

An Innovative Pedagogical Practice Models for English Teachers: A Case Study at Srisuvit School, Thailand

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Abstract: *This study explored the pedagogical English teaching model by analyzing the data from the classroom action research conducting at Srisuvit School. The research objectives were to: 1) compose a systematic English teaching model being implemented at the school. 2) explore the factors that help English teachers at the school be competent in English teaching. 3) explore English teaching activities appropriate with different grade levels of students and 4) explore how those teachers work together in teaching English at the school. The research approach is a Mixed Methods, using Concurrent Embedded design strategy. The informants who provide the research data were eight pairs of English teachers at the English Department at the school with the total of 16 teachers. The data analysis for the quantitative research methods was a mean to measure the teacher competency and attitude towards teaching English as well as students' attitude toward English learning. The data analysis for a qualitative data was done through manual coding and categorizing then interpreting the data. The research results were as follows: 1) the systematic English teaching model composed of seven elements, they were: school culture and policy, parents' participation, English learning environment, teacher's self-development, student's individual differences, teaching pedagogy, and students' learning achievement, 2) the factors that help teachers be more competent in teaching English were: working together in pair, application of teaching pedagogy, 3) approaches those suit the different grade level of student's abilities: letting student work in group, giving student encouragement and motivation, using songs, making them relax and comfortable, letting student do self-evaluation, and building the English learning atmosphere and 4) the ways that teachers work together are: the more experienced teachers work with the less experienced teachers, identifying the problem together, analyzing the problem together, planning the lesson together, and having discussion after class. It is recommended that the parents' participation element of the English teaching model should be the most beneficial to any private schools.*

Keywords: English pedagogy, Innovative mode, English teaching model, Systematic English teaching, Systematic English teaching model

Introduction

Human resource development (HRD) is the main concern of the Thai government, specifically developing the English communication skill for Thai people in order to prepare them to acquire the competitive advantage. Schooling is the approach for developing English communication skill for Thai students. Providing education takes much more resources as compare to training, however it provides more comprehensive development of human beings. Formal education provision is the duty of schools both public and private schools. HRD is an activity to produce behavioral changes in human (Nadler, 1970), the behavior change can be done through training in workplace or through education in educational institution. Human resource development through education in school or university is one of the main investments in human capital that in turn has resulted in the better competitiveness of the country. Among

many behavior changes needed for Thai people are, critical thinking, information literacy, and English communication skill. English communication skill is one of the main issues in Thai education. There has been complains on the English teaching in school in Thailand. Thai students have studied English for many years during their school life, in spite of the long length of English study; the English learning outcome is still not satisfactory. One of the causes could be the English teaching approach in Thai schools may not be effective, specifically English teaching in private school.

Srisuvit School is a large size private school which enrolled more than 3000 students and employed more than 250 teachers. The school offers three levels of education, pre-school level, primary education level and secondary education level. The school has emphasize on developing the innovative approaches to enhance education quality by offering five different innovative programs in the school they are: (1) Standard Program, (2) Signature Program, (3) English Program, (4) Gifted Program, and (5) Intensive Program. The reform of Thai education placed the highest importance on learners (National Education Act of B.E. 2542, p. 35). As a result, it also influenced pedagogical practice to become more focused on learner-centered.

Wongsothorn (1999, p. 54) commented on (Wongsothorn, 1999, p. 54) the need for more language learning especially English that had been mentioned in The Eighth National Education Development Plan: 1997-2001. Section 4 of The National Education Act of B.E. 2542 (1999, p. 3) defines the role of teachers as taking a great deal of responsibility for learning, teaching and encouraging students to learn. Thus encouraging students to learn with enjoyment and participation is to be encouraged more than learning by heart. Moreover, the reform of Thai education placed the highest importance on learners (National Education Act of B.E. 2542, p. 35). As a result, it also influenced teaching methods to become more focused on learner-centered teaching so the methods gradually were changed from grammar-translation into participatory methods. Section 6 of the Education Act states that:

Education shall aim at the full development of the Thai people all aspects: physical and mental health; intellect; knowledge; morality; integrity; and desirable ways of life so as to be able to live in harmony with other people. (National Education Act, 1999, p. 4)

The model for English teachers is an important aspect of the activities emphasized English teachers' cooperation, interaction and participation in pairs and in groups. They now had more opportunity to practice working together with their colleagues. From this view, the researcher assumed that the objectives of education in Section 6 were met.

The Ministry of Education's Foreign Language Education Policy 1996 (Wongsothorn, 1999, pp. 56-57) identified teaching and learning procedures for the 1996 English Language Curriculum. The goal is to create communicative proficiency required for social, personal, academic purposes. Classroom interactions using integrative skills are emphasized. Srisuvit School aims to provide the high quality of education for those 5 distinctive education programs. The education management is organized in to two functions: Academic function and Administration function. The academic function is managed by organizing teachers and subject strands into departments. Each department has different tasks, but similar duties in teaching, similar patterns of interpersonal communication and formal hierarchies. From the provided educational programs, the school has concentrated mostly in teaching English and teaching with English.

It is important for the school to look in to the practice of teaching English and teaching with English to provide the professional development for the teachers in the teaching profession.

In this study, the researcher focused on the professional development of those teachers in the English department, which contains 16 people in the department exclude foreign teachers. Srisuvit School aims to provide the high quality of education for those 5 distinctive education programs. The education management is organized in to two functions, academic function and administration function. The academic function is managed by organizing teachers and subject strands into departments. Each department has different tasks, but similar duties in teaching, similar patterns of interpersonal communication and formal hierarchies. From the provided educational programs, the school has concentrated mostly in teaching English and teaching with English language.

Action research lends itself to use in work situations, due to its focus on current work based practices. While the word “Classroom Action Research (CAR)” is well established in the European Education system, this method has been introduced in Thailand since The New Act, however, a large number of teachers failed to do it in their work situation. It has not previously been practical in Thai education system to implement action research and teaching simultaneously, while teachers are running lessons in the class.

Second language acquisition (SLA)

English is considered as a foreign language for Thai students, however, it is also a second language since Thailand has only one official language so the English is considered a second language for Thai students, acquiring a second language is the same as acquiring the foreign language. A second-language acquisition is an interdisciplinary field, from the beginning there are two publications in particular that are seen as instrumental to the development of the modern study of SLA (Pit Corder's 1967) on the significance of learners' errors, and Larry Selinker's (1972) on Interlanguage. Corder's essay rejected a behaviourist (UK) account of SLA and suggested that learners made use of intrinsic internal linguistic processes (Corder, 1967). Selinker's argued that second-language learners possess their own individual linguistic systems that are independent from both the first and second languages (“SLA”, n.d.), (Selinker, 1972). The 1990s there were new theories introduced to the field, such as Michael Long's interaction hypothesis (Long 1996), Merrill Swain's output hypothesis, and Richard Schmidt's noticing hypothesis. However, the two main areas of research interest were linguistic theories of SLA based upon Noam Chomsky (1965)'s universal grammar, and psychological approaches such as skill acquisition theory and connectionism. The latter category also saw the new theories of process ability and input processing in this time period. The 1990s also saw the introduction of sociocultural theory, an approach to explain second-language acquisition in terms of the social environment of the learner (“SLA”, n.d.). In the 2000s research was focused on much the same areas as in the 1990s, with research split into two main camps of linguistic and psychological approaches. VanPatten and Benati (2010) do not see this state of affairs as changing in the near future, pointing to the support both areas of research have in the wider fields of linguistics and psychology, respectively (“SLA”, n.d.). For the second-language learner, the acquisition of meaning is arguably the most important task. Meaning it is the heart of a language, not the exotic sounds or elegant sentence structure. There are several types of meanings: lexical, grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic. All the different meanings contribute to the acquisition of meaning resulting in the integrated second language possession (“SLA”, n.d.) Lexical meaning - meaning that is stored in our mental lexicon. Grammatical meaning - comes into consideration when calculating the meaning of a sentence; usually encoded in inflectional morphology. Semantic meaning - word meaning. Pragmatic meaning - meaning that depends on context, requires knowledge of the world to decipher; for example, when someone asks on the phone, “Is Mike

there?” he doesn’t want to know if Mike is physically there; he wants to know if he can talk to Mike (“SLA”, n.d.).

Research purposes

The purpose of this study was to explore the systematic English teaching model as a result of the classroom action research being conducted at the school at the same time the researcher aimed to explore in details concerning; the factors those help the teachers be more competent in teaching English, the teaching approaches those suit the different grad levels of student, and the way those teachers work together.

Research questions

The researcher has posted the following research questions: 1. what should be the systematic model for English teaching at Srisuvit School?, 2) how does the systematic model enhance the school’s English teaching? There are three sub-questions for this research question; what should be the factors that help teachers be more competent in teaching English?, what approaches suit the different grade level of student?, and how did teachers work together?

Research methods

The researcher has used the Mixed Method Research, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods combines in analyzing the action research cycle that used the interview and questionnaires techniques. The qualitative part, an interview observation and document analysis were used. The interview was undertaken with eight pairs of teacher, with the total of 16 teachers, as representative of English teachers at the English Department at Srisuvit School. The quantitative method was nested within the qualitative method to validate the teachers’ competency and attitude during the classroom action research practice using an evaluation form and questionnaire as the data collection tool. Diaries and notes of teachers were used to provide the qualitative data about teachers’ practice and attitudes in two terms. First was explained in terms of pedagogical practice in class, second was attitude to work together. The teachers’ diaries were written and recorded after they finished participating at the end of the day and exchange ideas during the group meeting/ discussion. Peer and self-rating scales were used before and after classes. There were also the student’s English learning memos which students wrote every week in order to provide teachers with useful knowledge about students’ feelings towards English class. The use of diaries in research into attitudes is supported by Jane (2001) and Peck (1996).

The interview

The researcher stimulates and supports English teachers in making change and to innovate pedagogical practice for their self-development. After undertook action research cycle to practice and develop English teachers, there is a strong need to spend more time for investigating teachers’ feeling and attitudes through interview.

The interview process was promulgated on beginning of March 2016 which separated to two steps, first was one to one interview and there were 4(8) teachers from different pair came for interview. It was semi- structured interview; everyone was asked the same questions, the questions were about the difficulty and problems in working together, what they have learn from each other and what are new ideas or new pedagogical practices. (list of questions shown in appendix). Second step is in-tray exercise, head of English department and two experience

teachers plus two new comers attended the interview, it was implemented to encourage teachers expressed their opinion in terms of implemented action research, conflict and so on.

Data analysis

In this project, the qualitative data were collected from observation, interview, document analysis, diaries and notes. To analyze the qualitative data the researcher has cleaned up the raw data (transcripts, field notes, images, etc.) then did the coding, categorized the codes to answer the research questions while the quantitative part the data from the questionnaire and self-rating were analyzed through mean.

Trustworthiness

The researcher has employed the triangulation method to ensure the trustworthiness of the data collection and analysis by collecting the data from different sources, the teachers, students, and pair of teachers. The data were also collected with different tools; the interview, observation, document analysis, diaries and notes.

Ethical Issue

The ethical issue in research concerns protecting the research participants' right and harmfulness that may arise from participating in the study, in this study the researcher has informed the research participants that they can withdraw from participating in the study at any time if they feel uncomfortable. Their names were not revealed at any place of data collection, data analysis or interpretation.

The research results

The researcher has reported the research results accordingly to the research questions as follows:

The factors that help teachers be more competent in teaching English

From the data analysis the researcher has found different factors that may help teachers at the school be competent in English teaching they are:

Workings together:

The teachers at the school have worked together in a pair of two where more experienced teacher helps or learns from the less experience. When they work together they have done many activities in order to improve the English teaching practices. Those activities are:

1. Identifying problem. Many pairs of the teacher solve their problem by identifying problem, the evidence can be found from those pairs
2. List the possible problems. They have found the following possible problem of English teaching and learning

2.1 Students' attitude toward learning English, they have found that some students do not like English; they do not know why they need to study English. They do not pay attention to the learning and cause the problem of class room management

2.2 Students' incompetency in the English contents. Problem of English learning can be from the fact that student's lack of English foundation.

2.3 Learning environment. The learning environment affects students learning significantly, specifically the learning of English communication skill. The classroom action research data.

2.4 Teaching approach. The teachers at Srisuvit school has utilized different approaches in their English teaching in order to maximize their teaching effectiveness, those approaches are:

- (1) Analyzing the problems together
- (2) Planning the lesson together
- (3) Having discussion after class
- (4) Sharing and creating new way of teaching

Application of pedagogical methods

The teachers have applied different pedagogical methods in their English teaching activities, they are:

1. Students practice in class activity rather than in textbook: the pair in the classroom action research has reported of having students had real conversation practice among themselves not just read from a text book. This approach enable student to be able to use English for communication.

2. Using various learning resources: the teachers have used different learning resources, including: role play, songs, simulation, outsource profession, foreign teachers at the school, and students' parents.

3. Using various pedagogical tools: different teaching tools are used in English teaching at the school, they are: Log book, role play, song, think-pair share.

4. Bridging gap between teachers and students: the gap arises from teachers and teacher in terms of differences of age and work experiences, the gap can also be the differences in age, experience, ability, and attitude between teachers and students.

School philosophy

Srisuvit school philosophy has emphasized on those aspects leading to the best practice include; English is the priority, encouraging change, no one is left behind, encouraging parents participation and being up to date.

Approaches those suit the different grade level of student's abilities

The teachers at the school have employed six methods to help student at different grad level they are: 1. letting student work in group, 2. giving student encouragement, 3. using songs, 4. making students relax and comfortable, 5. letting students do a self-evaluation, and 6. building the learning atmosphere.

Teachers work together

Followings are the ways that the teacher at Srisuvit school work together:

1. Workings together in pair where more experienced help/learn from the less experience. The less experienced teacher normally learn from the more experienced teachers, however the more experience teacher can also learn the new teaching approach from the young teachers since they are fresh from the university, fully equipped with the new approach

2. They work together to identify problem, then list the possible problems as following;

- 2.1 Students' attitude toward learning English
- 2.2 Students' incompetent in the subject contents
- 2.3 Learning environment
- 2.4 Teaching style and
- 2.5 Class room management

3. They analyze the problems. The pair of teachers comprised of one experienced teacher and one novice teacher they do the team teaching, they do problem analysis leading by the more experience teacher.

4. They plan the lesson together. They plan the lesson for the team teaching class using the results from the problem analysis from the previous stage.

5. They have discussion after class. In the team teaching class the pair has took turn to lead the class while other does the supporting role. The novice teacher expects to learn more teaching skill from the experience teacher. While the more experience teacher can expect some new approach from the novice teacher who recently graduate from the university, specifically those novice teachers who graduated from the teacher education institution.

The Systematic English Teaching Model

The elements of the systematic model:

1. School culture and policy: The school culture can be identified as everyone works as a team, embracing Thai value. While the school policy can be identifies as giving English the first priority, encouraging parent's participation, employing the professional learning community (PLC) for teacher development

2. English learning environment: The learning environment is very crucial for developing the good complete learning results. The learning environment, specifically learning English for communication involves providing relaxation making the English communication learning relax, easy and natural and encourage English communicating in English all the time in class. The class room environment includes physical arrangement both visual such as images, signs, and decoration and audio such as announcement, songs are made in English

3. Teaching pedagogy: The teaching pedagogy is the main element to foster student learning, it is the practice that employs theory or principle in teaching include; simulation, role play, songs, think-pair share and other possible methods appropriate to the nature of the teaching needs. The characteristic of the teaching pedagogy consisting of goal, steps of activities, application of theory or principles.

4. Teacher's self-development: The teacher self-development is the vital mean for individual and group of teacher. The teaching profession requires teachers to continual and active develop themselves. This can be done through training individually or group training, specifically through the peer coaching such as the PLC approach.

5. Students 'individual difference: The persisting problem arises from any teaching is the student individual difference. The differences are age difference, learning ability, learning style, value, and attitude

6. Parents participation: The influence from parents can dictate student learning achievement both direct and indirect way. Parents' participation could be participating in school activities, class room activities, extra curriculum activities, this is the direct influence. The indirect influence from parent's participation could be being a network for school, connecting more networks or representing school in any aspects

7. Student English learning: The outcome product as the output of the teaching pedagogy or call it another name "the learning achievement" The learning outcome comprises of the English communication in four skills: listening, speaking reading and writing. Below is the graphical model.

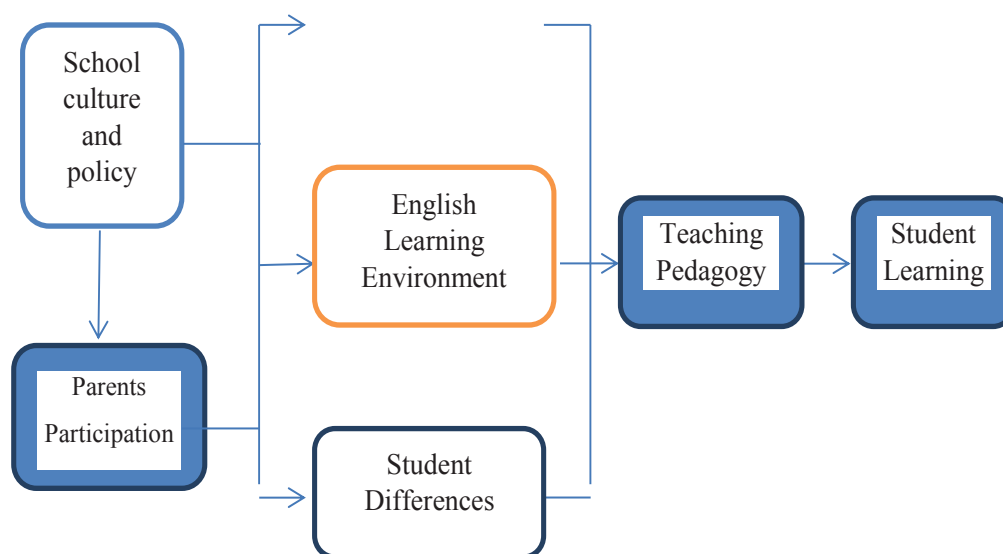


Figure1. The Model (developed by the researcher)

Discussion

The researcher intended to discuss the research results as followed:

1. **The system concept**, the systematic English teaching model derived from this study suggested 7 elements. The model suggested the relationship that the school culture and policy come concurrently with the elements of parent's participation, followed by three concurrent elements, namely: Teacher development, English learning environment and Student differences. The next element is the teaching pedagogy and the final element of the systematic model is the output: the student learning achievement. This systematic model concept is supported by the concept of "System". (Semprevivo, 1982) suggested system is composed of elements or units when put together perform a designated function.

The school culture and policy come first because the culture and policy are the mechanical instrument that directs the direction of school development and the behaviour of school teachers. It is valid that the element of school culture and policy come first of any business activity. Dyck, Frese, Baer, & Sonnentag (2005) suggested that firm goal achievement has a relationship with firm performance. Srisuvit school culture: team working can be seen at all teaching activities throughout the data on the classroom action research.

2. **The systematic English teaching model** comprised of seven elements, six elements have contributed directly or indirectly on the students' learning achievement, however, the teaching pedagogy is worth mentioning in this study. The teaching pedagogy involved three aspects: the goal, the steps of the activities and the application of teaching theories or principles. The goal of teaching English at the school is to enable all students who study English to communicate in English effectively with all four communication skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. The teachers at the school employed steps of activities to enable student to learn English as well as employing teaching theories or principles such as role play simulation, songs or think-pair-share, these are the interactive approaches that have been used regularly and they help students learn as well as developing students good attitude toward learning English. This result is supported by Mynard and Almarzougi (2006, p. 13), Deacon (2000, p. 37) and

Davidand Cheng (2003, pp. 50-58) who suggested the interactive approach helps students learn language.

3. **The factors that help teachers be more competent in teaching English**, the findings revealed the steps of activities in teaching so called teaching pedagogy that involved setting teaching goals, designing activities guided by the theory and principle being used. It also can be explained in terms of the instructional design principle, the ADDIE model that comprised of: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation.

The analysis can be seen from the teachers' activities on "analyzing the problem" and "listing the possible problems". The design can be seen from "planning the lesson..." the implementation and evaluation can be seen from "discussing after class." The utilization of the instructional design process is considered the main factor of being competent in teaching. The other factor enabling them to be competent in teaching is the fact that those teachers at all-times have employed the teaching pedagogy: setting their goals, applying teaching theory and principle and also having steps of teaching activity.

4. **Approaches** that suit different grade levels of student's ability. The fact that the teachers have to teach English to all levels of student, from grade one to grade nine and different grade levels need different teaching approaches. For young students; the approach could be: 1) working in group, 2) giving encouragement and 3) building a learning atmosphere. For the older students; the approach could be: 1) giving encouragement, 2) using songs, 3) making them relaxed and comfortable, 4) doing self-evaluation and 5) building the learning atmosphere.

These notions are supported by the work of McCombs and Whisler (1997) that confirmed that individual learners: their heredity, experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs, are important aspects to be considered.

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