

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The main purpose of this study is to develop the English listening and speaking lessons for hotel service personnel through task-based learning and to track the improvement of their English listening and speaking abilities. The research design and method used are discussed as follows:

1. Subject
2. Instrument
3. Lesson plan adjustment
4. Data collecting
5. Data analyzing

#### **3.1 Subject**

The subjects of this study were 14 hotel personnel working at the Amari Rincome Hotel. They were selected by the hotel manager according to their needs of training and were classified into three groups: (1) 3 females and 1 male from the housekeeping section,

(2) 1 female and 4 males from the food and beverage section, (3) 3 females and 1 male from the front office section plus 1 volunteer from the food and beverage section. All three groups started learning English in Prathom 5 and studied English for an average of approximately 7.6 years. Each person has been working at the hotel for at least 5 years.

### **3.2 Instruments**

Two types of instruments, lesson plans and data collecting instruments, were employed. The details of each instrument are discussed as follows:

#### **3.2.1 lesson Plans**

The fourteen English listening and speaking lesson plans were constructed by using task-based activities. The process of constructing the lesson plans included conducting a needs survey, designing a proto-syllabus and writing lesson plans.

### 3.2.1.1 A needs survey

The purpose of constructing a needs survey is to find out learners' needs and interests in learning English for their present career which is hotel service. The needs survey consisted of 5 parts: personal information, learning and teaching techniques, learning style, English communication problems and interesting content. The subjects of this study were asked to complete the needs survey. The needs analysis showed that the subjects wanted to learn English by creating tasks involving the use of English for communication at work. The learning style survey showed that 86% of the subjects are dependent learners in that they still wanted the researcher to correct their mistakes while performing their tasks. They also preferred doing pair work, group work and work with the instructor and the whole class. Regarding English communication problems, most of them had similar problems in that they were unable to get the main point across while having conversations with foreign guests. They also had problems with using appropriate words and correct grammar in making sentences. Besides this, they needed more pronunciation practice. The last part, interest content, were different depending on their jobs. The details of contents are shown in Appendix A-F.

### **3.2.1.2 A proto-syllabus**

A proto-syllabus is a framework for writing lesson plans used for teaching English listening and speaking skills to the subjects. In order to design a proto-syllabus, the curriculum and the course description of English for hotel service were studied and analyzed before setting the course objectives. There were three course objectives for this syllabus, which covered performing functions, communication and problem solving skills. The proto-syllabus was constructed based on the course objectives as mentioned (see Appendix J).

### **3.2.1.3 Lesson plans**

The 14 lesson plans were constructed by using a proto-syllabus as guideline (see Appendix K). Considering the content validity, all lesson plans were checked by the thesis advisor and the co-advisor. They were implemented within 4 weeks from February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2001 to March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001. For the reliability of lesson plans, the mean score obtained from the hotel supervisor, an English instructor from Maejo University and the researcher were compared and they were similar. The details of each lesson plan are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Details of Lesson Plans**

<b>Lesson</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>No. of period</b>	<b>Tasks</b>
	<b><u>For all sections</u></b>		
1	Giving Directions	2	Giving directions
2	Festivals in Chiang Mai	1	Giving information
3	Hotel Services and Facilities	1	Answering about general hotel services and facilities
	<b><u>Housekeeping section</u></b>		
4	Room and Bathroom Features	1	Responding to the requests about room and bathroom features
5	Laundry service	1	Responding to the requests about laundry service
6	Dealing with complaints	2	Responding to the complaints
	<b><u>Food and Beverage Section</u></b>		
7	Taking orders (Room Service)	1	Taking orders and giving suggestion
8	Taking a reservation	1	Taking a reservation and giving information
9	Taking orders	1	Taking orders, giving suggestions and describing dishes
10	Dealing with complaints	1	Responding to the complaints
	<b><u>Front Office Section</u></b>		
11	Reservation and Checking-In	2	Making reservation and checking-in
12	Telephoning	1	Answering the phones and taking messages
13	Checking-out	1	Checking-out
14	Dealing with complaints	1	Apologizing to the complaints
Total	14	17	14

The first 3 lessons were designed for all sections. The rest of the lessons were implemented for different sections. The teaching procedure was based on task-based learning activities that consisted of 3 steps, pre-task, task cycle and language focus (Willis, 1996). In the pre-task step, the instructor introduced the topic, vocabulary, function and expressions used in different contexts. The learners used the linguistic elements provided in the first step for practicing conversation and creating the tasks. In the second step, the task cycle was to create the conversation in the written form using given examples as guidelines. The researcher's role in this step was as a facilitator. The learners performed tasks both in pairs and small groups. After finishing writing a conversation, each group presented their conversation by doing a role play. While performing the tasks, they were assessed by the researcher and their peers. In the third step, the language focus, both the researcher and peers gave comments to the group who performed the tasks about vocabulary, grammar used and pronunciation skills. Each group had a chance to correct their language mistakes and practice more. All three steps were employed in each lesson plan until the end of the study.

During and after finishing teaching, some problems appeared. In the first lesson, the learners had problems with time constraints. The hotel provided 60 minutes per period, as a result the learners did not have enough time for practicing, preparing the tasks and discussing the language mistakes and it negatively affected the learning process. Thus the hotel administrator allowed the researcher to expand the teaching time per period from 60 to 90 minutes. Another problem was that the learners could not pronounce words correctly, so the researcher gave them more time for practicing pronunciation. In the second lesson, which was about doing peer assessment the learners could not give comments on language mistakes. The instructor had to guide them how to do it. In terms of content, there were some lessons that needed content added to make the learners have a chance to practice more. For example tag questions were added in lesson three and knowledge of a.m.,p.m. was added in lesson five. In some lessons, the learners needed to practice more, thus more vocabulary and expressions were added such as lesson 6, lesson 10 and lesson 14. At the same time some lessons were long and not suitable with the time provided, so they were reduced such as lesson 6, lesson 10 and lesson 13. Besides this, in some lessons, the tasks were

separated and not meaningful such as lesson 9, lesson 11 and lesson 12, so they were combined together. Lastly, in each lesson the learners were asked to do the same tasks, which became a little boring, so the researcher gave them choices in changing some parts of doing tasks to make them more interesting.

### **3.2.2 Data Collecting Instruments:**

There were three types of data collecting instruments: (1) lesson plan evaluation form; (2) classroom observation and (3) interview.

#### **3.2.2.1 Lesson plan evaluation form**

The lesson plan evaluation form was a tool used for assessing the effectiveness of the English listening and speaking lessons developed (see Appendices L and M). The 4 main parts of each lesson plan consisted of objectives, content, procedure and task. Each lesson plan was assessed by 3 people, the hotel supervisor, an English instructor from Maejo University and the researcher, for each teaching period using this form.

The effectiveness of each lesson plan is determined by the following mean score interval.



Mean score	Effectiveness
4.50-5.00	Very effective
3.50-4.49	Effective
2.50-3.49	Moderately effective
1.50-2.49	Fairly effective
0.50-1.49	Least effective

Mean of the passing criteria was 2.50

### 3.2.2.2 Classroom observation

Classroom observation was employed for assessing the learners' task performance focusing on their English listening and speaking skills (see Appendices N and O). The learners were assessed by the researcher and their peers for each class. The learners were not only being evaluated in class, they were also evaluated by the manager of each section while performing their duties two weeks after the teaching and learning were finished.

The speaking and listening of the lessons is determined by the following mean score interval.

Mean scores	Listening and Speaking Quality
25.01-30.00	Excellent
20.01-25.00	Very good
15.01-20.00	Good
10.01-15.00	Moderate
5.01-10.00	Fair
0.01-5.00	Poor

### 3.2.2.3 Interview

Interviews were also used for assessing the effectiveness of the course by asking the learners' opinions. The purpose of using the interview was to have direct feedback from the learners, as well as assessing their performances in class. The interview was a structured type, which consisted of questions asking about the effectiveness of the lessons and the improvement of their listening and speaking skills learned through TBL activities.

### 3.3 Lesson Plans Adjustment

The researcher had adapted and modified some parts of the lesson plans to suit the learners' needs. The adjustments were done as a whole lesson and in each section as well.

As a whole lesson, the first adjustment was to expand the time teaching per period from 60 to 90 minutes. At the beginning of the course, the learners were not familiar with the task-based process and they needed more time to discuss the language mistakes in the language focus step. They also needed time to practice their pronunciation and writing skills.

For each section, there were some adjustments. The four section adjustments were: (1) reducing the number of activities; (2) adding more vocabulary and expressions to be used; (3) combining the related tasks together and (4) giving learning choices in changing some parts of doing tasks to make them more interesting. The time practising conversation in some lessons needed to be reduced, such as lesson 6, lesson 10 and lesson 13. Since the dialogues prepared for the learners to practise were of many kinds in each task, and because of time constraints in practising, the instructor needed to select some dialogues for the learners to practise and the rest the learners could practice by themselves. During the learners' task performance, some of the learners came up with questions about vocabulary and expression beyond what the researcher had prepared for them. Therefore, the adjustment for vocabularies and expression

was done during the teaching learning process. For example, in lesson 6, lesson 10 and lesson 14, which were about dealing with complaints for all three sections, the researcher needed to be well-prepared and have a lot of knowledge of vocabularies and expressions. In addition, some of the tasks should have been combined together to make them more meaningful to learners and make them more appropriate for them to work as a group; therefore, some tasks were adjusted before the researcher presented the lessons. For example, lesson 9 mixed 2 tasks: taking orders and explaining dishes. Lesson 11, mixed taking a reservation and checking-in. And lesson 12, mixed answering a phone call and taking a message. In order to make the given task more interesting, the learners could change the names of the persons and places, and change the time to make it related to their real job. For instance in lesson 8, which was about taking a reservation, the instructor changed the name, time and place in taking a reservation in each task. For lesson 12: telephoning, the instructor differentiated tasks by changing the names and the messages.

Based on the lesson plan adjustment above, the teaching period of 14 lesson plans using 14 periods was extended to 17 periods for the 14 lessons.

### **3.4 Data collecting**

There were three types of data collecting instruments: (1) lesson plan evaluation form; (2) classroom observation; and (3) interview. The lesson plan evaluation form was employed by the researcher, the hotel supervisor and an English instructor from Maejo University during the 14 teaching periods. The second instrument, classroom observation was conducted by researcher assessment and peer assessment during 14 teaching periods. The third instrument, interview, was conducted by the researcher only at the end of the last teaching period.

### **3.5 Data analyzing**

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS for Windows) was used in the statistical analyses of the data. The mean ( $\mu$ ) and the standard deviation ( $\sigma$ ) are employed to analyze the data

from the questionnaires, the lesson plans evaluation and the classroom observation.

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