

INTEGRATED INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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Abstract

Communication and culture is rapidly changing, triggered by changes in economy, society, and technology. Thus, it is unanimously agreed that education personnel and instruction innovation are to revitalize local wisdom and culture. Also, English has become more important, being the language in ASEAN. However, Thai learners' English performance needs to be improved to compete regionally and internationally. Elementary education is the grassroots of the entire education paradigm; more attention is needed. However, English performance at this level is unsatisfactory due to a number of reasons. For instance, English is not used in daily life, resulting in limited opportunities of authentic language use. Moreover, commercial textbooks may not be appropriate for them because they are young, with limited experience and perspectives. They thus become demotivated and cannot connect with these commercial textbooks, leading to slow development in learning. Therefore, changes satisfying learners and communities' needs are crucial to enhance students' English performance and skills. This research aims to develop their English and instill pride of local Thainess, complying with the national policy for sustainable development. A school located in an area at risk of losing its local culture was selected. Instructional innovation was developed, consisting of 8 lessons, covering several aspects of the province: history, geography, arts, environment, and culture. Each lesson begins with vocabulary, followed by reading. The innovation was implemented with a Grade level 4 class. The success of instruction and the use of innovation were assessed by the pre/posttest in the first and last classes of each part, the tour-guide simulation task, and the questionnaire. Pedagogically, instructional innovation can help promote English language learning and local Thainess. The project is thus a means to mobilize cooperation from other sectors including families, school administrators, school teachers, students, and communities. The innovation also prepares English teachers for integrating local Thainess to English lessons. With help from the province and local organizations, tourist attractions can be developed, offering young and needy students an opportunity to earn extra cash to support their families. This study also encourages young learners to appreciate their own local culture while learning English. Finally, the study depicts the learning management compatible with the local settings and also satisfies the national demands of English, upgrading education quality and developing human resources for sustainable development.

Keywords: Elementary education, instructional innovation, local Thainess.