E-Training for Personnel on Business English Communication to ASEAN Community

Jaemjan Boonyopakorn

Rajamangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi, Nonthaburi, Thailand

Email: jaemjan.b@rmutsb.ac.th

Abstract—The research conducted earlier shows that E-training is considered nowadays as a very important issue for business organization because of the benefits it can bring. And it also has developed into a revolutionary way of learning motivation. The purpose of this research is to improve communicative business English skills of personnel for ASEAN community by using E-training . The sample was 45 personnel for instance students, instructors, officers, and any persons who are interested in practice communicative business English skills in community and society for a period of three months. The research instruments were questionnaires, pre-test and post-test, and E-training. The data were statistically analyzed by percentage, mean, t-test, and standard deviation. The results of the research revealed that communicative business English skills of personnel after using E-training increased at the level .001 significantly. The personnel had much satisfaction for training to communicate business English skills by using E-training at mean level 4.15 which is compatible with the earlier research result that motivation to learn, management support and organization support were significant predictors of user satisfaction.

Index Terms—E-training, business English communication, ASEAN community

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization impacts on human life in society around the world. It makes life better, easier, and happier. Digital age education is the most significant life-long learning for them. They are able to learn any topics of text to improve their knowledge for their jobs. They also can practice languages that they are interested in application for their jobs. Electronic training (E-training) is the most popular electronic media to train the personnel any topics of their jobs in companies. It saves cost effectiveness, time and money for their knowledge and skill improvement about jobs. They can gain a great deal of knowledge and practice any skills in English anytime anywhere by using their electronic medias such as a mobile phone, an i-pad, a tablet, etc. E-training provides organizations with an unprecedented opportunity. The information and communications technologies that characterize our age are redefining the future of learning in the workplace. Organizations can use E-training to advance the knowledge and skills of their employees and to create life-long learners (Colin Barrow, 2003). [1]. They can

enroll to the website to train communicative English by themselves with these electronic medias which make them more convenient and economical.

They also are able to run through E-training on their own time and at their own pace, reviewing topics whenever necessary. E-Training system allows them to see who has done which course at the touch of a button so they can easily keep track of overall course completions by various personnel. This real time reporting and provision of training completion certificates enable us to manage the training process very effectively (Lily Byrne, Safety4u) [2] Business English is very necessary to communicate with all personnel in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) community which consists of 10 member countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam (Balbir Bhasin, 2010) [3].

In December, Thailand and the other nine member states of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) are due to join as a single market. Integration will enable the free flow of capital, goods, services and skilled labour. Workers in eight areas - engineers, nurses, doctors, dentists, architects, surveyors, accountants and tourism professionals - will be able to migrate across ASEAN borders. The investors can establish their businesses anywhere, and employees are able to search for job opportunities in neighboring countries with less restrictions than before. The catch is, all 10 countries: Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Cambodia, Brunei, and Indonesia, agree to use English as the language for business. Doing business in the ASEAN countries, all of them have to communicate in English for their business in the nearer future.

"English will be extremely important as a means for communications in business. People with higher skills in English will be at an advantage." (Treenuch Phaichayonvichit, 2015) [4]. "The ability to communicate in English is the most important skill to have," (Witchuda Mas-o-sot, 2015) [5]. It is the effective tool to drive them doing business successfully and progressively. For Thai students' business English listening skills were considered as the most problematic skills, followed by speaking, writing and reading skills respectively (Wipanee Pengnate, 2013) [6]. And also Thai entrepreneurs need to improve communicative English proficiency relevant for tourism and service business,

which can contribute for a higher quality of Thailand's tourism business in the era of ASEAN Economic Community. English has become the working language of ASEAN in 2015. (Singhanat Nomnian, 2014) [7]. So we need to prepare the personnel's business English communication for a competitive edge in the workplace in the nearer future ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). The more they practice business English, the better they communicate in business English fluently. They will also have good understanding, cooperation and relationship for doing business forever.

A. Research Question

The research questions of the study were as follows:
1) Do the personnel increase their communicative business English skills after using E-training?
2) Do the personnel have much satisfaction for training communicative business English by using E-training?

B. Research Purpose

The purposes of the study were as follows:
1) To increase the personnel's communicative business English skills by using E-training.
2) To study the personnel's satisfaction for training communicative business English by using E-training.

C. Research Hypothesis

The research hypotheses of the study were as follows:
1) The personnel improve their communicative business English after using E-training.
2) The personnel have good attitude for training communicative business English by using E-training.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Communicative English

Priscilla Josephine Sarah *et al*. (2004) [8] describe that the phrase 'Communicative English' refers to that English which helps us to communicate effectively with people using language functions.

Jai Bhim International (2008) [9] defines that communicative English is based on real language, as used day-to-day, curious about how language functions, rich in useful vocabulary, expressive, active, and fun.

B. ASEAN Economic Community

The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is the integration of regional economic growth for 2015. The aim of this integration is to develop business and commerce throughout the 10 ASEAN nations. These countries include: Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei and the Philippines.

All 10 ASEAN countries have agreed to use English as the working language for all business communications. Investors and entrepreneurs will now have the opportunity to do business in all 10 ASEAN nations without having any of the restrictions that were applied

before. At corporate level, companies that adapt well to foreign trade will find rapid growth from the use of English. At the same time, workers may also seek promotion or, more profitable ventures within these countries. Therefore, the paramount ability to communicate at all levels will be essential to the development of new business and new opportunities. "With the diversity in ASEAN reflected in our diverse histories, races, cultures and belief systems, English is an important and indispensable tool to bring our Community closer together." (H.E. Le Loung Mihn 2013) [10].

Figure 1. ASEAN member countries

AEC 2015 preparation: Firstly, an understanding of AEC and what it will mean to them as a business owner or as an individual is key in the anticipation of AEC 2015. Secondly, if they are a first time user of English, gaining a basic understanding of the English language is a step in the right direction. If they are an advanced user of English, then taking a Business English course would be highly beneficial in the development of their career.

C. Benefits of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)

It will open more regional cooperation and will improve the scale efficiencies, dynamism and competitiveness of ASEAN members. AEC will enable easier movement of goods, services, investment, capital and people.

Ultimately, it will offer new ways of coordinating supply chains, or access to new markets for established products.
1) All ASEAN countries are more important to foreign investors if they are considered as one node in a larger regional market of nearly 600 million people - a single market.
2) Investment in emerging markets is more desirable than in the US and Europe. "There will be no shortage of funding coming from within ASEAN, the Asia Pacific or even the US and Europe.
3) SMEs accounted for 96% of enterprises and between 50-85% of domestic employment across ASEAN.
4) Tourism opportunity. Asians travels more in the region and there are more travelers from other

countries that have begun to reach out to Asia as new visitors.

5) Internationalization of health care under the AEC. This is definitely a big challenge as it is more complicated than just the popularity of Singapore and Thailand's "medical tourism" that patients travel from one country to another seeking better care at lower cost.

D. E-Training

1) Definition

Newtonstrand (2010) [11] defines that E–Training is an amazing break-through solution which has enabled hundreds of our clients to provide a fast and efficient option for their organizational and business training. It's the "green" way to train your remote and incoming employees. Save time and resources and help save the planet at the same time! E-Training enables employees to be trained before or immediately post-hire from the privacy of their own home.

2) E-Training and development

Colin Barrow (2003) [12] explains that E-training and development enables organizations of any size and in any parts of the world to enjoy the benefits of skilled and well-train workforce.

Cheick Kante (2002) [13] describes that E-training can take professional development to higher levels of achievement and efficiency, it can only build on face-to-face training. Equally important is the supporting virtual community of instructors, mentors, peers and even students.

3) Benefits of E-training

Colin Barrow (2003) [14] explains the benefits of E-training:

a) Just-in-time learning -employers can integrate individual learning with individual needs and provide employees with the knowledge and skills when the "modules" of learning that fit their current needs.

b) Cost-effectiveness - significant savings come from reduced travel expenses and reduced venue costs, and lost productivity time is less as employees and spend "down-time" in training.

c) Improved employees morale- staff are better motivate by being able to retain some of the initiative in training matters.

4) Relevant researches

Osama Harfoushi and Ruba Obiedat (2011) [15] studies that E-training is considered nowadays as a very important issue for business organization because of the benefits it can bring. It is essential to measure the organization's acceptance for the new E-training system before implementing it in order to gain its full potential. The studied factors which are believed to affect the E-training acceptance.

Thurasamy Ramayah, Noor Hazlina Ahmad and Tan Say Hong (2012) [16] study that E-training has developed into a revolutionary way of learning in Malaysian organizations due to rapid growth in information technology infrastructure. The study tested the causal pathway of the factors that could predict the effectiveness

of E-training. Data from 163 employees in multinational companies (MNCs) with prior E-training experience was obtained via survey method. The result revealed that motivation to learn, management support and organization support were significant predictors of user satisfaction.
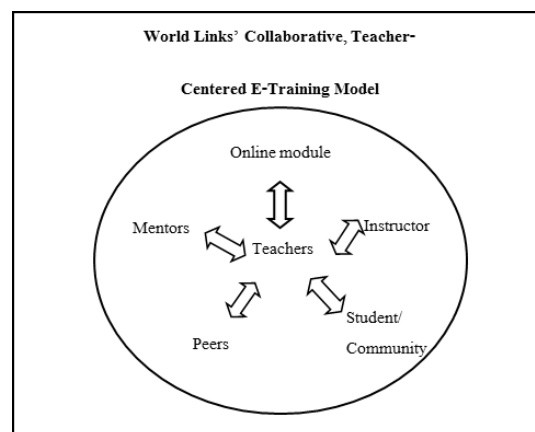

Figure 2. E-training model.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. The Scope of the Research

1) Population and sampling group

a) Population

The population was the total number of 128 personnel in community area in Nonthaburi, Thailand such as students, instructors, officers and others who are interested in practice communicative business English skills by using E-training.

b) Sampling group

The sampling group was the total number of 45 personnel in community area in Nonthaburi, Thailand.

2) Variables

c) Independent variable is E-training for communicative business English skill practice.

d) Dependent variable are:
(1) The personnel's communicative business English skills.
(2) The personnel's satisfaction that practices communicative business English skills by using E-training.

3) Experimental time

The experimental time was 3 months (from June to August, 2014).

4) Content

The content of experiment was the total of 10 lessons for communicative business English skills: welcoming visitors, telephoning, business appointment, business enquiry, business presentation, business negotiation, business trading, business meeting, business plan, and business cooperation.

B. Experimental Scheme

This research was the one group pre-test post-test design:

Group	Pre-test	Trail	Post-test
ER	T1	X	T2

When ER was instead of the sample,
T1 was instead of the pre-test.
T2 was instead of the post-test.
X was instead of the trail.

C. *Experimental Instruments*

1) Questionnaires which surveyed the personnel's needs and satisfaction towards communicative business English skill practice by using E-training.
2) Pre-test and post-test measured the personnel's communicative business English skills by using E-training.
3) The communicative business English skill practice through E-training.

D. *Data Collection*

The data was collected as the following procedure:

1) The researcher surveyed the personnel's needs of communicative business English skill practice by using questionnaires.
2) The personnel enrolled to attend communicative business English skill practice by using E-training through the university website: http://ebc.rmutsb.ac.th/E-training.php.
3) The personnel did the pre-test before practicing communicative business English skill practice through E-training.
4) The personnel practiced communicative business English skills through E-training.
5) The personnel did the post-test after practicing communicative business English skills through E-training.
6) The personnel did the questionnaire about satisfaction towards communicative business English skill practice by using E-training.

Figure 3.   A sample of E-training webpage

E. *Data Analysis*

The data from the personnel's need questionnaire for communicative business English skill practice was statistically analyzed by percentage. The personnel's communicative business English skill practice, and pre-test and post-test were statistically analyzed by mean, the standard deviation, and t-test dependence. The quantitative data from the five-pointed Likert type scale [17], questionnaire towards the personnel's satisfaction by E-training as the five category average mean scores:

4.50-5.00 interpreted as the most satisfaction
3.50-4.49 interpreted as the much satisfaction
2.50-3.49 interpreted as the medium satisfaction
1.50-2.49 interpreted as the less satisfaction
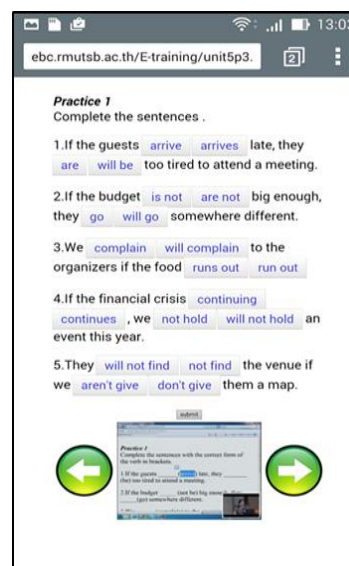1.00-1.49 interpreted as the least satisfaction

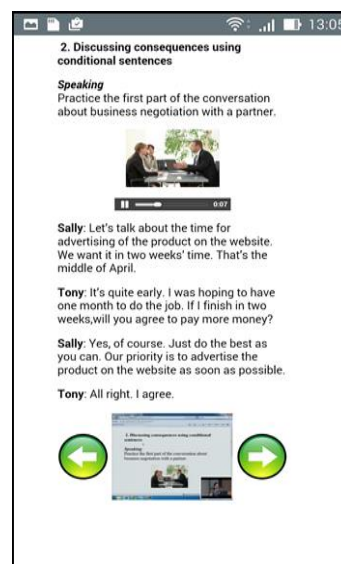Figure 4.   A sample of E-training practice

Figure 5.   A sample of listening practice.

F. *Research Results*

The analysis of questionnaires and test scores for communicative business English skill practice by E-training as follows:

1) The result of the survey can be summarized in term of personnel's needs for communicative

business English skill practice by E-training as shown in Table I.

Figure 6. A sample of practice and test scores.

TABLE I. PERSONNEL'S DETAIL

No.	Items	Percentages (%)
1	Gender 1) Male 2) Female	27.2 72.8
2	Educational background 1) Bachelor degree 2) Master degree 3) Others	79.9 12.2 7.9
3	Occupation 1) Government officers 2) State enterprise officers 3) Company officers 4) Others	23.1 4.2 15.0 57.7
4	Internet user experience 1) 1-3 years 2) 4-6 years 3) 7-9 years 4) 9 years up	7.5 21.6 20.2 50.7

TABLE II. PERSONNEL'S NEEDS COMMUNICATIVE BUSINESS ENGLISH TRAINING

No.	Topics	Need Level (%)
1	Welcoming Visitors	61
2	Telephoning	75
3	Business Appointment	63
4	Business Enquiry	74
5	Business Presentation	71
6	Business Negotiation	50
7	Business Trading	72
8	Business Meeting	64
9	Business Plan	60
10	Business Cooperation	75

TABLE III. THE COMPARISON BETWEEN THE TWO TEST SCORES BEFORE AND AFTER PRACTICE EACH TOPIC

Scores	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
Pre-test	45	58.87	20.87		
				6.446	0.000
Post-test	45	77.31	20.10		

* p<0.01

TABLE IV. PERSONNEL'S SATISFACTION TOWARDS COMMUNICATIVE BUSINESS ENGLISH PRACTICE BY E-TRAINING

No.	Items	Mean	Interpreted
1	The appropriateness of contents	4.25	much
2	The item difficulty of pre-test and post-test	3.87	much
3	The item difficulty of exercises	3.94	much
4	The learning from video	4.13	much
5	The practice for listening	4.19	much
6	The access to the Internet	4.00	much
7	The convenience for practice	3.94	much
8	The modernization of training	4.13	much
9	The utilization of training	4.56	most
10	The adoption skills for careers	4.50	most
	Total	4.15	much

From the data shown in Table I, there were more females than males 55.6%. Almost personnel graduated bachelor degree 79.9%. Most personnel's occupation was government officers 23.1%. The personnel had the Internet user experience at 9 years up 50.**7**%.

According to Table II, almost topics need level were 60%-75% (much), except business negotiation was 50% (medium).

2) The result of the study can be summarized in terms of personnel's communicative business English skills as shown in Table III.

From the data shown in Table III, there is a statistically significant difference between the two communicative business English test scores at .001 level.

3) The result of personnel's satisfaction towards communicative business English skill practice by E-training as shown in Table IV.

According to Table IV, the personnel had much satisfaction (mean= 4.15).

G. Discussion

Research findings can be discussed that:
1) The personnel improve their communicative business English skills after practicing by E-training since they are able to access to the Internet through E-training anytime anywhere. They can get their feedback for practice communicative business English skills. It makes them attempt to practice their communicative business English skills more times. They can communicate business English to Asians fluently and have well preparation to do business for ASEAN community.
2) The personnel have much satisfaction for training communicative business English skills by using E-training at mean level 4.15. They are very convenient to practice their communicative

business English skills all time. There are materials to practice such as audio, video, etc. It motivates them to practice their skills continuously. They also adapt their knowledge and communicative business English skills to their careers for ASEAN community cooperation in the nearer future.

H.   Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that E-training assists the personnel improving their communicative business English skills effectively. They can practice for life-long learning to apply their careers. They also have good opportunities to do business with Asians in ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) successfully.

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Jaemjan Boonyopakorn is an assistant professorat department of Language, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Rajanagala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi, Thailand. She received B.Ed. degree in English, Faculty of Education, Srinakharinwirot University, and M.A. degree in Teach ing English as a Foreign Language from the same university, Faculty of Humanities, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand. She is an author of academic textbook; "English for Technological Learning". She also has experience in improvement on EFL learners' English skills by E-learning researches: "The Development of English News and Information Listening Skills by Using E-learning of Bachelor Degree Students at Rajamangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi" which was published in "International Journal of Multidisciplinary Thought 2012 Volume 02, Number 01. And also "The Effect of E-learning on EFL Learners English Reading Ability Encouragement" which was published in "International Journal of e-Education, e-Business, e-Management and e-Learning, Volume 4, Number 3, June 2014.