

**ENHANCING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH A MONK CHAT-
BASED GUIDEBOOK FOR ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS AT
MAHACHULALONGKORNRAJAVIDYALAYA UNIVERSITY, CHIANG MAI CAMPUS**

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the current challenges and specific communicative needs of English major monastic students in using English during Monk Chat sessions; to develop a Monk Chat-based sessions, to design and evaluate a Monk Chat-based guidebook for enhancing English-speaking skills for English major monastic students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), Chiang Mai Campus, and to compare the effectiveness of a Monk Chat-based guidebook in enhancing English major students' English-speaking skills before and after implementation. The research employed a quasi-experimental design using a one-group pretest and post-test approach. The sample population consisted of 35 first-year and second-year students enrolled in the Monk Chat Program during the 2025 academic year. The research instruments included: (1) a needs analysis questionnaire to investigate students' current challenges; (2) instructional treatment tools, developed Monk Chat-based guidebook and structured lesson plans; and (3) pre-test and post-test speaking assessments used to measure students' English-speaking achievement before and after the intervention. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, to summarize students' levels. The effectiveness of the lesson plans was evaluated using the E1/E2 efficiency formula. E1 represents learning process efficiency, while E2 represents learning outcome efficiency based on post-test performance. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare pre-test and post-test scores in order to determine whether the improvement was statistically significant. The findings of this study addressed the research objectives in three key areas. First, the study found that students faced anxiety, lack of confidence when speaking with foreign visitors, limited vocabulary for explaining Buddhist concepts, and difficulty in managing conversations. Second, based on these needs, the researcher developed a Monk Chat-based guidebook with structured lesson plans that included situational dialogues, targeted vocabulary, Buddhist concepts, and communicative activities such as role-plays and guided discussions to support real-life communication. Third, the results showed that the guidebook improved students' English-speaking skills, as shown by higher post-test scores, as well as

increased confidence and fluency after the implementation. Overall, the guidebook can also serve as a practical instructional model for improving communicative competence in authentic religious and culture contexts.

Keywords: MCCDM Model, Monk Chat, English-Speaking Skills, Monk Chat-Based Guidebook, Communicative Competence

Introduction

English has become a global language that facilitates communication among people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In Thailand, Buddhist temples are popular destinations for international visitors seeking to learn about Buddhism and Thai culture (Prabnok, 2018). Chiang Mai is a major city for its historical temples in Northern Thailand. One such activity is the Monk Chat Program at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Chiang Mai Campus, which provides opportunities for Buddhist monks, novice, university students, and foreign visitors to engage in conversations about Buddhism, culture, and daily life. Monastic students can practice English in authentic communication situations and develop their communicative competence. However, many monastic students have limited opportunities to practice English regularly and gain sufficient experience in communicating with international visitors.

The key issues leading to this research directly relate to the specific communicative challenges monastic students face in Monk Chat sessions. Observations revealed that students often lacked confidence, appropriate vocabulary for explaining Buddhist concepts, and strategies for managing real-time conversations with foreign visitors. Kulsum et al. (2025) found that these emotional problems often lead to reduced participation and reluctance to engage in speaking activities because there are limited opportunities for practice and improvement. Similar challenges have been widely discussed in recent research on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and communicative competence, which emphasize the importance of aligning instruction with learners' authentic communicative contexts and professional needs (Basturkmen, 2019). Studies on willingness to communicate and speaking anxiety further highlight that confidence and interaction readiness are critical factors influencing speaking performance (Lee & Hsieh, 2019). Moreover, the challenges can be categorized into linguistic, psychological, and environmental factors broadly (Jamoom, & Bahron, 2024). Therefore, reviewing prior studies on communicative language teaching, context-based instruction, and ESP provided important references for developing appropriate instructional materials and research instruments.

This study is grounded in contemporary perspectives on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasize meaningful interaction, learner-centered pedagogy, and authentic communication in real-life contexts (Richards, 2006). It also draws upon current interpretations of communicative competence, highlighting the integration of linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence in developing effective speaking ability

(Celce-Murcia et Al., 2014). Furthermore, the principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) support the design of instructional materials tailored to learners' contextual and professional communication needs (Basturkmen, 2010). These theoretical foundations guided the development of the Monk Chat-based guidebook and informed the instructional procedures implemented in this study.

In summary, the identified communicative challenges, together with contemporary communicative and ESP theory, led to the central research question: can a Monk Chat-based guidebook effectively enhance English speaking skills among English major students at MCU, Chiang Mai Campus? Accordingly, the study aimed to systematically develop, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of the guidebook.

Research Objectives

1. To explore the current challenges and specific communicative needs of English major monastic students in using English during Monk Chat sessions
2. To develop a Monk Chat-based guidebook for enhancing English-speaking skills for English major monastic students at MCU, Chiang Mai Campus
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of a Monk Chat-based guidebook in enhancing English major monastic students' English-speaking skills before and after implementation

Methodology

The study employed a quasi-experimental, a one-group pretest-posttest design with the following details:

1. Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design using a one-group pretest-posttest model. The purpose of this design was to investigate the effectiveness of a Monk Chat-based guidebook in enhancing English speaking skills among English major students.

2. Target group and Key Informants

The target group of this study consisted of 35 first and second-year English major students who enrolled in the Monk Chat Program at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), Chiang Mai Campus, during the 2025 academic year. These students were selected because they regularly interacted with foreign visitors and required practical English communication skills.

3. Research Tools (Quantitative and Qualitative)

Both quantitative and qualitative research tools were used in this study. The quantitative tools included: (1) A needs analysis questionnaire, (2) English-speaking pretest and posttest, and (3) Lesson plan efficiency evaluation (E1/E2) to assess the instructional effectiveness of the developed guidebook. The qualitative data came from classroom observations and reflective teaching notes to examine students' engagement, confidence development, and interaction behavior during Monk Chat simulations.

4. Research Instrument Validation

All research instruments, the questionnaire, lesson plan based on Guidebook, were examined for content validity by five experts. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was employed to determine the consistency between each item and the research objectives. Items with IOC values ranging from 0.60 to 1.00 were considered acceptable. To ensure the quality of the research instruments, the questionnaire was pilot tested with a sample of 31 participants to determine its reliability. The reliability coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha method. The analysis revealed that the overall reliability of the questionnaire was $\bar{X} = .878$, indicating a high level of internal consistency and confirming that the instrument was appropriate for data collection.

5. Data Collection

The researcher conducted data collection in four stages. First, a needs analysis questionnaire identified students' communicative challenges and learning needs. Second, students completed an English-speaking pretest. Third, the researcher implemented the Monk Chat-based guidebook through structured lesson plans that included vocabulary support, model dialogues, role-plays, and simulated Monk Chat interactions. During this stage, qualitative data were collected through observations and reflective notes. Finally, students took a speaking post-test to evaluate their improvement.

6. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean ($\bar{X}$) and standard deviation (S.D.), to summarize students' performance and needs analysis results. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare pretest and post-test scores and determine completed as whether the improvement in speaking skills was statistically significant. Qualitative data obtained from classroom observations notes were analyzed using content analysis. The researcher categorized the data into themes such as communicative confidence, participation level, fluency development, and interaction competence. These qualitative findings were used to support and explain the quantitative results.

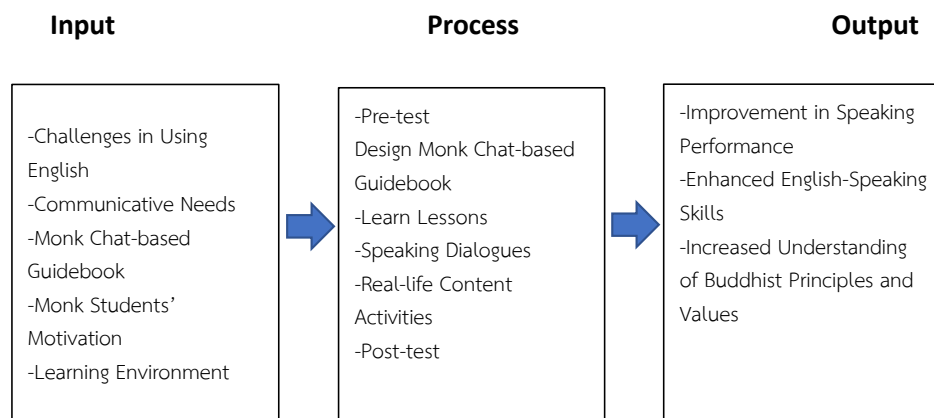


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The framework describes students' English-speaking development through three stages: Input, Process, and Output. In the Input stage, students face communicative challenges such as speaking anxiety, limited Buddhist vocabulary, and low confidence in Monk Chat interactions. The Process stage involves implementing the Monk Chat-based guidebook through structured vocabulary support, guided practice, and simulated activities in a supportive environment. As a result, the Output stage reflects improved English-speaking proficiency, greater confidence, and increased readiness to communicate with international visitors. Overall, the framework demonstrates that structured, context-based instruction can lead to meaningful and measurable improvements in students' English-speaking skills.

Results

The results of this study are presented in accordance with the three research objectives.

1. Result of the current challenges and specific communicative needs of English major monastic students in using English during Monk Chat sessions

Table 1 The personal problems (Students' Anxiety with Speaking English)

No.	Questions	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	I lack confidence in speaking with foreigners.	3.88	0.96	High
2	I don't understand how to start or end a conversation	3.74	1.01	High
3	I lack the vocabulary to use when explaining Buddhist concept.	3.62	1.11	High
4	I feel nervous when I speak English.	3.37	1.33	Moderate
5	I struggle with pronunciation.	3.34	0.93	Moderate
Total		3.59	0.67	High

The results of the needs analysis revealed that students experienced significant challenges in Monk Chat communication. The overall mean score of speaking anxiety was at a high level ($\bar{X} = 3.59$, $SD = 0.67$). Students reported lacking confidence when speaking with foreign visitors ($\bar{X} = 3.88$, $SD = 0.96$), difficulty in starting and ending conversations ($\bar{X} = 3.74$, $SD = 1.01$), and insufficient vocabulary for explaining Buddhist concepts ($\bar{X} = 3.62$, $SD = 1.11$). These findings indicate that students feel nervous when they speak English ($\bar{X} = 3.37$, $SD = 1.33$), and struggle with pronunciation ($\bar{X} = 3.34$, $SD = 0.93$). These results clearly demonstrate the necessity of developing a context-specific instructional guidebook tailored to the communicative demands of Monk Chat sessions.

2. The results of developing a Monk Chat-based guidebook for enhancing English-speaking skills for English major students at MCU, Chiang Mai Campus

The guidebook was developed by the researcher based on the finding of the needs analysis questionnaire and related studies on English speaking, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and Monk Chat communication. The guidebook included structured lesson plans, Buddhist vocabulary lists, model dialogues, common tourist questions, guided speaking activities, and simulated Monk Chat role-plays. The content was organized to progressively build students' confidence and speaking ability. The researcher implemented the guidebook for approximately 2.5 hours per week, over 8 weeks (20 hours total; 2 hours 30 minutes per week) to developing in enhancing English-speaking to monastic students. During the students' activities in each period, the researcher observes the students and takes notes. After students were taught and practiced, the researcher assessed their English-speaking skills after learning (Post-test. The researcher collects data for statistical analysis.

2.1 Results of the analysis of the efficiency (E1/E2) of the lesson plans for development of a Monk Chat-based guidebook for enhancing English-speaking skills for English major monastic students at MCU, Chiang Mai Campus, by finding the efficiency of the process.

Table 2 A Comparison of Post-test and Delayed Post-test Mean Scores

Assessment	N	Percentage (%) of each	Average Percentage (%)	$\bar{X}$
During Instruction Process (E1)	35	1st lesson: 82.80% S.D. = 6.22 2nd lesson: 83.63% S.D. = 6.79 3rd lesson: 82.94% S.D. = 5.33	83.12%	6.09
Post-test Product (E2)			85.03%	5.52

The efficiency of the developed guidebook was evaluated using the E1/E2 efficiency criterion. E1 represents the efficiency of the learning process, calculated from students' performance during the activities, while E2 represents the efficiency of the learning outcome, calculated from students' post-test performance. The results showed that the efficiency of the learning process (E1) was 83.12%, and the efficiency of the learning outcome (E2) was 85.03%. The overall efficiency value of 83.22/85.03%, which is higher than the established criteria of 80/80%, indicating that the guidebook was effective both during the learning process (E1) and in terms of learning outcomes (E2). Therefore, the developed Monk Chat –

based guidebook was considered appropriate and effective for implementation in the Monk Chat Program.

3. Results of the evaluation of the effectiveness of a MonkChat-based guidebook in enhancing English major students' English-speaking skills before and after implementation

Table 3 The results of evaluation the effectiveness of a Monk Chat-based guidebook

Score	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	t	P
Pretest	35	47.11	7.38	-29.38	.000
Posttest	35	85.02	5.51		

The results show that the **pre-test** scores of the 35 students had a mean ($\bar{X}$) of **47.11** with a standard deviation (S.D.) of **7.38**. This indicates that students had a relatively low English-speaking ability with variation before the guidebook was implemented.

After the instructional intervention, the **post-test** scores significantly increased. The mean score rose to **85.02**, with a smaller standard deviation of **5.51**. This shows significant improvement in students' speaking ability and more consistent performance after using the Monk Chat-based guidebook.

The analysis revealed a **t-value of -29.38** and a **p-value of .000** ($p < .05$). Since the p-value is lower than the .05 level of significance, it indicates that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores is statistically significant.

In conclusion, the findings clearly demonstrate that students' English-speaking skills improved significantly after using the Monk Chat-based guidebook. Therefore, the guidebook was effective in enhancing students' speaking performance, and the research hypothesis was supported.

1.The current challenges and specific communicative needs of English major monastic students in using English during Monk Chat sessions

The findings showed that English major monastic students experienced high anxiety when using English during Monk Chat sessions. Many students lacked confidence when speaking with foreign visitors, had limited vocabulary for explaining Buddhist concepts, and struggled to start and end conversations. They also face moderate difficulties with pronunciation, grammar, and responding fluently to spontaneous questions. These challenges are consistent with recent research indicating that speaking anxiety and low willingness to communicate significantly affect EFL learners' oral performance and confidence (Lee & Hsieh, 2019). Furthermore, students expressed strong communicative needs in areas such as making small talk, asking and answering questions, giving clear explanations, and discussing Buddhist teachings, Thai culture, and global issues. This aligns with current studies in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which emphasize that instruction should be closely connected to learners' real communicative contexts and professional

demands (Basturkmen, 2019). Research also supports the effectiveness of context-based communicative instruction in improving fluency and interactional competence when learning tasks reflect authentic communication situations (Sato & Loewen, 2022). Therefore, these findings indicate that monastic students need context-specific, communicative English instruction aligned with real Monk Chat interactions.

2. Developing a Monk Chat-based guidebook for enhancing English-speaking skills for English major monastic students at MCU, Chiang Mai Campus

Based on the identified needs, the researcher developed a Monk Chat-based guidebook and structured lesson plans to promote authentic speaking practice. The guidebook includes situational dialogues, targeted vocabulary, Buddhist terminology explanations, and communicative tasks such as role-plays and guided discussions. The communicative tasks were also aligned with task-based and interaction-focused language teaching approaches, which have been shown to effectively promote speaking development and communicative competence (Yildiz, 2020). Its design was informed by research in materials development and task-based language teaching, which emphasizes authenticity, learner-centered design, and meaningful interaction to enhance speaking performance (Tomlinson, 2020). Furthermore, empirical studies have shown that task-supported and context-based instruction significantly improves EFL learners' oral proficiency and communicative confidence (Hadiansyah et al., 2025). The efficiency evaluation yielded an E1/E2 value of 83.22/85.03, exceeding the 80/80 standard criterion, indicating that the guidebook was pedagogically sound and effective in strengthening students' English-speaking skills in real communicative contexts.

3. The effectiveness of a Monk Chat-based guidebook in enhancing English major monastic students' English-speaking skills before and after implementation

The effectiveness of the Monk Chat-based guidebook was examined through a pre-test and post-test design to measure students' speaking development before and after the instructional intervention. The findings revealed a substantial improvement in English-speaking performance following the implementation of the guidebook. The mean score increased significantly from 47.11 in the pre-test to 85.03 in the post-test, with the difference reaching statistical significance at the .05 level ($t = -29.38, p < .05$). These results indicate that structured, context-based instructional materials can effectively enhance learners' oral proficiency, confidence, and communicative ability in authentic interaction settings. In addition, Medina Fernández (2021) demonstrated through a meta-analysis that task-supported language teaching leads to measurable gains in speaking performance across different learning contexts. Similar findings were reported by Cutrone & Beh. (2018), who found that task-based instruction significantly enhanced EFL learners' speaking ability and willingness to communicate. AL-Garni & Almuhammadi. (2019) confirmed that communicative language teaching approaches significantly improve learners' speaking proficiency and

interactional competence. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Monk Chat-based guidebook was pedagogically effective in strengthening students' English-speaking skills within real Monk Chat contexts.

Discussion

Results of the study can be discussed as follows:

The study found that students had several problems when using English in Monk Chat sessions. Many students felt nervous and lacked confidence when speaking with foreign visitors. They also had limited vocabulary, especially for explaining Buddhist concepts, and had difficulty managing conversations, such as how to start and end discussions. These findings are consistent with previous studies, which show that speaking anxiety and low confidence are common among EFL learners (Anthoney, & Wilang, 2023). In addition, research has found that students often struggle with vocabulary and real-time communication in authentic situations (Jannah et al., 2025). This suggests that students' speaking problems are not only related to language knowledge but also to emotional factors.

The Monk Chat-based guidebook was developed to address these problems. The guidebook included useful vocabulary, translations of Buddhist terms, sample dialogues, and common questions from tourists. Furthermore, there were communicative activities such as role-plays, group discussions, and practice conversations. These activities helped students practice speaking step by step in classroom environment. This approach is supported by studies on English-language guidebooks, which show that materials designed for specific audiences help learners develop their language patterns and apply them in real communication situations (Polishko & Blynova, 2021). In addition, research has shown that students learn more effectively when instructional materials are connected to real-life communication and specific learning needs (Kabilito, 2024). In this study, students needed English for Monk Chats, so the lessons were designed for this purpose. The lesson plans were also carefully designed, following clear steps such as setting objectives, preparing content, planning activities, supporting students with language, and modeling speaking. The efficiency score (83.22/85.03) was higher than the standard criterion, which shows that the lessons were effective and suitable for the students. This supports the idea that well-planned instruction can improve learning outcomes (Ushie & Daniel, 2023).

The results clearly show that guidebook was effective in improving students' English-speaking skills. Post-test scores were significantly higher than pre-test scores, suggesting that the guidebook contributed to students' improvement. This means the improvement of students' English-speaking skills happened because of the tool. In addition, students became more confident, more fluent, and better able to manage conversations. These findings are consistent with previous studies, which show that communicative and task-based learning

can improve speaking skills (Sangkhawasee & Jansem, 2022). The Monk Chat activity gave students real opportunities to use English, which made learning more meaningful.

The findings of this study also support Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which focuses on using language in real communication (Qasserras, 2023). Overall, the study supports the idea of communicative competence, which includes not only grammar but also the ability to use language appropriately in different situations (Salmanova, 2025). The guidebook helped students develop these skills through practice and interaction. In addition, the study supports English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which focuses on teaching language based on learners' real needs. This made learning more relevant and useful. According to (Rahmawati, et al 2025), ESP-based teaching helps improve students' motivation and performance because it is closely connected to real-life use. Another important finding is that speaking is not only about language knowledge but also about confidence and communication skills. This process can be explained through the Monk Chat Communicative Development Model (MCCDM), where students first become aware of their problems, then practice with support, and finally improve their communication skills. This model connects all parts of the study and shows how learning happens in a clear and meaningful way. The study is important because it shows that when teaching is based on real needs and real communication, students can improve both their speaking ability and their confidence.

In conclusion, this study shows that a well-designed, context-based guidebook can effectively improve English speaking skills, especially in real communication settings like Monk Chat. The results demonstrate that when teaching is based on students' actual needs and supported by meaningful practice, students can develop both their language ability and confidence. It also offers a practical model that can be applied to other contexts where learners need to use English in real-life professional communication.

Body of knowledge

This research generated new knowledge in the form of an instructional model for enhancing English speaking skills in a religious and intercultural communication context. The researcher proposes the “Monk Chat Communicative Development Model (MCCDM)” as a structured framework for developing English speaking skills in Buddhist higher education contexts. A Monk Chat setting leads to significant improvement in students' speaking competence.

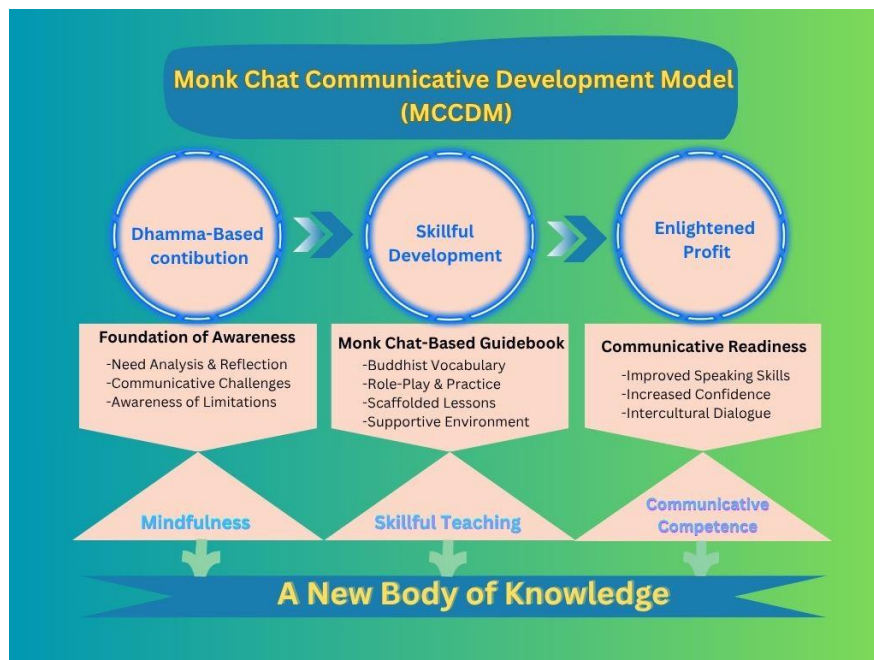


Figure 2: Monk Chat Communicative Development Model MCCDM

This diagram explains how the Monk Chat Communicative Development Model (MCCDM) develops students' English-speaking skills step by step. First, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasizes meaningful interaction and authentic communication as essential elements of language learning. Second, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) supports the development of instructional materials for Specific Purposes (ESP) supports the development of instructional materials tailored to learners' specific communicative needs within Monk Chat contexts. Third, context-based learning facilitates language acquisition through authentic religious and intercultural communication situations. Together, these theoretical foundations explain how monastic students develop English-speaking competence through meaningful practice in contexts.

The MCCDM consists of three interconnected stages: Input, Process, and Output. The Input stage identifies learners' communicative problems and needs, including speaking anxiety, limited Buddhist vocabulary, and low confidence in interacting with foreign visitors. The process stage involves implementing the Monk Chat-based guidebook through structured lessons, role-plays, guided speaking practice, and vocabulary support designed to promote authentic communication. The Output stage reflects the development of promote authentic communication. The Output stage reflects the development of learners' English-speaking skills, confidence, and communicative competence in authentic Monk Chat interactions. Thus, the MCCDM provides a theoretical framework for explaining how context-based and communicative instruction can enhance English language learning in Buddhist educational settings.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aimed to develop and evaluate a Monk Chat-based guidebook to enhance English speaking skills among English major students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. The research employed a quasi-experimental design using a one-group pretest-posttest approach with 35 first and second-year students.

The needs analysis revealed that students experienced high levels of speaking anxiety, a lack of confidence when communicating with foreigners, limited vocabulary for explaining Buddhist concepts, and uncertainty in initiating conversations. Students expressed strong needs for communicative topics such as discussing Buddhist precepts, explaining meditation methods, and responding to visitors' questions.

The developed lesson plans achieved an efficiency level of 83.22/85.03, exceeding the established 80/80 criterion. The comparison of pre-test and post-test scores showed a significant improvement in students' English-speaking ability (pre-test mean = 47.11, post-test mean = 85.03, $t = -29.38$, $p < .05$). The findings confirm that the Monk Chat-based guidebook was effective in improving students' speaking performance, confidence, and communicative competence in authentic contexts.

This study contributes to the body of knowledge in English Language Teaching, particularly in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The findings demonstrate that context-based instructional materials, designed according to learners' real communicative needs, can improve speaking proficiency. In addition, this study proposes a practical instructional model that explains how students develop speaking skills through three connected stages: identifying communicative problems, practicing through structured and guided activities, and achieving improved speaking ability and confidence. This model is significant because it integrates communicative language teaching and English for Specific Purposes within a real religious and intercultural context. It provides a practical framework that can be applied in similar teaching situations where learners need to use English for specific communication purposes. Overall, this study shows that students can improve their speaking skills.

Practical Recommendations

1. Teachers should conduct a needs analysis before designing speaking courses to ensure alignment with students' real communicative demands.
2. Instruction should emphasize authentic tasks, such as role-plays and simulated interactions with foreign visitors.
3. Language scaffolding, including vocabulary lists, model dialogues, and pronunciation practice, should be incorporated to reduce anxiety and build confidence.
4. Both printed and digital formats of guidebooks should be developed to increase accessibility and flexibility in learning.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. Future studies should employ a control group design to strengthen causal conclusions.
2. Research could expand the sample size to include students from other campuses or Buddhist institutions.
3. Longitudinal studies may examine the long-term impact of Monk Chat-based instruction on communicative competence.
4. Further research may explore the integration of digital platforms or mobile applications to support interactive Monk Chat learning environments.

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