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KMUTT Journal of Language Education

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Editorial

The last issue of *rEFlections* was largely devoted to reports of piloting tasks and methods for use as part of a new undergraduate English curriculum at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi. I'm pleased to say that within the past year, great strides in the successful design and implementation of the new curriculum have been made. We are now well into the second semester of using the new curriculum and all concerned, be they students, teachers or administrators, feel that the new curriculum is a great improvement on the previous courses. The first two articles in this issue of *rEFlections* look at this point in greater detail and are concerned with evaluating the new curriculum. The first, by Pamararat Wiriyakarun, investigates the curriculum from the students' perspective, while the second, by Chada Kongchan and Nunthana Pichaipathanasopon, examines a teacher's reactions. Both papers indicate that the new curriculum has many advantages over the previous curriculum.

The other two papers in this issue also arise out of the new curriculum. Instead of evaluating the curriculum however, they use certain tasks within the curriculum as jumping-off points for research. Sutida Ngonkum investigates the use of consultations in helping students cope with independent learning. Instead of evaluating the usefulness of these consultations, she takes a broader approach in looking for genre patterns from the consultations she has given. I hope that this is the first step in a series of investigations of this area which is badly in need of some serious well-founded research. Similarly, in the last paper, Kasamaporn Maneekhao uses one of the tasks in the new curriculum to investigate an area important both within and outside language learning. The growth of task-based learning and the suitability of resourcing as a task make it imperative that teachers know more about how students search for information. Again, I hope that the paper here is the first in a series of investigations of this area.

This issue is, then, a celebration of the new curriculum at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, looking at the curriculum from different perspectives ranging from broad evaluative overviews to research-oriented investigations of specific points. With this range of linked interests, I believe that this issue makes for valuable reading.

Richard Watson Todd
Editor

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Students' Reactions to Task-based Learning

Pamararat Wiriyakarun

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Abstract

In recent years, task-based teaching has received a great deal of attention both in the literature and in real situations, especially at university level. Task-based instruction is claimed to be a very effective and powerful approach to learning. However, task-based learning may be difficult to implement with Thai students who are accustomed to traditional types of classroom learning and who may be resistant to innovation. This paper examines the reactions of students coming from traditional learning backgrounds to task-based teaching.

Introduction

Traditionally, language learning has been viewed as a syllabus of structure which presents a series of 'ready-to-learn' lessons arranged from easy to difficult. Fluency and accuracy are the ultimate goals of this type of learning (Foster, 1999). In contrast, the task-based approach has been developed to provide an environment allowing language learners engage themselves in meaningful activities, such as problem-solving, discussions, narratives, and information-gap activities. Learners acquire the target language through a more natural process and errors do not signify bad learning or failure in language learning (Ellis, 1994). In other words, the emphasis is placed on meaning rather than form. Sometimes, ill-formed language may be used to complete the tasks. Skehan (1996 cited in Foster, 1999) points out that this problem may not occur if learners have enough time to plan before they begin each task. If so, the complexity, accuracy and fluency of the language they use will be increased as well. In addition, task-based instruction is learner-centered, that is, it requires individual and group responsibility and commitment on the part of students. Within a task-based approach, teachers have to change from traditional roles to more creative and innovative ones (Krahnke, 1987). Proponents of task-based teaching claim that it yields great benefits for both teachers and students.

The National Education Act of 1999 and increasing demands for educational reform have led to pressure for large-scale changes in education in Thailand over the past two years. The terms "learner-centredness" and "innovation" have become talking points among national leaders, educators, teachers and even parents throughout the country. The trends towards new and innovative ELT curricula have been encouraged in Thailand since the late 1990s especially at the tertiary level. A number of Thai universities have expressed concern about existing EFL programs and have made great attempts to promote more effective EFL curricula. King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) is one of the leading universities in curricular innovation, and task-based language teaching is the innovation chosen for the development of the new EFL curriculum.

An innovative EFL curriculum at KMUTT

As a university of technology with undergraduate programmes primarily in science and engineering, the previous EFL curriculum of KMUTT consisted of EST courses which were organised around discrete discourse functions and focused on specific skills. The School of Liberal Arts which provided the English support courses was dissatisfied with them and, as a result, proposed a completely revised curriculum. The proposed curriculum contains two preparatory task-based courses: Fundamental English I (LNG 101) and Fundamental English II (LNG 102), for which students are placed according to their proficiency, followed by a course-length project and a content-based adjunct course (Watson Todd, 2000). The first two courses, Fundamental English I (LNG 101) and Fundamental English II (LNG 102), were taught for the first time in the first semester of the academic year 2000.

These two courses are based around large-scale tasks like Newspapers, Library, Resourcing, Problem-solving and so on. The following is an outline of a typical task on these courses. Another description of a typical large-scale task can be found in Watson Todd (1999).

An Example of a Task-based Unit

Library Task

- Aims: 1. To introduce the library as a resource because there is no fundamental course that teaches students how to do library search and resourcing
 2. To enable students to make use of the library effectively
 3. To introduce basic presentation skills

Duration: 2 weeks (8 periods)

Content: 4 Lessons

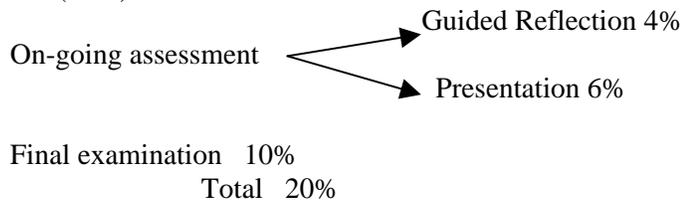
Lesson 1 General information about the library

Lesson 2 General search on selected topics

Lesson 3 Finding a book of interest

Lesson 4 Presentation

Evaluation: (20%)



Lesson Plans

Lesson 1: General information about the library

- Teacher starts with warm up activity (30 minutes)
- Teacher elicits general information about the library from the students.(30 minutes)

- Students work in the library in groups of 3 finding information to complete a worksheet (library questionnaire 1-3). Each group works on a different worksheet. Students hand in their work in next lesson.

Lesson 2: Library search

- Teacher gives feedback to library questionnaire 1-3 (20 minutes)
- Teacher takes students to the library to attend a lecture given by library staff. The lecture focuses on how to conduct a library search.
- Students work in groups of 3 to complete Library Search Questionnaires.

Lesson 3: Finding a book of interest

- Students present the information found in their library search.
- Teacher gives feedback (20 minutes)
- Teacher explains how to make use of sections of the books and how to use them effectively e.g. content pages, indexes, pictures, graphs etc. so that they can get something useful and understandable from the book. Teacher provides examples (30 minutes)
- Students (groups of 3) are assigned to choose a topic of interest, go to the library and find a book of their choice, borrow or photocopy sections from the book they think are useful and relevant to present to the class.(20 minutes) Guided questions for presentation:
 - What is your book about?
 - How do you know the general information without reading the whole book?
 - How did the text organization help you to get the general information?
- Students complete “Guided Reflection” form.
- Teacher prepares students for their presentations (30 minutes)
- Teacher talks about the assessment of the presentation according to the Presentation Assessment form.

Lesson 4: Presentation

- Students in groups of 3 give presentations.
- Teacher and students evaluate the presentations

From this sample task, we can see that the students take on much of the responsibility for learning, that students are given chances in their learning, and that discovery learning takes precedence over teacher-centred deductive learning.

The process of curricular innovation

The process of innovating the new curriculum at KMUTT has been implemented by full-time staff of the Department of Language, who are the users of the new curriculum. The aims of involving language teachers in the innovation process are to decrease any negative perceptions of language teachers that might occur, and on the other hand, to raise their awareness of the benefits of the innovation and to promote sense of ownership (Watson Todd, 2000). Because of this, teachers’ attitudes towards the new courses are overwhelmingly positive (See Kongchan and Phichaiattanasophon, this volume).

The focus of the study

While teachers’ attitudes are important, we must also consider the views of students regarding any innovation, and in this paper, I will discuss students’ reactions to task-

based learning, which differs greatly from the traditional classroom learning students are used to. Such reflections are very important in determining the success or failure of the innovation, and we should not assure that students will automatically respond positively to any innovation (see Shamim, 1996). Evaluations of students' reactions to curricular innovation are a crucial part of the curriculum innovation process, and this paper, aims to fulfil this part of curriculum innovation.

Methodology

Post-course guided journals were used to gain insights into students' attitudes and feelings towards the two preparatory task-based courses which were first taught in the first semester of the academic year 2000. The first three guiding questions for the journals ask students to recall their experience of language learning at secondary level. The remaining three items encourage students to reflect on the new task-based courses. These items were written in Thai to enable students to reflect on their learning by themselves without any teacher interference.

Post-course Guided Journal

Students' Reactions to Task-based Learning

1. Thinking back to secondary school, describe how you learnt English.
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.....
.....
2. Thinking back to secondary school, describe how you felt about English courses.
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.....
.....
3. Thinking back to secondary school, describe what sorts of things you learnt in English classes.
.....
.....
.....
4. Thinking about the current English courses (LNG 101/ LNG102), describe how you learn English.
.....
.....
.....
5. Thinking about the current English courses (LNG 101/ LNG102), describe how you feel about English courses.
.....
.....
.....
6. Thinking about the current English courses (LNG 101/ LNG102), describe what sorts of things you learn in English classes.
.....
.....
.....

Students' reactions to task-based learning

Most of the students described their high-school language learning as following a teacher-dominated chalk and talk approach. Grammar and language skills were the main elements of the English Language syllabi. Mostly, students felt bored with teacher-centered lectures, drills and the emphasis on grammatical accuracy. However, there were some positive views concerning high-school language learning. Some students felt that it was satisfactory since their teachers were very skillful in implementing fun activities in the classroom. In addition, they felt more fun when studying speaking and listening with non-Thai teachers.

In contrast, students' reactions to the task-based courses were overwhelming positive. Some important themes emerge from students' journals.

Firstly, most of the students preferred a learner-centred self-directed approach to a spoon-feeding handout-based one. For example:

“ดี ทำให้ได้ฝึกทักษะไปโดยไม่รู้ตัวและเพราะทุกอย่างต้องเรียนรู้ด้วยตัวเองจึงจำได้แม่นยำกว่าที่จะมีแต่คนคอยสอน”

(Good! We are allowed to practice English without realizing it. As we have to learn everything by ourselves, therefore, we know it by heart. It's better than spoon-feeding method)

Secondly, they were taught to learn “how to learn” rather than simply to memorize facts for tests. For example:

“รู้สึกว่าการเรียนที่นี้สามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ได้จริงเป็นเพราะว่าระดับมัธยมจะสอนเพื่อให้นักเรียนสามารถสอบเอ็นทรานส์ได้ จึงไม่ได้เน้นการนำไปใช้”

(I feel that what we have studied from this course can be applied to real-life situations. This may be because learning English at high-school level aims at enabling students to pass the University Entrance Examinations not for real-world use.)

Thirdly, they enjoyed co-operative learning as well as peer and teacher feedback that encourage close, interactive relationships between teachers and students. For example:

“เป็นการเรียนที่นักเรียนสามารถมีส่วนร่วมในการสอนทำให้มีโอกาสในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ และการเรียนการสอนก็เป็นแบบภาษาอังกฤษทำให้สามารถฝึกการฟังไปด้วย”

(This kind of learning encourages students to participate in selecting activities that allow them to use English in class. Additionally, English is the medium of teaching, and as a result, students can practice listening skills.)

Another important theme is that their language proficiency was raised and their critical thinking skills were also promoted. For example:

“รู้สึกดีและสนุกมาก คิดว่าเป็นวิธีการเรียนที่ได้ประโยชน์ดี ได้ฝึกทักษะในหลายๆด้านด้วยตนเอง รู้สึกต้อง
ตื่นตัวตลอดเวลา”

(I feel good and have a lot of fun. I think that this kind of learning is very useful since I have chances to practice language skills by myself and I have to be active all the time.)

“ในช่วงแรกรู้สึกว่างานจะหนักมากเพราะยังไม่ชินกับการเรียนแบบศึกษาด้วยตนเองแต่มัน ก็ให้ประโยชน์
มาก(ซึ่งมันแตกต่างจากมัธยม คือเราสามารถที่จะเลือกทำข้อเรื่องที่เราน่าสนใจแล้วไปค้นคว้าทำให้เราเข้าใจมากขึ้น) ต่อ
มาก็รู้สึกว่าชอบวิธีการเรียนแบบนี้มากขึ้นเพราะมันทำให้เราพัฒนาความคิดตนเอง”

(At the beginning of the course, I felt that it was a very hard work since I was not accustomed to a self-directed learning method. However, it provided lots of benefits. (It was totally different from high-school learning in that we could select any topics we were interested in and conducted research on those topics. Consequently, we understood our topics better.) Now, I like this kind of learning more than I used to as it helps develop our thinking skill.)

Finally, they realized the application of what they studied in class to real-world situations. For example:

“เรียนโดยการศึกษาค้นคว้าด้วยตนเองแล้วนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ ส่วนมากจะเป็นการสนทนากัน แลกเปลี่ยน
ความคิด เป็นการเรียนโดยใช้การพูดภาษาอังกฤษเป็นส่วนมาก”

(We study by using a self-directed learning method and how to apply what we have learnt to situations in our daily lives. Most of the lessons are concerned with speaking and sharing ideas using English as the medium.)

“ส่วนมากไม่ได้เน้นไวยากรณ์เหมือนในมัธยมปลาย แต่จะเน้นการนำไปใช้ในชีวิต มากกว่า เช่น การ
ได้ฝึกพูด การรายงาน ทำให้คล่องมากขึ้น”

(The course doesn't focus on grammar like secondary school. Instead, its emphasis is on how to apply English in our daily lives such as speaking and giving presentations that help to improve our speaking abilities.)

A small minority of students, however, expressed negative attitudes concerning the difficulty of lessons, the number of assignments, the “strange” teaching method, inadequate resources and so on.

Conclusion

Clearly, the innovation of the EFL curriculum at KMUTT has found great acceptance by the majority of students. This success has been influenced by a number of factors such as teachers' effectiveness in implementing each task, available resources and cooperation from other institutions and so on, not only from the curriculum itself. However, there is still some resistance from those who are afraid of change, and there is a need for some

minor changes and revision of several units. More support from the university as well as the government is also required for the long-term success of this reform.

Overall, the implementation of a task-based curriculum at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi has been a great success, both for teachers and for students. It is hoped that this new curriculum may provide a model of English teaching and learning for other universities in both Thailand and the region. I therefore recommend all language teachers in Thailand to welcome this 'changing time' for nationwide curriculum innovation with a new perspective. As educational philosophy changes, the roles of teachers and students change. Our roles have changed from ordinary teachers to become changing teachers, that is teachers who change something. We should not change only materials and teaching methods. Our attitudes and beliefs should be changed as well. If we cannot do that, it would be impossible to change our students to accept their new roles as independent learners.

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Teacher's Reactions towards Curricular Innovation

Chada Kongchan

Nunthana Pichaipathanasopon

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Abstract

In the last issue of *rEFLECTIONS*, there is an article about the curricular innovation at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (Watson Todd, 2000). This article shows how the curriculum innovation was conducted. Now that the curriculum innovation has been implemented, evaluation of the innovation is needed. This paper presents a case study of what one teacher thinks about the new curriculum. A diary was chosen as the instrument to gain in-depth information. The findings indicate that the teacher analyzed the materials or activities and also her students and her teaching situation since she felt more freedom to adapt the curriculum to the needs of her students than she had felt previously. In addition, there was an improvement in students' attitudes, in their ability to speak, and in the way they presented. From the teacher's perspective, the teacher must develop a sense of ownership and be involved in the curricular innovation as a designer and an implementer for the curricular innovation to be a success.

Curricular Innovation

The Thai education system has been developed on the basis of using the same curricula as a core for the whole country. The curricula, especially for foreign languages, are mainly proposed by experts from 'core' countries like Britain, North America and Australia who do not truly understand the local context and culture. The resulting curricula are often more reflective of developments in ELT and EST in the core countries than the local situation (Holliday, 1994). Perhaps because of this, there is a lot of pressure for change in Thai education as shown by the National Education Act of 1999. Much of this pressure results from dissatisfaction with current teaching curricula and methods, which lead to failure in the Thai education system.

Alternative directions for developing courses and materials and for teaching are needed, particularly in English language teaching. The Department of Language, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) agrees with the need for change and decided to redevelop the whole of its language curriculum.

For the process of curriculum innovation, a tentative curricular framework was proposed which was further honed in a series of meetings among the staff. Certain key characteristics which distinguish the proposed curriculum from the previous curriculum can be noted as follows:

- Students are placed into two groups to allow for the heterogeneity of student intake.

- Courses based on discourse functions and skills have been replaced by process-oriented courses organized around tasks, projects and adjunct content-based learning.
- Courses incorporate self-access learning.

Considering all these key characteristics, it can be clearly noted that they directly serve both the students' learning and the National Education Act (Office of the National Education Commission, 1999).

Within the process of curriculum innovation, however, there were some constraints which had to be taken into account. Most importantly, the curriculum innovation was mainly originated by staff from the Department of Applied Linguistics but the main implementers would be the Department of Language staff. The implementers in curriculum innovation are vital, so involving the implementers in curriculum renewal had to be given the highest priority. The initial reaction from the staff towards the proposed curriculum was worry concerning some teaching and learning constraints like workload, class size, ability to implement the curriculum etc. After some discussion, workshops and the piloting of a task-based unit (Watson Todd, 1999) which have been implemented as "strategic planning" and "tactical planning" (Markee, 1997 pp. 78-81), the curriculum innovation has been set up successfully with the implementers taking the leading role in task design.

Background of the Study

The Department of Language is responsible for providing EST support courses for undergraduate students of other faculties. The previous English curriculum consisted of a four-credit course and the content of the course was based on *Interface* (Hutchinson and Waters, 1984), an EST textbook mainly organized around discourse functions. For the second and third courses, students were given a choice from a set of skill-specific courses, such as Basic reading in EST or Communicative writing in EST. All of these courses underwent frequent modification but the underlying frameworks had remained unchanged for over ten years (Watson Todd, 2000). In addition, there was a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the curriculum from both the teachers and students. The teachers worked hard to produce supplementary materials to make the lessons more attractive and more relevant to the students whereas the students complained that the language input was not sufficient and that the content was boring. For these reasons, an overhaul of the curriculum was proposed. The course new courses take the form of a series of large-scale tasks, such as asking students to find their own resources to complete tasks e.g. the Self-Access Learning Centre, the library and the Internet (see Maneekhao, this volume). These tasks were chosen as a means to bring about both learning skills and language skills of learners in the new curriculum at KMUTT since tasks can provide a purpose for the use and learning of language other than simply learning language items for their own sake. Tasks also encourage hypothesis formation and testing, and teaching directed towards students' needs. Moreover, tasks have the potential to encourage holistic language learning (Rubdy, 1998; Willis, 1994 cited in Srimavin and Watson Todd, 2000).

Evaluation of Curricular Innovation

Any curricular innovation needs evaluation to see whether it is effective or not. This evaluation can be conducted at many points within the process of curriculum innovation, for example during the design of courses or during the implementation of the courses, and it can be conducted by several different groups of people. In this section we will look at who should evaluate the courses.

Either outsiders or stakeholders can evaluate curricular innovations. However, which one is chosen depends on what advantages are required. Even though evaluations of language programs are usually conducted by outside evaluators (Markee, 1997), outsider evaluations have a number of weaknesses. Outsiders may use their own methods which are not applicable in the situation under consideration. Then, the stakeholders might not accept any recommendations for improvement. Though outsiders are believed to be objective and free of conflicts of interest, it might be possible that they may put their own ideas into the evaluation without really understanding the aims of the innovation. Markee (1997) also states that most outsiders also have a limited time to deal with evaluation so they cannot perceive the innovations in the same way as teachers.

The situation at KMUTT is somewhat unique. The teachers were involved in the curriculum renewal at all stages, not only in implementing the new courses but also as participants or stakeholders who worked on the new curriculum right from the start. They were fully involved in the curriculum renewal process, and thus have developed a sense of ownership concerning the ideas in the new curriculum (Watson Todd, 2000). The teachers joined staff development workshops, workshops on learner training, the piloting of a task-based unit, and reading tasks relevant to the proposed curriculum. When everything was ready, all staff in the Department of Language started working together. Courses were designed, materials were made and then the innovations were implemented for the sake of our students.

Given this level involvement and the sense of ownership teachers now have, the evaluators of the innovations at KMUTT could not be anyone else except the insiders. Markee (1997) states that the most useful kind of evaluation is carried out by project participants for project participants or stakeholders (Weir and Roberts, 1994) who will use the results of the evaluation to sustain and develop the innovations.

The evaluation of the curricular innovations at KMUTT, then, was conducted by insiders. Wiriyakarun (this volume) evaluates the new curriculum from the perspective of the students, and in this paper, we look at one teacher's evaluation of the innovation.

Research Methodology

Subject (Ajarn Chada Kongchan)

Change is a complex process and one part of that complexity is the role of teachers' attitudes in the implementation of change (Kennedy and Kennedy, 1997). Ajarn Chada, the subject of this study, is an experienced lecturer in the Department of Language. She has taught both the old curriculum and the new one. She felt that the previous curriculum

was not interesting and attractive since the materials were dry, too specific on language input and lacked variety.

Teaching Situation

The course focused on for evaluation was LNG 101: Fundamental English I, which is the most basic English course offered at the university. This course requires students to spend 4 periods in class and 6 periods outside class for self-access learning per week. The course lasts for 15 weeks. The group of students taught by the teacher-evaluator comprised students of mechanical and chemical engineering. There were 27 students in the class. Most of them were less-able students since, from a placement procedure, they were placed in the lowest possible grouping. The previous experience of language learning of all the students involved a teacher-centred chalk-and-talk approach, and consequently, these students are not autonomous learners. In contrast, they prefer sitting still waiting for a full spoon of knowledge from the teachers. As a result, the approach taken in the new course was an approach unfamiliar to the students.

Data Collection

There several ways in which teachers can evaluate innovations, for example teachers could assess an innovation by survey (through questionnaires), observations, interviews, end-of-course debriefing (a formal interview after a course), group feedback (an informal class discussion), weekly minuted staff meetings (Weir and Roberts, 1994), transcripts of classroom interaction, or teacher's journals (Markee, 1997).

In this paper, the teacher decided to use a diary to gain in-depth information since the other evaluation procedures mentioned above cannot reveal such in-depth information. In addition, information gained from other procedures is kept only once or twice a semester while diary keeping can be conducted throughout the course.

Before class, the teacher-evaluator wrote the lesson plan and then after class, she wrote a diary jotting down whatever had happened in class and how she felt about it. Each diary was approximately two A4 pages in length. Consequently, each diary was divided into three parts. Part one was the lesson plan the teacher prepared for each class. Part two was a record of things happening in class, and part three was the reflections. Though keeping a diary after every single class seemed to be tough, the teacher-evaluator did not become demotivated. Surprisingly, reflection on everything happening in class made her enjoy teaching more and more. It might be because she could understand her teaching situation more clearly.

Findings

The diary was analyzed for frequency and salience of entries by both authors. The first aspect of the diary to consider for analysis was frequency of topic in the entries. From this, three crucial points were identified as occurring frequently throughout the whole diaries. One further aspect, even though it occurred infrequently, will also be discussed since it represents a salient point.

Aspects Occurring Frequently in the Diaries

1. Teacher's Awareness

Throughout the teaching of this innovative course, LNG101: Fundamental English I, it was found that the teacher kept on examining things happening in class all the time. She did not just carelessly follow all materials or activities as suggested step by step. Instead, the teacher always analyzed the materials or activities and also her students and her teaching situation.

“I think that before throwing students to take responsibility for their studies themselves, the teacher should prepare them first e.g. by a placement test for listening. There is not much time for them to cope with their outside class activities especially for reading and listening. Moreover, these students are new; they don't get used to self-access learning. Therefore, I think taking them to do the placement test is better and I can save time waiting for the ones that might not do the placement test.”

(Week 6, July 10, 2000: Placement test)

“In my opinion, students don't have only problems on isolated grammar points or vocabulary but also on writing skills. Moreover, the portfolio and newspaper tasks require students to be able to write or at least to express themselves. Though some writing activities are provided in the newspaper session, I think it's too late to wait for that session. Then I started teaching writing. I think I'll provide and prepare some activities to enable students to be able to write e.g.

- sentences (simple, compound and complex)

- paragraphs (at least a list paragraph)

I also found that in LNG 102, LNG 103 and LNG 104 students need more writing skills from writing an e-mail through bulletin board or discussion list to more academic writing tasks in research writing. If students can't write even a sentence and they don't improve themselves now, they will face a serious problem in LNG 102, LNG 103 and LNG 104.”

(Week 7, July 21, 2000: Feedback session)

“ I feel that evaluating the presentation only once for 6% is not fair because students do not have a chance to practise evaluating their classmates on presentations. So I would like to let students have a chance to practise both presenting and evaluating.”

(Week 8, August 7, 2000: Finding a book of interest)

The above evidence shows how much awareness the teacher gained from teaching a new innovative course.

2. Teacher's Decision Making

The teacher-evaluator revealed that she could make decisions about her teaching freely according to students' needs without any pressure from the curriculum.

“After discussing the plan with students, I have an idea that I would like to link portfolio (class reflection session) to feedback session (consultation 2). Therefore, I plan to join the 2 sessions together because time in class is not enough to do class reflection on portfolio in class. Moreover, what students wrote in their portfolio tasks can be used as a guide to

further their studies to improve themselves. So consultation and class reflection can be combined together.”

(Week 9, August 18, 2000: Time table discussion)

“Teaching about these symbols helps me to indicate students’ errors and also help students understand them. Normally, students express their feeling generally. They do not mention specific examples or clarify themselves. So I encourage them to see the way people express ideas more clearly by adding supporting details for both major and minor details. (I asked students to study a paragraph on diamonds.) I think that one way of teaching people to write is having them see and analyze what and how other people write.”

(Week 7, July 21, 2000: Errors in writing)

“Moreover, I need about 15 minutes to explain about the presentation activity that must be evaluated for 6%. According to the class on August 7, 2000, I assigned students to present only 3 items.

- What is a book about?
- How do you know the general information without reading the whole book?
- How does text organization help you to get general information?

However, I think that these guided questions are not enough and reasonable for the presentation so I add some more questions as follows:

- What is the name of the book?
- Who is the author?
- Explain the process of finding the book.
- Point out at least one problem you faced in finding the book.
- Explain how to solve the problem.”

(Week 9, August 11, 2000: Presentation on a book of interest)

“I felt that news is a special kind of passage. It is not the same as other general passages. However, general passages and news passages have basic structures in common: main idea, major supporting details, minor supporting details and also conclusion. When students want to summarize the news story, they can find out key words from those structures. Then, I decided to introduce a general passage to encourage students to understand clearly what those structures are and how they are used in the passage before dealing with a news story passage.”

(Week 12, September 4, 2000: Newspaper)

“I must find other sources to teach how to write a news story. Fortunately, Ajarn Suthida has a book on basic writing with a chapter on ‘The Journalist’s Questions: Five W’s + H’. So I can study it and find out the idea of how to teach students to write a news story. I feel that the five W’s + H questions will help students a lot in terms of planning, writing a lead and developing the news. Students can start from planning by answering those questions and use them as a plan. Then they can write a lead and finally other paragraphs as a developing paragraph of the lead.”

(Week 13, September 11, 2000: How to write)

“I found that it’s good to have a theme for all teachers to follow the same track. However, there is at least one way out for teachers who have different groups of students to do something else in order to suit their own students and also they can still base on the same track.”

(Week 14, September 22, 2000: Summary and final exam preparation)

The quotations above show that activities were changed, and materials were adapted and even initiated. However, the teacher still followed the objectives of the curricular innovation. In implementing the new curriculum, then, the teacher felt more freedom to adapt the curriculum to the needs of her students than she had felt previously.

3.Limited Time

Limited time is also an aspect stated throughout the diaries.

“No time to do the library search activity because the library timetable is fixed. Students have to present on Monday so they don’t have time to finish their worksheet. They may have to work on Saturday.”

(Week 8, August 4, 2000: Library search)

“Each group spent more than 6 minutes because they were asked questions. It took time because this was the first time students had to ask and answer questions during their presentation. The groups which were the audience faced difficulties in making questions while the speakers could not answer effectively because they had to answer immediately after they heard the questions. In fact, they couldn’t do so since they didn’t practise enough. Therefore, this section took a lot of time and then 2 periods were not enough.”

(Week 9, August 11, 2000: Presentation on a book of interest)

“ I didn’t have time to arrange a practice class for news story summarizing. Therefore, I could only show the suggested summary on KOREA WARNS OF YELLOW WIND DANGER and have students compare it with their work. Then they have to do their summary work individually for 8%. In my opinion, I feel that it is unfair for students to do this task because they have only one chance practising it. Moreover, they have to practise in groups to do the individual final task.”

(Week 12, September 8, 2000: Summary of a news story)

“I don’t have time to deal with the summary of the news story so students have to do their own work themselves. I felt unhappy about this situation but I can’t do anything more for my students because of the limited time.”

(Week 13, September 15, 2000: Second draft)

“The problem was about the limited time. Students couldn’t finish their newspaper poster in time. Therefore, some groups had to keep on working on the exhibition day.”

(Week 14, September 18, 2000: Exhibition day)

“ I didn’t have time to do the activities as suggested so I had to adapt the activity to spend less time. However, it worked. Students enjoyed answering all the questions since those

questions helped them review things they've learnt. Unfortunately, the time in class is limited. So students didn't have so much time to deal with how to prepare themselves for the final exam."

(Week 14, September 22, 2000: Summary and final exam preparation)

Limited time mentioned above shows one serious problem of the curriculum innovation concerning time management. Since the teaching reflected on in this study, however, the amount of work and the number of activities on the course have been reduced.

Salient Aspects

Although diary entries concerning improvement of students occurred infrequently during the semester, they are worth stating because they show how much students have developed themselves through the curricular innovation.

Weak Points

"Students didn't do homework. Therefore, time was spent on doing it in class. I felt upset because this was a big problem."

(Week 3, June 19, 2000: Scanning)

"Students didn't do homework. Most of them ignore the materials I gave them the previous week. This is quite a big problem for Thai students. They don't take responsibility for their studies. They like to wait and take something from their teacher. They don't like to study anything themselves. Perhaps, practising those learning styles for 12 years in Primary school and High School level make them inert."

(Week 11, August 28, 2000: Aims of newspaper task)

Improvement

"Students worked quite well. They paid attention in doing this activity. It might be because everybody took part in this task equally. They also have to present their work in plenary. So they must do their best to show others that they can."

(Week 3, June 23, 2000: Intro to reading)

"I like the worksheet very much because it encourages students to listen to the librarian carefully. It also encourages students to be able to search for the book they want. Students paid attention to the librarian because of the librarians themselves and also the worksheet."

(Week 8, August 4, 2000: Library search)

Weak Point

"Most students can't speak clearly e.g. there are no verbs in their sentences. They just expressed important words."

(Week 2, June 12, 2000: Intro to self-access learning)

Improvement

"Students worked quite well in groups. Everybody worked hard to get the meaning of the vocabulary and find how they got it. The presentation sessions were quite good. They

spoke clearly. They also tried to speak English even though their English was fairly poor. This time I didn't prepare their language for them. However, they could start their presentation."

(Week 4, June 26, 2000: Intro to reading)

Weak Point

"I found that students' problems were as follows:

- Their voice is so soft.
- They didn't speak loudly. Only 4-5 students spoke loudly.
- Students didn't ask questions.
- Students read guided questions and answered them so it made their presentation boring."

(Week 8, August 7, 2000: Finding a book of interest)

Improvement

"I felt happy that students paid more attention to their presentation. However, they have some weak points, e.g.

- They spoke softly.
- They couldn't speak fluently.
- It took so much time to answer the questions.
- The audience asked fewer questions."

(Week 9, August 11, 2000: Presentation on a book of interest)

"Mechanical students did a very good job today. They could explain clearly on each section that appeared in the newspaper. They could also give examples. Moreover, listeners could compare the differences between *The Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. The listeners took notes from what they listened to. They also evaluated their friends on their presentations. In my opinion, I am so proud of my students because these students started LNG 101 with so little ability in speaking. Now they can explain things they've learnt. They can also deal with presentation techniques. They can ask and answer questions according to things they presented. I am very happy for these good things happening in class."

(Week 10, August 25, 2000: Newspaper presentation)

"According to the questions the audience asked, I found that students followed the presentation attentively. Moreover, most of the questions related to the presentation. E.g.

- What do you learn from this book?
- What do you think about this book?
- If you can't find this book in the KMUTT library, how can you do to solve the problem?
- Who is the target of this book? etc.

I also found that the audience tried to ask questions according to the missing points that the speakers forgot to talk about. Moreover, I am very happy to see that this presentation was not only for marks. Students showed that they were really interested in all presentations. It seemed that they were attending a real seminar and participating for real life purpose. All students prepared their presentations in advance. They had their notes.

They organized the content. They also planned to have all members present equally. Even though 5-7 students read more than they spoke, I think that this is all right for a fundamental course like LNG 101. For the overall view, I think they could achieve the goal of this presentation session both for academic and real life purpose.”

(Week 11, September 1, 2000: Presentation on a book of interest)

The improvements shown above are an important and challenging point which suggests that the curricular innovation at KMUTT has been successful.

Conclusion

With the new curriculum, students are showing improvements which were not apparent with the previous curriculum. They show improvements in their attitudes, their ability to speak and the way they presented. These were the most noticed improvements but there were other improvements as well, which were overlooked in this diaries. Overall from the students' perspective, then, the new curriculum is a success.

Since the teacher-evaluator is one of the innovators, she feels more in control of the curriculum than she felt with the previous curriculum. From the diaries, we saw that the teacher's awareness of her teaching was raised and she felt willing and capable to make decisions about changing the contents, or the activities in the materials. Both of these effects may have occurred because the teacher was one of the implementers and designers of the new curriculum. Since she designed the new curriculum, she felt a sense of ownership about it. Therefore, she did not worry about making changes because she was making changes to her own work even though she had not designed that particular unit. In this way, we can see that it is crucial that teachers must be involved in any curricular innovation for the curricular innovation to be a success.

As we can expect with any new innovation, there were problems with the new curriculum, the main one, as we saw through the diaries, concerning time. At the time of writing this article, it is now half-way through the second semester and the time problems seem to have disappeared, because between semesters the teachers worked on reducing the amount of work and activities involved in the new curriculum. Again, they can only do this because they feel that the new curriculum belongs to them and they are free to do what they want. So again, we can see the importance of involving teachers in the curricular innovation.

From this article and from the research into the students' attitudes towards the new curriculum of Wiriyakarun (this volume), it can be seen that the curriculum based on tasks at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi has been a success for all involved both for student learning, for teacher development, or for freedom and control of the course.

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The Genre of Consultations
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Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate the genre moves pattern used in teacher-student consultations which given as support for portfolio learning at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT). The subjects were the undergraduates in KMUTT, who were studying Science or Engineering. The main instrument used in this study was the transcripts from the consultations. In the findings, five compulsory genre moves together with a further three optional moves were found. It is hoped that this five-move pattern may be useful for developing consultations.

General Background

Currently, in English Language Teaching there is an increasing interest in independent learning. Therefore, many institutes including King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) promote independent learning.

To promote independent learning, KMUTT provides a Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) which includes various kinds of facilities (descriptions of the SALC can be found in Tantisawetrat and Chongsuphajaisiddhi, 1995). In addition to providing the SALC, KMUTT is now implementing a new curriculum which aims to provide more learner independence (see Watson Todd, 2000).

The courses in the new curriculum are primarily task-based, but also incorporate autonomous learning, projects and content-based learning. As part of one of these courses, students were required to keep a portfolio and study grammar by themselves through self-access learning. To support student's learning through self-access, consultations with the teacher were provided.

In this situation, teachers act as counsellors who provide guidance and advice to students. From the situation, it is quite clear that teacher's role has changed. Gardner and Miller (1999) argue that the teacher's role dramatically changes from a person who manages the traditional classroom to a counsellor who stands aside and supports students.

The growth in the use of consultations is an important aspect of teaching that teachers need to know about. This has led to some recent research into various aspects of consultations, including the strategies used by counsellors (see Sutthanu, 2000).

However, there has been no previous research into the overall patterns which consultations take. The purpose of this research, therefore, is to provide a basic description of the stages and functions of consultations. In other words, it attempts to provide a functional description of the genre of consultations.

The Genre of Consultations

At present, there has been an increasing interest in the study of genre analysis. Genre analysis is "the study of texts as social phenomena where recurrent patterns of structure and behavior help organize structures and behaviors into comprehensible and effective forms" (Connor and Mauranen, 1999, p. 48).

One key factor in genre analysis is the study of genre moves which are the stages and functions that show a specific communicative purpose (see more details in Bhatia, 1993). The important moves of one genre were once illustrated by Swales' (1990) analysis. Swales discovered that writers of academic research paper displayed similarities in the way they organized their article introductions. The communicative purpose of the article introductions could be divided into four rhetorical moves. Each of these moves serves a communicative purpose or function, which taken together give the genre its communicative purpose (Bhatia, 1993).

In this paper, it is posited that consultations form a genre with a common communicative purpose, and that this purpose is reached through a series of moves. The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to identify the genre moves in a consultation.

Situation

This study was conducted at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, a technological university which is well-known in Thailand. Most students at the university are engineering or science undergraduates.

As has been mentioned above, as part of an English language support course for these undergraduates, teacher-student consultations were provided to support portfolio learning. The consultations were generally given to students in groups of three, pairs or individually. One consultation for each group lasted about 10 minutes.

The main purpose of the consultations was to help students to solve their language problems which may have arisen during self-directed learning and to provide them with paths for future improvement.

The data of this study come from twenty-two consultations. I am both the teacher and researcher who conducted all these consultations. I did not have experience in giving consultations. However, I am quite familiar with the learning situation, and know the characteristics of the students.

As mentioned above, the students came for the twenty-two consultations either in groups of two or three, or individually. There were seven consultations with groups of three students and eleven consultations with groups of two students. The other four consultations were with individual students. All of these students were undergraduates taking evening courses in the faculties of science and engineering.

Methodology

The twenty-two consultations with students were all recorded and the recordings were transcribed. The transcriptions were used as the instrument in this study.

To identify the genre moves from the transcripts, firstly, the transcripts were segmented to identify the stages in consultations. Then, the function served by each stage was identified. This process was conducted recursively. From the stages and functions of stages identified through this process, the frequently occurring functions or genre moves were found. Any moves which occurred in over 80% of consultations were included as the standard genre moves within the consultations. Other function of stages which occurred less frequently were included as optional genre moves within the overall genre of consultations.

Findings

The main findings of this study, then, are the genre moves within the genre of consultations. Within twenty-two transcripts of the 47 students which are the data for this study, the following eight moves were found. Numbers in brackets after each move show the numbers of consultations in which that move occurred.

- 1). Teacher and students greet one another. (21)
- 2). Students report on the work done. (17)
- 3). Teacher checks students' understanding. (12)
- 4). Teacher asks students to talk about their problem. (20)
- 5). Teacher gave explanation or advice to students. (6)
- 6). Teacher asks students to express their attitudes toward consultation. (22)
- 7). Teacher asks students to talk about autonomous learning. (9)
- 8). Teacher and students say good-bye. (16)

From this, we can describe the genre moves of consultations as having the following pattern:

- Move 1: Greeting
- Move 2: Reporting on work
- Move 2a: (Checking students' understanding)
- Move 3: Description of problem
- Move 3a: (Giving explanation/ advice)
- Move 4: Eliciting students' attitudes
- Move 4a: (Guiding towards autonomous learning)
- Move 5: Farewell

Note: Moves in brackets are optional.

To illustrate what each of these moves looks like, the following are examples of transcripts of each moves:

Move 1: Greeting

Student: Good evening teacher, my name is Somwang Chingching.
Teacher: Hello.

Move 2: Reporting on work.

Student: My topic is present perfect tense. Verb form consist of subject... ah ... verb to have and participle. Use for show the activities and events which start in the past and continue to the present.

Teacher: A-ha ... O.K. ... very good!

Move 2a: Checking students' understanding.

Teacher: When can we use present simple tense?

Students: Ah.... Ah at present.

Teacher: At the present time!

Student: Yeah, at present time

Teacher: O.K., very good.

Move 3: Description of problem.

Teacher: What is or what are you problem?

Student1: Ah... problem is my ... ah the structure of sentence... I don't know ... (laugh).

Student2: (smile)

Teacher: Oh! You don't know the structure of sentences!

Student1: (Nod)

Teacher: How can you solve the problem?

Student1: You make example sentence, and you tell me structure.

Teacher: O.K., you want the teacher to teach you, right?

Student1: Yeah.

Student2: (Nod).

Move 3a: Giving explanation/advice.

Student: Um ... I don't know difference when we use ah ... between present perfect and past simple.

Teacher: O.K., ... um ... present perfect began in the past and it's still going on in the present, while ... past simple began in the past and finished in the past. It won't be in the present.

Move 4: Eliciting students' attitudes

Teacher: How do you feel when I ask you to study grammar by yourself?

Student: Ah...exciting!

Teacher: Exciting! Are you happy or not happy to study by yourself?

Student: Happy.

Teacher: Can you tell me why?

Student: Because I can get a new thing or the tip when we... when... I don't remember ... um the tense every tense.

Teacher: Um....

Move 4a: Guiding towards autonomous learning

Teacher: Sompong, do you want me to teach you grammar?

Student1: Uh...no.

Teacher: No! Why?

Student1: I learn grammar in self-access room.

Teacher: How about Sompit? Do you want me to teach you grammar?

Student2: Yes.

Teacher: Why?

Student2: I ... I begin learning no good...(laugh.)

Teacher: So, you don't think that you are good at English now, and you want me to help you, right?

Student2: (Nod)

Move 5: Farewell.

Teacher: Thank you for coming. See you on Friday.

Student: (smile)

Conclusion

This research was introductory and descriptive. Thus it is not clear the extent to which the moves identified in this research will be helpful for learning. However, I hope that this preliminary research has provided some useful information for both teachers and students.

Teachers who do not have experience in giving consultations and who do not know how to start consultations may use the genre moves as a pattern or model to follow. This pattern may be helpful for them to see how they should begin and run their own consultations.

For teachers who have experience in consultations, they may see whether their consultations follow the same genre moves as this. If they do not, they might consider why are different. This leads to the question: Should they change their consultation pattern to fit the pattern identified in this research or should they keep their own pattern because it is preferable?

From these situations, it is hoped that the genre moves identified in this paper would help to make feedback consultations more productive and more useful leading to greater student learning.

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Students' Perceptions of a Library, Self-Access and the Internet

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Abstract

University students are supposed to be able to search for information by themselves. To help students learn this important skill, a resourcing task was then assigned to the first year students. This paper shows the students' attitudes and perceptions towards searching from three information resources, namely, a library, a self-access centre and the Internet. A questionnaire was used to survey the students' opinion towards the three resources after completing the task. This task can increase the students' confidence in using the resources and raise their perceptions towards the resources as well.

Introduction

Recently there has been an increase in the application of task-based learning in English language learning (Legutke and Thomas, 1991; Willis, 1996). One standard task that is commonly assigned to students is resourcing (Tudor, 1996; Watson Todd, 1995). To evaluate students' work, teachers usually check the quality of the content and the language of their written reports or oral presentations. Teachers rarely check how students do actual resourcing or what problems they face when working. This study aims to survey the students' attitudes and perceptions towards three resources: a library, a self-access learning centre, and the Internet.

The Internet, the Library and Self-Access

There are various kinds of resources that students can search for information. Some students have their own books, while some prefer to use their department library. However, in the situation under consideration in this paper the students were suggested to use three different resources, namely, the Internet, the university library and a Self-Access Learning Centre (SALC). This was because all three are large collections easily accessible to students.

During the last five years, a lot of research has been conducted investigating internet-based activities in language classrooms and what the students get from such activities (e.g. Carrier, 1997; Eastment, 1996, 1998; Keyuravong, 1997; Peterson, 1997; Warschauer and Healey, 1998). In terms of a resource, people generally say that the Internet is the biggest library in the world. We can get every kind of information any time and anywhere if the computer is on-line. It also provides a learning environment that is less restrictive than the traditional language classroom (Peterson, 1997). However, there are also some disadvantages to the Internet as an information source, such as the extremely large amount of information, the lack of reliable, relevant and quality information, and the bad organization of information (Kelly and Nicholas, 1996).

Nevertheless, Internet users can gain a lot of benefits. Among a lot of dubious information, there is still a large amount of valuable information which can be accessed free of charge.

A library is a traditional resource that every student is familiar with. It is undoubtedly beneficial since it contains various kinds of information especially those that are relevant to the fields of study and the level of the students in that institute. Several pieces of research have shown the advantages of integrating the library with classroom learning. For example, Hamilton-Pennell (2000) found that the size of the library collection (e.g. books, magazines and newspaper) and whether it has the computers with access to library resources, databases and the Internet are factors influencing students' performance in learning. Olson (2000) also shows the link between higher reading scores and the quality of school libraries. So a dynamic and well-equipped library can help students to gain knowledge and can improve their learning.

Like the Internet and the library, a Self-Access Learning Centre (SALC) is a tool that promotes learner independence and responsibility for learning since the students have to become involved in the learning process such as selecting the materials that suit their level and interest. The major purpose of a SALC is to solve language teaching problems such as mixed-ability classes, and students with different background and needs (Sheerin 1989). However, a SALC can also be a good resource for finding information since it contains not only the materials for learning language but also a lot of reference books, text books, magazines etc. Gardner and Miller (1999), in explaining the different elements of self-access, argue that one is resources that provide learning materials, authentic materials, activities, technology, access to authentic language users, and access to other language learners. A SALC therefore provides students with a third option for finding resources.

The Problem

Many pieces of research and books discuss ways of integrating the Internet, a library, and self-access with classroom learning. Some of them also suggest providing Internet access in a library or even creating an electronic library (Kelly and Nicholas, 1996; Hamilton-Pennell, 2000). However none of this research compares these resources. This is largely because people involved such as librarians see them as complementary resources. However, from the students' perspective, these resources can be competitive since students have to make decisions about which one they should go to first when they need information.

Before taking this course the students had different experiences in using the Internet, a library, and self-access. Doing the resourcing task could make them get used to these resources because they were suggested to use all of them. This study aims to survey the students' perceptions of these resources after completing the task with a particular focus on how students perceive the value and usefulness of the three resources.

Research Methodology

The situation

The ability in searching for information to answer one's own questions is one of the major goals every teacher in the Department of Language at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) would like their students to achieve. Thus a task on Resourcing was carefully designed and put into a new course, LNG 102 (Foundation English II).

The course LNG 102 is a basic English support course which contains 3 big tasks and one adjunct. Resourcing is the second task which lasts 3 weeks. To complete the task, the students work in groups of 4 people and complete the following procedures:

1. The students select a topic. It could be any topic the group was interested in.
2. The students ask themselves what they want to know about the topic. Then they set up at least 3 questions about the topic.
3. The students search for information to answer their own questions. The students take notes and write a summary of each source.
4. The students write a report explaining whether they found the answers to their questions, how they worked, what problems they found, how they solved the problems and what they learned from doing the project.
5. The students give an oral presentation.

The aspect of the task which is focused on in this paper is the third stage where students search for information.

Subjects

After every group of students submitted their written report, a questionnaire was distributed to survey their opinions and attitudes toward each of the three resources. Forty students were asked to complete the questionnaire and thirty-two of them returned completed questionnaires.

These thirty-two students studied in 5 different departments of the Engineering Faculty, namely Civil, Electrical, Production, Instrument and Control Systems, and Electronics and Telecommunications. LNG 102 was their first English course at KMUTT. Like other students, they knew what a library is but many of them had never visited the KMUTT library before. All of them knew how to use the Internet but, before doing the project, many of them (50%) said they were not good at using the Internet. Only 8 students claimed that they could surf the Internet efficiently. Moreover, before entering KMUTT, none of these students had experience with self-access learning.

Student preparation for using the resources

In the first week of this course the students were given an orientation for the KMUTT SALC. They were assigned to work in groups, survey different corners, and report to the class. The teacher also took them to visit the library to listen to an orientation given by two librarians. This orientation included how to use the links provided in the library computers as well. In addition the teacher also discussed in class about how to surf the

Internet efficiently. A handout describing ways of searching the Internet and nine tips for Internet searching was also distributed to the students.

Instrument

To survey the students' attitudes toward these resources, three major areas of questions were asked in the questionnaire. The first concerns the first resource they thought of (before and after doing the project) when they needed information. The second concerns their feelings about the resources (both before and after doing the project) by rating the usefulness, the ease, and their own confidence in using each resource. Lastly, they were asked to describe advantages and disadvantages of each resource. A copy of the questionnaire is given in the appendix.

Findings

Changes in students' perceptions of three resources

According to the survey, before doing the task, the students had positive attitudes towards the three resources. They only seemed uncertain about how to use each of them. However, the students' perception of the three resources became even more positive after they completed the resourcing task. This can be clearly seen in Table 1.

Students' perceptions	Before	After	Percentage change
The library is useful for searching for academic information.	4.65	4.55	-2.17
The SALC is useful for searching for academic information.	3.81	3.94	+3.36
The Internet is useful for searching for academic information.	4.13	4.65	+11.84
It is easy to use the library.	4.06	4.1	+0.98
It is easy to use the SALC.	3.39	3.65	+7.39
It is easy to use the Internet.	4.06	4.32	+6.20
The confidence in finding information from the library by oneself.	3.71	4.16	+11.44
The confidence in finding information from the SALC by oneself.	3.42	3.81	+10.79
The confidence in finding information from the Internet by oneself.	3.87	4.45	+13.95

Table 1: Changes in students' perceptions of three resources

One remarkable change in the students' perceptions is the increase in the confidence in using the three resources. Before doing the task, the average score for this topic is the lowest. However, after finishing the task, a lot of students gain more confidence in using these resources, especially the Internet. This suggests that the resourcing task can successfully increase the students' ability to search for information by themselves.

The change in students' perception of the library appears rather negative in terms of its usefulness and ease since fewer students considered it a useful resource and the ease of using the library barely changed. However, the score of more than 4 out of 5 (for both Before and After doing the task) can be considered very high. This can be seen more clearly when comparing the library with the SALC where the average scores are the lowest among the three resources. On the other hand, the students' perceptions of the SALC became much better after doing the task, especially concerning its user-friendliness.

It seems easier to raise the students' perceptions of the value of the Internet. The data show that, like the library, the Internet obtains very high scores for both its usefulness and ease, both before and after doing the task. However the distinctive difference between the Internet and the library is the high increase in students' perceptions of the Internet after the students finished the task. Consequently the Internet seems to become the most useful and user-friendly resource.

The advantages and disadvantages of the three resources

The reasons for the changes described above can be illustrated by the answers to the third area of questions, the advantages and disadvantages of the three resources, which are shown in Table 2 and 3. Percentages in the table refer to numbers of respondents stating that advantages /disadvantages.

There are two major focuses concerning the advantages and the disadvantages of the three resources: the materials provided and the services.

Advantages		Library	SALC	Internet
Materials	amount / variety of information	84.38%	6.25%	65.63%
	up-to-date information	-	-	6.25%
	having Thai materials	6.25%	-	-
	practise language	-	50.00%	-
	reliable and academic-oriented information	18.78%	3.13%	-
	get expected information	3.13%	6.25%	3.13%
	entertainment	-	6.25%	6.25%
Services	ease to use	53.13%	9.38%	59.38%
	a lot of facilities	-	12.50%	-
	rapid	-	-	46.88%
	familiarity in use	6.25%	-	-

Table 2: The advantages of KMUTT Library, the SALC and the Internet in terms of information resources

Disadvantages		Library	SALC	Internet
Materials	no variety of information	15.63%	34.38%	-
	not enough copies for many users	40.63%	3.13%	-
	books aren't allowed to be borrowed.	3.13%	25.00%	-
	old materials	9.38%	-	-
	too much information	3.13%	-	6.25%
Service	not enough computers for searching for the location of materials	3.13%	-	-
	helpers are not very helpful	-	3.13%	-
	limited opening hour	3.13%	15.63%	-
	many rules and limitations	-	6.25%	-

Table 3: The disadvantages of KMUTT Library, the SALC and the Internet in terms of information resources

The outstanding points in Table 2 and 3 concern the amount and variety of information. A great number of students (over 50% of all students) find the library and the Internet treasures of information while a lot of students (34.38%) complain about the lack of information in the SALC. However, fifty per cent of the students consider the SALC a good resource for language practice. Since the goal of a SALC is supporting language learning whereas libraries and the Internet focus more on providing information, this means that all three resources have achieved their major goal.

The library is also popular in terms of the quality of the information since about eighteen per cent of the students stated that the information in the library is reliable and academic-oriented. Meanwhile the Internet is the only resource whose information is considered up-to-date although the percentage is not very high.

The above inferences can best be illustrated by looking at the students' answers to the opened-ended questions concerning advantages and disadvantages in the questionnaire.

Advantages of the library:

“สามารถที่จะเลือกหนังสือที่ต้องการ หรือสามารถยืมมาที่บ้านได้ และเป็นแหล่งข้อมูลที่ใกล้ตัวที่สุดในมหาวิทยาลัย”
 “Able to select the books needed or able to take them home. It's also the closest resource in the university.”

“สามารถค้นหาข้อมูลทางวิชาการ และอื่นๆ ได้หลากหลาย และหาได้มาก และง่ายกว่าแหล่งอื่น”

“Able to search for academic information and other varieties. It contains a lot of information and is easier to use than other resources.”

Advantages of the SALC:

“สามารถที่จะใช้ฝึกทักษะทุกๆ ด้านที่ต้องการ ในการทำรายงานจะใช้ศูนย์ SALC ในการพัฒนาทักษะในการเขียนและการพูด”

“Able to practise every skill needed. In doing this report, I used the SALC to develop my skills of writing and speaking.”

“ทำให้ได้ฝึกทักษะภาษาอังกฤษเพิ่มขึ้นเพราะเป็นศูนย์ฝึกภาษาอังกฤษโดยเฉพาะ”

“I can practise my English skills more because it is a centre for practising English.”

Advantages of the Internet:

“ได้รับรู้ข้อมูลที่กว้างไกล สามารถหาข้อมูลได้ทุกชนิด ทั้งทางวิชาการ หรือด้านอื่นๆ ด้วยครับ”

“I can get information from everywhere. I can find any kinds of information, both academic and others.”

“สะดวก รวดเร็ว สามารถหาข้อมูลแล้ว copy ลงในdisk ได้ แล้วพิมพ์ออกมาได้เลย ไม่เสียเวลา และสามารถใช้ได้ 24 ชม.”

“It’s convenient and rapid. I can find information and copy it onto a diskette. Then I can print it out right away without wasting much time. It also works 24 hours a day.”

One particular thing area where library cannot compete with the Internet and the SALC is entertainment. Some students prefer a resource that they not only get information but can also relax. Moreover, it is inevitably inconvenient for the students who want the same book to wait until that book has been returned.

The SALC has the opposite problem to the library. The purpose of setting up a SALC is to have students use the materials to study by themselves inside the area provided. As a result most books and materials in this resource cannot be taken home. So some students complained about the number of copies of each book. In addition, many of them (25%) complain about borrowing restrictions.

Amusingly, the Internet, on the other hand, is blamed for having too much information. One student also complained that he wasted time printing out the information.

The following are examples of the students’ explanation about the disadvantages of the materials provided in the three resources.

Disadvantages of the library:

“หาหนังสือได้ยาก มีข้อมูล แต่ส่วนใหญ่จะเป็น textbook ทำให้ต้องเอามาแปลอีก มีคนขี้มมาก ทำให้รอคิวนาน”

“It is difficult to find a book. There is the information needed but it is usually a textbook that needs to be translated. There are a lot of borrowers so I have to wait for a long time.”

Disadvantages of the SALC:

“เวลาในการปิด-เปิด และ การยืมสื่อต่างๆ เช่น ห้องบางห้องเปิดทำการช้ามาก และไม่สามารถยืมสื่อได้”

“The opening hour and borrowing system, e.g. some rooms are opened very late. And I cannot borrow materials.”

Disadvantages of the Internet:

“มีข้อมูลเยอะมาก ทำให้บางครั้งจะหาweb ที่เกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่ต้องการต้องใช้เวลานาน”

“There is a large amount of information. So it sometimes takes a lot of time to get the website that I want.”

As for the services, the majority of the students (more than 50%) consider the library and the Internet easy to use. One supportive reason for the ease of the library is the students' familiarity in using libraries when they were in high school. A lot of the students (46.68%) appreciate the rapid speed in getting information from the Internet. The SALC, however, is appreciated for the facilities provided inside. One major complaint about the SALC is the limitations of the opening hours and the detailed regulations.

A problem in using the Internet is caused by the computer system at KMUTT. Fifty-three per cent of the students complained about the computer facilities in the Computer Centre, such as the low numbers of computer, the poor quality of the computers and the server system.

The students themselves also have personal problems in using the resources as shown in Table 4. One serious problem that needs some solution is that there are still a lot of students who lack skills in using the resource.

Problems	Library	SALC	Internet
inability to understand the materials because of English	6.25%	6.25%	6.25%
not enough time	6.25%	-	3.13%
lack of skills in using the resource	31.25%	9.38%	18.75%

Table 4: Students' own problems in using the resources

Which resource is the first choice in the future?

Among the many advantages of the three resources, the amount and variety of information and the ease of use are the most important factors that the students will take into consideration when they have to select the first resource to use in the future.

According to the survey, both the library and the Internet are popular and regarded as trustworthy among the students. Before doing the task, about 47 % of the students

decided to go to the library first because they believed that the library contained a large amount of information and was easy to use. Some of them claimed they had seen the books they needed before. About 44 % of the students said they intended to use the Internet first because the Internet contains various kinds of information and it is easy to use as well. The SALC was rated less popular.

A number of students changed their mind after completing their task. About 19 % of the students changed from the library to the Internet because of its variety of information and ease of use. Also about 19 % of the students changed from the Internet and the SALC to the library for the same reasons. This shows that, from the students' perception, the library and the Internet are equally good starting places for resourcing.

Conclusion

Before the students did the resourcing task, they already had positive attitudes and perceptions towards the three resources, although they did not have much confidence in using them. Doing this task improves their skills in searching for information which, in turn, leads to more confidence in using the resources. The SALC seems to be the least useful resource of information but the best place for language practice while the library and the Internet are equally important resources of information for the students.

This research also suggests that giving an orientation session is not enough to make students learn something because they can not realize the usefulness of what the teachers teach them by only listening and doing exercises. Moreover, they gain little confidence in applying that knowledge. Thus teachers should bear in mind that the students can learn much better by having an orientation session, together with doing a task. They should also pay attention to the students' process of working, for example how they use information resources. By doing these things, it is hoped that students' ability and confidence in searching for information will be improved so that they can gain fully from their university studies and become more autonomous learners.

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Appendix: The questionnaire used in this study

แบบสอบถามนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อเปรียบเทียบความคิดเห็นและความรู้สึกที่นักศึกษาที่มีต่อแหล่งค้นคว้าประเภทต่างๆ

กรุณาตอบคำถามต่อไปนี้โดยใช้เวลาน้อยที่สุด

1. ชื่อ/นามสกุลภาค

วิชา.....

2. หัวข้อรายงาน (project) สำหรับบทเรียนเรื่อง Resourcing

คือ.....

3. ครั้งแรกที่ทราบว่าจะต้องหาข้อมูลเพื่อทำรายงาน ท่านคิดถึงแหล่งค้นคว้าประเภทใดก่อน

ห้องสมุด

ศูนย์ SALC

Internet

เหตุผล

.....

.....

4. ในอนาคตถ้าท่านจะต้องหาข้อมูลเพื่อทำรายงานอีก (ไม่ว่าวิชาใดก็ตาม) ท่านจะใช้แหล่งค้นคว้า

ประเภทใดก่อน

ห้องสมุด

ศูนย์ SALC

Internet

เหตุผล

.....

.....

5. ตัวท่านเองใช้ internet ในการสืบค้นข้อมูลสำหรับทำรายงานครั้งนี้หรือไม่ ใช่ ไม่ใช่

ถ้าใช่ ท่านคิดว่าตนเองประสบความสำเร็จในการใช้ internet หรือไม่ ประสบความสำเร็จ ไม่

ประสบความสำเร็จ

เหตุผล

.....

.....

ถ้าไม่ใช่ กรุณาบอกเหตุผล

.....

6. กรุณาใส่ ✓ หน้าข้อที่แสดงถึงความสามารถในการใช้ Internet ของท่านก่อนการทำรายงาน ได้ดีที่สุด

----- สามารถใช้ internet สืบค้นข้อมูลได้ด้วยตัวเองอย่างคล่องแคล่ว

----- สามารถใช้ internet สืบค้นข้อมูลได้ด้วยตัวเองแต่ไม่คล่อง

----- สามารถใช้ internet สืบค้นข้อมูลได้ด้วยตัวเองแต่ต้องมีคนแนะนำหรือช่วยเหลือบ้าง

----- ไม่สามารถใช้ internet สืบค้นข้อมูลเลย

(สำหรับผู้ที่ไม่ได้ใช้ internet ในการสืบค้นข้อมูลสำหรับทำรายงานครั้งนี้ ไม่ต้องตอบข้อ 7)

7. กรุณาใส่ ✓ หน้าข้อที่แสดงถึงความสามารถในการใช้ Internet ของท่านหลังการทำรายงาน ได้ดีที่สุด

----- สามารถใช้ internet สืบค้นข้อมูลได้ด้วยตัวเองอย่างคล่องแคล่ว

----- สามารถใช้ internet สืบค้นข้อมูลได้ด้วยตัวเองแต่ไม่คล่อง

----- สามารถใช้ internet สืบค้นข้อมูลได้ด้วยตัวเองแต่ต้องมีคนแนะนำหรือช่วยเหลือบ้าง

----- ไม่สามารถใช้ internet สืบค้นข้อมูลเลย

8. โปรดแสดงความรู้สึกของท่านที่มีต่อแหล่งค้นคว้าประเภทต่างๆ ก่อนการทำ project

5 = มากที่สุด

4 = มาก

3 = ปานกลาง

2 = น้อย

1 = น้อยที่สุด

	5	4	3	2	1	เหตุผล
8.1 ห้องสมุดมีประโยชน์สำหรับการสืบค้นข้อมูลทางวิชาการ						
8.2 ศูนย์ SALC มีประโยชน์สำหรับการสืบค้นข้อมูลทางวิชาการ						
8.3 Internet มีประโยชน์สำหรับการสืบค้นข้อมูลทางวิชาการ						
8.4 ห้องสมุดเป็นแหล่งค้นคว้าที่ใช้งานง่าย						
8.5 ศูนย์ SALC เป็นแหล่งค้นคว้าที่ใช้งานง่าย						
8.6 Internet เป็นแหล่งค้นคว้าที่ใช้งานง่าย						
8.7 มั่นใจว่าสามารถหาข้อมูลในห้องสมุดได้ด้วยตนเอง						
8.8 มั่นใจว่าสามารถหาข้อมูลในศูนย์ SALC ได้ด้วยตนเอง						
8.9 มั่นใจว่าสามารถหาข้อมูลจาก Internet ได้ด้วยตนเอง						

9. โปรดแสดงความรู้สึกของท่านที่มีต่อแหล่งค้นคว้าประเภทต่างๆ หลังการทำ project

5 = มากที่สุด 4 = มาก 3 = ปานกลาง 2 = น้อย 1 = น้อยที่สุด

	5	4	3	2	1	เหตุผล
9.1 ห้องสมุดมีประโยชน์สำหรับการสืบค้นข้อมูลทางวิชาการ						
9.2 ศูนย์ SALC มีประโยชน์สำหรับการสืบค้นข้อมูลทางวิชาการ						
9.3 Internet มีประโยชน์สำหรับการสืบค้นข้อมูลทางวิชาการ						
9.4 ห้องสมุดเป็นแหล่งค้นคว้าที่ใช้งานง่าย						
9.5 ศูนย์ SALC เป็นแหล่งค้นคว้าที่ใช้งานง่าย						
9.6 Internet เป็นแหล่งค้นคว้าที่ใช้งานง่าย						
9.7 มั่นใจว่าสามารถหาข้อมูลในห้องสมุดได้ด้วยตนเอง						
9.8 มั่นใจว่าสามารถหาข้อมูลในศูนย์ SALC ได้ด้วยตนเอง						
9.9 มั่นใจว่าสามารถหาข้อมูลจาก Internet ได้ด้วยตนเอง						

10. ข้อดีของการใช้ห้องสมุดได้แก่

.....

11. ข้อดีของการใช้ศูนย์ SALC ได้แก่

.....

12. ข้อดีของการใช้ Internet ได้แก่

.....

13. ปัญหาและอุปสรรคในการใช้ห้องสมุดได้แก่

.....

14. ปัญหาและอุปสรรคในการใช้ศูนย์ SALC ได้แก่

.....

15. ปัญหาและอุปสรรคในการใช้ Internet ได้แก่

.....

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