

AN INVESTIGATION OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT THE CAUSES OF LOW
ENGLISH O-NET ACHIEVEMENT OF 9TH GRADE: CASE STUDY OF BASIC
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY SCHOOLS IN SUPHANBURI



Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
at Srinakharinwirot University

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The purpose of this study was to find out the opinions of the classroom English teachers about the causes in English teaching in Basic Educational Opportunity Schools in Suphanburi resulted in low O-NET scores. The participants were 67 English teachers who taught English in Basic Education Opportunity Schools in Suphanburi. The instrument of this study was a questionnaire asking for teachers' opinions about the causes of low English O-NET achievement in 9th grade. The data were statistically analyzed by percentage (%) and mean (\bar{X}).

The result of the study showed the top five causes are: students' insufficient in English grammar for 9th grade, students' different levels of English proficiency, teachers' extra work loads affecting the teaching efficiency, students' sufficient in vocabulary, and students' awareness of the value of English.

Keywords: O-NET Achievement, Teachers' Opinions, English Teachers

การสำรวจความคิดเห็นของครูสอนภาษาอังกฤษต่อสาเหตุคะแนน O-NET ของนักเรียน
ชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 3 ต่ำ: กรณีศึกษาโรงเรียนขยายโอกาสในจังหวัดสุพรรณบุรี



เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต
สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ
พฤษภาคม 2557

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การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อสำรวจความคิดเห็นของครูต่อสาเหตุของคะแนน O-NET วิชาภาษาอังกฤษ ต่ำ ของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 3 โรงเรียนขยายโอกาสในจังหวัดสุพรรณบุรี ผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามในการศึกษาค้นคว้าครั้งนี้คือ ครูผู้สอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ ชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 3 ในโรงเรียนขยายโอกาส จำนวน 67 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยคือ แบบสอบถามความคิดเห็นของครูสอนภาษาอังกฤษต่อสาเหตุคะแนน O-NET ของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 3 ต่ำ

จากการวิจัยพบว่า สาเหตุของคะแนน O-NET วิชาภาษาอังกฤษ ของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 3 ต่ำ ในโรงเรียนขยายโอกาสในจังหวัดสุพรรณบุรี ใน 5 อันดับแรกตามความคิดเห็นของครู ได้แก่ 1) ด้านความรู้ไวยากรณ์ ภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนที่จำเป็นในระดับชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 3 2) ด้านความสามารถที่แตกต่างกันของนักเรียนในระดับชั้นเดียวกัน 3) ด้านงานพิเศษของครูที่ส่งผลต่อประสิทธิภาพการสอน 4) สาเหตุด้านความรู้ของนักเรียนในเรื่องคำศัพท์ 5) ด้านความตระหนักถึงคุณค่าของภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียน

คำสำคัญ: คะแนน O-NET, ความคิดเห็นของครู, ครูสอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ

The Master's Project

titled

“An Investigation of Teachers’ Opinions about the Causes of Low English O-NET
Achievement of 9th Grade: A Case Study of Basic Educational Opportunity Schools
in Suphanburi”

By

Thapani Samnianglam

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the Master of Arts degree in Teaching English as Foreign Language of

Srinakharinwirot University

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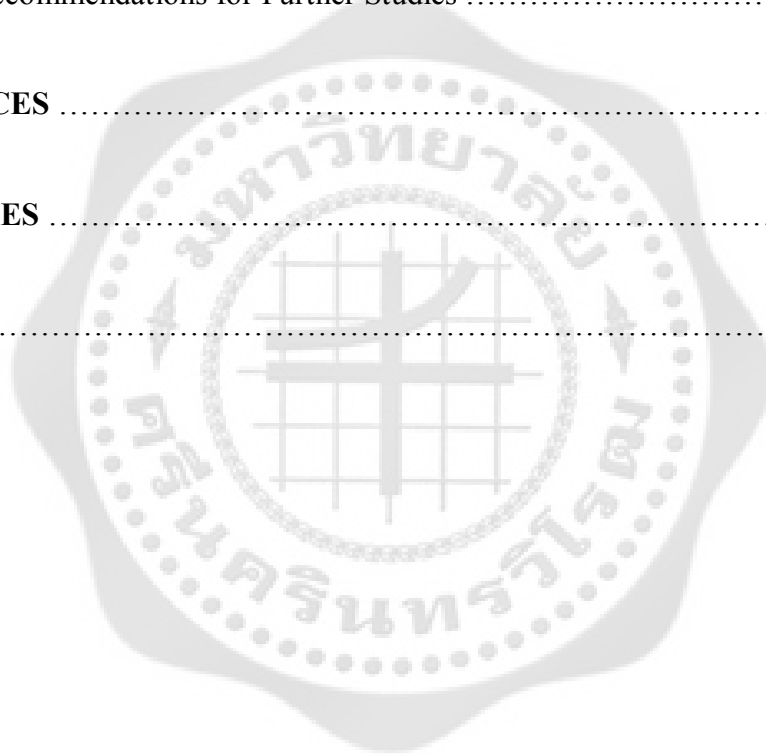
Thapani Samnianglam

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

According to the National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organization) or NIETS, English's national mean scores during the 2009 – 2012 academic years were the lowest among all of the subjects tested. In Suphanburi, the results were also the same during the years 2010 – 2012. Among all of the schools in Supanburi, there are 77 Basic Education Opportunity Schools (BEOSs), and only a few schools had their 9th grade's O-NET means scores higher than the national average numbers from 2009 – 2012.

As an English teacher, I have reviewed several research studies for the related casuses of the low O-NET achievement of the students. The researcher has discussed and analyzed the studies with other teachers about the factors that could cause the problem. Hence, The researcher would like to find out what classroom teachers perceived as factors for the low scores.

Since 2010, Thai education has been directed by Basic Educational Core Curriculum (BECC) 2008. English is a compulsory subject – and also in the BOESs. The most important requirement of BECC 2008 for 9th grade students is to educate them to become the effective English users for the basic workforce requirements according to the labor regulations. BECC 2008 requires 9th grade students to gain ten attributes such as speaking and writing ability to describe themselves, experiences, news/incidents/ various issues of interest to society. Moreover, the students should have a language capability for communication in real and simulated situations in the classroom, school, community and

society. However, the students' achievement is basically based on the teachers' responsibilities of teaching, teaching material and classroom environment. Thus the O-NET is designed in order to evaluate students' attributes throughout the country. And it also reflects the effectiveness of teaching and learning of all schools.

Even BECC 2008 created the students' benchmarks, but the low O-NET achievement reflect that students do not meet the curriculum objective and students' benchmarks. O-NET has started since 2003 academic year. It is an evaluation tool for the success of the students' qualities, teachers' teaching, evaluation, curriculum and O-NET test. BEOSs' O-NET achievements are unsatisfactory - especially the English scores that always get the lowest numbers during 2009 - 2012. This also happened in Suphanburi as mentioned in the first paragraph.

According to the students' qualities set in BECC 2008, they should have shown high abilities in all skills. They must be able to communicate and use language efficiently. However, the overall outcomes including in Suphanburi did not meet the standards. So Suhanburi tried to solve this problem by offering the intensive O-NET tutoring session right before the O-NET examination days. This tutoring was done twice in 2011 and 2012 academic year, but the scores of both years were still lower than the national mean scores. This means teaching process and other factors do not work. Tutoring is not enough or it is not the right way. Therefore, a new method needs to be employed.

There were many researchers who studied O-NET problem. For example, Srisalasang's study (2002) showed that English teachers' education was one of the factors that caused the low English scores. There are many teachers who have not graduated with English major, but they are assigned teaching. Therefore, they could not have applied the appropriate approach. Intajuck (2007) said that the serious problems with

regard to teaching and learning were the basic knowledge and skills in writing lesson plans, teaching as planned, using the communicative approach, and integrating the four skills in the lesson. Paribal (2003) said that learning proficiency was affected by teachers' special tasks, teachers' educational degree, and teachers' teaching time per week. Intajuck (2007) also said that learning and teaching materials – such as computers, internet devices, projector screens, laboratories - were not enough for all students because the schools could not allocate enough budget to support all needed teaching aids and hiring native speakers to teach the students so they could not have opportunities to practice in real situations both inside and outside the classrooms.

Therefore, the researcher conducted this study to survey the teachers' opinions on the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade. This study used the questionnaire in order to investigate the opinions. The questions related to the teachers' opinions on this problem and were applied to ask the teachers teaching 9th grade in 77 BEOSs in Suphanburi only.

Research Objectives

The purpose of the study was to investigate the opinions of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade in Basic Educational Opportunity Schools (BEOSs) in Suphanburi.

Significance of the Study

This study would be useful for various educational works. Firstly, for the teachers in BEOSs, they could share their own teaching experiences and train themselves to overcome the problem. Secondly, for the director of educational area and the directors

of the schools would use the findings to cope with the problem. And lastly for the Office of The Basic Education Commission policy makers would revise and reform the curriculum.

Definition of Term

The terms used specifically in this study are defined as follows:

Basic Educational Opportunity Schools (BEOS) are the schools located in Suphanburi educate kindergarten, primary and lower secondary.

Teachers are English teachers who teach 9th grade in BEOSs.

Causes are issues listed by teachers that affect the English O-NET scores.

Research Question

What are the top five serious causes in teaching English perceived by English teachers in Basic Educational Opportunity Schools in Suphanburi?

Scope of the Study

This study was designed in order to investigate the BEOS teachers (77teachers), teachers' opinions. This study based on BEOSs in Suphanburi only because almost of their O-NET achievements were lower than the national's mean scores. This study was in the 2013 academic year. This survey based on 9th grade students.

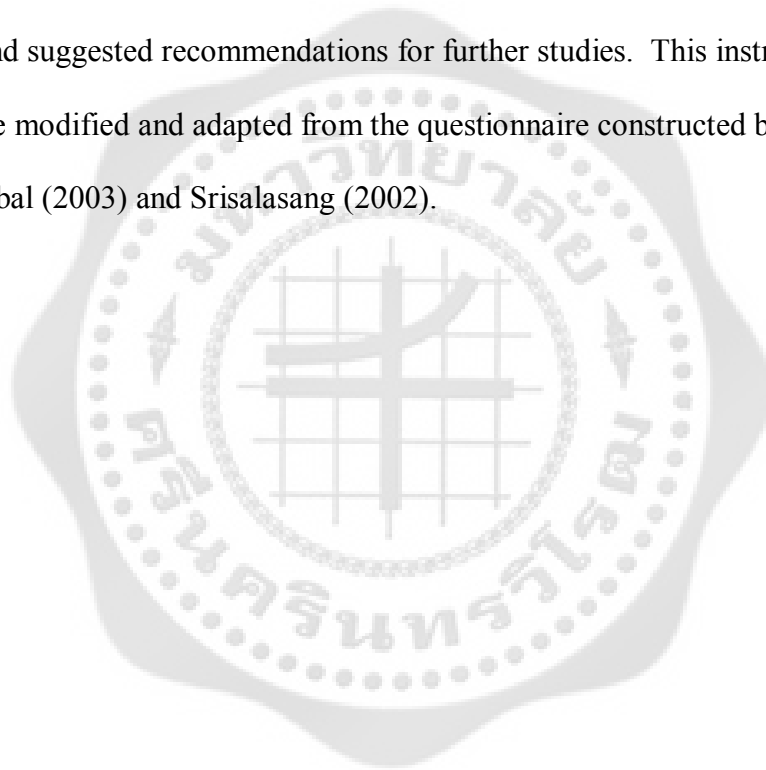
The researcher chose to study 9th grade students because it was the basic compulsory education level for Thai people. They could be legally employed.

The researcher focused on teachers because she was one of the BEOSs teachers in Suphanburi. The researcher faced this problem since 2009 – 2012 academic year.

Moreover, the teachers were one of the key factors to educate the students to be qualified according to the BECC 2008 attributes.

Organization of the study

Chapter 1 introduced the Rational and Background of the study. Chapter 2 reviewed the related literature and research. Chapter 3 explained the methodology of this study. Chapter 4 presented the analyzed data of the study. Finally, chapter 5 discussed the results and suggested recommendations for further studies. This instrument was a questionnaire modified and adapted from the questionnaire constructed by Taweesak (2006), Paribal (2003) and Srisalasang (2002).



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is an overview of the related literature which provided a basis for the study. Three parts were consisted in this chapter. The first part included the O-NET test which was designed in accordance with the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) (BECC) as well as the importance of O-NET test. The second part presented the Basic Educational Opportunity Schools (BEOSs) concerning English teachers' teaching and administration. The problems of English teaching in Thailand and the related research studies were reviewed and discussed in the final part.

The O-NET test and the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) or BECC 2008

Ordinary National Educational Test or O-NET was used as the national evaluation on Thai students' learning competence. The test was written by the National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organization) or NIETS. This test was used to evaluate learning competence of third-grade, sixth-grade, and ninth-grade students in eight subjects. The test designed by NIETS was based on BECC. The test questions in English subject were based on the strands of English.

BECC's purposes of foreign language teaching for Thai students were that the students could acquire a positive attitude towards foreign languages, communicate using foreign languages in various situations, seek knowledge, engage in a livelihood, and continue their education at higher levels. Therefore, the students had knowledge and

understanding in cultural diversity of the world community, and were able to convey Thai concepts and culture to the global society.

The concepts of BECC were as follows:

Language for Communication: use of foreign languages for listening, speaking, reading and writing, exchanging data and information, expressing feelings and opinions, interpreting, presenting data, concepts and views on various matters, and creating interpersonal relationships appropriately.

Language and Culture: use of foreign languages harmonious with culture of native speakers; relationships, similarities and differences between languages and cultures of native speakers; languages and cultures of native speakers and Thai culture; and appropriate application.

Language and Relationship with Other Learning Areas: use of foreign languages to link knowledge with other learning areas, forming the basis for further development, seeking knowledge and broadening learners' world views.

Language and relationship with Community and the World: use of foreign languages in various situations, both in the classroom and the outside community and the global society, forming a basic tool for further education, livelihood and exchange of learning with the global society.

These contents were set be the strands of of foreign language curriculum. The strands of English were as follows:

Strand 1: Language for Communication

Strand 2: Language and Culture

Strand 3: Language and Relationship with Other Learning Areas

Strand 4: Language and Relationship with Community and the World

BECC set the concept and the strands for all schools in Thailand. The schools applied BECC according to their circumstances and situations because they were in different areas. BECC's results showed that they were various ones. Therefore, research studies relating to BECC usage were conducted, such as Prompan's research.

Prompan (2011) studied the evaluation of the School-based Curriculum of English Strand in primary level at Thasatoi municipal school, Chiang Mai city municipality. The research instruments included a questionnaire, interview forms, survey forms, recorded score forms, and attitude test. The results indicated that all three Dimensions: Instructional Dimension, Institutional Dimension, and Behavioral Dimension in the School-based Curriculum English Strand were at good levels. The Instructional Dimension, supporting factors of the studying and budget aspects, did not pass the evaluation criteria as it was at poor levels. Furthermore, the Institutional Dimension which included the student, the family and the community aspects did not pass the evaluation criteria as well. On the other hand, the Behavioral Dimension including English knowledge, attitude towards English of students and reading skill passed the evaluation criteria. However, listening, speaking, writing, and communicating skills did not pass the evaluation criteria.

This research showed that this curriculum had attempted to create the standards for students' abilities in each level. Students graduating from grade nine should have adequate English abilities to enter the workforce. Nevertheless, this study revealed that there were problems in the employment of this curriculum, for example, in administration and in students' performance. Most students did not pass the evaluation designed by the study.

The national test of Thailand or O-NET was constructed in accordance with BECC. English questions of O-NET were designed following foreign language strands.

Strand 1: Language for Communication

Standard F1.1: Understanding of and capacity for interpreting what has been heard and read from various types of media, and ability to express opinions with proper reasoning

Standard F1.2: Endowment with language communication skills for exchange of data and information; efficient expression of feelings and opinions

Standard F1.3: Ability to present data, information, concepts and views about various matters through speaking and writing

Strand 2: Language and Culture

Standard F2.1: Appreciation of the relationship between language and culture of native speakers and capacity for use of language appropriate to occasions and places

Standard F2.2: Appreciation of similarities and differences between language and culture of native and Thai speakers, and capacity for accurate and appropriate use of language

Strand 3: Language and Relationship with Other Learning Areas

Standard F3.1: Usage of foreign languages to link knowledge with other learning areas, as a foundation for further development and to seek knowledge and widen one's world view

Strand 4: Language and Relationship with Community and the World

Standard F4.1: Ability to use foreign languages in various situations in school, community and society

Standard F4.2: Usage of foreign languages as basic tools for further education, livelihood and exchange of learning with the world community

Chamonman (2008: 4), a researcher who received the research fund from NIETS, mentioned that testing questions in English test were verified by the BECC.

Table 1

The Number of Questions of Each English Strands

Strand	Items	
	Grade nine	Grade twelve
Strand 1: Language for Communication	32	71
Strand 2: Language and Culture	8	29
Strand 3: Language and Relationship with Other Learning Areas	Included in strand 1 and 2	
Strand 4: Language and Relationship with Community and the World	Situations included in strand 1 and 2	
Total	40	100

Language proficiencies of third-grade, sixth-grade, and ninth-grade students were evaluated by O-NET held in February every year. The test format was multiple choice with four choices for each question. Although the design of O-NET was based on BECC and its English strands, which determined the scope of English contents throughout the academic years, most students got low scores in the O-NET's English test. Therefore, many researchers studied this problem.

Nochai (2009) studied the academic administration of the small secondary schools under the Chiangrai Educational Service Area Office 3 for the uplifting of the national test results. The participants of this study were the schools' directors, schools' academic heads, foreign language heads, and foreign language teachers. The instruments were the interview and observing behaviour forms. The findings revealed that the schools had to manage problems in five aspects: planning, organization management, suitable persons for work, management, and controlling. The reasons why the national

achievement test scores were low were that the teachers lacked self-development and did not use classroom activities in their teaching.

Aungwatthanakul mentioned that teaching's qualities were one of the factors affecting the English achievement test scores. The students' qualities depended on the teachers' teaching methods because the teachers taught the students English knowledge and urged them to develop themselves. (Pichaiwong K. 2006: citing Aungwatthanakul S. 1992)

Waiwannachit (2009) studied the causes of twelfth-grade students' O-NET scores. The students were in Yala, Phattani, and Naratiwad. The causes were in many aspects as follows:

1. The Directors lacked knowledge concerning the management of the schools' O-NET data for teaching development.
2. The teachers were not trained in English teaching skills.
3. The schools lacked guiding teachers who were knowledgeable about the national test and other evaluations. Therefore, the students were not effectively prepared for the test.
4. The core curriculum did not conform to the local multi-cultures and questions in O-NET.
5. The schools lacked teaching aids. This problem affected the positive attitude of the students and teaching efficiency.
6. The students lacked motivation to pursue further education at higher levels in the future.
7. The parents were not aware of the importance of education and did not support the students.

8. The students lacked opportunities to gain knowledge and supports because of the circumstances and situations in these areas.

Taking into account the findings of the researchers (Chamonman, Nochai, Aungwatthanakul and Waiwannachit) demonstrated previously, the information in the findings was used as a basis for constructing the questionnaire of this study.

Taweesak (2006) studied the problems and guidelines for the development of English achievement based on the national achievement test of the second level learners: case study of the schools in Bangkok educational area 1. The research study was conducted in four aspects: administrators, teachers, the Basic Educational Committees, and students. All of the participants' opinions showed that the problems were related to instructional media, innovations, learning management, teachers, and learners. The problems of teachers were teachers' gender, age, educational background, major subject, teaching experience, in-service training experience, teaching hours, number of teaching subjects, and extra tasks besides teaching.

The researcher employed Taweesak's information in the aspect of the problems of the teachers in the first part of the questionnaire.

National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organization) or NIETS (2007: p.10 – 12) mentioned that the schools should use O-NET for teaching development and learning process. Furthermore, it was suggested that the schools bring it into the schools' meeting for the administration. The schools should do the followings:

1. The directors and the teachers used O-NET scores for improving the students' learning competence next semester.
2. The directors and the teachers made schools' yearly plans for the whole academic year or semester.

3. The directors should direct the teachers to prepare lesson plans in accordance with BECC for each academic year in advance. After that, the directors had to check the lesson plans before the semester started.

4. The schools set up meetings in order to develop lesson plans for the next semester.

5. The directors should evaluate the schools' yearly plans for the following year.

Other countries, such as the Philippines used Filipino and English as official languages. Nonetheless, they had problems concerning the result of the National Achievement Test as well.

Anastacia Nicolas-Victorino (2011) stated that there were four main factors that affected the performance of the Filipino students in the National Achievement Test which included (1) motivational practices of the family, (2) technology, (3) media, and (4) studying habits. Moreover, there was a negative correlation between the motivational practices of the families and the academic performance of the students.

Anastacia Nicolas-Victorino (2011) suggested that the factors affecting the performance of the Filipino Students in national achievement test (NAT) were as follows:

1. Technology had a pivotal role in the students' studying. However, the students were also aware of the other roles of newer technologies, such as entertainment and communication. There was a dominant usage of cell phones and internet among students.

2. Most students did not get involved in extracurricular activities, whereas academic contests were the most common form of extracurricular activities that the students engaged in.

3. There was a massive consumption of TV among students. Radio and newspapers were not preferred media. The media provided minimal help to the students.

4. The students allotted a small portion of their free time in doing their assignments and other school work. The internet and textbooks were on equal footing when it comes to information sources.

5. The students received support and encouragement from their family members regarding their striving for better grades. Nevertheless, lacking of parents and siblings affected the students' success.

This foreign research showed the problem relating to the low national test scores happening in other countries, too. The factors for this problem were similar to Thailand's. Therefore, if Thailand wanted to develop the national test scores, other countries' solutions to the problem should be considered to study.

Basic Educational Opportunity Schools (BEOSs)

Basic educational opportunity program. It was unanimously acknowledged that communication among different countries all over the world was very important because we had to contact in various aspects such as economy, technology, and academy. As developing working skills and knowledge for real life of Thai people were very important, the Ministry 9th grade. The Ministry of Education set the policy for opening the lower secondary level in the primary school as this was a way to give opportunities to students in the countryside who lacked support from their parents.

Policy of basic educational opportunity schools (BEOSs). Office of the Primary Education Commission (1998, p 8) stated that the policies of the Basic Education Opportunity Schools (BEOSs) were to:

1. Develop BEOSs in the countryside throughout the country in order to bring children who had less educational opportunities to study in the lower secondary level.

2. Promote and support students and parents so that they were aware of the importance of education which was influential in developing efficient people, career development, and social development.

3. Develop the school management, teaching-learning, supervising for students' efficiency. The students needed to have knowledge, basic skills for careers, morals, and local wisdom awareness.

Office of the Basic Education Commission followed the policy of the Ministry of Education for opening the lower secondary level in primary schools. In May 1991, there were 119 BEOSs in 75 provinces. These schools were the prototype schools for controlled education level in the future. By 1996, the number became 4,200 schools and 6,619 schools in 1999 respectively. The policies of BEOSs were to:

1. Set classroom activities and evaluation that followed the lower secondary curriculum and contact secondary schools.
2. Contact other persons and other institutes in order to promote teaching-learning, develop career skills, and local wisdom awareness.
3. Advertise the Basic Educational Opportunity management in order to foster a positive attitude and understanding towards the local community.
4. Improve the management for effective system.
5. Report the success and all management results to the Office of the Primary Education Area.

The duties of BEOSs were to:

1. Provide free education to the students.
2. Lend textbooks to the students.
3. Give uniforms to the students.
4. Set the dormitories for the students whose houses were far from schools.

5. Support the students whose houses were far from schools with school buses.

According to the policies and duties of BEOSs mentioned above, the teachers tried to follow accordingly. However, teaching and management problems were not completely solved.

Tuntisuk (2004) interviewed Mr. Wewut Wongwasan who was an educational supervisor under Utraradit Primary Educational Service Area Office about BEOSs. Mr. Wewut Wongwasan stated that the problems in basic educational opportunity schools were teachers' teaching. The causes of these problems were that the teachers had to teach both primary and lower secondary levels. Moreover, some teachers lacked teaching skills to teach students in lower secondary level. The teachers used the same methods for both levels which affected the students' achievement test scores. Furthermore, the budget for the lower secondary level was used to support the primary level, too. Thus, the teaching effectiveness of the lower secondary level was inevitably affected.

According to what Mr. Wewut mentioned above, the problems of teachers in other aspects affected the teaching effectiveness. Accordingly, the information about teachers' opinions concerning other aspects was used in constructing the questionnaire in this study.

English-Teaching Problems in Thailand

Teachers used many language teaching methodologies, such as grammar translation and audio-lingual. Thai teachers applied various methodologies in their classes. All methodologies were efficient ways; moreover, Thai teachers did not choose only one methodology for their classes. The reasons for applying various methodologies in class were to promote students' English competency. Thai teachers and students had

long experiences with ELT methodologies, including Audio – Lingual in 1960, Communicative Language Teaching in 1977, functional communicative approach in 1996 generated by English native speaking theorists, and a recent national curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education in Thailand.

Although the teachers tried to adopt different methodologies for enhancing English teaching, there were problems in English teaching and learning. Consequently, a great number of research studies related to English teaching problems in Thailand were conducted.

Yamlamoon (2010) stated that there were many problems in English teaching of the lower secondary level, such as classroom activities, teaching materials, classroom environment, curriculum, and evaluation. The considerable problems were the classroom activities and the teaching process. That is, the teachers were the models for students' using and practicing language, i.e., pronunciation, and stress.

The researcher applied Yamlamoon's information in the questionnaire of this study which concerned teachers' opinions about teachers and their experiences in using the English language.

Paribal (2003) mentioned that extra tasks, educational levels including a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree, aged from 30 to 40 years old, and teaching hours per week had considerable influence on the teaching effectiveness of English teachers.

Srisalasang (2002) mentioned that there were three aspects of the problems in English teaching. The first aspect was the teachers who graduated in English major had the problems about the students and parents' promoting. The second aspect was that the teachers who did not graduate in English major had the problems about teaching English.

The last aspect was that the teachers who had teaching experience less than five years had, similarly, the problems about teaching English.

The problems of English teaching did not happen with Thai teachers only, but also the teachers who were native speakers, too. Weawong (2007) mentioned that native English speaking teachers believed that teaching English for Thai learners tended to be easy.

The research revealed that although the teachers were foreigners, there were English learning problems among Thai learners.

Reem Mohammed Abu Riash (2011) studied the problems in teaching English in middle school classrooms and their relationship effects on teaching performance in the educational supervisors' views. The participants consisted of 20 supervisors and 25 teachers of the English language. The results proved that there were the differences concerning teachers' experience (high – low). The differences were in favor of high experience. The results also indicated that there were the differences concerning the classroom environment (good- bad). The differences were in favor of good environment. The results also showed that there were the differences concerning the using of teaching aids (using teaching aids – not using teaching aids).

Research above showed that there were many factors which affected the English teaching of middle schools. Therefore, this information was a useful basis for the researcher to conduct the current study.

According to the research studies mentioned previously, the researcher noticed that some related examples could be applied in the questionnaire of this study. Consequently, this Master's project was conducted.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study intended to investigate the answer to the research questions concerning the top five serious causes. These causes were revealed by English teachers in Basic Educational Opportunity Schools in Suphanburi (BEOSs). This chapter described the research methodology including research design, research instruments used to collect data, and research procedure. The methods of the data analysis were explained at the end of the chapter.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 77 English teachers who taught English in 9th grade BEOSs in Suphanburi. The participants were selected by their O-NET achievement test scores of 9th grade students in the latest three years were lower than those of the national mean scores. So, all of 9th grade English teachers asked the questionnaire.

Instrument

The instrument of this study was the questionnaire which comprised of three parts as follows:

Part 1: General background information of respondents

This part was a checking list questionnaire included 9 questions constructed to require the respondents to provide their personal background information, such as

teaching experience, highest educational degree, the number of teaching hours per week, and the extra workload.

The participants answered the questions by checking in the list of each item.

Part 2: Teachers' Opinions about the Causes of Low English O-NET

Achievement of 9th grade students

The statements in this questionnaire were divided into five topics: (1) opinions concerning curriculum, (2) opinions concerning teachers, (3) opinions concerning students, (4) opinions concerning teaching and learning materials, and (5) opinions concerning other aspects. The questionnaire was based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from most agree (5) to least agree (1). The criteria and meaning of the rating scale were as follows:

The level of agreement

5	means	Most agree
4	means	Agree
3	means	Fairly agree
2	means	Slightly agree
1	means	Least agree

Part 3: Suggestions on Improving English O-NET Achievement of 9th grade students.

This part was an open-ended questionnaire concerning how to develop English O-NET achievement of ninth-grade students according to teachers' opinions.

The Construction of Instrument

The researcher studied several documents presented in chapter two. This instrument was a questionnaire modified and adapted from the questionnaire constructed by Taweesak (2006). She studied the problems and the guidelines for the development of English achievement based on the national achievement test of the sixth-grade students. The researcher used Paribal's information to construct the questionnaire in the part relating to teachers' opinions concerning other aspects. Moreover, the researcher used Srisalasang's information about the problems of teachers in the questionnaire of this study. The problems of the teachers concerning teachers' general background were applied in the first part of the questionnaire. The instrument construction process included the following steps:

1. The researcher analyzed research objectives so as to find out the answers to what this study wanted to know.
2. The researcher studied various academic sources, such as English teaching, Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (BECC 2008), the related research, and problems in English teaching in Thailand.
3. The researcher studied the report of group discussions of English teachers' network in Suphanburi. The discussions concerned English teachers' problems with teaching and low O-NET achievement of students. The report was produced at the seminar in Suphanburi. In the discussion, the teachers shared their problems and guidelines for increasing teaching-learning efficiency.
4. The researcher created the open-ended questionnaire relating to the teachers' general background information and problems in teaching and other aspects of problems.

After that, the researcher interviewed the teachers who were the target respondents of the interview questions.

5. The researcher used information from the interview, the open-ended questionnaire, group discussion, report of English teachers' network in Suphanburi to construct the first draft of the questionnaire.

6. The researcher consulted the advisor about the questionnaire so as to get the comments and improve it again.

7. The researcher consulted the specialists about content validity measurement of the questionnaire.

8. The researcher analyzed the comments and the suggestions of the advisor and the specialists, the unclear items or terms used in the questionnaire were revised.

9. The researcher tried-out the questionnaire with the teachers who were teaching in another area which was not the same as the target respondents.

10. The researcher calculated the questionnaire item discrimination and selected the validated items.

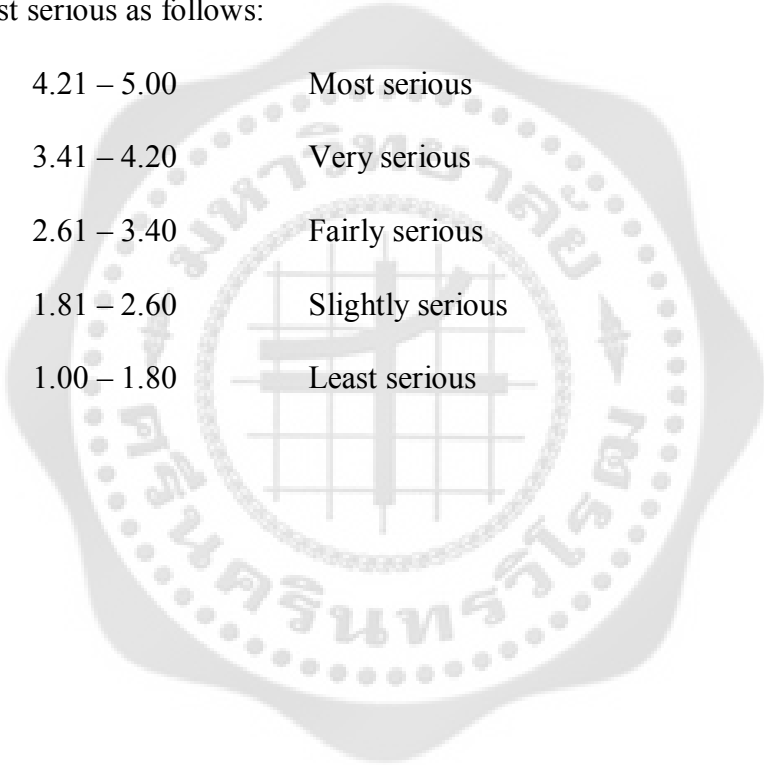
11. The researcher made any necessary changes in order to revise the questionnaire again, and did the final check.

The Procedure for Collecting Data

The data were collected in the academic year of 2013. The questionnaire was piloted and revised according to the research objectives. After that, the questionnaire was distributed to the participants. The participants were allotted two weeks' time to complete the questionnaires. Finally, the respondents returned the completed questionnaires to the researcher.

Data Analysis

This study aimed to investigate the teachers' opinions and classified the problems on the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. Therefore, the data collected from the completed questionnaires were described and analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques which comprised of frequency, percentage and mean score. The mean score of teachers' opinions ranging from most serious to least serious as follows:



4.21 – 5.00	Most serious
3.41 – 4.20	Very serious
2.61 – 3.40	Fairly serious
1.81 – 2.60	Slightly serious
1.00 – 1.80	Least serious

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This study was intended to investigate the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students in BEOSs in Suphanburi province. As indicated in Chapter 3, the study utilized quantitative collection and analysis of the data. The questionnaire was modified and adapted from the questionnaire constructed by Taweesak (2006). There were 5 factors in the questionnaire related to the teachers' opinions concerning curriculum, teachers, students, teaching and learning materials, and other aspects.

To describe the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students in BEOSs in Suphanburi province, the survey included a five-point Likert scale questions which were completed by 67 English teachers who taught ninth-grade students in BEOSs in Suphanburi province.

This chapter presented the overall results of this study including the general background information of the respondents, total mean score, average mean of each cause of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students.

According to the questionnaire, the findings were divided into three parts as follows.

Part 1: General background

Frequency and percentage were used to analyze the data

Part 2: Teachers' opinions on the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students

Mean and the criteria were employed to identify teachers' opinions.

Part 3: Suggestions on improving English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students

Part 1: General Background

The quantitative data from the collected questionnaire were presented in the form of descriptive statistical analysis including frequency and percentage. The results are shown in table 2 to table 12. The tables show the number of teachers in each background information. The numbers of teachers were shown by the frequency and percentage. Frequency shows the number of teachers in each background. Percentages show statistics of teachers' frequency.

Table 2

Educational background

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree	40	59.70
Master's Degree	27	40.30
Total	67	100.00

Table 2 shows that 40 respondents (59.70%) graduated with a Bachelor's degree whereas those who graduated with the Master's degree was 27 (40.30%). The data indicated that all English teachers had English knowledge at least at the level of a Bachelor's degree.

Table 3

Major of Bachelor's Degree

Major		Frequency	Percentage
English	(Educational Program)	33	82.50
English	(Art Program)	4	10.00
Business English		2	5.00
History		1	2.50
Total		40	100.00

The results shown in Table 3 indicated that of the total participants in the Bachelor's degree group, the major of the majority of them, 33 respondents (82.5%), was English (Educational Program), while those whose major was English (Art Program) was 4 respondents (10%). Furthermore, the participants whose major was Business English were 2 (5%) whereas 1 respondent's (2.50%) major was History. According to the results, almost all of the respondents (39) in the Bachelor's degree group had English knowledge because their major was English.

Table 4

Major of Master's Degree

Major	Frequency	Percentage
Educational Administration	16	59.26
Curriculum and Teaching English	8	29.63
TEFL	3	11.11
Total	27	100.00

Table 4 indicates that of the total respondents (27), 16 (59.26%) graduated in Educational Administration major while 8 (29.63%) of them graduated in Curriculum and Teaching English major. In addition, 3 (11.11%) of them graduated in TEFL major. The results showed that 24 respondents in the Master's degree group had other knowledge apart from English. Moreover, three teachers had English knowledge at a higher level than Bachelor's degree.

Table 5

Teaching experiences

Teaching experiences	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 5 years	24	35.82
5 – 10 years	20	29.85
More than 10 years	23	34.33
Total	67	100.00

Table 5 notes that 24 respondents (35.82%) had been teaching one to five years while 23 (34.33%) of them had been teaching for more than ten years. Furthermore, 20 respondents (29.85%) had been teaching for five to ten years. As the core curriculum was changed in 2007, it can be concluded that 43 respondents whose teaching experiences was more than five years could qualify themselves for the new core curriculum.

Table 6

Class size

Number of students	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10 students	5	7.47
10 – 20 students	28	41.79
20 – 30 students	25	37.31
More than 30 students	9	13.43
Total	67	100.00

The results shown in Table 6 reported that the ranges of respondents were divided into four classifications: less than 10 students, 10 – 20 students, 20 – 30 students and more than 30 students. The first group had 5 respondents or 7.47%. The second group had 28 respondents or 41.79%. The third group had 25 respondents or 37.31%. There were 9 respondents or 13.43% in the last group. This table indicates that 58th grade classes, which had less than 30 students per class, of BEOSs in Suphanburi province had the appropriate class size for learning because the number of students per class was not massive.

Table 7

Number of teaching periods per week

Number of teaching periods per week	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 16 periods per week	7	10.45
16 – 20 periods per week	22	32.84
20 – 25 periods per week	29	43.28
More than 25 periods per week	9	13.43
Total	67	100.00

Table 7 indicates that the teaching periods of 7 respondents (10.45%) was less than 16 periods per week while those of 22 respondents (32.84%) was 16 – 20 periods per week. Furthermore, the teaching periods of 29 participants (43.28%) was 20 – 25 periods per week whereas 9 (13.43%) of them had more than 25 teaching periods per week. This table shows that of the total participants (100%), 89.55 percentages of them had to teach more than 16 periods per week which was considered over standard for the teachers to teach in a week. Accordingly, the teachers required more time for teaching preparation and homework checking.

Table 8

Experiences in teaching English

Experiences in teaching English	Frequency	Percentage
Primary and Lower secondary	53	79.10
Lower secondary	14	20.90
Total	67	100.00

It can be noted from Table 8 that 53 respondents (79.10%) taught both primary and secondary levels while 14 (20.90%) of them taught lower secondary level only. As shown in Table 8, the majority of the respondents, 53 (79.10%), taught both levels. Therefore, it can be generalized that they knew how to teach basic knowledge for the students who were weak in English. On the other hand, 14 respondents had teaching experiences for lower secondary level; accordingly, they were skillful teachers for lower secondary levels.

Table 9

Teaching subjects

Teaching subjects	Frequency	Percentage
English subject only	38	56.72
English and other subjects	29	43.28
Total	67	100.00

Tale 9 shows that 38 (56.72%) of the total participants (67) taught the English subject only while 29 (43.28%) of them taught both the English and other subjects. This table indicates that the majority of them, 38 (56.72%), concentrated on teaching English only whereas 29 of them had to focus on teaching not only English but also other subjects, too.

Table 10

Class Levels of Teaching

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
One class level	-	0
More than one class level	67	100.00
Total	67	100.00

It can be observed from Table 10 that all respondents, 67 (100.00%), had to teach more than one class level. Consequently, they had to prepare activities and lesson plans for more than one class. Meaning that, they had heavy loads of tasks and many teaching preparations.

Table 11

Extra works

Number of extra works per teacher	Frequency	Percentage
Two extra works	18	26.87
Three extra works	36	53.73
Four extra works	13	19.40
Total	67	100.00

Table 11 indicates that 18 respondents (26.87%) had two extra works while the majority of them, 36 (53.73%), got three extra works. Moreover, 13 participants (19.40%) were found to have four extra works. Hence, it can be concluded that all of the respondents had extra works and most of them got three extra works.

Table 12

Experiences in participating in in-service English teaching programs

Frequency of participating in three years	Frequency	Percentage
Once	-	0
Twice	4	5.97
Three times	9	13.43
More than three times	54	80.60
Total	67	100.00

Table 12 shows that four respondents (5.97%) participated in in-service English teaching programs twice in three years while 9 (13.43%) of them participated in in-service English teaching programs three times in three years. The majority of the participants, 54 (80.60%), participated in in-service English teaching programs more than three times per three years. There were no respondents reported as not joining in in-service English teaching programs in three years. This table can be noted that all of the respondents had English teaching skill development.

Part 2: Teachers' opinions on the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students

Table 13-16 represents teachers' opinions that were collected from 67 respondents. The questionnaire comprised of five topics and there were five statements in each topic. Hence, there were 25 statements in this questionnaire. The data reported in this section included mean, the ranking of each topic, and the ranking of all statements. Mean shows the average of teachers' opinions in each statement. The rating of cause level was the criteria for interpreting mean. The ranking of each topic was the ranked statements from the highest mean to the lowest mean in each topic. The ranking of all statements is the ranked statements that are ranked by the highest mean to the lowest mean from 25 statements.

Table 13

Teachers' opinions on the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students

Statements	Respondents N = 67			
	Mean \bar{X}	Rating of Cause Level	Ranking of each topic	Ranking of all
1. Opinion concerning curriculum				
1.1 The curriculum directs teachers' teaching in class.	3.87	Very serious	2	8
1.2 The curriculum's objectives can be accomplished in a semester.	3.79	Very serious	3	10
1.3 There is a balance between the curriculum's objectives and the number of class periods in a semester.	3.42	Very serious	5	16
1.4 Content of O-NET is based on the curriculum's objectives.	3.91	Very serious	1	7
1.5 The curriculum requires that the school include local knowledge, but O-NET does not evaluate the local knowledge.	3.73	Very serious	4	12

Table 13 (Continued)

Statements	Respondents N = 67			
	Mean \bar{x}	Rating of Cause Level	Ranking of each topic	Ranking of all
2. Opinion concerning teachers				
2.1 The teachers possess English grammatical knowledge.	2.88	Fairly serious	5	25
2.2 The teachers are knowledgeable in vocabulary.	2.97	Fairly serious	4	24
2.3 The teachers are knowledgeable in English teaching methodologies.	3.15	Fairly serious	1	19
2.4 The teachers are knowledgeable in classroom management.	3.06	Fairly serious	3	21
2.5 The teachers spend class time reviewing the previous lessons more than teaching the contents for 9 th grade lesson.	3.10	Fairly serious	2	20
3. Opinion concerning students				
3.1 Students possess vocabulary knowledge.	4.04	Very serious	3	4
3.2 Students are knowledgeable in English grammar for 9 th grade level.	4.25	Most serious	1	1
3.3 Students realize the value of the English language.	3.97	Very serious	4	5

Table 13 (Continued)

Statements	Respondents N = 67			
	Mean \bar{x}	Rating of Cause Level	Ranking of each topic	Ranking of all
3.4 Students possess different levels of English proficiency.	4.10	Very serious	2	2
3.5 Students have positive attitudes toward the English subject.	3.75	Very serious	5	11
4. Opinion concerning teaching and learning materials.				
4.1 There are sufficient teaching materials.	3.03	Fairly serious	5	22
4.2 Resources in school such as libraries or computer laboratories are sufficient.	2.99	Fairly serious	4	23
4.3 Teaching materials are up to date regularly.	3.36	Fairly serious	2	17
4.4 The classroom environment is appropriate.	3.49	Very serious	1	15
4.5 Teaching materials and activities are regularly used.	3.34	Fairly serious	3	18

Table 13 (Continued)

Statements	Respondents N = 67			
	Mean \bar{x}	Rating of Cause Level	Ranking of each topic	Ranking of all
5. Opinion concerning other aspects.				
5.1 Teachers have extra responsibilities on school works.	3.94	Very serious	2	6
5.2 Teaching loads affect the teaching efficiency.	3.85	Very serious	3	9
5.3 Extra work loads affect the teaching efficiency.	4.09	Very serious	1	3
5.4 Different class levels affect the teaching efficiency.	3.72	Very serious	4	13
5.5 Teaching different subjects affect the teaching efficiency.	3.63	Very serious	5	14
Total	3.58	Very serious		

Table 13 present mean, level of the seriousness of each statement, the ranking of each topic, and the ranking of all statements. The total mean of the causes in this study was 3.58 which demonstrated that the teachers perceived that the causes were very serious.

According to the top five ranks of teachers' opinions, the highest rank indicated that the teachers thought that the students' English grammar was not sufficient for 9th grade level. The second highest rank indicated that teachers believed that the students'

possessing different levels of English proficiency affected O-NET achievement. The third highest rank indicated that teachers believed that the extra work loads affected the teaching efficiency. The fourth highest rank indicates that teachers believed that students' vocabulary skill affected O-NET achievement. Lastly, the fifth highest rank demonstrated that the teachers perceived that the students did not realize the value of the English language. Moreover, this table shows that of the top five causes, four related to the factors concerning students, meaning that the teachers perceived that students were considered the important causes.

In conclusion the first highest rank of each topic as follows. (1) Teachers' opinions concerning curriculum, the first highest rank showed that the teachers thought that the content of O-NET did not relate to the curriculum objectives. (2) Teachers' opinions concerning themselves, the first highest rank showed that the teachers perceived that their knowledge in English teaching methodologies affected O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. (3) Teachers' opinions concerning students, the first highest rank indicated that teachers believed that students' English grammar was not sufficient for 9th grade level. (4) Teachers' opinions concerning teaching and learning materials, the first highest rank showed that the teachers believed that the appropriate environment affected O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. (5) Teachers' opinions concerning other aspects, the first highest rank showed that the teachers believed that their extra work loads affected their teaching efficiency.

Table 14

Mean of each topic in teachers' opinion on the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students

Topics	Respondents N = 67		
	Mean \bar{x}	Rating of Cause Level	Ranking
1. Opinions concerning curriculum	3.74	Very serious	3
2. Opinions concerning teachers	3.61	Very serious	4
3. Opinions concerning students	4.02	Very serious	1
4. Opinions concerning teaching and learning materials.	3.24	Fairly serious	5
5. Opinions concerning other aspects.	3.85	Very serious	2

Table 14 shows the overall mean score of each topic. This table indicates that the teachers thought that the aspect concerning students was the most important cause because the topic related to students was the first highest rank. The second highest topic was the teachers' opinions concerning other aspects. The third highest topic was the teachers' opinions concerning curriculum. The fourth highest topic was the teachers' opinions concerning themselves. The fifth highest topic was the teachers' opinion concerning teaching and learning materials. Moreover, the first to the fourth highest rank were the very serious causes, while as for topic of the teaching and learning materials, the cause was fairly serious. Accordingly, the results showed that the teachers believed that the most important cause the students. The teaching and learning materials was the factor that least affected O-NET achievement of 9th grade students.

Part 3: Suggestions on improving the English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students

This section is the last part of the questionnaire. The teachers gave opinions about how to improve the English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. There were many opinions concerning curriculum, teachers, and students. The teachers provided various suggestions. They offered to improve students' vocabulary skill and English grammar first. They also suggested that students should learn English every day. Moreover, a variety of activities should be used in class because they could motivate the students to focus on the lesson. The teachers had to persuade the students to realize the value of the English language. Moreover, the teachers mentioned that extra works affected their teaching efficiency. They suggested that the directors reduce extra works so that the teaching would be more effective.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presented the conclusion, a discussion as well as the limitations of the study. The implication of this study and recommendations for further studies were also discussed.

Summary of the Research

This study was utilized survey research. The study was conducted to investigate the teachers' opinions on English teaching in Basic Educational Opportunity Schools (BEOSs) in Suphanburi province concerning low O-NET achievement scores of 9th grade students. The respondents in this study consisted of 67 English teachers who taught 9th grade students in Suphanburi province. The participants were required to rate the questionnaires in order to show their opinions on the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. The data obtained through the questionnaire were analyzed using mean and percentage. Finally, the results of this study were presented.

Summary of the Main Findings

The teachers' opinions toward low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students can be summarized as follows. The main findings were divided into three parts: general background of the respondents, teachers' opinions about the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students, and the teachers' suggestions on improving English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students.

The first part showed the respondents' general background information. Of the total participants (67), 66 of them graduated with a Bachelor's degree which related to English whereas 1 of them graduated with a Bachelor's degree in history major. In addition, there were 24 respondents who graduated with Master's degree in administration curriculum; nevertheless, 3 respondents graduated with a Master's degree in Teaching English as Foreigner Language (TEFL) major. The teachers' teaching experiences were categorized into three groups. Each group consisted of the equal number of teaching experiences. The teaching periods of the teachers were heavier than standard that indicated by Office of The Basic Educational Commission. Almost all of the teachers taught more than 18 periods per week. Moreover, they taught both primary and lower secondary levels as well as other subjects besides English. As for the over loads of teaching periods, almost all of the teachers got three responsibilities, meaning that the teachers had a lot of extra work loads. Furthermore, the majority of 9th grade classes in BEOSs had not over 30 students per class, which could be considered not a problem for low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students.

Another factor that less affected the low English O-NET achievement was the in-service participation. All of the teachers participated in in-service English teaching programs more than three times per three years.

The second part presented the teachers' opinions about the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. This part was divided into five topics including (1) opinions concerning a curriculum, (2) opinions concerning teachers, (3) opinions concerning the students, (4) opinions concerning teaching and learning materials, and (5) opinions concerning other aspects. The findings of this part were ranked by mean, and then they were ranked as the top five causes. Four of the five causes were found to be related to the students. That is, they were in the first, the second, the

fourth, and the fifth ranks. The first rank was students' knowledge in English grammar for 9th grade level. The second rank was students' different levels of English proficiency. The fourth rank was students' knowledge in vocabulary. The fifth rank was students' realization of the value of the English language. There was only one cause that related to the other aspects; the third rank was extra work loads. Therefore, this research showed that the teachers thought that the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students concerned the students. Moreover, the teachers thought that their extra work loads affected the low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students.

The third part presented suggestions on improving English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. The majority of the teachers revealed opinions about curriculum's evaluation and local knowledge. Some of them stated that the students should learn English every day which they were to start learning as early as possible. Their opinions about teaching and activities in class were that the teachers should create interesting activities for the students. The students' problems about vocabulary skills had to be solved instantly. Moreover, students' attitude toward the English language needed improvement because they did not realize the value of the English language. The last suggestion concerned extra work loads of the teachers which were to be reduced for more effective teaching.

Discussion of the Research Findings

This study was conducted to investigate the main factors in English teaching in BEOSs in Suphanburi province about low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. The data were gathered from the only classroom teachers who taught in BEOSs in Suphanburi province. The data showed the teachers' opinions on the causes of low

O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. This section presented the discussion as follows.

The findings of this research clearly indicated that the students were the important causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students because four of the top five causes related to the students. As for the general background, the results showed that almost all of the teachers graduated with a Bachelor's degree in English major and many teachers graduated with a Master's degree in the related education and English teaching majors, too. Moreover, the teachers participated in in-service English teaching program more than three times per three years. Therefore, the teachers' English knowledge was sufficient for teaching of 9th grade students.

The teaching experiences showed that almost all of the teachers taught students in two grade levels (primary and lower secondary). They taught both English and other subjects. All teachers taught more than one class level because each BEOS had one or two English teachers. Therefore, each teacher had to teach many levels. Accordingly, lacking English teachers was the problem that the Ministry of Education tried to improve.

This problem was similar to that of Tuntisuk (2004). He interviewed Mr. Wewut Wongwasan who was an educational supervisor under Utraradit Primary Educational Service Area Office about BEOSs. Mr. Wewut Wongwasan stated that the cause of this problem was that teachers had to teach both primary and lower secondary levels. The findings revealed that all of the teachers (100%) taught more than one level and it resulted in that the teachers had many tasks. As for the number of teaching periods per week as well as teaching other subjects and levels, they were found to be the factors which affected teaching efficiency. Office of the Basic Education Commission set the standard of teaching periods for each teacher to teach 18 periods per week. In contrast, almost all of the teachers in this study actually taught 20 – 25 periods per week, which were

considered over load for teaching in a week. As the teachers had to teach many periods, they required more time for teaching preparation. However, almost all of the teachers could not effectively prepare the lessons for the students as they had to deal with a lot of extra work loads.

The extra work loads were in the third rank of the top five problems. It showed that the teachers viewed their extra work loads as the cause of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. The general background of the respondents showed that almost all of the teachers got three extra work loads. The extra work loads reduced teachers' teaching efficiency because their teaching preparation time was taken away by many extra work loads.

Furthermore, the problem about extra work was in line with Taweesak's (2006) findings. She studied the problems and guidelines for the development of English achievement based on the national achievement tests of the second level learners. The findings revealed that the problems related to teachers' backgrounds which included teacher's age, educational background, major subject, teaching experience, in-service training experience, teaching hours, teaching other subjects, and other tasks besides teaching.

However, teachers' educational backgrounds in this study were different from those of Taweesak (2006), meaning that the majority of the teachers graduated with Bachelor's degree. She mentioned that teachers' educational backgrounds were the factors which influenced low English O-NET achievement because some teachers in her study did not graduate in English major. In contrast, the findings of the current study revealed that almost all of the teachers graduated in English major. The reasons as to why they were different were that BEOSs at the beginning period lacked English teachers. Hence, later on, the Ministry of Education determined that all BEOSs required

English teachers who graduated in English major. However, other factors according to Taweesak's results were similar to the findings in this study such as teaching hours, the number of teaching subjects, and extra tasks besides teaching. These were considered the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students.

Nevertheless, the teachers voted that their extra work loads was one of the top five causes. The teachers thought that extra work loads was the only factor related to the decrease of teaching efficiency. They thought that the reduced teaching efficiency was one of the causes of low English achievement of 9th grade students.

Besides students' knowledge (grammar and vocabulary) and students' different levels of English proficiency mentioned previously, the teachers thought that students' not realizing of the value of the English language was a cause of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students. The results were consistent with the findings of Srisalasang (2002) who studied English problems of lower secondary level in BEOSs. He stated that English problems of students in lower secondary level were at a highly serious level. He also pointed out that the important factors were students' unawareness of the value of the English language and students' basic English knowledge. Moreover, the causes about the students' not realizing of the value of the English language were consistent with Waiwannachit (2009). She studied the causes of grade twelve students' low O-NET scores. The students were in Yala, Phattani, and Naratiwad provinces. The causes could be viewed in many aspects. That is, in this aspect of the problem, the students lacked motivation to pursue further education at a higher level in the future. In addition to the causes of low English O-NET achievement, this study demonstrated other factors which less affected O-NET achievement of 9th grade students according to the teachers' opinions. These factors included the number of students per class, participation in in-service English teaching programs, and teaching materials.

In this study, the number of students per class in BEOSs in Suphanburi province was not over 30 students per class. According to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in lower secondary education, the average class size in OECD countries should be about 24 students, which was considered appropriate class size for learning. Moreover, it was in line with the Faculty of Education of Mahasarakham University (2013) research. This study was a survey research conducted on 300 schools in the East-North of Thailand about educational management. The findings reported that in the teachers' opinions, 35 students per class was an appropriate number. Therefore, the number of students per class was not the cause of low O-NET achievement of 9th grade students in Suphanburi province. The current research was also consistent with the findings of Yamlamoon (2010). Her study revealed many problems in English teaching of the lower secondary level such as activities in class, materials for teaching, classroom environment, curriculum, and evaluation. Her finding about classroom environment was different from the findings of this study. That is, the number of students per class for the 9th grade classrooms in Suphanburi province was appropriate for learning.

As for the proficiency development in the teaching of the teachers, the educational area office wanted to help them improve their professional skills. Thus, the educational area office provided them with in-service English teaching programs. All teachers participated in in-service English teaching programs at least twice a year. In addition, the educational area office supported teaching materials to the teachers. Consequently, the teachers reported that they had only a few problems on teaching materials which was in the last rank among the five factors.

However, other researchers also studied the causes of low O-NET achievement of students. The populations consisted of directors, teachers, students, and parents. The

respondents thought that the teaching itself was a cause of low O-NET achievement. This was in line with the findings of Lincharoen (2007, p. 91-92) who studied the factors that affected low O-NET achievement of sixth and twelfth-grade students. The findings revealed that teachers' teaching affected O-NET achievement of the students because they used the description and remembering as teaching methods in class. Moreover, the results also reported that extra work loads were the factor that had an impact on low O-NET achievement of the students. Such result was reported because teachers' time for teaching preparation was reduced by extra work loads.

Limitations of the Study

Limitation was the English version of the questionnaire. It affected the results because some respondents found that some of the statements were unclear for them. The cause of this problem was that the researcher did not meet the respondents and explain the comprehensive description of the questionnaire to them. Moreover, part three of the questionnaire was open-ended that required the participants to write the responses in English. Consequently, there were only a few suggestions given in part three due to the teachers' inconfidence in their writing. However, this study did not attempt to evaluate teachers' knowledge, for the objective of this study was to investigate teachers' opinions about low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students only.

In addition, if the researcher had had more time, the researcher would have investigated the directors' opinions and the parents' opinions as well because these two factors also affected the low O-NET achievement of 9th grade students.

Implication of the Study

The outcomes of this study can benefit various persons. In the schools, the teachers can use the research results of this study in order to develop their teaching. The schools' directors can apply the teacher's suggestions in order to support teachers' teaching. As they know the causes of problems in teaching and learning process as well as the causes relating teachers such as extra work loads and number of teaching periods per week, they can help the teachers by supporting budget, or increasing the number of teachers.

In the educational area, the director of educational area can realize what problems need to be solved first. The advisors can change or adjust the ways for solving the problems on the low O-NET achievement of students.

At the national level, the policy makers know what are the problems of teachers who follow the national policies and the rules of the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the policy makers can improve some factor such as the core curriculum, O-NET test and the ratio of the extra work loads for each teacher.

Recommendations for Further Studies

1. In addition to the questionnaire, there should be more various instruments to obtain the information from respondents such as interview and observation.

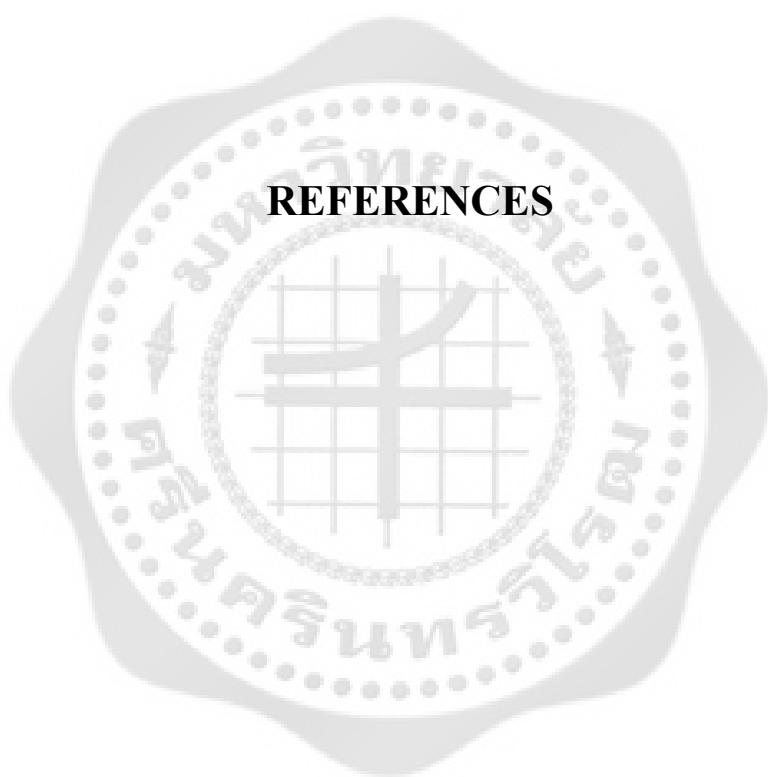
2. The part of gathering data, after distributing the questionnaires to participants, a lot of time should be allotted for collecting the returned questionnaires.

3. As this research is an investigation of teachers' opinions about the causes of low English O-NET achievement of 9th grade students: a case study of Basic Educational Opportunity Schools in Suphanburi province, the results might be only particular facts

based on Basic Educational Opportunity Schools, on O-NET achievement test of 9th grade students only. Hence, further studies should be conducted at other types of schools, other grade levels or other the national tests such as NT or LAS.



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English

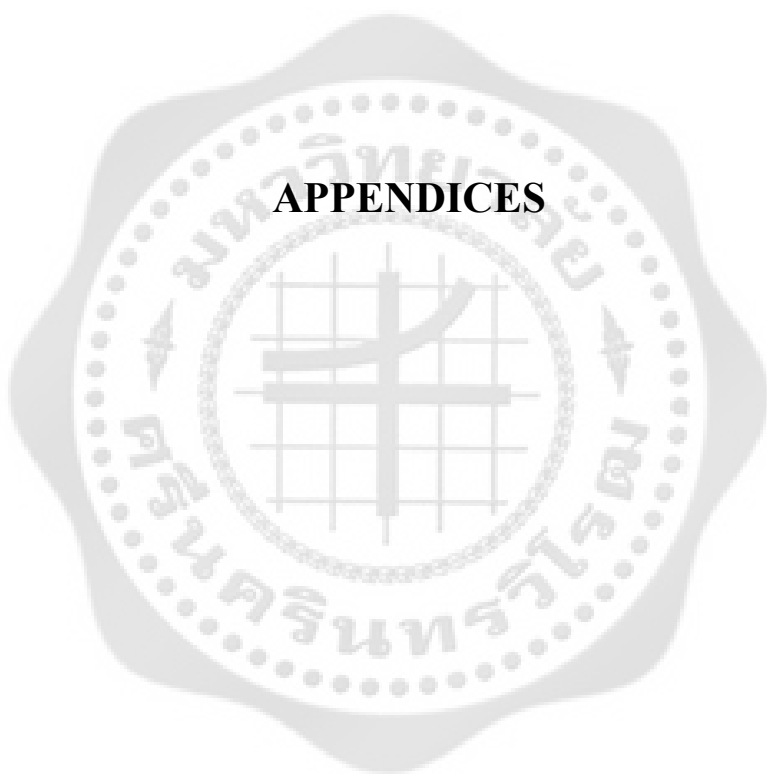
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APPENDICES



Questionnaire

An Investigation of Teachers' Opinions about the Causes of Low English O-NET

Achievement of 9th Grade:

A Case Study of Basic Educational Opportunity Schools under Suphanburi

Dear English Teachers

This questionnaire aims to study of your opinions on the causes of low English O-NET achievement in 9th grade. The information will help to improve teaching conditions and O-NET achievement. This questionnaire has three parts:

Part 1: General background

Part 2: Teachers' Opinions on the Causes of Low English O-NET Achievement in 9th Grade

Part 3: Suggestions on improving English O-NET Achievement in 9th Grade.

Instructions: Please check / into that represent your information and fill in the blank.

Part 1: General background

1. Educational background

- Bachelor's degree Major.....
- Master's Degree Major.....
- Higher than Master's degree Major.....

2. Teaching experiences

- Less than a year
- 1 – 5 years
- 5 – 10 years
- More than 10 years

3. Numbers of students per class

- Less than 10 students
- 10 – 20 students
- 20 – 30 students
- More than 30 students

4. Numbers of teaching periods per week

- Less than 16 periods per week
- 16 – 20 periods per week
- 20 – 25 periods per week
- More than 25 periods per week

5. Experiences in teaching English

- Kindergarten
- Primary
- Lower secondary

6. Teaching subjects

- English subject only
- English and other subjects

7. Levels

- One class level
- More than one class levels

8. Extra work (s)

Work position (can choose more than one)

- Clerical work
- Library work
- Consultation work
- English subject coordinators
- Superintended work
- Head of English department
- Advisory work (class teachers)
- Finance work
- Others

9. Experiences in participating in in-service English teaching programs

- Yes No

Frequency of participating in three years times

- Once Twice
- Three times More than three times

Part 2: Teachers' Opinions on the Causes of Low English O-NET Achievement in 9th

Grade

Instructions: Please check / into that represent your fact.

Criterion: 5 means Most agree

4 means Agree

3 means Fairly agree

2 means Slightly agree

1 means Least agree

Statements	Level of agreement				
	5	4	3	2	1
What is your opinion on these statements					
1. Opinion concerning curriculum					
1.1 The curriculum directs teachers' teaching in class.					
1.2 The curriculum's objectives can be accomplished in a semester.					
1.3 There is a balance between the curriculum's objectives and numbers of class periods in a semester.					
1.4 Content of O-NET is based on the curriculum objectives.					
1.5 The curriculum requires including local knowledge but O-NET does not evaluate the local knowledge.					

Statements	Level of agreement				
	5	4	3	2	1
2. Opinion concerning teachers					
2.1 The teachers are knowledgeable in English grammar.					
2.2 The teachers are knowledgeable in vocabulary.					
2.3 The teachers are knowledgeable in English teaching methodologies.					
2.4 The teachers are knowledgeable in classroom management.					
2.5 The teachers spend class time reviewing the previous lessons more than teaching 9 th grade lesson.					
3. Opinion concerning students					
3.1 Students are knowledgeable in vocabulary.					
3.2 Students are knowledgeable in English grammar for 9 th grade.					
3.3 Students realize the value of English.					
3.4 Students have different levels of English proficiency.					
3.5 Students have positive attitudes toward English subject.					

Statements	Level of agreement				
	5	4	3	2	1
4. Opinion concerning teaching and learning materials.					
4.1 There are sufficient teaching materials.					
4.2 Resources in school such as libraries or computer laboratories are sufficient.					
4.3 Teaching materials are up to date regularly.					
4.4 The classroom environment is appropriate.					
4.5 Teaching materials and activities are regularly used.					
5. Opinion concerning other aspects.					
5.1 Teachers have extra school work responsibilities.					
5.2 Teaching loads affect the teaching efficiency.					
5.3 Extra work loads affect the teaching efficiency.					
5.4 Different class levels affect the teaching efficiency.					
5.5. Teaching Different subject affect the teaching					

Part 3: Suggestions on improving English O-NET Achievement in 9th grade.

Instructions: Write comments or suggestions to improve the English O-NET Achievement.

Suggestion

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