



การจัดการเรียนการสอน ความท้าทาย และความต้องการในการพัฒนาตนเอง  
ของครูผู้สอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษระดับมัธยมศึกษา

**In-Service Secondary School English Language Teachers' Instructional Practices,  
Challenges, and their Training Needs: A Focus Group Interview Study**

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**บทคัดย่อ**

การวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพในครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อที่จะศึกษาการจัดการเรียนการสอนในชั้นเรียนของครูผู้สอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ ใน 4 ประเด็นหลัก คือ ภูมิหลังทางการศึกษา การจัดการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษของครู ความท้าทายในการจัดการเรียนการสอน และลักษณะของการอบรมที่ครูต้องการ โดยกลุ่มตัวอย่างในการศึกษาในครั้งนี้คือ ครูสุภาพสตรีผู้สอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษระดับชั้นมัธยมศึกษาในจังหวัดนครราชสีมา ซึ่งสมัครใจเข้าร่วมการศึกษาในครั้งนี้ จำนวนทั้งสิ้น 8 คน สังกัดโรงเรียนมัธยมศึกษาของรัฐบาลในเขตอำเภอเมืองจำนวน 6 คน และอำเภอตากใบ จำนวน 2 คน ซึ่งกลุ่มตัวอย่างทั้งหมดมีประสบการณ์ในการสอนภาษาอังกฤษระหว่าง 5-20 ปี และผ่านการอบรมเพื่อพัฒนาตนเองมาแล้ว การวิจัยในครั้งนี้เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลจากการสนทนากลุ่มและนำข้อมูลที่ได้มาวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา

ผลจากการวิจัยพบว่าครูจัดการเรียนการสอนในชั้นเรียนและแก้ไขปัญหาในการสอนโดยใช้ความรู้จากการเข้าร่วมการอบรม และประสบการณ์การสอน ครูเชื่อว่าการนำเอาประเด็นทางวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่นและประเด็นต่างๆ ของโลกมาใช้ในการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ สามารถช่วยพัฒนาทักษะทางภาษาของผู้เรียนและสร้างความเข้าใจในความแตกต่างระหว่างวัฒนธรรมให้กับผู้เรียน นอกจากนี้ครูมีความต้องการที่จะเข้าร่วมการอบรมที่จัดอบรมด้วยวิธีการและกิจกรรมที่หลากหลาย โดยครูส่วนใหญ่เห็นว่าการอบรมเพื่อพัฒนาตนเองของครูไม่เพียงแต่มีผลต่อการพัฒนาในเรื่องความรู้ ความสามารถ และพัฒนาคุณภาพการจัดการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษของครู แต่ยังสามารถช่วยพัฒนาผลสัมฤทธิ์ทางการเรียนของผู้เรียนอีกด้วย

**คำสำคัญ:** การจัดการเรียนการสอน ความต้องการ ความท้าทาย การพัฒนาตนเอง ครูผู้สอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ

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**ABSTRACT**

This article aims to report the findings of a descriptive qualitative study on in-service teachers' beliefs toward their teaching practices, teachers' beliefs concerning integrating local and global issues into English lessons, the challenges that they faced throughout their professional growth, thus far, and their needs of the training program, as reported by eight Thai female high school teachers of English in Narathiwat province. All of them volunteered to participate in the present study. Six of these English language teachers are from an urban high school, and two of them are from a high school in Tak Bai District. They all participated in the data collection. All of them had experiences for participating in the professional training program. The data were collected by means of focus group interviews and analyzed in order to identify teachers' educational backgrounds, teachers' teaching practices, challenging issues, and their needs of a training program.

The findings clarified that Thai English language teachers faced many problems concerning their teaching practices and their workloads. However, all of them deal with those problems based on their knowledge and teaching experiences. Additionally, they needed to attend the training courses, in which various active activities were done such as doing workshops, and sharing ideas rather than lecturing. They agreed that the teacher professional development (TPD) training program increased their professional knowledge and practices and improved their teaching quality. They also mentioned that attending such a training program can improve not only their instructional knowledge and practices, but also their students' learning outcomes. Moreover, all teachers of English thought positively about integrating local and global issues into English classrooms. They proposed that integrating local topics can develop students' English proficiencies, cultural understanding, students' attitudes of cultural differences, and cultural awareness.

**Keywords:** In-Service teachers; teachers' reflections; teaching practices; integrating local and global issues; training needs

**INTRODUCTION**

As a result of the educational reform, the Teachers Council of Thailand was appointed to continuously provide both pre-service and in-service teachers the professional skills through various activities (Atagi, 2011). That was why the proposal for Second Decade of Educational Reform (2009-2018), formulated by the Office of the Education Council (2009), stated that both Thai English language teachers and learners were trained and practiced to prepare themselves for a widely used foreign language as a second language, and those of neighboring ASEAN countries, or those of interest to learners (Office of the Educational Council, 2009). The Teachers Council of Thailand's Regulations on Professional Standards and Ethics B.E. 2548 (A.D. 2005) mentioned a specific set of standard knowledge for Thai teachers, which consists of nine areas: language and technology for teachers, curriculum development, learning management,



psychology for teachers, educational measurement and evaluation, classroom management, educational research, educational innovation and information technology, and teachership (The Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2005).

According to the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002), the reform of the teachers and educational personnel system has been investigated in order to set teachers and education personnel to become high-status professionals. Regarding this, the teaching profession development system in Thailand was reformed in four key areas: teacher education development; personnel management and a new salary scale; maintaining professional standards; and the development and promotion of teachers and education personnel (The Office of the Education Council, 2017). Therefore, promoting teachers to become a quality teacher with high competence was one of the most imperative factors for schools, because it can help not only teachers but also students to increase their knowledge and competence.

According to the study of Wisetsuwannabhumi, Intarak, and Tangpanithanwat (2013) on the research and development on learning network innovation of teachers and educational staff to develop students' quality in the three southern border provinces, a proposal was made that the teacher professional development program should be modified continuously in the form of an accessible e-training course, to which all teachers and educators can easily have access. Finally, improving and promoting education personnel and teachers' competency development in technology and social network usage.

English language teachers in this decade needed to adjust themselves to cope with the extreme changes in the world because language teaching methods and teaching trends over the past ten years have changed enormously and rapidly (Eaton, 2010). There were several ways for teachers to fulfill their professional skills, such as carrying out classroom action research, observing peers teaching, reading articles, getting involved in teachers' training courses, creating teaching journals, joining professional organizations, accessing the internet to ascertain information for teaching, attending seminars, workshops or conferences. All of these activities can be held locally, nationally, and internationally (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007; Harmer, 2007; Murray, 2010; Sitthitikul, 2010). Some activities for teacher professional development can be enhanced for individual teachers and they can be done informally, while others are more complex and beneficial for teachers if they are done collectively (Moswela, 2006; Harmer, 2007; Matsuda & Friedrich, 2010).

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

There are four purposes of this present study:

1. To study in-service English language teachers' educational backgrounds and teaching experiences
2. To investigate in-service English language teachers' instructional practices
3. To explore in-service English language teachers' perceptions concerning integrating local and global issues into English classrooms



4. To investigate challenges faced by in-service English language teachers
5. To examine needs of in-service English language teachers towards teachers' the professional development training program

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In order to achieve the aims of the study, the research questions for the study were:

1. What are in-service English language teachers' educational backgrounds and their teaching experiences?
2. What are the instructional practices of in-service secondary school English language teachers?
3. What are in-service English language teachers' perceptions toward integrating local and global issues into English classrooms?
4. What challenges do in-service English language teachers face in their teaching?
5. What are the needs of in-service secondary school English language teachers toward the teachers' professional development training program?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Instruments of the Study**

The main research instruments used for the purpose of data gathering is a focus group interview which was designed and conducted through pilot testing. It consists of three main issues which contain sixteen sub- topics regarding teachers' profiles, teachers' teaching practices, and teachers' professional development. The focus group interview was developed as follows:

1. Literature related to the purpose of the study and research questions was read and analyzed (e.g. Kusumoto, 2008; Richardson, 2012; AL-Qahtani, 2015; Simsek, 2017; Sheffield, Blackley, & Moro, 2018).
2. The first draft of the focus-group interview was developed using ideas from the previous literature and relevant methodological literature on close-ended questions and focus-group interview design were read and consulted (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2012; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).
3. The focus-group interview was presented to experts to comment on.
4. The final draft of the focus-group interview was developed based on experts' recommendations and was presented to experts to comment on.
5. The research instrument was piloted with a sample of individuals similar to the target group, that is, two English teachers at schools in other areas. The pilot sample was not included in the main sample in the present study.
6. The focus-group interview was revised based on the results of the pilot testing.
7. The final version of the focus-group interview was used to collect data with the sample.

Concerning the ethical principles of data collection, the researcher informed the participants about



the purpose of the study and invited them to attend the interview for sharing their ideas and teaching experiences voluntarily by assuring them of confidentiality and anonymity of their information.

### **Population and Sample of the Study**

Concerning the present study, eight Thai female teachers of English from secondary schools both in Mueang District and Tak Bai District, Narathiwat Province attended the interview voluntarily. Thai teachers of English in the study have had English language teaching experiences from 5 to more than 20 years. Four of them hold Bachelor degrees in foreign languages such as English and French, on the other hand, the rest of them received Master of Education degrees in different areas: one hold a M.A. in Educational Measurement and Evaluation and three in various majors which are related to teaching English.

### **DATA COLLECTION**

The audio-taped interview was conducted with eight English foreign language (EFL) experienced teachers who work in secondary schools both in Mueang District and Tak Bai District, Narathiwat Province. The data were collected through focus group discussions which intends to explore the people's understanding experiences about the issue and reasons behind their particular patterns of thinking. Three main issues which contain sixteen sub-topics regarding teachers' profiles, teachers' teaching practices, and teachers' professional development were identified in the end of the data analysis. The interview took more than two hours for each school.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

The data from the focus- group interview helped the researcher to interpret the research findings. Open coding strategy was applied to analyze the data for answering research questions (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). The data were then grouped and open coded thematically. The data were categorized into four main topics consisting of: Thai English language teachers' education and teaching experiences, teachers' reflections on their teaching practices, the challenges that they faced throughout their professional growth, and teachers' needs of training program.

### **FINDINGS**

This session will start with a profile of the teachers in this current study. The data showed the following descriptive information from the interview for which teachers' profiles has been divided into four main parts: 1) teachers' profiles, 2) in-service English language teachers' teaching practices, 3) the challenges faced by in-service English language teachers, and 4) teachers' needs of teachers professional development, which will be discussed respectively.

**1. Teachers' Profiles****1.1 Teachers' Education Background**

Concerning the teachers' academic achievements, four of them hold Bachelor degrees in foreign languages such as English and French, on the other hand, the rest of them received Master of Education degrees in different areas: one hold a M.A. in Educational Measurement and Evaluation and three in various majors which are related to teaching English. All of them attended professional development courses related either to methodology of teaching English, or to their needs and interests. However, seven of them have taken the training course organized by the Regional English Training Centre by foreign teacher trainers from a famous Language Center for 15-18 days at a Thai University in the south of Thailand.

**1.2 English Language Teaching Experiences**

Thai teachers of English in the study have had English language teaching experiences from 5 to more than 20 years. Two have been teaching for more than 20 years while only one has been teaching for 16 to 20 years; two of them have been teaching from 11 to 15 years; and three of them have been teaching for 5 to 10 years. In addition, apart from teaching English, most of them have other duties and responsibilities such as head of academic affairs, head of department, counselor, project manager, and academic consultant. The demographics of the participants in the focus group sessions were summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Demographic characteristics of participants

| <b>Teacher</b> | <b>Educational Background</b> | <b>Teaching Experiences (years)</b> | <b>Level of Teaching</b>  | <b>Range of Teaching hours per week</b> | <b>Type of School</b>                |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| T1             | Master Degree                 | 19                                  | Lower and upper secondary | 15-18                                   | Secondary School in Mueang District  |
| T2             | Master Degree                 | 5                                   | Lower secondary           | 15-18                                   | Secondary School in Mueang District  |
| T3             | Bachelor Degree               | More than 20 years                  | Lower and upper secondary | 15-18                                   | Secondary School in Mueang District  |
| T4             | Bachelor Degree               | 7                                   | Lower and upper secondary | 15-18                                   | Secondary School in Mueang District  |
| T5             | Bachelor Degree               | 5                                   | Lower and upper secondary | 15-18                                   | Secondary School in Mueang District  |
| T6             | Bachelor Degree               | 9                                   | Lower and upper secondary | 15-18                                   | Secondary School in Mueang District  |
| T7             | Master Degree                 | More than 20 years                  | Lower and upper secondary | 18-20                                   | Secondary School in Tak Bai District |
| T8             | Master Degree                 | More than 20 years                  | Upper secondary           | 18-20                                   | Secondary School in Tak Bai District |



**NOTE:** Secondary School in Mueang district is in a group of large sized schools which have 1,500 - 2,499 students and secondary school in Tak Bai District is in a group of small sized schools which have less than 499 students.

### **1.3 Levels of teaching, teachers' teaching hours per week and classroom sizes**

Six of the teachers have been teaching both lower and upper secondary while two of them have been teaching at upper secondary level. Most of the English classes in secondary schools are offered two or three times a week for fifty minutes. Concerning classroom sizes in secondary schools in our country, the English classes in an urban school have approximately 30 to 35 students in a general classroom and 40 to 45 students in the Science and Math program; on the contrary, at the secondary school in Tak-Bai district, there are about 20 to 30 students in a class. The range of teachers' teaching hours starts from fifteen to twenty hours per week. One of them works 15 hours per week because she is the head of the English department at an urban school. Occasionally, some of them have to work with other extracurricular activities or provide extra short courses for their students, and these courses are not included in their general teaching schedules.

## **2. In-Service Secondary Schools English Language Teachers Teaching Practices**

### **2.1 English Language Teaching Practice and Learning Management**

The teachers in the present study mentioned six focal points concerning teachers' teaching practices and learning management which consists of learning standard, textbooks used, contents emphasized, local issues in English language teaching (ELT), students' feedbacks, and teaching materials. Firstly, they have to provide all courses based on Learning Standard which was determined by the Ministry of Education. All of them brainstorm and discuss for choosing appropriate courses' compositions such as content standard, learner's performance standard, and strand which consists of knowledge, process and attitude for each course. Learning Standard was divided into two main levels: Learning Standards for lower secondary level and Learning Standard for upper secondary. Regarding Learning Standard for lower secondary level, it was divided separately for each grade (i.e. Matthayomsuksa 1-3) while Learning Standard for upper secondary consists of twenty-one aspects in total, which teachers have to select and teach all of these aspects completely in three academic years for Matthayomsuksa 4-6, and teachers could select and identify each of them repeatedly in course syllabuses related to learning objectives. However, some teachers also mentioned that regarding the result of students' English language learning assessment, it showed that the majority of students took low-level of learning standards; therefore, these learners lack of knowledge and English language skills for communicating with others.

Secondly, most of the teachers used commercial textbooks as the primary source of their teaching and some of them, sometimes, created and adapted their own handouts or downloaded free printable documents from websites, such as BBC for their class. Moreover, other free teaching materials such as CDs and activity books, which were received from book dealers, were used as supplementary materials as well.



The teachers sometimes provided a list of links to useful educational websites to their students for their self-studying. Thirdly, the contents of textbooks still focused on grammatical structures, rather than cultural issues. Therefore, teaching grammar is still a significant topic which English language teachers have to emphasize, especially for Matthayomsuksa 6 (grade 12) students, for helping them prepare for National examinations (such as GAT and PAT) and their higher education.

Fourthly, one of two teachers from the secondary school in the Tak Bai district taught a selective course entitled English Communicative Language Teaching to ASEAN which emphasizes on reading skill based on a variety of topics towards ASEAN. Furthermore, doing project works concerning students' local issues are also one of the active learning tasks provided for her learners. Students' productively presented their project works in various types of work pieces such as vocabulary books, local cloth, local food, and local tourist attractions.

Fifthly, all teachers revealed that they gained their knowledge and teaching practices from their prior teaching experiences, attending training programs, websites, teachers' teaching manuals, textbooks, and local people and other resources. Finally, regarding students' feedbacks on teachers' teaching practices, some teachers in the study mentioned three easy ways for gathering students' opinions which are: students gave their feedbacks through evaluation forms provided by teachers; teachers asked students to give their own opinions in a written passage or a short paragraph; and some students shared their viewpoints with their advisors or classmates. Concerning these feedbacks from students, teachers can use them to monitor and adjust instructions for improving their teaching practices.

## **2.2 Teaching Techniques Used for Enhancing Students' Learning Competence**

All of these teachers reported that they adapted and used various teaching techniques for increasing students' learning outcomes. All teachers of English suggested eight teaching techniques that were frequently used for their English language classroom. First, they adapted their lessons and teaching methods based on students' capability. Second, many of the teachers used various types of teaching techniques for enhancing students' competences, such as one of the teachers reported that she adapted her teaching methods for teaching students with low proficiency by using cooperative learning or a peer-assisted learning approach, and she sometimes describes each topic elaborately and frequently. Third, they used various types of teaching materials and adapted them in appropriate way. However, games, VDO clips, word cards and PowerPoint are not so frequently used by the teachers of English. This might be due to the fact that most of these activities take a bit more time. Forth, some of teachers prepared tutorial courses for students with high proficiency, especially special courses for the General Aptitude Test (GAT). Fifth, they used dictionaries as a main material for increasing students' pronunciation and speaking skill. Sixth, most of them provided cooperative learning activities such as group working and presentation tasks for promoting students' aptitude. Seventh, teachers changed their roles from the expert dispensing knowledge to the facilitators or knowledge builders. Finally, many of the EFL teachers have to teach each topic repeatedly for increasing students' comprehension.



The EFL teachers stated that they gained all these teaching techniques from attending professional development training programs, teaching experiences, and shared ideas with their colleagues. Nevertheless, they also pointed out that using various teaching techniques and adapting their teaching practices brought pros and cons to their students. For example, some students agreed and liked tutorial courses, because most of the teachers introduced new teaching techniques to the English classroom and these techniques can help to improve students' language skills; on the other hand, some of them disagreed and felt stress and bored with overly strict instructions. In addition, some teachers' teaching activities are not suitable for students who were at the lowest levels of English language proficiency standards, because these students cannot use English language skills to communicate with others. Moreover, some activities took at least longer than fifteen minutes at a time, so the rest of fifty minutes is insufficient time for teachers to teach and summarize the important points for low proficiency students.

### **3. Teachers' Perceptions about Integrating Global and Local Issues into English Lessons**

Based on the finding, all teachers of English thought positively about including local and global issues into English classrooms. They believed that it is quite easy for most of the students when they have to read and discuss on some issues, especially the topics related to their ways of life, or their own cultures, with teachers and friends. Moreover, students could use English to discuss appropriately with the target culture. However, EFL teachers suggested that integrating some global and local topics in ELT might take longer time for preparing lesson plans, reading texts and classroom activities, and these topics should be appropriately included or adapted these topics at different levels appropriately. Therefore, having guidelines or instant lessons can help EFL teachers to easily incorporate global and local topics into EFL classrooms.

Regarding the data analysis, most EFL teachers have adapted and integrated various global and local issues in their ELT. They believed that integrating local topics can develop students' English proficiencies, cultural understanding, and students' attitudes of cultural differences, and cultural awareness. For example, two of the EFL teachers from the urban school mentioned that they assigned a group presentation for their students to select one of their preferred local topics such as local famous people and local tourist attractions, and then presented them in a form of magazine and short VDO clips. Besides, EFL teachers revealed that other interesting local topics which were selected to incorporate into ELT consist of local food, local products, and local events. All these local topics can integrate in ELT in all levels.

### **4. The Challenges Faced by In-service Secondary Schools English Language Teachers throughout their Profession Growth**

Most of Thai EFL teachers mentioned that they have faced many challenges of English language teaching problems. The main problems can be identified into five aspects as follows:

4.1 Regarding low proficiency students, teachers of English have to face with this focal problem for years. The urban school EFL teachers revealed that to deal with this problem, the school headmaster asked teachers of English to set a special course for 150 Matthayomsuksa 1 students who did not pass English



proficiency test for improving students' English language competences. The English special course was prepared by Thai EFL teachers and the Filipino teachers for four months. These students with low and very low proficiency will be divided into a group of 25 students, based on their language competencies. The course for students with low proficiency was taught by one Thai EFL instructor to one group of students and focused on students' reading skill. For students with very low proficiency, the Filipino teachers will ask for teaching basic English pronunciation at the beginning of the course, and the rest of the course was conducted by Thai English teachers. The Scholastic textbook was used as a focal teaching material for this course.

4.2 Regarding the effect of special activities or unexpected events, teachers of English mentioned that they sometimes had to cancel their classes because of special activities or unexpected events such as the power going out, flood, and violent crisis. Therefore, they have to adapt their lessons to respond to students' needs and increase students' competencies. Besides, EFL teachers sometimes had to provide a make-up class and extra tutorial time for their students.

4.3 Regarding the lack of regular classrooms, as it is the case in many schools in an urban area, where they have to face with a growing great number of students each academic year. This issue affects directly on lacking of regular classrooms for students. Therefore, students have to move to another room for other subjects when the class finishes. This problem affects not only teachers' teaching practice, but also students' learning competence. For example, English teachers reported that they have to take more than ten minutes for preparing audio visual equipment and other classroom resources at a time. Besides, they sometimes have to teach in a small room which is unsuitable for the number of students and lacks of audio visual equipment.

4.4 Regarding lack of Classroom Facilities, teachers in an urban school reported that the lack of classroom facilities is often a focal problem. Although most of the school's budget were used to improve classroom facilities, buying computers and other audio visual equipment, and renovate classroom that may not be used in the English classroom and they are not enough for all teachers.

4.5 Regarding the classroom size, the number of students in an urban school has increased continually in every academic year. In the case of an urban school, there are more forty more students in the Science and Math program; on the other hand, there are thirty students in other programs. This causes the imbalance between the number of students and the size of the classroom which is sometimes quite small for forty or forty-five students. Teachers commented that it is very hard for doing some activities that need to use a wide space for students to move around the class or move their tables to work with their friends.

## **5. Needs of Thai EFL Teachers toward Teachers' Professional Development Training Program**

Attending professional development training programs have positive impacts for teachers to raise their professional standards, and these opportunities can also help teachers to improve teachers' teaching



proficiency, gain new knowledge and expertise, meet new friends, and share ideas of teaching practices and experiences (Gonza'lez, Montoya, & Sierra, 2002; Al-Qahtani, 2015). Concerning the findings, teachers' opinions about teachers' education and their needs of a training program will be presented as follows:

#### *5.1 Teachers' opinions on characteristics of training program*

Based on the research findings, all of the teachers stated their needs concerning content of the training program that it should contain various types of teaching activities for promoting students' reading and listening skills and teaching materials design for enhancing low proficiency students. The training program should provide various active activities such as doing workshops and sharing ideas, rather than lecturing. EFL teachers also emphasized their need on qualifications of trainers that they required to gain new knowledge which they can functionally use in their classrooms such as teaching trends, teaching techniques, and some recommendations related either to the methodology of teaching English or to the problem solving of trainers and friends. For training program schedule, they suggested that a training program should be taken for three or five days on Friday to Sunday at a Thai University in Narathiwat Province or any safe places which is not too far for driving within a few minutes.

#### *5.2 Teachers' experiences of prior training programs*

Regarding the Ministry of Education' policy on professional development, seven teachers mentioned that all Thai teachers have to attend two main training programs of which all budgets are provided by the Ministry of Education. The first one was organized by Teacher Professional Development Institute , and cost ten thousand baht per one academic year, and the other one was organized by the Regional English Training Centers (RETC), which teachers attended for free. Regarding the first training program, Teacher Professional Development Institute offers quality online and in class courses, for both secondary schools educators for years. All these courses might be organized by universities, institutes, schools, companies, and private agencies which are certified by the Teacher Professional Development Institute. Therefore, all Thai teachers can select various courses which they are interested in by themselves and reply through a mobile application entitled Training OBEC for registering the training programs. It is interesting to note that EFL teachers have to get sixty hours on teacher education during five years. Otherwise, they will lose an opportunity to get promoted.

For the second training program, EFL teachers attended professional development courses related either to methodology of teaching English, or to their needs and interesting. However, seven of them who have taken the training course organized by the Regional English Training Centre (RETC) by foreign teacher trainers are from the famous Language Center for 15-18 days. Most of the training activities emphasized on doing workshops, group presentations, and receiving feedbacks from trainers. This training program was from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 16.30 p.m. at a Thai University in the south of Thailand. After attending a training course for three month, all of them have to attend the monitoring phase which was held for two days. During this phase, EFL teachers have to do VDO presentations related to their teaching practices. Regarding the contents of the training course, all EFL teachers reported that this training is the best intensive training



courses for them, because they can adapt all teaching methods and training activities that they gained from the course for their English classrooms. However, some teachers of English noted some problems about the adaptation of new knowledge into ELT, that where they faced some challenges such as the classroom size, lacking of teaching facilities, and time consumption for some activities.

#### *5.3 Teachers' beliefs on training program's advantages*

EFL teachers emphasized that previous training courses contribute to their teaching practices and professional growth as well. They believed that these teaching methods can promote their students' language competencies. Moreover, attending a training course brought a good opportunity for sharing their ideas with other teachers and meeting new friends. The advantages of a training course also encourage these EFL teachers to attend other training courses for improving their continuing professional development.

#### *5.4 Teachers' views on factors affecting teachers' professional development*

It is interesting to note that, the majority of EFL teachers mentioned that violence in the area is not the focal factor affecting their needs of attending training courses entirely. They mentioned that there are two most major factors affecting their professional development. These crucial factors are being overloaded with school work and the duration of the journey. In terms of school work loads, most of them reported that the number of duties does not allow the EFL teachers enough time to discuss and share their ideas with others colleagues. The little free time in their schedules were used for paperwork, grading, or doing extracurricular activities.

## **DISCUSSION**

Concerning the interview, the five main aspects of EFL teachers' beliefs will be discussed: First, EFL teachers believed that training courses can not only improve their professional growth but also increase students' competencies as well. Second, they always adapted and designed their own teaching practicing and teaching materials based on their students' proficiencies. Third, in order to deal with many challenges, teachers of English tried to adapt and solve problems based on their prior knowledge gained from training courses combined with their teaching experiences. Fourth, the EFL teachers stated that the violence events in the area is not the main factor that affecting them. On the other hand, being overloaded with school work and the duration of the journey are two main factors affecting their opportunities for attending training courses. Finally, English language teachers believed that it is quite easy for most students to read and discuss on some topics related to their own cultures with teachers and friends. Moreover, they mentioned that including local topics can develop students' English proficiencies, cultural awareness, and students' attitudes of openness and respect toward other peoples and their cultures.

In summary, teachers are affected by changes which occur both outside and inside their school. Many teachers try to keep up with the recent trends and the methods of teaching to improve their knowledge, language skills, teaching practices, and professional development (Zivkovic, 2013; Murray, 2010; Kotharaarsa, 2004).



## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Concerning the research objectives of the study, the study has shown that EFL teachers in Narathiwat province always need to improve their profession. In the light of a training course, they suggested that a training program should provide various active activities and should also emphasized their need on qualifications of trainers. Moreover, they require to gain new knowledge which they can functionally use in their classrooms, and some recommendations related either to the methodology of teaching English from trainers and friends. There are many problematic issues that EFL teachers faced for years, but they believed that they can solve those challenges based on the combinations of their knowledge which was gained from training courses and their teaching experiences. In terms of school's supporting, EFL teachers suggested that schools should provide and support teachers of English with opportunities to attend training courses and classroom facilities as well. These are one of the most important factors for enhancing not only teachers teaching qualities, but also students' English competencies.

In terms of implications of the study, the policy makers, education leaders, and teacher trainers could be advised to incorporate global and local issues into the English classroom with more varied activities to promote students' understanding of their role as global citizens and their awareness on the difference between people and their cultures. As Glatthorn (1995) and Guskey (2000) stated that professional development of teachers is a continuous, complex and long-term process, so government, educators, scholars, policymakers, and school administrators have to promote professional development of teachers progressively. However, this present study still had some limitations as this study was conducted through an interview with a small female sample size. Therefore, it is suggested that further study should be carried out with a larger sample size of both male and female EFL teachers from various types of schools in an interview session.

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