THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AMONG RECEPTIONISTS AT BOUTIQUE HOTELS IN BANGKOK

BY

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ID: 5721040763

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH FOR CAREERS
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2015
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THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AMONG RECEPTIONIST AT
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was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for

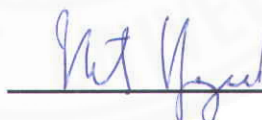the degree of Master of Arts in English for Careers

on July 30, 2016

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Independent Study Paper Title	The Needs of English Language Skills among Receptionists at Boutique Hotels in Bangkok
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Degree	Master of Arts
Major Field/Faculty/University	English for Careers
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Academic Years	2015

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to measure the English proficiency of 50 front office staff who worked at boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument in order to gather data. The questionnaire was divided into four parts: listening, speaking, writing and reading. When the participants had completed the questionnaires at the hotels and submitted them on the same day, the data was analyzed through the SPSS software.

The findings showed that the receptionists were able to communicate in English at a moderate level because they had difficulties in using English, such as pronunciation and specific terms. Speaking was the most important skill in the workplace, while writing was the least important one. Therefore, the receptionists should improve their speaking skills the most in order to send effective messages to their customers. The data from the findings could improve the management of the boutique hotels in Thailand by helping the staff develop some important English skills. In addition, the findings could be useful for the management of the hotels.

Keywords: Receptionist, Front office staff, Needs, Hotel, Customer, Boutique Hotel

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thammasat University   Miss. Pandao Chamnankit
Bangkok, Thailand   July 2016

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background

One of the most important economic drivers in one's country comes from tourism. Tourism plays an important role for the generation of income for the local community. It is now a main strategy for development for most developing countries. Tourism not only generates income for locals but it also helps develop the exposure of culture to residents as there is constant exchange of knowledge, data, culture, and technology. Due to these positive aspects which tourism brings to a country, the Thai government thus passed a resolution in 2009 to make tourism a part of the national agenda. To date, tourism planning and policies are strategically made under the National Tourism Development Plans 2012-2016 (Ministry of Tourism and Sports. 2010).

Figure1. *Number of International Tourists Arrival to Thailand 2014-2015*

Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Thailand
International Tourist Arrivals to Thailand
By Nationality
January - December 2015

Nationality	2015 Number	2015 %Share	2014 Number	2014 %Share	%Δ 2015/2014
East Asia	19,871,773	66.50	14,603,825	58.86	36.07
Europe	5,629,122	18.84	6,161,893	24.84	-8.65
The Americas	1,235,095	4.13	1,099,709	4.43	12.31
South Asia	1,403,977	4.70	1,239,183	4.99	13.30
Oceania	921,355	3.08	942,706	3.80	-2.26
Middle East	658,129	2.20	597,892	2.41	10.07
Africa	161,640	0.54	164,475	0.66	-1.72
Grand Total	29,881,091	100.00	24,809,683	100.00	20.44

Source of Data : Immigration Bureau,Royal Thai Police.
Note : Primary Data
Last Updated : 22/01/2016 14.00 PM
นำข้อมูลลงเว็บไซต์วันที่ 22 มกราคม 2559 เวลา 15.00 น.

กลุ่มสถิติและเศรษฐกิจการท่องเที่ยว
กรมการท่องเที่ยว

(Tourism Statistics in Thailand for the Year 2558, 2015)

http://www.tourism.go.th/home/details/11/221/24710

Note. The above statistics (Figure 1) show the number of tourists who travel to Thailand. As seen on the figures, the largest number of tourists who travel to Thailand are from East Asia at 19,874,773 people in 2015 compared to the year before at 14,603,825 people. The second place goes to Europe at 5,629,122 in 2015 and 6,161,893 in 2014. What we can say about these numbers is that the amount of tourists who come to Thailand is increasing each year with tourists from Asia holding the highest rank.

In Thailand, English is becoming more significant as it is now the working language of ASEAN in 2015. As a result, the current increase in demand for tourism has made English a means of communication both internally and externally when dealing with international tourists.

Due to the rise of boutique hotels in Thailand as well as tourism, we can now see the need for a well-educated staff. One of the increasing requirements in the service industry is proficiency in English. From the establishment of the ASEAN economy, the tourists who come to Thailand nowadays are from neighboring countries. These groups of people are seeking value for money tourist destination. Since there are already a number of boutique hotels in Thailand, it would be useful to examine how the roles of boutique hotels are changing. Due to the fact that people are traveling and paying for cheaper hotel stays while still needing a more 'luxury' hotel room, people are showing high interest in staying at boutique hotels rather than 1 or 2 star hotels.

The Sukhumvit area is one of the famous areas for international tourists and is Bangkok's main commercial zone that connects offices, boutique hotels, shopping malls, nightclubs, and Bangkok's finest restaurants as well as luxury hotels and tailor shops. This area is quite diverse and businesses vary in terms of the clientele that they target. For instance, boutique hotels that are located in that area include hotels such as The David Hotel, Marriott Executive Apartments, Ad Lib, S31 Hotel, Radisson Blu, Hotel Muse, Indigo Hotel, and Maduzi Hotel. The list of hotels mentioned have high

recognition from tourists who travel to Thailand and stay in the Sukhumvit area due to the style and homely feeling that the hotels give to their guests.

With high demand for staying at boutique hotels from ASEAN tourists, staff members are now required to be able to communicate and have higher English proficiency. The English proficiency of the Thai staff at boutique hotels will be examined as follows: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The types of charm boutique hotels offer are shown through their welcoming and service-minded staff. English for instance, is the most important language used for communication, and proficiency in English will enable Thai staff to provide high-quality service to hotel guests.

1.2   Statement of Problem

This study intended to answer the following questions:

1.2.1   What are the English language skills that reception officers need to use the most and the least at work?

1.2.2   How effective are their English skills and what difficulties do they face?

1.2.3   Which English language skills do the reception officers need to improve the most?

1.3   Study Objectives

The purposes of this study are following:

1.3.1   To examine the reception officers' needs for using the English skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in their work.

1.3.2   To explore the problems reception officers face when using English and level of their ability to communicate, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in the workplace.

1.3.3   To find out the skills that reception officers want to improve the most.

1.4   Definition of Terms

The definition of key terms is as follows:

1.4.1   *Needs* refer to English skills that the front office staff at boutique hotels want to improve.

1.4.2   *Problem* refers to the difficulty when using English to communicate with native and non-native speakers.

1.4.3   *English skills* refer to the ability in the following areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

1.4.4   *Reception officer* refers to a receptionist.

1.4.5   *Customer* refers to hotel guests who use the English language to communicate.

1.4.6   *Front desk* refers to a receptionist.

1.5   Scope of the Study

Fifty receptionists working at boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area were given a questionnaire asking about their use of English language to communicate with hotel customers. This study sought to determine the English skills that front office staff need, the problems, and the specific requirements with regard to using English as a professional, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing in their workplace.

1.6   Significance of the Study

Since English is important in communicating worldwide, the study can help to improve the workforce in their communication skills because tourism is the number one generator of income in Thailand. If we do not know the needs and difficulties people face when using English to communicate, we cannot help improve their abilities.

1.7   ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1:   Introduction composed of the background of study, questions, objectives, definition of terms, scope of the study, and organization of the study.

Chapter 2:   Review of the literature and relevant concepts relating to the study.

Chapter 3:   Research methodology, which includes subjects, materials, and procedures.

Chapter 4:   Results of the study derived from the survey.

Chapter 5:   Conclusion, discussion of the findings and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents the related of literature review consisting of the following:

    (1) Tourism in Thailand

    (2) The Importance of English Language in the Hotel Business

    (3) Needs Analysis

    (4) Problems when using English Language

2.1   Tourism in Thailand

One of the largest income generating sectors of the Thai economy is Tourism (Bindloss & Taylor, 2004:32). In order to generate more income, the workforce has to know how to speak in English to make international deals. Because of this, spoken English is valuable for people in the workforce. English should now be spoken not only by the elite but also by other people who are working in companies and hotels. With the increase of the foreign travelers, the requirements of English now are becoming even more important. Taxi drivers, for instance, will need to understand instructions and directions from a person taking a taxi. Learning how to greet and make small talk can also help them communicate with travelers and create a good impression regarding Thai people and Thailand as a whole.

The importance of English in Thailand today is clear. However, as mentioned, English should not be spoken only by the elite but also by the working class. People who are working in the hospitality industry have a variety of English speaking levels and occupations, ranging from 5 star hotels to guest houses. Workers' different levels of English speaking ability depend on the demands of their positions as well as their educational history. This may be a kind of Thai charm for the tourist too; a worker at a bungalow may speak a little English mixed with Thai giving tourists the Thai experience. English competencies for workers in 5 star hotels however are a completely different case. These people have to speak English in order to provide 5 star service, and to have polite and informative conversations that maintain the standard of the hotel. This will make guests feel more welcomed and comfortable in

the hosts' establishments. As Blue and Harun (2003:77) mentioned; *"in many parts of the world, the art of greeting, soliciting information, thanking and bidding farewell requires some measure of familiarization with the relevant English expressions before a person can serve effectively as a receptionist, telephonies or in other guest-contact capacities."*

2.2 The Importance of English Language in the Hotel Business

2.2.1 English Language as the Medium of Communication in Hospitality

With the increasing amount of tourists arriving in Thailand, English competency for people in the workforce is needed. Wiriyachitra (2004) stated that there is a shortage of skilled labor in Thailand who speak and use good English. This results in misunderstandings between guests and the staff, which in turn creates negative feelings and attitudes. In light of globalization, businesses have to hire and train a workforce who can communicate at the international level; they will need to know the "business language of the world", which is none other than English (GuWei|2011-04-06|Business, Corporate English Language Training).

As mentioned, the lack of English communication creates conflicts between locals and foreigners. Ajay Kr. Sigh and D.Antony added that in communication, we sometimes use words that don't state the real information that is on our mind. When this happens, errors lead to frustration and conflict, with neither person willing to accept responsibility. This causes an unfavorable working atmosphere, and conflicts from miscommunication then lead to costly damage control, waste of time, setbacks in work, and delay in production. Communication should therefore be clearly understood immediately in order to be effective. Clampitt & Downs, (1993) state that when communication satisfaction is low, managerial evaluations of staff productivity such as their work quality, safety, conduct, attendance, and job longevity are also low.

Moreover, Kandampully & Suhartanto (2000) assert that the hotel staff that has high importance is the front office staff. This is because front office staff deals with the requests and enquiries of the guests and are the ones who make the guests happy. Therefore, to create a good first impression and lasting impression for the

guests, the front office hotel staff must have good English communication skills for smooth service.

2.3 Needs Analysis

2.3.1 Definitions and types of needs:

The concept of needs analysis has been discussed by various scholars with different points of view. Nunan (1988:45) points out that the development of needs analysis in the 1970s was within the field of language teaching and learning. Needs analysis is therefore a *'a set of procedures for specifying the parameters of a course of study'*.

Richards (1984 cited in Nunan, 1988:43) on the other hand maintains that needs analysis has three main purposes in the development of language curriculum:

- To obtain a wide range of input for development of the content of a language program
- To identify language needs that can be used to develop goals as well as the content and objectives of a language program

Richards (2001) also further details the purposes of needs analysis with regard to language teaching as following:

- Needs analysis is needed to find the skills that the learner will need in order to perform a particular role: job positions as a tourist guide or sales manager as well as a university student.
- To see if students will need training in particular languages
- In order to find a gap between students that are willing to learn and what they need in order to learn
- To collect information about the problems people face when learning English

Robinson (1991) lastly suggests that the essentiality of a needs analysis is focused only on target or end-of–course requirements to aim to the initial needs of students.

To summarize, needs analysis is used to gather detailed information on the needs of learners. This is a tool that is beneficial for focusing on a learner's status and desires, which is crucial because this will help people design courses that will be suited to different people.

2.3.2 Types of Needs Analysis

According to Mackay and Mountford (1978), the needs of students are divided into two aspects: academic and job needs. Academic needs are requirements of English related to their studies and the latter relate to the performance of different occupations. There are two types of needs of learners: objective needs and subjective needs.

- Objective needs: from the factual information of learners when implementing English in real life and their problems during usage
- Subjective needs: affective cognitive needs of learners form their personality, confidence, attitude, as well as desires leading to expectations in learning English. This need is used for the collection of learner's information to be a guideline during the process of learning (Richterich & Chanceral, 1980; Brindley, 1989; Robinson, 1991).

2.4 Problems in Using English Language

Viboolphant (2005) states that the barriers towards communication and the causes of communication failure in business occur when the person receiving the information has failed to understand what has been said – this results in sender breakdown, method breakdown, and recipient breakdown. Scott (1986) adds that these communication barriers happen due to misunderstandings or sometimes from being ignored by the listener. These barriers of information are from understanding, listening, and the acceptance of the listener. Speakers should know how to structure

their sentences to make them easy to understand – this is so that the audience will be interested.

Davidoff (1994) points out that barriers create communication breakdowns – these barriers are either from verbal or non-verbal communication. People who work closely with clients must have a high ability to convey messages or else the content will be lost. Problems from language efficiency are the root of these problems. Language barriers and individual differences also cause problems with communication. Language barriers arise when people with different dialects communicate such as French to English and English to French. The sentence structures are different between the languages and the compositions of the verbs are different, which may lead to major miscommunications between parties. *"Our vocabularies may be inadequate or our level of skill with language may simply be inadequate to express some of our deeper and subtler thoughts"* (Sigband and Bell, 1994).

From the above definitions of communication barriers, we can see that certain barriers lead to failure of communication between the speaker and the listener. Due to problems stated in this paper, the focus of this research was on the levels of the English of the staff in boutique hotels as well as the problems they face. Minimization of communication barriers is the key to giving good service to foreign guests because effective communication is an important tool for people to succeed in their careers. According to Timm and Stead (1996), 90% of people who are professionals in the workforce need to communicate well for an organization to develop

Barriers leading to miscommunication:

- **Lack of interest in the subject matter**: either the sender or receiver. (Comeau and Diehn ,1987)

- **Lack of fundamental knowledge**. (Comeau and Diehn ,1987)

- **Emotions of either the sender or the receiver**: hate, love, anger, fear, etc. (Comeau and Diehn ,1987)

- **Poor listening skills**

Listening is considered the most important out of all the communication skills because according to Burns and Joyce (1977), 45% of routine communication comes from listening where 30% is from speaking, 16% from reading, and an additional 9% from writing.

2.4.1 English Language skills

Listening Skill: For beginners of English, the difficult problem is from new vocabulary (Brown, 1994). This is because people who listen to these words are not familiar with them and are not able to recognize and detect the words and understand what they mean. The process of understanding therefore takes longer – they have to detect the word, find the vocabulary, and also understand the meaning of the whole sentence; due to such a long process, people are not able to understand quickly. Hence, fluency in listening is important for effective communication. What people can do to improve these skills is simple: to listen to music and also watch movies to keep track of the different accents and development of new vocabulary (Mendelsohn & Rubin, 1995). Listening consumes a lot of time because there are barriers such as worry, fear, language differences, as well as noise (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). People should have an awareness of what is happening in their minds in order to be effective in listening.

Speaking Skill: Oral communication is a two-way process, with both speakers and listeners involved. The encoding of messages is done to understand the information. To decode a message is to participate in communication and find the appropriate language of communication. The roles here alternate: a speaker listens; a listener speaks (Bygate 2001; Byrne 1986; Rost 2001; Underhill 1987).

Reading Skill: A student's problems with reading skills are related to their age, their cognitive ability, and the intervention as well as the quality and quantity of instruction. They may have difficulties sounding out words/letters, comprehension as well as processing time; for instance, they may not be able to understand that some sentences may consist of different words that have a composition of syllables made up from single sounds or phonemes. Other processing problems occur when people spell

incorrectly due to their reading problems (Lundberg & Hoien; Mather & Goldstain, 2001 & Isaacs, 2012).

Writing Skill: Pupils with writing problems have difficulties communicating their ideas because they are not able to construct sentences. This is due to their lack of knowledge of punctuation, grammar, organization of paragraphs as well as vocabulary and spelling (Payne and Turner, 1999 & Strickland et al, 2002).

2.5   Relevant Research

Several previous studies have been conducted to investigate the needs and problems of English Language.

Chistison and Krahnke (2004) studied non-native students who speak English. The findings showed that most of them have problems with speaking and listening. The most important skills were speaking and writing.

Maniruzzaman (2004) studied non-native speakers speaking in English, with a focus on pronunciation. Accents and words are hard to pronounce if it is not your language. This study confirmed that native people in different regions are familiar with the accents and pronunciation of the locals and when they hear a foreign word, they will have a hard time pronouncing the word in the native way.

Ravisuda Aunruen (2005) conducted a needs analysis of people speaking in English in Chiang Mai. The study looked at people who worked at travel agencies. The study sought to determine which skill they need the most. After analysis of the data, it was found out that the skill that people need the most to conduct everyday business is speaking. However, listening, writing, and reading are needed in an addition whereas grammar and pronunciation is needed the least.

The findings of Thawatchai Tangniam (2006) were similar to Ravisuda. In looking closely at the Thai Airways ground staff, it was found that the most needed skill for the ground staff is the speaking skill as they are always talking to travelers. However, the listening skill is the skill that is needed to be improved the most.

The research of Chakrit Phaisuwan (2006) showed that the listening and speaking skill used in English are the hardest for non-native speakers. This is because the language is not their own and when people try to learn a language that they are not familiar with, they will have a harder time to pronounce specific words as well as take time to understand the different accents.

Orada Opasruttanakorn (2006) looked at the tourism business and found that listening and speaking are the most needed skills in this industry.

Saijai Lertanant (2006) studied Thai people working at restaurants in Bangkok. The results showed that people have high difficulty conversing with foreigners as their speaking skills need to be improved.

Sansanee Yhouyhen (2008) also looked at the tourism industry. The results showed that people in this industry have problems in speaking and listening. These skills are highly needed for work purposes. Reading and writing were found to be less significant problems.

Ben Moore (2012) studied the needs of English for Thai workers. The results showed that Thai people have difficulty understanding and therefore speaking.
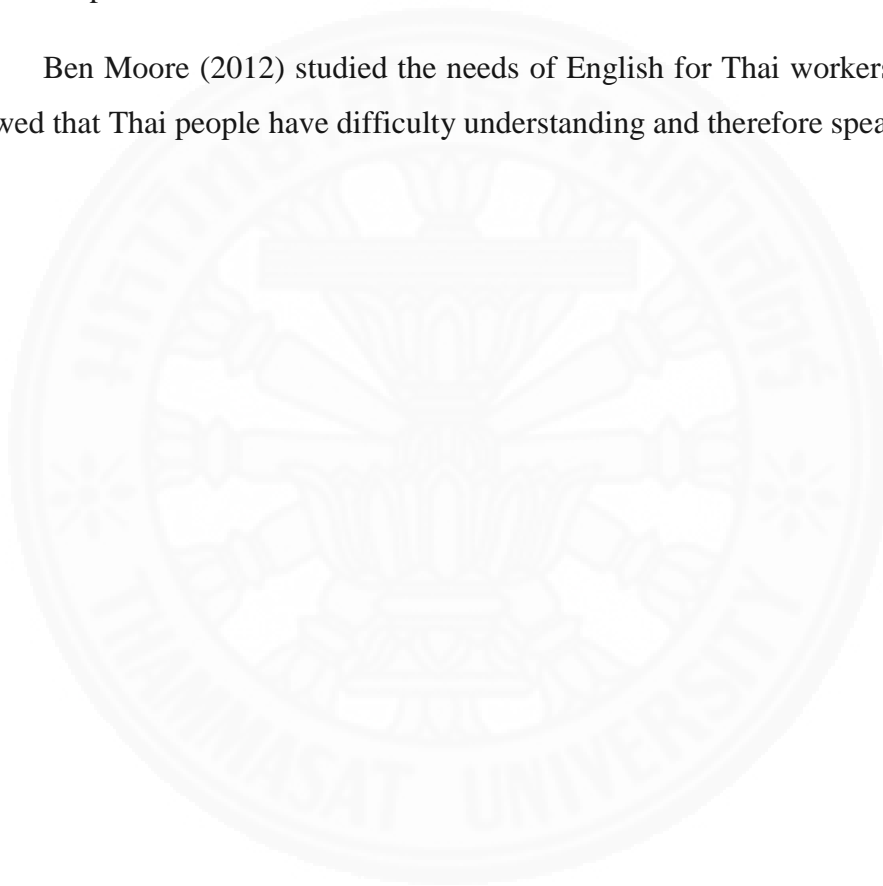
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents methodology of the study (1) Participants (2) Research Instrument (3) Procedures (4) Data analysis.

3.1   Subjects

The objective of the study was to determine the level of English of front office staff in boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area. The participants were 50 staff members at eight boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area obtained by random sampling. The sample in this research only focused on Thai front office staff.

3.2   Materials

The research instrument in this study was a close-ended questionnaire divided into three main sections, with the questions adapted from Charunsri (2011).

Part I - Profile of Respondents

This section introduces the sample size, their occupation, age, gender, education, and other basic information.

Part II – The Needs of requirements and ability when using English Language.

This section concentrates on the important of needs and how the participants perform. All the participants were asked a series of questions and then rated their English skills using a Likert Scale.

The criteria were as follows:

Opinion ratings	Clarification of the scale
1	Very Low
2	Low
3	Moderate
4	High
5	Very High

Part III – Open-ended questions.

This section sought suggestions from the reception officers in regard to improving their English skills. This part of the questionnaire was divided into two parts for the problems and the solutions. Participants were asked to choose from a total of four answers with four solutions and subsequently asked to elaborate on their answer choices.

3.3   Procedures

This research used a questionnaire to obtain data about the English proficiency of front office staff in boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area.

3.3.1   Research Design

The distribution of the questionnaires was done by sending them to the target group during working hours. The questionnaires were then returned after completion. The data was collected right after submission and the sampling technique was used to collect the data. The data was collected between May 15-22, 2016. All the information gathered from the sample was kept confidential.

3.3.2 Data Collection

Questionnaires were sent to staff in eight hotels The David Hotel, Marriott Executive Apartments, Ad Lib, S31 Hotel, Radisson Blu, Hotel Muse, Indigo Hotel, and Maduzi Hotel. The questionnaires were given and returned within one hour during the meeting of the hotel staff in the morning. A series of 48 questionnaires were given in both English and Thai for Thai nationals working in the front office department of front office boutique hotels.

3.5   Data Analysis

After gathering the questionnaires, the collected data was then analyzed by the SPSS program. The data were analyzed and explained through charts and figures in the form of median, percentage, frequencies, and standard deviation.

For the evaluation, the following criteria were used:

Score from   1.00 – 1.80   Strongly Disagree

Score from   1.81 – 2.60   Hardly Agree

Score from   2.61 – 3.40   Fairly Agree

Score from   3.41 – 4.20   Agree

Score from   4.21 – 5.00   Strongly Agree

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents the report of the findings from 50 front office staff at boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area divided into three parts: firstly, data summary of the general information; secondly, the ability and skills of the candidates as well as the importance of the need for these skills, lastly, the problems with the use of English and suggestions.

4.1 General Information: Demographics of Sample Size

Table 1. Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	34	68.0%
Male	16	32.0%
Total	**50**	**100.00%**

We can see from Table 1 that there were a large number of female respondents in comparison to males, with 68% being females and 32% being males.

Table 2. Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	5	10.0%
26-30	17	34.0%
31-35	17	34.0%
36-40	6	12.0%
More than 40	5	10.0%
Total	**50**	**100.0%**

Moving on to the age of the respondents, most respondents were aged between 26-35 (at 68%), 10% were aged 20-25, 12% were aged 36-40, and lastly 10% were

over 40. Analyzing the data here, on top of having a larger amount of female front office staff, there was a high presence of people at a younger age working in this department. The participants aged 20-25 were probably newcomers or new graduates or even trainees.

Table 3. Level of Education

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Less than bachelor's degree	2	4.0%
Bachelor's degree	34	68.0%
Higher than bachelor's degree	14	28.0%
Total	**50**	**100.0%**

Table 3 shows that participants with a bachelor's degree totaled 68%. Respondents with a higher education than a bachelor's degree were at 28% and 4% had less than a bachelor's degree.

Table 4. Work Experience

Experience of work	Frequency	Percentage
Less than a year	16	32.0%
1-5 years	20	40.0%
6-10 years	3	6.0%
11-15 years	7	14.0%
More than 15 years	4	8.0%
Total	**50**	**100.0%**

Table 4 shows the working experiences of the participants. A total of 32% had worked for a year or less. However, the highest percentage of people had worked at least 1-5 years at 40%. The lowest percentage was 6% at 6-10 years followed by more than 15 years at 8%.

Table 5. Evaluation of Hotel staff regarding the Necessity of English

English is necessary	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	96.00%
No	2	4.00%
Total	**50**	**100.00%**

Table 5 shows that 96% of the staff considered English to be necessary whereas the other 4% said that English is not necessary.

Table 6. Evaluation of the Respondents regarding English skills

Skills	Excellent		Good		Moderate		Low		Very Low		Mean	S.D.	Level of English Proficiency
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
Listening	5	10	16	32	27	54	2	4	0	0	3.48	0.74	Moderate
Speaking	5	10	11	22	28	56	5	10	1	2	3.28	0.86	Moderate
Reading	2	4	17	34	27	54	4	8	0	0	3.34	0.69	Moderate
Writing	2	2	15	30	28	56	4	8	1	2	3.26	0.75	Moderate
Total											**3.34**	**0.072**	

The above table shows the evaluation from the respondents of their English skills.

Listening Skill

Most of the respondents rated their skill as 'moderate', which means that they are able to understand some of the content. This was followed by good at 32%, excellent at 10% and low at 4%.

Speaking Skill

Most of the participants at 56% rated their speaking skill as moderate followed by good at 22%, excellent at 10%, low at 10% and very low at 2%.

Reading Skill

A total of 54% of participants rated their reading skill as moderate, good at 34%, excellent at 4%, and low at 8%.

Writing Skill

A total of 56% rated their writing skill as moderate, followed by 30% good, 8% low and 2% excellent and very low.

4.2   The Needs and Problems in using English at the workplace: Self Evaluation

This section explored the requirements and ability of people who work at boutique hotels as front desk staff. The requirements indicate the needed skill from the workforce. For example, to be a front office staff, the candidate must have excellent speaking skills to be able to communicate well or the skill to read clients' requests online. As for the ability, this means the actual capacity and ability in terms of what are they able to do.

The following tables show the participants' needs and ability levels regarding using English in a variety of specific areas.

Table 7. Level of needs and ability to use Listening Skill

Level of needs				Skill	Ability of used			
Level	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Listening	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Level
Very High	4.24	0.85	2	1. Listening to and understanding what customers want.	3.36	0.78	2	Moderate
High	4.16	0.91	5	2. Listening to customers' complaints	3.36	0.88	2	Moderate
Very High	4.22	0.76	3	3. Listening to customers' comments/advice	3.4	0.7	1	Moderate
Very High	4.24	0.82	2	4. Listening to personal details and information	3.34	0.75	3	Moderate
Very High	4.28	0.78	1	5. Listening to conversations by phone	3.26	0.69	4	Moderate
High	4.2	0.95	4	6. Listening to idiomatic English	3	0.83	5	Moderate
High	4.12	0.9	5	7. Listening to varieties of western accents	2.98	0.74	7	Moderate
High	4.12	0.9	5	8. Listening to varieties of Asian accents	3.04	0.75	5	Moderate
High	4.12	0.9	5	9. Listening/understanding the usage of slang	2.98	0.68	7	Moderate

Table 7 above shows that the top 3 skills of the staff were: Listening to conversations by phone, Listening to and understanding what customers want, and Listening to customers' comments/advice. The lowest ranked skills for listening were:

Listening to varieties of Asian accents, Listening/understanding the usage of slang, and listening to varieties of western accents.

It can be seen from the mean on the left that the company requires an average skill at 4.28. However, the mean on the right shows that the staff only have a mean of 3.26. The second ranked skill is listening to and understanding what customers want. This skill is needed by the company at 4.24 but was only achieved at 3.36. Thirdly, listening to customer's comments and advice is required at 4.22 but was obtained at 3.40 by the staff. Moving to the lowest ranked scores. Listening to varieties of Asian accents are required at 4.12 but was obtained at 3.04. Western accents are needed at 4.12 but it gained only 2.98. Regarding the usage of slang, it is required at 2.12 but it obtained 2.98.

After looking at the requirements needed by the company. With the same data, we will now look at how the staff evaluates themselves. The top ranked skill by the employees include: Listening to customers' comments/advice, listening to customers' complaints, and Listening to and understanding what customers want. As for the lower ranked skill that the staffs have are: Listening to varieties of western accents, listening to varieties of western accents, and Listening/understanding the usage of slang.

Listening to customers comment and advice is obtained at 3.40 but it was required at 4.22. Listening to and understanding what customers want obtained 3.36 but it is required by the hotel at 4.24. And listening to customers' complaints obtained 3.36 but required 4.16. The lower ranked skills were as follows: Listening to idiomatic English obtained 3.00 but required at 4.20. The lowest ranked skills were the listening to varieties of western accents and Listening/understanding the usage of slang skill, which obtained the same amount at 2.98 but required 4.12.

Making comparisons from both sides, we can see that the top three skills that the hotel needs are: Listening to conversations by phone, Listening to and understanding what customers want, and Listening to customers' comments/advice. However, the top three skills that the staff were able to obtain were different as follows: Listening to customers' comments/advice, listening to customers'

complaints, and Listening to and understanding what customers want. The two skills match – this means that employees had two out of the three skills that the hotel wants: Listening to customers' comments/advice and Listening to and understanding what customers want. This shows that the staff members are able to provide the hotel with the skills that they want.

Table 8. Level of needs and ability to use Speaking Skill

Level of needs				Skill	Ability of used			
Level	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Speaking	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Level
Very High	4.36	0.80	3	1. Welcoming and greeting	3.60	0.83	1	High
Very High	4.26	0.90	7	2. Inquiring about customers' needs and decisions	3.36	0.87	2	Moderate
Very High	4.32	0.91	5	3. Making polite requests	3.36	0.89	2	Moderate
Very High	4.38	0.83	2	4. Providing and explaining information about room details and facilities	3.28	0.90	3	Moderate
Very High	4.30	0.89	6	5. Offering assistance	3.24	0.89	4	Moderate
Very High	4.36	0.85	3	6. Giving customers directions	3.22	0.84	5	Moderate
Very High	4.34	0.89	4	7. Refusing politely	3.20	0.80	6	Moderate
Very High	4.26	0.94	7	8. Making recommendations (e.g., restaurants, traditions, tourist attractions, transportation, etc.)	3.14	0.96	7	Moderate
Very High	4.24	0.95	8	9. Engaging in conversations by phone	3.36	0.80	2	Moderate
High	4.16	1.07	10	10. Apologizing when mistakes occur.	3.22	0.88	5	Moderate
High	4.18	1.02	11	11. Explaining the reason for mistakes	3.02	0.84	10	Moderate
Very High	4.24	1.00	8	12. Negotiating for mutual understanding	3.08	0.85	8	Moderate

Very High	4.22	1.00	9	13. Clarifying questions or confirming messages	3.04	0.83	9	Moderate
Very High	4.72	4.09	1	14. Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds	2.92	0.94	12	Moderate
High	4.16	1.14	10	15. Speaking with appropriate word stress.	2.94	0.93	11	Moderate
High	4.06	1.16	12	16. Speaking politely according to grammatical correctness	2.90	0.97	13	Moderate

Table 8 shows the speaking skill of the front office staff and the top ranked skills needed by the hotel include: Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds, Providing and explaining information about room details and facilities, and Welcoming and greeting. As for the lowest ranked skills, they are presented as follows: Clarifying questions or confirming messages, speaking with appropriate word stress, speaking politely according to grammatical correctness.

Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds have a requirement of 4.72 but it obtained 2.92. The second ranked skill needed by the hotel is providing and explaining information about room details and facilities at 4.28 but it obtained 3.28. Lastly, being able to welcome and greet guests are required at 4.36 but it obtained 3.60. The lowest ranked skills needed by the hotel are presented as follows: 4.22 for clarifying questions or confirming messages and it obtained 3.04; Speaking with appropriate word stress is required at 4.16 but it obtained 2.94 and Speaking politely according to grammatical correctness is needed at 4.06 but it gained 2.90.

The top three and lowest three skills that meet the hotel benchmark is are: Welcoming and greeting, inquiring about customers' needs and decisions, and Making polite requests.

Welcoming and greeting was obtained at 3.60 but required 4.36. Inquiring about customers' need and decisions as well as Making polite requests were ranked the same with a mean of 3.36 but required at 4.32. As for the lowest ranked skill, the staff have low abilities in the following: Speaking with appropriate word stress,

Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds, and Speaking politely according to grammatical correctness. Speaking with appropriate word stress gained 2.94 but required 4.16. Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds gained 2.94 but required 4.26.

From this data, the top three requirements are: Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds, Providing and explaining information about room details and facilities, and Welcoming and greeting. However, the skills that the staff are able to do are: Welcoming and greeting, Inquiring about customers' needs and decisions, and Making polite requests. When cross checked, there is a large difference between the data. The top three skills that the hotel requires and the top three skills that people are able to do are completely different skills. Here, the hotel can use this data to help train the staff in order to get the skill needed from their staff.

Table 9. Level of needs and ability to use Reading Skill

LEVEL OF NEEDS				SKILLS	ABILITY OF USED			
Level	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Reading	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Level
High	4.16	0.84	4	1. Reading customers' travel documents	3.42	0.92	4	Very High
High	4.18	0.87	3	2. Reading business letters and faxes	3.38	0.87	5	Moderate
High	4.20	0.85	2	3. Reading information from the internet	4.46	7.34	1	Very High
Very High	4.24	0.89	1	4. Reading E-mails	3.50	0.88	3	Moderate
High	4.20	0.83	2	5. Reading brochures or tourism magazines and journals	3.42	0.90	4	High
High	4.18	0.84	3	6. Reading minutes of meetings	3.98	5.71	2	High
Very High	4.24	0.87	1	7. Reading news and official information issued by the company	3.12	0.96	6	Moderate

Table 9 shows the top levels of ability for reading skills that the hotel requires are reading E-mail, Reading news and official information issued by company, and Reading brochures or tourism magazines and journals. The lowest needed skill from the front office staffs are: Reading business letters and faxes, Reading minutes of meeting, and Reading customers' travel documents.

Reading E-mails and Reading news and official information issued by company are required at 4.24 but obtained 3.50 and 3.12. Reading brochures or tourism magazines and journals are needed at 4.20 but obtained 3.42. The lowest

skills needed are Reading business letters and faxes and Reading minutes of meetings, which are needed at 4.18 but gained 3.98 and 3.5.

As for the skills obtained by the staff, the top three were the following: Reading information from the internet at 4.46 but required at 4.20, Reading minutes of meetings obtained 3.98 but required 4.18 and Reading E-mails obtained 3.5 but required 4.24.

We can see here that the ability to read emails is required by the hotel as a top three skill and it was also a top three skill of the staff.

Table 10. Level of needs and ability to use Writing Skills

LEVEL OF NEEDS				SKILL	ABILITY OF USED			
Level	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Writing	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Level
High	3.90	1.14	3	1. Writing business letters in appropriate formats	2.80	0.96	4	Moderate
High	3.78	1.18	4	2. Writing daily reports	3.00	1.04	3	Moderate
High	3.94	1.05	2	3. Writing messages for customers	3.12	1.02	2	Moderate
High	3.96	0.98	1	4. Taking telephone messages	3.12	0.96	2	Moderate
High	3.94	1.07	2	5. Writing E-mails	3.20	0.96	1	Moderate
High	3.94	1.03	2	6. Writing memos	3.12	1.00	2	Moderate

Table 10 shows the skills required by the hotel: Taking telephone message, Writing E-mails, Writing memos, writing messages for customers were the top ranked needed skills and the lowest were Writing business letters in appropriate formats and Writing daily reports.

Taking telephone message is needed at 3.96 but obtained 3.12 where Writing E-mails, Writing memos, writing messages for customers are needed at 3.94 but obtained 3.12 and 3.20. The lowest ranked skills needed by the hotel are Writing business letters in appropriate formats at 3.9 but it obtained 2.80 and Writing daily reports at 3.78 but it obtained 3.00.

What the staff could do best is writing emails, which obtained 3.20 but required 3.94. Taking telephone messages and writing memos gained at 3.12 but needed 3.96. The skills that obtained the lowest rating by the staff were writing daily reports at 3.00 but required 3.78. Lastly, writing business letters in appropriate formats gained 2.80 but required 3.9.

The skills that matched with what the hotel wants were: Taking telephone message, Writing E-mails, Writing memos, and writing messages for customers. This means that whatever the hotel requires the staff to do, the staff are able to provide them.

Table 11. The skills needing the most improvement

The skills needing the most improvement			
Skills	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Rank**
1. Listening skill	14	28	2
2. Speaking skill	16	32	1
3. Reading skill	12	24	3
4. Writing skill	8	16	4
Total	**50**	**100**	

Table 11 shows that speaking skills need the most improvement at 32%, which is 16 people of the participants out of 50. Second was listening skill at 28% or 14 people, third was reading skill at 24% or 12 people. Lastly, writing skill needed to be improved by 16% or 8 people.

4.3 Problems and Suggestions

4.3.1. Problems

On the questionnaires, the candidates were asked a series of questions. These questions are presented in different tables as seen below.

Table 12

Problem: "I am not sure of proper pronunciation "

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	50.00
No	25	50.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 12 shows that 25 respondents out of 50 said that they were not sure of proper pronunciation of words and the other half said that they can pronounce them, equating to a percentage of 50%.

Table 13

Problem: "I have a hard time listening to Indian accents"

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Yes	39	78.00
No	11	22.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 13 shows 78% of the respondents have a hard time understanding Indian accents, with this accounting for 39 people; meanwhile, another 11 people are able to understand, which accounts for 22%.

Table 14

Problem: "Spelling long and specific words in messages"

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Yes	34	68.00
No	16	32.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 14 shows that as for reading, 68% or 34 participants out of 50 said that they find it difficult to spell specific words. However, the other 16 people, which accounts for 32%, don't find it hard.

Table 15

Problem: "It takes a long time to read a long e-mail from a customer or client"

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Yes	24	48.00
No	26	52.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 15 shows 24 people or 48% of the staff said that they take a large amount of time to read long e-mails. However, the other 26 people out of 50 or 52% said that they take a shorter time to read long emails.

Additional problems with English include: worrying about grammatical errors as well as being shy about making mistakes.

4.3.2. Suggestions

The employees were asked to give suggestions about improving their English proficiency. The data are presented as follows:

Table 16

Suggestion: "I read books on a weekly basis"

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	70.00
No	15	30.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 16 shows that 35 people said that reading books on a regular basis will help improve their reading skill, which represents 70%. On the other hand, 15 people said that this will not help, representing 30%.

Table 17
Suggestion: "I push myself to try to communicate with foreigners from all backgrounds"

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Yes	37	74.00
No	13	26.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 17 shows that 37 participants or 74% said that pushing themselves to communicate with people with different background will be effective. However, the other 13 people or 26% said that it will not be helpful.

Table 18
Suggestion: "I try to write messages in English/to practice grammar and vocabulary"

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Yes	34	68.00
No	16	32.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 18 shows 34 participants or 68% said that writing messages in English consistently will improve their English level but only 32% or 16 people said that it will not help.

Table 19

Suggestion: "Find a foreign friend to communicate with so that I can push myself to speak another language"

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Yes	42	84.00
No	8	16.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 19 shows that finding a foreign friend seems to be the most effective way to improve their English because 42 participants out of 50 members, which represents 84%, said that it will dramatically improve their English; meanwhile, only 8 people or 16% said that it will not help.

Additional suggestions include: they should have English training at a consistent rate (or on a monthly basis or quarterly basis) and to evaluate their English level every six months or one year. Also, for people who have a hard time learning English, they must take additional English courses to help them with their English. Watching movies in English and listening to music will also help the staff with listening and speaking because they get to hear foreign accents all the time. Lastly, they must consistently use English in order to practice and not forget some English words that they learned.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will present the review of the study after finding the results with the following topics:

1) Summary of the study

2) Summary of the findings

3) Discussion of the results

4) Conclusion

5) Recommendations for further research

5.1 Summary of the Study

This part will present the subject, materials, and procedures of the study.

5.1.1 Objectives of the study

This study was conducted to examine and identify the needs and problems of English proficiency for front office staff who were working at boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials and Procedures of the study

This paper focused on the English level of front office staff. A total of 48 questionnaires were sent to front office staff at boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area (The David Hotel, Marriott Executive Apartments, Ad Lib, S31 Hotel, Radisson Blu, Hotel Muse, Indigo Hotel, and Maduzi Hotel), which was divided into three parts: firstly, data summary of the general information; secondly, the ability and skills of the staff as well as the importance of the need for these skills; lastly, the problems with the use of English and suggestions. Within a span of three weeks, the data was collected then analyzed.

After the data was gathered, SPSS was used for data analysis to find out the mean and percentage of the different areas of the topics.

5.2   Summary of the Findings

5.2.1   Demographics of Sample Size

According to the study, a most of the respondents (68%) were female. Most of them were between 26-35 years old (68%). Most of them (68%) had a bachelor's degree and 40% had been working at least 1-5 years. They agreed that the English language is a necessity for their work (96%). Lastly, most of the candidates rated themselves as having moderate English ability in speaking and writing skill (56%).

5.2.2   Level of needs and ability regarding English Language skills

5.2.2.1 Listening skills

The study shows that in general, this group of participant is able to listen. Even though higher levels are required for this, they are still achieved a mean of 3 when the requirement of the English level is 4. The most required skill from this group of participant is listening to conversations on the phone. They are able to pick up calls from clients requesting bookings or other enquiries about the hotel or tourist destinations. However, according to the results, they were not able to achieve the highest proficiency in picking up calls. However, they were able to achieve only a moderate level in their phone listening skills, meaning that they have to develop their skill.

However, it is clear that this group of participants needs development on specific listening such as listening to different accents and understanding the use of slang. This is normal as people living in Thailand are accustomed to a specific type of accent. When travelers have thick accents from India, England, or Russia, it makes understanding them harder. In addition, hearing slang that isn't used on a daily basis will also cause a problem for understanding, as the front office staff doesn't speak or understand specific words or slang.

5.2.2.2 Speaking skills

The speaking skills had the same results as listening. According to Table 8, the level of ability of speaking skills ranged from 2.9-3.2, with the only part showing a sign of weakness again being specific details of the language, i.e., pronunciation. As mentioned, the participants are able to communicate on a daily basis but cannot pronounce words the right way. People are used to the English spoken by the locals and therefore pronounce English words the local way but not the native way.

The skill needing to be perfected is pronunciation skill. People are asked the most to be clear with English words. All the words being said have to be clearly spoken because in the hotel business, people are dealing with guests from all over the world. And communication is the key to effectiveness. If they are not able to pronounce words clearly, tourists or guests will have a hard time understanding what has been said. On the other hand, this skill was only achieved at a moderate level and not as high as required.

5.2.2.3 Reading Skills

Table 9 shows again that people can read text from daily operations such as email and requests and demands from hotel guests. What proves to be difficult are news articles because they use specific words and are harder to understand.

The highest reading request is the skill for reading news and official letters or text. This is because during the working hours, people will have to read official texts as a form of news to forward to the team or to clients. This skill is needed at a high level but people were only able to achieve it at a moderate level.

5.2.2.4 Writing Skills

As for the writing skills of the participants, from the data of table 10, people are able to write in e-mails and daily operations. However, as a chain effect from all the other skills, writing a formal business letter can prove to be difficult for this group of people.

Taking phone calls and messages is needed as the highest skill for this group of people. This is because when guests call in and leave a message in the room or for the staff, the staff have to be able to note down clearly in order to send the message forward. This is needed at a high level but people were only able to rate themselves as moderate.

5.2.2.5 The skills that front office staff requested to be improved the most

When respondents from boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area were asked about the skills that they wanted to improve the most, 32% said speaking skill followed by listening, reading and writing skill.

This shows that on a daily basis, front office staff are used to communicating on a certain level to hotel customers and can use English to express their ideas, thoughts, and demands. However, the other group of people are able to speak English but need development. A total of 56% are able to write at a moderate level as well as read, at 54%.

We can say that people who work at hotels must have a certain level of English speaking proficiency as they need to talk to foreigners who come to stay at the hotel. However, when specifically dissecting their English proficiency, grammatical errors, specific words, synonyms, idioms or even fluency in English needs development.

5.3   Discussion

The findings of this research relate to the theories from researchers who have conducted similar studies.

5.3.1   Needs of using English language skills in work

The results of this study showed that almost all the receptionists who worked at the front office at boutique hotels in the Sukhumvit area need English skills to communicate with their hotel guests. This is similar to the study of Ravisuda Aunruen (2005) who studied needs analysis of English for travel agents in Chiang Mai, with

the results showing that most travel agents in Chiang Mai needed to use English language to communicate with their clients. This is because their customers are not only from Thailand, but also from other parts of the world. Moreover, this is also in line with Robinson (1991) who conducted a needs analysis of English teaching in UK. It was found that English is a goal-oriented need for the workplace because to be competitive in the workforce, you will need to be able to have good English skills.

From the results of this study, speaking is the most necessary skill for receptionists working in the front office at the selected hotels in the Sukhumvit area because speaking skills can be used in order to solve problems, find solutions, and discuss the wants and needs of guests or clients. Similarly, the study of Ravisuda Aunruen (2005) showed that speaking is more important part for the routine work of travel agents than the other skills because most customers used English language as a medium to communicate overseas. Moreover, this is also in line with Thawatchai Tangniam (2006) who studied foreign tourists' satisfaction with the service of Thai Smile. The findings showed that the staff of Thai Airways needed English speaking skill the most because these people have to communicate with foreigners on a daily basis at the airport; likewise, Sansanee Yhouyhen (2008) studied the improvement of basic English communication skills for housekeepers at Elements Boutique Resort & Spa. The finding showed that speaking skill is very important as a direct method used for communication. And this is what the hotel staff will need the most in order to provide the best customer service.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study differ from Kamomwan Chanrunsri's (2011) who studied the needs and problems of English language skills for the hotel front office staff in Chinatown, Thailand. The results showed that listening is the most wanted skill at work, not speaking, because the participants must understand the context of what has been said in order to do what has been asked. Thus, we cannot conclude definitely that one skill is more important than the others because different careers or locations might require different English skills.

5.3.2 Difficulties in Using English Language Skills in Work

The results of this study showed that the receptionists have difficulties in speaking more than the other skills because speaking was used most often in the communication between receptionists and hotel guests compared to the other skills (listening, writing, and reading). Even though they were able to convey daily messages, they were not able to pronounce some words clearly and correctly. They were also afraid of making mistakes when speaking a foreign language. This is similar to Chistison and Krahnke (2004), who studied non-native English speakers, with the results showing that they had difficulties, such as pronunciation and their confidence, while learning to speak English. This is also in line with Saijai Lertanant's (2006) study of Thai restaurant staff's problem and needs in English speaking skill, with the results showing that main characteristic of Thai people was shyness, which made them not confident when they spoke English language. Most of the respondents were shy to speak English because they were afraid of making mistakes when speaking a foreign language. The fear of making mistakes accounts for a large barrier for a person who wants to improve their English.

5.3.3 The Skills that Front Office Staff' wanted to Improve

Regarding the results of the study, most receptionists in the hotels in the Sukhumvit area needed to improve their speaking skill, which was the most problematic skill for them. This is because they usually are in contact with people who are from different countries or have different nationalities. The findings also showed the level of needs was very high in speaking skill but participants' had the ability to perform only at a moderate level. This is similar to Saijai Lertanant (2006), who conducted research on the speaking level of people working in the hotel and restaurant businesses, with the results showing that difficulties in speaking made them want to improve their speaking skills first. Likewise, Supita Kalasin (2013) studied the needs and problem of English use among Thai hotel front desk staff in tourist attractions in southern Thailand, with the findings showing that speaking skill was very important for their work as well as it can be problematic for them to use correctly.

Even though the findings of this study showed that the receptionists believed that speaking was the most important skill for their career, the other skills were needed as well. This is because the results showed that the receptionists were required to specialize in the four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Therefore, it can be concluded that the four skills are important at the same level in order to be a professional and skillful receptionist.

5.4   Conclusion

The participants are able to speak English, but they may not be able to speak fluently due to the lack of skills. They need to communicate effectively and speak fluently. The answers to the research questions are as follows:

5.4.1   What are the English Language skills that reception officers need to use the most and the least at work?

From the survey, the English language skill that need to be used the most is speaking skill. The reason for this is because in order to be able to communicate in any form, front desk must be able to speak clearly and know what to say and how to discuss certain topics or issues. As the results show, pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds are the most needed because people need to be clear with their words. Providing and explaining information about the hotel is also needed because they have to be able to tell guests. Welcoming and greeting is also important because this is the first impression for clients who come.

The least needed skill at the work place is writing according to grammar rules and appropriate words. This is because people only need to be able to speak clearly about what they request or send messages to the staff; they do not need to speak perfect grammar to convey the message clearly. Another skill is the clarifying questions and confirming messages. People need to understand what has been said first. Although they may ask for clarification, the initial understanding is most important.

5.4.2 How well can front office staff use their English skills and what are the difficulties they face?

Looking at the data of the listening skills of this group of participants, they were able to perform well in terms of listening to customers' comments and advice. However, the skill that needs the most improvement is the skill of listening to different accents.

As for the speaking, what participants are able to do the most is welcoming and greeting because they need to show great hospitality by showing guests that they are welcomed at the hotel. The words used for this are the same for every occasion and staff are able to say "Welcome", "Hello", and "Good Morning" at the least. On the other hand, the skill that they need to improve the most is speaking with correct grammar.

The reading skill that is done the best for this group of participants is reading from the Internet. On the other hand, the skill that they have the most difficulty with is reading the news and official letters and information. This is because these use specific terms and it is hard to grasp the information of the text.

As for writing, participants are able to write e-mails the most as these are simple and straight to the point. However, they have difficulty writing business e-mails in formal formats.

5.4.3 Which English Language skills do the reception officers need to improve the most?

The skill that is needed to be improved the most is speaking. This is because front office staff need speaking skills they most because they are the first people whom these guests talk to once they arrive at the hotel. They must be able to know what the client is talking about and are able to answer them clearly.

In order to do this, people need to be more exposed to English not just at work, but even at home. To be able to develop themselves even more and to understand certain slang words or even different accents will require hard practice. The general and most used form that could help these people is to watch foreign movies on a daily basis or find a foreign friend who doesn't speak the local language. This is the most effective way in which people can push themselves to learn more about a langue that isn't their own.

5.5   Limitations of the Study

A limitation of this study is that the participants were asked for their opinions, so the findings were based on their feelings and emotions rather than observations by the researcher. Therefore, the results of the study may be biased according to how the staff view their English speaking skill. In order words, the results are subjective because some people may be hard on themselves when evaluating their English skills whereas other people may be overly confident about their English proficiency, for example.

5.6   Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings and discussion, the following recommendations are made for future research.

5.6.1   A pilot study should be done so researchers can get a better idea of what data is being sought. If the pilot study goes badly, the questionnaire can be revised in order to get the optimum results.

5.6.2   There should be qualitative data, which means interviewing. This can yield greater insight, such as what problems people face. Therefore, we will know what can be done to help this group of participants.

5.6.3   In order to collect better data about the sample group, the clarity of the questionnaire should be considered. That means questions should be clarified and go straight to the point.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire in English

The Needs of English Language Skills among Receptionists at Boutique Hotels in Bangkok

Instruction

The questionnaire is a part of a research paper for graduate student, Language Institute, Thammasat University. Please read the instruction carefully and fill out the answer that best corresponds to you. All answer and information will be confidential and will be presented as group data, not individually.

The Questionnaires are divided into three parts which are:

Part I: General information

Part II: Level of needs and problems of English language for the front office staff

Part III: Problems and suggestions

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR KIND COOPERATION

The Questionnaire

Part I: General information of the front office staff

Instruction: Please put X in The appropriate box or fill in the blanks provided.

1. Sex ☐ Female ☐ Male

2. Age (years) : ☐ 20-25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ More than 40

3. Education
   ☐ Less than Bachelor's Degree
   ☐ Bachelor's Degree
   ☐ Higher than Bachelor's Degree

4. How many years have you been working in the front office department?

   ☐ Less than a year ☐ 1-5 years ☐ 6-10 years
   ☐ 11-15 years ☐ More than 15 years

5. Is English necessary for your present job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. How do you rate your listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill, writing skill?

   Instruction: Please put an X into the box that highly describes your knowledge.

Skills	Very Low 1	Low 2	Moderate 3	Good 4	Excellent 5
Listening					
Speaking					
Reading					
Writing					

Rates of Opinion	Clarification of the scale
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Hardly Agree
3	Fairly Agree
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

PART II: **The Needs of requirements and Ability when using English Language**

2.1   To what extent do you need and encounter difficulties with the following **Listening Skill** in your job?

Listening Skill Activities	Importance of Needs					Rate Your Ability on This Skill				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Listening to and understanding what customers want.										
2. Listening to customers' complaints										
3. Listening to customers' comments/advice										
4. Listening to personal details and information										
5. Listening to conversations by phone										
6. Listening to idiomatic English Ex. "Sick as a dog" - means you are very ill										
7. Listening to varieties of western accents										
8. Listening to varieties of Asian accents										
9. Listening/understanding the usage of slang										
Other……………………………………………………										

2.2 To what extent do you need and encounter difficulties with the following **<u>Speaking Skill</u>** in your job?

Speaking Skill Activities	Importance of Needs					Rate Your Ability on This Skill				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Welcoming and greeting										
2. Inquiring about customers' need and decision										
3. Making polite requests										
4. Providing and explaining information about rooms' detail and facilities										
5. Offering assistance										
6. Giving customers directions										
7. Refusing politely										
8. Suggesting travel information (e.g., restaurants, traditions, tourist attractions, transportation, etc.)										
9. Engaging in conversations by phone										
10. Apologizing when mistakes occur.										
11. Explaining the reason for mistakes										
12. Negotiating for mutual understanding										
13. Clarifying questions or confirming messages										
14. Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds										
15. Speaking with appropriate word stress										
16. Speaking politely according to grammatical										
Other ……………………………………………………										

2.3 To what extent do you need and encounter difficulties with the following **<u>Reading Skill</u>**
in your job?

Reading Skill Activities	Importance of Needs					Rate Your Ability on This Skill				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Reading customers' travel documents										
2. Reading business letter and faxes										
3. Reading information from the internet										
4. Reading E-mail										
5. Reading brochures or tourism magazines and journals										
6. Reading minutes of meeting										
7. reading news and official information issued by company										
Other ……………………………………………..										

2.4 To what extent do you need and encounter difficulties with the following **<u>Writing Skill</u>** in your job?

Writing Skill Activities	Importance of Needs					Rate Your Ability on This Skill				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Writing business letters in appropriate formats										
2. Writing daily reports										
3. Writing messages for customers										
4. Taking telephone message										
5. Writing E-mails										
6. Writing memos										
Other …………………………………………….										

2.5 What is the skill you would like to improve the most?

The requirement that you need

☐   1.   Listening skill

☐   2.   Speaking Skill

☐   3.   Reading Skill

☐   4.   Writing Skills

Part III: Problems and suggestions

1. **Please state and pick the problems in using English language for your work.**
   (You may choose more than one option. Any additional comments, please
   suggest below).

   ☐ "I am not sure of proper pronunciation"

   ☐ "I have a hard time listening to Indian accents"

   ☐ "Message spelling long and specific words is hard"

   ☐ "It takes a long time to read a long e-mail from a customer or client"

   ………

   ………

   ………

2. **Please state and pick the way to solve the problems. (You may choose more**
   than one option. Any additional comments, please suggest below).

   ☐ "I regularly read books on a weekly basis"

   ☐ "I push myself to try to communicate with foreigners from all backgrounds"

   ☐ "I try to write messages in English/to practice grammar and vocabulary"

   ☐ "I find a foreign friend to communicate with so that I can learn to push
   myself to speak another language"

   ………

   ………

   ………

                                                                      Thank you

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire in Thai

<u>เรื่อง</u> ความต้องการการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในกลุ่ม พนักงานต้อนรับส่วนหน้า ของโรงแรมสไตล์บูติค ใน

กรุงเทพมหานคร

<u>คำชี้แจง</u> แบบสอบถามฉบับนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ สำรวจความคิดเห็นของพนักงานต้อนรับส่วนหน้าของ

โรงแรม บูติค ในกรุงเทพ และเพื่อสอบถามความต้องการในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการทำงาน และรวมถึง

ความสามารถของทักษะด้านภาษาในส่วนต่างๆ เช่น พูด, ฟัง, อ่าน, และเขียนว่าอยู่ในระดับใด รวมถึงความ

คิดเห็นด้านการพัฒนา ตนเองเพิ่มเติมเพื่อให้อยู่ในระดับสากล ซึ่งข้อมูลที่ได้จากท่านจะเป็นประโยชน์อย่างยิ่งใน

การนำมาวิเคราะห์เพื่อหาแนวทาง มาพัฒนาเพื่อต่อยอด ให้พนักงานต้อนรับส่วนหน้ามีศักยภาพในด้านการ

พัฒนาการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการทำงาน และข้อมูลที่ได้จะนำมาเสนอในภาพรวมเท่านั้นและจะไม่มีผลกระทบ

ต่อการทำงานใดๆทั้งสิ้น

แบบสอบถามแบ่งออกเป็นสามส่วน

ส่วนที่ 1 ข้อมูลทั่วไป เกี่ยวกับผู้ทำแบบสอบถาม

ส่วนที่ 2 ความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับความสำคัญของภาษาอังกฤษในการทำงานและความสามารถที่ท่าน

ทำได้

ส่วนที่ 3 ข้อเสนอแนะและปัญหา

ข้อมูลในแบบสอบถามเป็นแบบระดับการให้คะแนนทุกข้อสามารถให้คะแนนตามความคิดเห็นของท่านมากน้อย

ตามความเป็นจริง

ขอบคุณค่ะ

The Questionnaire

ส่วนที่ 1: ข้อมูลทั่วไป

Instruction: โปรดทำเครื่องหมาย X หน้าข้อความหรือกรอกข้อมูลให้ครบทุกข้อตามความเป็นจริงเกี่ยวกับตัว

ท่าน

1. เพศ ☐หญิง ☐ ชาย
2. อายุ (ปี) ☐ 20-25 ปี ☐ 26-30 ปี
   ☐ 31-35 ปี ☐ 36-40 ปี ☐ มากกว่า 40 ปี
3. การศึกษา
   ☐ ต่ำกว่าปริญญาตรี
   ☐ ปริญญาตรี
   ☐ สูงกว่าปริญญาตรี
4. ท่านทำงานในตำแหน่งพนักงานต้อนรับส่วนหน้าเป็นเวลา?

☐ น้อยกว่า 1 ปี ☐ 1-5 ปี ☐ 6-10 ปี

☐ 11-15 ปี ☐ มากกว่า 15 ปี

5. ภาษาอังกฤษมีความสำจำเป็นต่อตำแหน่งงานของคุณหรือไม่?

☐ จำเป็น ☐ ไม่จำเป็น

6. ความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับความจำเป็นและปัญหาการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในทักษะการ ฟัง, พูด, อ่าน, และ

เขียน. **ความสามารถในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษของท่าน อยู่ในระดับใด? ทักษะ ฟัง, พูด, อ่าน,**

และเขียน

ทักษะ	น้อยที่สุด 1	น้อย 2	ปานกลาง 3	มาก 4	มากที่สุด 5
ฟัง					
พูด					
อ่าน					
เขียน					

(โปรดเครื่องหมาย X ตามความเป็นจริง)

1	-	น้อยที่สุด
2	-	น้อย
3	-	ปานกลาง
4	-	มาก
5	-	มากที่สุด

<u>**ส่วนที่ 2**</u> **ท่านมีความสามารถด้าน ฟัง, พูด, อ่าน, เขียน อยู่ในระดับใด?**

1. **ท่านมีความจำเป็นและความสามารถในการใช้ทักษะภาษาอังกฤษด้านการฟังในการทำงานของท่านอยู่ระดับใด?**

ทักษะในด้านการฟัง	ความสำคัญและความต้องการ					ความสามารถในทักษะนี้ของคุณอยู่ในระดับ?				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. ฟัง และเข้าใจความต้องการทั่วไปของลูกค้า										
2. ฟังเมื่อลูกค้าเกิดปัญหาหรือความไม่พอใจ										
3. ฟังเมื่อลูกค้าต้องการเสนอแนะในบริการ										
4. ฟัง และเข้าใจรายละเอียดต่างๆ ของลูกค้า										
5. ฟัง และเข้าใจบทสนทนาทางโทรศัพท์										
6. ฟัง และเข้าใจ สำนวนของชาวต่างชาติ เช่น "Sick as a dog" – หมายถึงป่วยมาก										
7. ฟังและเข้าใจ สำเนียง ชาวต่างชาติ โซนยุโรป										
8. ฟังและเข้าใจ สำเนียง ของชาวต่างชาติ โซน เอเชีย										
9. ฟัง หรือ เข้าใจ คำพูดเปรียบเปรย ของชาวต่างชาติ										
อื่นๆ										

2. ท่านมีความจำเป็นและความสามารถในการใช้ทักษะภาษาอังกฤษด้านการพูด ในการทำงาน
ของท่านอยู่ระดับใด?

ทักษะในด้านการพูด	ความสำคัญและความต้องการ					ความสามารถในทักษะนี้ของ คุณ อยู่ในระดับ?				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. กล่าวต้อนรับ และทักทายลูกค้า										
2. พูดสอบถามข้อมูลความต้องการและการตัดสินใจ ของลูกค้า										
3. พูดขอร้องลูกค้าอย่างสุภาพ										
4. พูดอธิบายรายละเอียดของห้องพักและสิ่งอำนวย ความสะดวก										
5. เสนอความช่วยเหลือ										
6. พูดให้คำแนะนำเกี่ยวกับการการเดินทาง										
7. พูดปฏิเสธได้อย่างสุภาพ										
8. พูดแนะนำและให้คำแนะนำเกี่ยวกับการ ท่องเที่ยว เช่นวัฒนะธรรม ประเพณี สถานที่ ท่องเที่ยวต่างๆ										
9. พูดสนทนาโต้ตอบทางโทรศัพท์										
10. พูดแสดงความเสียใจ เมื่อเกิดข้อผิดพลาดขึ้น										
11. พูดอธิบาย สาเหตุเมื่อเกิดข้อผิดพลาด										
12. เจรจาทำความเข้าใจ เพื่อต่อรอง										
13. สอบถามหรือกล่าวย้ำคำตอบเพื่อความเข้าใจ										
14. ออกเสียง ภาษาอังกฤษ ได้อย่างถูกต้อง ตาม หลักสากล										
15. ออกเสียงเน้น คำ หนักเบา ได้อย่างถูกต้อง										
16. พูดสื่อสารได้อย่างสุภาพ ตามหลักไวยากรณ์ และเหมาะสม										
อื่นๆ ถ้ามี										

3. ท่านมีความจำเป็นและความสามารถในการใช้ทักษะภาษาอังกฤษด้านการอ่าน ในการทำงาน
ของท่านอยู่ระดับใด

ทักษะในด้านการอ่าน	ความสำคัญและความต้องการ					ความสามารถในทักษะนี้ของคุณ อยู่ในระดับ?				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. อ่านข้อมูลจากเอกสารการเดินทางของลูกค้า										
2. อ่านจดหมายธุรกิจ และ แฟกซ์										
3. อ่านข้อมูลจากอินเตอร์เน็ต										
4. อ่านอีเมล์										
5. อ่าน โบรชัวร์หรือนิตยาสารท่องเที่ยว										
6. อ่านรายงานการประชุม										
7. อ่านประกาศขององค์กร										
อื่นๆ ถ้ามี..										

4. ท่านมีความจำเป็นและความสามารถในการใช้ทักษะภาษาอังกฤษด้านการเขียนในการทำงาน ของท่านอยู่ระดับใด

ทักษะด้านการเขียน	ความสำคัญและความ ต้องการ					ความสามารถในทักษะนี้ ของคุณ อยู่ในระดับ?				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. เขียนจดหมายธุรกิจได้อย่าง เหมาะสม										
2. เขียนรายงานประจำวัน										
3. เขียนข้อความถึงลูกค้า										
4. เขียนข้อความ จากการฝาก ข้อความทางโทรศัพท์										
5. เขียนอีเมล์										
6. เขียนบันทึกข้อความ										
อื่นๆ ถ้า มี……………………………………………										

5. ทักษะภาษาอังกฤษ ด้านใดที่ท่านต้องการพัฒนามากที่สุด ใน สี่ทักษะ พูด ฟัง อ่าน หรือ เขียน?

       ☐   1. ทักษะด้านการฟัง

       ☐   2. ทักษะด้านการพูด

       ☐   3. ทักษะด้านการอ่าน

       ☐   4. ทักษะด้านการเขียน

ส่วนที่ 3: ปัญหาและข้อเสนอแนะ

1. ช่วยอธิบาย สิ่งที่เป็นปัญหาของท่านในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการทำงานมีอะไรบ้าง? หรือเพิ่มข้อมูล

   เพิ่มเติมได้ในช่องว่าง (สามารถเลือกได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)

   ☐ ไม่รู้จะออกเสียงอย่างไรให้เหมาะสมและถูกต้อง

   ☐ ฟังสำเนียง ของชาวต่างชาติ ไม่เข้าใจ เช่น สำเนียงอังกฤษของคนอินเดีย

   ☐ สะกดคำผิด ศัพท์เฉพาะ ศัพท์ยาก และยาว

   ☐ ใช้เวลานาน ในการอ่านข้อความภาษาอังกฤษจากลูกค้า เพื่อทำความเข้าใจ

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2. โปรดให้คำแนะนำที่คิดว่าจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการแก้ปัญหาในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ? หรือเพิ่มข้อมูล

   เพิ่มเติมได้ในช่องว่าง (สามารถเลือกได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)

   ☐ อ่านหนังสือภาษาอังกฤษบ่อยๆ

   ☐ พยายามพูดภาษาอังกฤษ ให้เป็นเหมือนชาวต่างชาติ

   ☐ พยายามเขียน ให้ถูกต้องตามหลัก และ ฝึกคำศัพท์ ภาษาอังกฤษ

   ☐ ฝึกคำศัพท์ ภาษาอังกฤษ หรือ หาเพื่อนเป็นชาวต่างชาติ วิธีนี้จะช่วยให้ได้ฝึกภาษาไปในตัว

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ขอบคุณค่ะ