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## Preface

The proceedings on education and relevant areas were compiled for the International Conference on Education (ICE 2013) "Excellent Innovations for Educational Research and IT Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." They include presentations on studies conducted by educational experts, lecturers, graduate students from both private and state universities as well as Thai and foreign researchers. The conference was held on 8-9 August 2013 at Sampran Riverside Hotel, Sampran, Nakorn Pathom, Thailand. Its objectives were to establish an academic platform for lecturers, students and researchers, to publicize research studies or dissertations and to exchange experiences in conducting research concerning learning innovations and information technology. Another objective was to innovate of a new body of knowledge and the development of quality in education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The content of the proceedings includes research reports by educational experts, lecturers, graduate students from both private and state universities, as well as research institutions, and researchers from local and foreign countries.

The compilation of these proceedings became successful due to cooperation from many parties. The committee of the conference hopes that the proceedings will yield useful guidelines for promoting and developing teaching and learning as well as research on education.



(Assoc. Prof. Wisa Chattiwat, Ph.D.)

Dean of Faculty of Education, Silpakorn University

THAILAND.

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## An Evaluation of a Capacity Building Program of English Teachers in Thailand<sup>1</sup>

Asst. Prof. Maream Nillapun, Ed.D.<sup>2</sup>

Asst. Prof. Chaiyos Phivitayasirithum, Ed.D.<sup>2</sup>

Siriwan Vanichwatanavorachai, Ph.D.<sup>2</sup>

Ubonwan Songserm, Ed.D.<sup>2</sup>

Chaiwat Kaewphanngam, M.Ed., M.A.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This research was funded by English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education of Thailand.

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Education, Silpakorn University, THAILAND.

### Abstract

It is universally accepted that continuous professional development can significantly improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement. A professional development program strategically integrated in an educational system is likely to provide a promising sign of positive outcomes. Processes to ensure that any capacity-building program contain high quality to master teachers 'valuable skills are, therefore, required. This research article highlights results of a capacity-building program initiated by the English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education which has been in partnership with Temasek Foundation CLG Limited and Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Language Center (SEAMEO RELC), Singapore. This professional development program has been applied to promote skills and knowledge required for English teachers in Thailand in order to better prepare students in the country for ASEAN Community in 2015.

The research was conducted to explore the effectiveness in developing teaching and professional behaviors of the teachers taking part in this program, and was also aimed to eventually propose of a model for English language teachers and to identify characteristics of English language teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Project evaluation and mixed method approaches were applied as the major conceptual framework of the analysis. Results indicated strong satisfaction of this capacity building program. Towards this end, the research identifies systematic model of teacher's expected competencies is teacher capacity building.

**Key Words:** Project Evaluation/ English Teacher Development/ Competencies in English Language Teaching

## Introduction

With the completion of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, member countries' skilled labor will soon be allowed to move freely across the region. The more liberalized labor market could provide opportunities for Thai workers; however, they need to be equipped with English proficiency and cultural understanding of people from different countries. In order to either reap benefits from liberalization or survive the strong competition among themselves and from ASEAN workers, Thai workers inevitably need to improve their necessary working skills, for example, international languages, computer usage, and creativity. Consequently, it is crucial for Thai workers to advance their working skills to catch up with the globalizing trend and to increase their job performance. Among those necessary working skills, English language proficiency is one of the most important tools as language is a fundamental part of workers' human capital.

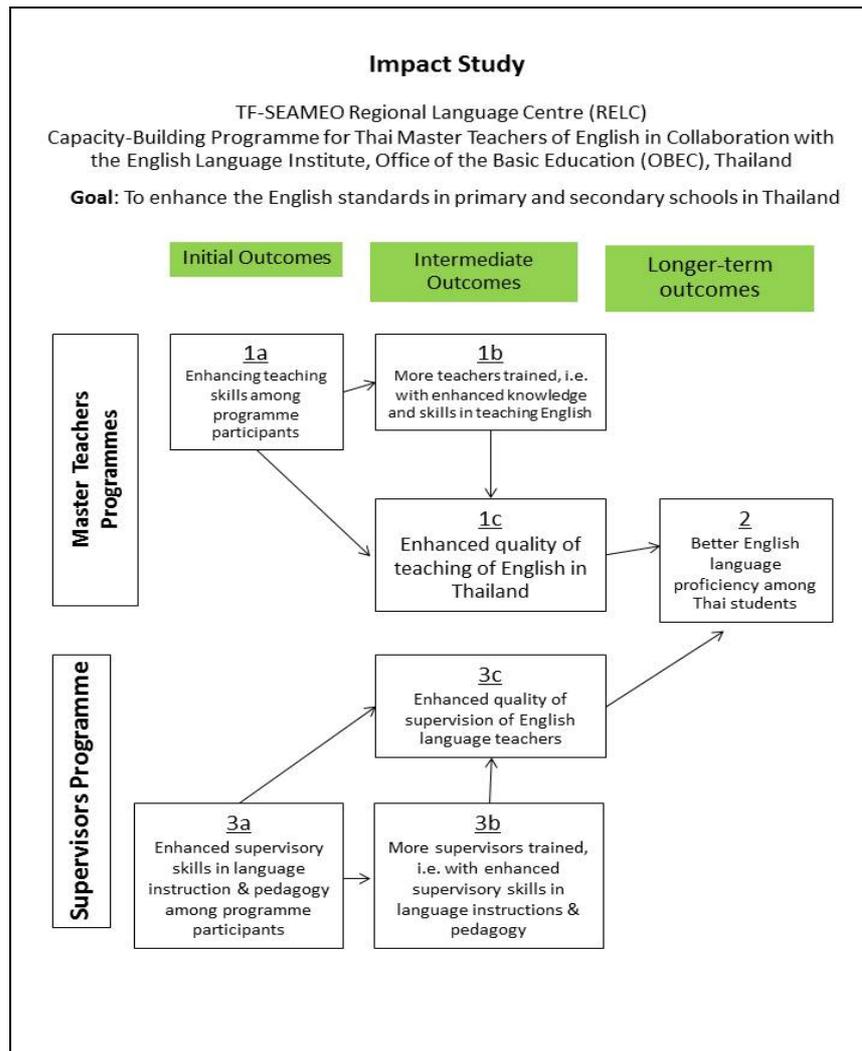
According to the current plan (Eleventh National Economic and Social Plan (2012-2016) of the country, it sets two out of four major missions in supporting the knowledge society. The first one is "to develop people with integrity, knowledge and skills appropriate to their ages, and to strengthen social institutions and local communities for positive adaptation to changes." And the second mission is "to enhance the efficiency of production and services based on local wisdom, knowledge, innovation, and creativity by developing food and energy security, reforming the structure of the economy and consumption to be environmentally friendly, and strengthening relations with neighboring countries in the region for economic and social benefits."

The current *National Education Plan* (2002-2016) emphasizes human-centered development and an integrated/holistic scheme of education, religion, art and culture in order to increase quality of life. The plan serves as a framework for formulating the development and operational plans in all levels of the education system. More specifically, the Plan aims to lead to a Knowledge-Based Economy and Society, promote continuous learning, and involve all segments of society in designing and decision-making concerning public activities.

Amongst other main educational inputs, teachers are usually regarded as one of the most important inputs affecting students' achievements and quality of education of the country as a whole. As teachers play essential role in reforming the learning process and are considered change agents for educational quality improvement, great efforts have been made to upgrade the status and standards of the teaching profession, through both pre-service and in-service training programmes. To upgrade teaching to a highly respected profession, teachers have been empowered and professional standards have been controlled. In conformity with National Education Act, the teaching profession development system in Thailand has been reformed in four key areas: teacher educational development; personnel management and a new salary scale; maintaining professional standards; and the development and promotion of teachers and educational personnel.

Thailand's major on-going education reform is the Second Decade of the Fourth Phase of Educational Reform (2009-2018) reflects major educational priorities and strategies. One of the major visions of this reform emphasizes the new generation of teachers (OEC, 2009) as it is relevant to other major educational issues, including internationalization of education in Thailand, quality of education problems, regional disparities and inequalities, and development of science and technology and related research and development. The teachers of this generation are expected to be Professional Teachers or C-Teachers who acquire skills of the next-generation learning.

The English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education together with SEAMEO Regional Language Centre (RELC) has developed the capacity-building program for English teachers in the country in order to improve the standards of English language teaching and learning. Three phrases of outcomes; initial outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and longer-term outcomes have been set to identify relevant activities that will finally help the country to reach the long term goal. Below is the diagram of developmental phrases and major targets involved in the impact study. However, this research study is particularly intended to focus on the Master Teacher Programme, and to find out whether the program reaches its Initial Outcomes and Intermediate Outcomes.



The objectives of this research study are to evaluate development of English language teaching and professional behaviors of English teachers who took part in this capacity building program. Additionally, it is aimed to seek opinion of school directors, supervisors and heads of English department toward the participants' teaching competencies. Eventually, a proposal of model to increase the capacity building for English language teachers and to identify characteristics of English language teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and ASEAN community is recommended for further implementation.

## Research Model and Conceptual Framework

Capacity building should be driven by clearly defined objectives that state what the initiative is intended to achieve and how it will accomplish its objectives. Due to the fact that this research was aimed to evaluate the capacity-building program of an initiative by the Ministry of Education of Thailand, the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study, several models related to project evaluation are applied. The conceptual framework stresses the interrelationship of the three components: evaluation models, English language teaching and quality of learning.

### Evaluation Models

Three major models in evaluating research projects consisted of “a goal’s attainment model”, “operations-description and judgment model” and “evaluation model”. **Tyler’s model of evaluation** focuses on an examination whether desired educational objectives have been attained or not. It was used to evaluate the achievement level of either individuals or a group of students. The evaluator working with this model is interested in the extent to which students developing in the desired way. As for **Countenance’s Model** for conducting education evaluation, the model emphasizes on two major operations-description and judgment. The model divides descriptive acts according to whether they refer to what was intended or what was actually observed. It is indicated that both intentions and what actually took place must be fully described. Additionally, **CIPP model** of evaluation was applied in this research study. CIPP is an acronym representing the four types of evaluation identified by this model namely, context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation and product evaluation (Education, 2008: 1-12; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007: 325; and มาเรียม นิลพันธุ์ 2553). Evaluation is the process of delineating, obtaining and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives. To collect in-depth information for this study, **Stakeholder** analysis of qualitative data of Robert E. Stake was also applied as the research’s conceptual framework for further improvement of the project.

## English Language Teaching Conceptual Framework

Office of the Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education of Thailand (Office of the Basic Education Commission of Thailand, 2553) has applied David McClelland, psychological theorist, Harvard University, theories, as the model for evaluating teacher's competencies. McClelland's theory of competency focuses on different levels of competency. Behavioral components such as motives, attitude, traits, thinking styles, self-image, and social role have been applied by the Office of the Basic Education Commission as fundamental concept for promoting competencies of teachers in the country. Descriptions of Core Competency and Functional Competency were identified and promoted as a focus of evaluation within the Ministry of Education. As for this research study, competencies related to English language teacher were carefully investigated. Competencies related to teaching, profession, lesson plan writing, development of research and innovation, and training aspects were identified and evaluated.

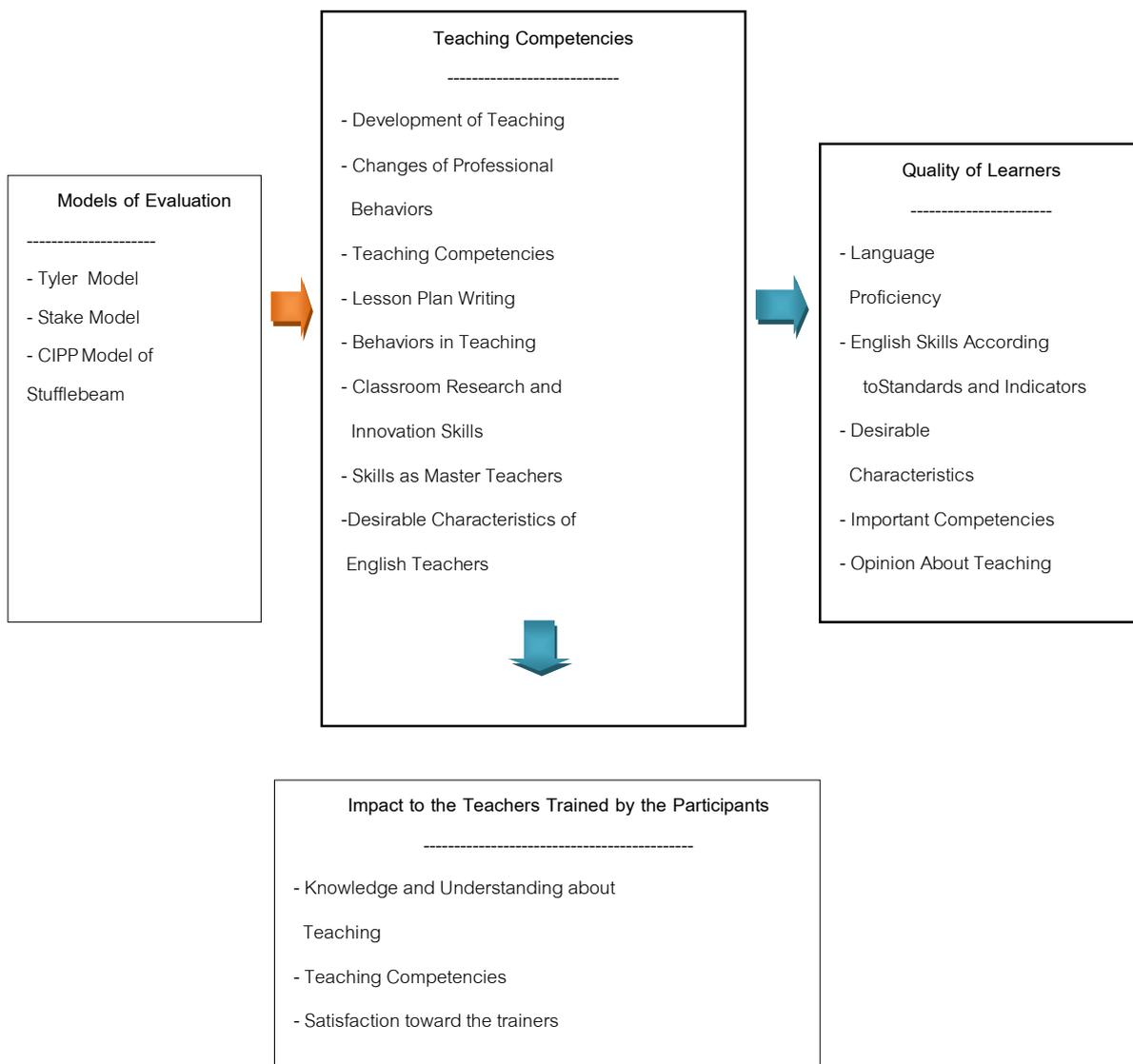
### Quality of Learners

Basic Education Core Curriculum (2551 A.D. 2008) of the Ministry of Education, Thailand which served as the national education has been applied as the core focus on quality of learning in this study. As guiding principles for human development for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the core curriculum focuses on learners' development for attainment of the following desirable characteristics, enabling learners to enjoy a life of harmony among others as Thai citizens and global citizens: Love of nation, religion and king; Honesty and integrity; Self-discipline; Avidity for learning ; Observance of principles of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in one's way of life ; Dedication and commitment to work; Cherishing Thai-ness; Public-mindedness. In addition, knowledge and skills for communication, thinking, problem-solving, technological knowhow, and life skills are also the goals of this core curriculum.

As indicated in the goals of learning set for the national basic core curriculum, quality of learning for Thai students need to be reflected from several aspects such as learning achievement, English language skills according to standard and indicators, desirable characteristics, and opinion related to language teaching. These aspects of information can be used to reflect the quality of learning, and thus were used as conceptual framework of this research.

The following figure indicates conceptual framework of this research study:

### Conceptual Framework of the Study



### Research Methods

This study is an evaluation research applying theoretical frameworks from Tyler, Stake and Stufflebeam models. Mixed methods were employed in the study by using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Three major processes of the mixed methods approach as the conceptual frame conducted in this study included:

1. An in-depth study of fundamental information including analysis of the capacity-building program initiated by the English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education in collaboration with Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Language Center (SEAMEO RELC); focus group and individual interviews. The content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data.

2. An evaluation of teacher's teaching competencies. As for this research study, it is divided into four major categories: changes of professional behaviors, lesson plan writing, classroom research and innovation skills, and skills as master teachers.

3. A synthesis of capacity building model for English language teachers and the desirable characteristics to prepare the students as 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers.

Population and samples of this research including all related stakeholders are shown in the table below:

Population and samples of the study	
1. School directors	43 (1 director/school)
2. Heads of English department or academic affairs	43 (1 head/school)
3. Supervisors	43 (1 supervisor/school)
4. English teachers who took part in this capacity building program	43 teachers as participants of the program from Primary Educational Service Area and Secondary Educational Service Area from 35 different provinces
5. Students	1,815 students
6. English teachers who were trained by the participants	509 English teachers
7. Executives from the Ministry of Education	2 executives
8. Program coordinator	1 coordinator
9. English language teaching experts	5 experts

To collect extensive information, several research tools were developed and implemented including, 1) a self-evaluation form in language teaching and professional behaviors 2) in-depth interviews of the participants 3) lesson plan's evaluation 4) classroom observation form 5) evaluation of classroom research/instructional media/ or related innovation in language teaching and learning 6) evaluation of teaching module produced by the participants 7) questionnaire for master teachers 'teaching 8) in-depth interviews related to the participants' behaviors and professional competencies 9) in-depth interviews related to the participants' teaching 10) questionnaire of the students' opinion about their teachers, and 11) in-depth interviews of the executives and experts in language teaching policies of the English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education Commission.

## Results and Discussion

According to the first objective of the research, which was intended to evaluate development of English language teaching and professional behaviors of English teachers who took part in this capacity building program, the self-evaluation of the English teachers was generally found higher than before participating in the program. The following questions were answered by the participants to analyze the outcome of the capacity building program:

1. What do you think about the overall process of this training programme? Are you satisfied with that? How? Please also express your opinion towards the initial programme organized in Thailand and the programme organized in Singapore.

2. State the benefits of the following aspects obtained from attending the course

3. How has the course helped you in your current job?

3.2 Development and skills in language teaching

3.3 Lesson plan and lesson construction

3.4 Classroom research/Innovation in language teaching and learning

3.5 Students' English language competence

4. Are you satisfied with the overall capacity building programme? Please state the reasons and suggestions

5. What do you think about the selection process of the participants in this programme? Is the program suitable for the qualification of the participants? How? Please state the reasons

6. Please suggest approaches, processes, models, and activities in which the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Thailand should further collaborate and improve the capacity building programme with TF-SEAMEO in the future. What activities/skills/knowledge should also be included in this program if it is organized in the future?

7. As the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) will come into fully effect in 2015, and to prepare Thai students for the readiness to compete in a global economy for 21<sup>st</sup> century, what competence and capability should an English teacher have? What skills/knowledge/content should an English teacher have? Please also suggest ways to help the teachers to obtain those skills/knowledge and content.

8. What do you think about one of the requirements in which the Programme required you to share your learning/innovation with other teachers after you returned from the training? Are you satisfied with this task? How should it be further developed? As for the teachers 'self-evaluation, questions related to eight components of teacher competencies were employed:

#### Self-Evaluation of Teacher's Competencies

Components of Teacher's Competencies	Before attending the program	After attending the program
1. Curriculum and lesson plan writing	3.48	4.30
2. Contents	3.71	4.65
3. Teaching methods, techniques, and activities	3.35	4.39
4. Innovational media, and application of teaching resources	3.42	4.41
5. Classroom management	3.74	4.51
6. Communication	3.58	4.57
7. Assessment	3.35	4.35
8. Professional development	3.60	4.53
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>4.48</b>

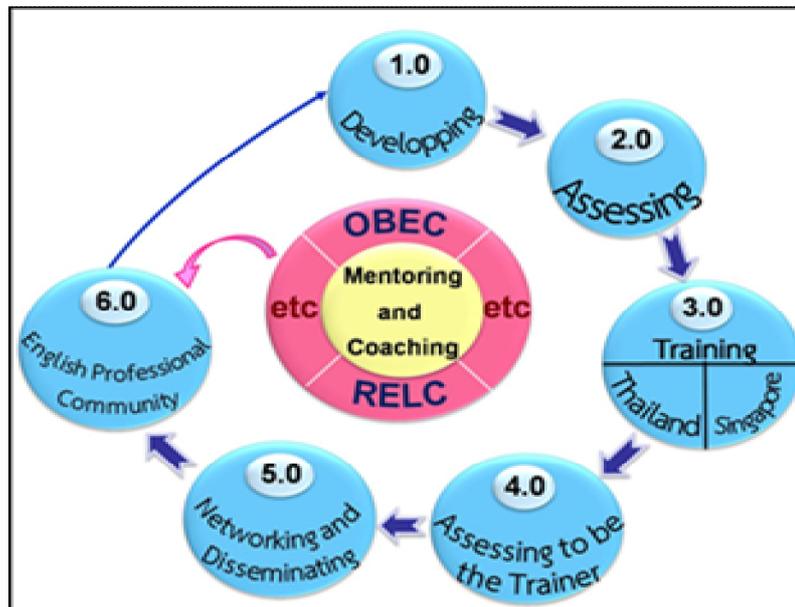
As can be observed from the result of the self-evaluation of teacher's competencies, the teachers, generally, expressed higher satisfaction toward their own competencies after attending the capacity-building program. The overall satisfaction was found much higher than before attending the program (3.54 and 4.48).

The Contents Component gained highest scores (4.65) which reflected that the teachers were highly satisfied with the knowledge and pedagogy in language teaching gained during the capacity-building program. The lowest scores found from the statistical description were on the component of Curriculum and Lesson Plan Writing (4.30), yet it was still considered at the high level of the satisfaction. The follow-up interviews conducted after the questionnaire shown that Lesson Plan Writing was not the major focus of the instructor at the program. Instead the focus was given more on theoretical concept and creative idea behind each lesson plan, not on the lesson plan writing.

Additionally, the findings obtained from the opinion of school directors, supervisors and heads of English department stated that the participants of this capacity building program could perform their teaching professionally. They applied extensive methods and techniques in language teaching and learning in all four skills. They could effectively and strategically planned and carried out their lesson plans. Student-centered learning, innovation in developing instructional materials, and language testing and assessment were found in the participants. Furthermore, the participants were more confident and active in their profession. The findings also indicated that they could produce more innovation in teaching, and obtained higher respect from the schools and their communities.

The research was also conducted to propose a model for English language teachers and to identify characteristics of English language teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and ASEAN community. "DATANE" was proposed as a capacity building model for English language teachers and to identify characteristics of English language teachers for the 21st century and ASEAN community. The six major procedures consisted of "developing", "assessing", "training", "assessing to be the trainers", "networking and disseminating", and "English professional community". Throughout the processes of implementing these six proposed procedures, strong mentor and partnership with all stake holders involved is necessary as indicated in the following figure:

Six Proposed Procedures of a Capacity-Building Model in  
Enhancing the Teacher's Competencies



To effectively implement a capacity-building program to enhance the teacher's competencies, the following were factors contributing to the success of English language teachers' development program.

Furthermore, according to the research study, there are five major aspects that highly contribute to the success of English language teacher's development program:

1. **School support:** English language teachers' effectiveness in taking part of the development program needs strong support from his/her school, especially from school principals and colleagues.

2. **English teacher's willingness to personal development:** By recognizing and addressing the instrumental role of "self" in teacher development, a language teacher development program is likely to meet its objectives. Improvement will not be achieved by forcing a teacher to take part in the program.

3. **Government continuous support:** Impact of a teacher development program is normally observed over long periods of time and can be affected by unstable political situation and social environment and by a lack of sustained resources. Hence it is vital to take into the

consideration not only the immediate implications of a teacher development program when it is being developed, but also the long-term requirements in terms of political support, and finance.

**4. Professional and teaching credential:** Teacher education should be organized and sustained through series of learning activities, intended to strengthen teachers' commitment and competence. It is important that the government needs to develop ongoing guidance, monitor and support by giving the teachers more autonomous guideline in deciding on their own training and education, and it is especially important that the government needs to provide policies that link promotion to participation and success in training.

**5. Partnership in teacher development:** It is essential for the government to continuously seek partnership with both public and private sectors at national and international levels to help developing teacher education program. Financial resources and innovative teaching approaches can be achieved with the strong partnership with them. In conjunction with the government education experts, other public and private sectors from around the world can contribute with new approaches, activities and materials that any English language teachers can use to help students achieve their full potential.

Three major aspects of the characteristics of English language teachers for the 21st century and ASEAN community are composed of "knowledge", "skills", and "attributes". **Knowledge** includes 1. Content related to language teaching and learning, language assessment and instructional media and technology 2. Cross cultural understanding 3. Action Research 4. Global awareness issues and 5. Social issues. **Skills** include 1. Communication 2. Innovation 3. Creativity 4. Problem Solving 5. Life and Career skills 6. Integrating 7. Collaboration **Attributes** include 1. Smart 2. Leadership 3. Self Confidence 4. Positive Thinking 5. Life Long Learning 6. Professionalism 7. Moral and Ethic

### **Suggested Policies for the government**

Strong positive outcomes were found from the study. The program could effectively contribute to the Basic Education of Thailand as indicated that the teachers found the knowledge and experience gained from the program useful for their teaching and profession. The researchers suggested policies and implementations if the program is carried out in the future. Firstly, English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education Commission should continuously support this program.

The long-term sustainability of the program is essential for more sustained impact. Furthermore, several criteria of the selection process and more coverage of the groups of participants should be taken into the consideration. In addition to TEMASEK, English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education Commission should also seek other partnerships with other local higher education institutions providing language teaching and learning training as a form of official memorandum of understanding (MOU).

Regarding to the selection process, teachers should be given more opportunities to take the placement test. If they later pass the required level, they should be able to participate in the program. It is essential that the participants of the program and the English teachers who are trained by them should continuously work together to strengthen their professional network.

Furthermore, English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education Commission, together with Education Service Area Offices and other higher education institutes, should develop and implement more systematic and on-going coaching and mentorship as a collaborative partnership. As for the training process, domestic and international trainings should be organized. As for international training, trainings at other English native speaking countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia should also be considered. Most importantly, more collaboration with the participants' schools is required. English Language Institute, Office of the Basic Education Commission should seek other support and contribution from the schools in terms of financial support and time. It was found out that teachers and schools are willing to contribute more to the program if they are properly informed.

### **Implementation of Research Findings**

1. Supervision system needs to incorporate coaching and mentoring models
2. Before sharing their knowledge and experience gained from the training with other schools, the participants should be required to share with the colleagues at their schools first.
3. Continuous assessment of the English teacher's competence and proficiency is important. Prior to taking part in this program, English teachers should improve themselves first to meet the minimum requirement before receiving the opportunity to attend the program.
4. Online training and social network tools should be encouraged as an alternative tool for the continuous self-learning and improvement.
5. As a motivational mechanism, not only new participants recruited from the placement test, but also English teachers with extensive experience should be provided this opportunity as a reward.

### **Recommendations for Further Studies**

1. More research studies related to English language instructional models and development of English teaching competencies should be conducted.
2. More research studies to synthesize both qualitative and quantitative studies of characteristics of English teachers, English teacher development, strategies in producing English teacher should also be carried out.
3. Lesson distilled from the best practices of the teachers and the supervisors who participated in this program should be undertaken.
4. Research and development related to systematic coaching and mentoring for both English teachers who participated in this program and the teachers who are trained by these participants should be able to suggest insightful learning.
5. Research and development in English teachers' standards, and language teaching indicators should be further studied.

## **Conclusion**

There are some important conclusions that can be usefully drawn from this project evaluation research that may have implications for planning teacher's development policies. Findings from this research study evidently revealed significantly positive outcomes. The program could effectively contribute to the Basic Education of Thailand as indicated that the teachers found the knowledge and experience gained from the program useful and relevant for their teaching and professional development.

Results suggest that there is a link between knowledge and skills acquired by the participants and increased their performance in the profession. To prepare Thai students to be fully integrated with ASEAN community, and develop essential skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, further continuous implementation of this capacity building program is extremely important as any effective and sustainable programs might take up to ten years to see the better results. Office of the Basic Education Commission together with participants, schools, community, and community of English profession should collaborate in order to create systematic and continuous development of this program. As a blueprint for moving forward, suggestion for strategic planning and implementation are provided to improve the teachers' skills, knowledge-base and competencies.

## **Acknowledgement**

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