

A Blended Training Model Using Mobile Devices to Enhance Speaking Ability of Local Tour Guides

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Abstract

The purposes of this study were to develop a training model called A Blended Training Model Using Mobile Devices to Enhance Speaking Ability of Local Tour Guides and to evaluate its effectiveness in enhancing local tour guides to be more confident and efficient in their delivery of tour guiding commentary. The training was delivered into 2 sessions: 66 hours in 22 days of in-house training and 4 weeks of self-training through iPod Touch devices. The implementation and evaluation were carried out by a 1-group pre-test and post-test design experimental study. To prove the participants' oral English competency, the pre-test and the post-test results were compared and assessed by three raters using a 4-level scoring scale in order to see degree of change in seven spoken language components: content, organizational pattern, language functions, pronunciation, spoken grammar, spoken vocabulary, and communication strategies. A nonparametric test, Krippendorff's Alpha, was used to assess inter-rater reliability. Moreover, to evaluate if the training model met their needs, the trainees completed five questionnaires to examine their attitudes towards the in-house training and self-training sessions through an iPod Touch. The findings revealed that, based on a 4-point scale, 13 trainees' performances reached a higher level (Level 3), 1 reached a much higher level (Level 4), and 1 showed no change. The self-assessment scores, before and after training, were significantly different at the level .001, indicating that the trainees assessed themselves positively. In brief, the findings affirmed the effectiveness of the constructed training model for local tour guides.

Keywords: Training Model; Mobile Devices; Local English-speaking Tour Guides; Inter-rater reliability

บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อพัฒนาและประเมินประสิทธิภาพรูปแบบการฝึกอบรมทักษะการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ สำหรับมัคคุเทศก์ท่องเที่ยนโดยผ่านการเรียนผ่านอุปกรณ์สื่อสารเคลื่อนที่ เพื่อเพิ่มความมั่นใจและความสามารถของ มัคคุเทศก์ในการนำเที่ยว รูปแบบการฝึกอบรมแบ่งออกเป็นสองส่วน "ได้แก่ การเรียนในชั้นเรียน 66 ชั่วโมง ภายใต้เวลา 22 วัน และการเรียนด้วยตนเองนอกชั้นเรียนผ่านอุปกรณ์สื่อสารเคลื่อนที่ iPod Touch เป็นเวลา 4 สัปดาห์ การขัดการฝึกอบรม และการประเมินผลการศึกษารั้งนี้ เป็นการวิจัยแบบกึ่งทดลองกับกลุ่มตัวอย่างแบบกลุ่มเดียว มีการทดสอบ ก่อนและหลังเพื่อพิสูจน์ประสิทธิภาพของรูปแบบการฝึกอบรมที่สร้างขึ้นที่ส่งผลต่อทักษะการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของ กลุ่มตัวอย่างเจึงได้ทำการประเมินเปรียบเทียบผลการทดสอบการพูดก่อนและหลังการฝึกโดยผู้ประเมิน 3 คน ซึ่งใช้แบบประเมินมาตราส่วนประมาณค่าแบบ 4 ระดับ ทั้งนี้เพื่อวัดระดับการเปลี่ยนแปลงความสามารถในการใช้ภาษา 7 ด้าน

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ได้แก่ ด้านเนื้อหา ด้านรูปแบบการเรียนเรื่องเนื้อหา ด้านหน้าที่ของภาษา ด้านการอภิสาน ด้านไวยากรณ์ภาษาพูด ด้านคำศัพท์ และด้านกลวิธีการสื่อสาร ค่าสถิติแบบอนพารามิตริก (Nonparametric test) ของ Krippendorff's Alpha ถูกนำมาใช้ประเมินความเที่ยงระหว่างผู้ประเมิน (Inter-rater reliability) นอกจากนี้เพื่อประเมินรูปแบบ การฝึกอบรมสนองตอบต่อความต้องการของกลุ่มตัวอย่างหรือไม่ กลุ่มตัวอย่างได้ตอบแบบสอบถาม 5 ชุด เพื่อประเมินความคิดเห็นที่มีต่อการฝึกอบรมในชั้นเรียน และการเรียนด้วยตนเองผ่านอุปกรณ์สื่อสารเคลื่อนที่ iPodTouch ผลการประเมินด้วยแบบประเมินมาตราส่วนประมาณค่าแบบ 4 ระดับ พนว่ากลุ่มตัวอย่างจำนวน 13 คนมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงที่ระดับสูงกว่า (ระดับ 3) กลุ่มตัวอย่างจำนวน 1 คน มีการเปลี่ยนแปลงที่ระดับสูงกว่ามาก (ระดับ 4) และกลุ่มตัวอย่างจำนวน 1 คนไม่มีความเปลี่ยนแปลงผลการประเมินตนเองก่อนและหลังการฝึกอบรม พนว่ามีความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญที่ระดับ .001 แสดงให้เห็นว่ากลุ่มตัวอย่างประเมินตนเองในเชิงบวก กล่าวโดยสรุปว่ารูปแบบ การฝึกอบรมที่สร้างขึ้นสำหรับ นักศึกษาที่ต้องมีประสิทธิภาพ

Introduction

It is apparent that tourism is one of the main sources on income for internationally popular tourist sites. However, for the industry to be sustainable, local human resources, especially tour guides, must be well-trained to serve their increasing non-Thai visitors. While communicating in English is one of the most desirable qualifications for them, a good number of local tour guides in Krabi lacked not only language skills but also sufficient local knowledge, a common phenomenon in Thailand. According to the president of Krabi Tour Guides Association (personal interview, 2008), some of them held an official license, while others were trainees applying for one. Often, they did not have much time for long training, while available training course hardly served their immediate needs and fitted their busy schedules. Moreover, there were no tailor-made training materials for them. The present study aimed to furnish Krabi local tour guides with more local knowledge and to improve their English skills for tourism purposes through a blended training model using mobile devices. The model was systematically constructed through needs assessment, model development, implementation, and evaluation using the following research questions for directions:

- 1) What are the characteristics of Krabi tour guides and their needs for an English training model?
- 2) To what extent does the training model meet the needs of Krabi tour guides?
- 3) Does the blended training model enhance the participants' oral English competency?

Review of Literature

In the present study, ESP or 'English for Specific Purposes', which refers to

English for Tourism, was coiled in the curriculum design. Richards and Schmidt (1985) define ESP as the role of English in a language course or program of instruction in which the content and aims of the course are fixed by the specific needs of a particular group of learners. Simply said, ESP is defined as English for specific needs. Meanwhile, English for Tourism classes are expanding. Classes for tourism personnel focus on two things: 1) Information about tour guiding; 2) Spoken English to respond to tourists' questions, requests, and opinions. Curriculum design includes the study of the purposes for which learners need a language, the setting of objectives, the development of a syllabus, teaching methods, and evaluation of the effects on the learners' language ability (Tyler 1949; Taba 1962; Richards and Schmidt 1985; Brown 1995; Richards 2001; Nakjan 2005).

Needs Analysis for ESP Program

Needs analysis (Richards and Schmidt, 1985) determines the learners' practical needs for a language and arranges the needs according to priorities, which are:

- a) The context in which the language will be used.
- b) The purposes for which the language is needed
- c) The types of communication that will be used
- d) The level of proficiency that will be required (pp. 353-354).

ESP needs assessments can be done effectively through questionnaires, interviews of experts, learners, and other stakeholders, observations, job-shadowing, and analysis of spoken or written language.

ESP Syllabus Design

Richards and Schmidt (1985) define syllabus as a description of the contents of a course of instruction and the order in which they are to be taught. It is reconciled with 3 essential steps proposed by Feez (1998) in constructing a syllabus: 1) analyzing learner needs; 2) selecting what needs to be learnt; 3) sequencing the elements of the course to make learning effective. Language-teaching syllabuses may be based on different criteria, such as (1) grammatical items and vocabulary (Structural Syllabus), (2) the language needed for different types of situations (Situational Method), (3) the meaning and communicative functions which the learner needs to express in the target language (Notional Syllabus), (4) the skills underlying different language behaviors, or (5) the text types learners need to master. Since every syllabus has its

own strengths and weaknesses, a mixed syllabus may be the best for an ESP course. Integrating different syllabus types means using lexical items, grammatical structures, topics, situations and notions, learning activities, and content to help learners learn the material. Furthermore, in the field of tour guiding, there is a special technique to convey the sequenced content to tourists, the target listeners. It creatively presents information, ideas, and feelings that help people enrich their understanding of their world and their role within it (Weiler and Ham, 2001). The syllabus was then integrated with the interpretation techniques in order to make the tour guiding entertaining, interesting, relevant to the audience, organized, and carrying an underlying theme or message.

Teaching ESP

One of the teaching methods serving as a teaching model for the training program for tour guides is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). As reviewed before, the objectives of this training program are language for communication, fluent speech, and authentic content and teaching materials. Bygate (2001) also says a communicative approach developed in two ways. First, a grammar approach includes paying attention to formalities and functions, such as making requests, apologies, invitations, and introductions. Second, a learner-centred approach starts from the meanings learners want to communicate and work out how to express them. Savignon (2001) proposes CLT as an instruction by using of English for real and immediate communicative goals. Attention to the specific communicative needs of learners is important in the selection and sequencing of materials. Its focus is on meaning rather than form. Lee and Van Patten (2003) note that CLT is language teaching whose goal is communication. Taken into account the characteristics and components of CLT, the approach seems most appropriate for program training. Its eclectic nature allows flexibilities in language learning activities, content selection, and teaching materials.

Mobile Learning

O'Mally et al. (2003) state that mobile learning, sometimes called M-learning, is learning that takes place through small, portable computing devices such as mobile phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), or laptop computers. Singh (2003) states that mobile learning lets the users learn the lessons on-demand at their own pace and preference. It is apparent that there have been attempts to integrate or incorporate

mobile phones into classroom instruction to improve learner performance. Thornton and Houser (2005) developed an innovative project using mobile phones to teach English at Kinjo Gakuin University in Japan. The learners were provided vocabulary instruction by SMS and were tested during each 2-week cycle. Their learning outcomes were compared to those of the groups that received the identical lesson via the web and on paper. The results indicated that the SMS learners learned over twice the number of vocabulary as the web learners, and the SMS learners improved their scores by nearly twice as much as the learners who had received their lessons on paper. McConatha and Prael (2006) stated that mobile learning was a relatively new tool in the pedagogical arsenal to assist learners and teachers as they navigate the options available in the expanding distance-learning world. The results of their performance, as indicated by a final grade in the course, were compared to the outcomes for those learners who chose not to use the M-learning tool. The learners using the software demonstrated a higher level of knowledge of the subject matter covered in the course when compared to those choosing not to use the tools ($p<.01$). For the present study's training model, mobile learning referred to lessons that were transferred into a mobile device namely an iPod Touch for the training participants to practice the knowledge learned in daily life. This helped reduce the forgetting, as stated by Tyler (1949) and strengthen the memory of the lessons learned, and it was hoped to improve the participants' English speaking ability. It was expected that a mobile learning blended English training model could enhance the course participants' oral communication ability.

Assessing Speaking

How to assess speaking ability of local tour guide trainees in the study was one of the most important parts of the training program, since oral proficiency was its stated goal. Therefore, knowledge, expertise, and new ideas in the field of oral testing were contemplated in order to devise a model to assess speaking that was effective, timely, and reliable.

Luoma (2004) states that so many factors influence an assessor's impression of how well someone can speak a language, and test scores are expected to be accurate, just and appropriate for test purposes. Components of speaking skills have to be put into consideration, such as what is involved in speaking (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, discourse, interaction, etc), test format, language functions, and rating

scales. The question of how to make up an oral test that fits in with the training program is not easy to answer. Initially, she proposed a basic model for assessment whose starting point was a definition of test purpose followed by the tasks and assessment criteria for which the testers wanted to test.

Douglas (2000) states that testing language for specific purposes is a special case of communicative language testing in which the test content and the test methods are derived from an analysis of a specific language use situation, such as Spanish for Business, Japanese for Tour Guides or English for Air Traffic Control. He also mentions two aspects of LSP testing: authenticity of task and the interaction between language knowledge and specific purpose content knowledge. Similar to Douglas (2000), Luoma (2004) proposes the activity cycle of assessing speaking as follows:

1. A clarification of the purpose of the assessment after the realization that speaking scores are needed
2. The planning & development of which the main products are tasks, assessment criteria, and instructions to participants, administrators, interlocutors and assessors for putting the assessment into action.
3. The administration of the test that produces examinee performances, which are then rated to produce the scores (p.7)

As important as test validity is test reliability. Luoma (2004) explains reliability arises from the same scores obtained from the test that is administered by different assessors. Therefore, the most common procedure to ensure the reliability of the scores is rater training. Analyzing reliability of the speaking scores can be conducted through “**intra-rater reliability**” and “**inter-rater reliability**.” The former means that raters agree with themselves about the ratings that they give. The latter means that different raters rate performances similarly. In this point, well-defined criteria help raters come to an agreement about a joint rating.

Kunyot (2005) conducted the research entitled ‘Developing the English Oral Competency of Tourism Learners by Means of a Genre-based ESP Approach.’ At the end of the training course, student performances were assessed in two ways: test scores from pre-test and post-test of giving commentaries in four genres: itinerary, description, narrative, and procedure. In the assessment process, three testers gave

each student scores by comparing pre- and post- performances to 4-level comparisons: 1 for lower, 2 for same, 3 for higher and 4 for much higher according the four criteria of 4 genre-based commentaries. Among to the related research reviewed, the speaking test was systematically administered and subject to less-subjective scoring.

Literature Gap in English for Tourism Curriculum in Thai Context

Recently, many researchers have conducted studies in developing localized curriculum of English for tourism. They were: Nakjan (2005) “Curriculum and Instruction Development of English for Tourism in Phetchaburi”; Tiptara et al. (2005) “Tourism English for Beach Activities” for Rajabhat Songkla University; Prachanun et al. (2005) “The Study and Development of Learning Process of Teachers of English for Supporting Long Life Local Tourism: A Case Study Phanom Rung Sanctuary, Buriram Province”; Tongpinit et al. (2005) “Developing the Learning process and the Associated Skills of teachers to promote Tourism: A Case Study of Schools in Thali District, Loei Province”; Boonjan et al. (2005) “The Development of English Learning Process by Instructional Packages of English for Enhancing Local Tourism: A Case Study Khao Kor District, Phetchabun”; Yodmongkol et al. (2005) “Enhancing English Teachers’ Competence for Local Tourism Promotion: A Case Study of Phu Kradung Nation Park”; Kunyot (2005) conducted the research entitled ‘Developing the English Oral Competency of Tourism Learners by Means of a Genre-based ESP Approach’. However, no research has involved tour guides or tourism personnel outside the educational institutes as the training participants and no training package has been blended with mobile learning. They all developed localized curricula for learners and teachers and delivered in-class training. The present study developed a blended training package using an iPod Touch in enhancing English speaking ability of local tour guides in Krabi could fill the gap and serve as a model for similar language training programs elsewhere.

The Blended Training Model

Based on a review of these brief theoretical backgrounds, a 4-phase construction of an English training program for local tour guides was designed as follows:

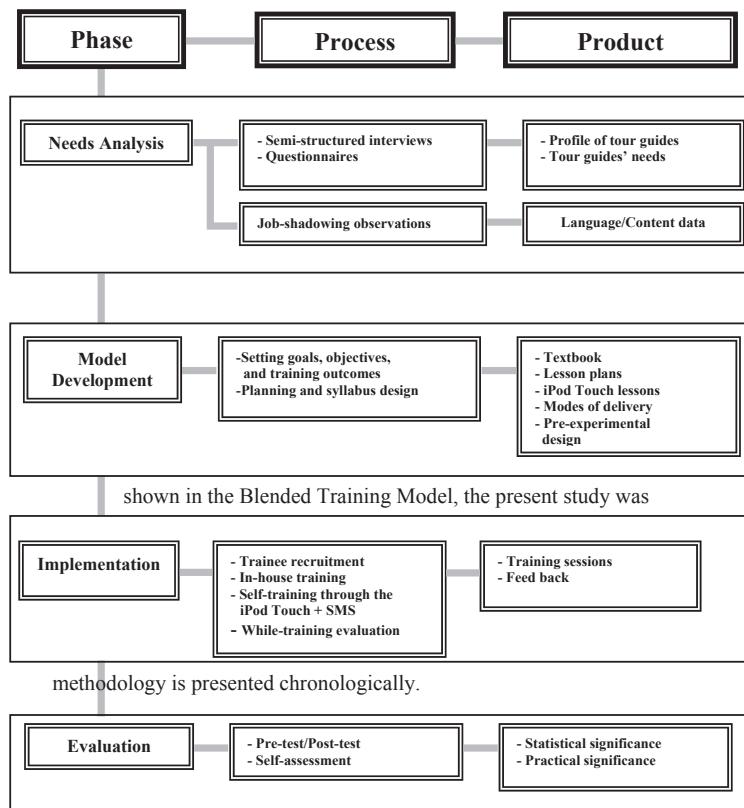


Figure 1 The Blended Training Model

Research Methodology

As shown in the Blended Training Model, the present study was designed in four phases. The research methodology is presented chronologically.

Phase 1: Needs Analysis

In order to obtain a profile of Krabi's tour guides and their needs, the study was carried out through three research tools: semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire, and job shadowing observation. The procedures were as follows:

- 1) Three sets of questions and observation forms for semi-structured interviews of local tour guides, tour agency employers, tourism officers, and tourists were constructed. The instruments were used in the preliminary study to gather general information regarding tour guiding in Krabi and the needs of tourism personnel.
- 2) A study was conducted by interviewing five tour agency employers, four local tour guides, and four tourists. The subjects were selected on a basis of convenience sampling. In addition, four job-shadowing observations on the top four most popular

tours, namely Phi Phi Islands, 4-Island, Kayak Bor Thor, and Jungle Tour packages, were conducted.

3) From the qualitative data analysis of the preliminary step, a questionnaire was constructed of three main parts including (1) Personal Data, (2) Self-rating of English-speaking Ability, and (3) Local Tour Guides' Needs Survey (See Appendix 1).

4) To ensure the validity of the research instrument, three experts were invited to examine the questionnaire. Finally, the draft of the questionnaire was revised according to the suggestions and comments of the three experts.

5) The questionnaires were distributed to ten local tour guides randomly for a pilot study. Ambiguous or confusing statements and questions were then edited to make the questionnaire ready to use to gather information from the whole population of local tour guides according to the member list of the Krabi Tourist Guide Club.

6) Eighty questionnaires were then distributed in person or by postal mail to local tour guides. Sixty-nine questionnaires (86.25%) were returned and the data was analyzed by accumulating totals for each response. All responses were converted into numerical data of frequency, a further percentage and an average. The conclusions in Part 1 and Part 2 were then drawn to make a composite profile of Krabi tour guides. The analyzed data in Part 3 revealed their needs for the training model (See Appendix 2).

7) Job shadowing involved observing tour guiding delivered by local tour guides in an authentic setting. The researcher traveled with the tour group for ten trips to four tour sites, taking video recordings when the tour guides talked to the tourists. Then the transcribed data were put into a 4-column table including VDO Shot/Place, Data, Category, Language Pattern and Notes (See Appendix 3). This was done for a closer study and convenient analysis. The transcriptions were put into 10 tables: Phi Phi Islands transcriptions were put into 3 tables with data sources from 3 tour guides; Krabi Jungle Tour transcriptions were put into 2 tables with data sources from 2 tour guides; Krabi 4-Island Package transcriptions were put into 3 tables with data sources from 3 tour guides; and Kayak Bor Thor transcriptions were put into 2 tables with data sources from 2 tour guides. The collected data then were organized into four categories: 1) Content, 2) Organizational Pattern of tour guiding presentation, 3) Language Functions, and 4) Communication Strategies.

Based on the findings of job shadowing observations, several issues merited further consideration. The content obtained at the stage of job shadowing observation

was rich in quality and quantity of information. The findings from each tour route were used for syllabus design of the training model in the next phase of the study.

Phase 2: Model Development

In the second phase, the personal profile of Krabi tour guides and their English speaking ability, their needs within the training model, and the findings from job shadowing observation were taken into account in setting the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the training model. A textbook was then composed in as an easy format as possible for a diverse set of trainees. The language exercises and tasks for the trainees to do and to practice were put in lesson plans, which were used by the trainers. Three experts for language accuracy and content assessed the validity of the training model. The syllabus was based on a communicative approach that required organization around a content-based syllabus, which identified the information the trainees would use to present it and the typical communicative acts in the restricted setting of Krabi.

The content was organized into two kinds of material for the training sessions. One was a textbook in hard copy with ample information. The content of the book consisted of 23 lessons in 4 units: Unit 1: Krabi 4-Island Package; Unit 2: Phi Phi Islands; Unit 3: Krabi Jungle Tour; Unit 4: Kayak Bor Thor. The other was a tailored text in video form stored in an iPod Touch. The researcher and a native speaker tailored the content to make it more concise. The lessons for iPod Touch consisted of 23 video files with a length of 127 minutes. At this stage iMovie video files for the self-training session were created via Apple iMovie 09, an application on a Mac Computer. The computer consultants commented that the lessons in an iPod Touch should be user-friendly, without any complicated applications, because of trainees being possibly unfamiliar with the iPod Touch.

In this phase, there were two modes of delivery for the training: the in-house training and the self-training through the iPod Touch. The learner-centered, communicative approaches and Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL) were also planned to apply to intensive in-house training, including some other motivational reinforcements from the collaboration of stakeholders in the community. After the intensive in-house training, the participants continued practicing their speaking skills with the lessons installed in their iPod Touch devices. During that time, the trainees were stimulated to keep self-training by SMS sent by the researcher. To prove the

effectiveness the training model, the Pre-Experimental Designs in the format of 'One-Group Pre-test Post-test' was designed as the following diagram.

X₁	T₁	X₂	T₂
X ₁	=	Intensive In-house Training	
T ₁	=	Pre-test	
X ₂	=	Self-training through a mobile device	
T ₂	=	Post-test	

Phase 3: Implementation

The subjects in this phase were 15 local tour guides, tour agent personnel, hostel owners who conducted tours without licenses, and interested persons who were recruited by voluntary sampling. They had an equal opportunity to attend the training.

The in-house training took 66 hours in 22 days at a tutorial school in an air-conditioned room with a projector, computer, white board and speaker. The self-training allowed the trainees to train for four weeks by using tailored lessons through iPod Touch projects.

A while-training evaluation was conducted through questionnaires in order to examine the trainees' attitude towards the training sessions. The trainees' feedback on the in-house training and the self-training through iPod Touch devices was positive. The overall trainees' attitude towards the first two units of the Krabi 4-island Package and the Phi Phi Islands was at the highest level. The overall trainees' attitude towards the last two units of the Krabi Jungle Tour and the Kayak Bor Thor was at a high level.

Phase 4: Evaluation

The two speaking tests were administered. A pre-test was taken after the in-house training of each unit and a post-test was taken after self-training through lessons on an iPod Touch. The trainees were told to take the role of a tour guide and were taped by a computer video camera. The post-test was conducted after the trainees had a course through tailored lessons in an iPod Touch for four weeks. The unit that was chosen for the tour guiding commentary in the post-test was the Krabi 4-Island Package, since all 15 trainees had taken this unit as the pre-test.

Test validity and reliability were taken into account. The validity came from a

work-related simulation of a speaking task. The commentary covered content and spoken language that they had learned from in-house training and self-training through an iPod Touch. The assessment criteria were broken down into content, organizational pattern, language functions, pronunciation, spoken grammar, spoken vocabulary, and communications strategies. The test reliability arose from 'inter-rater reliability' by the assessment of three raters. The assessment started with rater training. The videotape of a trainee's pre-test and post-test was played on a big screen projector on the wall plugged into an amplifier for better sound. The first two video files of the trainee's pre-test and post-test were presented for the three raters to calibrate the assessment process. Then the three raters showed their scoring sheets and opened a discussion on scoring agreement. The raters asked themselves seven questions as they watched the pre and post-tests of the test takers.

1. How much more content is there in the post- test than in the pre-test?
2. Are the ideas in the post-test easier to follow?
3. Are the language functions used more appropriately in the post-test than in the pre-test?
4. Is the test taker's pronunciation clearer in the post-test?
5. Is the test taker's spoken grammar more effective to convey information in the post-test?

How frequently are the well-chosen words and phrases used in the post-test compared to the pre- test?

Are means of communications strategies used by test taker's more appropriate and effective in the post-test?

The raters used the scoring sheet while assessing the speaking test of 15 trainees (See Appendix 4). The score sheet indicated that seven criteria were assessed to discover the comprehensibility and acceptability to the raters of the post-test performance compared with that of the pre-test. The analysis of the results was aimed to illustrate how the tailored lessons for self-training through an iPod Touch had impact on trainee speaking ability in terms of intelligibility and changes in seven criteria. The results were that one trainee's performance remained unchanged, one reached a much higher level, and thirteen attained a moderately higher level.

To ensure inter-rater reliability, a nonparametric test, the Krippendorff's Alpha,

was used to analyze the pre-test and the post-test scores by the three raters. According to Krippendorff (2007), Krippendorff's Alpha is a statistical measure of the agreement achieved when coding a set of units of analysis. Also called measures of inter-coder agreement, it assesses inter-rater reliability. The ordinal data of three raters were computed category-by- category with an application of the following formula.

$$\text{ordinal} \delta_{ck}^2 = \left(\frac{n_c}{2} + \sum_{g>c}^{g<k} n_g + \frac{n_k}{2} \right)^2$$

where $c < k$

The reliabilities a were of all $> .800$, which was acceptable for inter-rater reliability, proving agreement among the three raters on the trainees' performance.

In addition, before and after training self-assessment was conducted to examine the trainees' self- perceptions of seven language components. The trainees were asked to assess their own ability by scoring each component out of 10: 0=lowest, 10=highest, in column A for ability before training and in column B for ability after training. The result from the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test indicated that the trainees assessed themselves as positively ranked. They reported higher scores after training in almost all components. Z values at .001 show significant differences between before and after self-assessments.

The holistic assessments in this stage revealed, by the end of A Blended Training Model Using Mobile Devices to Enhance Speaking Ability of Local Tour Guides, an improvement at a moderately higher level in three language components of content, organizational patterns and communications strategies, and some improvement in language function, pronunciation and spoken vocabulary occurred. A trainee (T14) who was rated by the three raters at a much higher level never missed classes and reported using an iPod Touch about 100 times to do self-training everyday. The trainee proved that a very strong commitment to the training course produced the improvement.

Furthermore, to confirm to what extent the speaking test ratings were reliable, three sets of oral pre-tests and post-tests were selected for analysis. They were rated as either much higher, higher, or no change in the pre-test and post-test results comparison. The two coders wrote two-letter codes to identify the language components; CT for content, LF for language function, SG for spoken grammar, SV for spoken

vocabulary, and CS for communication strategies. The language components in this stage are five of seven criteria used in scoring the speaking test (See Appendix 5). The inter-coder reliability was determined by using the formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 64).

$$\alpha\text{-Inter-coder reliability} = \frac{\text{number of agreements}}{\text{number of agreements} + \text{disagreements}}$$

$\alpha = 1$ means perfect reliability because there is no disagreement between the coders. The total alpha 0.82 is acceptable in terms of inter-coder reliability.

The results of the analysis of spoken language transcriptions agreed with those of the speaking test scoring. This was done to give more credence to the oral pre-test and post-test assessment.

Findings and Discussion

With a view towards developing a tailor-made training program for local tour guides, a localized curriculum with specific content was created from needs analysis, thus confirming its uniqueness. A textbook was designed from needs analysis results and written up in an easy-to-use format. The textbook was trimmed to make it concise and simple in order to put it into an iPod Touch for a self-training session. The in-house training sessions incorporated a native speaker working as a co-trainer, a successful tour operator and a professional tour guide invited as guest speakers. Speaking tests were administered as pre-tests after the completion of each unit. Self-directed training through tailored lessons followed these on an iPod Touch. Trainees' attitudes towards the in-house training and the self-training sessions through an iPod Touch were examined by questionnaires. The three experts, including a native speaker, a professional tour guide, and a Thai teacher of English were invited to assess the pre-tests and the post-tests of 15 trainees. The pre-test and post-test scores were compared to assess the degree of change of each trainee's speaking performance. Finally, three sets of speaking pre-tests and post-tests were transcribed and analyzed in order to affirm the reliability of the speaking test ratings.

The process was long but intellectually rewarding. All these activities were done to answer three research questions. To Research Question 1: "What are the

characteristics of Krabi tour guides and their needs for an English training model?" the needs analysis results gave ample information to furnish the training model. Specially, the information gained from job shadowing ascertained the organizational pattern, content, language functions, and other language elements needed. To Research Question 2: "To what extent does the training model meet the needs of Krabi tour guides?" the trainees' attitudes and satisfaction towards the training model were positive and high as seen in the results of attitude questionnaires. To Research Question 3: "Does the blended training model enhance the participants' oral English competency?" the answer to this research question was "Yes." Apparently, the results of the pre-test and the post-test rating scores comparing degree of change revealed the statistically significant improvement of the tour guides' speaking ability because 14 out of 15 trainees got higher scores. The iPod Touch tailored lessons could be considered a powerful innovative device for self-directed learning. The trainees' analyzed spoken language revealed that self-training through an iPod Touch enhanced retention. The content in the mobile device was of manageable size, sensible, sufficient, complete and ready to use. The device was also portable with a key listening feature. It could be assumed that the self-directed training through the iPod Touch supported the training model and made it significantly different from the traditional in-class training.

The products of many stages in this study, including a profile of Krabi tour guides, needs within an English training model, a tailor-made curriculum, and tailored lessons in an iPod Touch for mobile learning were academically valuable.

Conclusion

Not only the statistical significance of the tour guides' speaking ability, as shown in the degree of change of the pre-test and the post-test scores, but the practically significant improvement, as displayed in the self-assessment results with a higher level and a large magnitude of effect size, can also assure the effectiveness of the blended training model.

The achievement is not a matter of chance, but a matter of contributions: 1) The syllabus met their needs; 2) The training sessions were held during the low season of tourism; 3) The trainees attended the training free of charge except for buying an iPod Touch; 4) The methodology, materials, equipment, and trainers were efficient;

5) The trainees had high motivations to learn; and 6) They used an iPod Touch, which allowed them to train on their own time.

Any ESP course planners desiring to engineer a relevant training regimen such as English for Superstore Departments, English for Resort Staff, and English for Police Officers, to name a few, can follow and adapt these research stages and probably do a further study. Specifically, the job-shadowing observation could be a powerful research instrument to provide abundant data. However, it took a lot of time during field trips and analyzing collected data. It was practical. As a result, any interested researchers should ascertain whether it is fit for the time scale or worth their application.

Another further study could be focused on self-training through an iPod Touch. English for Tourism, existing elsewhere in Thailand, can be tailored and put into an iPod Touch for local tour guides to use as a mobile-learning device. Should the use of the iPod touch be the exclusive method by which tour guide proficiency is augmented? Will it meet the needs of trainees, stakeholders, and be the decisive factor that turns more prospective trainees into competent tour guides? If it turns out to be manifestly successful in aggrandizing local tourism, could the method be expanded to train tour guides in other parts of Thailand? It is hoped that the findings in this research can inspire practitioners and interested people in this field to construct a parallel training model to meet their learners' needs.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Krabi Local Tour Guides

This questionnaire is a part of a research entitled "***The Integration of Mobile Phones in a Training Model for Local English-Speaking Tour Guides***" for a doctoral degree in English Language Studies, School of English, Institute of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology.

Objectives of the study

This study is conducted to investigate the fundamental data of Krabi local tour guides in order to attain local tour guides' profile that provides personal information, including sex, age, educational background, working experience, and English speaking ability. A needs analysis concerning job-related is also administered to provide some resources for developing the training model for Krabi local tour guides. Eventually, the findings in this phase make a major contribution to the success of the training model in terms of strengthening Krabi local tour guides' English speaking skill.

Your responses are crucial to the success of the study. Please answer every question accurately. Your responses will be treated confidentially and will be used for the purpose of this study only.

Directions

The questionnaire is divided into 2 parts:

Part 1: Personal Data

Part 2: Self-rating of English Speaking Ability

Part 3: Local Tour Guides' Needs Survey

Part 1: Personal Data

Directions: Please fill in the blanks provided and/or put a (/) mark in the box that reflects your answer.

1. Gender Male Female

2. Age years.

3. Current Work

3.1 Krabi Local Tour Guide for Years Months

- holding a yellow-card license
- holding a blue-card license
- applying for a license
- not having any license
- used to have one but expired

3.2 Other (please specify)

3.3 Please prioritize English skills used while working:

(speaking/listening/reading/writing)

- 1) 3).....
- 2) 4).....

4. Educational Background

PhD Master Degree Bachelor Degree

Vocational Certificate/College/ Diploma

High School or Mattayom 6 Certificate

Other (Please specify)

5. English Language Background

5.1 Total years you learned English years in educational institutions

5.2 Have you ever attended a training program on English-speaking skills for tour guides?

Yes No

If yes, please give a detail:

1.
2.
3.

5.3 At present do you still practice/learn English?

Yes No

If yes, please explain (how)

.....

6. Mobile Devices

Mobile Phone with Symbian Operating System, if yes, please identify (name/series)

PDA Phone with Window Mobile Operating System, if yes, please identify (name/series)

Others please mention

7. Contact Address:.....

Telephone: Mobile:

E-mail:.....

Part 2: Self-rating of English Speaking Ability

Directions: Please read the description of English speaking ability provided in each level and put a (/) mark in the box that best match your present English speaking ability level.

- POST-BEGINNER** Can **understand** a few everyday expressions of simple **functions** in known situations, and can **produce** some single words and set phrases in response, or can make requests using, for example, a single word + 'please' ('Salt, please').
- ELEMENTARY** Can **understand** many simple expressions of everyday basic **functions** in unfamiliar situations and sometimes grasp what the basic topic of a conversation in English is. Can **produce** understandable questions and answers involving information above basic (e.g. Not only 'What is your name?' but 'What does your father do?') even if structures often go wrong and words are not known.
- PRE-INTERMEDIATE** Can **understand** the gist of a commonplace conversation in English, though not in detail, and can **produce** English well enough to take part if spoken to carefully. Can also initiate conversation by asking questions on a range of everyday topics (e.g. sport, or food) and can perform most everyday social and practical **functions** (e.g. buying things in shops, going to the doctor) well enough to survive comfortably.
- MID-INTERMEDIATE** Can **understand** the gist of a commonplace conversation involving fluent speakers, provided that some allowances are made, or occasional help given. Can **produce** well enough to make substantial relevant contributions (e.g. of an example or story clearly related to the topic) and to get full and satisfactory information from other speakers by questioning as necessary. Is **functionally** competent for all everyday negotiations except where completely unpredictable problems arise.
- UPPER INTERMEDIATE** Can **understand** well enough to hold a continuous conversation with a native speaker, even where the speaker does not, or can not, adapt his/her language to a foreigner. Can **produce** well enough to initiate new topics, change the subject, and generally take part in the management of the conversation rather than merely responding. Can manage all normal life **functions** with ease, and cope linguistically with completely new situations (e.g. a negotiation in a

shop not going according to expectations).

ADVANCED Can **understand** native speakers of everyday standard English, even when not being directly addressed, and can therefore take part in normal interaction on almost the same terms as a native speaker. Can **produce** speech fluent enough to convey feeling, to argue and maintain a point of view, or to convey complex information (e.g. explaining a process) to a listener.

(Adapted from Attainment Levels: Severnvalle Definitions On-line www.englishschool.org.uk/level.htm)

Part 3: Local Tour Guides' Needs Survey

Directions: Please put a cross X in the boxes provided to show your opinions on needs in a training model for local English-speaking tour guides.

1. If the training model were offered to improve English-speaking skills of Krabi local tour guides, would you attend this training?

Yes No Undecided. It depends on

2. Are English-speaking skills the most needed for the tour guiding?

Yes

No. If not, please specify other skill(s)because

3. To what extent do you need the following spoken functions in a tour guiding? Please put a cross X in a box of each if you think it is Very Useful, Useful, Not Useful.

	Very Useful	Useful	Not Useful
1) Greeting/leave taking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) Explaining an itinerary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Giving an instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) Describing places, things, events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) Giving directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6) Telling a legend of places/people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7) Giving a recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8) Highlighting some information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9) Giving health and safety advice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10) Others, please specify.....			

From the list, choose five you want to learn first.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

4. What tour guiding routes are most needed to be put as the content in the training model?

	Most Needed	Moderate Needed	Little Needed
1) Phi Phi Islands Tour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) Hong Island Package (Hong,Pakbia,Lading Islands)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Krabi 4-Island Package (Phranang Cave, Chicken, Tup,Poda Islands)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) Krabi Rain Forest Tour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5) Kayak Bor Tor

6) Kayak Thalen

7) Others, please specify

5. The proposed training model composes of two modes of training delivery: in-house intensive training and self-taught through mobile phones. Please put a cross X in the boxes that reflects your preference.

In-house intensive training

1) Duration of training 30 hours in 5 days
 40 hours in 7 days
 50 hours in 9 days
 Others, please specify

2) Number of trainees Not more than 10 persons
 Not more than 20 persons
 Not more than 30 persons
 Others, please specify

3) Trainers English-native speakers
 Thai
 Both Thai and English-native speakers

4) Training activities (you can choose more than one option)
 Lecture(get information from trainers)
 Role-play
 Pair/group work
 Individual drilling
 Memorizing dialogues/conversations
 Practicing tour guiding presentation
 Others, please specify

Mobile Phones Learning (after the intensive training)

5) To what extent do you think Mobile Phones Learning useful to improve your English-speaking skills?
 Very Useful Useful Not Useful

6) What proportion of time is adequate for you to do self-training on-demand through Mobile Phones Learning until you improve your English-speaking skills at a satisfactory level?
 1 hour a day in 2 weeks
 1 hour a day in 4 weeks
 2 hours a day in 2 weeks
 2 hour a day in 4 weeks
 Others, please specify

6. To find out how much your English-speaking skills are improving, how do you like to be assessed?
 Oral presentation assessed by the trainers
 Oral presentation assessed by peers
 Oral presentation assessed by professional tour guides
 Paper tests set by the trainers
 Others, please specify

7. Other suggestions may affect the success of the training model:
.....

Appendix 2

Profile of Krabi Tour Guides

	Tour Guides' Profile	Group
Sex	Male	66.66%
	Female	33.33%
Age	16-20	7%
	21-30	43%
	31-40	38%
	41-47	12%
Work	- Experienced	77.77%
	Less than 5 years	22.22%
	More than 5 years	
	- Licensed	
	Yes	56%
	No	44%
Background	- Education	
	Master	1.5%
	Bachelor	32%
	Diploma	30%
	M.6	32%
	M.3	3%
	P.6	1.5%
	- Language training	
	Yes	42%
	No	58%
Mobile Devices	Symbian Operating System	47%
	PDA	7%
	No operating system	46%
Self-rating of English Speaking Ability	Post beginner	7.5 %
	Elementary	10.5%
	Pre-intermediate	22%
	Mid-intermediate	44%
	Upper-intermediate	13%
	Advanced	3%

Appendix 3

First Transcribed Data

(One Day Tour to Phi Phi Islands by Speed Boat Sunday 25 May 2008)

Place	Data	Category	Language Pattern and Note	
Nopparattara Pier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hello, good morning. We are going to Phi Phi islands today, but we go to Rai Lay beach first to pick up the guests... about 10 persons. - Please take off your shoes before get on the boat and wash your shoes to get rid of the sand. 	3.1 3.2 3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hello, good morning... 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome to Ao Nang Orchid Speed Boat to Phi Phi Isalnds - Please take off your shoes and wash them before ... up to the boat. - Ok, everyone we start. We're ready to go.. let's go. - Today we have a big wave. So.. Ok .. we need you to sit while the boat running.. on both side for balance. - We are going to Phi Phi Lay first... to see around Phi Phi Lay first, then we go to Phi Phi Don ... to have lunch and on the way back we go to Koh Pai. I show you when we arrive there. Ok? 	3.1 3.3 3.5, 4.6 3.7, 3.9, 3.10, 4.6 4.6 3.2, 3.3, 4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome to... Ok Let's go. Ok Ok Ok 	
Viking Cave	Phi Phi is first place. Welcome to Phi Phi Lay, for this side we call Phi Phi Lay, right? In this area we call Phi Phi Lay and over there Phi Phi Don. That side we call Phi Phi Don, this's Phi Phi Lay, right? (tourist murmur, talking to each other) And this is Viking cave. We get here for you to take some pictures of Viking cave first. This is Viking Cave...Viking Cave, Viking Cave.	3.1 4.11 3.4 4.11 3.10 3.8 3.8	right? right ? Viking Cave Viking Cave	Welcome to... In this area we call... That side we call...this is... This is...(introducing the place) This is... Repetition

Appendix 4

Pre-test/Post-test Performance Change Score Sheet

Testee's Name Rater's Name

Instruction: Please indicate your opinion of the post-test performance compared with the pre-test performance by writing the numbers in the columns.

Scoring Scales:

4	Much higher level
3	Higher level
2	Similar level
1	Lower level

Score Sheet

Criteria for Assessment	4	3	2	1
1. Content				
2. Organizational Pattern				
3. Language Functions				
4. Pronunciation				
5. Spoken Grammar				
6. Spoken Vocabulary				
7. Communications Strategies				
Total Score				

Appendix 5

Table 7.4 illustrates the transcriptions of trainee number 9's pre-test and post-test and coding that was done by the two coders.

Speech Transcription Analysis of T9

Speaking Pre-test	Speaking Post-test
<p>1. O.K. everybody now we are at Koh Si. [CODER 1: LF] [CODER 2: LF]</p> <p>2. Is pleasure place for snorkeling, swimming <Show picture> and coral reef. [CODER 1: CT/LF] [CODER 2: CT/SV/LF]</p> <p>3. There are many kinds of colorful fish <change picture> including Tiger Fish, Grouper, Nemo, Parrot Fish and many more. [CODER 1: CT/LF] [CODER 2: CT/SV]</p> <p>4. Not you can enjoy snorkeling but also you can feed the fish.<pause....look ahead....close eyes....look at the picture> [CODER 1: SG/LF/CS] [CODER 2: SG/LF/CS]</p> <p>5. Don't forget to bring some bread to feed the fish. [CODER 1: LF] [CODER 2: LF]</p> <p>6. You have any question? [CODER 1: SG/LF] [CODER 2: SG/LF]</p> <p>7. If no question, I give you 40 minutes for snorkeling. [CODER 1: SG/LF] [CODER 2: SG/LF]</p> <p>8. Please don't forget to wear your life jacket. [CODER 1: LF] [CODER 2: LF]</p> <p>9. If you not good swimming please hold the rope while you snorkeling. [CODER 1: LF/SG] [CODER 2: LF/SG]</p>	<p>1. The second stop is Koh Si. [CODER 1:LF] [CODER 2:LF]</p> <p>2. Koh means Island, Si in Thai means four <show 4 fingers> [CODER 1:CT/LF] [CODER 2: CT/LF]</p> <p>3. You see there...er...there are four rocks...<show picture>... together. [CODER 1: LF/CS] [CODER 2:LF/CS]</p> <p>4. It's the best place for snorkeling, swimming and sunbathing...and coral reefs. [CODER 1:CT/LF] [CODER 2:LF/CT]</p> <p>5. This spot is the nearest snorkeling place out of shore. [CODER 1:CT/LF] [CODER 2:SG/CT/LF]</p> <p>6. There are many kinds of colorful fish including Nemo, Par...Parrot fish, Tiger fish...er...Grouper and many more. [CODER 1:CT/LF] [CODER 2: SV/CT]</p> <p>7. And not only you can enjoy swimming, you can also feed the fish. [CODER 1:SG/LF] [CODER 2: SG/LF]</p> <p>8. Don't forget to bring some bread to feed the fish. [CODER 1:LF] [CODER 2: LF]</p> <p>9. You have any question? [CODER 1:SG/LF] [CODER 2:SG/LF]</p>

Speaking Pre-test	Speaking Post-test
10. Ok, let's go swimming. [CODER 1: LF] [CODER 2: LF]	10. Please wear life jacket. [CODER 1:LF] [CODER 2:SG/LF]
11. Ok welcome...welcome to Phranang Cave beach. [CODER 1: LF] [CODER 2: LF/CS]	11. If no question, I will give you 40 minutes for swimming and snorkeling. [CODER 1:LF/SG] [CODER 2: LF/SG]
12. Er...as you can see <show picture> the beach like silver floating on white soft sand. [CODER 1:CS/LF/SV] [CODER 2:CS/SG/LF]	12. See you, enjoy your time. [CODER 1: LF] [CODER 2:LF]
13. In front of us <look at picture in hand> is dramatic limestone scenery. [CODER 1: CS/LF/SG/SV] [CODER 2:LF]	13. Our last stop is ...<select and show picture> Phranang Cave Beach. [CODER 1:LF/CS] [CODER 2:LF]
14. It's one of the best place to rock climbing. [CODER1: LF/SG] [CODER 2:SG/LF/CT]	14. As you can see <look at picture> the beach like silver floating on soft white sand. [CODER 1:CS/LF/SV] [CODER 2:SG/LF/CS]
15. From here it's possible to climb up to the top of headland spectacular view <Put down the picture> [CODER1:CT/LF/SG] [CODER 2:CT/SG/LF]	15. In front of us, it's dramatic limestone cliff scenery. [CODER 1:LF/SG/SV] [CODER 2: SG/LF/SV]
16. On...on your right, on your right is famous Phranang Cave. [CODER1:CS/LF/SV] [CODER 2:CS/LF]	16. It's one of the best places for rock – climbing...in Thailand. [CODER 1:LF/SG] [CODER 2:LF/CT]
17. Some say the princess live here with Lingam offering. [CODER1:LF/SV] [CODER 2:SG//LF]	17. It's possible to climb to get to the top to get... spectacular view of entire area. [CODER 1:CT/LF/SG/SV] [CODER 2:CS/SG/CT]
18. The local people believe that a couple who don't have children can ask the princess, they have to give phallus to makes they have. <pause and look at pictures> [CODER1:LF/CS] [CODER 2: SG/CT/LF]	18. And some say, on your right <point to the picture> it's....Phranang Cave on [CODER 1:CS/LF] [CODER 2:CS/LF]
19. They have to make phallus to respect the princess. [CODER1:LF] [CODER 2: SG/CT/LF]	19. Some say...the princess lives here with Lingam offerings. [CODER 1:LF/SV] [CODER 2: CS/LF]
20. Ok we stroll in Phranang cave... has big surprise wait to it. [CODER1:LF] [CODER 2: SG/LF]	20. The local people believe that...<look at the picture> a couple who don't have any children can ask the Princess... [CODER 1:LF/CS] [CODER 2:CS/CT/LF]

Speaking Pre-test	Speaking Post-test
	<p>21. If you don't have another and they have to make phallus to respect the Princess. [CODER 1:LF/SG] [CODER 2:SG/CT]</p> <p>22. OK. Follow me to Phranang Cave, has big surprise wait you. [CODER 1:LF] [CODER 2:SG/LF]</p> <p>23. This is our last stop. [CODER 1:LF] [CODER 2:LF]</p> <p>24. I hope you enjoy our trip today and thank you for coming with us. [CODER 1:LF/SV] [CODER 2:LF/SG]</p> <p>25. You're welcome back again and again. [CODER 1:LF/SV] [CODER 2:LF]</p> <p>26. And I hope you will...have amazing a...<close eyes and pause>...have wonderful....a wonderful time in Thailand...today. [CODER 1:LF/SV/CS] [CODER 2:CS/LF]</p> <p>27. Thank you very much. [CODER 1:LF] [CODER 2:LF]</p>

Coder 1								
Trainee	CT	OP	LF	PN	SG	SV	CS	Rated
T 9	Pre/Post	Pre/Post	Pre/Post	Pre/Post	Pre/Post	Pre/Post	Pre/Post	
Coder 1	3/5	.....	20/27	.....	7/8	4/7	5/5	39/52
Coder 2	6/8	.....	19/24	.....	11/11	2/2	4/7	42/52
α	0.5/0.6	.....	0.95/0.87	.....	0.64/0.73	0.5/0.2	0.8/0.71	0.75

