
Online Task-Based Language Learning to Enhance Thai Monks' Speaking Performance

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Abstract

This research aimed to achieve two main objectives: (1) to assess the learning achievements in online task-based language learning, and (2) to evaluate satisfaction with the utilization of the online task-based language learning model. The study's population comprised Buddhist monk students from four provinces in Thailand: Chiang Rai, Phrae, Phayao, and Nan. A total of 80 participants took part in a 30-hour English language training program that focused on task-based language teaching (TBLT) implemented through online technology to enhance Thai monks' speaking performance. Zoom and free online tools such as Pronunciation Checker App were integrated into the TBL learning cycle to deliver this online training. The research process can be summarized four stages consisting of orientation stage, pre-practicing stage, practicing stage, and post-practicing stage.

The comparison of learning outcomes before and after the implementation of the instructional model for monks revealed a significant difference in the average scores. The overall score before training was 38.78 (S.D. = 5.85), while the post-training learning outcomes had a higher average score of 47.34

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(S.D. = 4.99). The assessment of satisfaction was divided into four dimensions: (1) content and language usage; (2) English instructional activities for monks; (3) teaching and learning process; and (4) development of English-speaking skills. Overall, participants expressed high levels of satisfaction across all four dimensions of the instructional design approach, with a mean rating of 4.49 and a standard deviation of 0.56.

Keywords: Online task-based language learning, online technology, English speaking skill, Buddhist monks.

1 Introduction

According to the World Population Review (2023) website [1], there were approximately 507 million Buddhists worldwide in 2020, making Buddhism the world's fourth largest religion after Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. English is used as a bridge language in communication with international Buddhist groups, including people of different religions. Consequently, developing Thai monks' English-speaking skills to propagate Buddhism in line with global changes in the twenty-first century is critical, especially in an era of borderless communication. Furthermore, to meet today's changing world, monks and novices have to possess local language, English language and religious understanding simultaneously. In Thailand, Buddhist education consists primarily of the study of Dharma-Pali and general education. Dharma knowledge corresponds to Pali, or the essence of being a monk and novice, whereas general education consists of ordinary, worldly subjects based on the basic education curriculum. Therefore, the monks' English language study is part of their education to prepare the religious descendants with language skills.

Thai monks' role is not limited to the propagation of Buddhism; from the past to the present, monks have also supported education, particularly in areas where the government cannot provide comprehensive education, such as education for the poor. The monks teach them directly or provide them with scholarships or opportunities to attend network schools or Phrapariyattidhamma schools. There are currently 408 Phrapariyattidhamma schools in the general education department offering lower secondary and upper secondary education to a total of 34,634 novices/students [2]. Consequently, the implementation of task-based learning techniques for teaching English-speaking skills to monks serving as educators in schools holds the potential to facilitate the practical application of acquired knowledge in their everyday lives, thereby resulting in advantageous outcomes. However, the majority

of monks face significant obstacles in developing fluent English-speaking abilities because there are few opportunities for them to converse in English as a result of their community's predominance of Thai speakers; cultural norms and traditions may affect their willingness and confidence to converse in English; and their unpredictable schedules make it difficult for them to allocate time to learn a language [3].

Although traditional task-based learning provides benefits such as immediate engagement and exposure to different cultures, it encounters obstacles such as limited opportunities for English conversations and time limitations [4, 5]. Conversely, online task-based learning demands high levels of self-discipline and self-motivation despite offering flexibility and access to an extensive array of resources [6, 7].

By recognizing and addressing the challenges faced by Thai monks in developing English speaking skills, it becomes possible to provide effective solutions that support their language learning journey. Through tailored approaches: technological integration and task-based learning, Thai monks can overcome these challenges and enhance their English-speaking abilities, enabling them to engage with a broader global community and propagate Buddhism.

1.1 Research Objectives

1. To study the learning achievement of online task-based language learning to enhance Thai monks' speaking performance.
2. To assess the satisfaction towards the use of online task-based language learning to enhance Thai monks' speaking performance.

2 Concepts and Theories

This research section compiles studies, research papers, concepts, and theories related to online task-based language learning to enhance Thai monks' speaking performance.

2.1 Speaking Skills

2.1.1 English speaking skills for monks

More and more people, both locally and around the world, are becoming Buddhist because they believe deeply in its principles. Monks and Buddhist instructors play a crucial role in the dissemination of these beliefs, and to expand their reach, they are increasingly employing the English language. Consequently, the acquisition of English-speaking skills has become

indispensable for monks, leading to a transformative role of the language in this context [4, 5]. This evolution encompasses various facets, including the development of pronunciation skills to ensure accurate English word articulation, the cultivation of vocabulary and sentence construction skills to facilitate effective communication and comprehension of English words and sentences, the enhancement of comprehension skills to ensure accurate understanding of spoken or written English content, and the refinement of communication skills to enable effective interaction with English-speaking individuals [8, 9].

2.1.2 Components of speaking skills in english

Speaking a foreign language is a complex process involving language proficiency, speaking skills, and strategies. Speaking skills consist of five main components, working together to ensure effective communication: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension [6, 7].

1. Grammar: Grammar rules are essential for learners to construct correct sentences in both written and spoken forms [8].
2. Vocabulary: Vocabulary refers to the most appropriate or essential terms in a language, particularly for speaking. Extensive vocabulary knowledge allows for the expression of thoughts, feelings, and ideas, both verbally and in writing [9].
3. Pronunciation: Pronunciation is the way we emit the sounds of a language to emphasize how we feel and what we mean [10]. Clear pronunciation ensures that words or speech are easily understood by others.
4. Fluency: Fluency means the ability to communicate smoothly and accurately. It involves using language naturally without pauses [11].
5. Comprehension: Understanding a second language is more challenging than learning and listening because it cannot be directly observed and must be inferred from language responses in both speech and written form [7].

2.2 Task-Based Learning (TBL)

2.2.1 Steps in task-based language learning

Task-Based Learning (TBL) involves a series of steps, as outlined by Skehan (1996) [12] and Ellis et al. (2019) [13], including pre-task, task cycle, and language focus.

1. Pre-task

In this step, the teacher provides activities that introduce relevant knowledge, vocabulary, and language structures related to the upcoming task. Learners receive explanations of the task's objectives, what they should do, and the criteria or guidelines they should follow. This step helps learners understand and prepare for the topic and language they will use in the following task.

2. Task Cycle

This includes 3 phases: task introduction, task performance, and task feedback [13, 14].

- Task Introduction: The teacher introduces the task, providing instructions and objectives. Learners receive explanations of the task's objectives, what they should do, and the criteria or guidelines they should follow.
- Task Performance: Learners engage in the task, using the target language to communicate, negotiate meaning, and solve problems collaboratively. The teacher observes and provides support as necessary.
- Task Feedback: Learners receive feedback on their performance after completing the task. This feedback can come from self-assessment, peer assessment, or teacher assessment and focuses on both language accuracy and task success.

3. Language Focus

This step follows task performance and involves language analysis, language practice, and language integration. First, language analysis refers to the teacher selecting language points relevant to the task, such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, or other language strategies. Direct explanations, examples, and language practice activities are provided [10, 11]. Second, language practice is based on language analysis; learners engage in language practice activities to reinforce their understanding and skills. The third step is language integration [12]. In this final step, learners revisit or extend the task, incorporating new language knowledge and deeper insights into their understanding and communication [13].

It is important to note that task-based learning is a flexible approach that can be adapted to various contexts, emphasizing genuine communication, and integrating language skills into real-world situations [13].

2.3 Online Task-Based Learning

Online task-based learning is an innovative approach to language education that combines the benefits of online platforms with task-based learning methodology. It focuses on providing learners with interactive, real-world tasks that promote active engagement, collaboration, and communication in the target language [14].

In the context of English language learning, online task-based learning offers several advantages, including increased speaking practice, authentic language use, and personalized learning experiences. This approach provides a dynamic and learner-centered way to develop speaking skills by leveraging online platforms, facilitating meaningful tasks, offering immediate feedback, supporting collaboration, and personalizing the learning experience. Willis (2021) [15] conducted a study on the impact of online task-based learning in language education, resulting in significant discoveries and notable effects. Firstly, it has been shown that learners who engage in task-based learning using online platforms have higher levels of language competence in comparison to their peers in conventional instructional environments [16, 17]. Second, online tasks allow students to learn about different cultures, which helps them become more interculturally competent. Thirdly, because online task-based learning is so flexible, students have the freedom to access course materials and complete assignments at their own leisure. In addition, educators in online task-based learning environments frequently assume roles as facilitators and aides, departing from traditional instructional models to support learner autonomy [16]. Finally, it is important to note that online task-based learning provides learners with the necessary abilities for continuous learning and problem-solving in a constantly changing digital environment. This highlights its value in modern education [15]. To ensure success, ongoing research, teacher training, and technological advancements must be prioritized, allowing educators to adapt methodologies and harness the potential of online platforms for language education [15].

3 Research Methodology

This research investigates the implementation of online task-based language learning to improve the speaking performance of Thai monks. The study involves various steps and methodologies, as outlined below.

3.1 Population and Target Group

The study's population consists of Buddhist monks from the provinces of Chiang Rai, Phrae, Phayao, and Nan in Thailand. A total of 80 monks participated in a 30-hour English language training program.

3.2 Data Collection Tools

There are a total of three data collection tools used to create the teaching approach for English speaking skills through language teaching for communication via information technology and communication in monastic education.

1. The assessment forms used to examine the quality of the teaching approach for English speaking skills among monks in terms of suitability and alignment.
2. Proficiency tests in English language skills and classroom activity assessments conducted before and after the training.
3. A satisfaction questionnaire on the English training.

3.3 Research Methodology

Data were collected from a sample group of 80 monks, and the research process can be summarized four stages consisting of orientation stage, pre-practicing stage, practicing stage, and post-practicing stage.

Orientation stage

During the first hour of the first week, all participating monks were introduced to the usage of the Zoom platform for English language communication. Following the orientation, they engaged in English speaking skill training activities, including pronunciation exercises, conversation practice, general English expression, and vocabulary enhancement. These activities align with the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) A2 level standards.

Pre-Practicing Stage

In the second to fifth hours of the course, the students engaged in paired conversation tests within the classroom to assess their speaking abilities. In these sessions, the instructor provided a sample dialogue for everyone

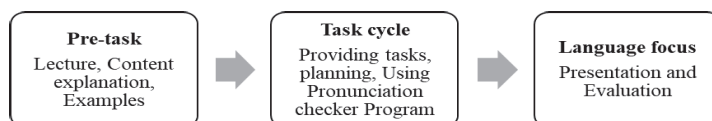


Figure 1 Model of Online task-based language learning to enhance Thai monks' speaking performance.

to practice, focusing on greetings and self-introduction. Subsequently, each pair independently constructed their own dialogues using learned phrases or vocabulary. The monks recorded their dialogues using Google Pronunciation and Pronunciation Checker application to ensure accuracy and boost their confidence. Finally, these dialogues were presented online in the classroom. This approach allowed students to witness best practices through their peers' dialogues. Therefore, the classroom learning format incorporated a task-based learning approach for English language acquisition.

Practicing Stage

On Days 2 to 6 (6th–26th Hours), students practiced English speaking skills and engaged in spontaneous conversations within the defined content framework. The instructor provided examples and specified presentation topics as outlined in Table 1.

Post-Practicing Stage

On the 6th week (26th–30th hour), students assess their English-speaking skills through paired conversations and a read aloud activity, using the same format and methodology as the pre-learning assessment. Subsequently, students evaluate their satisfaction with the instructional format for English speaking skills, which is based on language instruction for communication through information technology and communication tools in teaching.

3.4 Research Instruments

The tools used for data collection included (1) speaking skill assessment and (2) satisfaction questionnaire in the instructional model of online task-based language learning designed to enhance the speaking performance of Thai monks, as follows:

3.4.1 Speaking skill assessment

Speaking skill assessment: the speaking skill assessment was divided into two components: pronunciation assessment for read aloud activity through the

Table 1 Data collection plan

Week	Topics/Activities	Teaching Materials
Week 1 (1st hour)	Orientation: Utilizing information technology in online teaching (Zoom)	– Zoom Application – Lesson plan
Week 1 (2nd–5th hour)	Pair conversation tests (Pre-test) Read aloud through Pronunciation Checker Program (Pre-test) Chapter 1: Introduction to English for Monks – Bridging the Gap: The Need for English Proficiency in a Globalized World – Greetings and Introductions	– Pronunciation Checker Program – Teaching materials – Google Translate Program – Google Pronunciation
Week 2 (6th–10th hour)	Chapter 2: Basics of English Language – Small Talk and Social Interactions – Requesting and Offering Assistance	– Pronunciation Checker Program – Google Pronunciation – Teaching materials – Google Translate Program
Week 3 (11th–15th hour)	Chapter 3: Practical English for Monastic Life – Expressing Needs and Preferences – Describing Daily Activities and Routines	– Pronunciation Checker Program – Teaching materials – Kohoot Application – Random Name Picker Wheel Program
Week 4 (16th–20th hour)	Chapter 4: Giving directions in the temple	– Pronunciation Checker Program – Teaching materials – Google Translate Program
Week 5 (21st–25th hour)	Chapter 5 Describing places (Temple)	– Pronunciation Checker program – Teaching materials – Google Translate
Week 6 (26th–30th hour)	– Pair conversation tests (post-test) – Read aloud through Pronunciation Checker Program (post-test) – Satisfaction questionnaire	– Pronunciation Checker program – Teaching materials – Google Translate

pronunciation checker program, worth 20 points, and a paired conversation assessment (individual scores), worth 40 points, totaling 60 points. The paired conversation assessment (individual scores) – 40 points was conducted by three experts in English language teaching and communication skills, each with more than 10 years of experience in teaching. The assessment was categorized into four main criteria: fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The scoring criteria were adapted from the speaking skill assessment criteria proposed by Rukmini and Saputri (2017) [16].

The utilization of speaking skill evaluation criteria [16] serves several crucial purposes in language assessment and education. These factors provide a standard, objective way to measure how good a person is at speaking. This makes grades more fair and less subjective. Clear performance expectations are established for learners, including assessing several abilities and competencies, such as pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. The utilization of these criteria contributes to the improvement of the validity of

Table 2 Speaking skill assessment criteria (adapted from Rukmini and Saputri, 2017 [16])

Topics	Details	Scores
Fluency	– Highly Fluent	8–10
	– Minimal language-related issues affecting fluency	5–7
	– Occasional hesitation due to language limitations	2–4
	– Disjointed conversations with frequent communication breakdowns	0–1
Vocabulary	– Appropriate vocabulary and expressions usage	8–10
	– Occasionally uses unclear vocabulary that may require clarification	5–7
	– Occasionally employs inappropriate vocabulary	2–4
	– Limited vocabulary hinders effective communication	0–1
Grammar	– Minimal or minor grammatical errors	8–10
	– Occasional errors that do not significantly impact meaning	5–7
	– Frequent errors leading to misunderstandings	2–4
	– Difficulty in comprehension	0–1
Pronunciation	– Extremely clear and easily understandable.	8–10
	– Easily understood even though the influence of the native language was detected.	5–7
	– Pronunciation issues required full listener attention.	2–4
	– Severe pronunciation difficulties that were incomprehensible. (The pronunciation checker program is used for assessment)	0–1
Total scores		40

speech examinations, assuring their ability to properly evaluate the desired capabilities. Therefore, the assessment outcomes become reliable.

3.4.2 Satisfaction questionnaire

To evaluate the use of online task-based language learning to enhance the speaking performance of Thai monks, a satisfaction questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire is divided into three sections: Section 1 – General Information, Section 2 – Satisfaction with the Instructional Format, and Section 3 – Recommendations.

Section 1 – General Information: This section comprises two parts, namely, age and province of residence.

Section 2 – Satisfaction with the Instructional Format: This section consists of four parts: (1) content and Language Usage, (2) activities focused on teaching English speaking skills for monks, (3) teaching and learning process, and (4) Development of English-speaking skills after training, each assessed on a 5-Point Likert Scale, utilizing the 5 levels of the Likert Scale.

Section 3 – Recommendations: Recommendations are provided in the form of open-ended questions to allow respondents to express their opinions fully.

To ensure the questionnaire's validity, the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) was employed as a tool to determine the extent to which each question aligns with the survey's objectives. The IOC was calculated based on the responses of three experts with more than 10 years of experience in teaching English. The calculated reliability coefficient was 0.985, which is close to 1.00, indicating that the questions in the satisfaction survey are reliable and aligned with the survey's objectives.

4 Findings

This study involved the systematic planning, collection, and analysis of data to effectively address the research objectives. The findings of the comparative analysis conducted before and after the training are provided below.

Table 3 Learning outcomes before and after training through read aloud activity with pronunciation checker program

Testing	N	Full Scores	\bar{x}	S.D.	T
Before training	80	20	11.08	4.10	19.50
After training	80	20	13.91	3.52	

4.1 Findings of Learning Achievement

In Table 3, the pre- and post-training learning results were compared using the Pronunciation Checker program. It was found that the average scores for learning outcomes before and after the training were different. The pre-training score using the proactive English language teaching model was 11.08 (S.D. = 4.10), whereas the post-training learning outcomes had a higher average score of 13.91 (S.D. = 3.52).

According to Table 4, speaking performance through paired conversations (individually scored) was evaluated, with a total of 40 points from three experts. The assessment was divided into four main categories: fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The pre-training scores were 27.78 (S.D. = 3.45), while the post-training scores showed a higher average score of 33.43 (S.D. = 2.99).

Table 5 presents the scores of learning outcomes before and after training using online task-based language learning, with a total of 60 points. This includes scores for read aloud activity through the pronunciation checker program with a total of 20 points, and paired conversations (individually scored), totalling 40 points. The overall score before training was 38.78 (S.D. = 5.85), while the post-training learning outcomes had a higher average score of 47.34 (S.D. = 4.99).

4.2 Findings of the Satisfaction Assessment

The first section of the questionnaire includes personal information such as age and the province where the monks reside. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 4 Learning outcomes before and after training through pair dialogues (individual scoring)

Testing	N	Full scores	\bar{x}	S.D.	T
Before training	80	40	27.78	3.45	21.43
After training	80	40	33.43	2.99	

Table 5 Learning outcomes before and after training of read aloud activity and pair dialogues

Testing	N	Full scores	\bar{x}	S.D.	T
Before training	80	60	38.78	5.85	26.06
After training	80	60	47.34	4.99	

4.2.1 General information

Table 6 presents general demographic data of the questionnaire respondents, including the number of respondents and percentages, as detailed below:

Monks' age groups responding to the questionnaire: the majority fall in the age group of 40 to 49 years, with 24 respondents accounting for 30.00%. The age group between 30 and 39 years old comprises 23 respondents, or 28.75% of the total. Consequently, there are 17 respondents under 30 years old, representing 21.25 percent. The total number of respondents aged 50 and older is 16, representing 20.00%.

Provinces represented by monks attending online task-based language learning training: Chiang Rai is the province with the highest participation rate, at 33.75 percent. Next is the province of Phayao at 25%. Then comes Nan province at 21.25 percent. Lastly, Phrae province contributes 20%.

The satisfaction questionnaire regarding the teaching and learning design is divided into four sections: (1) content and Language Usage, (2) English instructional activities for monks, (3) teaching and learning process, and (4) Development of English-speaking skills after training. According to Table 7, a total of eighty monks responded to the questionnaire.

According to Table 7, the assessment findings of the teaching and learning model of English-speaking skills for Thai monks in an online classroom can be categorized into four dimensions. These dimensions include (1) content and language Usage, (2) English language teaching activities for monks, (3) process for teaching and learning management, and (4) post-training

Table 6 General data analysis of survey respondents

Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents		
Age	Number	Percentage
Below 30 years old	17	21.25
30–39 years old	23	28.75
40–49 years old	24	30.00
50 years and above	16	20.00
Provinces		
Chiang Rai Province	27	33.75
Phrae Province	16	20.00
Phayao province	20	25.00
Nan province	17	21.25
Total	80	100.00

Table 7 Evaluation of satisfaction for online task-based language learning to enhance Thai monks' speaking performance

Satisfaction		Teacher Opinion		
		\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
Content and language usage				
1.	The content was engaging and diverse.	4.46	0.57	satisfied
2.	The content was contemporary and suitable for the monks.	4.45	0.63	satisfied
3.	The content was aligned with practical application.	4.48	0.57	satisfied
4.	The content was easy to understand and clear.	4.46	0.57	satisfied
5.	The language used in teaching was appropriate according to language standards.	4.48	0.57	satisfied
Overall average in content and language usage		4.47	0.58	satisfied
English instructional activities for monks				
6.	Speaking practice activities through online classroom games.	4.51	0.50	very satisfied
7.	English conversation activities in the classroom with teachers and peers.	4.60	0.54	very satisfied
8.	Speaking practice activities through role-play.	4.51	0.57	very satisfied
9.	Activities focused on learner-centered learning.	4.46	0.50	satisfied
10.	Task-based learning activities.	4.46	0.59	satisfied
11.	The use of applications to enhance English speaking skills.	4.58	0.55	very satisfied
12.	The use of information technology to make the classroom learning environment more enjoyable.	4.48	0.59	satisfied
Overall average in English language teaching activities for monks		4.51	0.55	very satisfied
Teaching and learning process				
13.	Teaching procedures	4.54	0.50	very satisfied
14.	Activity planning was in line with the objectives set for each lesson.	4.43	0.55	satisfied
15.	Convenience was provided for online participation in activities.	4.51	0.57	very satisfied
16.	Activity planning was flexible and adaptable to the situation.	4.59	0.50	very satisfied
17.	Clear and specific measurement and evaluation were implemented.	4.53	0.50	very satisfied

(Continued)

Table 7 Continued

Satisfaction	Teacher Opinion		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
Overall average in teaching and learning process	4.52	0.52	very satisfied
Development of English-speaking skills after training			
18. The ability to apply acquired knowledge in different contexts.	4.39	0.63	satisfied
19. The ability to disseminate or convey knowledge.	4.41	0.65	satisfied
20. Having more confidence in speaking English	4.58	0.50	very satisfied
Overall average in development of English-speaking skills after training	4.46	0.59	satisfied
Overall average in 4 approaches	4.49	0.56	satisfied

development of English-speaking skills. The satisfaction levels across all four dimensions of the teaching format were high ($\bar{x} = 4.49$, S.D. = 0.56). To summarize:

Content and Language Usage

The satisfaction level regarding content aligned well with practical applications, and the language used for instruction was deemed appropriate based on language principles, with a high level of satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 4.48$, S.D. = 0.57). Following closely was satisfaction with the engaging and diverse content, as well as its easy-to-comprehend and clear content, also rated at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.46$, S.D. = 0.57). Lastly, the content was contemporary and suitable for the monks, with a high level of satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 4.45$, S.D. = 0.63). The overall average satisfaction level for content and language usage was high ($\bar{x} = 4.47$, S.D. = 0.58).

English Language Teaching Activities for Monks

Overall, satisfaction with activities for teaching English language to monks was high ($\bar{x} = 4.51$, S.D. = 0.55). The activity that garnered the highest satisfaction level was the English conversational activities in the classroom with teachers and peers ($\bar{x} = 4.60$, S.D. = 0.54). Following closely was The use of applications to enhance English speaking skills, which received the highest level of satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 4.58$, S.D. = 0.55). Similarly, the activities with the highest satisfaction levels were speaking practice through online classroom games ($\bar{x} = 4.51$, S.D. = 0.50) and speaking practice activities through role-play ($\bar{x} = 4.51$, S.D. = 0.57).

Teaching and Learning Process

Overall, satisfaction with the process for teaching and learning management was at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.52$, S.D. = 0.52). The satisfaction level for “activity planning was flexible and adaptable to the situation” was at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.59$, S.D. = 0.50). Following this was satisfaction with the teaching procedures, also at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.54$, S.D. = 0.50). Furthermore, there was high satisfaction with the implementation of clear and specific measurement and evaluation ($\bar{x} = 4.53$, S.D. = 0.50), as well as the convenience of participating in online activities ($\bar{x} = 4.51$, S.D. = 0.57). Lastly, the monks expressed high satisfaction with the alignment of activity planning with the specified objectives for each lesson ($\bar{x} = 4.43$, S.D. = 0.55).

Development of English-Speaking Skills after Training

Overall, satisfaction with the development of English-speaking skills after training was high ($\bar{x} = 4.46$, S.D. = 0.59). The highest level of satisfaction was associated with increased confidence in speaking English, which was rated at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.58$, S.D. = 0.50). Following closely was the ability to disseminate or convey knowledge gained, also rated at a high level of satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 4.41$, S.D. = 0.65). Subsequently, participants expressed high satisfaction with the ability to apply the acquired knowledge in different contexts ($\bar{x} = 4.39$, S.D. = 0.63).

From the overall satisfaction assessment findings, it can be concluded that the educational effectiveness of the English-speaking skills teaching approach through information technology and communication for monks showed that the post-training outcomes, both from the pronunciation practice application and the committee, had higher scores. Additionally, the satisfaction survey results for all four aspects of the teaching approach were at a high level. Therefore, it can be concluded that this teaching approach is suitable for training and developing English speaking skills for monks.

5 Conclusion, Discussion, and Recommendations

This study aims to construct the online task-based language learning to enhance Thai monks’ speaking performance with underlying two objectives (1) to study the learning achievement of online task-based language learning to enhance Thai monks’ speaking performance and (2) to assess the satisfaction towards the use of online task-based language learning to enhance Thai

monks' speaking performance. The results offered conclusion, discussion and recommendations as outlined below.

5.1 Conclusion and Discussion for Learning Achievement of Online Task-based Language Learning to Enhance Thai Monks' Speaking Performance

From the data presented in Tables 3, 4, and 5, it is evident that there is a consistent improvement in the learning outcomes following training in all three methods: the pronunciation checker program, paired dialogues, and the combination of the two. This suggests that the training methods are effective in enhancing language learning outcomes. Similarly, standard deviation (S.D.), which measures the amount of variability or dispersion in a set of values, was observed to decrease after training in all three instances. This indicates that monks became more consistent in their performance after training. A smaller S.D. suggests that scores were more tightly clustered around the mean, implying less variation among the learners' scores. This can be seen as a positive outcome and the uniformity in improvement further underlines the effectiveness of the training methods employed.

Table 3 displays an increase in the mean score through Pronunciation App from 11.08 (S.D. = 4.10) to 13.91 (S.D. = 3.52), even though their mean scores were relatively low against the full score of 20. The emphasis on pronunciation through technological intervention might have been a contributing factor to this improvement, as agreed upon by Suryani et al. (2019) [17] in their study on the usage of ORAI (orai.com), one of the most famous Android mobile applications for public speaking practice and development. The findings from their study indicated that the majority of the 30 out of 35 participants, or 86%, viewed ORAI as providing more benefits to the teaching and learning process in pronunciation practice class. They stated that ORAI helped boost their confidence in speaking English with proper sounds, thereby improving their pronunciation ability.

Table 4 showed the scores from pair dialogue (scored individually) with a full score of 40. The mean for the pre-implementation was at 27.78 (S.D. = 3.45) while the post-implementation was at 33.43 (S.D. = 2.99). This method promotes real-time interaction and correction, facilitating improved comprehension and application of fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The increase in post-implementation mean scores and the reduction of the standard deviation from 3.45 to 2.99 clearly demonstrate the improvement in the pair dialogue ability of the monk students. This progress can be

attributed to the use of the Pronunciation Checker App before engaging in real-time pair dialogue speaking activities. The software has nurtured their self-confidence in practicing pronunciation skills and increasing the speed of their utterance. This finding aligns with Nasim et al.'s (2022) study [18], which investigated the effectiveness of digital tools, including synchronous and asynchronous online materials, for teaching pronunciation – both segmental (minimal pairs, word recognition, consonant and vowel identification) and suprasegmental (stress patterns), as opposed to traditional methods such as printed materials, drilling, and imitating the teacher among Saudi male EFL undergraduates. Their findings underscored that exposure to digital technology tools significantly improved pronunciation in the experimental group when compared to the control group.

Table 5 displays a significant increase in the mean score, from 38.78 to 47.34, accompanied by a reduction in the standard deviation, from 5.85 to 4.99, respectively, after implementing integrated teaching methods (utilizing the Pronunciation Checker App in conjunction with pair dialogues). Furthermore, this demonstrates that the combined use of both tools (online read-aloud practice with the Pronunciation Checker App and pair dialogues) resulted in a synergistic effect, enhancing the speaking performance of the monk students. This indicates that integrating the use of digital tools for self-practice and incorporating paired dialogues for real-time interaction had a positive and complementary impact on improving the monk students' speaking performance. This improvement is evident in the consistent reduction of the standard deviation across the usage of three different types of speaking activities. Moreover, the assessment of English-speaking skills among the monks, which includes evaluation of content, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, when combined with the utilization of the Pronunciation Checker app and expert guidance from teachers, allows the monk students to self-reflect on their proficiency level, aligning it with their course objectives. This self-directed learning approach empowers them to effectively plan their future courses and enhance their overall learning efficiency.

The findings from the research indicated that the use of technological tools like the Pronunciation Checker Program, when combined with interactive methods such as pair dialogues, can significantly boost learning outcomes. The results consistently showed a rise in post-training scores across different methods, highlighting the efficacy of these tools and techniques in English language learning. The online learning in this research is live online classes which involve real-time communication between teachers and learners through Zoom application. This approach helps enhance the

learning experience promoting engaging and exciting classroom experience. This online learning environment incorporates technology, self-regulated learning, and learning motivation.

5.2 Conclusion and Discussion for Satisfaction Towards the Use of Online Task-based Language Learning to Enhance Thai Monks' Speaking Performance

Assessing satisfaction with the development of English-speaking skills through online technology for monks in Thailand was divided into four aspects: (1) Content and language use; (2) English instructional activities for monks; (3) Teaching and learning process; (4) Development of English-speaking skills after training. The satisfaction was rated by 80 monks who were involved in this instructional platform. The satisfaction in all four aspects was rated at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.49$, S.D. = 0.56).

(1) Content and Language Usage

The satisfaction for content showed alignment with basic communication and is applicable for general use, and the language used in teaching is highly satisfied ($\bar{x} = 4.48$, S.D. = 0.57). This is because the content presented for training is appropriate for the level of the monks and can be used for general conversation, and vocabulary can be applied in various contexts. The emphasis on English pronunciation is in line with Varasayananda and Prakrai (2020) [19] in that English pronunciation skills are important for monks to accurately pronounce English words, enabling effective communication in English. Speaking a foreign language is a complex process that involves language proficiency, speaking skills, and strategies. Speaking skills consist of five key components to facilitate effective communication for speakers and listeners, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension [20, 21]. The content and language used in this training module showed clear connecting dots intertwining content selection suitable for monks with an emphasis on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension, which contributed to high satisfaction results towards content and language usage.

This English-speaking skills development model in this research focuses on developing English communication skills for monks to improve their proficiency in speaking English. This active teaching approach offers monk learners with opportunities to practice communication skills in English in the classroom context by using online applications to build confidence and

promote self-directed practice in various speaking activities and situations. This is done to ensure that learners feel confident in using English for communication with their peers. This active teaching of English-speaking skills development model involves consistent guidance and feedback to enable learners to continuously improve their English-speaking skills. Nurturing motivation in speaking is crucial because speaking English may be something learners feel insecure about and afraid of making mistakes. Therefore, promoting real-life English language practice is essential to giving learners the opportunity to practice and improve their English-speaking skills, and a self-directed approach by using free and ubiquitous internet resources is the key success factor for this approach.

(2) Instructional Activities for Monks

Overall, satisfaction with English language teaching activities for monks was rated at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.51$, S.D. = 0.55). The activity most satisfying is the English language conversation in the classroom with the teacher and their peers ($\bar{x} = 4.60$, S.D. = 0.54). Following closely is the use of language learning applications to enhance English speaking skills, which is also at the highest level of satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 4.58$, S.D. = 0.55).

The satisfaction towards teaching activities at the highest level on conversation activities with the teacher and fellow learners indicated positive interaction for the online class instruction. After the classroom session, the monks further expand their knowledge by applying techniques trained in the classroom to self-practice at the temple using various language learning applications. They utilized Google Translate to assist with scriptwriting for speaking practice and trained their listening and pronunciation skills on their own by using the Pronunciation Checker App. The Pronunciation Checker is used to determine the correctness of English pronunciation by comparing the user's pronunciation with the actual pronunciation of English words. This helps users improve their pronunciation and speaking skills more clearly. As a result, the monks gain greater confidence in speaking English, both inside and outside the classroom [22].

Another key success factor intertwining with online technology integration into teaching and using applications in online classrooms was the various activities used in English language instruction to create a constructive learning environment for monk students. These activities included games and speaking exercises with teachers and peers in the online classroom. The teaching activities aligned with Dos Santos (2020) [23] in that teaching language for communicative purposes required an integrated

approach that combined various teaching techniques. The primary focus was on communication-based teaching, which involves direct instruction, modelling, and memory integration during listening, reading, and speaking activities. Grammar was also incorporated into the teaching for language skill development.

(3) Teaching and learning process

After training, the monks rated satisfaction regarding the teaching and learning processes overall at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.52$, S.D. = 0.52). The satisfaction at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.59$, S.D. = 0.50) was also offered to activity planning, which was flexible and adaptable to the situation. Slightly lower was the satisfaction with the teaching procedures, which was rated at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.54$, S.D. = 0.50).

In sum, the communicative language skills teaching approach through online technology for monks regarding teaching and learning process management is highly suitable for online classrooms for monks.

(4) Development of English-speaking skills after training

The monks' satisfaction with the English-speaking skills development model using a task-based learning approach and online technology was high ($\bar{x} = 4.46$, S.D. = 0.58). The aspect showing the highest satisfaction was having increased confidence in speaking English at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.58$, S.D. = 0.50), followed by the ability to disseminate or apply knowledge at the high satisfaction level ($\bar{x} = 4.41$, S.D. = 0.65); the subsequent aspect was the ability to apply acquired knowledge in different contexts ($\bar{x} = 4.39$, S.D. = 0.63). Upskilling English proficiency is important for monks [19] because an increasing number of people, including foreigners and westerners, have turned to Buddhism as they have profound faith in the teachings of the Buddha or the Dharma teacher. This has led to the dissemination of Buddhism by using English as a means of communication.

The use of English among monks may seem distant, but it is not disconnected from their Buddhism dissemination and communication business because English holds great significance for Buddhist monks worldwide, especially in the study of international communication. English is an international language for academic communication, reading Buddhist texts, and related documents. Furthermore, English is used to strengthen relationships and exchange activities with Buddhist communities around the world. Additionally, English is a language for easy access to information, communication with people from different places, and facilitating travel to religious sites. All

of these factors allow studying Buddhism and learning about its culture more accessible.

English is still a globally accepted and widely used language, which facilitates effective and successful communication with the international monk community and reduces misunderstandings in communication [24]. Therefore, learning English is essential to improving communication for monks and Buddhists from around the world to exchange experiences and knowledge efficiently.

English also allows monks to access various information easily, whether it is related to Buddhist teachings, visiting temples, or even information about the activities of monks outside the temple. This is made possible through online resources such as watching videos or listening to English podcasts to learn more about Buddhism and teaching techniques. This helps monks and Buddhists develop better learning skills for more efficiency in exchanging knowledge with people worldwide.

However, learning English is not an easy task and can be a significant challenge for some monks. Nevertheless, with dedication and effort, if monks are determined to learn English, it will equip them for successful communication and accessibility to endless information.

5.3 Recommendations for Application

The study had limitations due to a small number of participants and its specific context, which focused on Buddhist monk students in northern Thailand, as well as the online learning platform. Consequently, the results may be subject to constraints in terms of generalizability. However, the findings can still be considered in the context of the following aspects:

1. Schools or education institutions, both public and private, can adopt the teaching format of teaching English language speaking skills using online technology platforms for implementation and integration into other grade levels. For example, using language-instruction apps for English-speaking skill development with other courses or other subjects.
2. English language teachers or foreign language instructors can apply or use this model to develop their teaching and learning methods or implement it in other foreign language courses.
3. If monks find it necessary to use the English language for the dissemination of Buddhism or for communicating the Dharma with non-Buddhists, this teaching and learning model can assist in the development of English language skills for monks to upskill their

English for communication of Buddhism activities in international contexts.

4. Using online technology learning platforms, monks can use this instructional model to develop their English-speaking skills and increase their competency effectively.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Studies

The results can conceptualize aspects for further studies as follows:

1. Expand the investigation into hybridized training platforms, specifically by comparing two aspects of the blended learning model for the development of English language speaking skills: online and onsite class instruction to assess the learning outcomes of both platforms.
2. Expand the investigation into learner autonomy competence to conduct an in-depth analysis of the complementary contributions and relationships between the use of digital technologies and self-directed learning abilities.
3. Extend the investigation into the use of technology-assisted learning methods for students, with a focus on monk students developing other aspects of English skills, such as reading, writing, and listening.

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