



**A STUDY OF THAI ENGLISH TEACHERS'  
ENGLISH LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS**

**BY**

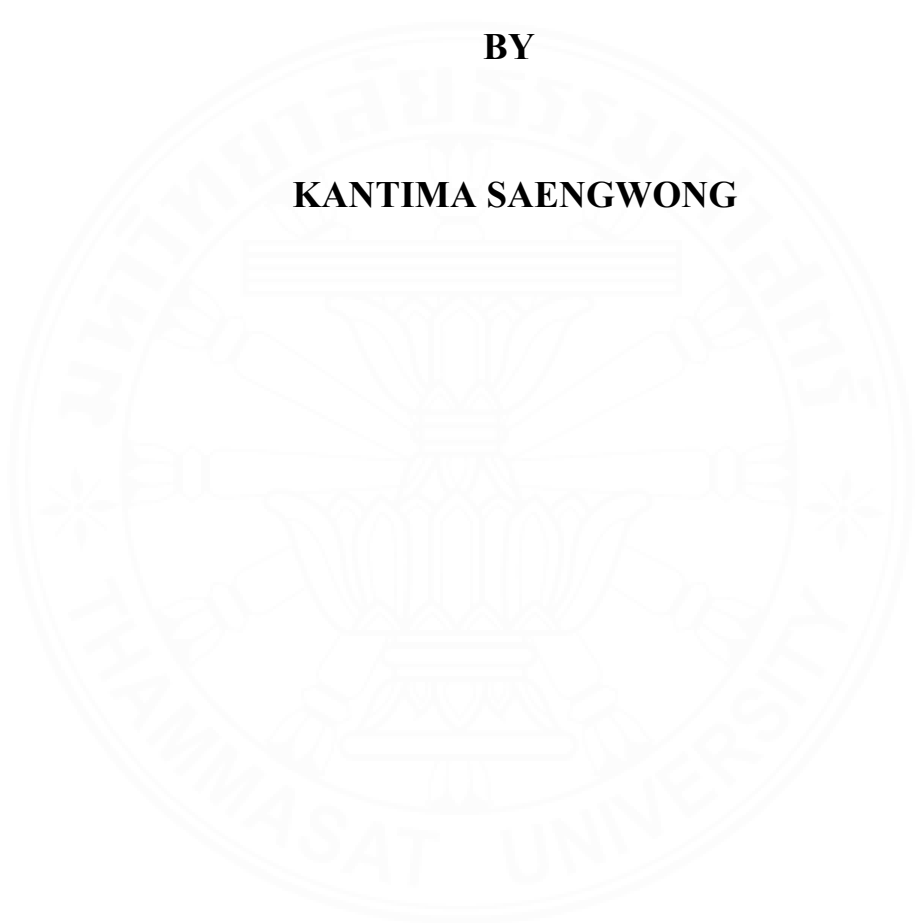
**KANTIMA SAENGWONG**

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CAREER ENGLISH FOR  
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION  
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE  
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2022**

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AN INDEPENDENT STUDY

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KANTIMA SAENGWONG

ENTITLED

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LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts in Career English for International Communication

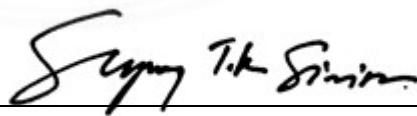
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Chairman



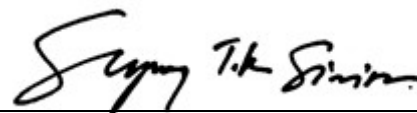
(Associate Professor Supakorn Phoocharoensil, Ph.D.)

Member and Advisor



(Associate Professor Supong Tangkiengsirisin, Ph.D.)

Director



(Associate Professor Supong Tangkiengsirisin, Ph.D.)

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## **ABSTRACT**

The main purpose of this study was to identify the needs of the English language for communication regarding listening and speaking skills related that Thai English teachers want to improve and to investigate the problems of English listening and speaking skills related to teaching students or communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace. The sample size of this study was 60 Thai English teachers who teach students and communicate with foreign teachers at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, Thailand. The participants were selected by convenience sampling and were asked to complete the modified questionnaire, which included both closed-ended questions on a checklist and a five-point Likert scale as well as open-ended questions. The study reveals that Thai English teachers' needs for improving their English relate to teaching students or communicating with foreign teachers. They had much higher needs for speaking than listening skills. It was found that speaking greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers was the most important aspect they needed to improve their skills for use in their job. Thai English teachers generally had more problems listening than speaking when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace. They had the most trouble listening to English at native speed. This finding can provide information that can assist in designing courses for Thai English teachers' listening and speaking by selecting appropriate materials and organizing effective training courses that meet the needs of Thai English

(2)

teachers. Moreover, this study may allow students in the field of Thai English teachers to recognize the value of using language skills and prepare them for future employment.

**Keywords:** English oral communication, Needs and problems, Thai English teachers



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Kantima Saengwong

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	(1)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	(3)
LIST OF TABLES	(7)
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Research Objectives	2
1.3 Research Questions	2
1.4 Definitions of Key Terms	3
1.5 Scope of the Study	3
1.6 Significance of the Study	4
1.7 Organization of the Study	4
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	5
2.1 English Communication Skills	5
2.1.1 Listening Skill	7
2.1.2 Speaking Skill	7
2.2 Needs	8
2.2.1 The needs of English Language for Communication	8
2.2.2 Methods and Instruments Used in Language Needs Research	9
2.3 English Communication Problem	10
2.3.1 Listening Skills	12
2.3.2 Speaking Skills	14

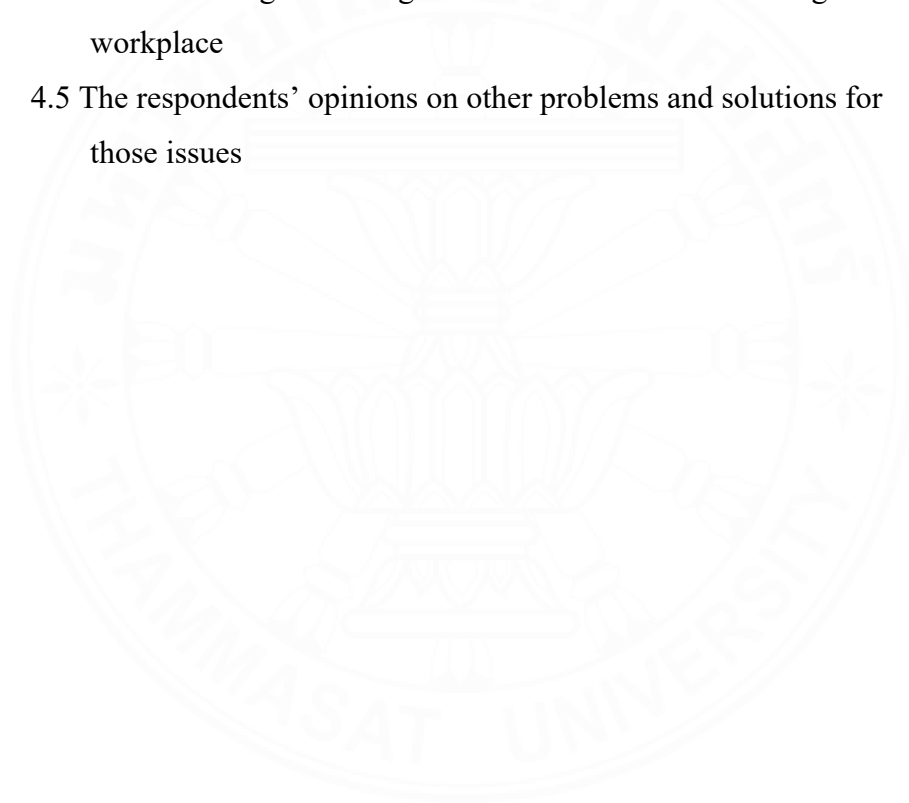
	(5)
2.4 Related Studies	17
<b>CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>24</b>
3.1 Participants	24
3.2 Research Instruments	24
3.2.1 Preliminary Research with Open-Ended Questionnaire	24
3.2.2 Questionnaire	25
3.3 Research Procedures	26
3.3.1 Research Design	27
3.3.2 Data Collection	27
3.4 Data Analysis	27
<b>CHAPTER 4 RESULTS</b>	<b>28</b>
4.1 Findings on the Demographic Data	28
4.2 Findings on Thai English Teachers' Needs in English Listening and Speaking Skills at the Workplace	32
4.2.1 Five-Point Likert Scale Questions	32
4.2.2 Additional Question	35
4.3 Findings on Thai English Teachers' Listening and Speaking Problems with Learners when Teaching and Foreign Teachers when Communicating at the Workplace	36
4.3.1 Five-Point Likert Scale Questions	36
4.3.2 Additional Question	39
<b>CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>42</b>
5.1 Summary of the Study	42
5.1.1 Objectives of the Study	42



	(6)
5.1.2 Participants, Instruments and Procedures	42
5.2 Summary of the Findings	43
5.2.1 Demographic Data of the Respondents	43
5.2.2 The Needs in English Listening and Speaking Skills at Workplace of the Respondents	43
5.2.3 Problems in English Listening and Speaking Skills of the Respondents	44
5.3 Discussion	45
5.3.1 Demographic Data of the Respondents	45
5.3.2 The Needs in English Listening and Speaking Skills at Workplace of the Respondents	46
5.3.3 Problems in English Listening and Speaking Skills of the Respondents	47
5.4 Conclusion	48
5.5 Implications	49
5.6 Limitations of the Study	50
5.7 Recommendations for Further Research	50
REFERENCES	52
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A	61

## LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Page
4.1 The respondents' background information	29
4.2 The respondents' needs to improve their English listening and speaking skills at the workplace	33
4.3 The respondents' opinions on other English communication needs	35
4.4 The respondents' listening and speaking problems with learners when teaching and foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace	37
4.5 The respondents' opinions on other problems and solutions for those issues	40



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The Basic Education Core Curriculum (2008) showed that learning foreign languages is very important and necessary for daily life in the modern global society, as foreign languages serve as significant tools for communication, education, information collecting, livelihood, and gaining an understanding of global cultures and visions. Foreign languages enable students to become aware of the variety of cultures and points of view in the global community and are conducive to friendship and cooperation across nations. They aid in the development of students by providing them with a better understanding of themselves and others. Students are competent in comprehending and learn about differences in languages and cultures, customs and traditions, thinking, society, economics, politics, and administration. The learner will be able to use foreign languages for conversation as well as for simpler and broader access to bodies of information, and they will have a vision for their life plan.

The English language is applied for both personal and educational use. It enables learners to recognize the variety of cultures and attitudes in the global society. Thai English teachers encourage Thai students' improvement through an understanding of themselves and others. They can help students in learning and comprehending distinctions in languages, cultures, customs, and traditions and will be able to adopt foreign languages for everyday conversation. English is a foreign language and an essential learning content that is required for the entire basic education core curriculum in 2008.

According to the Ministry of Education (2015), the 21st century is the era of a learning society. In the pursuit of knowledge, several instruments are used. English is considered the important skill of the century and it is an important tool in learning society. Therefore, it is necessary to provide English teaching and learning to develop students with the knowledge and ability in using English as a tool to access knowledge and keep pace with the world, including their own development, to lead to increasing the competitiveness of Thailand.

English communication abilities are essential for everyday living. Due to various social and environmental factors, the majority of Thai students face challenges when it comes to using English to communicate with foreigners in real-life situations (Yuh & Kaewura, 2019). In addition, improving English communication abilities may lead to a better social life and improved employment chances. In the past, people used to get jobs if they were competent in their industries, but nowadays, specific competencies must be combined with communication skills (Pandey, 2014). Therefore, Thai English teachers need to teach English communication skills to be effective in order to be able to use English to communicate effectively. Being unable to speak in English does not exclude professional success, but having a sufficient comprehension of the language and the skills necessary for one's occupation may undoubtedly help one succeed in any job.

This is a study of Thai English teachers' English daily-life communication skills regarding speaking and listening skills in both primary teaching between grades 1 and 6 and secondary teaching between grades 7 and 10 of public schools in Muang District, Sakon Nakhon Province, Thailand. This study is aimed at investigating teachers' use of English communication skills (and also problems they have). The significance of this study is that it will provide better knowledge for Thai English teachers to improve and enhance further language learning.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) To investigate the needs in using English listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers.
- 2) To study the problems in using English listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

This study aims to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the needs in using English listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers?

2) What are the problems in using English listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers?

#### 1.4 Definitions of Key Terms

The following terms are specified specifically in this study:

**1) Thai English teachers** in this study refers to the English teachers in both primary teaching between grades 1 and 6 and secondary teaching between grades 7 and 10 of public schools in Muang District, Sakon Nakhon Province, Thailand.

**2) Listening and speaking skills** refer to Thai English teachers' ability to listen and speak the English language when teaching students or learning to improve the English language.

**3) Needs** refer to knowledge and abilities required for English listening and speaking skills that Thai English teachers need to use to develop their career path and for effective work.

**4) Problem** refers to factors or obstacles that can affect Thai English teachers' comprehension of English speaking and listening abilities when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers.

#### 1.5 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study aims to understand Thai English teachers' obstacles and needs for using English daily-life listening and speaking skills. In this study, the research focuses only on exploring Thai English teachers' opinions on problems with their speaking and listening skills for teaching, learning, and communicating with students, and foreign teachers to be as efficient as possible. The participants were 60 Thai English teachers who teach students and communicate with foreign teachers at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, Thailand. The participants were selected by convenience sampling.

This study was time-limited; the researcher only administered the questionnaire to 60 Thai English teachers. This sample size may not be sufficient for generalizing the findings to Thai English teachers in other schools. In addition, the results obtained in this study may not be applicable to the participants outside of this designation because of differences in the demographics, locations, and timing of the study.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

These results of the research include the following:

1) Thai English teachers will recognize the value of English communication abilities in their job and will also recognize that the language could expand professional prospects.

2) This study can help investigate the needs and examine the problems that Thai English teachers in using English language skills at public schools.

3) This study's findings could be used as a guide for designing courses for Thai English teachers such as listening and speaking training courses to enhance those skills for Thai English teachers.

## **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The study on Thai English teachers' problems and needs for improving English listening and speaking skills at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, Thailand, is divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction consists of background, research questions, objectives of the study, definitions of terms, scope of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the study.

Chapter Two: The literature review covers four topics: English communication skills, Needs, English communication problem and related studies.

Chapter Three: Participants, methods and methodology, instruments, the data collection procedure, and the data analysis process are in this chapter.

Chapter Four: The study's findings include three sections: general information, the needs of using English listening skill, and the needs of using English speaking skill.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations. This chapter contains six sections: a summary of the study, a summary of the findings, a discussion, a conclusion, recommendations for future research, and a discussion of the implications.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In reviewing the literature to create a theoretical framework for this research project, I have considered various concepts and theories related to language and communication. It appears that English communication skills, the needs of Thai English teachers who use English to communicate with foreigners, and English communication problems are relevant concepts to elaborate an answer to the research question in this study, which are all discussed further in the parts below.

To begin with an outline, there are four main sections in this chapter. First, section 2.1 explores concepts and definitions revolving around English communication skills with a specific focus on listening and speaking skills for Thai English teachers that use English to communicate with foreigners. Then, in section 2.2, the review moves on to needs of English Language for Communication, including listening and speaking skills for Thai English teachers. After that, section 2.3 investigates the problems of using English language skills of the research participants in this study who are in the Thai education system. Finally, the chapter ends with section 2.4 which presents related previous studies.

#### **2.1 English Communication Skills**

Communication is the process of conveying ideas, ideals, and emotions from one person to another. Communication takes place between two or more participants. The goal of communication is to be able to thoroughly convey messages from the sender to the receiver(s). It's critical that all sides be on the same page when it comes to the signals being sent (Hamilton, 2013). Similar to Weekley (1967), The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (sixth edition) presents the Latin root of communicate as *communicare*, which means "to impart, share, or make common" (Brown & Stevenson, 2007). Moreover, Hamilton and Kroll (2014) state that communication is "the process of individuals exchanging their thoughts, ideas, and emotions in commonly understandable ways" (p. 6). All living things need to communicate with each other to

survive. However, human communication can be complicated due to the numerous factors involved in the various stages of the communication process.

According to Pearson and Nelson (2000), interpersonal relationships are related to communication. The definition will emphasize processing, comprehension, communication, and meaning. All of these factors affect the communication process, which means the encoding and decoding process, message, source or sender, receiver, motivation, context, channel, feedback, environment, and noise. Furthermore, communication is also referred to as the meaning that includes transmission, which is where the shared understanding of information possibly creates effective oral communication. Since communication includes the transmission of meaning, in language usage meaning plays an important role as it encourages a suitable response that shows the message was comprehended (Capp, 1981). Moreover, McLean (2010) suggests that communication is important for success in interpersonal relationships and workplace relationships. The capacity to communicate comes from many experiences in developing communication skills. You can become an effective communicator by studying from your own or others' experiences and in a real-life situation involving interpersonal communication meaning can be exchanged, transacted, or bargained by asking questions about the message, especially when communicators have little in common (Olawale, 2014). Therefore, Ellis (2003) suggests that enhancing communication skills involves recognizing and making explicit what we do in our courses by attracting students' attention to the communication skills and outcomes they are acquiring as part of their studies. Therefore, enhancing communication skills should have real benefits. If teachers look and sound confident while communicating with students and foreign teachers, students may think instructors are confident and deserving of respect. This is a very vital skill for a language instructor to possess (Ellis, 2003). This means:

- 1) Raising awareness of how the curriculum encourages communication skills
- 2) Linking learning outcomes explicitly with communication
- 3) Enhancing students' knowledge of the value of study beyond their immediate academic area.
- 4) Giving students a language to better effectively express their abilities, knowledge, and career potential with prospective employers.



### **2.1.1 Listening Skill**

Thomlison (1984) defines listening as "active listening, which is essential to successful communication" (p. 2). Listening may also be described as "being able to comprehend and interpret the meaning of a conversation more than just hearing it". It has been stated that the listening process is distinct from hearing. Hearing is a physical fact but listening is a mental process. Likewise, listening is associated with brain understanding. Thus, listening is the perception of audible symbols (Purdy, 1997). Similarly, Dickson (2015) found that listening and hearing are distinct. The activity of listening involves the receiving and interpretation of spoken messages. It involves translating sound into meaning. Hearing is the perception of sound. Hearing refers to the perception of sound and the reception of aural inputs.

Therefore, hearing might be defined as the ability to notice and understand. The efficacy of listening and the ability to clearly understand the speaker's message may vary based on the audience's interest and willingness, language competency, organizational and interpreting capability, and use of the audience's experience.

In the field of listening, three skills are needed, each of which affects the skill to understand and listen to English (Rost, 1991).

1) Perception abilities include the ability to distinguish between distinct sounds and to recognize the words heard.

2) Analysis abilities include the ability to identify both written and spoken language.

3) Synthesis skills are the ability to make connections in the auditory language and use prior knowledge to correctly comprehend what is heard.

To summarize, the listening skill level comprises hearing, translating or interpreting, and answering. All of these are significant and must be incorporated into every process.

### **2.1.2 Speaking Skill**

Valette (1977) shows that speaking is a type of communication in everyday life and is essential to communication because it enables the audience to comprehend the speaker's thoughts and understanding. Speaking involves more than simply word pronunciation and sentence intonation; it also means making sure that everyone

understands what you are saying and that your speech is acceptable for people who speak the language as their first language. In the same way, speaking is described as communicating one's thoughts, feelings, experiences, and needs to an audience via the use of sound, language, and gestures in a manner compatible with ethics and social convention in order to elicit a response (Phakamas, 1999).

According to Bygate (1991), speaking is distinct from writing a language. Spoken language conveys a concise message. Some messages may lack sentence structure or grammatical integrity, but they must be understandable. Similarly, speaking requires vocabulary, collation, and grammar into phrases and sentences in order to communicate meaning (Valette, 1977). However, in terms of speaking ability Rivers (1980) classifies it into four types: fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. First, language fluency, rhythm, and speed are natural, and there is a link between text and speech pauses. Second, the correct use of grammatical and lexical structures. Third, language and grammar are necessary for communication from start to finish. The ability to adjust pace, intonation, and pitch in the speaker's original language is possible or may occur, but it must not hinder communication.

## **2.2 Needs**

Robinson (1991) divides needs into five types. First, goal-oriented need means what students can do after the course is over. Second, needs can refer to what the user's institution or society as a whole deems essential or desirable to learn through a language training program. Third, needs should be considered as process-oriented. It refers to what students must do in the language-acquiring process in order to achieve their learning objectives. Fourth, it is what the students want to gain from the language course, indicating that learners might have their own goals for learning apart from study or occupational needs. Lastly, what pupils are not able to know or do is considered to be a lack.

### ***2.2.1 The Needs of English Language for Communication***

The Oxford Dictionary describes that "need" refers to materials or circumstances that are needed rather than desired. Language is the main way that people communicate. When employees or workers are working in an organization, they try to

meet these wants throughout their whole lives. Recognizing and satisfying the demands of employees increases the company's market competitiveness. In the future, an increasing number of businesses will become transnational, necessitating fluency in English as a means of internal communication. On the other hand, employees or workers who cannot communicate in English would have difficulty doing their work. It is essential to our everyday lives since it allows us to communicate and share ideas with others. English is an essential language to learn since it is a global language. English has evolved into a language that is spoken as a first language, second language, or foreign language in a significant number of countries. Many people across the globe believe that English knowledge is essential, particularly those active in world commerce. Likewise, Petcharat (2012) presented that workers in multinational firms were directly or indirectly required to speak in English; a lack of English communication abilities might lead to misunderstandings or miscommunication.

Wiriyachitra (2002) presented her study that English skills needed and desired in the workplace could not be learned via the English curriculum of Thai universities. Listening and speaking skills were not emphasized in the Thai English school curriculum, despite their importance in the company. This research focused on the English for General Purposes (EGP) that had not been taught effectively to learners. Similarly, Khan (2011) reported that even if the workers were proficient in general English, they still need training for their respective industries using ESP. Therefore, building an English course to meet the objectives of multinational corporations should result in improved learners' English communication skills and a better understanding of the material connected to the students' work experiences. It is estimated that after completing the course, the student should be able to speak with the international employees of the organization concerning their jobs and functions at work.

### ***2.2.2 Methods and Instruments Used in Language Needs Research***

There are several tools and techniques that may be used to gather information for a language needs study, including questionnaires, interviews, and observation. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated that using a questionnaire is the approach most often employed in language needs research. Additionally, a pilot test of a questionnaire

is strongly advised before its use in the main study to detect unclearly arranged questions (Mackay & Mountford, 1978).

In general, questionnaires serve two main purposes, collecting information and assessing different program components. Richards (1990) presents that questionnaires are important for gathering data on emotional aspects of teaching and learning, including beliefs, attitudes, motivation, and preferences. They may be used to collect data regarding the opinions, attitudes, and comments of participants. In language need studies, questions may be developed to determine what language learners think about a language course's objective, resources, and teaching technique.

According to Brown (1995), questionnaires may be used to elicit background information such as age, gender, education, and the number of years spent studying the English language. For instance, the educational background or English proficiency of Thai English teachers may impact the language issues they confront at school. Questionnaires can also be effective for evaluating different program components. A study from Knowles (1980) shows four benefits of questionnaires. Questionnaires can reach a large number of individuals quickly. They allow participants to respond without embarrassment or fear, and data can be simply compiled and published.

As stated above, several approaches and tools can be used to collect data for language needs research. However, questionnaires were used in this study to explore the needs and issues in the English speaking and listening abilities of Thai English teachers, since this is the most often used and preferred approach for language needs research. The data collected from the surveys could be simple to analyze and easy to evaluate.

### **2.3 English Communication Problem**

According to Runnakit (2007), effective communication is necessary for workers in the workplace, and it is a main issue. Employees not only have difficulty utilizing the proper terms, but they also have difficulty learning certain words and employing suitable terminology. Listening and speaking are important skills that affect communication in the workplace.

The teacher is seen as a significant element in successful language learning. To set a good example for language learning and encourage students to be more willing to

study English, they must be qualified, well-trained, and proficient in all four language skills, as well as having the desired language competence (Suwannatrai et al., 2012). The instructor is recognized as one of the most essential factors in the effectiveness of teaching English, which plays a big influence in classroom decision-making. A professional and well-trained teacher who understands the nature of teaching techniques and strategies for transferring information and skills might maximize teaching and learning in the EFL setting.

However, numerous studies from Akbari (2015) and Tabatabaei & Pourakbari (2012) found that instructors who lacked enough training were incapable of implementing proper teaching techniques and approaches in the classroom. As a consequence, Akbari (2015) and Nook-ura (2013) noted that the majority of EFL classes were teacher-centered, with instructors teaching all lesson content to students while students behaved as passive observers. In addition, according to Tabatabaei and Pourakbari (2012), the classes and activities emphasize grammar, reading, and memorization of words or phrase patterns above communication skills. Teachers with inadequate training reduced students' opportunity to practice the four skills and permitted them to obey directions in their L1 in English classes. Therefore, EFL classrooms taught by inexperienced teachers who did not know how to convey English knowledge and language skills were unmotivated, resulting in undesirable outcomes, and the poor English proficiency of teachers was a significant factor. According to Songbatumis (2017), instructors with low English competence have difficulty teaching speaking and listening. Moreover, students tend to speak just their native tongue at school. The teacher sets a positive example since it is critical for the success of teaching and learning. Therefore, it is essential that teachers participate in ongoing professional development to update their knowledge and skills in line with current teaching practices and pedagogical goals in order to better facilitate the transfer of all four language skills to their students. These are some of the aspects that appear to be the problems that teachers face in their careers. Still, problems with listening and speaking skills seem to be one of the most important language skills teachers need for effective communication with a student at school. Problems or obstacles in teaching English as a foreign language commonly seem to be in communication skills.

### **2.3.1 Listening Skills**

Tyagi (2013) states that listening competence is the process of receiving a message efficiently. It is a mix of hearing a person's message and being emotionally involved with them while they are speaking. It necessitates a high degree of focus, a desire to comprehend, an attitude of empathy and tolerance, and a willingness to keep one's mind open in order to attempt to see things from another person's perspective. Furthermore, McLean (2010) claims that listening is a talent that allows one to analyze and comprehend the message input in any discussion via hearing. An inquiry for clarification on the message might be used as interpretive feedback.

According to Yagang (1993), there are five categories of listening obstacles: The listening text (message), linguistic features, the speaker, the listener, and the physical environments.

**The message (listening text)** is that listening is essential in many aspects of human life. A listener can listen to content in a variety of settings because speakers often change topics at different times and locations. Therefore, the message may decrease systemically. Many times, listeners may not be able to predict what speakers will say, such as in daily life conversations, interview questions, radio news, and broadcasts. We may not reduce their speed while listening to content on tape or on the radio. Moreover, it is hard to ask the speaker to speak about their topic again. A few studies from Goh (1998), show that students frequently have trouble with listening because they fail to understand the message, forget the words, and immediately forget what they have heard.

**Linguistic features** are conditions that delimit the functionality of languages. For example, these characteristics can be specific sounds. When sounds are combined, their distinct characteristics produce words, the essential components of language. Due to hesitance or nervousness, people will use incorrect grammar in unprepared conversations. They may skip sentence components or add unnecessary material. Moreover, the conversation may include a variety of expressions and colloquial terms like slang. Students who are just familiar with formal English may not understand slang. Also, the listener will struggle to comprehend the meaning of words. This is similar to

Field (2003), who emphasized that another issue with listening is when a student understands the words but interprets them incorrectly. Phonological variations of a word, such as reductions, assimilations, and elisions, mislead people. Students may learn how to use the vocabulary in writing, but not in speech. Furthermore, catching the word in continued speech is also hard for students such as conversation.

**The speaker** is the person who delivers a speech at a public event, conference, or speaking at a meeting. Repeating is important when speaking and it is the nature of speech. It may be beneficial or harmful to students, depending on the learner's level. Repeating may include self-corrections, tautologies, repeats, false beginnings, ostensibly meaningless additions, explanations, and rephrasing. It is very difficult for beginners to comprehend what the speaker is talking about. Moreover, natural conversations have a lot of uneven intonation, hesitancy, and pauses. In contrast, it may offer learners more time to get acquainted with the speaker's voice and speaking style. Normally, students are often familiar with their instructor's accent. British and American accents are constantly utilized in several nations, like Italy, France, Denmark, etc. It is difficult for them to understand the accents of others. Therefore, speakers' accents influence listeners' comprehension. According to Hasan (2000), the biggest issues for listening presented by foreign language learners were caused by the quick delivery of text leading to difficulty for them to identify and recognize words in a continuous stream of data and input.

**The listener** is a person who is listening to a speech at a public event, listening at a meeting, and on the radio. In an English study, foreign students were unable to predict words, and phrases that were absent because they were unfamiliar with clichés and collocations. It is a massive problem for learners. Students may lack sociocultural, factual, and contextual knowledge of the target language, which may be a barrier to understanding since language is used to show a culture. This is similar to Chen (2013), who showed the listening problems of students, such as students have trouble focusing during academic lectures, having trouble learning new vocabulary and concepts, difficulties concentrating, having trouble listening due to the fast speed of delivery as a result makes listening difficult, and a few studies from Anderson and Lynch (1998)



which noted that students lack commitment, and are nearly entirely passive while listening. According to Mohamad (2013), the largest obstacle for the respondents is their limited comprehension of language, difficulties in generalizing after the first listening, and lack of grammatical expertise which makes it harder to get a basic understanding from first listening since Thai and English grammar are dissimilar. Moreover, Underwood (1989) described that there are several reasons for listening obstacles. First, listeners cannot adjust to the speed of the message delivery. Second, listeners may not always be able to request that a message be repeated by the speaker. Even if learners are able to repeat what they have heard, it is difficult for the teacher to evaluate their understanding of a particular section of what students have heard in English class. Third, the vocabulary of the listeners is insufficient. When listeners listen to an audio recording, sometimes listeners face an unfamiliar word, and it becomes a cause for the listener to stop listening and think about the word's meaning. Therefore, it causes them to miss the next section of the speech, and as a result, listeners may be unfamiliar with the context.

**Physical Setting** is the presence of noise, visual clues, and substandard equipment which are all elements that contribute to the development of listening comprehension issues. Noise, which includes both background sounds on the recording and surrounding noises, may distract the listener's attention from the learning passage's content. Visual clues, whether it is in the form of photos, a video, or writing, help students understand the spoken message. This is similar to Hasan (2000), who showed that physical environment problems with hearing may happen as a result of noise or difficulty hearing a recording. Unclear noises caused by low-quality equipment can interfere with the listener's comprehension. Individual hearing issues may have to be evaluated with basic hearing tests; however, the other problems may easily be handled by simply adjusting the context or the individual spoken text being used.

### ***2.3.2 Speaking Skills***

Speaking is a skill that demonstrates a person's individuality. This is a talent that takes a child's whole infancy to acquire via prolonged engagement. In the ongoing evolution of language, new words are added. Speech mistakes are a valuable source of



data or context about the ways in which we communicate (Levelt, 1989). In the same way, NACE (2009) identified that speaking ability as one of the top ten abilities, indicating that it is a desired skill for workers. Low speaking skill in a foreign language is a problem for learners or workers, and topics are not interesting to them. As a result, they feel uncomfortable when learning and are exposed to the target language less. Therefore, they choose to continue being influenced by using their mother language rather than by using English. In addition, understanding the structure of grammar helps boost their confidence and grammar encourages people to talk as much as possible.

According to Kayi (2006), language problems are one of the important causes of speaking difficulties. This weakness may prevent learners from enhancing and improving their speaking abilities. The learners' weak command of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation are the causes of their speaking difficulties. These issues are a part of the linguistic obstacle. Nevertheless, the fear of not being able to speak English and comprehend what is being said causes people to avoid messages, channels, listeners, situations, and content.

Linguistics can be defined as the scientific study of language, and learners often face challenges when they need to speak English fluently. Issues such as a weak grasp of English vocabulary, difficulties with phonology, and problems with pronunciation are common linguistic hurdles that can hinder students' speaking abilities. A few studies from Thornbury (2005) states that the obstacles with speaking may be seen from two aspects:

**Knowledge factors.** mean learners are unable to comprehend the components of language that enable speech creation. They lack both knowledge and practice.

**Skill factors.** mean learners are also not autonomous enough to assure fluency. Affective factors such as lack of confidence, anxiety, self-consciousness, and so on may also be present.

As stated above, it may be stated that there are two categories of barriers for students: knowledge factors and skill factors. Knowledge refers to the speaker's

cognitive or theoretical information and skill refers to the understanding of the practical application, such as confidence.

Richards (2008) explained that there are a number of common linguistic obstacles in the speaking of students. These issues include the following:

**Lack of vocabulary in conversation.** involves the production of spoken language both as an expression and as a means of communication. As a result, vocabularies are very important for daily communication that people must know because it is very important when communicating with others. Likewise, Linse (2005) explains that vocabulary is the collection of words that are known by people. This is similar to Hornby (2006), who stated that vocabulary is the collection of all the words that people know or use and they are all of the words in a particular language. Therefore, a lack of vocabulary may be described as a situation in which a person lacks sufficient language knowledge, making speakers have difficulty speaking since they do not know what to say. In fact, many learners were often confused about how to combine and use the necessary vocabulary. In fact, many learners were often confused about how to combine and use the necessary vocabulary. In the real situation of communication, nobody paid much attention to grammatical accuracy, but they focused on the message and how to respond (Harbi, 2005).

**Poor use of grammar.** involves the system of a language structure used in the process of learning English to ensure that both theory and practice are completed in the classroom. If learners are poor in communication as a result of negative thinking, they may face the same obstacles, such as a lack of confidence, thinking that good communication is a quality that they cannot achieve in real life. A few studies from Harmer (2001) explained that grammar is the explanation of the way people modify the form and combination of words in order to create sentences in a language. In the same way, grammar becomes hard for learners since they do not study about the structures one at a time, as a result they often fail to understand and remember a particular structure in a short period of time. These issues with speaking also appear when people speak English or talk about grammar which includes unease, dissatisfaction, self-doubt, and fear while speaking English to others (Celce-murcia, 2001).

**Lack of pronunciation in conversation.** involves linguistic features (vocabulary and grammar) and skills (speaking and listening). Since pronunciation is a component of speech, it is also a physical process. To pronounce a new language, it is necessary to retrain the vocal muscles. Furthermore, pronunciation includes listening to the sounds of the language. People may practice by concentrating on linked speech while listening to fragments of recorded speech. In the same way, Yates and Zielinski (2009) identified pronunciation as the way in which speakers create sounds in oral communication in order to communicate meaning when they talk. Learning how to properly articulate one's words is an essential component in the development of one's speaking abilities. Listeners will have an easier time comprehending the information being presented if the speaker is able to appropriately pronounce the words and sentences. If the speakers have bad pronunciation, it will be tough or problematic to transmit the information or idea to the audience. Amornrattanasak (1999) found that may be the result of stress or incorrect sounds and structure. As a result, the listener will be unable to pay attention and absorb what is being said, since they will lack access to the meaning. On the other hand, Krashen adds that children will pronounce what they have learned if they pass the test of learning that language by obtaining relevant and understandable input and that students must acquire the language without being coerced.

## **2.4 Related Studies**

Various studies in the field of English daily-life communication skill problems of Thai English teachers in public schools have been conducted. There are fourteen previous related studies discussed below.

Anantawan (2010) investigated Thai Airways International's communication issues between Thai and international flight attendants. The purposes were to find the greatest communication issues between the Thai and the foreign flight attendants. Using the random sample approach, data was collected from 36 respondents through a questionnaire. The results of this research showed that accent was the main communication problem between Thai and foreign flight attendants.

Charunsri (2011) investigated the needs and issues of front office staff in a hotel in Chinatown, Bangkok. A total of 60 people responded to the surveys, which were

divided into three portions. The study's findings revealed that conducting phone conversations, listening to varied accents in English, and listening to customer complaints were the most common hearing problems. The researchers recommended that the questionnaire be more explicit regarding English language requirements, such as studying needs and challenges with employing English language abilities for front-office personnel in other sectors.

Grubbs et al. (2010) conducted a study, "Studying English with Thai and Native-Speaking Teachers". This study investigated how students in beginning English lessons view their Thai and native-speaking instructors. To evaluate three areas, the researchers examined students at five universities and compared a sample of 600 students learning with native-speaking professors to another equal number of students studying with Thai instructors. Those areas were: (1) students' English language learning experience, (2) students' overall attitudes and preferences for studying English with Thai or native speaking instructors, and (3) students' assessments of their present English professors. The results showed that most students had similar backgrounds and had good attitudes about their teachers in the classroom. However, their instructor preferences for learning English differed; students preferred the kind of teacher who was currently instructing them. This implies that the nature of instructor in the classroom has an influence on students' choices and should be taken into account when reviewing data on non-native English-speaking teachers.

Karachedee (2017) aimed to study the needs for English communication skills among Thai employees or workers, as well as the factors that may have an impact on the needs of an international company. It was revealed that most Thai staff lacked English communication abilities. This will impact the performance of the workers and the company's performance. It is desirable to develop the English communication abilities of Thai employees in order to enhance the performance of both the employees and the organization. The researcher collected data using a number of approaches, including interviews with management-level workers and a questionnaire distributed to a representative sample of Thai employees at a multinational organization. After that, statistics were used in order to conduct the analysis of the collected data. English communication abilities were important to be critical for Thai employees or workers working for a multinational corporation. Moreover, the development of listening and

speaking abilities is needed. A variety of requirements for English communication skills may vary according to many factors, such as work experience, education level, and job description.

Khamkhien (2010) carried out a study titled “Teaching English Speaking and English Speaking Tests in the Thai Context: A Reflection from Thai Perspective”. The study aimed to discuss serious issues in English language instruction in Thailand, especially in English speaking instruction and English speaking assessments. Regarding the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method, serious efforts should be made to in-class and out-of-class education in order to tackle the problems Thai instructors are now experiencing. The study mainly proposed that (1) the choice of language approach should be acceptable and relevant to exam format and evaluation; (2) teaching and learning in the classroom should focus not just on spoken phrases or common expressions, but also on communication in the actual world, including the expansion of linguistic knowledge (e.g., phonetics, lexical items, and pragmatic knowledge, etc.); (3) teachers should motivate and encourage students to generate their own new sentences and expressions while speaking English, highlighting a variety of strategies that may be used to succeed in actual dialogue (e.g., asking for clarification, using gesture, etc.); and (4) the above-described situation in Thailand cannot be achieved without the commitment and cooperation of educators, particularly classroom teachers, who need effective language trainings and organized distribution of subject-matter knowledge.

Nimnuch (2011) investigated English communication problems influencing Thai people to take English classes at foreign universities. The participants were 120 English students at the Language Institute, Thammasat University (LITU) and American University Alumni Language Center (AUA). The results found that the main issues in English communication were listening problems caused by unfamiliar accents and pronunciation. In reading, the main issues were understanding the message’s substance and common words’ meanings, as well as idioms and words with many meanings.

Noom-ura (2013) conducted a study called “English-Teaching Problems in Thailand and Thai Teachers’ Professional Development Needs” to investigate issues and the needs of high-school teachers in three provinces of three Secondary Educational

Service Areas in Thailand for English language teaching and learning, as well as professional development (PD). There were both closed-ended and open-ended questions used. The data was examined using frequency distribution and percentages for the issues and PD needs. The study's findings revealed that (1) Thai English teachers see moderate problems involving themselves, curricula and textbooks, assessment, and other factors supporting teaching success; (2) They see a high degree of issues as a result of students' lack of exposure to English and lack of language background; (3) The students' lack of confidence in their ability to use language for communication is also due to their lack of perseverance in practicing or finding more opportunities to practice; (4) Teachers are aware of continued professional development and the availability of PD programs, despite the fact that their requirements for professional development and budgets for PD are moderate; and (5) they have a high level of interest and value for all factors that contribute to their work success, including their personal English proficiency and instructional/pedagogical techniques for teaching and assessing productive skills, in particular listening-speaking and writing abilities.

Promhiran (2008) presented a study called "A study of English listening comprehension problems of Thai teachers at Satit Kaset International Program". The goal of this research was to explore the English listening comprehension issues that Thai teachers at Satit Kaset International Program have while listening to native speakers. Thai teachers who were currently teaching Thai or using Thai as a tool in teaching are therefore the subjects of study. The main instrument of the research was a three-part questionnaire. Parts I, II, and III focused on personal data, analyzing Thai instructors' perceptions of listening comprehension issues, and offering solutions. Part two consisted of a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire regarding difficulties with listening comprehension, concentrating on hearing text, speaker, physical setting, and listener. All sixteen questionnaires distributed to the subjects were examined and presented using the mean score, standard deviation, and problem degree. The study's findings suggested that the listening text (message) was the most influential component in listening comprehension. Speaker, physical setting, and listener were identified as presenting moderate difficulties. In addition, they included the speaker's and listener's language skills, emotional problems, motivation, and the context in which English is spoken as additional factors associated to listening comprehension problems.

Saetae (2010) conducted a poll of Thai employees at a multinational company in Bangkok on their abilities to communicate in English and working with foreigners. A survey questionnaire was completed by 100 Thai workers working in international corporations in Bangkok. The results of this study revealed that writing skills were a problem that should be improved, followed by speaking and listening skills. Speaking English was more important than writing as different accents may impact their understanding of foreigners. The recommendations stated that employees required more help improving their listening skills than their reading skills.

Sangsook (2007) studied the needs for English communication in the careers of employees at Bangkok Produce Merchandising Public Company Limited. In Sangsook's study, a population of 1,042 individuals was considered. From this population, a sample size of 125 employees, which accounted for approximately 12% of the total population, was selected to participate as respondents. To collect data, a questionnaire was employed as the primary research instrument. The result of this study indicated that the majority of the respondents in all groups agreed and strongly agreed that English communication was important for their jobs and speaking was the most required skill.

Songsirisak (2017) conducted a study called "Non-native English speaking teachers: Uncovering Thai EFL teachers' instructional practices in an international program of Thai university". This study attempts to explore Chinese students' perspectives of Thai EFL instructors' instructional techniques in terms of their pedagogical strengths and weaknesses in English language teaching due to little research on foreign students' opinions of language teaching in Thai EFL settings, Thai EFL instructors have a limited amount of data on which to base their instructional techniques. A combination of questionnaires and open-response questions were used to carry out the study with 38 Chinese students from a university in Yunnan Province, China. The data revealed that (1) native English speakers are preferred over Thai EFL instructors. This preference is connected to students' experiences studying English as a foreign language in China, as well as the requirement for local instructors to develop language competency; (2) the students had a favorable opinion of Thai EFL instructors; (3) Thai EFL instructors are informed, qualified, and show positive qualities in English language instruction. Although these elements have a good influence on Chinese



students' classroom learning, they also have several pedagogical flaws and language limitations in English language teaching.

Srikrai et al. (2016) conducted a research study named “English Language Difficulties of Non-Native English Postgraduate Students in an English for Academic Purposes at a Thai University”. Non-native English postgraduate (NNEP) students confront significant academic obstacles when studying at Thai universities. The English language is one such barrier, especially at the start of their academic studies. To meet academic objectives, they must be proficient in all fields and possess strong language abilities. The researchers used a mixed method, including a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, in an academic setting at a Thai university to discover the English language difficulties of NNEP students, to discover the relationships between non-linguistic factors and NNEP students' English language difficulties, and to investigate the causes of the difficulties. The questionnaire was completed by 85 NNEP students from four faculties. According to the data, students considered writing in an academic style to be the most challenging, followed by paraphrasing and synthesizing essays, reports, dissertations, theses, research papers, and articles. In terms of language, possible causes of difficulties in the study could be from: (1) limited exposure to reading and listening input; (2) lack necessary academic study skills; (3) limited English proficiency; and (4) limited knowledge in academic disciplines.

Thadphoothon (2017) presented his study titled “English Language Competence of Thai School Teachers”. This study examined Thai teachers' English language proficiency and their use of English in order to determine if they are prepared to follow the current Thai government policy on driving the country toward the digital economy (Thailand 4.0) meaning Thai citizens must be able to use English for a variety of online business activities. There were 175 Thai teachers who self-evaluated their English language proficiency using questionnaires. The participants were teachers from two public schools under the Bangkok Metropolitan Government and in-service teachers obtaining a graduate diploma in the teaching profession. The findings revealed that (1) the majority of Thai instructors ranked their English proficiency as low, while their need to utilize English was average; (2) The English language proficiency and usage of teachers with BAs and those with MAs did not differ significantly; (3) their English language proficiency influenced their abilities to combine English into other



courses; and (4) most Thai teachers have stated their desire to get English language training and have requested stronger assistance from the government and school management.

Unkaew (2010) investigated employees' needs and problems regarding English communication using each English skill at Venus Technology Co., Ltd. (VTEC). The objectives of the research were to identify the specific English-related issues encountered by employees in the workplace and determine the type of English courses employees desired to attend. The study's data collection instrument was a questionnaire. The researchers selected 30 workers using a purposive sample approach. The findings of this study revealed that the main English issue in the workplace was speaking skills, with a majority of respondents expressing a need for a 50-hour speaking training course.

In summary, from reviewing the related literature and the previous studies, Thai people lacked English communication skills regarding speaking and listening. This is very likely to cause issues and obstacles for Thai English teachers who use English every day for teaching, communicating with students, and working with foreign teachers. Accordingly, this research found out what factors contribute to Thai English teacher problems and explored the needs in using English communication concerning listening and speaking skills. It aimed to find out what their needs and problems were and can identify their weaknesses. It will also help them enhance their English communication skills; for example, by providing them with access to innovations, a training course, or program relating to listening and speaking. In addition, this research will be beneficial to organizations, schools, colleges, universities, and authorities involved in or responsible for teachers and educators in the future.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the research strategy that is used to study the needs in English listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers. This chapter discusses the methodology and data collection procedures used to answer the research questions. The research examined which English language skills are perceived to be most necessary for performing their duties. There are three parts of this chapter: (1) the participants, (2) the research instruments, (3) the procedures used in data collection, and (4) the data analysis.

#### **3.1 Participants**

The participants of this study were 60 Thai English teachers, both male and female, in both primary (grades 1-6) and secondary (grades 7-10) levels of public schools in Muang District, Sakon Nakhon Province, Thailand. The convenience sampling was used to include Thai English teachers who are required to teach the students and communicate with foreign teachers in English as part of their jobs and live in this district in order for it to be convenient to collect the data.

#### **3.2 Research Instruments**

In this study, a questionnaire was used to investigate Thai English teachers' needs and problems with English listening and speaking skills, with both closed-ended questions used to collect the data. There are both checklist questions and questions on a five-point Likert rating scale. The questionnaire was divided into the following three parts: (1) demographic data of the respondents, (2) the problems of using listening and speaking skills, and (3) the needs for listening and speaking skills at the workplace. The details of each part are described below:

##### ***3.2.1 Preliminary Research with Open-Ended Questionnaire***

The need for English communication skills among Thai English instructors has not been thoroughly investigated. As a result, the researcher conducted a preliminary

study with 60 Thai English instructors to survey the requirements for English listening and speaking abilities before conducting the questionnaire. The researcher used an open-ended questionnaire that was authorized by the research supervisor and the subject matter expert to gather data collection. The data was employed to create the questionnaire which serves as the primary research instrument for answering the research questions.

### ***3.2.2 Questionnaire***

The questionnaire was developed based on the information received from the open-ended questions in the preliminary study and literature review related to the purposes of this study. The two sections of the questionnaire were open-ended questions and the five-point Likert scale. Following that, research supervisors checked the questions to make sure of the validity of the questionnaire.

The questionnaires were translated into Thai to make sure participants understood the forms correctly (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 2010). There were the following three sections to the questionnaire:

**Part 1: Demographic data** Participants were asked to answer general questions about themselves. There were ten questions in this part: sex, age, education background, occupation, job experiences, period of studying English, self- evaluation of ability of English listening skill, self-evaluation of ability of English speaking skill, experience in studying English for teaching Thai students in public school, and frequency of using English language communication. The participants were asked to identify the methods they use to learn and improve their English listening and speaking skills to teach learners and communicate with foreign teachers.

**Part 2: Thai English teachers' needs in English listening and speaking skills at the workplace** The participants were requested to respond to a questionnaire comprising items aimed at identifying the specific requirements of Thai English teachers in terms of enhancing their listening and speaking skills in various situations involving students and foreign teachers. These requirements were intended to help them become more effective and proficient in their teaching practices.

**Part 3: Thai English teachers' listening and speaking problems with learners when teaching and foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace** The participants were requested to indicate the level of problems or challenges with English listening and speaking that they face when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers. In addition, the open-ended questions were added to explore any possible obstacles that Thai English teachers think they might have and how they overcome those problems when teaching students in school and communicating with foreigners.

The five-point Likert rating scale, which requires respondents to specify their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements, was also used for some questions on both parts 2 and 3 of the questionnaires. The rating scale in this study is detailed in the table below:

Scale	Level of Need	Level of Problem	Mean Range
5	Very High	Strongly Agree	4.50 - 5.00
4	High	Agree	3.50 - 4.49
3	Moderate	Neutral	2.50 - 3.49
2	Low	Disagree	1.50 - 2.49
1	Very Low	Strongly Disagree	1.00 - 1.49

Moreover, the open-ended question was included to examine if there were any other topics of listening and speaking skills that Thai English teachers wanted to improve on or develop for teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers.

### 3.3 Research Procedures

In this part, the procedures used in the data collection were described as follows:

### ***3.3.1 Research Design***

Since the methods used, problems, and needs for improving the listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers of public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, were the main focuses of this research study, a questionnaire, which was designed and used as the instrument for research in this study, was submitted to Thai English teachers of public schools in Sakon Nakhon Province.

### ***3.3.2 Data Collection***

All the data were gathered through questionnaires distributed to 60 Thai English teachers of public schools in Sakon Nakhon Province during the second academic semester of 2022. After all the respondents had filled out the questionnaires, the researcher reconsidered all the forms to ensure that the respondents had accurately followed the instructions and recommendations.

## **3.4 Data Analysis**

After collecting the completed surveys, all statistical data was collected from the closed-ended questions, both checklist questions and questions on the rating scale, in the first part contained demographic data. The second part, which contained Thai English teachers' listening and speaking problems with learners when teaching and with foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace, and the third part, which contained Thai English teachers' needs in English listening and speaking skills at the workplace, were analyzed using the Social Sciences (SPSS) software program and presented in frequency, percentage, and mean. Moreover, the data gathered from the open-ended questions at the end of parts 2 and 3 were evaluated using content analysis. The information was presented in a table and in descriptive language.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

This chapter reports the results of the study on needs and problems in English listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, obtained from the data collected from the questionnaires. The findings processed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software program are presented in frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation (SD), and level of problems and needs. Moreover, additional opinions from the open-ended questions were analyzed and presented in a descriptive manner using content analysis. The results presented in this chapter are divided into three sections: (1) findings on the demographic data; (2) findings on Thai English teachers' needs in English listening and speaking skills at the workplace; and (3) findings on Thai English teachers' listening and speaking problems with learners when teaching and foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace.

#### **4.1 Findings on the Demographic Data**

This part of the survey is about the background information of the participants and contains 8 checklist questions asking about gender, age, education, number of years of working as a teacher, the chance of using English to communicate with foreign teachers, period of studying English, and the level of English proficiency in listening and speaking skills. The results were calculated and shown in frequency and percentage, as detailed in the table below:

**Table 4.1***The Respondents' Background Information*

<b>Information</b>		<b>Frequency (n=60)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Gender	Male	12	20.0
	Female	48	80.0
Age	23-25 years old	7	11.7
	26-30 years old	29	48.3
	31-35 years old	5	8.3
	36-40 years old	2	3.3
	41-45 years old	3	5.0
	More than 45 years old	14	23.3
Education	Bachelor's degree	44	73.3
	Master's degree	15	25.0
	Ph.D.	1	1.7
	Other	0	0
Number of years of working as a teacher	Less than 1 year	2	3.3
	1-3 years	25	41.7
	4-6 years	10	16.7
	7-9 years	3	5.0
	10-14 years	6	10.0
	More than 14 years	14	23.3
Chance of using English to communicate with foreign teachers	Always	9	15.0
	Often	7	11.7
	Sometimes	31	51.7
	Rarely	13	21.7

<b>Information</b>		<b>Frequency (n=60)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Period of studying English	Less than 5 years	5	8.3
	5-10 years	20	33.3
	11-15 years	13	21.7
	More than 15 years	22	36.7
Level of English proficiency in listening	Excellent	2	3.3
	Very good	5	8.3
	Good	37	61.7
	Fair	16	26.7
	Poor	0	0
Level of English proficiency in speaking	Excellent	1	1.7
	Very good	7	11.7
	Good	33	55.0
	Fair	17	28.3
	Poor	2	3.3

The data from Table 4.1 shows that there were more female respondents (80%) than male respondents (20%). The age range of participants was from 23 to more than 45 years old. The respondents aged between 26-30 years old were representative of the largest group (48.3%). The second largest group of respondents aged more than 45 years old represents (23.3%), followed by the age group between 23-25 years old (11.7%), 31-35 years old (8.3%), 41-45 years old (5.0%), and the last group of respondents aged 36-40 years old represents (3.3%) of the total. For educational level, it can be seen that there are more respondents (73.3%) who completed a bachelor's degree than those (25%) who completed a master's degree. There were few respondents (1.7%) who completed a doctor of philosophy.



In terms of using English and their jobs, most of the respondents have been working as teachers for 1-3 years, which accounted for (41.7%) of the respondents. The second largest group of respondents who had been working as teachers for more than 14 years respondents (23.3%), followed by 4-6 years (16.7%), 10-14 years (10%), 7-9 years (5%) and less than 1 year, which accounted for (3.3%) of the total. Most of the respondents (51.7%) had sometimes had a chance of using the language with foreign teachers. Considering their English studies, the majority of respondents (36.7%) had been studying English for more than 15 years. The second largest group of respondents who had been studying English for 5-10 years were respondents (33.3%), followed by 11-15 years (21.7%), and less than 5 years, which accounted for (8.3%) of the respondents.

Regarding the level of English proficiency in listening, it was found that most of the respondents (61.7%) thought that their level of listening skills was good and over a quarter of them (26.7%) felt that their listening skills were fair, followed by very good (8.3%) and excellent (3.3%). The level of English speaking proficiency was self-evaluated. Most of them rated their speaking proficiency level as good (55%), followed by fair (28.3%), very good (11.7%), poor (3.3%), and excellent (1.7%) respectively.

## 4.2 Findings on Thai English Teachers' Needs in English Listening and Speaking Skills at the Workplace

### 4.2.1 Five-point Likert Scale Questions

This part of the survey is about the English listening and speaking skills related to teaching students or communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace that the participants wanted to improve and consists of two sections of the five-point Likert scale questions: seven for listening skills and the other eight for speaking skills. The results were calculated and shown in mean, SD, and level of needs. The interpretation and detail are shown in the table below:

Scale	Level of Need	Mean Range
5	Very High	4.50 - 5.00
4	High	3.50 - 4.49
3	Moderate	2.50 - 3.49
2	Low	1.50 - 2.49
1	Very Low	1.00 - 1.49

**Table 4.2**

*The Respondents' Needs to Improve Their English Listening and Speaking Skills at the Workplace*

<b>The Needs of English Oral Communication Skills</b>	<b>Means (<math>\bar{x}</math>)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Level of Need</b>
<b>1. Listening skills</b>			
1.1 Listening to greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers	3.55	0.79	High
1.2 Listening to different opinions to develop and reduce the gaps of various problems in teaching	3.58	0.84	High
1.3 Listening to advice to implement accurately	3.43	0.87	High
1.4 Listening to suggestions in various fields to improve the work	3.63	0.84	High
1.5 Listening to feedback or compliments to improve yourself	3.73	0.82	High
1.6 Listening to problems to discuss solutions	3.71	0.86	High
1.7 Listening to performance appraisals upon completion of that work	3.53	0.83	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>2. Speaking skill</b>			
2.1 Speaking greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers	3.86	0.87	High
2.2 Speaking politely and correctly	3.68	0.83	High
2.3 Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds	3.61	0.82	High
2.4 Teaching and explaining content in English subject	3.73	0.88	High

<b>The Needs of English Oral Communication Skills</b>	<b>Means (<math>\bar{x}</math>)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Level of Need</b>
2.5 Discussing problems in teaching encountered with foreign teachers	3.60	0.97	High
2.6 Conveying ideas or introducing new techniques for teaching to foreign teachers	3.61	0.94	High
2.7 Using technical terminology and measurements to make it easier for your students and foreign teachers to understand	3.70	0.82	High
2.8 Talking to build relationships at work	3.76	0.98	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 4.2 shows the overall average score of the respondents' needs to improve their English listening skills at the workplace. The first section was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.59$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ). The findings reveal that most respondents concurred that listening to feedback or compliments to improve yourself ( $\bar{x} = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ), followed by listening to problems to discuss solutions were essential and needed suggestions in various fields to improve the work at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ , and  $\bar{x} = 3.63$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ , respectively). Similarly, listening to different opinions to develop and reduce the gaps in various problems in teaching at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ) and greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.55$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ). They also viewed that listening to performance appraisals upon completion of that work and advice to implement accurately were rated at a high need level ( $\bar{x} = 3.53$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ , and  $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ , respectively).

The other section of the table shows the respondents' improving needs in speaking skills at the workplace, with the overall average score at a high need level ( $\bar{x} = 3.69$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ). It can be seen that eight aspects of needs: speaking greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers, with a high level of need ( $\bar{x} = 3.86$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ ), followed by talking to build relationships at work ( $\bar{x} = 3.76$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ), teaching and explaining the content in English subject ( $\bar{x} = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ), using technical

terminology and measurements to make it easier for your students and foreign teachers to understand ( $\bar{x} = 3.70$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ), speaking politely and correctly ( $\bar{x} = 3.68$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ). Also, conveying ideas or introducing new techniques for teaching to foreign teachers and pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds had the same mean ( $\bar{x} = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ , and  $\bar{x} = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ , respectively). In addition, the other one that respondents' needs in speaking skills at the workplace, which was discussing problems in teaching encountered with foreign teachers, is also at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.60$ ,  $SD = 0.97$ ).

All in all, it is noticeable that the levels of overall needs in the respondents' listening and speaking skills are the same at a high level of need ( $\bar{x} = 3.59$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ , and  $\bar{x} = 3.69$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ , respectively). Moreover, seven aspects of needs for listening skills at the workplace were rated at a high level, similar to the eight aspects of needs for speaking skills at the workplace, with the overall average score at a high need level.

#### 4.2.2 Additional Question

This part of the survey contains the open-ended question asking about other things that respondents need to improve their English listening and speaking skills when teaching students or talking with foreign teachers. The findings are shown in frequency and percentage, as detailed in the table below:

**Table 4.3**

*The Respondents' Opinions on Other English Communication Needs*

Information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Needs Knowing more basic listening and speaking skills	30	56.6
Improving assertiveness		
Improving listening and speaking skills to teach students	16	30.2
Creating more teaching methods that involve students' participation	5	9.4
	2	3.8

From Table 4.3, it can be concluded that over a quarter of the respondents (56.6%) would like to improve their knowledge of the basic English skills of listening and speaking. They agreed that to be better at teaching students smoothly and effectively, they needed to improve their assertiveness (30.2%), followed by practicing listening and speaking skills to teach students (9.4%) and creating more teaching methods that involve students' participation (3.8%). It should be noted that there were seven respondents who did not give responses to the question.

### **4.3 Findings on Thai English Teachers' Listening and Speaking Problems with Learners When Teaching and Foreign Teachers When Communicating at the Workplace.**

#### **4.3.1 Five-point Likert Scale Questions**

This part of the survey is about the English listening and speaking problems related to teaching students or communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace of the participants and consists of two sections of the five-point Likert scale questions: eight for listening skills and the other eight for speaking skills. The results were calculated and shown in mean, SD, and level of needs. The interpretation and detail are shown in the table below:

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Level of Problem</b>	<b>Mean Range</b>
5	Strongly Agree	4.50 - 5.00
4	Agree	3.50 - 4.49
3	Neutral	2.50 - 3.49
2	Disagree	1.50 - 2.49
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00 - 1.49

**Table 4.4**

*The Respondents' Listening and Speaking Problems with Learners When Teaching and Foreign Teachers When Communicating at the Workplace.*

<b>The Problems of English Oral Communication Skills</b>	<b>Means (<math>\bar{x}</math>)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Level of Problem</b>
<b>1. Listening skills</b>			
1.1 I am unable to listen and understand general English conversation.	2.43	1.29	Disagree
1.2 I am unable to catch content words, it is difficult for me to guess the meaning from the conversation (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs).	2.55	1.22	Neutral
1.3 I am unable to translate words or sentences.	2.50	1.20	Neutral
1.4 I find it difficult to understand spoken English because of my limited vocabulary.	2.66	0.98	Neutral
1.5 I find it difficult to understand spoken English because of my limited understanding of grammar.	2.55	1.14	Neutral
1.6 I am unable to listen to English in fast native speed.	2.93	1.03	Neutral
1.7 I am unable to listen when having face-to-face conversation with foreign teachers.	2.66	1.17	Neutral
1.8 I find it difficult to understand some idioms when I listen to English.	2.90	0.98	Neutral
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.65</b>	<b>0.91</b>	<b>Neutral</b>

<b>The Problems of English Oral Communication Skills</b>	<b>Means (<math>\bar{x}</math>)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Level of Problem</b>
<b>2. Speaking skill</b>			
2.1 I am nervous when speaking English.	2.75	1.15	Neutral
2.2 I am unable to pronounce correctly.	2.51	1.04	Neutral
2.3 I am unable to choose the right word.	2.55	0.99	Neutral
2.4 I am unable to speak with correct grammar.	2.70	0.94	Neutral
2.5 I am unable to convey clear messages.	2.58	0.92	Neutral
2.6 I am unable to make general conversations while talking with students or foreign teachers.	2.46	1.17	Disagree
2.7 I want to speak as fluently as a native speaker but I find it difficult.	2.88	1.19	Neutral
2.8 I lose my self-confidence when I make mistakes and someone correct my English.	2.48	1.12	Disagree
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.61</b>	<b>0.89</b>	<b>Neutral</b>

Table 4.4 illustrates the overall average score of the respondents' listening problems with learners when teaching and foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace. The first section was at the neutral level ( $\bar{x} = 2.65$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ ). Specifically, the results indicate that most respondents agreed that listening to English at a fast native speed caused trouble for them, also at the neutral problem level ( $\bar{x} = 2.93$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ). This was followed by "I find it difficult to understand some idioms when I listen to English," which was also rated at the neutral level ( $\bar{x} = 2.90$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ). Additionally, the other two speaking problems with learners and foreign teachers, which were listening during face-to-face conversations with foreign teachers and difficulty understanding spoken English due to limited vocabulary, were both the same means ( $\bar{x} = 2.66$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ , and  $\bar{x} = 2.66$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ , respectively). The problem of not being able to catch content words due to difficulty for me to guess the meaning from the



conversation (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) and difficulty in understanding spoken English because of my limited understanding of grammar had the same means ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.55, SD = 1.22, and  $\bar{x}$  = 2.55, SD = 1.17, respectively). This was followed by being unable to translate words or sentences ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.50, SD = 1.20). On the other hand, the listening problem of being unable to listen and understand general English conversation, appeared to be the only topic rated at the disagree level of problem ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.43, SD = 1.29).

The other section of the table presents the respondents' speaking problems with learners when teaching and foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace, with the overall average score at the neutral level ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.61, SD = 0.89). The findings reveal that most respondents think speaking as fluently as a native speaker is difficult and feel nervous when speaking English, with the same neutral level ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.88, SD = 1.19, and  $\bar{x}$  = 2.75, SD = 1.15, respectively). This was followed by the problem of speaking with correct grammar, which was rated at the neutral level ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.70, SD = 0.94). In the same manner, problems of conveying clear messages ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.58, SD = 0.92), choosing the right word ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.55, SD = 0.99), and pronouncing correctly ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.51, SD = 1.04) all received the same neutral level of problem. Furthermore, the respondents' other speaking problems with teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace were at a disagreeable level. These issues were losing self-confidence when making mistakes and making general conversations while talking with students or foreign teachers ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.48, SD = 1.12, and  $\bar{x}$  = 2.46, SD = 1.17, respectively).

On the whole, it can be seen from the table that although the overall score for the level of problems in the respondents' listening and speaking skills was not different at the neutral level, the results showed that the respondents had more trouble English listening than speaking when teaching students and communicating foreign teachers at the workplace ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.65, SD = 0.91, and  $\bar{x}$  = 2.61, SD = 0.89, respectively). The scores for these problems were at a neutral level.

#### ***4.3.2 Additional question***

This part of the survey contains two open-ended questions asking about: (1) other problems(s) that respondents have when teaching students or talking with foreign

teachers; and (2) the way the respondents overcome the problem(s). The findings are shown in frequency and percentage, as detailed in the table below:

**Table 4.5**

*The Respondents' Opinions on Other Problems and Solutions for Those Issues*

Information		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Problems	Different cultures	12	22.6
	Lacking vocabulary knowledge	11	20.8
	Losing confidence	14	26.4
	Having poor pronunciation	10	18.9
	Teaching students with different learning abilities	6	11.3
Solutions	Consulting colleagues	23	43.4
	Using body language	11	20.8
	Practicing English skills to teach students	12	22.6
	Look at your surroundings		
	and think of words in English	7	13.2

From Table 4.5, according to the question asking about other problems that the respondents had when teaching students or talking with foreign teachers, many of them (26.4%) thought that losing confidence caused a lot of problems in their work and could negatively affect people's relationships, work, or studies. Without improvement, it could negatively affect their mental and physical health, resulting in ineffective negotiations. Another problem that some respondents mentioned was different cultures, which accounted for (22.6%) of the total. However, it was found that 22.6% of the respondents had trouble with a lack of vocabulary knowledge. Most of the time, they were unable to comprehend what foreign teachers were saying due to insufficient vocabulary. This was followed by poor pronunciation, which accounted for (18.9%) of the respondents. Moreover, (11.3%) of the respondents had problems teaching students

with different learning abilities, which can be influenced by a variety of factors, such as their cognitive abilities, prior knowledge, motivation, learning style, and the learning environment.

In terms of the question asking about how the respondents overcame the problems, many respondents (43.4%) believed that consulting colleagues can be a helpful strategy for many professionals, including teachers. When faced with a challenging problem or decision, consulting with colleagues can provide several benefits, such as sharing expertise, collaborative problem-solving, building relationships, and improving professional development. Practicing English skills to teach students was mentioned as another solution by some respondents, accounting for (22.6%) of the total. It can benefit teachers in many ways, leading to better communication, understanding, and confidence in their teaching abilities. This can ultimately lead to a more effective and engaging learning experience for their students. In addition, some respondents (22.6%) believed that using body language such as hand gestures and facial expressions was a quick and effective way to achieve the same understanding for both parties. In addition, there were some respondents who looked at their surroundings and thought of words in English (13.2%). Looking at one's surroundings and thinking of words in English can be a helpful strategy for improving English language skills such as vocabulary development, and practice with sentence structure. It should be noted that there were seven respondents who did not give responses to this question.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents: (1) summary of the study; (2) summary of the findings; (3) discussion of the problems and needs in English listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province; (4) conclusions; (5) implications; (6) limitations of the study; and (7) recommendations for further research.

#### **5.1 Summary of the Study**

This section summarizes the study's objectives, participants, instruments, and procedures to provide the reader with an overall aspect, as follows:

##### ***5.1.1 Objectives of the Study***

The objectives of the study were to explore the needs and problems in using English listening and speaking skills of Thai English teachers who teach students at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, Thailand.

##### ***5.1.2 Participants, Instruments and Procedures***

The participants of the study were 60 Thai English teachers, both male and female, who are required to teach students and communicate with foreign teachers in English as part of their work. The research instrument was a questionnaire consisting of close-ended and open-ended questions. The questionnaires were divided into three parts: (1) demographic information; (2) the respondents' needs in English listening and speaking skills at the workplace; and (3) the respondents' listening and speaking problems with learners when teaching and foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace.

According to the data collection procedures, 42 questionnaires were distributed to Thai English teachers, which were then analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to determine the frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviation of the data.

## 5.2 Summary of the Findings

The results of the study can be summarized into three sections, which are demographic data of the respondents, improving needs in English listening and speaking skills of the respondents, and problems in English listening and speaking skills of the respondents, as follows:

### 5.2.1 Demographic Data of the Respondents

The majority of the participants who worked as teachers at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, were female (80%). Most of them were between 26-30 years old (48.3%), had graduated with a bachelor's degree (73.3%), and had worked as teachers for 1-3 years (41.7%). In terms of English use for the job, most teachers sometimes had a chance to use the language to communicate with foreign teachers (51.7%) and had been studying English for more than 15 years (36.7%). In addition, most Thai English teachers rated their overall listening and speaking skills at good levels (61.7% and 55%, respectively).

### 5.2.2 The Needs in English Listening and Speaking Skills at the Workplace of the Respondents

With regard to needs for improving English communication skills at the workplace, the findings showed that their overall level of needs for improving listening skills was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.59$ ). The item that Thai English teachers want to improve the most was listening to feedback or compliments to improve themselves ( $\bar{x} = 3.73$ ), followed by listening to problems to discuss solutions ( $\bar{x} = 3.71$ ), listening to suggestions in various fields to improve the work ( $\bar{x} = 3.63$ ), listening to different opinions to develop and reduce the gaps in various problems in teaching ( $\bar{x} = 3.58$ ), listening to greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers ( $\bar{x} = 3.55$ ), listening to performance appraisals upon completion of that work ( $\bar{x} = 3.53$ ), and listening to advise to implement accurately ( $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ) were rated at a high level.

In terms of needs for improving speaking skills, the overall mean score of the problems was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.69$ ). The item that most Thai English teachers needed to improve the most was speaking greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers, followed by talking to build relationships at work, teaching and

explaining the content in English subject, Using technical terminology and measurements to make it easier for your students and foreign teachers to understand, speaking politely and correctly, conveying ideas or introducing new techniques for teaching to foreign teachers, pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds, discussing problems in teaching encountered with foreign teachers were rated at a high level.

According to the question on other things that Thai English teachers need to improve their English listening and speaking skills when teaching and communicating at the workplace, the results showed that the majority of Thai English teachers want to know more basic listening and speaking skills to be better for teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers at work.

### ***5.2.3 Problems in English Listening and Speaking Skills of the Respondents***

In terms of listening problems related to teaching students or communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace, the overall mean score of the problems was at the neutral level ( $\bar{x} = 2.65$ ). The item that caused the most problem was listening to English at a fast native speed, also at the neutral problem level ( $\bar{x} = 2.93$ ). On the other hand, most teachers listed listening problems of being unable to listen and understand general English conversation, which appeared to be the only topic rated at the disagree level of problem ( $\bar{x} = 2.43$ ).

In the matter of speaking problems related to teaching students or communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace, the overall mean score of the problems was at the neutral level ( $\bar{x} = 2.61$ ). The item that caused the most problems was speaking as fluently as a native speaker, which is difficult and was rated at a high level of difficulty ( $\bar{x} = 2.88$ ). In contrast, most respondents considered losing self-confidence when making mistakes and making general conversations while talking with students or foreign teachers, which was also rated as a disagreeable level.

According to the question on other problems or challenges that Thai English teachers have when teaching students or talking with foreign teachers, it was found that losing confidence when teaching students and speaking with other people caused the most trouble for respondents. Regarding the follow-up question on the solutions to the

problems, many Thai English teachers considered consulting colleagues and practicing English skills to teach students to solve their problems.

### **5.3 Discussion**

This part discusses the major findings of the study based on the research questions linked to some relevant concepts and theories presented in the literature review and related studies.

#### ***5.3.1 Demographic Data of the Respondents***

According to Thai English teachers' opinions on their overall English proficiency in listening and speaking skills, the results indicate that they were both at good levels, which can be beneficial for their teaching students. However, they thought their English communication skills were insufficient to use for work because respondents' opinions indicate a deficiency in listening and speaking skills that may need to improve, which were both at fair levels. As Noopong (2002) pointed out, the current study found that other factors contribute to unsuccessful teaching in Thailand such as a lack of English native speakers, an inadequate budget for teaching materials, and insufficient financial support for teachers. As a result, Thai teachers faced difficulties when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers at work. Similar to Igawa (2017), it has been shown that speaking is usually more difficult than listening for non-native speakers because a number of factors, including vocabulary, phonemes, and grammatical structures, are required for speaking and become barriers to effective communication. With regard to the Thai English teachers' past and future English-improving methods, it is evident that speaking with foreigners was the most popular method used, it helps them to communicate effectively in basic day-to-day situations, as they are able to learn and improve those skills from their work experiences with foreign teachers. This is consistent with the process of second-language acquisition outlined in Krashen's input hypothesis, which states that language learning can occur without instruction and learners can progressively better their abilities on their own (Krashen, 2003; Lewis, 2020).

### ***5.3.2 The Needs in English Listening and Speaking Skills at Workplace of the Respondents***

According to Thai English teachers' needs for improving English communication skills at the workplace, the findings showed that their overall level of needs for improving speaking skills was at a high level, indicating that improving speaking ability in English is essential for teachers who teach students or teach English subject and communicate with foreign teachers. It can lead to more effective communication, improved student engagement, enhanced professional development, and increased confidence in one's teaching abilities. According to Parnroch (2018), learners must communicate in the target language frequently to improve their language skills, increase their opportunities in life, and advance in their careers. In the same way, Ellis (1994) suggested that learners should engage in regular speaking practice in a variety of contexts, and informal conversations with native speakers in order to increase their opportunities for success in life and career. Therefore, improving speaking skills has led to a growing awareness of the importance of English language education in Thailand and a greater emphasis on the teaching of English in schools and universities (Sithlaothavorn & Trakulkasemsuk, 2016).

In terms of listening needs, the overall finding showed that they were at a high level of need. In addition, the majority of respondents selected listening to feedback or compliments to improve themselves, followed by listening to problems to discuss solutions. The result is in line with that of Gkoutzidou and Stasinakis (2019), who showed that effective listening was critical for successful leadership and management, including the ability to respond to feedback in a constructive and helpful way. Additionally, Devito (2017) suggests that strong listening skills are an essential component of effective interpersonal communication and can lead to greater trust, rapport, and satisfaction in personal and professional relationships. Therefore, it can be inferred that developing strong listening skills is important and can help individuals better understand and address problems, as well as receive and respond to feedback in a constructive and helpful way.

Regarding the Thai English teachers' opinions on other English communication needs when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace, most of them referred to knowing more basic listening and speaking skills.



This might be because many Thai English teachers thought that speaking and listening were considered the foundations of language learning, and improving these skills could help learners better understand the grammar, vocabulary, and structure of the language. Moreover, improving listening and speaking skills can also help learners build their confidence in using the language, which can further motivate them to continue learning and practicing (Krashen, 1981).

### ***5.3.3 Problems in English Listening and Speaking Skills of the Respondents***

Regarding Thai English teachers' problems with English communication skills, the findings showed that their overall level of problems with listening skills was at a neutral level, and the level of problems with listening skills was higher than that of speaking skills, therefore they would need to improve them further. On the contrary, it is obvious that listening and understanding general English conversation was the only topic rated at a disagree level of problem. Therefore, it is not difficult for respondents to listen and understand general English conversation. These findings can be linked to the English listening comprehension problems explained in Chapter 2, where the obvious issues for non-native speakers mostly depends on their proficiency levels in a foreign language. For instance, Vandergrift and Goh (2012) noted that factors such as vocabulary knowledge, grammatical competence, and background knowledge can all impact a listener's ability to comprehend spoken language. In the same way, Brown and Yule (1983) emphasized the importance of prior knowledge and contextual cues in understanding spoken discourse. These perspectives support the idea that language proficiency is a key factor in listening comprehension for non-native speakers.

In terms of speaking problems, the overall finding showed that they were at a neutral level. It is likely that speaking appears to be one of the most challenging skills in the language and requires greater linguistic ability, prompting the majority of respondents to concur that speaking skills are challenges when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers. The point agrees with studies from Ellis (1994), who stated that the development of speaking skills is easier than the development of listening skills, as speaking involves a more active process of producing language while listening is a more passive process of receiving and processing language. Likewise, the study from Cook (2008) suggests that speaking may be easier than listening because

when we speak, we have more control over the language we use, while when we listen, we are at the discretion of the speaker's language and delivery.

In terms of Thai English teachers' opinions on solutions to problems when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace, many respondents chose solutions to problems by consulting colleagues and practicing English skills to teach students. As mentioned in the study by Johnson (2009), collaborative problem-solving can be an effective way to enhance teacher learning and improve classroom practice. Johnson suggests that teachers who work together to solve problems can develop a deeper understanding of the issues they face and generate more creative and effective solutions. Similarly, the study from Nunan (2010) emphasizes the importance of collaboration and peer support in language teacher development, arguing that teachers can greatly benefit from sharing their experiences, ideas, and concerns with colleagues.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This research has investigated identifying the needs for listening and speaking skills related to teaching those Thai English teachers at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, want to improve, as well as the problems of English listening and speaking skills related to teaching students or communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace. The findings disclose that Thai English teachers' needs to improve their English listening and speaking skills in the workplace. The study revealed that Thai English teachers also had more demand for improving their speaking skills than their listening skills when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers. It is obvious that the findings reported in this research have significant implications. Additionally, the results on Thai English teachers' other English communication needs indicate that many of them wanted to know more basic listening and speaking skills to improve their communication with foreigners.

Regarding Thai English teachers' problems with English communication skills, they had more overall listening problems than speaking when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace. It was found that most Thai English teachers had trouble listening to English at a fast native speed and understanding some idioms. Moreover, results on respondents' other problems suggest

that many of them had problems losing confidence, dealing with different cultures, lacking vocabulary knowledge, having poor pronunciation, and teaching students with different learning abilities. Accordingly, the solutions that most Thai English teachers considered most effective for resolving those issues were consulting colleagues, practicing English skills to teach students, and using body language.

### **5.5 Implications**

This study is intended to determine the listening and speaking needs and problems of Thai English teachers when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers in the workplace. The main findings presented in this study reveal a high level of needs to develop non-native language communication skills to be used as a medium of communication in daily life or when working with foreigners and reveal a neutral of the problem. The results, in terms of levels of needs and problems to improve English, can lead to an awareness of the importance of listening and speaking skills for teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers. Moreover, Thai English teachers recognize that English proficiency is crucial and can improve their career prospects. It may also be beneficial for authorities or organizations and may help students in the faculty of education recognize the value of using language skills and be able to acquire language skills in preparation for future employment. Thus, the following implications are present.

According to the findings of the study, Thai English teachers' needs to improve their English listening and speaking abilities at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province. They understand why they need to improve their English communication skills, with an emphasis on speaking and listening. Communication at work is primarily conducted in English when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers to help them understand the direction of English-improving methods that their Thai English teachers would like them to use in the future. In the same way, the results of respondents' problems with listening and speaking skills can help an authority find ways to reduce obstacles to developing Thai English teachers' specific issues related to teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace. As a result of this, they want to improve their English to increase their work efficiency and confidence. The findings will be helpful in planning a suitable

workshop or training course to enhance Thai English teachers' fundamental English. The instructor at the university or the trainer should consider offering additional English courses tailored to the needs of Thai English teachers and their profession, focusing on methods of communicating in English. Additionally, courses or methods should incorporate English practice activities to contribute to an integrated skills approach.

### **5.6 Limitations of the Study**

For the limitations of this study, since all the information was obtained from only 60 Thai participants working as Thai English teachers at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, it is possible that the sample size is insufficient to generalize the findings to teachers teaching students in different grades and classes. Moreover, as the main objectives of the study only concentrated on the needs and problems of English oral communication, other concepts and theories related to the English language were not explored and used in this study. Lastly, since this research study mainly explores the needs and problems of Thai English teachers in terms of listening and speaking abilities, it may not have acquired sufficient information or perspectives from other groups of people outside of the selected participants.

### **5.7 Recommendations for Further Research**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study of problems and needs in listening and speaking skills related to teaching students or communicating with foreign teachers at the workplace, the following items are presented as recommendations for future research.

1) In order to enhance more accuracy and reliability, it is necessary to perform additional research with a larger sample of respondents; further research may add respondents in more areas of schools.

2) Further research should be conducted on the research's scope as well as with other careers to present similarities and differences to explore more aspects of English oral communication or other related topics.

3) Additional studies should also investigate the perspectives of in-class students taught by those teachers in order to make the research more complete and comprehensive.

4) It would be interesting to conduct a comparative study on the same problem with independent schools, or other Thai teachers to determine whether there are any similarities or differences in English competence or communication issues between each group.



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## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**

**QUESTIONNAIRE OF A STUDY OF NEEDS AND PROBLEMS  
IN ENGLISH LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS OF THAI  
ENGLISH TEACHERS AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN MUANG  
DISTRICT, SAKON NAKHON PROVINCE**

This questionnaire is part of a research study that is in partial requirements for the Master of Arts in Career English for International Communication (CEIC), Language Institute, Thammasat University. The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate the need and problems of English listening and speaking skills to work for Thai English teachers at public schools in Muang district, Sakon Nakhon Province, as well as the necessity to enhance or acquire additional English listening and speaking skills. Your responses will greatly benefit the research. To produce guidelines for enhancing the English proficiency of Thai English teachers. Please kindly complete all items in this questionnaire. Your answers will be kept confidential and your cooperation in completing this questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

The questionnaire consists of three parts as follows:

Part 1: Demographic data

Part 2: Thai English teachers' needs in English listening and speaking skills at the workplace

Part 3: Thai English teachers' listening and speaking problems with learners when teaching and foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace

**Part 1: Demographic data**

**Instruction:** Please fill a tick (✓) in the box or write your answers that corresponds to you.

## 1. Gender

 Male Female

## 2. Age

 23-25 years old 26-30 years old 31-35 years old 36-40 years old 41-45 years old More than 45 years old

## 3. Education

 Bachelor's degree Master's degree Ph.D. Other, please specify.....

## 4. How many years have you been working as a teacher?

 Less than 1 year 1-3 years 4-6 years 7-9 years 10-14 years More than 14 years

## 5. How often do you use English to communicate with foreign teachers?

 Always Often Sometimes Rarely

## 6. How many years have you studied English?

 Less than 5 years 5-10 years 11-15 years More than 15 years

## 7. What is your English listening proficiency level? (Self-evaluation)

 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

## 8. What is your English speaking proficiency level? (Self-evaluation)

 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor



## Part 2: Thai English teachers' needs in English listening and speaking skills at the workplace

**Instruction:** Please fill a tick (✓) in the box that corresponds to your opinions regarding the degree of needs in English listening and speaking skills at the workplace.

Level of the needs are as follows:

5 = Very high

4 = High

3 = Moderate

2 = Low

1 = Very low

No.	The Needs of English Oral Communication Skills	Level of the needs				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	<b>Listening skills</b>					
	1.1 Listening to greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers					
	1.2 Listening to different opinions to develop and reduce the gaps of various problems in teaching					
	1.3 Listening to advice to implement accurately					
	1.4 Listening to suggestions in various fields to improve the work					
	1.5 Listening to feedback or compliments to improve yourself					
	1.6 Listening to problems to discuss solutions					
	1.7 Listening to performance appraisals upon completion of that work					

No.	The Needs of English Oral Communication Skills	Level of the needs				
		5	4	3	2	1
2.	<b>Speaking skills</b>					
	2.1 Speaking greetings and farewells to students and foreign teachers					
	2.2 Speaking politely and correctly					
	2.3 Pronouncing English consonant and vowel sounds					
	2.4 Teaching and explaining content in English subject					
	2.5 Discussing problems in teaching encountered with foreign teachers					
	2.6 Conveying ideas or introducing new techniques for teaching to foreign teachers					
	2.7 Using technical terminology and measurements to make it easier for your students and foreign teachers to understand					
	2.8 Talking to build relationships at work					

3. Do you (or do you think other Thai English teachers in the public school) have other topic(s) needed to improve their English listening and speaking skills when teaching students or talking with foreign teachers?

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**Part 3: Thai English teachers' listening and speaking problems with learners when teaching and foreign teachers when communicating at the workplace**

**Instruction:** Please fill a tick (✓) in the box that corresponds to your opinions for the degree of English listening and speaking problems you have when teaching students and communicating with foreign teachers.

Level of the problems are as follows:

5 = Strongly Agree

4 = Agree

3 = Neutral

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree

No.	The Problems of English Oral Communication Skills	Level of the needs				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	<b>Listening skills</b>					
	1.1 I am unable to listen and understand general English conversation.					
	1.2 I am unable to catch content words, it is difficult for me to guess the meaning from the conversation (nouns, verb, adjectives, and adverbs).					
	1.3 I am unable to translate words or sentences.					
	1.4 I find it difficult to understand spoken English because of my limited vocabulary.					
	1.5 I find it difficult to understand spoken English because of my limited understanding of grammar.					
	1.6 I am unable to listen to English in fast native speed.					
	1.7 I am unable to listen when having face-to-face conversation with foreign teachers.					

No.	The Problems of English Oral Communication Skills	Level of the needs				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	1.8 I find it difficult to understand some idioms when I listen to English.					
<b>Speaking skills</b>						
2.	2.1 I am nervous when speaking English.					
	2.2 I am unable to pronounce correctly.					
	2.3 I am unable to choose the right word.					
	2.4 I am unable to speak with correct grammar.					
	2.5 I am unable to convey clear messages.					
	2.6 I am unable to make general conversations while talking with students or foreign teachers.					
	2.7 I want to speak as fluently as a native speaker but I find it difficult.					
	2.8 I lose my self-confidence when I make mistakes and someone corrects my English.					

3. Do you (or do you think other Thai English teachers in the public school) have other problems when teaching students or talking with foreign teachers?

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4. How do you (or do you think other Thai English teachers in the public school) overcome the problems?

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**Thank you for your cooperation**

