

English Language Needs of Tourism Students at
Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi
ความต้องการการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนการท่องเที่ยว
วิทยาลัยสยามบริหารธุรกิจ นนทบุรี

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to survey English needs of tourism students studying in SBAC Nonthaburi. The study focused on the needs of English skills, language functions and topic areas of each skill that the tourism students need for their learning as well as the needs for organization of English course for tourism.

The samples of this study were 204 persons. The instruments were three sets of questionnaires which were distributed to 120 tourism students, 50 teachers and 34 executives at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi. The obtained data was analyzed by computer software. Percentage, frequency distribution, population mean score, and standard deviation were used to analyze the data.

The research results showed that tourism students and the executives placed the greatest importance on speaking in the classroom. However, the tourism teachers considered listening to be the greatest importance for tourism students' learning. The results of this study can be used as a guideline for designing an English for tourism course to serve the needs of tourism students.

Keywords : English Academic Purpose; Tourism; English Language Needs

บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อสำรวจความต้องการในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนสาขาการท่องเที่ยว วิทยาลัยสยามบริหารธุรกิจ นนทบุรี โดยสำรวจความต้องการทักษะภาษาอังกฤษ และเนื้อหาของแต่ละทักษะที่นักเรียนสาขาการท่องเที่ยวต้องการใช้สำหรับการเรียนในห้องเรียน รวมทั้งความต้องการในการจัดหลักสูตรภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการท่องเที่ยว

กลุ่มตัวอย่างสำหรับงานวิจัยครั้งนี้ มีจำนวน 204 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยเป็นแบบสอบถามจำนวน 3 ชุด ประกอบด้วยนักเรียนสาขาการท่องเที่ยว 120 คน อาจารย์ผู้สอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการท่องเที่ยว 50 คน และผู้บริหารวิทยาลัยสยามบริหารธุรกิจ นนทบุรี 34 คน ข้อมูลที่รวบรวมได้ถูกนำไปวิเคราะห์โดยใช้โปรแกรมคอมพิวเตอร์ เพื่อแสดงค่าร้อยละ การแจกแจงความถี่ ค่าเฉลี่ย และค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นักเรียนการท่องเที่ยวและผู้บริหารให้ความสำคัญแก่ทักษะการพูดมากที่สุดในห้องเรียน แต่อาจารย์สอนภาษาอังกฤษต้องการสอนทักษะการฟังมากที่สุดในห้องเรียน ผลที่ได้จากการศึกษาในครั้งนี้นี้อาจสามารถนำมาใช้เป็นแนวทางในการจัดหลักสูตรภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการท่องเที่ยว เพื่อตอบสนองความต้องการของนักเรียนการท่องเที่ยวได้

คำสำคัญ: ภาษาอังกฤษเชิงวิชาการ การท่องเที่ยว ความต้องการทักษะภาษาอังกฤษ

1. INTRODUCTION

At present it is accepted that English is increasing its significant role in academic fields. It is the subject that students need to study and learn. It is also needed for people who work and will work in the future in the tourism, business and services. The tourism industry is the fastest growing sector of the service industry in Thailand, and employs the largest number of people in any sector of the Thai economy [1]. English is very important language for the tourism industry in Thailand. English has become a common language for travelers from different countries. It is the first priority for those who work in the tourism business. Tourism business in Thailand such as travel agencies, airlines, hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops need workers who speak English in order to effectively serve their foreign customers.

Siam Business Administration College (SBAC) has offered English for tourism in vocational certificate level with the aim that students will be able to use English in their jobs as tour operators, tour guides, reservation officers, airlines offices, travel agents, and hotel staff etc. So far, the course “English for Tourism” of SBAC has been taught without surveying the needs of the tourism students since this college was opened three years ago.

Therefore, this study investigated the related people’s needs of the course called “English for Tourism” This survey was done with three sample groups with the belief that each group could provide useful information for needs analysis towards this course for vocational certificate level tourism students at SBAC Nonthaburi. According to [2] stated that the needs of the learners will guide the design of course materials. The topics, themes, and kind of English to be taught were based on the requirements of the learners.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the English language needs of tourism students, tourism teachers and executives at SBAC Nonthaburi.
2. To find the guideline to develop the course “English for tourism”.

3. SCOPE OF RESEARCH

1. This study explored the needs of English for tourism of the third year vocational certificate level in academic year 2012, the needs of students from the viewpoints of teachers and executives of SBAC Nonthaburi.
2. This study limited to the opinions of tourism students, tourism teachers and executives based on the questionnaire provided.

4. RESEARCH SIZE

4.1 Population

4.1.1 The third year vocational certificate level tourism students who studied for Technical English for Tourism in the academic year 2012 at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi.

4.1.2 The tourism teachers who taught English for Tourism at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi.

4.1.3 The executives who administrated at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi.

4.2 Sample

4.2.1 The subjects of this study were 120 the third year vocational certificate level tourism students. The subjects were randomly selected by systematic sampling.

4.2.2 Fifty tourism teachers who taught English for Tourism at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi.

4.2.3 Thirty four executives who worked at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi.

5. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Three questionnaires were used as instruments to gather data about the needs analysis of using English in tourism for third year Vocational Certificate Level students in the Tourism Department SBAC Nonthaburi, tourism teachers and executives at SBAC Nonthaburi.

Each questionnaire was composed of two parts:
Part 1: General Information regarding the subjects' age, gender, and level of study.
Part 2: Student's perceptions regarding their English language skill needs, using five-point Likert scale [3].

6. DATA COLLECTION

The questionnaires were distributed to 204 samples and collected within one week.

7. DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis was conducted as follows:

1. Percentage and Frequency Distribution were used in the analysis of responses concerning general information.

2. Five-point Likert Scale was used to score the levels of the needs for English skills and activities to be emphasized in the English course.

3. The criteria and mean score derived from the score in the questionnaires were interpreted on the following range based on Jamieson (See also [3]):

Score	Mean	Level of needs
5	4.50-5.00	The greatest needs
4	3.50-4.49	A lot of needs
Score	Mean	Level of needs
3	2.50-3.49	Average needs
2	1.50-2.49	Less needs
1	1.00-1.49	The least needs

4. Arithmetic mean was used to calculate the average level of English language needs of English for tourism.

8. RESEARCH RESULTS

This part is divided into two main sections as follows:

1. General Information of the tourism students, tourism teachers, and executives

Table 1 General Information of the Tourism Students

Tourism Students General Information	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage (%)
1. Gender		
Male	47	39.2
Female	73	60.8
Total	120	100
2. Age		
17 years	23	19.2
18 years	65	54.2
19 years	32	26.7
3.1 Level education of starting to learn English		
Kindergarten level	87	72.5
Primary level	33	27.5
3.2 How long you have learned English?		
15-17 years	79	65.8
10-14 years	41	34.2
4. Have you study extra tutorial English?		
No	87	72.5
yes, I study tutorial English.	32	26.7
4.1 Reason of learning the tutorial English For more understand in English class		
For communication with foreigners	11	34.4
	21	65.6

The result in Table 1 shows that the numbers of female students were more than numbers of male students. Most students were 18 years old. Most of them began to learn English at kindergarten level. Moreover, 87 (72.5%) of the tourism students haven't studied the tutorial English.

Table 2 General Information of the Tourism Teachers

Tourism Teachers General Information	Frequency (N=50)	Percentage (%)
1. Gender		
Male	21	42
Female	29	58
Total	50	100
2. Age		
23-29 years	19	38
30-45 years	31	62
3. Experience of teaching		
1- 5 years	19	38
5 -10 years	23	46
10- 15 years	8	16
4. Educational background		
Bachelor Degree	34	68
Master Degree	9	18
Doctor Degree	7	14
5. Number of seminar that you are trained in one year		
one time	5	10
two times	26	52
three times	11	22
more than three times	8	16
6. Practice your English skills by;		
read books	11	22
watch cinema	4	8
listen international song	2	4
sing a song	0	0
go a board	0	0
write e-mail	9	18
learn by yourself from CD	24	48

The result in Table 2 shows that (1) Twenty nine of the tourism teachers were female (58%) and Twenty one of the tourism teachers were male (42%). (2) Most of the tourism teachers were between 30-45 year olds (62%). (3) Nineteen of the tourism teachers have been teaching for 1-5 years (38%). (4) Twenty three of the tourism teachers have been teaching for 5-10 years (46%). (5) Thirty four of the tourism teachers hold Bachelor degree (68%). (6) Seven of tourism teachers hold Doctor Degree (14%).

Table 3 General Information of the Executives of SBAC Nonthaburi

Executives General Information	Frequency (N=34)	Percentage (%)
1. Gender		
Male	21	61.8
Female	13	38.2
Total	34	100
2. Age		
25-35 years	11	32.4
36-50 years	23	67.6
3. Experience of teaching		
25-35 years	6	17.6
36-50 years	28	82.4
4. Education Background		
Bachelor Degree	13	38.2
Master Degree	15	44.1
Doctor Degree	6	17.6

The result in the Tables 3 shows that (1) Thirteen of the executives were female (38.2%) and Twenty one of the executives were male (61.8%). (2) Most of the executives were between 36-50 year olds (67.6%). (3) Twenty eight of the executives have been teaching for 36-50 years (82.4%). (4) Fifteen of the executives hold Mater degree (44.1%), whereas thirteen of executives hold Bachelor degree (38.2%). (5) Six of executives hold Doctor Degree (17.6%).

2. English Language Needs of students, teachers, and executives

Table 4 English Language Needs of Tourism Students

Needs	Tourism Students	
	Mean	Level of Needs
English needs for students' daily life	4.53	The greatest
English skills for students' daily life		
-listening	4.56	The greatest
-speaking	4.57	The greatest
-reading	3.74	The greatest
-writing	3.75	A lot
-translation	2.99	Average

Table 4 English Language Needs of Tourism Students

Needs	Tourism Students	
	Mean	Level of Needs
English skills for students' English class		
-listening	4.54	The greatest
-speaking	4.73	The greatest
-reading	3.83	A lot
-writing	3.60	A lot
-translation	2.68	Average
Details of students' needs in listening skill		
-the conversation about introduce the places	4.40	A lot
-the seminar or meeting about tourism	4.53	The greatest
-the lecture about change of culture	3.83	A lot
Details of students' needs in speaking skill:		
-the conversation with foreigners	4.51	The greatest
-the advertising of tour	4.54	The greatest
-the presentation of places	4.41	A lot
Details of students' needs in writing skill:		
-the e- mail to customers about program of tour	4.55	The greatest
-the advertising for promoting the tour	4.34	A lot
-the information for booking ticket and doing VISA	4.57	The greatest
-the schedule or program of tour	4.39	A lot
-the leaflets	4.31	A lot

The result in the Table 4 shows that tourism students need the greatest importance on speaking both for their daily life and in English class (\bar{X} = 4.57 and \bar{x} = 4.73 respectively). Tourism students need to listen the seminar about tourism (\bar{X} = 4.53) to be the greatest importance. Moreover, they need the greatest importance on speaking both the conversation with foreigners and the advertising of tour (\bar{X} = 4.51 and \bar{X} = 4.54 respectively.) They need to write e-mail and fill the application at the greatest importance (\bar{X} = 4.55 and \bar{X} = 4.57 respectively).

Table 5 English Language Needs of Tourism Teachers' Viewpoints

Needs	Tourism Teachers	
	Mean	Level of Needs
English needs for students' daily life	4.78	The greatest
English skill for students' daily life		
-listening	4.66	The greatest
-speaking	4.62	The greatest
-reading	3.94	A lot
-writing	3.92	A lot
-translation	3.30	Average
English skill for students' daily life		
-listening	4.75	The greatest
-speaking	4.72	The greatest
-reading	3.66	A lot
-writing	3.82	A lot
-translation	3.16	Average
Details of listening skill for students' learning:		
-the conversation about introduce the places	4.76	The greatest
-travelogue about the places	4.61	The greatest
-the seminar or meeting about tourism	4.52	The greatest
-the lecture about change of culture	4.56	The greatest
Details of speaking skill for students' learning:		
-the conversation with foreigners about tourism	4.74	The greatest
-the advertising of tour	4.64	The greatest
-the presentation of the places	4.52	The greatest
Details of reading skill for students' learning:		
-the textbook about introduce the interesting places	4.66	The greatest
-the leaflet in tourism	4.58	The greatest
-the schedule or program for tour	3.96	A lot
-the e-mail from customers	3.92	A lot
Writing skill : They need students read		
-the e-mail to customers about programs tour	4.62	The greatest
Translation skill: They need students translates		
-the schedule of tour from Thai to English	4.52	The greatest

The result in Table 5 shows that tourism teachers need the tourism students to learn the greatest importance on listening both for the daily life and in English class of tourism students (\bar{X} = 4.66 and \bar{X} = 4.75 respectively). Teachers need to teach the conversation both listening and speaking skills (\bar{X} = 4.76 and \bar{X} = 4.74 respectively) to be of the greatest importance for learning of tourism students. Moreover, teachers need the students to read textbook about tourism (\bar{X} = 4.66) and to write e-mail (\bar{X} = 4.62), and to translate the schedule of tour from Thai to English language at the greatest importance (\bar{X} = 4.52).

Table 6 English Language Needs of Executives' Viewpoints

Needs	Executives	
	Mean	Level of Needs
English needs for students' daily life	4.59	The greatest
English skill for students' daily life		
-listening	4.71	The greatest
-speaking	4.74	The greatest
-reading	4.18	A lot
-writing	4.21	A lot
-translation	3.74	A lot
English skill for students' English class		
-listening	4.74	The greatest
-speaking	4.74	The greatest
-reading	3.91	A lot
-writing	4.15	A lot
-translation	3.56	Average
Listening skill : They need students listen		
-the conversation about introduce the places	4.76	The greatest
-the travelogue about the places	4.50	The greatest
Speaking skill : They need students speak		
-the conversation about introduce places.	4.56	The greatest
-the advertising of tour	4.50	The greatest
-the presentation of the places	4.59	The greatest
-the changing of time table	4.53	The greatest
Reading skill : They need students read		
-the textbook about introduce the interesting places	4.59	The greatest
-the leaflet about tourism	4.68	The greatest
Writing skill : They need students write		
-the article about introduce the places for tourism	4.50	The greatest
-the e-mail to customers about program of tour	4.65	The greatest

The result in Table 6 shows that the executives need the tourism students to learn and practice all 4 skills. However, executives need the tourism students to learn and practice listening and speaking skills to be the greatest importance for English class of tourism students (\bar{X} = 4.74). They need students to listen conversation (\bar{X} = 4.76) to be the greatest importance. The greatest importance on speaking skill was “presentation the places” (\bar{X} = 4.59). Moreover, the executives need the students to read the leaflet about tourism (\bar{X} = 4.68) and to write e-mail (\bar{X} = 4.65) at the greatest importance for their learning.

9. RESEARCH CONCLUSION

This study showed that for daily life the greatest needs of tourism students were on speaking, listening, writing, reading, and translating (\bar{X} = 4.57, 4.56, 3.75, 3.74, and 2.99 respectively). Moreover, the greatest needs of executives for daily life of tourism students were on speaking, listening, writing, reading, and translating (\bar{X} = 4.74, 4.74, 4.21, 4.18, and 3.74 respectively). However, the tourism teachers considered listening (\bar{X} = 4.66), to be of the greatest importance followed by speaking reading, writing, and translating for daily life of tourism students (\bar{X} = 4.62, 3.94, 3.92, and 3.30 respectively). See the Figure 1 as follows:

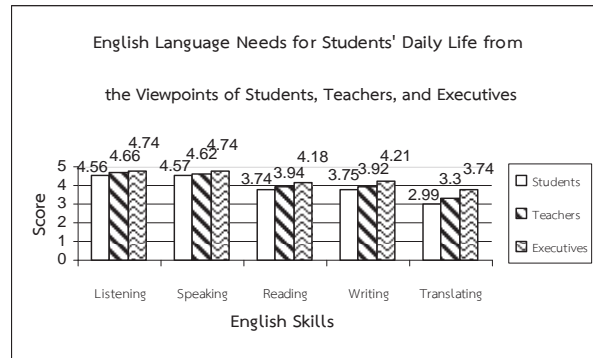


Figure 1 English Language Needs for Students' Daily Life from the Viewpoints of Students, Teachers, and Executives

Hence, the result of this study showed that English course for Tourism at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi should prioritize on speaking, listening, reading, writing and translating respectively (\bar{X} = 4.73, 4.54, 3.83, 3.60, and 2.68 respectively).

10. DISCUSSION

According to the study of English Language Needs of Tourism Students at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi, the consideration issues are as follows:

1. This study found that the tourism students needed English language on speaking skill for daily life at a great level. This may be because the tourism students have to communicate with the foreign customers which are a part of the tourism student's daily routine work in the future [4] such as giving a reply to the foreign customers, listening to comments or complaints from foreign customers, reading letters or e-mails, write the advertising. This means that English language is crucial for the tourism students at Siam Business Administration College Nonthaburi.

2. Needs of English skills for English tourism course are as follows:

- **Listening:** SBAC Nonthaburi tourism students emphasized the listening skill. SBAC Nonthaburi tourism students placed the highest importance on listening to English seminar or meeting related to tourism. The tourism students also emphasized the conversation with foreigners. Students need to practice conversation with English native speaker teachers face to face. English sound track films such as the travelogue can help them practice listening to real English conversation. Byram [5] suggested that CD or radio is a good way of developing listening ability. The tourism students can make use of the language laboratory in their class by learning through the listening activities provided. Most of tourism students need to learn the general introducing the places for specific information.

- **Speaking:** The tourism students need to practice speaking as much as listening. The students need to contact foreigners in their future jobs, they need to practice speaking to advise tourists of traveling program or to announce information regarding traveling program. This finding corresponds with the finding of Bachman [6] that the English language skills were the most useful for the tourism students either for their working or studying. The best way to practice speaking is to do it in the real situation outside classroom. They can practice speaking with their colleagues. Yaowong [7] recommended that

role play should be used in TEFL to simulate “real-life” situation and to encourage meaningful communication in the classroom. It gives tourism students the opportunity to draw together all the bits of language and to practice it in the kind of situations that they are likely to encounter outside the classroom.

- **Reading:** According to tourism students' needs, they have a high emphasis the reading about the timetable. They need to practice reading travel program or schedules as well as public signs and notices at tourist places. Moreover, the tourism students need to read e-mail and updated information about tourism for communication with foreigners. Brochures, leaflets, menus on papers advertisements and social network are ideal ways of introducing some authentic materials into the classroom. According to Richards [8], though the reading materials are different, its organization and presentation are similar and are obviously useful for students to read.

- **Writing:** The tourism students' needs on writing was found at the greatest level. They need writing skill on filling application forms such as job application, visa, or order forms. They must learn to take short notes or messages, and write formal or informal messages or letters. It was found that SBAC Nonthaburi tourism students had problems in English writing because they lacked basic skills in grammar and vocabulary. They did not know how to organize ideas coherently.

- **Translation:** The needs of tourism students on translation are average level. They need to translate the advertising from Thai to English Language at average. However, teachers and executives considered tourism students need to translate the schedule of tour Thai to English Language at the greatest importance. Translation is an old fashioned method of language teaching; however, the tourism students still use this type of learning because it is mechanical [9]. So they need to practice the translating.

Furthermore, the tourism students need to translate textbook or some articles concerning tourism. They also need to practice translating travel programs or schedules. However, in some practice activities, students cannot think of English meaning immediately, they have to translate English into Thai in their mind first.

11. RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. The results of this study bring about the development of English course for Tourism at SBAC Nonthaburi. Other educational institutes may use this development course design to be a guideline for the development of English Course for Tourism. Furthermore, they may set short courses such as inbound local guides, information service officers, counter sale offices, operator at airport or hotel officers.

2. There should be further research on English needs of tourism students in other levels and other institutes, both from students and executives' viewpoints to obtain the needs of tourism students as a whole.

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