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# **English Teaching and Learning Problems in The General Program of Bangbowitthayakhom School, Thailand**

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## **Abstract**

This research was conducted at Bangbowitthayakhom School, Thailand, and aimed to investigate teachers and students' English language teaching and learning problems in the General Program as well as find feasible measures to solve the problems. A mixed research design was used to process the data collection and data analysis. There were three instruments applied in this study. (1) the 5 Likert scale questionnaire was administered to 275 students in the General Program by randomly selected one rooms per one level ranging from Mathayom 1-.6 with stratified sampling technique and (2) the 5 Likert scale questionnaire was administered to 24 teachers from the Foreign Language Department with purposive sampling technique. Additionally, (3) the semi-structured interview was performed by four teachers with purposive sampling technique as well. The data was analyzed by percentages, means, and standard deviation of the questionnaire. The data from the interview was transcribed, categorized, and described. The study's results revealed that students agreed at a high level with the problems about themselves. The list of the top three statements was: (1) students lack opportunities of using English outside the class, (2) students think in Thai first before they translate it into English, as well as (3) students want to study with native speakers of English more than Thai teacher respectively. The results from teachers' questionnaires showed that teachers agreed on a high level with problems involving students too. They mostly agreed that students thought in Thai first before they translated it into English. However, problems involving curricula and textbooks and other factors related to English language teaching were agreed to a moderate level. Lastly, problems involving teachers and assessment were at a low level. Despite this, teachers found feasible measures: game-based learning, and the flipped classroom method, and used student-centered approach to successfully solve problems. The teachers also recommend that the program should incorporate more opportunities for teacher development seminars. They believed these seminars would keep teachers up to date on the latest education techniques being used.

**Keywords :** English teaching and learning problems, measures, The General Program

## **1. Introduction**

Thailand has a relatively short history of inclusion

With the English language (Kirkpatrick, 2010). Like numerous different nations in the district, Thailand doesn't have a history of colonization by the British, so its educational system is mainly monolingual. Furthermore, Thailand is commonly referred to as an Expanding Circle country that speaks English as a foreign language. (Kachru, 2005). The role of the English language in Thailand is an indispensable tool for communicating for various purposes. It has played an increasingly important role as a communication medium among people from different

countries, including Thailand. English is an essential subject in Thai schools, and every school in Thailand is required to teach English in the classroom. Therefore, English has come to be considered globally as an international or global language.

However, the current problem of English teaching and learning in Thailand has several dimensions. Baker (2008, as cited in Chanaroke & Niemprapan, 2020) the

problem of teaching English in Thai classrooms is exacerbated by the perceived overall inadequacy of the English language level of disqualified and poorly trained ELT Thai teachers with a focused teaching style in grammatical details, resulting in Thai being the most commonly spoken language in the English classroom. Problems arise when attempting to implement more communicatively oriented language classrooms due to a lack of English proficiency. Obviously, Thai learners find it difficult to master English in both speaking and listening. This is because the language of instruction in the classroom is mostly Thai, and many teachers who teach English to Thai students are mostly non-native speakers at all levels of education.

According to Bangbowitthayakhom School has followed a basic education core curriculum B.E.2551. However, the most obvious challenge is the school's English grades 80% of the General Program students will receive a grade of C-. From the opinions of foreign teachers and Thai teachers, most G.P. students do not understand



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English communication well, including writing, speaking, and reading skills. They cannot understand work orders or even room activities such as Mathayom 1 students, they hardly have any basic English vocabulary, making them unable to speak or make sentences. Moreover, Mathayom 6 students have spent a significant amount of time studying English, yet they still struggle with basic communication skills and use the wrong tenses. Despite this, teacher-centered is the norm at this school, in which the teacher takes an active

role in the learning process while the students sit in a passive, receptive mode and listen intently. Even in schools, the grammar-translation method is used. In the grammar-translation approach, students learn grammar while translating texts from the target language back to their native tongue. When English is taught this way, the emphasis is on memorizing vocabulary and grammar for exams rather than on teaching children to use the English language. It does not instill in children the importance of learning a second language (Panomket, T., personal communication, September 24, 2020)

This study sheds light on existing problems of English teaching and learning in the General Program in this public school in order to help both students and teachers solve

problems in learning and teaching English more precisely. Specifically, teachers can take effective measures to enhance English language teaching and learning in the classroom. Then students will earn high grades in English subject and then be able to speak as well as use English confidently and effectively.

The purpose of this study are to examine the problems of English language teaching and learning.

The objectives for this study are:

1. To identify English learning problems of students in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand.
2. To identify English teaching problems of teachers in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand.
3. To find out some feasible measures teachers of English at Bangbowithayakhom School can take to deal with these problems.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. English as a Foreign Language**

EFL stands for English as a foreign language, is the term used to describe the study of English by non-native

speakers in countries where English is not the official language.

EFL is used almost exclusively for specific, limited purposes, usually in a business context, such as international communication and education. EFL speaking countries are Egypt, Russia, China, Japan, Korea, and Thailand. Kachru (1991, p. 179) divides English users into three groups based on their level of usage concentration: 1) Those in the Inner Circle; 2) Those in the Outer Circle, and 3) Those in The Expanding Circle. Each circle's language has a different status. The Inner Circle speaks English as a native language, whereas the Outer Circle and Expanding Circle classify it as ESL and EFL. As a result, language learners in EFL countries must work extremely hard to master the English language. The process of learning English in EFL countries is limited by the constraints of classroom settings, in which learners must converse with teachers and friends who do not speak English as their first language. The opportunities to use English in EFL settings are limited. Because of these constraints, many EFL learners find it challenging to achieve a high level of English proficiency.

However, English has been considered a foreign language in Thailand, since it is neither an official language nor a medium of instruction. For many decades, English has played an essential role in Thai education. A teacher-centered approach is traditionally used in a typical English classroom in Thailand, in which teachers take control of their classes and students play a passive role (Saengboon, 2006). Thai students study English as a foreign language in the classroom. Still, they are less likely to be implemented outside the classroom environment, especially English, for daily use in all four skills, such as speaking, listening,

reading, and writing. Consequently, Thais' average English proficiency level is low compared with other nations in Asia, such as Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore.

### **2.2. English in Thailand**

In 1921, English was added to the school curriculum, but it was accessible only to the ruling class's privileged community, such as court officials and administrative officers (Foley, 2005). English was primarily regarded as an academic subject and a foreign language instead of a communication medium. For much of the community in the country, it was not widely available. Until 1960, when it became part of the current Thai educational system, the general public had access to English.



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English became compulsory for all primary schools in 1996, and students were required to complete mandatory education due to the National Education Act of Thailand

(Foley, 2005 & 2007). Following the reformed Act, the teaching of English in public school initiates in Grade 1. It includes national awareness of English as a medium of communication and working language of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The Thai government considers English as a means of facilitating international

cooperation, networking, sharing information with the global community, economic development, and competition, particularly with other ASEAN countries (Foley, 2005).

### **2.3. Theories on English language teaching and learning**

Behaviorism, also known as behavioral learning theory, is a learning theory that states that all behaviors are learned through their interaction with the environment through a

process called conditioning. Therefore, behavior is simply a response to environmental stimuli (McLeod, 2017).

Cognitive theory is a proactive process in which students create new ideas and concepts based on their past and present language knowledge. Bruner (1973) as cited in Rao (2018), in the process of integrating learning experience into their existing cognitive structure, they develop abilities to select information, generate assumptions, and make decisions. This process enables them to go beyond the surface of the information provided and interact with their surroundings by exploring and manipulating objects.

Rao (2018) notes that sociocultural constructivist learning theory is important in SLA as it confirms that knowledge is created and developed through learning which arises from interactions with others. Vygotsky (1981) studied the role of social experience in the

development of individual knowledge, which inspired the sociocultural perspective of S/FL acquisition. Vygotsky focused on the social context of learning, specifically how social and cultural contexts affect a learner's cognition or how the social environment accounts for the development of higher cognitive processes. Besides Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, human development is a socially mediated process in which children learn cultural values, beliefs, and problem-solving techniques through

collaborative conversations with more educated members of society. Vygotsky's theory includes notions such as culture-specific tools, private communication, and the Zone of Proximal Development (McLeod, 2018).

### **2.4. The Issues of EFL in Thailand**

Rossukhon and Mr. Langlois (2012) claimed that English language education in Thailand is not new. It has been a core subject in Thai schools for decades. Yet, after years of English lessons from primary school, most Thai students' English lies somewhere between inadequate and non-existent. Most high school students, especially those in more impoverished rural schools, can barely string a few words together to make a coherent sentence or write a small paragraph in English. Rossukhon's teacher, Mr. Guillaume Langlois, a French native teaching English at the school for five years, said many Thai students could not speak English in real-life situations because they have seldom been urged to do so.

#### **2.4.1. Thailand Falls in English Proficiency**

ETS also reported the results of TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) from 2010 to 2017. In the reports, Thailand was reliably among the poor-performing nations. The average scores on listening were always below 300, and the average reading scores were worse, which did not achieve half of the total score: 248. Reading is the most challenging part; however, the listening score is also low.

For over ten years, Education First (E.F.) revealed the English language skills ranking results for the year 2011, found that from 44 countries that do not use English as the national language, Thailand ranked at 42 (very low level). In 2012, Thailand ranked 53 out of 54 countries (very low level). In 2013, Thailand ranked 55 out of 60 countries (very low level). In 2014, Thailand ranked 48 out of 63 countries (very low level). In 2015, Thailand ranked 62 out of 70 countries (very low level). In 2016, Thailand ranked 56 out of 72 countries (very low level). In 2017, Thailand ranked 53 out of 80 countries (low level). In 2018, Thailand ranked 64 out of 88 countries (low level). In 2019, Thailand ranked 74 out of 100 countries, resulting in a total of 47.62 points (very low level). The year 2019 results were lower than the years 2018 and 2017. In 2020, Thailand's proficiency levels are still very low on 89 from 100 countries. Thailand has the third-lowest score in Southeast Asia, behind Indonesia and ahead of Myanmar and Cambodia, and ranked 17th out of 25 countries in Asia.



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The very weak performance by Thai students means that the country ranks third from the bottom for English proficiency among ASEAN nations.

**Table 1:** Thailand’s English Proficiency Trend from 2011-2020

Year	Rank	Proficiency
2011	42 of 44 countries	Very low
2012	53 of 54 countries	Very low
2013	55 of 60 countries	Very low
2014	48 of 63 countries	Very low
2015	62 of 70 countries	Very low
2016	56 of 72 countries	Very low
2017	53 of 80 countries	Low
2018	64 of 88 countries	Low
2019	74 of 100 countries	Very low
2020	89 of 100 countries	Very low

Note: The maximum score is 100

Source: <https://www.ef.co.th/epi/>

## 2.5. The Factors that Impact on the Failure of EFL in Thailand

Kaewmala (2012) commented that Thais’ English is dismal, and among the causes, the poor-quality and wrong-headed English-language education in the Thai school system is primary. Many Thai schools have begun to hire native speakers and English-speaking foreigners to teach English in recent years. However, the number of foreign instructors in the thousands is a small number. Most schools keep relying on Thai instructors, the majority of whom are unqualified to work. Many teachers do not speak the language well enough or do not have adequate English knowledge or teaching abilities to guide students in their study.

## 2.6. Attempts to Improve the Situations

Zhou (2017) points out that policies and strategies of the Ministry of Education directly decide how much support English education can get in practice. As noted by Punthumasen (2007) the Ministry of Education has recognized the importance of English and made some policy adjustments to promote ELT in Thailand.

1) Allowing more international schools to be opened since

1957.

2) Announcing English as the first foreign language for the

Thai school system in 1995.

3) Allowing launching English Programs in schools

throughout the country since 1995.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has consistently implemented reforms to improve English education in Thailand. The education reforms implemented between 1996 and 2007 encouraged life-long learning and mandated that all Thai students receive a free twelve-year basic education. English became one of the eight compulsory strands that students must take beginning in Grade 1 (Wiryachitra, 2002).

## 3. Research Methods and Materials

### 3.1. Research Design

The design of this study was mixed-method research, which was designed using both quantitative (questionnaires using the 5 -point Likert scale) and qualitative (structured

interviews) composing, students by questionnaire only with stratified sampling technique. While teachers by questionnaire and a semi-structured interview with purposive sampling technique. All of these methods were applied in the data collection and analysis stage. The main purpose of this research is to identified English teaching and learning problems from both students and teachers at Bangbowitthayakhom School Thailand.

### 3.2. Sample

The sample for this study comprised two populations: students and teachers from Bangbowitthayakhom School, Thailand.

1) There were a total of 2,317 students at Bangbowitthayakhom School; the researcher randomly selected only 1 class per one level ranging from M.1-M.6 in



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the General Program. Randomly selected class were: M.1/5 there were 45 people, M.2/4 there were 46 people, M.3/7 there were 42 people, M.4/2 there were 48 people, M.5/4 there were 49 people, and M.6/5 there were 45 people. Therefore, all 275 students were asked to complete the questionnaire.

**Table 2:** The Level and Class of the Randomly Selected Students who Respond to the Questionnaire

Students' levels and classes	Selecte d class	No.
<b>M.1:</b> (1/1), (1/2), (1/3), (1/4), (1/5), (1/6), (1/7), (1/8), (1/9)	1/5	45
<b>M.2:</b> (2/1), (2/2), (2/3), (2/4), (2/5), (2/6), (2/7), (2/8), (2/9)	2/4	46
<b>M.3:</b> (3/1), (3/2), (3/3), (3/4), (3/5), (3/6), (3/7), (3/8), (3/9)	3/7	42
<b>M.4:</b> (4/1), (4/2), (4/3), (4/4), (4/5), (4/6), (4/7)	4/2	48
<b>M.5:</b> (5/1), (5/2), (5/3), (5/4), (5/5), (5/6), (5/7)	5/4	49
<b>M.6:</b> (6/1), (6/2), (6/3), (6/4), (6/5), (6/6), (6/7)	6/5	45
<b>Total number of students:</b> 2,317	-	275

2) There were 24 teachers from the Foreign Language Department of Bangbowitthayakhom School. Participants consisted of 15 Thai teachers and nine foreign teachers, which included seven from the Philippines, one from America, and one from England.

All 24 English teachers responded to the questionnaire as the below table 3

**Table 3** Teachers from the Foreign Language Department who Respond to the Questionnaire

Nationality	Number of teachers from the Foreign Language Department
Thai	15
Filipino	7
American	1
British	1
Total	24

For the interview, the researcher used a purposive sampling method to select the participants. Four English teachers from 24 English teachers in the Foreign Language Department of Bangbowitthayakhom School were selected for the semi-structured interview as an interviewee.

**Table: 4** Teachers from the Foreign Language Department who Respond to the Semi-Structured Interviews

Nationality	Number of teachers from the Foreign Language Department
Thai	1
Filipino	1
American	1
British	1
Total	4

### 3.3. Research Instrument

There were three different instruments in the study: (1) questionnaire for students, (2) questionnaire for teachers. (3) semi-structured interviews for teachers.

#### 3.3.1 The questionnaire for students

The questionnaire consisted of three parts:

Part 1: requested about students' general information.

Part 2: consisted of one category of English-learning

problems involving student.

Part 3: open-ended question to solicit additional information from the students. The comments written in Thai would be translated into English later.

#### 3.3.2 The questionnaire for teachers

The questionnaire for teachers consisted of three parts:

Part 1: requested about teachers' general information.

Part 2: consisted of five categories of English-learning

problems involving teachers, student, assessment, curricula & text books, and other factors.



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**Table 5:** A Five-Point Likert Scale is used as an Indicator of Level of Agreement

Scale	Interpretation
5	Strongly Agree
4	Agree
3	Uncertain
2	Disagree
1	Strongly Disagree

This part identified factors attributed to English teaching problems involving teachers, students, curricula and textbooks, assessments, and other factors contributing to successful teaching. The calculation of the weighted mean score was the primary method. A score of 5 on the rating scale was interpreted as a level of agreement to each item in the questionnaire, as shown in (Table 6)

**Table 6:** Score and Interpretation for Items

Scale	Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Very high
3.51-4.50	High
2.51-3.50	Moderate
1.51-2.50	Low
1.00 -1.50	Very low

**Note: Source:** Srisa-ard, 2010

(บุญชม ศรีสะอาด, 2553, การแปลผลเมื่อใช้เครื่องมือรวบรวมข้อมูลแบบมาตราส่วนประมาณค่า: Thailand)

Part 3: open-ended question ask for supplementary data from the respondents, in particular, what were the other English-teaching problems you were facing? The comments written in Thai was translated into English.

### 3.3.3 The semi-structure interview for teachers

The semi-structured interview consisted of two parts:

Part 1: It consisted of the basic information about the respondents, such as nationality, age, ELT experience, teaching objects, and teaching subject.

Part 2: It consisted of structured questions about the respondents' perspectives on the problems and the corresponding measures taken. These questions were for clarification and further explanation.

## 3.4. Data Analysis

The researcher used statistical software programs to compare data analysis and the statistical methods as following:

1. To identify English learning problems of students in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand. The data were obtained from doing questionnaires by students. There was only one category associated with the questionnaire for students, such as student-related problems. It was analysed respectively by descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentage, mean and standard deviation. These methods measured the levels of agreement and identified English learning problems of students in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand.

2. To identify English teaching problems of teachers in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand. The data obtained from completing questionnaires by teachers were analyzed respectively by descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentage, mean and standard deviation. This method measured the levels of agreement and identified English teaching problems of teachers in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand.

3. To find out some feasible measures teachers of English at Bangbowithayakhom School can take to deal with these problems. The researcher collected data from the semi-structured interview was transcribed, classified,

and analyzed. Content analysis determined some feasible measures teachers of English at Bangbowithayakhom School could take to deal with these problems. The

interview, used voice record by smartphone and was later transcribed into text. Each interviewee had 10-15 minutes, and then the researcher conducted and summarized all

information into text, respectively.

## 4. Results and Discussion

The findings of the study based on the data from the

questionnaires distributed to 275 GP student respondents as well as the questionnaires distributed to 24



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English teacher respondents and data interpreted from the semi-structured

interviews with one Thai teacher and three foreign teachers from the Foreign Language Department in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School. The findings are

divided into three main parts as follows: (1) Results from research objective one, (2) Results from research objective two, and (3) Results from research objective three

#### **4.1. The Result from Research Objective One**

##### **4.1.1 Students Respondents' General Information**

In objective one of this research, a total of 275 students at Bangbowithayakhom School were randomly selected from each grade level: M.1/5 there were 45 people, M.2/4 there were 46 people, M.3/7 there were 42 people, M.4/2 there were 48 people, M.5/4 there were 49 people, and M.6/5 there were 45 people. to assess their problems in learning English through twenty questions. Mean and Standard Deviation were the statistical tools used in this analysis.

##### **4.1.2. Students' Responses to Research Objective One**

The respondents ranked at a high level of agreement; a total mean score was 3.56. and a total SD was 1.03. Moreover, 14 statements were highly agreed by the students. The list of the top three statements being: (1) students lack opportunities of using English outside the class (mean score: 3.99, SD: 0.93), (2) students think in Thai first before they translate it into English (mean score: 3.87, SD: 0.99), and (3) students want to study with native speakers of English more than Thai teachers (mean score: 3.77, SD: 0.94)

Meanwhile, six statements received a moderate level of agreement. The bottom three statements were: (1) students are not aware of the benefits of learning English (mean score:2.69, SD:1.22), (2) students do not have a good attitude towards the English subject (mean score: 2.99, SD:1.03), and (3) students do not like the English subject (mean score: 3.09, SD: 0.97)

##### **4.1.3. Students' Open-Ended Questions**

Students provided comments and suggestions about English language teaching and learning in this section. The following are comments from General Program students:

Problems related to teachers: most students wanted to study with foreign teachers because there were many new

activities. Furthermore, foreign teachers were less strict than Thai teachers. However, just a few students expressed an interest in studying with Thai teachers.

Problems related to students: the majority of the students stated that they did not have enough time and opportunities

to practice speaking English in and out of class. Some did not have inspiration to study English, so that why they thought English was very hard. Moreover, they mentioned that when they spoke English, they had to think in Thai first.

Problems related to curricula and textbooks: some students wanted to study Thai-English and English-Thai translation subjects.

Problems related to skill set: most students desired to improve their listening and speaking skills. They also wanted teachers to teach more writing skills, such as essay writing.

#### **4.2. The Result from Research Objective Two**

##### **4.2. 1. Teacher Respondents' General Information**

There were 24 teachers consisted of nine foreign teachers and 15 Thai teachers who taught in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand.

Most of the respondents were female, 58.33%. Nearly half were between 31- 40 years old, 41.67%, most Thai teachers, 62.50%, and most foreign teachers were Filipinos, 29.17%.

Regarding educational background, 62.50% were graduates with a bachelor's degree, while 37.50% hold a master's degree. 37.50% were teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience; most teachers had to teach approximately 16 - 20 periods per week, 54.17%. Aside from teaching, Thai teachers had many responsibilities such as student affairs, head of high school level, head of public relations, level, school bank staff, teacher advisor, and general academic

affairs. The foreign teachers did not have many other workloads. Some of them have international linkages. The teachers were required to describe their opinions on English teaching problems through questions. Mean and Standard Deviation were the statistical tools used in this analysis.

##### **4.2.2. Teachers' Responses to Research Objective Two**

The following figure depicts the findings of a survey of English teaching problems based on five



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categories involving teachers, students, curricula and textbooks, assessment, and other factors affecting English language teaching.

**Figure 1:** Overall English teaching problems in General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School

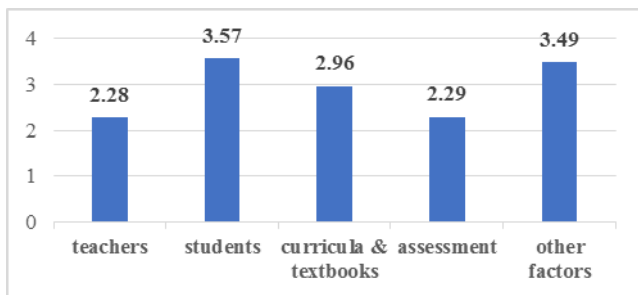


Figure 1 demonstrated that from the respective questions, English teaching problems involve teachers, students, curricula and textbooks, assessment, and other factors affecting English language teaching. Teachers agreed that problems involving students were at a high level. The list of the top three problems involving students were: (1) students think in Thai first before they translate it into English (mean score: 4.08, SD: 0.83), (2) students lack opportunities of using English outside the class (mean score: 4.04, SD: 0.81), as well as (3) students lack extra practice on their own (mean score: 3.96, SD: 0.69) respectively. However, problems involving curricula and textbooks and other factors related to English language teaching were moderate level. Lastly, problems involving teachers and assessment were rated at a low level.

#### 4.2.3. Teachers' Open-Ended Questions

For other English teaching problems that teachers were facing. The respondents gave the following answers:

Problems related to students: according to teachers, most Thai students spoke Thai with their peers in class and had no further language practice outside of class. Students thought that learning English was difficult and that they were disinterested in doing so. Furthermore, students were too embarrassed to interact and were too concerned with grammar to talk.

Problems related to other factors contributing to successful teaching and learning: teachers reported a lack of communication or cooperation among school administration, Thai teachers, and foreign teachers. In addition, there were too many students in class, and there

were issues with online instruction. Furthermore, the school lacked language laboratories, as well as there were a few foreign teachers in government schools.

Problems related to lexical differences between American and British: the teachers mentioned that there were contradicting English vocabularies of American and British English. The students might experience confusion when they heard or spoke the two accents.

### 4.3. Results from Research Objective Three

This objective found some feasible measures for teachers of English to deal with the English teaching and learning problems in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand. The researcher interviewed four English teachers in the Foreign Language

Department, three foreign teachers, and one Thai teacher. This section was divided into two parts. (1) the interviewees' general information and (2) their responses to the structured questions are presented. The statistical tool used for this analysis was Content Analysis.

#### 4.3.1. The Interviewees' General Information

This section contains basic information about the four respondents, including nationality, age, ELT experience, teaching objects, and teaching subject. The findings are as follows:

**Table 5:** The Interviewees' General Information

Teacher	Nationality	Age	ELT Exp.	Teaching Obj.	Teaching Subject
F1	Filipino	31-40	7	M. 1-4	English for communication
F2	American	31-40	3	M. 1-3	Speaking and listening English
F3	British	31-40	7	M. 4-6	English for communication
T1	Thai	21-30	5	M. 1-5	English

#### 4.3.2. The Interviewees' Responses

The teachers gave an interview and suggestion about problem English language teaching and learning. The following is an interview from teachers in the Foreign Language Department.





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Problems related to teachers: the majority of teachers said that they had no problems with themselves. According

to the interview, they loved teaching the students and believed that teaching was a great career for them. Some teachers stated that the problem they faced with themselves was establishing their confidence and finding methods to grow as teachers.

Problems related to students: most teachers reported that the most difficult challenges they faced in their classrooms were: first, getting the full attention of all students had been difficult at times, which was exacerbated when various other activities around the school interfered with regular class scheduling or took students out of the lesson. Second, there was the language barrier. Thai students rarely dare spoke English in the classroom. Most of them spoke Thai, or some students didn't speak at all. Third, because each student's background was unique, it

made teaching difficult for the teachers. Fourth, most students were uninterested in the lesson: some slept during class, while others did not pay attention. The next problem was students' inability to practice English. Furthermore, students get accustomed to grammar-translation methods rather than communicative learning and thus found it difficult to employ productive skills, particularly speaking skills.

Problems related to assessment: according to teachers, the assessment problems that they discovered first were a

high emphasis on grammar and passing tests. Moreover, Thai teachers found it difficult to create and assess lessons for the listening and speaking parts.

Problems related to other factors contributing to successful teaching and learning: most teachers said that there were too many students in class, and they did not

have much time to teach students.

The effective measures taken to deal with the problem:

regarding the interview question 7, research objective three follows: first, teachers stated that game-based learning, as well as the flipped classroom method, was beneficial. In a

smaller class, it was wise to incorporate personalized learning if possible. They attempted to make classes more enjoyable; as a result, students' enthusiasm to study increased. Second, teachers tried to get students accustomed to a more student-centered approach from the first M.1 class. Exposure to this as students advanced

through the levels prepared them to expect that they would need to speak English, work communicatively in groups, interview in English, and present in English. Third, teachers tried to get students to practice more conversations, such as role-play, group, and individual presentations. Lastly, teachers applied movies in teaching and outside-reading books to enhance students 'development in reading and listening skill.

#### **4.4. Discussion**

This section discusses the findings of this research by relating them to the findings of the previous research studies.

##### **4.4.1 English Learning Problems of Students in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand**

The findings of a survey of English learning problems involving students based on research question one. There was a difference between the two studies, discussed below:

According to the finding in this study, students at BBW School ranked problems involving students at a high level of agreement. The list of the top three statements being:

(1) students lack opportunities of using English outside the class. (2) students think in Thai first before translating it into English, and (3) students want to study with native speakers of English more than Thai teachers. It is assumed that Bangbowithayakhom School is located in the countryside, which is quite different from Bangkok's schools. As a result, students have few opportunities to communicate in English with foreigners in reality. Furthermore, there are few foreign teachers in government schools; students are accustomed to being teacher-centered, with most English lessons focusing on grammar rather than speaking skills.

However, in Jiani Zhou's study, the students' overall attitudes toward problems involved themselves, indicating a moderate agreement level with the issues listed. The top

three statements were: (1) students want to study with native speakers of English more than Thai teachers, (2) students lack knowledge in grammar and structure, and (3) students think in Thai first before they translate into English. It is assumed that Potisarnpittayakorn School,

a relatively prominent school in Thailand, is based in this country's capital city. This means that students in this school may have more opportunities to use English outside



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the classroom than in rural schools. As a result, in Jiani Zhou's study regarding the questionnaire problems involving students, the statement "students lack opportunities of using English outside the class" ranked 6th. Still, this statement turned out to be in the top three in this study.

#### 4.4.2. English Teaching Problems of Teachers in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, Thailand

The finding of English teaching problems involving teachers, students, curricula and textbooks, assessment, and other factors affected English language teaching based on

research question two. There were some similarities between the two studies, which are discussed below:

According to the finding in this study, English teachers in BBW School agreed that problems involving students were at a high level. However, problems involving curricula and textbooks and other factors related to English language teaching were moderate. Lastly, problems involving teachers and assessment were rated at a low level.

In the same way, Jiani Zhou's study stated that problems involving students were agreed to be significant by the respondents at a high level. However, problems involving curricula and textbooks and other factors related to English language teaching were moderately problematic. In contrast, problems involving teachers and assessment were rated at a low level of obstruction. It is assumed that these two schools were public schools, so they had similar problem factors.

In conclusion, both studies agreed that problems involving students were at a high level. According to this study, the top three items based on problems involving students were: (1) students think in Thai first before translating it into English. (2) students lack

opportunities to use English outside the class, and (3) students lack extra practice on their own. Despite this, Jiani Zhou's study stated that among the top three problematic items were: (1) students lack extra practice on their own, (2) students lack opportunities of using English outside the classroom, and (3) students think in Thai first before they translate it into English.

#### **4.4.3. There are some feasible measures teachers of English at Bangbowithayakhom School can take to deal with these problems.**

The finding of research question three according to teachers' teaching experiences of English teaching

problems in the General Program of Bangbowithayakhom School, they mostly encountered numerous issues. Including language barriers, getting students' attention

during teaching, having too many students in a room, students' basic English not being the same, students not daring to speak English, and students lacking the motivation to learn the language and vocabulary knowledge. However, they used the effective measures to address the issues, such as game-based learning, the flipped classroom method, a student-centered approach, role play, presentations, and movies, to encourage students to speak more effectively.

Similarly, according to Jiani Zhou's study, the teacher attempted to show two main things to the passive students in order to deal with them. One thing was that English was all around them, and they would most likely need it in the near future if they wanted to study, work, or travel. Another point was that in order to acquire a language, students needed to apply all they had previously studied rather than switching from one language model to another. In order to enhance students' awareness of English and inspire them to study, teachers may utilize a variety of teaching media in class. Teachers prefer to get close to their students by utilizing online games to improve their students' awareness of English and inspire them to study. Students were frequently exposed to English movies and music. Besides, games and hands-on learning are key components of teaching. Moreover, clips were given to the students in order to encourage them to practice speaking English.

## **5. Conclusions**

Regarding to the research question one, the finding showed that students' opinions revealed that they agreed at a high level with the problems about themselves. They mostly agreed that they lacked opportunities to use English outside the class, they had to think in Thai first before speaking English, and they also wanted to study with native speakers.

The finding in research question two, the results of the teachers' opinions revealed that they agreed on a high level with problems involving students. They mostly agreed that the list of the top three issues are: (1) students think in Thai first before they translate it into English, (2) students lack opportunities of using English outside the class, and (3) students lack extra practice on their own. However, problems involving curricula and textbooks and other



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factors related to English language teaching were agreed to a moderate level. Lastly, problems involving teachers and assessment were at a low level.

The finding in research question three showed additional problems that teachers faced as follow: first, getting the full attention of all students had been difficult at times, which was exacerbated when various other activities around the school interfered with regular class scheduling or took students out of the lesson. Second, there was the language barrier. Thai students rarely dare spoke English in the classroom. Most of them spoke Thai, or some students didn't speak at all. Third, because each student's background was unique, it made teaching difficult for the teachers. Fourth, most students were uninterested in the lesson: some slept during class, while others did not pay attention. The next problem was students' inability to practice English. Furthermore, students get accustomed to grammar-translation methods rather than communicative learning and thus found it difficult to employ productive skills, particularly speaking skills. However, teachers showed that they used these feasible measures to solve the problem successfully: (1) game-based learning, and the flipped classroom method to improve their motivation, (2) student-centered approach instead of a teacher-centered approach, (3) practice more conversation skills such as role-play and group/individual presentations, and (4) movies, and outside-reading books to improve students' listening and reading skill. Besides, the teachers also recommend that the program incorporate more opportunities for teacher development seminars. They believed these seminars would keep teachers up to date on the latest education techniques being used.

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