

Research Title Innovation Development of Tourism Personnel's English Ability Improvement for Preparation to ASEAN Community at Khao Kradong Volcano Forest Park in Buriram Province

Researchers Assistant Professor Dr. Akkarapon Nuemaihom
Ms. Puttachart Sripattanasakul

Project Period 2014-2015

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this research were 1) to study English needs of the tourism personnel who were officials and vendors of souvenir shops and restaurants at Khao Kradong Volcano Forest Park in Buriram Province, 2) to develop an innovation on tourism English communication for the them, 3) to develop English signs, brochures and product list, and 4) to find out their satisfaction with the innovation on tourism English communication, and English signs, brochures and product list. The populations were composed of officials, vendors of souvenir shops and restaurants, and foreign tourists visiting the site. The samples comprised 40 informants including 13 officials, 15 vendors of the souvenir shops, 7 vendors of the restaurants, and 5 foreign tourists. In addition, 10 representatives of 40 Thai samples including 5 officials, 3 vendors the souvenir shops, and 2 vendors of the restaurants were selected for a focus group discussion. It is noted that the samples were purposively selected. The research instruments consisted of questionnaire, focus group discussion form, innovation for English communication, innovation assessment form, SL-TL form, and satisfaction questionnaire. The descriptive statistics for analyzing the quantitative data were percentage, mean and standard deviation while the content analysis was conducted for analyzing the qualitative data. The research results revealed that:

1. For the English needs, the samples who answered the questionnaire and participated in the focus group discussion said that English was most important and necessary for entering the ASEAN community. They opined that two English skills, speaking and listening, were the most necessary. For the English contents, specific terms and conversations used in their careers were most needed for practicing English.

2. For development of tourism English communication innovation, they shared the same agreement that two types of innovation i.e. booklet and CD were most appropriate for practicing English. For the English topics, the officials needed 11 out of 12 topics, and the vendors needed 19 out of 29 topics.

3. For their needs of English signs, brochures and product list, the Thai samples most needed bilingual signs while the foreign samples most needed English signs for tourism and directional signs. Moreover, the focus group discussion participants most needed the

following signs: welcome sign, directional sign, shop's name sign, food menus, drinking water sign, restroom sign, and prohibition sign, etc.

4. The tourism English communication innovation evaluated by the experts was overall found at the highest level. Taking each aspect into consideration, it was found that the booklet design was ranked first at the average highest level (4.88), and was followed by English CD (4.83) and contents (4.75), respectively. Moreover, development of the English signs, brochures and product list evaluated by the experts was overall found at the highest level.

5. The officials' satisfaction with this English innovation was overall found at the highest level. Having considered each aspect, it showed that their satisfaction with the contents was ranked first at the average highest level (4.84), and was followed by booklet design (4.73) and English CD (4.72), respectively. For the vendors' satisfaction with this English innovation, it was also found at the highest level in overall aspect. Having considered each aspect, it showed that their satisfaction with the booklet design and contents was ranked first at the average highest level (4.81), and was followed by English CD (4.76). For development of the English signs, brochures and product list, it was found that their satisfaction with these English publications was overall found at the highest level.

Keywords: Innovation, English ability, ASEAN community, Tourism personnel, Khao Kradong Volcano Forest Park

