

## การบูรณาการวิธีการสอนรูปแบบการพูดภาษาอังกฤษด้วยวิธีการเรียนรู้แบบร่วมมือสำหรับ ผู้นำเที่ยวท้องถิ่น กรณีศึกษาอำเภอฮอด จังหวัดเชียงใหม่

INTEGRATING TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING PATTERNS THROUGH COOPERATIVE  
LEARNING FOR LOCAL TOUR LEADERS: A CASE STUDY IN HOT DISTRICT, CHIANG MAI

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### บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาผลของการใช้บทเรียนภาษาอังกฤษที่ปรับให้เข้ากับบริบทของพื้นที่ ในการส่งเสริมการใช้รูปแบบการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของมัคคุเทศก์ท้องถิ่นในอำเภอฮอด จังหวัดเชียงใหม่ และความคงทนของความรู้จากบทเรียนดังกล่าว เพื่อรองรับการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรมในพื้นที่ซึ่งได้รับความนิยมจากนักท่องเที่ยวจำนวนมาก โดยใช้รูปแบบการวิจัยกึ่งทดลองและใช้ข้อมูลที่หลากหลายในการวิเคราะห์ คณะผู้วิจัยได้เลือกกลุ่มตัวอย่างโดยพิจารณาจากเกณฑ์ และความสนใจในการเข้าร่วม วิธีการเก็บข้อมูลประกอบด้วย คะแนนหลังการอบรมทันที คะแนนหลังการอบรมผ่านไปสักระยะหนึ่ง การสัมภาษณ์ แบบสอบถาม และการสังเกตการณ์ในห้องเรียน

ผลการวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าทักษะภาษาอังกฤษของผู้เรียนได้รับการพัฒนาอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติเชิงพรรณนา โดยคะแนนเฉลี่ยของคะแนนเพิ่มจาก 13.03 (SD = 2.66) เป็น 18.20 (SD = 2.62) การทดสอบแบบ t-test ยืนยันความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ  $t(29) = -10.24, p < .001$  และมีขนาดอิทธิพลมาก (Cohen's  $d = 1.87$ ) ซึ่งแสดงถึงผลลัพธ์ที่ชัดเจนของรูปแบบการสอน จากการเก็บข้อมูล พบว่าผู้เข้าร่วมมีพัฒนาการที่ชัดเจนในด้านคำศัพท์ ( $\bar{X} = 4.53$ ), สำนวน ( $\bar{X} = 4.53$ ) และความเข้าใจโครงสร้างประโยค ( $\bar{X} = 4.60$ ) ผู้เข้าร่วมเห็นว่า การอบรมเพิ่มเติมจะช่วยให้สามารถสื่อสารกับนักท่องเที่ยวได้ดีขึ้น ( $\bar{X} = 4.73, SD = 0.46$ ) ซึ่งสะท้อนแรงจูงใจสูงในการเรียนรู้ต่อเนื่อง

อย่างไรก็ตาม ยังมีประเด็นที่ควรพัฒนาเพิ่มเติม โดยด้านการพูดอย่างคล่องแคล่วมีคะแนนเฉลี่ยต่ำที่สุด ( $\bar{X} = 4.06$ ) และความสามารถในการนำเสนอผลิตภัณฑ์ชุมชนเป็นภาษาอังกฤษอยู่ในระดับปานกลาง ( $\bar{X} = 4.13$ ) สะท้อนถึงความจำเป็นในการจัดการอบรมเฉพาะด้านเพิ่มเติมเพื่อเสริมสร้างความมั่นใจและทักษะในการสื่อสาร โดยสรุปแล้ว ผู้เข้าร่วมรู้สึกพึงพอใจกับคุณภาพของการอบรมและมีความต้องการให้มีการจัดอบรมเพิ่มเติมในอนาคต นอกจากนี้การสังเกตการณ์ในชั้นเรียนยังพบว่า การสอนแบบร่วมมือและเชื่อมโยงกับวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่น จะส่งเสริมการมีส่วนร่วมของผู้เรียน พัฒนาทักษะทางภาษา และสร้างบรรยากาศที่สนับสนุนการเรียนรู้

**คำสำคัญ:** ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม การเรียนรู้แบบร่วมมือสำหรับผู้นำเที่ยวท้องถิ่น การสอนทักษะการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ

### Abstract

This study seeks to examine the English-speaking patterns tailored to the local context for local tour leaders in Hot District, Chiang Mai Province, as well as the retention of knowledge from these lessons to enhance local cultural tourism, which has drawn a significant influx of visitors.

A quasi-experimental design was employed, integrating different types of data. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, based on their readiness and willingness to participate. Data collection methods included immediate post-test and delayed post-test scores, surveys, interviews, and classroom observations.

The results show significant improvements in participants' language skills. Descriptive statistics revealed an increase in the mean test score from 13.03 (SD = 2.66) to 18.20 (SD = 2.62). A paired-sample t-test confirmed a statistically significant difference,  $t(29) = -10.24$ ,  $p < .001$ , with a large effect size (Cohen's  $d = 1.87$ ), indicating a strong impact of the instructional program. Participants showed notable gains in vocabulary ( $\bar{X} = 4.53$ ), expressions ( $\bar{X} = 4.53$ ), and sentence structure understanding ( $\bar{X} = 4.60$ ). The highest agreement was that further training would enhance their ability to communicate with tourists ( $\bar{X} = 4.73$ , SD = 0.46), which suggests strong motivation for continued learning.

However, areas needing improvement were identified. Fluency development had the lowest mean score ( $\bar{X} = 4.06$ ), and moderate ability was reported in presenting community products in English ( $\bar{X} = 4.13$ ). These findings emphasize the need for continued targeted training to build confidence and competence in real-world communication tasks. Overall, the participants appreciated the quality of the training and requested more training sessions in the future. The classroom observation also showed that cooperative and culturally relevant instruction supported active engagement, language improvement, and a supportive learning environment.

**Keywords:** English for Cultural Tourism, Collaborative Learning for Local Tour Leaders, Teaching Speaking Skill

## Introduction

English plays a crucial role in communication across all professional fields, particularly in the tourism industry, a major component of the service sector. This sector is connected with various branches of production, ranging from household-scale operations to large-scale enterprises. Tourism activities are also widely dispersed geographically, encompassing both rural and urban areas. For example, in 2023, Thailand welcomed over 27 million international tourists, prompting the government to set an ambitious revenue target of 3.5 trillion baht from the tourism sector for 2024. This strategic aim reflects a concerted effort across multiple sectors to drive economic growth through tourism (Foreign Affairs Office, Government Public Relations Department, Office of the Prime Minister, 2024). Interestingly, a large number of these tourists are drawn to Thailand by its rich cultural heritage and traditional way of life, making cultural tourism an important sector, especially in culturally rich destinations such as Chiang Mai.

Cultural tourism, in particular, has emerged as a significant segment of the industry, leveraging cultural heritage as a key attraction for both domestic and international tourists. Tourists are increasingly drawn to cultural experiences, including the exploration of historical sites, architecture, local customs, traditional festivals, and the purchase of handicrafts that reflect indigenous knowledge. Cultural tourism is categorized as encompassing elements such as historical sites, archaeology, architecture, fine arts, crafts, sculpture, religious rituals, music, performing arts, language, literature, cuisine, clothing, folk culture, and local wisdom-based technology (Chittangwattana, 2005).

In addition, cultural tourism destinations can be classified under the "4Hs" model; Heritage, History, Habitat, and Handicraft as essential components. According to this model, cultural tourism can thrive in locations that exhibit at least one of these four elements: (1) heritage sites promoting historical or archaeological tourism; (2) historically significant areas contributing to historical-cultural tourism; (3) communities with unique lifestyles or traditions (habitat); and (4) regions renowned for traditional arts and crafts (Smith, 1997/2001).

As aligned with cultural tourism, community-based tourism emphasizes the improvement of community well-being through principles such as equitable benefit-sharing, shared use of infrastructure between locals and tourists, environmental conservation, and community ownership and management of tourism enterprises. External investment is encouraged in the form of joint ventures, with an emphasis on retaining benefits within the community and building local networks and capacities (Dewi, et al., 2018: 953).

To support the growth of cultural and community-based tourism in Thailand, especially in Chiang Mai, a region known for its rich cultural and historical significance, the researchers argue that English communication skills are essential. Therefore, it is imperative that English language training be made accessible to individuals working across the tourism sector. Moreover, the researchers identified a gap in the availability of high-quality training programs for local tour leaders in remote communities; thus, proposing that collaborative learning approaches could be effectively integrated into English language training sessions to enhance engagement and language development.

In terms of the importance of collaborative learning in English education, the researchers view that there is the global shift in English language towards communicative competence. English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy now prioritize practical language use for real-world



communication, aligning with global educational objectives.

Given these considerations, the present study aims to integrate cooperative learning techniques into English communicative instruction for local tour leaders in Hot District, Chiang Mai Province to help them improve their English communication with English speaking visitors.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To improve and retain the knowledge of English-speaking patterns of the local tour leaders in Hot district, Chiang Mai province
2. To investigate the attitudes of the learners towards their improvement in using English for Cultural and community-based tourism through cooperative learning

### **Literature Review**

#### **1. Concept of Cultural Tourism**

Cultural Tourism involves traveling to observe or experience different branches of art and culture, including visits to historical heritage sites, ancient monuments, religious places, and traditional festivals. Smith offers the perspective that cultural tourism areas should contain at least one of the "4Hs" components: 1) Heritage – areas with cultural or archaeological heritage sites, 2) History – areas with historical significance, 3) Habitat – areas that show evidence of community settlement, considered the most important, as they represent local ways of life and community-based cultural tourism, 4) Handicraft – areas known for traditional arts and crafts (Smith, 1997/2001).

#### **2. Concept of Potential and Quality Standards of Tourist Attractions (5As)**

Puechthonglang, et al. suggest that the 5As concept is essential in planning the development of religious and cultural tourism destinations in communities. The quality standards of these tourist sites are factors that help enhance visitor satisfaction and encourage repeat visits. This study adopts the 5As framework to guide the development of cultural tourism models in the new normal lifestyle era for the cultural tourism communities of Hot District in Chiang Mai (Puechthonglang, et al., 2017: 213-224).

#### **3. Cooperative Learning**

Johnson & Johnson define cooperative learning as the instructional use of small groups where students collaborate to enhance both their individual learning and the learning of their peers (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Slavin emphasizes that cooperative learning transforms the traditional classroom by shifting the focus from passive listening to active student participation in small groups (Slavin, 1995). Similarly, Comoglio and Cardoso view cooperative learning as a classroom management technique where students work in groups and are assessed based on their collective performance (Comoglio and Cardoso, 1996: 20-23). Likewise, Millis & Cottell note that cooperative learning encourages students to utilize higher-level thinking skills (Millis & Cottell, 1998). In conclusion, cooperative learning is a teaching strategy in which students work in small teams with diverse abilities, utilizing various learning activities to improve their understanding of subject matter.

#### **4. Core Principles of Cooperative Learning in TEFL**

According to Johnson and Johnson, effective cooperative learning requires adherence to specific

foundational principles. Effective cooperative learning in TESOL is characterized by five interrelated elements that promote both academic and social development. Positive interdependence ensures that learners perceive themselves as part of a team, working collaboratively toward a shared goal. Simultaneously, individual accountability holds each member responsible for their contribution, fostering a balance between autonomy and cooperation. Face-to-face promotive interaction requires students to engage directly with peers, offering feedback, challenging ideas, and supporting one another's learning in real time. Group processing allows teams to reflect on their collaborative efforts, set goals, and evaluate their effectiveness as a unit. Underpinning these processes are effective group or social skills, which are essential for facilitating communication, resolving conflict, and maintaining productive interpersonal relationships within the language learning environment (Johnson & Johnson, 1998).

### **5. Effective Strategies and Activities**

Strategies such as Think-Pair-Share and its derivatives; Read-Pair-Share and Write-Pair-Share, offer similarly structured opportunities for student engagement through stages of individual reflection, peer discussion, and group sharing. These approaches significantly improve learners' oral proficiency and build confidence in language use (Nguyen, et al., 2021). Furthermore, group projects and role-playing deepen this collaborative framework by integrating multiple language skills within authentic tasks. Group projects promote learner autonomy and critical thinking while supporting the principles of task-based language teaching (Ellis, 2003; Johnson et al., 1998; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Meanwhile, role-playing immerses learners in realistic scenarios that facilitate fluency, confidence, and communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980: 1-47; Larsen-Freeman, 2000), reinforcing Krashen's emphasis on meaningful interaction in second language acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Collectively, these strategies contribute to more dynamic, learner-centered classrooms that prioritize contextualized language use and collaborative learning.

### **6. Benefits of Cooperative Learning in TEFL**

Cooperative learning offers significant benefits in the TEFL classroom. It fosters meaningful interaction, enhances communicative competence, and supports the development of critical thinking and social skills. By engaging in structured group activities, learners not only improve their language proficiency but also gain confidence and motivation through peer collaboration. This approach creates a supportive, student-centered environment that reflects real-world communication and promotes long-term language retention (Johnson, et al., 1998; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

### **7. Teaching Speaking for EFL Learners**

English language teaching (ELT) in Thailand continues to face significant challenges due to several interrelated factors. Foley identifies key issues including outdated curricula, grammar-dominated instruction, inadequate teaching materials, and ineffective assessment practices (Foley, 2005: 223-234). Traditional teaching has often emphasized rote learning and mechanical drills, which limits learners' ability to produce authentic, accurate language (Saengboon, 2004: 11-34). Teachers also struggle to select appropriate materials and design tasks suited to students' speaking levels and content knowledge (Kanoksilapatham, 2007: 6-25). Additionally, learner-related factors such as low willingness to communicate further hinder oral language development (Tan & Phairot, 2018: 590), reinforcing the need for teacher intervention through scaffolding. Grounded in Vygotsky's

sociocultural theory and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), scaffolding refers to temporary support offered by teachers or peers to help learners perform tasks they cannot yet complete independently (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976 89–100). In EFL speaking instruction, this involves techniques such as modeling, questioning, and feedback, which are gradually reduced as learners become more proficient (Walqui, 2006: 159–180).

Recent empirical studies highlight the effectiveness of scaffolding in low-proficiency EFL speaking contexts. Pourpornpong found that Thai university students who received scaffolded instruction, especially through modeling and contingent feedback, showed improved interactional competence and longer spoken turns (Pourpornpong, 2020: 364–380). Research from Taiwan also supports these findings; both Talley and Chang observed that open-ended questions and increased wait time encouraged more extensive learner output (Talley, 2014: 341–356; Chang, 2011: 5-19). These outcomes resonate with Brock's study, which showed that referential questions elicit more complex responses than display questions (Brock, 1986: 47-59).

In addition to teacher scaffolding, peer support plays a critical role. Pourpornpong reported that mixed-proficiency groupings enabled less proficient learners to benefit from their peers' language models, fostering negotiation of meaning (Pourpornpong, 2020: 364–380). Similarly, Yawiloeng observed that peer feedback and clarification requests were instrumental in helping Thai learners' complete communicative tasks, a dynamic that directly benefits speaking development. The sociocultural view of learning further supports peer scaffolding as a means of co-constructing linguistic knowledge (Yawiloeng, 2013: 77–89.).

In technology-enhanced environments, scaffolding strategies continue to evolve. Ardiningtyasa, et al. identified six teacher roles in online speaking tasks; modeler, contingent responder, motivator, evaluator, consultant, and instructor, each of which contributed to increased fluency, confidence, and engagement (Ardiningtyasa, et. al, 2023: 5009-5019). This aligns with current trends in TESOL emphasizing hybrid learning and real-time support (Grapin, et al., 2021: 5-33). Furthermore, reflective scaffolding, such as through dialogue journals, offers a valuable preparatory tool for speaking. Dolly's study on adult ESL learners demonstrated that written dialogues between teachers and students promoted self-expression and conversational skills, suggesting a broader role for scaffolding in developing oral proficiency (Dolly, 1990: 317-321). Overall, the literature confirms that diverse, context-sensitive scaffolding strategies, whether teacher-led, peer-based, or technologically mediated, are essential to improving speaking outcomes for low-proficiency EFL learners.

Despite these advancements, gaps remain in the literature. More longitudinal research is needed to track the sustained impact of scaffolding strategies on EFL speaking development, particularly among lower-proficiency learners. Additionally, component analyses that disaggregate the specific effects of different scaffolding types, such as teacher modeling versus peer support, would provide greater clarity on best practices. Finally, the integration of multimodal and AI-based scaffolding tools, such as speech recognition and visual prompts, holds potential for enhancing accessibility and personalization in speaking instruction for low-level learners.

Moreover, willingness to communicate (WTC) is a key construct in ESL speaking instruction, reflecting a learner's readiness to initiate communication in the target language. Initially derived from Burgoon's concept of unwillingness to communicate (Burgoon, 1976: 60-69), WTC has been reconceptualized by MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels as a dynamic, context-dependent trait influenced by situational factors. This shift

highlights the importance of interactional and environmental contexts in shaping L2 communication behaviors. While WTC is widely recognized as critical in second language acquisition, its relationship with English proficiency remains complex (MacIntyre, et al., 1998: 545-562). Tan and Phairot investigated this connection among 375 Thai Grade 12 EFL learners and found that WTC varied significantly across proficiency levels. Although proficiency modestly predicted WTC inside and outside the classroom, it accounted for only a small portion of the variance (Tan & Phairot, 2018: 590). These findings suggest that while language proficiency influences WTC, other affective, contextual, and interpersonal factors also play a substantial role.

## 8. Previous Studies

Several studies have illustrated the importance of teaching speaking for tourism personnel. For example, Phaiboonnugulkij explored English-for-tourism blended lessons with youth guides and found that instruction in community-based tourism contexts, which included project work like promotional videos and peer/teacher feedback, significantly improved speaking ability for both low- and high-proficiency students, with the latter demonstrating more sophisticated strategy use (Phaiboonnugulkij, 2023). The study combined content focus with communicative instruction, aligning students' motivation with real-world applications.

Moreover, Chooma, et al., examined eco-cultural tourism staff and found that participants adopted multiple communication strategies such as L1 switching and circumlocution after a dedicated English workshop, demonstrating improved fluency and cultural appropriacy in job-related speaking tasks (Chooma, et al., 2022), highlighting the importance of strategic scaffolding in industry-based speaking outcomes.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) revealed positive relationships between CLT pedagogy, learner motivation, and speaking performance in Thai EFL classrooms. Although not tourism-specific, the motivational principles, promoting extrinsic and intrinsic regulation through meaningful speaking tasks, readily transfer to tourism instruction, which relies heavily on real-world communicative intent (Wanich, 2014: 49-67).

Cooperative learning (CL) has been widely implemented in various EFL contexts, with consistently positive effects on learner outcomes. Miyasako examined CL across 18 EFL countries and concluded that its strongest benefits emerged in speaking and vocabulary development, particularly at the tertiary level (Miyasako, 2022: 1-13). Together, these studies suggest that while cooperative learning is globally effective in EFL instruction, its success relies heavily on faithful and context-sensitive implementation. While in Thailand, Yamo, Wongthanate and Sitthitikul demonstrated that CL boosted achievement and motivation in rural secondary students studying English for the hospitality industry (Wongthanate & Sitthitikul, 2023).

Last but not least, Chaisiri reported that implementing technology-mediated oral tasks (via Flipgrid) significantly increased Thai students' WTC in virtual communication settings (Chaisiri, 2023: 97-120). Such platforms offer low-pressure environments that simultaneously scaffold oral performance and psychological readiness, providing useful models for integrating blended and hybrid speaking instruction in tourism training.

Scaffolding has long been recognized as essential in supporting low-proficiency Thai EFL learners' oral development. Teacher-mediated scaffolding, in the form of modeling, elicitation, and contingent feedback, consistently enhances student participation and interactional competence. Pourpornpong demonstrated that teacher scaffolding led to longer turns and more reciprocal dialogue in Thai university classrooms (Pourpornpong, 2020: 364-380). Besides, Chomprasertsuk reported that scaffolded questioning techniques,



especially those requiring elaboration, significantly improved spontaneous spoken output among Thai secondary students (Chomprasertsuk, 2017). Wongwanich and Poondej further reinforced that guided teacher prompts foster both accuracy and fluency in classroom talk (Wongwanich and Poondej, 2019).

Besides scaffolding, cooperative learning has emerged as a natural extension of scaffolding, enabling peer support to bolster speaking confidence. Siriphot and Hamcumpai found that structured group work enhanced low-proficiency learners' self-efficacy and reduced anxiety during oral tasks (Siriphot and Hamcumpai, 2020: 82–93). Likewise, Wattanakunakorn demonstrated that collaborative speaking projects promoted peer-mediated language modeling, encouraging risk-taking and richer language performance (Wattanakunakorn, 2018 98–114). Last but not least, Suchatan (2016: 73–88) showed that peer scaffolding in cooperative dialogue reduced hesitation and increased negotiation of meaning during Thai EFL speaking activities.

Key to successful speaking instruction is nurturing students' willingness to communicate (WTC). Pattapong highlighted that low-proficiency Thai learners were more likely to speak when tasks were accompanied by teacher and peer encouragement, creating a safe, supportive classroom environment (Pattapong, 2015: 105-136). Similarly, Ma, et al. emphasized that learners perceived communicative competence and social support were stronger predictors of WTC than language proficiency (Ma, et al., 2019: 127-144). Chanthathanakul and Rattanapinyopituk found that Thai EFL university students reported higher WTC when cooperative tasks were low-stakes, socially oriented, and teacher-facilitated to reduce affective filters (Chanthathanakul and Rattanapinyopituk, 2014: 22-38).

It is known that motivation also plays a central role in sustaining oral engagement. Wanich illustrated that communicative language teaching (CLT) increased both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation among Thai learners, with improvements in speaking persistence (Wanich, 2014: 49–67). Following similar findings, Thepsirin showed that contextualized speaking tasks with personal relevance significantly enhanced learner autonomy and speaking persistence (Thepsirin, 2013: 15–30). Also, Phumjiraphan and Khomson reported that integrating culturally relevant topics elevated speaking enjoyment and intrinsic motivation in Thai secondary students (Phumjiraphan & Khomson, 2017: 45-60).

From previous studies, teacher scaffolding emerges as the catalyst: it initiates talk and models target forms. Cooperative learning, at the same time, extends support socially, boosting self-efficacy and shared scaffolding. However, differences arise: teacher-led scaffolding emphasizes expert guidance and form-focused input, whereas cooperative learning draws on peer contributions and affective support. This research; therefore, aim to investigate how collaborative learning can help enhance and scaffold the speaking skill of local tour leaders in a rural district in Chiang Mai.

## Research Methodology

### 1. Research Design

This study adopted a one-group quasi-experimental design to evaluate the effectiveness of a scaffolded instructional intervention. This design allows researchers to measure changes within the same group over time, providing insight into the impact of the intervention without a control group (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Although this approach lacks random assignment, it is commonly used in educational research when



ethical or practical constraints limit the use of control groups (Fraenkel, et al., 2019). Moreover, findings from the attitude survey and classroom observations serve as complementary evidence to support the statistical results.

## 2. Participants

The study involved thirty community-based tourism leaders, aged between 18 and 25, residing in Hot District, Chiang Mai Province. All participants possessed a minimum English language proficiency of A1–A2, as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) a minimum English proficiency level of A1; (2) residency in the local area for no less than five years; and (3) demonstrated strong service orientation, as indicated by community involvement and local references. Here is the English translation:

## 3. Teaching Procedures

The teaching procedures are concerned with collaborative learning, scaffolding instruction, and the participants' willingness to communicate. There are five stages of teaching procedures as explained below.

1. **Orientation:** Explain the details of the course and introduce the use of cooperative learning.
2. **Initial Assessment:** Assess participants' basic English abilities through conversation and questions.
3. **Instruction:** Teach vocabulary, expressions, and sentence structures related to the local context.
4. **Group Activities:** Organize participants into groups to engage in collaborative activities, including speaking practice and presentations.
5. **Feedback:** The instructors provide feedback to help participants improve.

## 4. Instruments

The research utilizes five primary instruments: designed lessons, an immediate post-test and a delayed post-test, a semi-structured interview, a questionnaire designed to assess participants' attitudes and classroom observations. A pre-test is absent here because the participants do not have backgrounds on English vocabulary, language patterns, and phrases regarding the local contexts. The immediate post-test and delayed post-test were administered to measure their language knowledge learned and retention. To complement these data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants together with classroom observations to gain in-depth insights into their experiences, perceptions, and engagement with the learning activities. Additionally, a Likert-scale questionnaire was used to examine participants' attitudes toward their improved language skills and the collaborative learning strategies implemented. These instruments enabled triangulation of data, enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings within the TESOL research framework.

## 5. Data Collection

To investigate instructional effectiveness and knowledge retention, an immediate post-test was administered immediately following the intervention to measure learners' short-term gains in English language proficiency. A delayed post-test conducted one month later assessed long-term retention of the acquired linguistic knowledge and communicative skills. Additionally, an attitude survey was administered to explore learners' perceptions, motivation, and satisfaction, offering affective insights that supported the interpretation of test outcomes.

The study was theoretically grounded in instructional effectiveness theory, which posits that well-

designed pedagogical strategies can result in measurable learning improvements (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The independent variable was the instructional intervention, while the dependent variable was learners' improvement as indicated by test scores.

## 6. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, including the mean, median, and standard deviation, were calculated for both the pre-test and post-test scores to summarize the central tendencies and variability. A paired samples t-test was then conducted to examine whether the mean differences between the two sets of scores were statistically significant. The level of significance was set at  $p < .05$ . Furthermore, the effect size was computed using Cohen's  $d$  to assess the magnitude of the instructional impact. According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, a value above 0.8 indicates a large effect, thus supporting the practical significance of the findings.

## 7. Descriptions of Statistical Terms

1. **Mean:** A mean score is the average value calculated by adding all individual scores together and dividing by the number of scores. It provides a central tendency measure and represents the overall performance or response level of a group.

2. **Median:** The median here is the middle value in a set of numbers, which are the test scores arranged in ascending or descending order, dividing the data into two equal halves.

3. **Standard Deviation:** A standard deviation is a statistical measure that quantifies the amount of variation or dispersion of a set of values around their mean, showing how spread out the values are within the dataset.

4. **t-test:** The t-test in this study assesses whether there is a significant difference between pre-test and post-test means. A significant result confirms the intervention's effectiveness and validates the findings, especially with small samples in the study.

5. **p-value:** A p-value is the probability of obtaining the observed results. It helps determine if the results are statistically significant. Smaller p-values indicate stronger evidence against the null hypothesis.

6. **Cohen's  $d$  value:** Cohen's  $d$  is a standardized measure of effect size that quantifies the difference between two group means in terms of standard deviation units, indicating how large the difference is relative to the variability within the data. Furthermore, data from participants' attitudes and classroom observations were incorporated into the analysis to provide a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning context alongside the statistical findings.

## Results

This section presents descriptive statistics that evaluate the effectiveness and knowledge retention of the English lessons for local tour leaders in Hot District. The attitude survey. Additionally, classroom observations serve as a qualitative complement to the study, employing the POEMS framework to systematically analyze the learning environment.

### 1. Result from Descriptive Statistics

This part presents the findings of the study based on the stated research objectives. The statistical analyses were conducted to determine whether the instructional intervention had a significant and meaningful

impact on the participants' learning outcomes.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics to summarize the central tendency and variability of the scores

Test	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	t-test	p-value	Cohen's d value
Immediate post-test	13.03	13	2.66	-10.24	p < .001	1.87
Delayed post-test	18.2	20	2.62			

The descriptive statistics as shown in Table 1 revealed a notable improvement and retention in participants' performance following the instructional intervention, which is the English lessons taught. The mean score increased from 13.03 (SD = 2.66) on the immediate post-test to 18.20 (SD = 2.62) on the delayed post-test. This indicates a substantial positive retention in learning outcomes, suggesting that the participants might have reviewed the learned content regularly, which will help them retain the knowledge and use it when encountering an English-speaking visitor in the future. A paired samples t-test was performed to compare immediate post-test and delayed post-test scores. The result showed a statistically significant difference,  $t(29) = -10.24$ , and  $p < .001$ , which indicates that the instructional intervention led to an increase in participants' retention of the knowledge. The Cohen's d value = 1.87 represents a very large effect size, showing a strong and practically meaningful impact of the intervention on the retention outcomes.

Moreover, the median and standard deviation revealed that the median score increased from 13.00 to 20.00, while the standard deviation remained stable (Immediate post-test SD = 2.66; Delayed post-test SD = 2.62). This suggests that the retention of the performance even after the intervention was consistent across participants and not skewed by outliers or anomalies.

**Table 2:** The Level of Participants' Attitudes towards the Language Training Program

Item	Mean	SD
1. I have learned new English vocabulary related to community-based tourism.	4.53	0.52
2. I have learned new English expressions related to community-based tourism.	4.53	0.64
3. I have learned new English sentence structures related to community-based tourism.	4.60	0.51
4. I am able to apply the knowledge gained from the training to communicate with tourists.	4.33	0.72
5. I am able to present information about community products in English.	4.13	0.74
6. I feel more confident communicating in English with tourists.	4.47	0.74
7. I have become more fluent in English after the training.	4.06	0.70
8. I believe this training will be beneficial for my future.	4.33	0.72
9. I believe that further training on this topic will enhance my ability to communicate more effectively with tourists.	4.73	0.46

The findings from the language training program reflect a generally positive impact on participants' English language skills. Notably, the item "I believe that further training on this topic will enhance my ability to communicate more effectively with tourists" yielded the highest mean score of  $\bar{X} = 4.73$  (SD = 0.46), showing that participants not only valued the current training but also expressed a strong desire for an additional training.



This high mean score suggests that the program successfully stimulated a recognition of the need for continued learning in order to enhance communicative competence. The data also reveals that the participants felt they had acquired new English vocabulary ( $\bar{X} = 4.53$ ,  $SD = 0.52$ ) and expressions ( $\bar{X} = 4.53$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ). Furthermore, the high score for the item on sentence structures ( $\bar{X} = 4.60$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ ) emphasizes that the training provided participants with a strong foundation in sentence patterns that are important their communication with tourists.

However, despite the overall positive ratings, certain areas of improvement are also evident. The mean score for fluency development ( $\bar{X} = 4.06$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ) was the lowest across the items, showing that while participants generally felt their fluency had improved, they may not have achieved the same level of confidence or proficiency in spontaneous communication as in other areas. Moreover, the relatively moderate score for "I am able to present information about community products in English." ( $\bar{X} = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ) reflects a gap in the ability to use the language for more complex tasks such as product presentations, which are integral to tourism settings. These findings suggest that while the training program was successful in enhancing their language skills.

## 2. Participants' Opinions

Overall, the participants responded positively to the training. Two participants stated that the language training was very good (P2, and P3). They appreciated the quality of instruction, particularly noting the teacher's kindness and clarity. One participant said "The training was very good. The teacher was kind and explained things very clearly and understandably (P1)." Another participant highlighted the benefit of acquiring new English vocabulary, while also pointing out a delay in receiving the certificate, by stating that "Very good. I learned a lot of English vocabulary, but the certificate was a bit delayed (P3)." There was also a request for more training sessions in the future; "I would like there to be more training sessions in the future (P4)."

P = Participant

## 3. Result from Classroom Observation

To supplement the descriptive statistics, the POEMS observation framework, which is a widely-adopted methodology from the design thinking research community is used to understand the learners. POEMS stands for People, Objects, Environment, Messages, and Services, and is often used to structure observational data in a clear, user-centered way.

### POEMS Observation Summary

#### 1. People

1.1 The participants actively engaged in cooperative English learning activities related to guiding cultural tourism in their local communities.

1.2 The participants demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm, especially when working within groups to exchange ideas, ask questions, and clarify understanding.

1.3 Those with lower initial test scores showed a strong commitment to improvement, making notable efforts to address their linguistic weaknesses.

1.4 The instructors used engaging and supportive presentation techniques, ensuring all participants were included and motivated. They praised learners' participation regardless of the correctness of their responses.

## 2. Objects

2.1 The learning materials integrated culturally relevant content, particularly vocabulary and expressions connected to local cultural and environmental contexts.

2.2 The tools and resources supported pronunciation practice and sentence construction for interactive communication.

## 3. Environment

3.1 The classroom atmosphere was observed to be positive and inspiring, characterized by frequent smiles, laughter, consistent attendance, and voluntary participation.

3.2 The cooperative learning setting contributed to the participants' confidence, encouraging more active participation and peer support.

## 4. Messages

4.1 The participants received affirmative and constructive feedback from the instructors, fostering a supportive and respectful communication culture.

4.2 The integration of local culture into lesson content appeared to strengthen participants' sense of connection and intrinsic motivation.

4.3 Feedback from test results showed a positive progression in English proficiency, with the delayed post-test scores higher than the post-test scores.

## 5. Services

5.1 The instructional approach incorporated cooperative learning strategies, enabling group-based interaction and mutual support.

5.2 Formative assessment informed the instructor of participants' progress and challenges.

5.3 While improvements were noted across various skills, language fluency emerged as a relative area of weakness that participants wished to improve.

## Discussion

For the first objective, which is to improve and retain the knowledge of English-speaking patterns of the local tour leaders in Hot district, Chiang Mai province, the descriptive statistics of this study shows acceptable scores (immediate post-test  $\bar{X} = 13.03$ ) among the local tour leaders. Moreover, an increase from an immediate post-test means of 13.03 (SD = 2.66) to a delayed post-test mean of 18.20 (SD = 2.62), a highly significant t-value ( $t(29) = -10.24$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and a very large effect size (Cohen's  $d = 1.87$ ), strongly supports instructional and retentional effectiveness. It is assumed that through collaboratively reviewing lessons and discussing the patterns learned among the participants, they were managed to achieve higher scores in the delayed post-test. The results are similar to a Boonteerarak's study conducted in Chiang Mai, where a communicative curriculum significantly boosted convenience-store clerks' communicative competence, despite a slight decline at delayed post-test (Boonteerarak, 2021: 115-142). Likewise, Gray found that a tailored English-for-communication curriculum significantly enhanced community-based tourism workers' communicative performance in Kanchanaburi (Gray, 2024: 109-124). Together, these studies confirm that contextually crafted, task-based language training can achieve learning outcomes in Thai tourism settings.

To answer the second objective, which is investigating learners' attitudes toward using English for cultural and community-based tourism, positive results are reported. Participants strongly agreed ( $\bar{X} = 4.73$ ,  $SD = 0.46$ ) that further training would improve their ability to communicate effectively with tourists. They also rated learning new vocabulary ( $\bar{X} = 4.53$ ), expressions ( $\bar{X} = 4.53$ ), and sentence patterns ( $\bar{X} = 4.60$ ) highly, pointing to both perceived usefulness and recognition of continued needs. This finding aligns with Phaiboonnugulkij's work, which showed that blended lessons and strategy instruction in community-based tourism contexts significantly enhanced speaking performance and increased learners' use of learning strategies (Phaiboonnugulkij's 2023). Moreover, Chongchit et al. demonstrated the empowerment outcomes of English-for-tourism training in local Thai communities when learners recognize their own needs and purpose for language use (Chongchit et al., 2023: 203-234).

Moreover, some aspects, specifically fluency ( $\bar{X} = 4.06$ ) and ability to present community products ( $\bar{X} = 4.13$ ) scored relatively lower, which presents areas for further development. Though the participants reported a positive view on the training sessions, there is a request for more sessions. This pattern follows Tangjitnusorn and Sukavatee who found that hybrid community-based instruction improved oral-communication skills in tourism undergraduates, but learners still noted challenges in transactional and performance tasks (Tangjitnusorn & Sukavatee 2016: 14–28). Likewise, Chooma, et al. observed that eco-cultural tourism staff significantly improved after training; however, lower-proficiency participants struggled more with strategic fluency and communicative tactics (Chooma, et al. 2022).

Finally, classroom observations revealed that participants were highly engaged in cooperative English learning activities, showing strong motivation and progress. The learning environment was positive and culturally relevant, with supportive teaching methods, appropriate materials, and encouraging peer interactions that boosted confidence and participation. Even though overall language skills improved, the instructors noticed that fluency remained a challenge, indicating the need for continued targeted support.

It is noted that while vocabulary and structural knowledge were effectively enhanced, achieving true fluency and presentation competence may require more extensive practice, role-play, and real-world simulation in future trainings.

### Suggestions

Based on the findings, three key directions for further research are recommended.

1. Future studies should explore the long-term retention and practical use of English-speaking skills in real tourism settings.
2. Since fluency development was rated lowest, future research should investigate teaching strategies that specifically enhance spontaneous communication, such as immersive simulations or role-play.
3. Future research could examine how individual differences, such as initial proficiency levels or learning styles, influence the effectiveness of English training in tourism contexts. Understanding these learner variables would support the design of more targeted and inclusive training programs for community-based tourism.

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