

PRONUNCIATION TRAINING TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH INTERDENTAL
FRICATIVES AMONG THAIS TEACHING ENGLISH



A MASTER'S PROJECT
BY
APIRAT AKARAPHATTANAWONG

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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AN ABSTRACT
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The purpose of the study was to investigate the use of the pronunciation training to improve the English interdental fricatives among Thais teaching English. The participants of the study were 22 English teachers at Mahachai Christian Wittaya School. They teach English for primary students using Phonics method. Most of them did not major in English and have problems in the English interdental fricatives pronunciation. Research instruments used in this study were the English Interdental Fricatives Training, the Pretest and Posttest ON the English Interdental Fricatives, and the questionnaire. The results of the tests revealed that the mean score from the pretest was 10.09 while the posttest was 20.12. It was found that there was a significant difference between the mean score of pretest and posttest. The results of the questionnaire in each aspect showed that most of the participants were satisfied with the the English interdental fricatives training as it is beneficial for their career as an English teacher and the training helps a lot in improving their pronunciation. They also said that they spoke English with more confidence after attending the training.

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การศึกษาในครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาผลของการฝึกอบรมการออกเสียงภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อพัฒนาการออกเสียงเสียงเสียดแทรกระหว่างฟันของครูผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษชาวไทย กลุ่มตัวอย่างประกอบด้วย ครูผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษชั้นประถมศึกษาจำนวน 22 คน จากโรงเรียนมหาชัยคริสเตียนวิทยา ซึ่งทำการสอนภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้การสอนระบบโฟนิกส์ ครูส่วนใหญ่ไม่ได้สำเร็จการศึกษาในวิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษและมีปัญหาในการออกเสียงเสียงเสียดแทรกระหว่างฟัน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยได้แก่ การฝึกอบรมเสียงเสียดแทรกระหว่างฟัน แบบทดสอบก่อนเรียนและแบบทดสอบหลังเรียนเรื่องเสียงเสียดแทรกระหว่างฟัน และแบบสอบถามความพึงพอใจที่มีต่อการฝึกอบรมเสียงเสียดแทรกระหว่างฟัน ผลการศึกษาพบว่า คะแนนเฉลี่ยของกลุ่มตัวอย่างก่อนเข้ารับการอบรมมีค่าเท่ากับ 10.09 และคะแนนเฉลี่ยหลังเข้ารับการอบรมอยู่ที่ 20.12 ซึ่งเพิ่มขึ้นอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ และผลการตอบแบบสอบถามความพึงพอใจของกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่มีต่อการฝึกอบรมพบว่า กลุ่มตัวอย่างส่วนใหญ่มีความพึงพอใจต่อการฝึกอบรมเสียงเสียดแทรกระหว่างฟัน เนื่องจากเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการสอนในฐานะครูผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษ และช่วยพัฒนาการออกเสียงภาษาอังกฤษเป็นอย่างมาก นอกจากนี้กลุ่มตัวอย่างรายงานว่าสามารถพูดภาษาอังกฤษด้วยความมั่นใจมากขึ้นภายหลังเข้ารับการอบรม

The Master's Project Committee and Oral Defense Committee have approved this Master's Project as partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language of Srinakharinwirot University.

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This Master's Project has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Art degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language of Srinakharinwirot University.

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June 2012

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Communication is a part or parcel of everyone's life. All individuals need to communicate to share knowledge and information with others. Oral communication is the spoken interaction between two or more people. It is the tool by which a person interacts with others to receive information in the form of spoken words and sounds, therefore, pronunciation plays an important role in communication.

Oral communication began to be more important to non-native English speakers when they came into more frequent contact with Western countries during the 20th century. (Varasarin, 2007) Yong (2004) stated that understanding English through reading or writing would no longer be sufficient for the development of the economy, and that communicating face to face or through the Internet needed to be understood. Pronunciation is an integrated and integral part of second/foreign language learning since it directly affects learners' communicative competence as well as performance to a substantial extent. (Maniruzzaman, 2007) Morley (1998) also affirmed that pronunciation plays an important role in overall communicative competence.

One of the key requirements for language proficiency is to secure comprehensible pronunciation for the language learners. (Gilakjani, 2012) Work on pronunciation is important for two main reasons: to help the students understand the spoken English they hear, and to help them make their own speech more comprehensible and meaningful to others (Gower, Phillips, and Walters, 1995: 153) As Fraser (1999) pointed out, English as

a Foreign Language (EFL) learners need confidence with pronunciation for successful interaction and communication with native speakers. However, if they mispronounce sounds or feel frustrated when they have difficulty with some sounds due to their first language background, this leads to misunderstandings or results in poor communication. Those communication problems can easily cause a conflict or make it worse. If the learners are adults, it is much more likely that learners will have difficulty producing native-like pronunciation as commonly witnessed in a typical EFL classroom. EFL learners with accurate pronunciation, but with lexical or structural errors are more likely to be understood than learners whose grammar is accurate but with unclear pronunciation. (Huu, 2007) In addition, pronunciation accuracy affects how speakers are judged by others and how they are formally assessed in other skills (Frase, 2000).

EFL learners encounter many problems in acquiring English pronunciation. Morley (1994) discussed the problems nonnative-speakers may experience: (a) complete breakdown in communication, (b) ineffectual speech performance, (c) negative judgements about personal qualities, (d) anticipatory-apprehensive listener reactions, and (e) pejorative stereotyping. The results of studies conducted by Bell (1996) and Lado (1957) indicate that native language pronunciation significantly affects learning English pronunciation, particularly because of the differences between the first language sound system and second language sound system. EFL learners easily make reading mistakes while they sound English words. The reason is that the sounds of some English words are absent in the sounds of a learner's native language. Some EFL learners often fuse the intonation and rhythm of the mother tongue into the pronunciation of English. This causes incorrect pronunciation. Several research studies have proposed that a learner's

mother tongue interferes with the ability to correctly pronounce a foreign language. In addition, a learners' acquisition of pronunciation is influenced by many other factors such as age, motivation, classroom instruction and so forth.

Pronunciation is considered one of the most important aspects of second language acquisition because it affects a learner's communication competence (Hinofotis & Bailey, 1981). Scarcella and Oxford (1994) stated that "pronunciation should be taught in all second language classes through a variety of activities." Nevertheless, it seems that attention to this recommendation has been lacking in Thailand and EFL learners in Thailand have limited chance to be trained of pronunciation. Many Thai students have a lot of pronunciation problems. Thai learners have been commonly taught pronunciation through the strategy of memorisation and imitation of consonant and vowel sounds. They are supposed to memorise the phonetic symbols of consonants and vowels in order to pronounce perfectly the vocabulary they have learnt. This approach cannot improve their language performance especially in terms of pronunciation. Pronunciation is one of the most difficult areas of English for both teachers and students. In general, it is known that Thai learners have pronunciation problems of English consonant and vowel sounds.

The phonics method is probably the best known and widely used method to teach reading and writing in the English language. It relies on children being taught the alphabet first. They learn the names of the letters and the sounds they make. Once they have learnt the letter sounds they will begin to blend two letters together to make simple words then three letters, then four and so forth. These letters and letter groupings are then applied to make words until the student can comprehend and produce phrases, sentences and longer works. The Phonics Method has proven to be useful in teaching reading skills

to students from preschool through early elementary school or as a practical way to introduce English to foreign speakers. (Stella & Rani, 2010)

Even though teaching phonics focuses on practicing sounds, many students have not done well with reading aloud or speaking performance. As the researcher observed and noticed from primary grade classrooms and speaking tests at school, students have problems with articulation leading to misunderstanding when communicating. It appeared that there were a number of sounds that were difficult for students to pronounce correctly. For example, the initial sounds in the words “thank, that, think, throw, although, them, they, etc., are often mispronounced. These problematic sounds lead to communication errors at the sentence level, for example, “I think so” as “I tink so” and “I sink so” This is consistent with the study of Jukpim, (2008) which found that [v], [θ], [ð], [z], [ʃ], and [ʒ] are the problematic sounds for Thai learners, with the English interdental fricatives ([θ] and [ð]) being the most problematic. The reason for this is these sounds do not exist in the Thai language.

Teaching children to understand what they read, they must be able to do it quickly, and automatically, without stumbling over words. Phonics facilitates that process. With lots of practice sounding out words, in combination with other important reading skills such as phonemic awareness, letter recognition, vocabulary building, and concepts of print students will learn to read more fluently (Parlapiano, 2008). Phonics instruction requires the teacher to provide students with a core body of information about phonetic rules, or patterns. (Moxley, 2008) Students learn a new sound by listening to the teacher model it. Students then follow the teacher's model and try to produce the sound in the way the teacher does. Therefore, teachers play a crucial role in the development of

children's pronunciation ability by focusing on facilitating students' language learning through phonics lessons and demonstrations. However, many Thai teachers of English cannot pronounce English sounds well because they lack the skill to do so. Many problematic sounds are caused by the tongue not being in the right position in their mouths. For example, some teachers have difficulty pronouncing the /th/ sound where the tongue is placed behind and slightly between the teeth. Some produce the /z/ sound instead with their tongue touching the sides of their teeth. Some pronounce the word "three", for example, as "swee" or "sree" or "zree" with the tongue totally behind the teeth, producing an "s" sound instead of the /th/ sound, so at the sentence level, they say, "let's think about that" as "let's tink about dat." Moreover, from a survey that investigated teachers' pronunciation problems, it was shown that this lack of skill made these teachers hesitate to model the sounds and have no confidence.

The Office of Educational Testing of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, the Ministry of Education, Thailand, conducted a national survey during the years of 1997 and 1998. The results showed that Thai learners, being assessed against standardized benchmarks of achievement, had unsatisfactory proficiency in the four skills of writing, reading, listening and speaking. (Wiriyachitra, 2001)

Studies by Brown (1992), Claire (1993), and Fraser (2000) show that even in teaching English as a second language (ESL) programs in Australia, some teachers faced some difficulties meeting the pronunciation learning needs of their students. As a result, many teachers tended to avoid dealing with pronunciation because they lacked confidence, skills and knowledge. Similarly, since English has been taught as a

compulsory subject at the primary, secondary and higher secondary levels in Thailand, pronunciation is overlooked in the syllabus, materials and even classroom activities.

English teachers should be a good model for their students to imitate; otherwise, their students' pronunciation will be not improve and lead mistakes due to fossilization. Therefore, English teachers should teach students clearly about how the sounds are produced and where the word-stress is placed. (Wulandari, 2007) This is why Thai teachers should focus on pronunciation at word level before moving on to sentence level communication in English. Moreover, teachers have to raise learners' awareness and stress the importance of pronunciation at both word and sentence levels in order to avoid communication breakdowns or misunderstanding as a result of mispronunciation, inappropriate lexical items, and lack of pragmatic knowledge as conceived by the interlocutor. (Khamkhien, 2010)

Statement of the Problem

Pronunciation is an area of great difficulty for non-native speakers of English. It is crucially important for language teachers to have a good and accurate pronunciation. With inaccurate pronunciation, communication can be limited, confusing, or misunderstood completely. In a classroom setting, if teachers do not have accurate pronunciation, who can teach students to pronounce sounds correctly? Lacking strong background knowledge due to little training Thai teachers of English cannot improve their pronunciation. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate if pronunciation training would be able to help Thai teachers to improve their English interdental fricatives pronunciation, which are the most problematic sounds for Thai people. If it is found that

pronunciation training program can help teachers, the mean score of the post-test will be higher than the mean score of the pretest and the teachers will be satisfied with the training.

Hypothesis

The hypotheses to be tested for this study is as follows:

The mean score of the participants on the post-test of English Interdental Fricatives Pronunciation will be higher than the mean score on the pretest.

Significance of the Study

Since pronouncing the English interdental fricatives sounds is very difficult for Thais, the results of using a pronunciation training could be beneficial to Thai teachers who want to improve their English interdental fricatives. If it has been proved that the training improves the teachers' pronunciation due to a significant increase in mean scores on the post-test and the teachers are satisfied with the training, the training should be employed in Thai schools. Such information would be useful for school administrator and head of English department to allocate funds for the pronunciation training to improve the pronunciation skill of English teachers of all age groups and levels. Furthermore, the teachers may apply the training or the knowledge gained from the training to their classes in order to enhance students' pronunciation.

Definition of Terms

1. The English interdental fricatives

It represents in most cases one of two different phonemes: the voiced [ð] (as in *this*) and the voiceless [θ] (as in *thing*) with three occurrences: initial, medial, and final positions. Schams (2010) stated in her study that the absence of the interdental sounds in most languages undoubtedly is a crucial factor in the challenges associated with acquiring them. Even among native speakers of English, it has previously been pointed out that the voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives are the last sounds to be mastered and the ones most often substituted (Menyuk, 1968).

2. English interdental fricatives training

It consists of two components, theory and practicum, including micro-level skill (accuracy-based learning), macro-level skill (fluency-based learning) and awareness-raising classroom activities. At the micro-level skill, learners were trained in both voiced and voiceless initial, medial, and final positions. The training covers two areas that aimed to provide learners with a comprehensive insight into ways of teaching pronunciation.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discussed the background of the study: oral communication, pronunciation teaching and problem in teaching English pronunciation. The objective of the study, the significance of the study and definition of terms used specifically in the study were also described. Chapter two presents review of related literature grounded for this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a literature review designed to lay the foundations for the development of English pronunciation training. It is organized in four sections including, acquiring pronunciation skills, pronunciation problems in Thai learners, teaching EFL pronunciation, and research in related field

First Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning

Language is the main vehicle by which we know about other people's thoughts and possessing a language is the special human trait: all normal humans speak.

Although the desired outcomes of first language acquisition and second language acquisition are exactly the same, the processes of the acquisitions are extremely different. First Language acquisition is the natural process in which children subconsciously possess and develop the linguistic knowledge of the setting they live in. Learning a first language is something every child does successfully, in a matter of a few years and without the need for formal lesson. Compared to first language learning, second language learners develop this knowledge by utilizing conscious and cognitive efforts (Mowakket, 2011). Children learning a second language are more likely to achieve native-like fluency than adult but it is very rare for someone speaking a second language to pass completely for a native speaker.

Differentiating language learning from language acquisition is considered as one of the many linguistic phenomena that emerged in the 20th century (Mowakket, 2011). The need for a systematic study of how languages are learned was developed as part of the cultural and communication expansion the world has witnessed (Ellis, 1997).

Factors Affecting Second Language Learners' English Pronunciation

There are several factors influencing the pronunciation of the L2 learners. That is, the first language interference by interference of mother language, age, phonetic ability, experience in studying English, and motivation and concern for good pronunciation.

The first language.

The difference between the first language and foreign language is a problem in learning pronunciation (Bell, 1996). Accordingly, one of the obstacles to overcome in achieving acceptable English pronunciation for most Thai learners is knowing the differences between the sound structures of English and Thai. Language teachers often investigate the differences between the two languages based on the contrastive analysis hypothesis. Lado (1957) postulated the belief that first language or native language can strongly influence second or foreign language learning.

Lado (1957) also proposed that the problem people confront when learning a second language (L2) could be predicted by comparing L2 system with that of the first language (L1). This is known as mother tongue interference. That is to say, every language in the world has different varieties and different accents. Therefore, the way they speak is a part of their identity.

“...We have ample evidence that when learning a foreign language, we tend to transfer our entire native language system in the process. We tend to transfer to that language our transitions, our intonation patterns and their interaction with others phonemes...”

(Lado, 1957, p.2)

From the statement above, foreign language learners speak the target language with the characteristics of their own L1. In other words, L2 pronunciation is easily interfered with L1 pronunciation system. As a user of Thai language, we have difficulty in some English words and sounds which are not found in our native language. For

example, /θ/ and /ð/ sounds do not exist in Thai, and that is why Thai learners encounter pronunciation difficulties with the words that include those sounds and thus never obtain a native-like accent, so they produce those sound under the influence of their mother tongue.

Age.

This is one of the most important factors in the learning of the pronunciation of a foreign language. We can say that someone pronounce the second language with a native-like accent, he/she must have probably started to learn it during their childhood. At the same time, if young children are exposed to more than one language before the age of puberty, they seem to acquire all languages equally well since it has been claimed that children are better at learning than adult. As Krashen, (1997) mentioned acquirers who

begin to exposure to a second language during a childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency than those beginning as adults.

On the other hand, the findings of Snow, and Hoefnagel-Höhle, (1978) showed that short-term acquisition of pronunciation is measured, either in classroom setting or in natural environment, older children are better than younger, adolescents are better than younger children, and adults are better than children. Terrell (1989) summarised in his research on child-adult acquisition of sound systems of a second language suggests that older is better initially, but with few exceptions only young children ultimately attain a native level of production. Adult students can use their cognitive skills to analyse and produce new sounds and sound patterns; however.

As a result, the age of the learner is highly important in the pronunciation learning of a foreign language due to the factors mentioned above. The aged learners pick up the correct pronunciation a little bit late, so the foreign language teachers must be very patient in this sense, and must prepare special pronunciation drills or materials and have the students repeat. They will obtain an acceptable level of good articulation in the long term.

Phonetic ability.

There is a common view that some people have a better ear capacity for foreign language than some other people. This skill is sometimes called “phonetic coding ability” (Brown, 1992), so, they are able to discriminate between the two sounds more accurately than the others and able to imitate sounds better. We can accept these people as those with phonetic abilities. Also, this phonetic ability of the learner affects the development of his/her pronunciation. But as Senel, (2006) claimed that it does not mean

that people who have a better phonetic ability will be successful but the others will not be successful. So language aptitude ability exists in many people, but its degree is variable, so some people have more ability but some have less

Experience in studying English

Lacking of opportunity to practise English pronunciation is another prominent problem to advancing in English pronunciation. Several studies compared the pronunciation accuracy of people living in English-speaking countries and those who did not, revealing the difficulty with pronunciation of learners who did not live in an English speaking country in mastering English pronunciation. For instance, Siriwisut (1994) and Serttikul, (2005) indicated that language experience had an effect on pronunciation ability. In their studies, language experience meant the opportunities to use English language in daily lives. The studies suggested that students with poor pronunciation, who were regarded as less experienced, had more language transfer problem than the students with good pronunciation. For this reason, the students with good pronunciation would improve better than the poor ones. Their findings were witnessed by Haymes, (2000) and Senel, (2006) pointing out that learners living in an English-speaking country or community where English is the second language would have many opportunities to listen to and to use the language.

Brown, (1992) stated that the students could pronounce well if they spent time on pronunciation with full attention and interest. In short, students could simply improve the development of pronunciation competence if they were motivated and had a strong will to expose to the target language.

Motivation and concern for good pronunciation

The learners' motivation can be strongest factor. If the learners' motivation is high, then they will be willing to improve their abilities by themselves. On the other hand, if they do not see the value or care about pronunciation, they may not be motivated to do well. (Yangklang, 2006)

To conclude, these factors have some effects on pronunciation learning and improvement. Even though the age or phonetic ability of learner cannot be controlled, teachers can increase exposure to target language to a certain degree. Motivation seems to be the main factor for successful pronunciation; therefore, teachers should promote it in the training.

Pronunciation Problems in Thai Learners

Due to the findings from Jukpim, (2008), he concluded and discussed the facts of English pronunciation problems in Thai learners that the fricative sounds like /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /z/, /ʃ/, and /ʒ/ are their problems at highest level at every position for the consonant sounds. The reason is these sounds are not appeared in Thai. On the other hand, the / f /, / s /, / h / sound are their problems at lowest level because there are these sounds in Thai language.

The pronunciation of the vowel sounds which was problematic at the highest level included /ə/; whereas, the pronunciation of the other vowel sounds had problems at a very low level. The students could not pronounce this vowel / ə / correctly because there were no Thai words with this sound. Thus, it was difficult for students to pronounce it correctly. This simply showed that the mother tongue had influences on the students'

pronunciation, of this the teacher should be aware of. The pronunciation of the diphthong sounds which had problems at the medium level included /ʊə /; whereas, the other diphthong sounds had problems at a very low level.

Theories about Teaching Pronunciation

There have been various arguments and support for the effectiveness of pronunciation training on learners' achievement in communicative competence. Morley, (1998) states that pronunciation plays an important role in overall communicative competence. Yong, (2004) suggested that from the traditional ways of learning English, students neglected the basic knowledge of speaking. Yong, (2004) asserted that understanding by reading or writing would no longer be sufficient for the development of the economy and that communicating face to face personally or through the Internet needed to be understood.

The focus of the pronunciation training in this study followed Smith, (1983) arguments that consciousness and awareness raising are important in second language acquisition though Krashen, (1997) position was that pronunciation is acquired naturally. Furthermore clear instruction was important to the effectiveness of pronunciation training (Pennington, 1999) but this was contested by Suter, (1976) who was not able to find a positive effect from instruction. Acton, (1984) reported in detail on a program of instruction focusing on the link between pronunciation, affect, personality and social context, which was designed to help learners whose pronunciation had fossilized. However, no empirical evidence of its success was offered.

Derwing, Munro, and Wiebe (1997) found a positive outcome of instruction which focused on general speaking habits as opposed to a concentration on individual segments. They also found that both instruction in segmental accuracy and instruction in general speaking habits and prosodic features, led to improved pronunciation. Morley, (1994) suggested that the focus on pronunciation teaching nowadays should be on designing “new-wave instructional programs.” Moreover, she stresses that these new instructional designs should take into account not only language forms and functions, but also issues of learner self-involvement and learner strategy training. In other words, Students who have become active partners in their own learning have developed the skills to monitor and modify their speech patterns. Teachers’ awareness of learning opportunities might create potential for a deeper understanding of language learning and language classroom interaction. Allwright, (2005) defines the learning opportunity as a more developmental unit of analysis and assesses for well planning in language learning.

Approaches in Teaching EFL Pronunciation

Approaches to the teaching of pronunciation of a foreign language have evolved over the years as methodology and teaching philosophy have changed. Most instructors used grammar-translation methodology placed little emphasis on the teaching of pronunciation. When Thai students took English in their early or higher grade, the English teachers relied chiefly on repetition: at the start of each new lesson they repeated all the new vocabulary words in chorus. While some teachers used a slightly different technique: they would have the students read a sentence aloud before they translated it to Thai so that the teachers could correct the students’ pronunciation.

Audiolingual approach has totally changed perspective on teaching pronunciation. Terrell, (1989) mentioned that for audiolingualists the goal was the development of a set of automatic habits, including the learning of good articulatory habits right from the beginning of foreign language instruction. Techniques included progressive use of repetition in the memorization of dialogues, repetition drills, and various question-answer exercises such as recombination responses. Audiolingualists developed special techniques for the teaching of pronunciation. These included minimal-pair drills, drills with similar words, discrimination drills, etc.. The audiolingual approach has been retained for the teaching of pronunciation in most of these texts although a decline in emphasis on pronunciation, and phonetic symbols has been used explicitly.

In line with the dominance of communicative language teaching (CLT), teaching of pronunciation shifts from an aspect of phonological accuracy to a global conversational competence and is thought to be taught as an integral part of oral communication (Pennington, & Richards, 1986). In recent years, current trends of English language teaching support learners to be able to use the language more effectively and efficiently. However, researchers and teachers are not yet completely proved which approaches, models, goals and methodology are more helpful for learning and teaching pronunciation. (Gowrie, Saravanakumar, & Subbiah, 2011)

Current Perspectives on Pronunciation Learning and Teaching

There has been a prominent shift within the field of language learning and teaching with greater emphasis being put on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching over the last twenty years. In parallel to this new shift of interest, a move

from specific linguistic competencies to broader communicative competencies has emerged as goals for teachers and students (Morley, 1991). The need for the integration of pronunciation with oral communication, a change of emphasis from segmentals to suprasegmentals, more emphasis on individual learner needs, meaningful task-based practices, development of new teacher strategies for the teaching and introducing peer correction and group interaction were emphasized within the field of pronunciation teaching (Castillo, 1991). Research has revealed that the teaching of segmental phonemes isn't enough for intelligibility in communication (Cohen, 1977).

According to Morley, (1991), “Intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communication competence.” For this reason, teachers should incorporate pronunciation into their courses and expect students to do well in them. Teachers should pay attention to reassessing learner needs and learners goals, instructional objectives, and learning or teaching methodologies. They should attach importance to current directions in language learning and teaching theory and pedagogy. They should be primarily concerned with how pronunciation fits into communicative language teaching. There should be emphasis on meaningful communication when teaching pronunciation to the students. Without adequate pronunciation skills, the learner's ability to communicate is severely limited. Morley, (1991) states that not attending to a student's pronunciation needs, “is an abrogation of professional responsibility.”

One empirical study suggests that there is a threshold level of pronunciation in English such that if a given non-native speaker's pronunciation falls below this level, no matter how good his or her control of English grammar and vocabulary might be, he or she will not be able to communicate orally with native speakers of English (Celce-

Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1991). Gilbert, (1984) states that the skills of listening comprehension and pronunciation are interdependent: “If they cannot hear English well, they are cut off from the language. If they cannot be understood easily, they are cut off from conversation with native speakers.” Nooteboom, and Eefting, (1983) also has suggested that speech production is affected by speech perception; the hearer has become an important factor in communication discourse. This shows the need to integrate pronunciation with communicative activities; to give the student situations to develop their pronunciation by listening and speaking. The current research and the current trend reversal in the thinking of pronunciation exhibits there is a consensus that a learner's pronunciation in a foreign language needs to be taught in parallel to the communicative practices for the learner to be able to communicate effectively with native speakers (Otlowski, 1998).

In recent years, the idea of approaching pronunciation teaching from different modalities (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile) has become very popular within the field of foreign language teaching. To present and practise a sound from several perspectives is just basic stuff of good pronunciation teaching. Language teachers should employ a multi-modal method in the pronunciation class; that is, every sound process should be taught as a totality: visual + auditory + kinesthetic + tactile (though not necessarily in that order). Thus, students can have the chance to strengthen their lesser modalities. For instance, any experienced pronunciation teacher knows that to produce /r/ and /l/ well may require all modalities be engaged and sequenced. Students should hear the distinction, feel the difference, consciously focus on the movement of lips and tongue,

and probably focus on the places where the tongue comes into contact with the palate (Acton, 1997).

Whether there is a sound relationship between effective foreign language pronunciation teaching and Gardner's (1983) Multiple Intelligences Theory has been the primary concern of some researchers. Such researchers have offered various pronunciation teaching techniques and activities related with each intelligence type included within the theory. For example, Thompson, Taylor, & Gray (2001) present various pronunciation teaching techniques and activities so as to help students develop effective target language pronunciation: For example, for students with bodily kinesthetic intelligence, techniques like tossing a ball, using a rubber band, knee bending / body language, balloon squealing, etc. can be useful. Another example is that for students with visual / spatial intelligence, techniques like using wall charts, using a mirror, card games, etc. can be used. Moreover, for students with musical / rhythmic intelligence, techniques like using a song, using kazoos and using musical notation may be utilized by the teacher.

In parallel to the emergence of autonomous language learning, many innovative pronunciation teachers have attempted to move towards autonomous pronunciation learning. Such teachers motivate their students to become autonomous learners. Since students cannot always find the chance to ask their language teacher for help in real life contexts, they should be stimulated to come to a stage where they can make their own decisions about their own pronunciation learning. Students can be actively involved in their own learning. If the teacher teaches the students how to transcribe words by using phonetic symbols, students become autonomous to some extent in that they may look up their monolingual dictionaries when not knowing how to pronounce a word in the target

language. Moreover, motivating students to use computer-assisted pronunciation teaching programs can lead to autonomous pronunciation learning and hence may contribute to the improvement of the pronunciation of the students in the target language. However, it should not be forgotten that students are semi-autonomous pronunciation learners since it is the language teacher who selects the most appropriate computer-assisted pronunciation teaching program relevant to the needs and expectations of an individual student (Hişmanoğlu, 2004).

In addition to the above mentioned innovations, there has been an increasing interest in the use of technology for the teaching of pronunciation recently. Various types of computer hardware have been introduced and a number of studies show a growing interest among language teachers and researchers in the benefits of computer-assisted pronunciation pedagogy (Molholt, 1988).

Teaching EFL Pronunciation

Wong, (1993) stated that the importance of pronunciation is even more distinct when the connection between pronunciation and listening comprehension is taken into account. Wong, (1993) also demonstrates that a lack of knowledge of pronunciation could even affect learners' reading and spelling. According to Baker, and Murphy, (2011), pronunciation is very important and learners should pay close attention to pronunciation as early as possible. Otherwise, the result will be that advanced learners find that they can improve all aspects of their proficiency in English except their pronunciation, and mistakes which have been repeated for years are impossible to eradicate. Scarcella, and Oxford, (1994) similarly postulate that pronunciation should be

taught in all second/foreign language classes through a variety of activities. With the emphasis on meaningful communication and Morley's (1991) premise, that intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communication competence, teachers should include pronunciation in their courses and expect their learners to do well in them.

The Level, Variety or Accent of EFL Pronunciation

It has long been believed and accepted that ESL/EFL learners have to try to get as close as possible in their pronunciation to one of the dominant native-speaker accents, such as Received Pronunciation (RP), or General American (GA). However, the time covering the last fifteen years or so with the trend of globalization has brought about such a significant change in the role of the English language throughout the world that it is unavoidable to reexamine and rethink this situation.

In order to think about what accent of English should the learner be exposed to, Kenworthy (1987) puts forward the concept of "comfortable intelligibility" as a suitable goal for the majority of learners. Morley (1991) supports Kenworthy's view and advocates that the goal of pronunciation should be changed from the attainment of perfect pronunciation to the more realistic goals of developing functional intelligibility, communicability, increased self-confidence, the development of speech monitoring abilities and speech modification strategies for use beyond the classroom. The overall aim of these goals is for the learner to develop awareness and monitoring skills that will allow learning opportunities outside the classroom environment. Morley stated that "intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence".

The aspects, components or features of EFL pronunciation.

EFL pronunciation teaching should cover both the segmentals and the suprasegmentals as well as the training of the speech organs, such as lips, teeth, alveolar ridge, palate, tongue, vocal folds, ears, etc. The segmentals embody vowel and consonant sounds, preferably phonemes, as well as syllables. A phoneme is a set of similar sounds showing meaning differences or differentiating between words. And a syllable consists of a vowel as a compulsory element and one or more consonants at the onset and/or in the termination as optional elements, which is pronounced with a single contraction of the lungs. The English language has twenty vowel phonemes (12 monophthongs and eight diphthongs) and 24 consonant phonemes. While the vowels are articulated without any obstacle in the vocal tract, the consonants are produced with some blockage of the air passage. The treatment of the segmentals basically includes sound contrast in words, pronunciation of vowel and consonant phonemes. The phonemes which are not available in the learner's mother tongue and problematic to him/her should receive special treatment in the teaching material and methodology and sufficient room in the learner's practice.

The suprasegmentals are comprised of stress in words and connected speech, rhythm, pitch, loudness, length, quality, tone and intonation that play an essential and natural role in English speech production and perception. As the Bengali speaking learner's mother tongue is syllable timed whereas English is stress timed, he/she inevitably finds mastering EFL pronunciation a very daunting task (Bell, 1996). Hence, the differences in suprasegmentals between the learner's mother tongue and the target language are momentous topics that he/she should not only be aware of but should make a conscious effort to study and focus on (Thompson, & Gaddes, 2005).

Moreover, the learner should be helped to retrain his/her speech organs which have so long been trained naturally and used to articulate the sounds in his/her first language. This tremendously helps him/her to comfortably and sufficiently use his/her articulators so as to produce the sounds of the target language in an intelligible manner.

Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies can help students to improve their language competencies (Oxford, 1990). Canale, and Swain (1980), whose article influenced a number of works about communication strategies in ESL/EFL teaching, recognised the importance of communication strategies as a key aspect of strategic competence. An important distinction exists, however, between communication and Language learning strategies. Language learning strategies are used generally for all strategies that ESL/EFL learners use in learning the target language and communication strategies are one type of language learning strategies. Oxford, (1990) defined that Language learning strategies are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active and self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence.

The research of Vitanova, and Miller (2002) shows that learners can see improvement in both segmental and supra-segmental areas of pronunciation. However, once learners have mastered the basic sounds of English and identified some of the supra-segmental differences between their first language and English, it is time to help them learn some strategies so that they can study more effectively on their own. Oxford, (1986) explains that learning strategies are of great importance because they improve

language performance, encourage learner autonomy, are teachable, and expand the role of the teacher in significant ways. Given the pronunciation instruction that promotes learner strategy awareness more basic knowledge about the relationship between learning strategies and pronunciation is needed (Morley, 1998).

Pronunciation learning strategies.

Based on Oxford's (1990) definition of learning strategies, pronunciation learning strategies can be taught as steps taken by students to enhance their own pronunciation learning. A few investigations have looked at pronunciation as one of a number of skills associated with learning style use. O'Malley et al. (1985) asked 70 high-school ESL students about the learning strategies they used to help them with nine different oral language tasks, one of which was pronunciation. They stated that students reported using numerous learning strategies for pronunciation. However, their results were not reported in such a way as to indicate which specific strategies may have been used for pronunciation learning.

According to Oxford's (1990) strategy classification system, direct and indirect strategies, the pronunciation learning strategies and tactics that learners used in learning pronunciation were categorized and documented. Peterson (2000) later investigated Oxford's study and condensed it into 12 basic pronunciation learning strategies which provide a wider range of specific pronunciation learning tactics than had been previously documented. Learners reported they used these pronunciation learning strategies and tactics to improve their pronunciation learning. Strategies are plans or methods to obtain

a specific goal and affect the overall pattern; tactics are maneuvers, details that affect particular ways to control a situation.

In summary, pronunciation learning strategies have been useful in planning the teaching of pronunciation as well as analyzing the data reported from teachers and students in this study.

Related Research

A number of studies have been conducted to find out the problems concerning English pronunciation.

Chaithawin (1993) studied the final /-l/ pronunciation of 20 students from the faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. The main questions of the study were: 1) does language experience affect pronunciation? And, if so, how? and 2) does the structure of the Thai phonological system influence the pronunciation of the variants of /l/? If so, how? The students were asked to read thirty words from a list. Then, their pronunciation was analysed. The results of the study showed that the students pronounced final /-l/ in four different forms: [l], [w], [ø] and [n]. For this reason, Chaithawin concluded that the language learning experience had a direct effect on students' pronunciation. The students with longer language learning experience had less difficulty than those shorter experience.

Secondly, Chanyasuparb (1982) studied the English pronunciation of 100 Thai students from four teacher colleges. The purpose of the study was to analyse their mistakes in pronunciation. In the study, the students were asked to read 180 words from a list; read a message composed of 94 words; read a short conversation; and read out ten

prepared sentences. The results of the study showed that students pronounced the final clusters incorrectly more frequently than the initial cluster. It was found that the significant problems of the students' pronunciation were 1) they replaced voiced consonants with voiceless consonants such as /keit/ for /geit/ "gate"; 2) they deleted one of the consonants in the clusters such as [fim] when trying to pronounce /film/; and 3) omitted all clusters e.g., /kraun/ for /graund/ "ground" etc.

The next study was a collaborative action research investigation to develop pronunciation training and communicative competence for Thai students studying English in Thailand by Varasarin (2007). This study investigated pronunciation training and language learning strategies; how they influenced the learning behaviour of Thai students studying English; and whether it improved their speaking confidence. The purpose of the training was to improve students' pronunciation and spoken intelligibility. The project resulted in a change of policy by the school to include pronunciation teaching and an allocation of English classes to teachers who understood that process. The pronunciation learning strategies in this study and those of other researchers were presented to formulate strategies as a contribution for teachers to include teaching pronunciation in their classroom instruction.

Yildiz (2006) examined both Turkish child and adult L2 learners' acquisition of English interdentals and whether age affects L2 phonology. The aim of her study was to examine the acquisition of the English interdental /θ/ by Turkish learners. [t] substitution is common in spontaneous speech observation; however, in controlled speech [f] substitution is used more widely with two age groups. Moreover, [s] substitution is used exclusively in controlled speech and is used more widely by child learners. Her findings

confirm that children's ability to perceive is far more advanced of their ability to produce. This paper considers the wider implications of the differing substitution patterns between child and adult informants, as well as between spontaneous and controlled speech. Her study also found that children rely on visual as well as acoustic cues, while adults do not rely on acoustic cues as much as they rely on visual cues. It suggests that phonetic "deafness" and incorrect phonetic input are some of the potential factors responsible for the differing substitution patterns.

Schams (2010) analysed Taiwanese university EFL students' predictions of voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives in unfamiliar vocabulary words. From a list of thirty vocabulary words containing interdental fricatives, students were asked to guess whether the interdental fricatives in each word were voiced or voiceless and also provide a reason for their guess. The results showed that the highest percentage of correct guesses (94.5%) occurred with words containing voiceless interdental fricatives in the coda position, supported by McGuire's (2003) contention that voiced interdental fricatives are far less frequent than voiceless interdental fricatives but contradicting his claim that voiceless interdental fricatives are more stable than their voiced counterparts when they occur in the onset position. The subjects had the greatest difficulty predicting voiced interdental fricatives in the coda position and voiceless interdental fricatives in the onset position (each with an accuracy rate of 34.9%).

Hanulíková and Webe (2010), studied the production of English interdental fricatives by Dutch, German, and English speakers. They stated in the study that non-native (L2) speakers of English often experience difficulties in producing English interdental fricatives (e.g. the voiceless [θ]), and this led to frequent substitutions of these

fricatives (e.g. with [t], [s], and [f]). The results showed that the distribution of differential substitutions using identical materials differed between Dutch and German L2 speakers, [t], [s], and [f] substitutes differed acoustically from intended [t], [s], and [f], and finally, L2 productions of [θ] are acoustically comparable to L1 productions. All three substitutions [t,s,f] occurred in the L2 productions of both Dutch and German learners, and the substitutes were not word- or speaker-specific. Importantly, L2 speakers produced native-like realizations of the fricative [θ] more often than any of the dominant substitutions. Since this probably depends strongly on the proficiency level of the L2 speakers, the numbers could be reversed with lower proficiency. In contrast to L2 speakers, L1 speakers of English substituted [θ] with [f].

Summary

This study aimed to develop pronunciation training to improve Thai teachers of English voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives pronunciation in English. The training was designed to integrate pronunciation learning strategies using pronunciation teaching techniques with communicative activities to give the learners situations to develop their pronunciation through listening and speaking.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the procedure of the study and includes the participants and instrument used for the analysis of data.

Research Procedure

Population and participants.

Population of this study were Thais teachers of English. The participants of the study were 22 English teacher (5 males and 17 females) at Mahachai Christian Wittaya School. It is a famous private school with large enrollment numbers located in Samut Sakhon province, a western suburb of Bangkok. The area is a major trading town and has a large fishing industry. The students of this school mostly continue studying at the top public high schools in Bangkok. The participants teach English for primary 1-6 students. The first language of the participants is Thai, and most of them did not major in English. Most of them have problem with English interdental fricatives pronunciation and have no confidence when producing the sounds. The design of the study was pre-experimental research by using a one group pretest- posttest design.

Research instruments.

The instruments used in this study consisted of Pretest and Post-test on the English Interdental Fricatives, the questionnaire of satisfaction, and the English interdental fricatives training kit.

Pretest and Post-test on the English Interdental Fricatives

A pretest was administered to the participants a day before the training program. The aim of the pretest was to assess the participants' background knowledge on the English voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives pronunciation. A post-test was administered at the end of the training. It took 2 days to administer due to time limitations. The aim was to evaluate the participants' achievement after the training treatment. The mean scores from the pretest were compared with those from the post-test. The tests consisted of two parts. Part A included 12 words to be read aloud: six words for the voiced and six for the voiceless in different occurrences (initial, medial, and final positions). Part B was paragraph reading containing 14 words of voiced [ð] and voiceless [θ] interdental fricatives at a comfortable speaking rate. Stereo recordings were made in a quiet room with a digital recorder and were later transferred to a computer. The pretest and post-test were evaluated by three experts in the field of English language teaching to ensure the content validity of the test by using Item- Objective Congruency Index (IOC). (See Appendix D)

Table 1 to Table 4 show the test specification of the Pretest and the Post-test on the English Interdental Fricatives.

Table 1 *Test Specification of the Pretest Part A: 12 Words Reading*

Phoneme	Occurrence	Word	Phoneme	Occurrence	Word
voiced [ð]	initial	that	voiceless [θ]	initial	thunder
	initial	they		initial	theater
	medial	northern		medial	bathtub
	medial	feather		medial	earthquake
	final	smooth		final	both
	final	loathe		final	Perth

Table 2 *Test Specification of the Pretest Part B: Paragraph Reading*

Voiced [ð]	Voiceless [θ]
Perth	beth
the	think
father	things
mother	path
weather	throw
that	thirty
together	thousands

Table 3 *Test Specification of the Post-test Part A: 12 Words Reading*

Phoneme	Occurrence	Word	Phoneme	Occurrence	Word
voiced [ð]	initial	than	voiceless [θ]	initial	thousand
	initial	then		initial	thing
	medial	gathering		medial	birthday
	medial	together		medial	healthy
	final	breathe		final	earth
	final	clothe		final	booth

Table 4 *Test Specification of the Posttest Part B: Paragraph Reading*

Voiced [ð]	Voiceless [θ]
they	three
the	thunder
that	thought
weather	think
other	worth
rather	thirsty
this	something

Questionnaire of satisfaction.

A questionnaire was used to obtain the participants' satisfaction towards the use of the training by using a Likert Scale (5 scale rating). The questionnaire consisted of two parts, general information of the participants and the participants' satisfaction toward the English interdental fricative pronunciation training. The second part of the questionnaire (the participants' satisfaction) consisted of fourteen items asking about their satisfaction towards the training in three aspects: assessment of general impressions on the training, assessment of materials used in the training, and assessment of the instruction in the training. The participants were asked to indicate their degree of satisfaction with five choice rankings from "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied". To ensure its high quality, the content reliability and the content validity were tested, and the questionnaire was evaluated by three experts in the field of English language teaching to ensure the content validity by using an IOC procedure. (See Appendix E)

The English interdental fricatives training kit.

The English voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives training was designed to integrate pronunciation learning strategies using pronunciation teaching techniques with communicative activities to give the learners situations to develop their pronunciation by listening and speaking. It was a two-day training program (11 hours). The training aimed to train the participants two phonemes, voiced [ð] and voiceless [θ] interdental fricatives, in three occurrences: initial, medial, and final positions.

The training was conducted using instruction; articulation description, which will be used as a resource as well as a method for taking learners through the formation of the sounds; a variety of listening exercises; minimal pair contrast; production exercise; open-ended production exercise; practice of words, phrases, and sentences in a variety of ways; paragraph reading to give learners practise with discourse-level pronunciation with dialogue; short presentation activities.

To train learners' pronunciation, the learners were given opportunities for teacher correction, self-correction and peer feedback on individual progress so that each learner could improve their pronunciation of English interdental fricatives during the period of training. Furthermore, some examples of classroom instruction and different situations were presented in this area of the training. Learners were also given the opportunity to practise aspects of the English sound system which are crucial for their own improvement.

The training was developed by applying some materials from the New Headway pronunciation course (Sarah Cunningham, 2002), How to teach pronunciation (Gerald

Kelly, 2001), Pronunciation games (Mark Hancock, 1995), and Give it a go: teaching pronunciation to adults (Lynda Yates & Beth Zielinski, 2009).

Table 5 presents the schedule for the English Interdental Fricatives Pronunciation Training.

Table 5 *The English Interdental Fricatives Pronunciation Training Schedule*

Session	Topics	Duration
DAY 1		
1	The importance of English pronunciation training • Basic Concepts of English pronunciation / A guide to English pronunciation • Aspects of English pronunciation which cause difficulty • Pronunciation toolkit - using your mouth, jaw and tongue • Ear training and Awareness building	60 mins
2	Introduction to the English voiced [ð] and voiceless [θ] interdental fricatives pronunciation • Focus on specific problem areas • Assisting the perception of critical contrasts / Possible pronunciation problems	30 mins
3	The English voiced [ð] interdental fricatives pronunciation • Explanation of how to produce the sound and use pronunciation patterns appropriately • Syllable stress patterns and word families. • Word stress: content words and structural words (connected speech).	120 mins
4	Practice / Production activities / Highlighting	120 mins

Table 5 (continued)

Session	Topics	Duration
DAY 2		
5	The English voiceless [θ] interdental fricatives pronunciation • Explanation of how to produce the sound and use pronunciation patterns appropriately • Syllable stress patterns and word families. • Word stress: content words and structural words (connected speech).	120 mins
6	Practice / Production activities / Highlighting	120 mins
7	Synthesizing / Final Presentations	90 mins

Procedures for Data Collection

The English interdental fricatives training was examined by the experts in the field of English language teaching and English pronunciation. After being approved, the research asked for permission from the school director to conduct the training program. The participants attended an orientation session before the training started. Later, the pretest was administered to the participants. The participants attended the English interdental fricatives pronunciation training for 2 days (eleven hours) . After the training, the post-test was administered. The participants' mean scores in the pretest and post-test were statistically compared by using t-test for dependent sample in computer programs for statistical analysis to measure improvement.

Inter-rater reliability was calculated by measuring the Pearson correlation coefficient to see the degree of agreement among the three raters. The results of the

correlation analysis for the scorings of the pretests and the post-tests rated by three raters revealed high correlation as illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6 *Inter-Rater Reliability of the Scoring Correlation Coefficient (r)*

Pretest	r	Post-test	r
Rater 1 - Rater 2	0.98	Rater 1 - Rater 2	0.80
Rater 1 - Rater 3	0.98	Rater 1 - Rater 3	0.95
Rater 2 - Rater 3	0.97	Rater 2 - Rater 3	0.77

The questionnaires were given to the participants at the end of the training to obtain their satisfaction towards the training. The data from the questionnaires were analysed by using mean and standard deviation (S.D.) to provide descriptive information.

Data Analysis

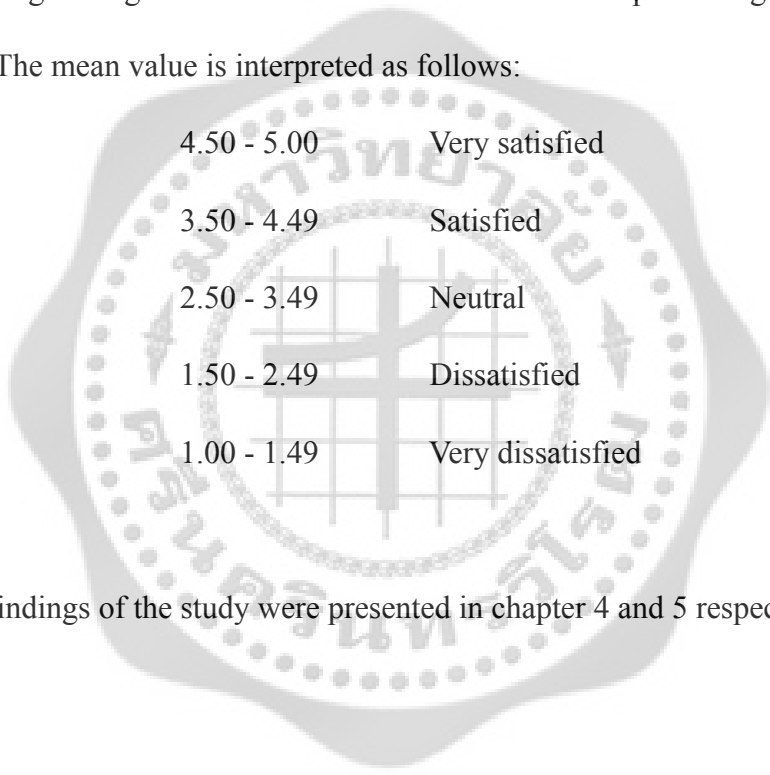
To find out that the mean score of the post-test is higher than the mean score of the pretest, data from the pretest and post-test were analysed as follows:

1. The participants' oral performance on the pretest and the post-test were evaluated by two native speakers of English and the researcher. Inter-rater reliability was established using Pearson Correlation to determine the consistency between three raters.

The data in this study were analysed according to the research hypothesis. The scores or data obtained from the pretest and post-test were analysed and statistically

compared by using t-test for independent sample group to see the improvement of the participants after the training and determine whether the mean score of the post-test was significantly higher than the mean score of the pretest ($p < .05$).

2. To examine the participants' satisfaction toward the training, mean and standard deviation (S.D.) were used to measure the participants' satisfaction toward the training. On the 5-point scale of respondent choices, each item was scored from one to five with one representing the highest level of dissatisfaction and five representing the strongest satisfaction. The mean value is interpreted as follows:



4.50 - 5.00	Very satisfied
3.50 - 4.49	Satisfied
2.50 - 3.49	Neutral
1.50 - 2.49	Dissatisfied
1.00 - 1.49	Very dissatisfied

The findings of the study were presented in chapter 4 and 5 respectively.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In this chapter, the findings of the study are shown in two main parts: the pronunciation training and the participants's improvement, and the participants' attitudes towards the training.

The Pronunciation Training and the Participants's Improvement

The English interdental fricatives pronunciation training kit was used with 22 English teachers at Mahachai Christian Wittaya School. The pretest and the post-test were administered before and after the training.

According to the hypothesis of the study, the mean score of the participants on the post-test should be higher than the mean score on the pretest. The pretest and post-test mean scores were compared using the independent t-test to determine whether there was a significant difference before and after instruction. Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics of the pretest and post-test scores of the participants. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean score of pretest and post-test.

Table 7 *T-Test Comparison of the Pretest and Post-test*

	n	M	SD	t	df	p
Pretest	22	10.09	7.99	5.92	21	0.00*
Post-test	22	20.12	6.04	15.62	21	0.00*

*significant at the .05 level ($p < .05$)

As shown in Table 7, the post-test mean score of the participants was significantly different from their pretest mean score, at a level of 0.00 ($p < .05$). Since, in this study, the level indicating a significant difference in results was set at 0.05, it can thus be concluded that the level of 0.00 points to a significant difference between performance before and after the pronunciation training. This result strongly supports the fact that the participants trained with pronunciation training can improve their English voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives pronunciation.

The researcher also compared the difference between the pretest and post-test for part A, 12 words reading, and part B, paragraph reading, as follows below.

Table 8 *A Comparison of Participants' Score between the Pretest and Post-test Part A and Part B*

	n	M	SD	t	df	p
Pretest A	22	4.53	3.82	5.56	21	0.00*
Post-test A	22	10.25	1.73	27.65	21	0.00*
Pretest B	22	5.79	4.28	6.35	21	0.00*
Post-test B	22	10.32	3.35	14.44	21	0.00*

*significant at the .05 level ($p < .05$)

Participants' Satisfaction towards the Use of the Training

The questionnaires were given to the participants after the training to obtain their satisfaction towards the training. The participants rated from 5, for the highest level of satisfaction, to 1, for the lowest level of satisfaction. The response of the questionnaire rated by the participants were analysed by using mean and standard deviation (S.D.).

Table 12 contains descriptive information about the participants's satisfaction towards the use of the training ranked from the highest to the lowest levels of satisfaction.

Table 9 *Satisfactions of the Participants Towards the Use of the Pronunciation Training*

Questionnaire	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The content is beneficial for my career.	4.18	0.66
The style of teaching, and the performance of the trainer was appropriate.	4.09	0.68
The activities and exercises in the training are useful and consistent with the contents.	4.05	0.79
The length of the course is appropriate to cover thoroughly the contents.	3.91	0.61
The training is well organized.	3.86	0.64
The trainer provided clear explanations of important issues/principles in the training.	3.86	0.64
I am satisfied with the pronunciation training I received.	3.82	0.73
The training help a lot in improving my pronunciation.	3.82	0.73
The trainer was well prepared and presented content with confidence.	3.82	0.73

Table 9 (Continued)

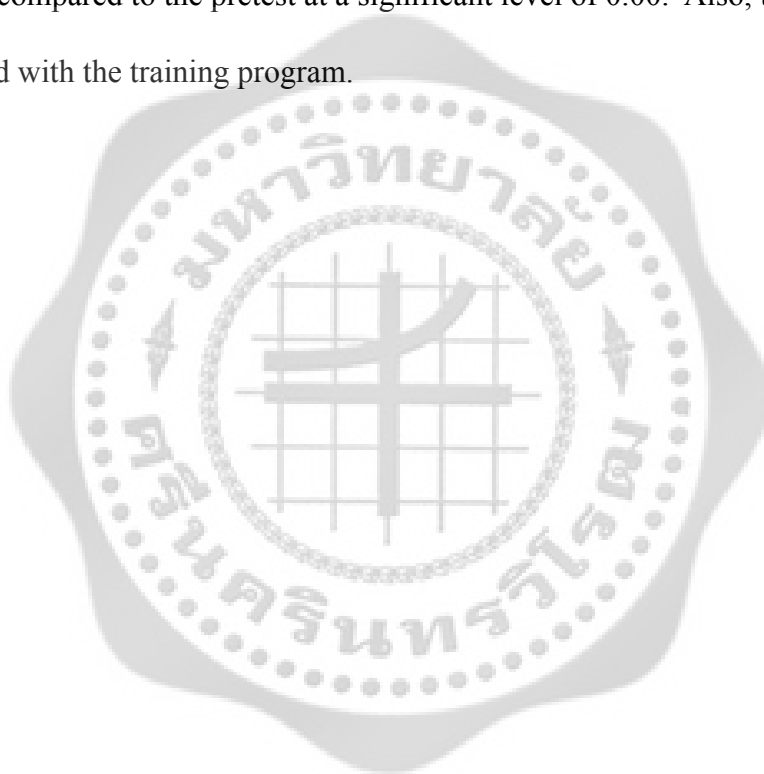
Item No.	M	S.D.
The trainer made an effort to enhance student learning.	3.82	0.80
The materials used in the training are helpful and effective.	3.73	0.70
The method of assessment is efficient and effective.	3.64	0.66
The hand-outs distributed are helpful and effective.	3.64	0.66
I speak English with more confidence after attending the training.	3.27	0.88
Total mean	3.82	0.71

Regarding the results of the questionnaire in order to determine the satisfaction of the participants, most of the participants were satisfied with the training; the total mean was 3.82 ($n = 22$). The participants rated “the content is beneficial to their career” at the highest level with a mean of 4.18, and “style of teaching, and the performance of the trainer was appropriate”, “activities and exercises are useful and consistent with the contents” at high levels of 4.09 and 4.05 respectively. On the other hand, they rated “speak English with more confidence after the training” at the lowest level with a mean score of 3.27.

Summary

The results of the tests revealed that the mean score from the pretest was 10.09 ($t = 5.92$) while the post-test was 20.12 ($t = 15.62$). It was found that there was a significant difference between the mean score of pretest and post-test. The results of the

questionnaire in each aspect showed that most of the participants were satisfied with the the English interdental fricatives training kit as it is beneficial for their career as an English teacher and the training helps a lot in improving their pronunciation. They also said that they spoke English with more confidence after attending the training. The results support the hypothesis that the training program can improve the English interdental fricative pronunciation of the participants in terms of the higher mean score of the post-test compared to the pretest at a significant level of 0.00. Also, the participants were satisfied with the training program.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the findings of the study are discussed in accordance with the hypothesis of this research study. Following the discussion, conclusion, applications and recommendations for further studies are presented.

Summary of the Research

Significance of the study.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the use of the pronunciation training to improve the English interdental fricatives among Thai teachers of English. Data from this study were obtained through the pre and post tests and questionnaires answered by the participants. The data were analysed according to the hypothesis: The mean score of the participants on the post-test of the English interdental fricatives pronunciation will be higher than the mean score on the pretest. The finding obtained from this study would help to identify whether the training helps Thai teachers to improve their English interdental fricatives pronunciation, represented by a significant increase in mean scores on the post-test. The results of the study are useful for English teachers of all age groups and levels who want to improve their pronunciation and be confident when speaking and teaching English.

Population and sample group.

The population of this study are Thai teachers of English. The participants of the study were twenty-two English teachers (5 males and 17 females) at the Mahachai Christian Wittaya School, Samut Sakhon. They teach English to primary students using the phonics method. Most of them did not major in English and have problems with English interdental fricatives pronunciation.

Research methodology.

The research is a pre-experimental research by using a group pretest- post-test design. The pretest was administered to the participants at the beginning of the training. After the pretest, the participants attended the English interdental fricatives pronunciation training. The duration of the training was 2 days. To see the improvement after using the training, the post-test was administered. In addition, questionnaires were given to the participants at the end of the training to obtain their satisfaction towards the training.

Research instruments.

Research instruments used in this study were the English interdental fricatives training, the pretest and post-test, and the questionnaire.

Data collection and analysis.

The participants' mean scores from the pretest and the post-test were collected to be statistically compared by using a t-test for dependent sample in computer programs for statistical analysis to measure improvement. The rating results from the questionnaire

were collected and analysed using mean and S.D. to measure the participants's satisfaction towards the training.

Summary of the Main Findings

The analysis of the pretest and post-test scores of the participants revealed that the English interdental fricatives pronunciation of the participants was significantly improved at the .00 level ($m = 20.12$) after attending the pronunciation training. Furthermore, the participants' satisfaction toward the training was at the satisfied level. The participants rated "The content is beneficial for my career" at the highest level with a mean score of 4.18 ($n = 22$), and "I speak English with more confidence after attending the training" at lowest level with a mean score of 3.27. The participants also said that the activities and exercises in the training are useful and consistent with the contents, and the training help a lot in improving their pronunciation.

Discussion

The overall aim of the study was to examine the use of the pronunciation training to improve the English voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives of Thai teachers of English.

Based on the findings derived from this study, the mean score form the pretest is 10.09 ($t = 5.92$) while the post-test is 20.12 ($t = 15.62$). The results from the pretest show that the interdental fricative sounds of English are the strongest pronunciation problems for Thai learners, which is in accordance with the study of Jukpim (2008). [t], [f], [s], and [z] substitution is widely used by the participants, which is similar the results of Yildiz's

(2006) and Hanulíková, and Webe's (2010) studies which found that Turkish L2 learners usually substitute English interdental fricatives with [t], [f], and [s].

The participants as adult learners seemed to be able to use their cognitive skills to analyse and produce new sounds and sound patterns as well as their errors. However, the differences between the first language and foreign language are still a problem in learning pronunciation as Bell (1996) stated. With a lack of background knowledge of English, less opportunity to use the language, or even seniority made it difficult for some participants to produce the target sounds. In addition, some participants who majored in English or who have been teaching English for a long time have more ability in discriminating and imitating the sounds more accurately than the others. As Brown (1992) noted, people with phonetic coding abilities are better able to develop their pronunciation.

In pronunciation training, the participants were taught how to correctly pronounce English sounds phonetically and communicatively. The results of the study showed the implications of the importance of pronunciation training in the Thai context and the usefulness of learner self-involvement and learner strategy training to help learners improve their pronunciation and have more confidence to speak English.

Integrating pronunciation learning strategies and pronunciation teaching techniques with communicative activities, the participants pronunciation and ability to self correct improved. The participants showed improvement in their speaking competence after they had been trained; they learned how to improve their pronunciation and know their weakness. Furthermore, they checked each other when working together.

Participants were active partners in their own learning, and they developed the skills to monitor and modify their pronunciation.

The results of the questionnaire in each aspect showed that most of the participants were satisfied with the the English interdental fricatives training as it is beneficial for their career as an English teacher and the activities. The exercises in the training were useful and helped a lot in improving their pronunciation and ability to speak English with more confidence after attending the training. However, the lowest ranking of the participants' satisfaction was "speaking English with more confidence after attending the training" as it was rated at a neutral level.

Limitations of the Study

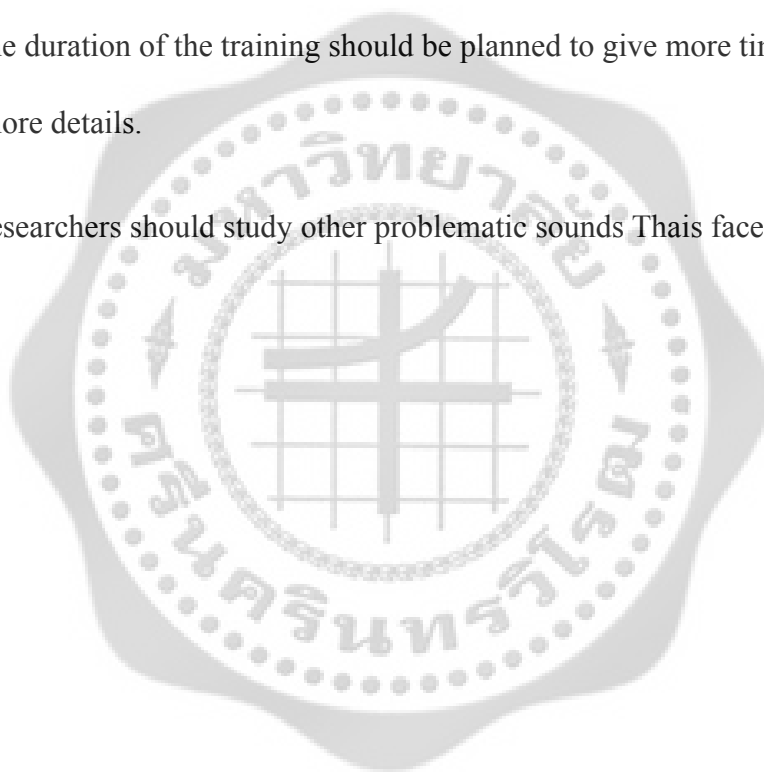
Limitations of the study described as follows:

1. The duration of the training was quite short. Some participants might need more practice or time to cope with the sounds. The duration of the training might have influenced the post-test scores.
2. The training only focused on two problematic sounds for Thais, voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives. In fact, there are many different problematic sounds in which Thais should be trained.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Recommendations for further studies are as follows:

1. This study was conducted with 22 primary teachers at Mahachai Christian Wittaya School. Further studies should be conducted with different levels of teachers: secondary, college or university level studies should be conducted with larger participants in order to have more reliability.
2. The duration of the training should be planned to give more time in order to provide more details.
3. Researchers should study other problematic sounds Thais face.





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APPENDIX A

Research Instruments

The Pre and Post-test on the English Interdental Fricatives

Pretest Part A: Read the following words aloud as naturally as possibly.

Word	Score	
	1 (correct)	0 (incorrect)
both		
they		
thunder		
smooth		
that		
loathe		
earthquake		
feather		
theater		
northern		
Perth		
bathtub		

Pretest Part B: Read the following passage aloud as naturally as possibly.

Beth's good old days

Beth lives in Perth. She likes to think about how

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things were in the good old days. Beth

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remembers her father and mother taking her dog

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for a walk along the garden path on a good

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weather day. She liked to throw things for her

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dog to catch. The garden had thirty kinds of

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plants and thousands of flowers. That was such a

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☐

great time to be together.

☐

Post-test Part A: Read the following words aloud as naturally as possibly.

Word	Score	
	1 (correct)	0 (incorrect)
earth		
birthday		
gathering		
clothe		
than		
thing		
booth		
thousand		
breathe		
then		
healthy		
together		

Post-test Part B: Read the following passage aloud as naturally as possibly.

The Three Brothers

Three brothers were sleeping under a tree when

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they woke to the sound of thunder. One of the

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brothers said that he thought the weather was

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changing and it would soon rain. The other two

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didn't want to move. Rather than wait for his

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brothers, the first brother left the others, saying, "I

think it's not worth getting wet in this weather. I'm

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thirsty and need something to drink."

☐
☐



APPENDIX B

Research Instruments

The Questionnaire of Satisfaction

QUESTIONNAIRE

Learners' Satisfaction toward the Pronunciation Training

The aim of this questionnaire is to measure learners' satisfaction toward the English interdental fricative pronunciation training.

1. Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Age ☐ Under 25 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60+

3. Education ☐ Bachelor degree ☐ Higher than bachelor degree

4. How long have you been working as a teacher?

- ☐ This is my first year ☐ 1-2 years ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years ☐ 11-15 years ☐ 16-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

5. How long have you been teaching English?

- ☐ This is my first year ☐ 1-2 years ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years ☐ 11-15 years ☐ 16-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

6. Have you ever attended a pronunciation training before?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Part 2: Learners' satisfaction toward the pronunciation training

Directions: Please indicate the level of your agreement with the following statements by marking ✓ in the boxes.

Description	Level of satisfaction				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Indicators for the assessment of general impressions on the training					
1. I am satisfied with the pronunciation training I received.					
2. The training help a lot in improving my pronunciation.					
3. The content is beneficial for my career.					
4. The length of the course is appropriate to cover thoroughly the contents.					
5. The training is well organized.					
6. The activities and exercises in the training are useful and consistent with the contents.					
7. The method of assessment is efficient and effective.					
8. I speak English with more confidence after attending the training.					
Indicators for the assessment of materials used in the training					
9. The hand-outs distributed are helpful and effective.					
10. The materials used in the training are helpful and effective.					
Indicators for the assessment of the instruction in the training					
11. The trainer was well prepared and presented content with confidence.					
12. The trainer provided clear explanations of important issues/principles in the training.					
13. The style of teaching, and the performance of the trainer was appropriate.					
14. The trainer made an effort to enhance student learning.					

Thank you very much for your cooperation.



APPENDIX C

List of Experts

The List of Experts Who Assessed the Pretest and Posttest and the Questionnaire

1. Dr. UsapornSukharom

Western Language Department, Faculty of Humanity, Srinakharinwirot University

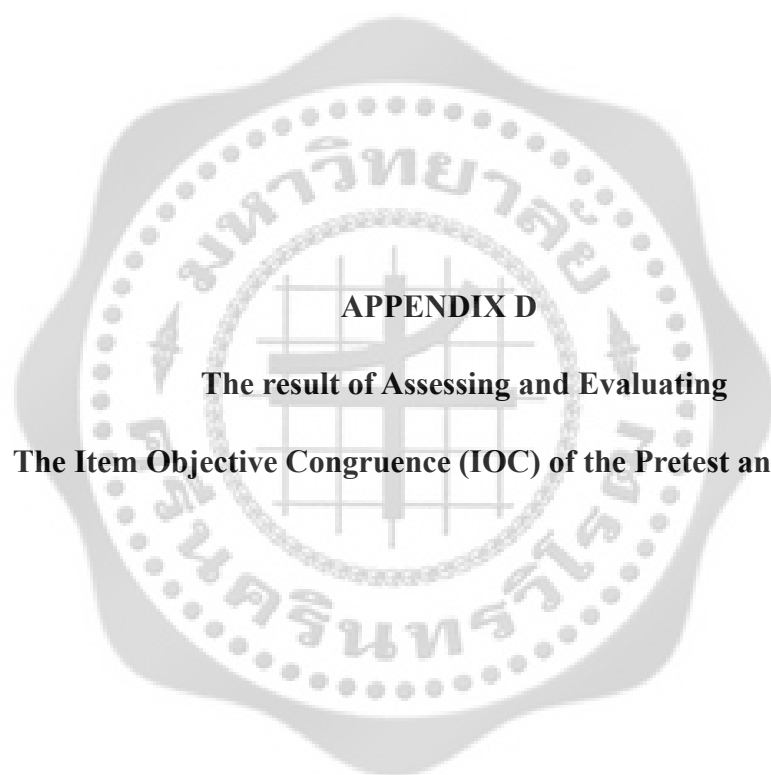
2. Lecturer Nicole Lasas

Linguistics Department, Faculty of Humanity, Srinakharinwirot University

3. Lecturer Peter Fayer

Western Language Department, Faculty of Humanity, Srinakharinwirot University





APPENDIX D

The result of Assessing and Evaluating

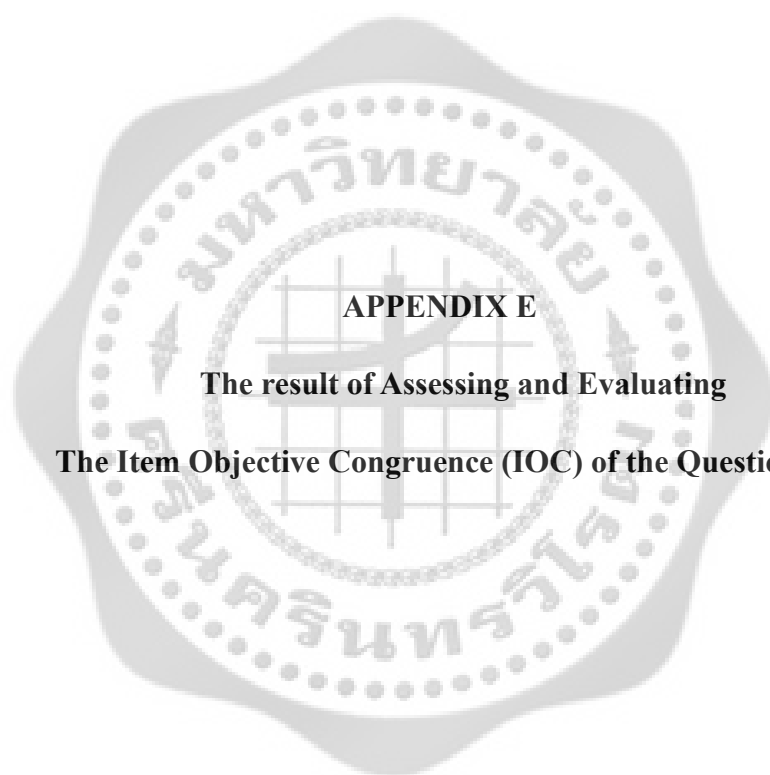
The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) of the Pretest and Post-test

Table 10 *The result of Assessing and Evaluating the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) of the pretest*

Item No.	Rating			IOC
	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	
1	+1	+1	+1	1.00
2	+1	+1	+1	1.00
3	+1	+1	+1	1.00
4	+1	+1	+1	1.00
5	+1	+1	+1	1.00
6	+1	+1	0	0.67
7	+1	+1	+1	1.00
8	+1	+1	0	0.67
9	+1	+1	+1	1.00
10	+1	+1	+1	1.00
11	+1	+1	0	0.67
12	+1	+1	+1	1.00
13	+1	+1	+1	1.00
14	+1	+1	+1	1.00
15	+1	+1	+1	1.00
16	+1	+1	+1	1.00
17	+1	+1	+1	1.00
18	+1	+1	+1	1.00
19	+1	+1	+1	1.00
20	+1	+1	+1	1.00
21	+1	+1	+1	1.00
22	+1	+1	+1	1.00
23	+1	+1	+1	1.00
24	+1	+1	+1	1.00
25	+1	+1	+1	1.00
26	+1	+1	+1	1.00

Table 11 *The result of Assessing and Evaluating the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) of the post-test*

Item No.	Rating			IOC
	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	
1	+1	+1	+1	1.00
2	+1	+1	+1	1.00
3	+1	+1	+1	1.00
4	+1	+1	+1	1.00
5	+1	+1	+1	1.00
6	+1	+1	+1	1.00
7	+1	+1	+1	1.00
8	+1	+1	+1	1.00
9	+1	+1	+1	1.00
10	+1	+1	+1	1.00
11	+1	+1	+1	1.00
12	+1	+1	0	0.67
13	+1	+1	+1	1.00
14	+1	+1	+1	1.00
15	+1	+1	+1	1.00
16	+1	+1	+1	1.00
17	+1	+1	+1	1.00
18	+1	+1	+1	1.00
19	+1	+1	+1	1.00
20	+1	+1	+1	1.00
21	+1	+1	+1	1.00
22	+1	+1	+1	1.00
23	+1	+1	+1	1.00
24	+1	+1	+1	1.00
25	+1	+1	+1	1.00
26	+1	+1	+1	1.00



APPENDIX E

The result of Assessing and Evaluating

The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) of the Questionnaire

Table 12 *The result of Assessing and Evaluating the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) of the questionnaire*

Item No.	Rating			IOC
	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	
1	+1	+1	+1	1.00
2	+1	+1	+1	1.00
3	+1	1	0	0.67
4	+1	+1	0	1.00
5	+1	+1	0	1.00
6	+1	+1	+1	1.00
7	+1	+1	+1	1.00
8	+1	+1	+1	1.00
9	+1	+1	+1	1.00
10	+1	+1	+1	1.00
11	+1	+1	+1	1.00
12	+1	+1	0	0.67
13	+1	+1	+1	1.00
14	+1	+1	+1	1.00



APPENDIX F

The Participants' Scores on the Pretests and the Post-test

Table 13 *Grading Result of the Pretest*

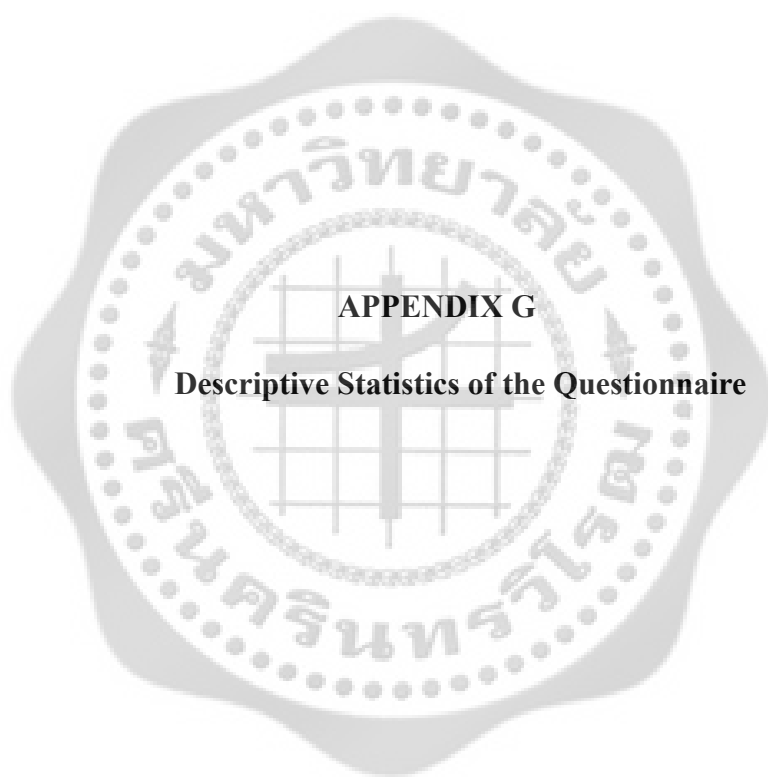
Participant No.	Score		
	Part A	Part B	Sum
1	1.67	2.67	4.33
2	10.67	12.00	22.67
3	4.33	1.67	6.00
4	0.67	8.33	9.00
5	0.00	5.00	5.00
6	1.67	3.67	5.33
7	0.33	0.67	1.00
8	5.33	7.67	13.00
9	3.00	2.67	5.67
10	0.67	0.67	1.33
11	10.00	11.67	21.67
12	9.67	13.33	23.00
13	6.00	8.00	14.00
14	0.67	0.33	1.00
15	11.00	12.00	23.00
16	1.00	1.00	2.00
17	7.67	7.33	15.00
18	8.67	10.67	19.33
19	1.33	1.33	2.67
20	7.33	6.67	14.00
21	6.00	6.67	12.67
22	2.00	3.33	5.33
ΣX	99.67	127.33	227.00
$\bar{X}$	4.53	5.79	10.32

Table 14 *Grading Result of the Post-test*

Participant No.	Score		
	Part A	Part B	Sum
1	10.00	11.33	21.33
2	11.33	10.00	21.33
3	8.33	5.00	13.33
4	10.67	10.67	21.33
5	8.67	8.33	17.00
6	12.00	9.33	21.33
7	7.67	3.67	11.33
8	11.67	12.33	24.00
9	9.67	9.67	19.33
10	10.67	12.00	22.67
11	12.00	13.33	25.33
12	11.67	13.67	25.33
13	11.00	9.67	20.67
14	9.00	5.33	14.33
15	12.00	14.67	26.67
16	7.33	6.67	14.00
17	12.00	11.00	23.00
18	11.33	12.67	24.00
19	7.00	5.67	12.67
20	11.67	15.33	27.00
21	8.00	12.67	20.67
22	12.00	14.00	26.00
ΣX	10.26	10.32	452.67
$\bar{X}$	225.67	227.00	452.67

Table 15 *Grading Result Comparison between the Pretest and Post-test*

Participant No.	Pretest	Posttest
1	4.33	21.33
2	22.67	21.33
3	6.00	13.33
4	9.00	21.33
5	5.00	17.00
6	5.33	21.33
7	1.00	11.33
8	13.00	24.00
9	5.67	19.33
10	1.33	22.67
11	21.67	25.33
12	23.00	25.33
13	14.00	20.67
14	1.00	14.33
15	23.00	26.67
16	2.00	14.00
17	15.00	23.00
18	19.33	24.00
19	2.67	12.67
20	14.00	27.00
21	12.67	20.67
22	5.33	26.00
X	10.32	20.58



APPENDIX G

Descriptive Statistics of the Questionnaire

Table 16 *Descriptive Statistics of the Questionnaire*

Questionnaire No.	N	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	22	3.00	5.00	3.82	0.73
2	22	3.00	5.00	3.82	0.73
3	22	3.00	5.00	4.18	0.66
4	22	3.00	5.00	3.91	0.61
5	22	3.00	5.00	3.86	0.64
6	22	2.00	5.00	4.05	0.79
7	22	2.00	5.00	3.64	0.66
8	22	1.00	4.00	3.27	0.88
9	22	3.00	5.00	3.64	0.66
10	22	3.00	5.00	3.73	0.70
11	22	3.00	5.00	3.82	0.73
12	22	3.00	5.00	3.86	0.64
13	22	3.00	5.00	4.09	0.68
14	22	3.00	5.00	3.82	0.80
Total mean				3.82	0.71



APPENDIX H

Letters of Consent



บันทึกข้อความ

ส่วนราชการ บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ โทร. 5664

ที่ ศธ 0519.12/1741

วันที่ ๒๖ มีนาคม 2555

เรื่อง ขอเชิญเป็นผู้เชี่ยวชาญ

เรียน อาจารย์อุสาศ์ภรณ์ สุขารมณ

เนื่องด้วย นายอภิรักษ์ อัครพัฒน์พงษ์ นิสิตระดับปริญญาโท สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ
ในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ ได้รับอนุมัติให้ทำสารนิพนธ์ เรื่อง
“Pronunciation training to improve the English interdental fricatives among Thais
Teaching English” โดยมี ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ นิตยา วังกังวาน เป็นอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาสารนิพนธ์
ในการนี้ บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย ขอเรียนเชิญท่านเป็นผู้เชี่ยวชาญตรวจสอบแบบสอบถาม และแบบทดสอบ

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อขอความอนุเคราะห์เป็นผู้เชี่ยวชาญให้ นายอภิรักษ์ อัครพัฒน์พงษ์
และขอขอบพระคุณเป็นอย่างสูง ณ โอกาสนี้

(รองศาสตราจารย์ ดร.สมชาย สันติวัฒนกุล)

คณบดีบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย

สำนักงานคณบดีบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย

โทร. 0-2649-5064

หมายเหตุ : สอบถามข้อมูลเพิ่มเติม กรุณาติดต่อนิสิต โทรศัพท์ 086-765-6764



บันทึกข้อความ

ส่วนราชการ บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ โทร. 5664

ที่ ศธ 0519.12/1743 วันที่ ๑๖ มีนาคม 2555

เรื่อง ขอเชิญเป็นผู้เชี่ยวชาญ

เรียน อาจารย์ Nicole Lasas

เนื่องด้วย นายอภิรักษ์ อัครพัฒน์พงษ์ นิสิตระดับปริญญาโท สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ
ในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ ได้รับอนุมัติให้ทำสารนิพนธ์ เรื่อง
“Pronunciation training to improve the English interdental fricatives among Thais
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ในการนี้ บัณฑิตวิทยาลัยขอเรียนเชิญท่านเป็นผู้เชี่ยวชาญตรวจแบบสอบถาม และแบบทดสอบ
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และขอขอบพระคุณเป็นอย่างสูง ณ โอกาสนี้

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บันทึกข้อความ

ส่วนราชการ บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ โทร. 5664

ที่ ศธ 0519.12/ 1746

วันที่ ๑๖ มีนาคม 2555

เรื่อง ขอเชิญเป็นผู้เชี่ยวชาญ

เรียน อาจารย์ Peter Fayers

เนื่องด้วย นายอภิรักษ์ อัครพัฒน์วงศ์ นิสิตระดับปริญญาโท สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ
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VITAE

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2012 Master of Arts (Teaching English as a Foreign
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