การสำรวจความต้องการเรียนภาษาจีน: สำหรับวิชาชีพพยาบาลในจังหวัดภูเก็ต
A Needs Survey of Learning Chinese: Nursing Profession in Phuket Province

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บทคัดย่อ

ภาษาจีนเพื่อวัตถุประสงค์เฉพาะ (CSP) เป็นกระบวนทัศน์ใหม่ทางการเรียนการสอนภาษา อันเป็น
ผลจากเศรษฐกิจจีนที่เติบโตขึ้นในศตวรรษที่ 21 การศึกษาวิจัยทาง CSP นั้นสามารถทำได้โดยการนำแนวทาง
ของภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อวัตถุประสงค์เฉพาะ (ESP) ที่ใช้ผลจากการสำรวจความต้องการของผู้เรียนเป็นรากฐาน
ของการสร้างหลักสูตรมาปรับใช้ ถึงแม้ทั้งสองสาขานี้จะมีความแตกต่างกันในรายละเอียดบ้าง การศึกษานี้มี
วัตถุประสงค์สองประการคือ เพื่อสำรวจความต้องการเรียนภาษาจีนของพยาบาล และเพื่อเสนอแนวทางการ
ออกแบบหลักสูตรให้เหมาะสมกับผู้เรียนกลุ่มเป้าหมาย ผู้วิจัยเก็บข้อมูลจากพยาบาลจำนวน 100 คน ที่ปฏิบัติ
งานอยู่ในโรงพยาบาลของรัฐในภูเก็ต งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้เก็บข้อมูลโดยใช้แบบสอบถามออนไลน์ ข้อมูลนำมาวิเคราะห์
โดยวิธีการวิเคราะห์สถิติเชิงพรรณนา ผลการวิเคราะห์แสดงให้เห็นว่ากลุ่มเป้าหมายมีความต้องการในการเรียน
ภาษาจีนสูงโดยเฉพาะทักษะการฟังและการพูด เพื่อสื่อสารกับผู้ป่วย และญาติผู้ป่วย ส่วนทักษะการอ่านและ
การเขียนไม่เป็นที่ต้องการมากนัก งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้จึงเสนอว่า โรงพยาบาลในจังหวัดภูเก็ตควรจัดอบรมหลักสูตร
ภาษาจีนในลักษณะของการอบรมภายใน โดยออกแบบหลักสูตรให้สนองความต้องการและความพึงใจดังที่
รายงานในการศึกษานี้

คำสำคัญ: **การสำรวจความต้องการจำเป็น การพยาบาล ภาษาจีน**

Abstract

As a result of Chinese economic growth in the 21st century, Chinese for Specific
Purposes (CPS) has become a new paradigm for the teaching and learning of language. Despite
some differences, it is reasonable to adapt the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) framework,
in which a Needs analysis is fundamental for course design, into the CPS process. This study
has two aims: to survey the need for nurses in Phuket to learn the Chinese language, and
to suggest a course design for the target learners. Data were collected from 100 nurses
working in three public hospitals on Phuket Island. The research instrument was an online
questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results show a high
demand for learning Chinese, especially listening and speaking skills for communicating with
patients and their relatives. Writing and reading skills are not highly desired by the target
learners. Therefore, it is recommended that hospitals in Phuket should arrange in-house
Chinese language courses, with course design based on the learners' needs and preferences
reported in this study.

Keywords: Needs, Nursing, Chinese language

Rationale of the Study

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Thailand, whose economy depends greatly on tourism, has suffered a dramatic decrease in tourist arrivals. Phuket, the second most important tourist destination in the country, was particularly damaged. In an attempt to recover the country's economy, the Thai government decided to re-open the country for international tourists to visit Phuket from July 1st, 2021 under the 'Phuket sandbox' campaign. [1]

The pandemic crisis forces new normal behaviors on people around the world. The 21st century has seen increasing demand for health tourism in Phuket [2]. Health tourism offers a wide range of health and medical services such as illness treatment, spa, beauty treatment, and dental services. Phuket is thought to have a high potential to become a hub of international healthcare due to its tourist facilities and tropical environment, and the province development plan envisages the island exploiting its potential through appropriate policies and programs. To this end, the province plans to develop its manpower to provide health services at an international level. Language skills are the key to this development, and the present research is aimed at diagnosing the current status and possible direction for those plans.

According to Kanoksilapatharm [3], the five most important foreign languages in Thailand are English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Arabic. English for specific purposes (ESP) is the most important focus and takes the major role in both economic and academic life in the country. Chinese is the second most important foreign language, but its importance is increasing. In Phuket, where this survey has been conducted, the speakers of Chinese are important to the economy. Statistical records show that the Chinese are one of the major international tourist groups visiting Phuket, alongside Europeans and Russians. Before the pandemic, Phuket received many Chinese travelers every year. According to Airports of Thailand (Public) Co.Ltd. [4], the number of Chinese travelers that disembarked at Phuket International Airport in 2019 was over two million, being a 38% share of the total number of international visitors. During the pandemic, the number of Chinese travelers dropped significantly to 0.46 million, which represented a 19.8% share of international travelers, but it is expected to recover in the future.

With the huge numbers of Chinese tourists in the area, the Chinese language has become important in the economy. For health services in particular and for nurses specifically, Chinese language skills are important, as many Chinese people do not communicate in English. Therefore, there is a need to survey the demand for learning Chinese amongst nurses in Phuket and to identify their needs. This survey could thus contribute to a plan for human resource development in the health services industry in Phuket. Demands for foreign language learning are crucial for nursing, especially in non-English-speaking countries.

Significance of the study

Despite the significant importance of the Chinese language in the Thai economy, especially in Phuket where there are many Chinese visitors and residents, Chinese language training has never been provided for medical professionals. The author hopes to fill this gap by surveying the demand for learning Chinese among nurses. This work has two research questions. First, what is the demand for learning Chinese from nurses working in Phuket? Second, how Chinese language training courses might be designed for nurses in Phuket?

Literature Review

Needs analysis

According to Rahman [5], English for specific purposes (ESP) is specialized English teaching and learning rather than general English teaching. After World War II, English gained importance as the means of international communication, development, and research. ESP emerged as a specific field. There have been many experts interested in ESP, for example, Robinson [6], Hutchinson & Waters [7], and Dudley-Evans & St.John [8]. They offered theory and guidelines for ESP courses. Among the different models offered by experts, Hutchinson & Waters [7] provided a useful guideline for needs analysis of ESP, and this guideline is considered applicable for the teaching and learning of any foreign language for specific purposes. Language courses for specific purposes would best succeed using a learning-center approach. Designing courses for language for specific purposes is more challenging than doing so for general language courses. Course designers need to consider three important factors, namely: language descriptions, theories of learning, and needs analysis. Language descriptions refer to how the language is described according to the learning purposes; for example, language functions and language structures. Learning theory is about how learners learn the language and involves learners' behaviors, cognitions, and affections. Needs analysis is the other important factor in designing language courses. Definitely, it helps the course designer to understand the specific needs of the learners. The three factors are interdependent as presented in Figure1.
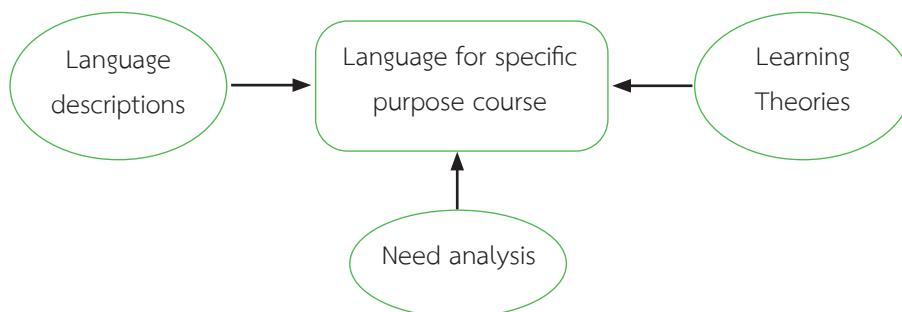
(adapted from Hutchison and Waters [7])

Figure 1. Designing courses for language for specific purposes

Furthermore, Hutchinson & Waters [7] explain that needs in language learning can be divided into target needs and learning needs. The former refers to linguistic features in communication situations, e.g. a business person needs to master language for business contexts such as meetings, emails, and reports. The latter refers to how learners learn the target language. As well as requiring motivation, success in language learning lies in course design. For example, reading materials and classroom activities should appeal to the learners rather than boring them. Hutchinson & Waters [7] elaborated further on the target needs that the course designers must identify; there are three components: Necessity, Lack and Want in the target needs. 'Necessity' is the language knowledge to be used in target situations. For instance, writing business emails is necessary for business people. Then, it is also important to find out the knowledge that the learners already have to identify the 'Lack' to be learned. For instance, learners might have basic writing skills for business emails but lack knowledge of a polite approach. Lastly, it is also important to learn from the learners' perspectives of what they 'Want', which might not totally agree with the course administrators' designs. All three components should be considered when designing a language course for specific purposes.

The guideline proposed by Hutchinson & Waters [7] is useful and applicable for needs surveys of language for specific purposes. It has been developed into the work of Dudley-Evans & St John [8] by extending the model into eight components: professional information of the learners, personal information of the learners, the target language skill of the learners, learners' lacks, language learning information, the use of the language in the target situations, leaners' wants, and the environmental situation i.e. how the courses will be provided.

From different theories and models offered by different ESP scholars, Rahman [5] concluded that ESP courses are usually offered to adults rather than school students. The learners of ESP already have English language skills, and the ESP courses provide them with language to improve their skills in the area of specialization. To design effective ESP courses, a needs analysis is crucial because it provides information on which to base the course design. The ESP needs analysis consists of three fundamental components. Firstly, Target situation Analysis (TSA) refers to the analysis of language to be used in learners' professional or academic settings. Secondly, Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) refers to the analysis from learners' perspectives on what they want to learn. Lastly, Present Situation Analysis (PSA) refers to the analysis of learners' strengths and weaknesses in different variables such as learners themselves, teaching and learning resources, and society.

It is widely agreed that the design of courses on language for a specific purpose should be based on a needs analysis. There are some studies on needs analysis to establish ESP courses for the medical profession to be reviewed as background knowledge for this study.

Woragittanon & Suratatdecha [9] employed Hutchinson & Waters [7]' model of needs analysis to analyze the needs when studying English for medical students in Thailand with the aim of the ASEAN Economic Community. The researchers conducted their study in four hospitals with 162 participants using a questionnaire. Results showed that the participants expressed their needs in English learning with different aims which were: to learn English for academic purposes, for their future career advancement, and to communicate with foreigners and patients.

There are other needs surveys for English for medical staff in non-native English-speaking countries using different methods. For instance, Lodhi et al. [10] conducted a need analysis of English in medical students and doctors in three medical colleges in Pakistan. The data was collected by a questionnaire and was analyzed using a Likert scale. Kayaoglu & Akbas [11] investigated medical students' needs in learning English at a university in Turkey. Data was collected from 169 first-year medical students using a questionnaire. Further, Finch [12] conducted a need analysis to understand the demands and expectations of the learners. Based on the results of the needs analysis, English teaching materials were designed that emphasized interaction skills, consulting skills, and relevant vocabulary.

As can be seen above, the findings of previous studies confirmed the importance of English in the medical profession in non-native English peaking societies. There are fewer studies on the needs analysis of the Chinese language for medical staff. However, in some places where there are many Chinese residents, it has been documented that the Chinese language was required in medical operations. Lai [13] conducted a needs analysis for the Chinese language in healthcare professionals in New York. Data were obtained from several sources such as class observations and interviews with stakeholders. From the results, Lai [13] suggested several teaching approaches such as listening practice, speaking drills, medical vocabulary practice, and role plays.

Chinese language teaching and learning in Thailand

We now turn to Chinese language teaching and learning in Thailand. The Chinese language has been taught as a foreign language in Thailand for decades and has been included in school curriculums and university programs throughout the country. According to Kanoksilpatham [14] Chinese language teaching in Thailand does not yield successful results. She conducted a national survey to provide an overview of the problems in high schools in Thailand. The results suggested a development plan to improve Chinese teaching and learning in the country. Firstly, both Thai and native teachers should receive proper training to enhance their professional and motivational skills. Secondly, textbooks should be created specifically for Thai learners. Thirdly, all curricula should be standardized. Lastly, the national exam should be redesigned to better assess students' language ability.

Research on Chinese language teaching and learning in Thailand mostly focuses on schools and universities, with rare attention to the professions even though the importance of the Chinese language for economic growth in this century is undeniable. There are few studies on Chinese for professionals in Thailand. In 2019, Song and Chalermnirundorn [15] organized a short course on the Chinese language for a group of staff working in a cosmetics company by focusing on conversation practice. The researchers concluded that a role-play method was an effective way to practise Chinese speaking. Kaewbut [16] conducted a needs analysis of learning Chinese among Thai staff who worked at Phuket International Airport. Data were collected by a questionnaire survey and a group interview. Results showed that the respondents expressed interest in learning Chinese speaking and listening.

Another relevant work on Phuket island was by Jangjai & Pathanasin [17] on using technology for self-study. The researchers explained that the main problem in providing Chinese language training in Phuket was the lack of qualified teachers. To solve this problem, the researchers designed a web-based application for self-study. The participants worked in front-office sections in three different hotels where staff had daily contact with Chinese customers. The participants were trained to conduct self-study online for one month. The content was created specifically for the work of hotel front-office staff. The results of pre-and post-tests indicated that learners had progressed, and the satisfaction with the web-based application was positive because the participants liked to be able to practise at convenient times and no cost. Even though Jangjai and Pathanasin's work was not in medical services, it showed that the Chinese language is important for the service industry in Phuket.

In sum, all ESP scholars have agreed that needs analysis is important and should be conducted prior to course design because it can provide information to help design the course. There are many different frameworks for the matter. However, all focused on ESP assume that learners have acquired English at some level. Although Chinese for Specific Purposes (CSP) has been developed, it could be inferred from the literature review that learners of CSP differ from those of ESP, especially in target language skills. While ESP learners have background English skills, most CSP learners do not have knowledge beyond basic Chinese. However, the target language situations (TSA) between the two can be comparable. Since CSP is a newer research paradigm, it is feasible to exploit the ESP framework in conducting a needs analysis. Thus, the current study adopts the guideline of ESP needs analysis in its survey of needs in learning the Chinese language by nurses in Phuket.

Methodology

Participants

The participants in this study were 100 nurses who work in three different public hospitals on Phuket island. The three hospitals were chosen based on their sizes and locations. All hospitals in the present study are of a similar size (60 patient beds) and are in different types of areas: a local residential area (hospital A), a foreign residential area (hospital B), and a tourist area (hospital C). The three hospitals selected in the current study were suitable because they differ from other private hospitals and big hospitals where full-time Chinese interpreters are employed to provide services to Chinese patients. Figure 2 shows the locations of the study sites.
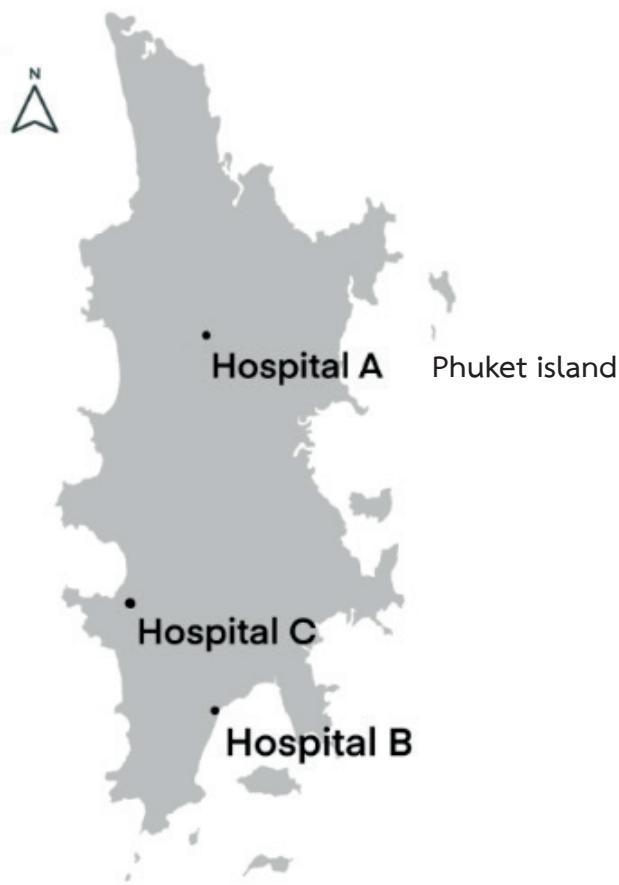
Figure 2. Locations of the three hospitals that participated in the survey

The participants were selected using convenient sampling methods. Table 1 shows the number of participants from the three hospitals.

Table 1 Surveyed Participants by each hospital in the survey

Hospitals	Hospital size (No. of beds)	No., % (N=100)
A	60	30, 30%
B	60	30, 30%
C	60	40, 40%

Research instrument

It can be seen in previous studies presented in the literature review above that questionnaires were a practical tool to collect data on needs analysis. By adapting questions from the previous studies, the questionnaire was constructed in four steps. Firstly, the researcher created questions by adapting from previous studies and then formatted them into an online questionnaire using Google Form. Secondly, the questionnaire was piloted with five people to ensure understanding, clarity, and neatness of the form. Thirdly, the questionnaire was revised according to the result of the pilot trial. Finally, it was used in a second trial for the final check. The questionnaire consisted of four parts. Each part was designed to elicit information relevant to the target learners' perspectives on learning the Chinese language for nursing.

Part A collected Socio-demographic characteristics of the surveyed participants. This part consisted of five questions i.e., age, gender, years of working, and working units. Ages and genders were assessed by categorical variables. Years of working and working units were asked by using open-ended questions.

Part B was a Chinese language experience section which consisted of four questions about their knowledge of the Chinese language and their working experience using Chinese language. There were three binary questions (Yes/No) and one open-ended question (i.e., What methods do you use to communicate with Chinese patients and their relatives?).

Part C surveyed participants' views on the usefulness of Chinese language in their work. There were two main topics, each contained four questions. The participants were asked to rate the degree of usefulness/importance on a Likert scale of 1-5 where "1" referred to "Very Low" and "5" referred to "Very High".

Part D was a Learning needs section which consisted of four questions to elicit target learners' preferences on teaching and learning methods. There were three categorical questions and one open-ended question.

Validity and Reliability of the instrument

The content validity was assessed by seeking advice from a professional nurse to

ensure the coverage of the test items. For the reliability of the questionnaire, the internal consistency of the rating scale questions was measured by Cronbach's alpha test. The results showed that all the rating scale questions had a relatively high reliability with overall Cronbach alpha = 0.8.

Data Collection

To collect data, the researcher contacted a Head Nurse in each hospital to explain the research objectives and ask them to assist with the distribution of questionnaires via a QR code. Before answering the questionnaire, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of participation. Participants were advised that all electronic-based participant information would be stored in password-protected files accessible only by the researcher. Additionally, personal identifiable information would be removed from electronic data. The participants were informed that the decision to join (or not to join) the survey would not affect their work appraisals. The participants were instructed to check the boxes if they understood the purpose of the study and consented to participate in the survey. The duration of data collection for all three hospitals was approximately one month.

Data Analysis

Variables assessed in the open-ended responses were grouped into categorical variables. Numbers and percentages were used to describe categorical variables. The Likert scale variables were presented using mean and standard deviation (SD.) Chi-square was used to test the difference in the proportions.

Results

Socio-demographic information

Of 102 potential study participants, 100 participants consented to join the study. Results showed that the majority of participants (61%) were aged between 20-30 years old, and the second most frequent (23%) age group was between 41-50 years old (Figure 3). Sixty-four (64%) of the participants have been working in their current hospitals for 5-10 years, and 30% of them have been working for over 10 years in the same hospitals. Regarding gender, 91% of the participants are female. Lastly, 70% of the participants work in units where nurses serve low numbers of patients e.g. pediatric clinics, and few works in the units where nurses serve many patients e.g. Emergency Room (ER) and the Out-Patient Department (OPD).
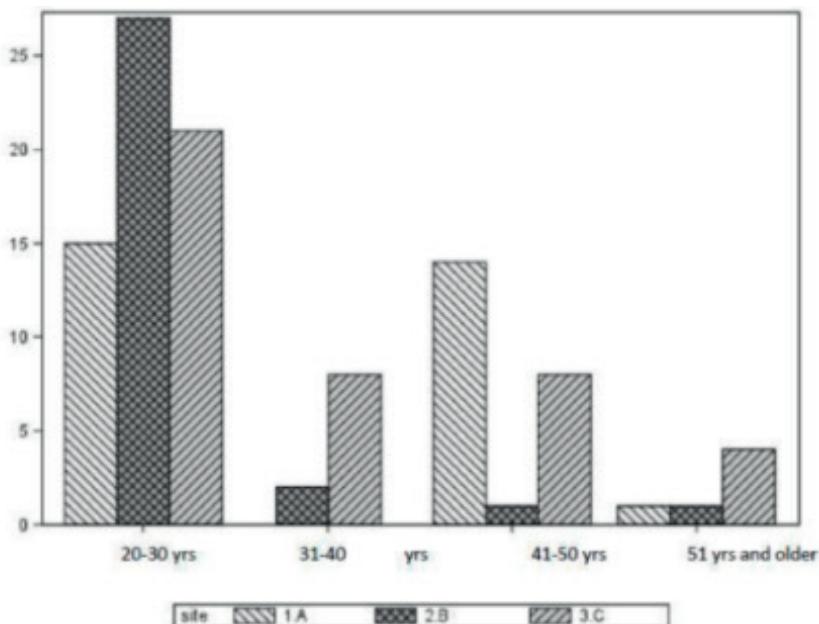
Figure 3. Age of surveyed participants

In terms of their Chinese language background, 75% of participants have never received Chinese language training. The rest of the sample, who have received training, evaluated their Chinese skill at relatively low and very low (12% and 13% respectively). However, 78% of the participants reported having had experience providing nursing services to Chinese patients. Furthermore, on the open-ended question regarding methods of communication, it was found that the participants employed different methods to communicate with Chinese patients namely: using smartphone applications only (42%), speaking English only (20%), speaking Chinese only (15%), using interpreter only (1%), and mix methods (84%) (Figure 4).
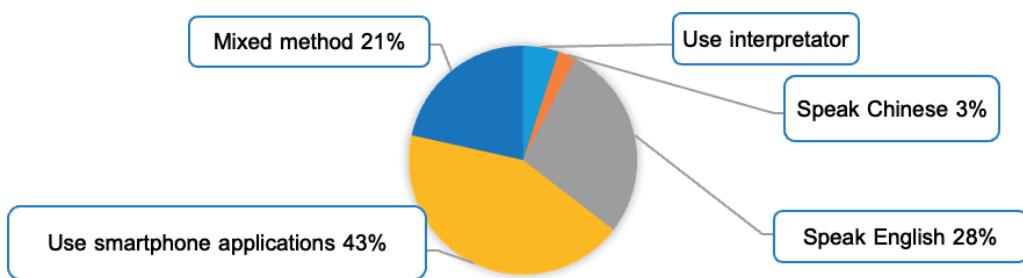

Figure 4. Communication methods commonly used by the surveyed participants in the survey

The usefulness and importance of Chinese language in nursing

This part surveyed participants' views on the usefulness of Chinese language in their work. Table 2 shows the statistical results of the responses.

Table 2 View's on importance of Chinese language in nursing

View	Items	Mean (SD)
Usefulness	Everyday conversation	3.45 (1.10)
	Communicate with patients	3.82 (1.00)
	Communicate with patients' relatives	3.76 (1.04)
	Communicate with colleagues	2.46 (1.17)
Importance	Listening	3.48 (1.34)
	Speaking	3.51 (1.37)
	Reading	2.90 (1.28)
	Writing	2.71 (1.18)

As can be seen in Table 2, surveyed participants indicated that the usefulness of the Chinese language in nursing was mostly in communicating with Chinese patients. The least utility of the Chinese language is in communicating with colleagues. For the importance of the Chinese language in nursing, surveyed participants described the listening and speaking skills as the most important skills.

The last part of the questionnaire revealed participants' preferences for learning the Chinese language. The results of the survey are presented in Table 3. Note that there were no significant comments in the open-ended questions, so nothing is reported here.

Table 3 Preferences for learning Chinese language in nursing

Preference	% (N=100)
Preference for teachers	
Native Chinese teachers only	5
Thai teachers only	11
Both native and Thai teachers	78
No preference	6
No. of hours per week for self-study	
1-2 hours	82
3-4 hours	17
5-6 hours	1
More than 6 hours	0
Using technology for self-study	
Yes	78
No/Not sure	22

As can be seen in Table 3, most participants (78%) showed preference to learn Chinese with both native and Thai teachers. 82% of the participants could allocate 1-2 hours per hour for self-study and 78% of them agreed to use technology to assist in their self-study.

To triangulate the results, the researcher informally interviewed the supervisors of each hospital by telephone conversations to elicit general information on Chinese patients and their in-house training. The researcher has been informed that all hospitals frequently received Chinese patients, however, they have never arranged Chinese language training for their staff. All agreed that the Chinese training course should benefit the hospital directly.

Pedagogical implication

The second aim of the present study is to suggest a possible Chinese language program for nurses. The program should be arranged as in-house training so that lessons can be designed specifically to meet learners' demands. Unlike ESP course designs where learners have acquired the English language at some level, the analysis reveals that CSP for the target learners of the current study should be designed based on the principle that the learners do not have background Chinese language skills. Commercial textbooks that are available in the market would not be suitable, so textbooks should be created specifically. Thus, Pinyin, the Romanized alphabet, should be employed exclusively and instruction should be given in the learners' mother tongue for them to be able to comprehend.

In terms of content design, the results suggested that the content should be limited to basic conversations between nurses and patients/ patients' relatives rather than general Chinese and Chinese for academic purposes such as grammar and advanced vocabulary. Examples of useful phrases and sentences that should be taught are: asking for patient's information, and medical records and giving medical instructions as follow:

Qǐng nín zài hòuzhěn shì děng yīxià. Yīshēng mǎshàng jiù lái.

(Please wait here, the doctor will come soon.)

Also, learners should be taught useful vocabulary for their daily work in hospitals such as:

yīyuàn/ guàhào chù/jízhěn shì/shōu kuǎn chù/yàofáng/fā yào shì/ bìngchuáng

(hospital, registration, emergency, cashier, pharmacy, hospital beds)

In the examples above, learners can practise useful dialogs and words using Pinyin alphabets with bold letters to emphasize stress sounds. In addition, learners should have opportunities to practice speaking and listening with native speakers of Chinese. This could be taught using role-play methods. It is suggested that in creating a role-play activity, the teachers should invite Chinese people to participate whenever possible. Moreover, learners should practise pronunciation, especially Chinese sounds that are problematic for Thai learners such as 鱼, 学, and 火.

In addition, lesson plans should include self-practice, for example, reviewing knowledge that the learners have learnt in class. The results indicate that suitable self-practice assignments should require 1-2 hours per week and it can be designed to be an online practice. Using technology would allow learners to practice anytime from anywhere. Also, it reduces workload of teachers on marking, monitoring, and recording learners' progress.

Lastly, knowledge of Chinese culture that might be useful for nursing should be taught to learners. Basic knowledge of cultural differences between Chinese and Thai would contribute to the success in providing health services and avoid misunderstandings between nurses and patients/ patients' relatives. For example, appropriate ways to approach patients, to give instructions/advice to patients' relatives while at the hospital, etc.

Discussion

Results of the analysis showed reasonable demand for learning the Chinese language for nurses who work on Phuket island. As can be seen from the results, a high percentage (78%) of participants have had experience providing nursing services to Chinese patients. Unfortunately, most of them (75%) never received any training in this important language. Consequently, most of them rely mainly on smartphone applications to communicate with their patients. Although the applications are convenient, it could risk a serious misunderstanding because medical services require specific knowledge. This confirms that Chinese language courses should be arranged specifically for nurses who work in Phuket.

The results of the survey indicate that the target learners are interested in learning Chinese as a foreign language with an emphasis on listening and speaking skills to communicate with patients and patients' relatives (Table 2). This result corresponds to previous studies [13] and [16], that demands on learning Chinese language for professionals were mainly for listening and speaking skills. In terms of course design, Table 3 reveals that the participants significantly preferred to practise Chinese with both native and Thai teachers. This result pointed out that the participants would be more comfortable to learn with Thai teachers who can explain and answer questions in Thai. In the meantime, they also believe that native speakers would be good models for them to practise with. In addition, materials, textbooks, and class activities should be designed to recognize learners' lack of Chinese language background. The results highlight the discrepancy between ESP and CSP course designs.

Learning a foreign language requires effort and self-study. The results show that the target learners are aware of this issue and 82% of them said they could allocate 1-2 hours per week for self-study. This result indicates that their motivation for learning Chinese language was for work duties. Further, most of the participants (78%) have no objection to using

technology to practise their lessons. This result corresponds with previous observation that using technology for self-study is a fruitful way of language practice [17].

Conclusion

Health tourism is a new trend in the tourism industry especially stimulated by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is crucial for Phuket to prepare for this trend since the island is a world-famous destination. With a huge number of Chinese tourists every year, the Chinese language has become a language of economic importance in Phuket. To follow the trend of health tourism, Chinese language courses should be provided for medical staff who work in Phuket, especially nurses who are front-line staff in encounters with Chinese patients. To design an effective language course, a needs analysis has to be conducted to understand learners' demands in learning the language. This study surveyed the needs of learning Chinese language in nurses who work in Phuket. The participants were 100 nurses from three different public hospitals; data has been obtained by an online questionnaire.

The results show that most of the respondents (78%) have had experience providing nurse services to Chinese patients, but 75% of all respondents cannot communicate in Chinese. Consequently, they employed several methods to communicate with their patients e.g. using smartphone applications and speaking English. When asked to rate the importance of Chinese language in nursing services, the respondents rated 'communicate with patients' and communicate with patients' relative' at a high level. The results of the survey correspond to previous studies in the field of Chinese for professional [13]; [16] and [17]. That is to say, the participants expressed demands for learning Chinese to communicate with customers in their work rather than for academic or social life. Consequently, it is proposed that Chinese language courses for nurses in Phuket should be designed by focusing on listening and speaking skills. Team teaching of Thai and native Chinese teachers is preferred. If homework is assigned, it should not require more than two hours per week. Last but not least, teachers should exploit technology in teaching for example self-study practice.

Acknowledgement

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