



KỶ YẾU

SUMMARY RECORD

HỘI THẢO QUỐC TẾ

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

"PHÁT TRIỂN NGUỒN LỰC DU LỊCH
TIỂU VÙNG SÔNG MÊ KÔNG"
"DEVELOPING TOURISM RESOURCES
IN THE MEKONG SUB-REGION"



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**NGUỒN LỰC - ĐỊNH HƯỚNG
PHÁT TRIỂN DU LỊCH
TIỂU VÙNG SÔNG MÊ KÔNG**

**RESOURCE
TOURISM DEVELOPING ORIENTATION
IN MEKONG SUB - REGION**

NHỮNG KHÓ KHĂN TRONG VIỆC HỌC TIẾNG ANH CỦA SINH VIÊN NGÀNH DU LỊCH THÁI LAN

Ngôn ngữ Anh được xem là một yếu tố quan trọng cho ngành công nghiệp du lịch và giáo dục du lịch Thái Lan. Các khóa học tiếng Anh dành cho các chuyên ngành du lịch là tiếng Anh chuyên ngành (ESP) được đưa vào giảng dạy nhằm đáp ứng tiêu chuẩn tiếng Anh cho nguồn nhân lực du lịch Thái Lan. Tuy nhiên, sinh viên Thái Lan vẫn còn phải đối mặt với nhiều khó khăn trong việc học tiếng Anh trong các khóa học khác nhau. Nghiên cứu định tính này điều tra khó khăn trong quá trình học tiếng Anh của sinh viên ngành du lịch. Nghiên cứu áp dụng cách thức phỏng vấn sâu với 12 sinh viên du lịch đã từng học các khóa học tiếng Anh dành cho chương trình du lịch đại học. Nghiên cứu cho thấy rằng hầu hết các sinh viên đều quan tâm về việc thiếu từ vựng tiếng Anh chuyên ngành du lịch. Ngoài ra, nghiên cứu cũng cho thấy khả năng nghe và nói để có thể được giao tiếp bằng tiếng Anh là những kỹ năng yếu nhất trong số tất cả bốn kỹ năng tiếng Anh.

DIFFICULTIES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSES FOR THAI TOURISM STUDENTS

Supalux Sri-sumang and Aroonroj Meechan

English language has been presenting as a significant component for Tourism industries and Thai Tourism Education. English language courses for Tourism studies are viewed as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) which have been purposely responded to serve the standards of English for Thai Tourism workforces. However, Thai students still face difficulties of learning English in different courses. This qualitative study investigated English language difficulties of Tourism students. The research applied In-depth interview with 12 Tourism students who studied in English courses for Tourism Undergraduate program. The research found that most of the students concerned about the lack of knowledge of specific English vocabulary in Tourism discipline. In addition to, listening and speaking abilities to communicate in English found to be the weakest skills among all four skills of English.

INTRODUCTION

In Thailand, English is one of foreign languages that is located in Thai Education Curriculum. It is divided into four substances: language for communication, language and culture, language in different disciplines and language and society (Ministry of Education, 2002). English language has been tremendously continuing its role towards Thai Education. At the same time, English language has been increasingly required for Thai tourism Industries (Foley, 2005, Diethelm Travel 2006, Todd, 2006, Simpson, 2011.). ESP programs in Thailand will continue and be inclined to increase in number. Foley again confirms that "English is no longer a luxury but a necessity" (Foley, 2005, p. 233).



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ESP COURSES IN THAI UNIVERSITY

With emphasizing to English courses for Undergraduate programs, ESP courses for University students involve English language skills and specific content integration. Darasawang (2007) and Sanguanngarm et al. (2011) identify English courses for Thai University Programs. They claim that English courses are compulsory for most undergraduates to take general English courses and Specific English courses that relate to their specialized areas of study. Davis (1993) explains that students perform best when the level of English is slightly above their current competence level in their field of study. Furthermore, Fredrickson (2003) continues that the level of English proficiency of Thai university graduate was surprisingly low. Similarly to the result of the study by Suwanarak and Phothongsunun (2009), half of undergraduate students participating in their study claimed that they were unable to use English to communicate in real situations as they were weak especially in listening and speaking skills. However, Thai ESP students have lowers both English skills and knowledge (Noom-ura, 2013). It is therefore Thai undergraduates with low English language proficiencies unavoidably challenged learning difficulties in ESP courses.

ESP COURSES FOR A TOURISM PROGRAM

ESP courses as English courses that support students to use a foreign language as the main communications means in communicating and cooperating with foreign partners in the professional field and real-life situations, teaching/learning ESP is believed to be specialty-oriented as it is submitted to specific (professional) needs of the students (Helsvig & Kolegija 2001). Hence, the people who have key roles in the education and preparation of the Tourism Operators have to be prepared for these new exigencies, with a language which will help all to share knowledge, to communicate and to make tourism an even greater source of enjoyment, of cultural sharing and ultimately profitable for all concerned (Nogueira, 2008). Accordingly, the ESP courses are considered to be able to enhance students' English proficiency with the linking of meaningful processes and activities to strengthen the English competence requirements of tourism personnel.

This study aimed to identify problems that occurred as learning in ESP courses he results are able to broaden teachers and course designers' viewpoints to gain visions and provisions of setting ESP courses for Tourism undergraduates.

METHODOLOGY

The study was a qualitative research. The data generation applied the in-depth interviews with 12 Tourism students to identify learning difficulties in ESP courses and their perspectives towards learning in ESP courses. Interviews are viewed as the most common and powerful means that people try to understand their fellow human being (Fontana & Frey, 2000). To gain data in qualitative research, interviews are broadly viewed as an appropriate technique (Denzin, 1989). The researchers used triangulation theory to check the reliability of information to collect data in a consistent way by performing completeness checks of the information. The

collected data was divided into English skills including vocabulary. The data and significant information were recorded and all the data had been examined and analysed to identify and difficulties of each language skill in ESP courses.

FINDINGS

The majority of the participants informed that the ESP program had similar difficulties on their English ability in the four skills in ESP courses. The results identified by divided into all four skills of English and specific vocabulary in ESP courses.

Listening

The main objective of this study was to identify the English skills' difficulties for Tourism students in ESP courses. According to the results, the participants agreed that listening skills became the most difficult skills among all four skills of English-for their studies. They continued that in practices they listened to different speakers of English for communication which challenged them to try to understand the dialogues or conversations. And, the data identified the difficulties when listened to varieties of English accents. They continued that the ESP courses for Tourism, they normally practices based on the American or British accents. As the study of Srisumang and Suyanune, the results also indicated that listening to different varieties of English of the international tourists found to be challenging and time-consuming for communication (Sri-sumang and Suyanune, 2014). Thus, listening to different varieties of English found to be difficult and with limitations of vocabulary they could not understand the entire conversations.

Speaking

Relating to listening skill, speaking skill was similarly claimed as an unavoidable usage for tourism activities. Students revealed that when communicating in English activities such as giving information and explanations of the attractions by using English speaking skills found to be stressful activities for them in ESP courses because they continued that they were worried about the grammar and accuracy. They were worried about using inaccurate vocabulary to suit the contexts. With less preparations and intensive practices, the student viewed that they were unable to communicate with fluency English and led to be unconfident. In addition, the results also found that This can be very challenging for students to listen to speakers who speak fast and unfamiliar accents for them.

Reading

Reading skill found to be the least learning problem of Tourism students for learning in ESP courses. The students claimed that when they used strategies such as skimming and scanning as well as guessing the meaning of the text according to the surrounded contexts, these could help them understand the general ideas of the passages or the texts that provided in the courses. Students were developed these reading techniques by learning through the English language courses and they continued that they leant without worrying about the usages and grammar matters, so they just read and understood the texts.

Writing

All students evaluated their writing skills with the problems of grammatical usages. They commented that writing skill is the lack of emphasized skills in the English courses. They recommended that there should be offering more practices and they need to learn to structure their paragraph writing in the English courses. Even though writing could be considered as the least use among four English skills in English courses of Tourism studies.

Vocabulary

For vocabulary use in ESP courses, students emphasized that the more frequency of the vocabulary word and the familiar words they used, they could easily apply with the different situations. Some of the participant revealed that they still disable to communicate and they were still not able to put words together into comprehensible sentences. This is because the various meanings of the words and they did not know which words used to complete the communication or contexts.

CONCLUSIONS

The research found that most of the students concerned about listening and speaking abilities to communicate in English found to be the weakest skills among all four skills of English. The lack of knowledge of specific English vocabulary in Tourism discipline was explored. Emphasising on accuracy rather than fluency should be developed in the ESP courses. Therefore, it is noteworthy to highlight on the blind spots of English courses to complement insufficient skills. In addition, the English courses should be able to encourage students to develop their performances based on the realistic practices and authentic English usages for particular purposes.

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