a high budget to prepare the training and they need specialists to teach them how to prepare themselves both the knowledge of Thai traditional massage and foreign languages so they are not only to do self -improvement but also interested in personal readiness to work (Manat Prathuangchit. 1999: 3). Nowadays, the English language plays a role in our lives and people all over the world because the communication with English, whether directly communicating, using the internet, watching TV, watching movies, programming computers, academic manuals, etc. The opportunity to find a job will not be limited to just Thailand with the growth of the tourism business over the past 20 years. English becomes increasingly important as a foreign language that affects the success report of academic conferences (Proceedings) as national research presentations for Graduate Network Northern Rajabhat University, 17th in the management and service in this field of business. Therefore, English is the most important and useful foreign language in Tourism Business (Panit Bunyawattana, 1999)

However, if the language priorities are necessary for ASEAN people English is considered the first mandatory language that citizens in 10 ASEAN countries must practice and improve their ability to use more English, and therefore it is the second language and the formal language. When compared to other ASEAN countries such as Singapore, and Malaysia. Indonesia and the Philippines the weakness of Thailand is that it is not possible to use English in various stages such as English for business, trade, services, tourism, medicine, etc.

Consequently, Thai traditional medicine services and Thai massage therapists should be responsible for learning the ability to solve immediate problems. The important thing is to have the ability to listen and speak English but most of them have difficulty conversing with foreign customers. They are not able to understand and interpret the words of the customers, and the needs of customers, which the problem is caused by the ability to use the language to communicate are not as standard as it should be. This can also affect the tourism business since Thai massage therapists are expected to be able to communicate in English at the basic level and in real-life situations so they have to use language in communication to create understanding and good relationships with customers. It is necessary to understand the foreign culture for their first impressing and they are likely to be back to do the massage again. But most foreign countries need to study English for massage as well. For this reason, the

researcher considers the importance of using activities for communication, especially English listening and speaking skills to increase their ability to talk with many tourists and to prepare themselves to be ready to work in the AEC countries.

Research Objectives

1. To create English lessons for developing English communication skills for Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai and to find out the effectiveness of the teaching package.
2. To study the opinions of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai Province toward English lessons

Research Methodology

A study on the development of specific English communication skills for Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai is experimental research (Pre-experimental Research) by studying one group, before and after the experiment (One group, pre-test - post-test design)

The study method

uses a sample selection method by selecting a sample of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai Municipality Hospital. And to create English lessons for developing English communication skills for Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai by experts and to find out the effectiveness of the teaching package. The data will be collected twice Pre-test and Post-test for 3 months.

Population and sample

30 Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai.

Research Instruments

1. English lessons to develop specific English communication skills which consisted of content, idioms, and technical vocabulary that help develop English communication skills.
2. Test of English communication ability which the researcher created and was approved by the 3 experts.
3. Feedback questionnaire for Thai massage therapists before and after training

Research process

1. Orientation of the objectives and request cooperation from the sample group for participating in the research
2. Data were collected before the experiment by having the respondents answer the questionnaires before attending the English training on Thai massage for the first time.
3. The subjects were trained by English-language experts for 3 months.
4. Data was collected after the end of the experiment for 3 months, with the sample responding to the same questionnaire after the completion of the last training.
5. Use the information to verify the completeness and analyze the data with a software package for summarizing and discussing the research results

Statistics used in the study

The data were analyzed by using the SPSS program for assessing English language skills in Thai massage. Preliminary statistics for discussion of results like percentage, mean, and One group, pre-test-post-test design

Study results

This study presents the results of the English skills training of 30 Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai by conducting a study continuously, at least 1-2 times a week for 3 months, learning activities through the lecture, role-play, and simulation. Assessment from scores before and after the experiment (One group, pre-test - post-test design).

Questionnaire analysis results

The results from the study show that the highest scores are the knowledge gained in the career (average is 4.36).

When considering each issue found that the knowledge gained is beneficial to their career (Average is 4.36), followed by instructor (Average is 4.13) Suitability of activities and content (Average is 3.83) Training place (Average is 3.80) Sorting content from easy to difficult (Mean is 3.76) Appropriateness and easy to understand the content (Average is 3.73) The appropriateness of the media used in training (Average is 3.63) The curriculum documents used in training (Average is 3.50) Training activities within the sub-group of participants (Average is 3.46) and the duration of training (Average is 3.26)

Information about the knowledge and understanding of the participants

| Questions | Experimental group (n = 30) | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------|--|
| | \bar{x} | S.D. | |
| 1. Appropriateness and easy to understand content | 3.73 | 0.52 | |
| 2. Sorting of content from easy to difficult. | 3.76 | 0.43 | |
| 3. Suitability of the media used in the training | 3.63 | 0.61 | |
| 4. Suitability of activities and content | 3.83 | 0.53 | |
| 5. Instructor | 4.13 | 0.34 | |
| 6. Training of activities within a sub-group of participants | 3.46 | 0.57 | |
| 7. Documentation documents used for training. | 3.50 | 0.57 | |
| 8. Duration of training | 3.26 | 0.52 | |
| 9. The training place | 3.80 | 0.48 | |
| 10. Knowledge gained is beneficial to their career. | 4.36 | 0.49 | |

The comparison of the differences in the English language skills training scores of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai.

Results from the study of the table show information on the English skills score of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai.

| Number | Pre-test Score | Z-score Pre-test | T-score Pre-test | Post-test Score | Z-score Post-test | T-score Post-test |
|--------|----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 49 | 1.499 | 64.99 | 58 | 3.165 | 81.65 |
| 2 | 43 | 0.389 | 53.89 | 54 | 2.424 | 74.24 |
| 3 | 36 | -0.907 | 40.93 | 58 | 3.165 | 81.65 |

| Number | Pre-test Score | Z-score Pre-test | T-score Pre-test | Post-test Score | Z-score Post-test | T-score Post-test |
|--------|----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 4 | 51 | 1.869 | 68.69 | 62 | 3.905 | 89.05 |
| 5 | 31 | -1.832 | 31.68 | 52 | 2.054 | 70.54 |
| 6 | 52 | 2.054 | 70.54 | 60 | 3.535 | 85.35 |
| 7 | 38 | -0.537 | 44.63 | 56 | 2.795 | 77.95 |
| 8 | 34 | -1.277 | 37.23 | 52 | 2.054 | 70.54 |
| 9 | 50 | 1.684 | 66.84 | 66 | 4.645 | 96.45 |
| 10 | 49 | 1.499 | 64.99 | 56 | 2.795 | 77.95 |
| 11 | 48 | 1.314 | 63.14 | 63 | 4.090 | 90.90 |
| 12 | 41 | 0.019 | 50.19 | 63 | 4.090 | 90.90 |
| 13 | 39 | -0.352 | 46.48 | 56 | 2.795 | 77.95 |
| 14 | 35 | -1.092 | 39.08 | 49 | 1.499 | 64.99 |
| 15 | 39 | -0.352 | 46.48 | 47 | 1.129 | 61.29 |
| 16 | 42 | 0.204 | 52.04 | 54 | 2.424 | 74.24 |
| 17 | 38 | -0.537 | 44.63 | 46 | 0.944 | 59.44 |
| 18 | 37 | -0.722 | 42.78 | 45 | 0.759 | 57.59 |
| 19 | 39 | -0.352 | 46.48 | 47 | 1.129 | 61.29 |
| 20 | 40 | -0.167 | 48.33 | 51 | 1.869 | 68.69 |
| 21 | 36 | -0.907 | 40.93 | 44 | 0.574 | 55.74 |
| 22 | 42 | 0.204 | 52.04 | 53 | 2.239 | 72.39 |
| 23 | 41 | 0.019 | 50.19 | 49 | 1.499 | 64.99 |
| 24 | 38 | -0.537 | 44.63 | 47 | 1.129 | 61.29 |
| 25 | 42 | 0.204 | 52.04 | 53 | 2.239 | 72.39 |
| 26 | 35 | -1.092 | 39.08 | 47 | 1.129 | 61.29 |
| 27 | 41 | 0.019 | 50.19 | 50 | 1.684 | 66.84 |
| 28 | 36 | -0.907 | 40.93 | 50 | 1.684 | 66.84 |
| 29 | 44 | 0.574 | 55.74 | 52 | 2.054 | 70.54 |
| 30 | 41 | 0.019 | 50.19 | 53 | 2.239 | 72.39 |

When the data from Table 4.2 is used to calculate the statistics with the SPSS program, the results are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 shows the statistics on the English skill level of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai.

From Table 4.3, it is found that the average score level before the English language skills training of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai is 40.90, which is in the middle level. The standard deviation is 5.40 and the average value after the English skills training of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai is 53.10, which is considered good. The standard deviation is 5.79.

| Statistics | English language skill scores of Thai Massage therapists | |
|----------------|--|-----------------|
| | Pre-test Score | Post-test Score |
| Mean | 40.90 | 53.10 |
| N | 30 | 30 |
| Std. Deviation | 5.40 | 5.79 |
| Max | 52.00 | 66.00 |
| Min | 31.00 | 44.00 |

Show the statistics used to compare the differences in the English skills training score of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai.

From Table 4.4, the results of the statistical analysis used to compare the differences in the English skills training score of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai before and after the training show that scores and cognition after the post-test study have more than (72.58) pre-test scores (50.00), representing an average score of 45.16 increased

| | Number | Pre-test | Post-test | The percentage of points increased |
|---|--------|----------|-----------|------------------------------------|
| The differences in the English skills training score of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai before and after the training | 30 | 50.00 | 72.58 | 45.16 |

Conclusions, discussion, and suggestions

This study was quasi-experimental research to study the development of specific English communication skills for Thai massages therapists in Chiang Mai, with the objectives of the research as follows

1. Feedback questionnaire for Thai massage therapists before and after training the population of this study was a group of 30 Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai. Practically, purposive sampling was used. The tools used in the study were questionnaires and English language skills tests.

Part 1: General Knowledge and questionnaire: a questionnaire is a checklist form, consisting of 10 questions.

Part 2: Tests of English skills of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai before and after studying.

For data collection, use the collecting method from samples totaling 30 persons by using the questionnaire to collect data 2 times, which is when the samples come for the first training and the last time of training, completed 1-2 times a week for 3 months. After that, the data were analyzed with the SPSS program to measure the scores. By summarizing it into percentage and mean values and using the paired t-test to analyze the difference in the mean.

Conclusions

Presenting as an overview and the conclusion of the study that is according to the educational objectives set as follows

1. The opinions of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai towards English lessons to develop English language communication skills. Most of the respondents agreed with the training and gained beneficial knowledge in their careers. Next is the lecture by the instructor, suitability of activities and content, training place, sorting of content from easy to difficult, appropriateness and easy to understand the content, suitability of the media used in the training, course documents used in training, training of activities within a sub-group of participants, and the duration of the training respectively.

A comparison of the differences in the English language skills training score of Thai massage therapists in Chiang Mai for 3 months showed that scores and cognition after post-test were higher than the pre-test scores of the sample. Differences were statistically significant at the level of 0.05 by the average score after receiving training than the average score before receiving skill training.

Research Discussion

The study found that the majority of Thai massage therapists use less English in their massage skills for communicating with foreigners because some of them lack training and they often use their body language. Some massage therapists use vocabulary skills that are not as good as they should be. To enhance their communication skills to be effective, therefore the researcher was conducting a training course for them on Thai massage services and specific terms. Therefore, from the research and inquiry for a period of 3 months, training, such as 1-2 days, received good feedback. And language courses in Thai massage are still popular and this study shows that the English language skills training in Thai massage affects their quality of life in all aspects.

Suggestions

Nowadays, Thai massage is popular with both Thais and foreigners. Because it can help the body with many things such as reducing pain, muscle stiffness, headache, or numbness in the body, hands, feet, etc. Later, more research has started to increase the working principles and results that occur within various systems. In the body when receiving a massage. It appears that massage affects many bodily systems such as the circulatory system, lymphatic circulation system, muscular system, nervous system, digestive system, hormonal system, or even skin system by helping various systems to work better and more efficiently. However, most research is mentioned other forms of massage, such as aromatherapy, on the other hand, there are not much research concerning foreign languages to enhance their communication skills such as Chinese, French, English, and many languages in massage. The Thai massage therapists, therefore, agreed that there should be further studies to be more beneficial for supporting their occupation in the future and to be more accepted than in the past for reaching international standards.

General suggestion

1. Should enhance more benefits of English language skills training in Thai massage to promote the Thai massage career.

2. Should promote the foreign language education and development of language training courses on Thai massage for reaching international standards

Suggestions for further research

Expand opportunities for education, skills, and language to be diverse in the career of Thai massage in Chiang Mai and nearby provinces.

Reference

Institute of Thai Traditional Medicine, **Department of Medical Services**, Ministry of Public Health (1994). Summary of the Seminar on Traditional Thai Medicine Development Report in Regional Region.

Junko Ida. (2005) **Promoting Thai Massage in Villages in Northern Thailand: Local Practices and the Power of Discourse "Thai Wisdom"**, Academic Document 42, Health Wisdom, Negotiable Practice of Local Knowledge, Bangkok: Center Sirithorn Anthropology (Public organization)

Manat Prathaungchit (1999). **Development of self-study package for preliminary graphic skills training for public health officers**. Srinakharinwirot University.

Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board Office of the Prime Minister. (2006). **Economic Development Plan and National Society, Issue 10, 2007 - 2011**. VJ Printing Limited Partnership, Bangkok.

Panit Bunyawattana. (1999). **The research report on the English language needs in the tourism business**. Chiang Mai: Department of English Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Mai University.