

Up-Skill Learning Management Competencies In English Language For Elementary School Teachers In Academic Service Networks For Society, St Theresa International College, Thailand

Piyada Wattanasan^{*1}, Chanida Muangkaew², Bhuson Tran³, Montien Chomdokmai⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Faculty of Education, St Theresa International College, Nakhonnayok, Thailand.

*Corresponding Author, Email: piyada@stic.ac.th

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Abstract

This research is a developmental research (R&D) aiming to study the conditions and the demand to up-skill teachers' learning management competencies in English language. The research also aims to study the process of upskilling teachers' learning management competencies in English language and establish good practice guidelines for enhancing English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers through academic services. This is consistent with the U2T project, university social services at the sub-district level in Thailand, which conducted academic services from July 2016 to March 2022. The results of the study has shown that 1) the English language learning management competencies of elementary school teachers were at a good level, while the demand for the up skilling of teachers' English learning management competencies, in organizing learning activities, is at a very high level. 2) Approaches to enhance learning management competencies through learning activities involve designing activities for teachers to gain experience and apply it forward in organizing activities for students. Afterwards, the teachers will design learning activities for students covering 4 areas: learning to know, learning to do, learning to get together, and learning to be, and then apply it to manage learning with students. The results indicated that the teachers have higher learning management competencies; as a result, the assessment results of students' English language proficiency are also raised. 3) Good practice guidelines for upskilling teachers' English learning management competencies consisted of 9 stages: 1) investigating the conditions and development needs of teachers, 2) setting the success indicators aligning to the goals, 3) designing learning activities for teachers and their development, 4) teachers designing learning activities for their students, 5) applying to student development, 6) evaluating results of the implementation, 7) improving and developing in correspondence with the success indicators and the goals, 8) improving the design of learning activities for students, 9) follow-up on students' English proficiency according to the national criteria. The relationship between the stages can be portrayed in a diagram.

Keywords: Teachers' learning management competencies, Up-skill elementary school teachers' competencies, Academic services

Background Information

Effective management of English language teaching for countries without English as the official language must begin at the elementary level (Panich, 2012). Thailand is one of the countries in which English is not the official language; therefore, it is necessary to build an

English language foundation for students starting from elementary school, according to the curriculum provided by the Thai Ministry of Education, as an essential foundation for learners (Khemkhan and Wanasri, 2020).

However, many public elementary schools face restrictions associated with

English teaching. For example, schools are not fully equipped to teach foreign language classes, teachers' qualifications do not correspond to the field of study, teachers are not competent in teaching English, teachers are unable to communicate to the class in English, or teachers emphasize on technical grammar and vocabulary memorization but neglect daily life application (Hongsachai, 2010). Schools attempted to solve the problem by hiring foreigners as English teachers, but it was realized later on that most foreign teachers' degrees do not correspond to the field of study and are not educational degrees. As a result, the transfer of knowledge is defective, teachers are unable to grasp child psychology, unable to keep the class under control, and lack conveying and communication skills (Jaiyeakyeen and Sudrung, 2020).

In addition, the Ministry of Education has adopted The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as a criterion for determining the language proficiency of teachers and of students. It was determined that the proficiency of elementary English language teachers must exceed or be equivalent to the B2 level (Ministry of Education, 2014). According to the investigation of English language teachers' proficiency throughout Thailand in 2015, it is deduced that most teachers' English Language proficiency does not meet the required criteria (Khemkhan and Wanasri, 2020).

The process of upskilling teachers' learning management competencies is therefore absolutely crucial since the enhancement of teacher potential will directly affect the development of learner potential (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Sparks, 2002; Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). Upskilling teachers to become fully competent in the language and possessing the ability to convey it practically in a social context will make language learning meaningful for the students. It is a potential pathway for student development, to be able to make effective use of the language (Hongsachai, 2010).

Due to the problems mentioned above, St Theresa International College expressed the abundant need for elementary school teachers to be able to effectively manage English language learning. Therefore, academic services were offered, coherent to the U2T project to provide social services at the sub-district level in Thailand, in order to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers within the academic social service networks of St. Theresa International College. Furthermore, good practice guidelines for upskilling elementary school teachers' English learning management competencies will be established, which will be beneficial for educational administrators and those involved in further application for the development of English teachers from elementary schools located in other areas.

Research Objectives

1. To study the conditions and the demand to up-skill the English language learning management competencies of elementary school teachers within the academic social service networks of universities in Thailand, a case study of St Theresa International College.
2. To study the upskilling of English language learning management competencies of elementary school teachers in academic service networks for society, a case study of St Theresa International College.
3. To establish good practice guidelines for upskilling English language learning management competencies of elementary school teachers, through academic services corresponding to the U2T project in which universities provide social services at the sub-district level in Thailand.

Research Methodology

This research consists of 2 stages.

Stage 1: Conditions and the demand to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers.

This stage is a quantitative research aiming to study the conditions and the demand to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers within the academic social service networks of St Theresa International College.

The population consists of elementary English teachers at schools within the academic social service networks of St Theresa International College, under the Nakhon Nayok elementary educational service area, totaling up to 120 people. The sample group was obtained from elementary school English teachers, using the districts where the schools are located as a criterion for stratified sampling. The number of samples was obtained from the Krejcie & Morgan table, a total of 92 samples were obtained.

Research tools and statistics - the instrument used was a questionnaire created by the researcher, with a discriminant index between .382 -.817, and a reliability index of .90. The statistics used in the research were mean and standard deviation.

Stage 2: Upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary teachers and establishing good practices for the process through academic services, in compliance with the U2T project, in which universities provide social services at the sub-district level in Thailand.

This stage is a developmental research (R&D) consisting of studies on the process of upskilling the English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers, the results of the process, and the establishment of good practice guidelines for the process through academic services, in compliance with the U2T project, in which

universities provide social services at the sub-district level in Thailand.

The sample group consisted of elementary English teachers from schools within the academic social service networks of St. Theresa International College, school administrators in which the teachers are affiliated with, students and lecturers from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Education, who participated in the implementation of the U2T social services project at the sub-district level in Thailand.

The researcher collected data through participant observation and in-depth interviews with 25 teachers, 7 school administrators, 8 social service students, and 5 social service teachers, totaling up to 45 key informants. The sample group was obtained through the snowballing method and triangulated data validation, the data was further analyzed.

The duration of the study for both stages was between July 2016 – March 2022.

Research Results

The results obtained from the study are as follows:

I. Conditions and demand to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers.

The results from the study on conditions and demand to up-skill English language learning management competencies of elementary teachers, from schools within the academic social service networks of St Theresa International College, was obtained using a questionnaire drafted for the English teachers, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The study on conditions and demand to up-skill learning management competencies (N=92)

Competencies	Teacher competency condition			Demand to up-skill competencies		
	Mean	S.D.	Competency level	Mean	S.D.	Demand level
English language basics	4.380	.3650	Good	4.474	.3467	High
Lesson planning	4.438	.4191	Good	4.438	.3857	High
Organizing learning activities	3.963	.3331	Good	4.543	.4467	Very high
Use of technology	3.989	.3544	Good	4.474	.4170	High
Assessment and evaluation	4.380	.3846	Good	4.427	.3435	High

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

According to table 1, displaying the results of the study on conditions of English learning management competence of elementary school teachers, it was found that all of the competencies studied were at a good level. The competencies in lesson planning, English language basics, assessment and evaluation, use of technology, and organizing learning activities were ranked from highest to lowest, respectively.

The results of the study on the demand to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers showed that the teachers needed to up-skill their competency in organizing learning activities, at a very high level of demand. For other competencies, there is a need for an up-skill at a high demand level.

2. Upskilling English learning management competencies and establishing good practice guidelines for the process of upskilling elementary teachers' competencies.

Upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary teachers and establishing good practice guidelines for the process through academic services, in compliance with the U2T project, in which universities provide social services at the sub-district level in Thailand, yielded the following results.

2.1 Upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary teachers.

Social service students and teachers, teachers, and school administrators analyzed the results of the survey on conditions and demand for English learning management of elementary school teachers. The results of the analysis revealed a consensus that there is a need to up-skill teachers' competence in English learning management in the field of organizing learning activities. This also affected other aspects. Social service students and teachers have therefore designed English language learning activities, aiming to up-skill teachers' competence in English learning management. After successfully incorporating it into the activities involving teachers, the students, lecturers, and teachers jointly designed English learning activities aiming to further up-skill the English learning management competencies revolving around elementary school students. The key results of the implementation are as follows.

2.1.1 Designing English learning activities to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers.

The design of activities, defined by Delors learning principles (1998), is to design activities in order to create experiences for teachers to absorb and apply forward in organizing activities with their students. The 4 characteristics include: learning to know, learning to do, learning to get together, and learning to be.

2.1.2 Designing English learning activities to up-skill the English learning competence of elementary school students.

Teachers utilized their learning experience to design activities for students' English language learning in 4 ways, each activity is detailed as follows:

1) Learning to know activities focuses on organizing classroom activities with learning materials and settings. It allows the students to study the contents through their own judgment, understanding the relationship between the cause and effect. Students will be able to thoroughly understand the contents and the notion they are derived from, in which the author wishes to convey.

2) Learning to do activities focuses on organizing classroom activities with various learning materials and role-playing assignments, allowing students to practice all the skills, especially those occurring in real life or in daily situations.

3) Learning to get together activities focuses on extra-curricular activities through collaborative processes, knowledge sharing, presenting personal opinions, listening to others' opinions, collective problem solving, and supporting one another while sharing responsibilities.

4) Learning to be activities focuses on organizing extra-curricular activities through applying rational thinking and decision-making in the process of solving problems. This would allow students to gain self-confidence, form their own identity, be a good and smart person who flourishes whilst surrounded by society, demonstrate good citizenship in society, and be an adaptive global citizen in a world of rapid change.

2.2 Results of upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers.

English teachers applied the designed learning activities to upskill English learning competence of elementary school

students in teaching and learning throughout academic years 2017-2021. The results of the implementation from each academic year were adjusted to improve continuously. The key success indicators are the English proficiency assessment results of students using standardized exams provided by the Ministry of Education. The results showed that English proficiency assessment results of students using standardized exams from the Ministry of Education, from a total of 25 schools within the academic service network under the university social service program at the sub-district level in Thailand (U2T), have constantly increased for 5 consecutive years. Moreover, each school was assessed higher than the national average.

2.3 Establishing good practice guidelines for upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers.

Social service students and teachers, teachers and school administrators analyzed the results obtained from the implementation of upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers at all stages from the academic year 2016-2021. This was done to establish good practice guidelines for upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers. The good practice guidelines established are to be tested out for the academic year 2022 in schools within other academic service networks. The results are as follows:

2.3.1 Establishment of good practice guidelines for upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers.

The relationship between the stages forming good practices in upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers can be portrayed in a diagram, as shown in Figure 1.

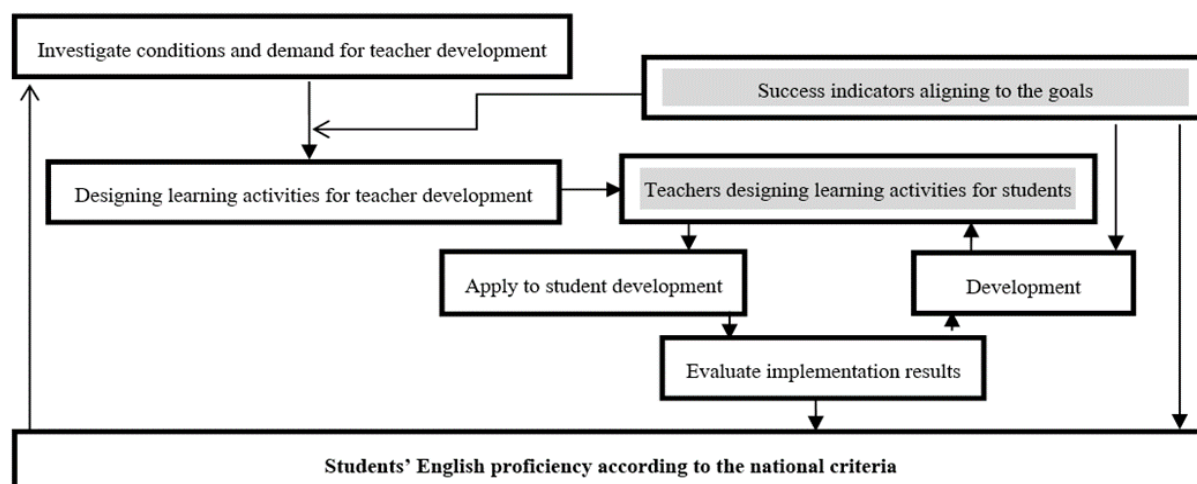


Figure 1. Good practice guidelines for upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers

2.3.2 Results from the implementation of the good practice guidelines in schools within other academic service networks.

Social service students and teachers tested out the good practice guidelines for upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers in 3 other academic service network schools for the academic year 2022. It was found that the students from the 3 tested schools had higher English proficiency assessment results using the standardized exams provided by the Ministry of Education.

Conclusion

The study on the process of upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary teachers from schools within the academic social service networks of St Theresa International College, Thailand, can be summarized as follows.

1. The conditions for English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers showed that for all five competencies consisting of lesson planning, English language basics, assessment and evaluation, use of technology, and organizing learning activities, the teachers performed at a

good level. For the demand to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers within academic service networks of universities in Thailand, specifically St Theresa International College, it was found that teachers needed to up-skill their competence in organizing learning activities, this was demanded at a very high level. Regarding other competencies, there is a demand for upskilling at a high level.

2. The process of upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers within academic social service networks, a case study on St Theresa International College.

2.1.1 Designing learning activities to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers.

Social service students and teachers have designed language learning activities to up-skill teachers' English learning management competencies. After successfully incorporating the activities for teachers until the goals were achieved, the students, lecturers, and teachers collaboratively designed learning activities to up-skill the English learning competence of elementary school students. The English learning activities for students were designed in 4 ways: 1) Learning to know - focuses on organizing classroom activities, allowing students to study the contents by applying their own judgment, understanding the cause and

effect relationship, 2) Learning to do - focuses on organizing classroom activities, allowing students to practically apply all the skills occurring in daily life, 3) Learning to get together - through collaborative processes, collective problem solving, helping each other whilst sharing responsibilities, 4) Learning to be - focuses on organizing extra-curricular activities, through rational problem solving, gain self-confidence, form their own identity, and flourish in society.

2.1.2 Results of upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers.

Results of upskilling teachers' English learning management competencies after the teachers designed learning activities to up-skill students' English learning competence and applied it in teaching and learning since the academic year 2017. It was found that students' English proficiency assessment results using standardized exams provided by the Ministry of Education in all schools, following the university social service project at the sub-district level in Thailand (U2T), had continuously increasing English proficiency results for 5 consecutive years, and the assessment results were higher than that of the national average.

3. Good practice guidelines for upskilling English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers, through academic services aligning to the university social service project at the sub-district level in Thailand (U2T).

The good practice guidelines for upskilling teachers' English learning management competencies consisted of 9 important stages: 1) investigating conditions and demand for teacher development, 2) setting success indicators aligning to the goals, 3) designing learning activities for teacher development, 4) teachers designing learning activities for students, 5) applying to student development, 6) evaluating results of the implementation, 7) improving and developing in accordance with the success indicators aligning to the goals, 8) developing the design

of learning activities for students, 9) follow-up on students' English proficiency according to the national criteria. The relationship between the stages can be portrayed in a diagram.

The results of applying the good practice guidelines to be tested in 3 other academic service network schools showed that students from the 3 trial schools had higher English proficiency assessment results from standardized exams provided by the Ministry of Education.

Discussion of Results

The study shows that the process of organizing learning activities to up-skill English learning management competencies of elementary school teachers was designed in 4 ways: 1) learning to know, 2) learning to do, 3) learning to get together, and 4) learning to be, allowing students to have higher learning competence in English language. This is consistent with a research conducted by Jaiyeakyen and Sudrung (2020) which found that decent learning activities makes the teaching process complete. It encourages students to gain firsthand experience, increase their learning potential, and learners are able to apply it in their daily lives. Emphasis is placed on organizing extra-curricular activities through rational problem solving, resulting in a rise in self-confidence. According to the study, good practice guidelines for upskilling teachers' English learning management competencies includes the ability to design appropriate learning activities for students. This is consistent with the research performed by Khemkhan and Wanasri (2020), which displayed how teachers play a crucial role in improving students' English proficiency. Teachers need to readily adapt their teaching and learning process in order to keep up with the changes. This is applicable for teachers, coaches, and learning facilitators. Optimal Blowfish Algorithm based Technique for Data Security in Cloud, Tripartite partite key assignment scheme for security of cloud data classes are also would be benefit to the health education management and technology industry sustainability (Reddy,

Bindu, 2017, Reddy, Bindu, Praveen, 2017; Reddy, Bindu, Praveen, 2016). Survey of Precision Medicine Strategy Using Cognitive Computing for English proficiency and A dataset for automatic contrast enhancement of microscopic malaria infected blood RGB images, Data in brief and Image Segmentation Technique Using SVM Classifier for Detection of Medical Disorders also included in digital literacy era to understand the digital literacy in health, food, education and technology aspects for English proficiency (Ramu et al, 2018, somasekar et al, 2019, Janardhan et al, 2019).

Recommendations

Recommendations for applying the research results:

According to the study, the process of upskilling teachers' English learning management competencies by enabling teachers to design English learning activities for students in 4 ways: 1) learning to know, 2) learning to do, 3) learning to get together, and 4) learning to be, resulted in a continuous increase in students' English proficiency assessment results through standardized exams provided by the Ministry of Education. Consequently, teachers or those responsible for teaching English, school administrators, educational administrators, and higher education institutions should cooperatively attempt to expand English language development within elementary schools, following the university social service project at the sub-district level in Thailand (U2T).

Recommendations for further research:

This study has shown that good practices for upskilling teachers' English learning management competencies consisted of 9 stages, and the relationship between the stages could be illustrated in a diagram. It is a qualitative research, studied within a limited range and boundaries. Therefore, in order to use the results of the study as an exemplar for development, additional quantitative studies are needed to verify the results prior to further action.

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