

## CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

The objectives of this study are to develop an intensive English course using task-based instruction for missionary monks and to implement it in an actual classroom situation in order to prepare the monk students for their mission abroad. Therefore, the findings are presented in such a way as to answer the proposed research questions. First, the language needs of the monk students and the Buddhist missionary monks on duty are presented. Then the lessons that were created according to those needs are described. At the second stage, when the course was actually taught and the data were collected, the quantitative data based on the total scores of the post-test, as well as the qualitative findings based on the students' logs, the teacher's diary and the key informants' interviews are presented. In the last section, the results from the questionnaire that was sent to follow up on the already graduated students from the class are reported in terms of the extent to which the course has benefited the monk students who are working in real situations abroad.

### 4.2 Language Needs

For the first research question, "What are the language needs of Buddhist missionary monks?", the answer is they need English for oral communication. The most needed tasks are listening and responding to phone call, followed by explaining Buddhism and its importance, asking and answering questions, listening to instructions or announcements and responding properly, and explaining the monk's roles and duties in Thai society respectively. The needs for reading and writing are not as high even though the majority need to fill out required forms and documents. To obtain the answer, language needs assessment was conducted using a set of questionnaires (see Appendices A and B). Three groups of respondents provided the data: the missionary monks who had already graduated and were on duty abroad and the monk students in class of 2005 as well as 2006. The results are compared using the mean scores. The acceptable level of mean scores for inclusion in the syllabus was set at 3.75. As already mentioned, the missionary monk training took place in April and May 2006. The needs

of the students in class were collected by a questionnaire distributed on the first day of class. However, because it would have been impossible to collect their responses and prepare all the lesson content, materials, evaluation, and other support items for the class according to their needs in a few days, the students' needs incorporated in the outline were those from the students who had already undergone the same type of training in 2005. The researcher collected the needs of the 2005 class before the course started. The reasons for using the data from the 2005 class were because of the need to prepare all the lesson content and materials neatly, have them validated by the experts, as they were to be the part of the research tools, and use them in a real missionary monk class as a pilot study. Nonetheless, the needs of the students in the 2006 class and those of the missionary monks on duty were similar, even though the number of monks in each class was different. For example, both classes indicated a greater need to listen to instruction or announcements more than to describe places or things, and to ask and answer questions more than tell tales. The table below shows the needs from the questionnaire distributed to the students before the course started, both in 2005 and 2006.

Table 4.1 Comparing Needs of Monk Students and Missionary Monks on Duty

Tasks they need English to accomplish:	Monks on duty means N=11	Students 2005 means N=70	Students 2006 means N=77
<b>Listening</b>			
Listening to instructions or announcements and responding properly, e.g., at the airport, on the plane, at customs, in the doctor's office, at a clinic	4.39	4.18	4.83
Listening to lay people's problems and responding based on Buddhist teachings regarding the proper way of life/practice	3.88	4.54	4.45
Listening and responding to phone calls	4.29	4.63	4.55
<b>Speaking</b>			
Asking and answering questions	4.21	4.45	4.74
Asking for directions when lost	4.24	3.75	4.56
Asking for permission	3.87	3.54	4.33
Asking prices/ Bargaining	3.65	3.63	4.25
Requesting information and assistance	4.19	3.54	4.59
Making small talk and keeping conversation flowing	3.97	3.36	4.46
Making an appointment on the phone	3.71	3.72	4.34
Describing places	3.67	3.45	4.19
Describing things	3.34	3.63	3.97

Tasks they need English to accomplish:	Monks on duty means N=11	Students 2005 means N=70	Students 2006 means N=77
Describing people	4.47	3.45	4.03
Discussing issues of interest	3.88	4.18	4.30
Talking about Thai culture and beliefs	4.23	3.81	4.58
Describing and answering questions about illness	3.93	4.00	4.60
Reporting problems or requesting assistance about health and belongings	3.76	3.75	4.60
Reporting emergencies	4.06	3.54	4.46
Having a prescription filled	4.02	3.54	4.22
Explaining Buddhism and its importance	4.53	4.10	4.78
Explaining the monk's roles and duties in Thai society	4.30	4.27	4.74
Explaining and discussing Dhamma issues	4.07	4.27	4.73
Discussing the significance of daily chanting	4.25	4.00	4.51
Talking about the monk's roles and requisites	4.19	4.36	4.67
Telling edifying tales	4.00	3.45	4.17
<b>Reading</b>			
Reading and responding to instructions, schedules, or announcements	4.28	4.00	4.5
Reading signs and maps and following directions	4.28	3.81	4.60
<b>Writing</b>			
Filling out required forms and documents	4.58	4.00	4.72

The table above shows the mean scores of the English needs surveyed from the monk students in the year 2005 and 2006 and the English needs of Thai missionary monks on duty in the temples abroad. It was found that the needs of the three parties concerned were quite similar. The speaking skills appeared to be relatively high in demand, followed by listening, reading and writing skills respectively. This may be due to the oral nature of tasks, primarily required of monks in the society at large.

#### 4.2.1 Top tasks needed from both groups (mean scores from 3.75 up):

Since some opinions of the three groups were different, only the needs with high scores from all groups were considered. The scores ranked from one to five. Those with a score of 3.75 or higher are listed as follows:

1. Listening to instructions or announcements and responding properly, e.g., at the airport, on the plane, at customs, in the doctor's office, at a clinic
2. Listening to lay people's problems and responding based on Buddhist teaching

- regarding the proper way of life/practice
3. Listening and responding to phone calls
  4. Asking and answering questions
  5. Discussing issues of interest with other people
  6. Talking about Thai culture and beliefs
  7. Describing and answering questions about illness
  8. Explaining the monk's roles and duties in Thai society
  9. Explaining Buddhism and discussing Dhamma issues
  10. Discussing the significance of daily chanting
  11. Talking about monk's roles and requisites
  12. Reporting problems or requesting assistance about health and belongings
  13. Reading and responding to instructions, schedules, or announcements
  14. Reading signs and maps and following directions
  15. Filling out required forms and documents

The list above indicated the nature of the oral communication of this course according to the students' needs and the language necessarily used by the missionary monks abroad. There were twelve listening and speaking skills needs (from number 1-12), two reading skills needs (number 13-14), and only one writing skill needed (number 15). The fifteen tasks were then divided into two categories: work related and survival skills.

#### **4.2.2 Tasks categorized into 2 groups:**

##### **4.2.2.1 Work related:**

1. Listening to lay people's problems and responding based on Buddhist teachings regarding the proper way of life/practice
2. Talking about Thai culture and beliefs
3. Explaining the monk's roles and duties in Thai society
4. Explaining Buddhism and discussing Dhamma issues
5. Discussing the significance of daily chanting
6. Talking about the monk's roles and requisites



#### **4.2.2.2 Survival skills in daily routine:**

1. Listening to instructions or announcements and responding properly, e.g., at the airport, on the plane, at customs, in the doctor's office, at a clinic
2. Listening and responding to phone calls
3. Asking and answering questions
4. Discussing issues of interest with other people
5. Describing and answering questions about illness
6. Reporting problems or requesting assistance about health and belongings
7. Reading and responding to instructions, schedules, or announcements
8. Reading signs and maps and following directions
9. Filling out required forms and documents

#### **4.2.3 Course goals and objectives**

This intensive communicative course is developed to be used as a training course for the missionary monks enrolled in the training program before they leave Thailand for their mission abroad. The objectives of the course are to enable monk students to use English in listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as specialized vocabulary concerning Buddhism and its propagation in real life communication. However, based on the language needs survey, the skills to be focused in this course would be oral communication, emphasizing speaking and listening skills while reading and writing will not be placed much emphasis.

#### **4.2.4 Lesson topics and objectives**

The results above, combined with the findings from the interviews with the administrators of the program (see Appendix C) conducted in 2004, were translated into nine main topics sequenced according to what a missionary monk needed to accomplish in the process of migrating abroad to work. Then the objectives of each topic, as well as the expected language to be taught, were described.

#### 4.2.5 The Outline of the Lesson Contents

After the topics and the tasks which result from the needs analysis are listed, the target language samples are added to each unit. These sentences and expressions are collected from various sources. Language used for some units about daily routine and survival skills such as getting around or visiting a doctor can be gathered from commercial text books. However, for the work-related units, the researcher had to consult the missionary monks on duty or look up from Buddhism Dictionary or request assistance from the monk experts to recheck them. The skills focused in each unit are the researcher's attempt to integrate all the four skills into each unit as much as possible, except in some units which did not lend themselves to literacy skills. The units are sequenced according to the tasks involved in the process of going abroad. First, they need to get a visa, and then they board the plane to their destination countries. Then when they arrive at the airport, they may need assistance or have to report problems, so the topics proceed in this manner until the last unit in which they have to work as a counselor giving advice about Dhamma in their monastery. The last column in the table shows the tentative length of time required of these students to accomplish each task in the unit. The lesson outline is presented in the following table.

Table 4.2 The Outline of the Lesson Contents

Unit	Topics	Tasks	Target language samples	Skills focus	Time (minutes)
1	Applying for a visa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Filling out forms and documents required</li> <li>2. Asking and answering questions about oneself</li> </ol>	What's your name? My name is .... Where are you from? I'm from..... Why do you want to go to..? I'm a missionary monk going to work in a Thai temple at .... What kind of work are you going to perform there? I'm supposed to ....., ..... and..... How long do you plan to stay in....? I plan to stay there for ...years.	Listening, speaking, reading, writing	180

Unit	Topics	Tasks	Target language samples	Skills focus	Time (minutes)
2	Boarding the plane	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reading instructions, signs, schedules, or announcements and responding properly</li> <li>2. Listening to instructions or announcements at the airport and on the plane.</li> </ol> <p>Making a polite request</p>	<p>... to ....., flight number .....now boarding at gate ...</p> <p>Passengers to .... ,... Airways regret to advise a delay of .....hours on their flight ....to ..... This delay is due to .....</p> <p>This is the final call for ... to ..... flight number ..... Any remaining passengers must go immediately to gate .... where the flight is now closing.</p>	Listening, speaking, reading	180
3	Reporting problems	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reporting problems</li> <li>2. Requesting assistance</li> </ol>	<p>Excuse me, where can I report the problem about my baggage? I'd like to report a problem about my luggage. My bag was broken and some of my belongings were stolen. I haven't got my bags from the carousel yet. Could you please check whether it goes to the right place? Could you please tell me where to pick up my bags?</p>	Speaking, listening, reading	180
4	Requesting information from different sources (telephone, face to face)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Asking and answering questions</li> <li>2. Listening and responding to phone calls</li> </ol>	<p>I was wondering if you could help me. I'd like to know.... I wonder if you could tell me.... Excuse me, do you know...? Oh, let me think for a minute. That's a very interesting question. I'm not sure; I have to check... I'd like to help you but... That's something I'd rather not talk about just now. May I speak to ....., please? I'll put you through.</p>	Listening, speaking	180
5	Getting around	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Asking and following directions</li> <li>2. Reading signs and maps</li> </ol>	<p>Excuse me, could you tell me how I can get to ....? Could you please tell me where the ....is? The ... is next to..... / is between ..... and ..... It's on the corner of ... and .... Go straight. Turn left. Walk ..... blocks. Turn right. The ..... is on your right. Walk down ....Street until you come to ....Avenue, then take a left. Walk towards the intersection. The ... is across from the .....</p>	Listening, speaking, reading	180

Unit	Topics	Tasks	Target language samples	Skills focus	Time (minutes)
6	Visiting a doctor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening to instructions or questions and responding properly in the doctor's office, or at a clinic</li> <li>2. Describing and answering questions about illness</li> <li>3. Reading medicine labels</li> </ol>	<p>What's wrong with you? What's the matter? I've got a headache/ a backache/ an earache/ a toothache/ a stomachache/ fever/ a cold/ a runny nose/ a pink eye/ measles/ cramps/ etc. My .....hurts Where does it hurt? It hurts here. Show me your .... Stick out your tongue. Say aah..... Breathe in/ breathe out/ hold your breath. How long have you got this symptom? Is it itchy?</p>	Listening, speaking, reading, writing	180
7	Talking about monks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explaining monks' roles and duties in Thai society</li> <li>2. Describing monks' roles and requisites</li> <li>3. Discussing the significance of daily chanting</li> </ol>	<p>Why do you wear robe? How many pieces of robe do you wear?  Why do you chant everyday? What does your chanting mean? How long does it take? How many chapters/ stanzas are there in your chanting? Why can't you .....(shake hands with women) .....? What are a monk's daily routines/ duties? Can you explain why ....?</p>	Listening, speaking	280
8	Talking about Thai culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describing Thai culture and beliefs</li> <li>2. Comparing Thai and Western culture</li> </ol>	<p>After Thai people.... (offer food or something to the monks), I notice that..... (they will pour some water to a container while the monks chant), Why do they do that? Can you explain .....? Is it OK for Thai people to ....? What should I do if I .....in Thai temple? Can I ..... when I ..... in Thailand?</p>	Listening, speaking	220
9	Explaining Dhamma issues & discussing cases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explaining and discussing Dhamma issues</li> <li>2. Listening to lay people's problems and responding based on Buddhist teachings</li> </ol>	<p>What does Lord Buddha teach? What is karma? Why is it important? I've suffered from ..... can you explain why ...? What should I do if I .....?/ What's your suggestion?</p>	Listening, Speaking, Writing	250

Then each lesson is planned using Willis's and Ellis's frameworks. A complete sample lesson plan is in Appendix G



### 4.3 Learning Outcomes

After the lessons were taught and the post-test was administered, the results were then analyzed. In response to the second research question, "To what extent does TBI increase learning outcomes?", findings were based on the comparison of the pre-test and post-test scores as well as on the follow-up questionnaire.

Results from the comparison between the pre-test and post-test scores showed an overall significant improvement. However, when considering each skill separately, the listening skill did not reveal a significant difference between the two tests. The average scores are illustrated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Mean Scores of Listening and Speaking in Pre and Post-tests

All the participants (N=30)

	Test Scores	min	max	$\bar{x}$	SD	Z-value	Cohen's d
Speaking	Pre	0	194	94.05	63.07	-3.88*	1.04
	Post	2	219	155.53	54.81		
Listening	Pre	5	16	9.10	2.63	-1.55	0.25
	Post	6	16.50	9.78	2.78		

\*p<0.01

It can be seen from Table 4.3 that the mean scores of the listening test was relatively low both in the pre-test and post-test (Pre-test  $\bar{x} = 9.10$ ; Post-test  $\bar{x} = 9.78$ ), with slight gains in the post-test and the effect size at 0.25, which is considered small (Cohen, 1969: 23), whereas there was a significant improvement in speaking skills (pre-test  $\bar{x} = 94.05$ ; post-test  $\bar{x} = 155.53$ ) with the effect size at 1.04, which is considered large. Statistically, to verify the difference, Wilcoxon: Z was used to compare their mean scores in the pre-test and post-test. It was found that they were statistically different at the significance level of 0.01.

In order to find out the relative effects of the task-based instruction on learners with different proficiency levels, scores of the high ability group and the low ability group are also reported.

Table 4.4 Mean Scores of the High and the Low Ability Groups

## High group (N=10)

	Test scores	min	max	$\bar{x}$	SD	Z-value	Cohen's d
Speaking	Pre	102	194	146.45	33.11	-2.70*	1.73
	Post	175	219	190.45	13.68		
Listening	Pre	7	16	10.05	2.79	-1.41	0.21
	Post	7	16.50	10.65	2.82		

\* p&lt;0.01

## Low group (N=10)

	Test scores	min	max	$\bar{x}$	SD	Z-value	Cohen's d
Speaking	Pre	0	87	41.65	34.62	-2.70*	1.63
	Post	2	172	120.60	58.70		
Listening	Pre	5	12	8.16	2.19	-0.92	0.30
	Post	6	14	8.90	2.58		

\*p&lt;0.01

From Table 4.4, it was found that the mean score of the listening test of the high group was relatively low (Pre-test  $\bar{x} = 10.05$ ; Post-test  $\bar{x} = 10.65$ ). This was also found in the low ability group (Pre-test  $\bar{x} = 8.16$ ; Post-test  $\bar{x} = 8.90$ ). The effect size was small, at 0.21 for the high ability group and 0.30 for the low. On the contrary, the speaking skills of both high and low ability groups were significantly different (pre-test  $\bar{x} = 146.45$ ; post-test  $\bar{x} = 190.45$  for high ability group with the effect size at 1.73 and pre-test  $\bar{x} = 41.65$ ; post-test  $\bar{x} = 120.60$  with the effect size at 1.63 for low ability group.) This indicates that task-based instruction can increase speaking skills but not listening skills. When comparing the high group's and the low group's performances, the scores showed that the high group did better than the low group on the speaking test but the low group gained more on the listening test.

For the speaking task, five components were evaluated to see in which components the learners made significant improvement after learning with task-based instruction. These components included communication, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Results show that in general the students made significant improvement in all components, with large effect size.

Table 4.5 Mean scores of Speaking Sub-Components

All participants (N=30)

	Test Scores	min	max	$\bar{x}$	SD	Z-value	Cohen's d
	Communication	Pre	0	39	19.85	12.52	-3.92*
Post		1	45	32.60	11.47		
Grammar	Pre	0	37	18.18	11.93	-3.82*	1.17
	Post	0	44	31.58	10.92		
Vocabulary	Pre	0	38	18.70	12.50	-3.83*	0.93
	Post	1	44	29.75	11.20		
Pronunciation	Pre	0	39	19.85	12.27	-3.92*	0.92
	Post	1	43	30.40	10.46		
Fluency	Pre	0	41	19.08	10.46	-3.92*	1.11
	Post	1	45	32.30	13.19		

\*p&lt;0.01

As can be seen from Table 4.5, students' speaking performances significantly improved in all areas, with the effect size in the large range. Pronunciation was found to improve at a relatively smaller degree (Effect size of 0.92) than other components, while students improved to a large extent in their grammatical ability, with the effect size of 1.17.

Table 4.6 Mean Scores of the High Ability Group in Speaking Sub-Components

High group (N=10)

	Test Scores	min	max	$\bar{x}$	SD	Z-value	Cohen's d
	Communication	Pre	21	39	29.90	6.57	-2.81*
Post		36	45	39.85	3.36		
Grammar	Pre	19	37	27.90	6.67	-2.80*	1.96
	Post	36	44	37.90	2.72		
Vocabulary	Pre	20	38	29.05	6.71	-2.81*	1.52
	Post	30	44	37.45	4.00		
Pronunciation	Pre	21	39	29.60	6.17	-2.81*	1.59
	Post	33	43	37.35	3.07		
Fluency	Pre	20	41	29.95	7.72	-2.81*	1.65
	Post	36	45	39.65	3.06		

\*p&lt;0.01

Table 4.6 shows that the high ability group gained the most in terms of grammar knowledge (effect size of 1.96), followed by communication (1.90), fluency (1.65), pronunciation (1.59), and vocabulary (1.52)

Table 4.7 Mean Scores of the Low Ability Group in Speaking Sub-Components

Low group (N=10)

	Test Scores	min	max	$\bar{x}$	SD	Z-value	Cohen's d
Communication	Pre	0	18	9.80	7.95	-2.80*	0.82
	Post	1	36	25.35	25.35		
Grammar	Pre	0	16	8.45	6.78	-2.67*	1.67
	Post	0	35	25.25	12.47		
Vocabulary	Pre	0	17	8.35	6.84	-2.67*	1.51
	Post	0	34	22.05	10.82		
Pronunciation	Pre	0	20	10.10	8.27	-2.81*	1.39
	Post	1	32	23.45	10.68		
Fluency	Pre	0	17	8.20	6.70	-2.81*	1.60
	Post	1	36	24.95	13.10		

\*p&lt;0.01

It can be seen from Table 4.7 that the low ability group gained at a large level in all areas. Like the high ability group, the low ability group seemed to gain the most in their grammatical knowledge (effect size of 1.67), followed by fluency (1.60), vocabulary (1.51), pronunciation (1.39), and communication, in which their scores increased the least (effect size of 0.82).

Results from a questionnaire sent via e-mail to 30 monk graduates to follow up on their performance in real situations revealed interesting findings. Ten monks responded, in which they reported on their ability in performing the tasks that were previously taught. Results are shown in the following table.

Table 4.8 Language Tasks needed by the Monk Graduates who use English in Real Situations (N= 10)

Real situations	$\bar{x}$	SD	CV	Remarks
Applying for a visa	2.50	1.58	0.63	Some foreigners spoke Thai
Boarding the plane	4.20	1.32	0.31	Pronunciation problems Got special card for special service
Reporting problems	2.90	1.29	0.44	Pronunciation problems
Requesting information	3.80	1.23	0.32	Pronunciation problems
Getting around	4.20	1.36	0.32	Pronunciation problems
Visiting a doctor	3.44	1.94	0.56	Some have not been sick yet.
Talking about monks	3.20	1.75	0.54	Pronunciation problems
Talking about Thai culture	3.89	1.36	0.34	Pronunciation problems
Explaining Dhamma	3.60	1.51	0.41	Pronunciation problems



Table 4.8 shows the degrees to which the monk graduates working abroad had to use English in different tasks and what kinds of problems occurred. Results indicate that the situation in which they needed to use English the most was getting around ( $\bar{x} = 4.20$ ), that is when they had to go out of their temples to places in the community, they needed to ask for directions, ask for clarification or confirmation, or talk to people on the public transportation. The problem they faced when talking to people were that they did not understand the foreigners' pronunciation and those talking to the monks did not understand their Thai accent. Another situation in which English was equally necessary was when they boarded the plane ( $\bar{x} = 4.20$ ). This occurred when they got on other airlines besides Thai Airways. They needed to speak English to the flight attendants and ground service officers to request some assistance, read the menu and order food, listen to the flight announcement for necessary information and respond properly, for example which gate to transfer to their destination, and which baggage carousel to go to collect their baggage. Moreover, in a long flight they sometimes had to talk with other passengers nearby. Few monks reported that they did not have to speak English at all because there would be an officer to take care of them and assisted them when needed. The other situations in which they had to use English are talking about Thai culture ( $\bar{x} = 3.89$ ) followed by requesting information ( $\bar{x} = 3.80$ ) and explaining Dhamma (both  $\bar{x} = 3.60$ ). The situation in which they use English the least was applying for a visa ( $\bar{x} = 2.50$ ). This was because some of the officers at the Embassy spoke Thai to them. The other two situations in which they needed less English were reporting problems ( $\bar{x} = 2.90$ ) and talking about monks ( $\bar{x} = 3.20$ ). This may be because they did not face any problem yet. Only one person reported that his bag was broken just like the task he had practiced in class, so he could manage to report this problem and got his bag taken care of by the airline. The majority of problems they reported in every situation concerned pronunciation: either they did not understand the speaker's pronunciation, or vice versa. The effectiveness of their use of English in those situations is reported below.

Table 4.9 The Monk Graduates' Self-Perception on their English Effectiveness in Real Situations (N= 10)

Real situations	$\bar{x}$	SD	CV
Applying for a visa	2.60	1.43	0.55
Boarding the plane	3.10	1.10	0.35
Reporting problems	2.60	1.26	0.48
Requesting information	3.20	1.34	0.41
Getting around	3.40	0.84	0.29
Visiting a doctor	2.90	1.29	0.44
Talking about monks	2.80	1.94	0.40
Talking about Thai culture	2.89	1.27	0.43
Explaining Dhamma	2.90	1.20	0.41

Table 4.9 shows the different degrees to which the monk graduates working abroad thought they were able to use English in various situations. On average, they reported they performed the best when using English in getting around ( $\bar{x} = 3.40$ ). This was followed by the ability to use English when requesting information ( $\bar{x} = 3.20$ ), boarding the plane ( $\bar{x} = 3.10$ ), visiting a doctor and explaining Dhamma (both  $\bar{x} = 2.90$ ). The ability to use English to apply for a visa and report problems were found to be equally low ( $\bar{x} = 2.60$ ). This maybe because some of them did not have to use English when applying for visa, so they did not need to perform well in the situation. Also, only one person out of ten reported his problem at the airport, the rest did not have to, so they did not use English in this case and they did not have data on how well they use English to report problems.

#### 4.4 Views on Different Aspects of the Task-Based Instruction

In response to the research question, "What are the views of the monk students regarding task-based instruction (TBI)?", two instruments were used to record the participants' views regarding the lesson content, methodology, materials, and evaluation. One instrument was students' logs collected from the 20 key informants, who represented the high and the low ability groups, while the other was the interviews at the end of the course. An additional instrument, the teacher's diary, was also used as supplementary data. In this section, views of both groups of participants on different aspects were compared, while the data from the teacher's diary were

described in comparison with students' views. Views from graduates who are working abroad are also provided as supporting evidence.

#### 4.4.1. Views on Lesson Content

Based on the students' log, which reflect students' views on the overall course content, all ten informants in the high ability group thought it was good, useful, authentic, and met their needs, while the majority of the low ability group (nine informants) reported the same. All informants in the high ability group thought the lesson content was appropriate to the students' level. On the other hand, only six informants from the low ability group agreed; the other four thought it was too difficult. Their performance in class also confirmed their views; the informants from high ability group always did all the tasks correctly, carefully and fast. For example, in Unit 5 when individual students had to practice following directions in their map, the fast students would reach the right place mentioned as soon as the instruction was finished but the slow students often needed repetition or some guide first. The fast students could create interesting situations and conversation in the role play, while the slow students try to copy from the handout. The high ability students were also willing to volunteer or train their peers to present the group result. Some of the low ability informants liked to try their best to perform in front of the class even though they knew their English was not so good but they never abandoned the chance to practice. On the other hand, a few of them tried to refuse when it was their turn to present the group result. The ones who tried hard were the ones who reported that the content was appropriate and the one who did not try reported that the content was too difficult.

Anyway, a few informants wanted to have more vocabulary added (two from the high ability group and one from the low ability group), but one from the low ability group indicated there were too many words to study. When focusing on individual units, two informants from the high ability group wanted to delete the section on medicine labels, which was considered too long, in Unit 6. Below are the examples of what was written in the logs from both high and low ability groups, the opinions based on the interviews with the informants, and the teacher's reflections in her diary, respectively.

The opinion of each informant quoted uses pseudonyms. To make it clear which group each one belongs to, 'H' is used to represent the informants from the high ability group, and 'L' is used to represent the informants from the low ability group. Their logs and the interviews were done in Thai so that they could express themselves without any language barrier. Their views were translated into English as accurately as possible by the researcher.

A student from the high ability group revealed positive attitude towards the lesson content and also proposed the idea that some part of a lesson was too long for the class time:

*H1: The contents are good and useful. The content of Lesson 6 was too long; the teacher should reduce the content to fit the limited time.*

Another log from the low ability group expressed his ideas that the content met his needs and was appropriate to his ability level:

*L1: The lesson contents are good, not too difficult, nor too easy. They are well planned for the mixed level class and meet the needs of missionary monks. The vocabulary is appropriate for use in real situations.*

The data from the interview also confirmed that students thought the content was appropriate to students' level as evidenced in the following:

*H2: The content was appropriate to students' levels. It was neither too difficult nor too easy. The beginning lessons were good but later on there was more difficult vocabulary. I've studied English with many teachers, even with a Christian priest. For a long time I've just studied but never had a chance to actually use what I learned, so I felt quite embarrassed when I had to speak English in the class. I'd like the teacher to focus more on speaking so that we can get used to it and do it naturally in real situations.*

Besides the lesson content, vocabulary was an issue that quite a few students mentioned. In the handout provided to students, every lesson consisted of a list of vocabulary, but every time some students would ask for more and the rest of the class



would try to take notes. A member of the low ability group provided an interesting and direct view about vocabulary

*L4: The content was good but a little bit too much compared to the time we had. There was too much vocabulary about traveling, visiting a doctor, and other lessons. Some students would like to ask for more but studying so much was hard for other students.*

The teacher also observed that vocabulary was among students' concerns as she noted in her diary that *some students seemed to be too eager to take notes on vocabulary, I had to tell them I would give them another page of vocabulary next time and asked them to move on to the next task instead of spending time taking notes.* She also agreed with many students that the content about medicine label was too much and it should be shortened to save time for other practice.

#### **4.4.2. Views on Teaching Method**

Regarding teaching methods used in class, the informants in the high ability group had better attitudes. All the informants from the high ability group stated TBI was good, and the majority of the low group (nine informants) had the same opinion. All the informants in the high group reported they liked discussion in class, jigsaw activities and role play. They felt the teaching methods were appropriate to the students' levels and they were given sufficient variety of tasks. On the other hand, only seven of the low ability group felt that the teaching methods were appropriate to students' level, while only three thought they were too difficult. A majority of both groups (eight from the high and nine from the low) preferred group work, while two from the high ability group said they liked both group work and individual work. Very few informants from the low ability group had any particular ideas, though one of them said the teacher taught too fast, and another one said he preferred studying vocabulary and basic grammar, wanted no homework, no role play or conversation practice, and wanted to excuse himself from all activities in front of class. Here is the evidence from the students' logs.

*H6: I'd like to work in groups and present the results in front of the class because it provides the students the opportunity to express their ideas and listen to feedback*

*from the teacher and classmates. We also learned how to manage good teamwork.*

*L1: At first, I was so embarrassed to go up to the front of the class to present, but when I had to do it, I was able to do it and it was fine. It made me feel braver to do so.*

*L2: The teaching methods and the materials used in class were all good; the problem is the background of the students. I've no background in English so I couldn't catch up with what's going on.*

The problem of L2 was also observed by the classmates, so during the interview some students expressed their ideas trying to help their teacher solve the problems. The way they viewed the situation and how they suggested indicated that they adjusted themselves well with the group work, he mentioned how to solve problems as an adult learner. Here is a sample from the high group.

*H7: The content and the method worked well but it was impossible for only one teacher to make every student in such a big class succeed at the same level in just a short time. The students who were ready to adjust and improve themselves could benefit more. The ones who were shy and afraid to express ideas would draw back. The way the teacher had them work in groups could solve this problem. At least they could brainstorm in their groups and the way the teacher encouraged the students to take turns to present could offer chances to as many students as possible.*

Another student from the low group also talked about how he adjusted himself to the new teaching method and indicated the way to solve problems using peer teaching.

*L3: The content was good and the teaching method was well planned. I like group work because it allows us to practice various aspects. I studied English in the past by memorizing the vocabulary and studying some sentence structure with substitution drills. At first, I was so embarrassed and nervous to present in front of the class. When I made mistakes and the class laughed. I felt worse and forgot what I had prepared. Later on, with more practice and adjustment, I knew what to do and felt better. I think the teacher should make use of the advanced students, for example, by asking Dr. PhraChatree to take care of one group, and Phramaha Pin to take care of another during the free time. Then give assignments for students to analyze and prepare what to present in advance as their homework. Thus students can have more*

*time to practice and can perform better.*

The evidence above showed how individual students viewed and reacted to the new teaching method even though they did not know the technical term TBI but they showed their potential as adult learners who were self-directed and got along well with peers. L5 wrote two interesting sentences to describe his thought about studying in this class.

*L5: This kind of class offers opportunities for the students who want to improve themselves. If they were active, they'd learn more.*

As a teacher of a large class with mixed level students, the researcher noticed that there was a problem that some students could not catch up with peers because they lacked English background, so she decided to go to class early to tutor this group of students. After a few times, students who came for tutoring demonstrated their progress, as they began to read and tried to adjust themselves to the new teaching method. Another topic that the students like to share their ideas is about teaching materials.

#### **4.4. 3. Views on Teaching Materials**

As for teaching materials, both groups had the same ideas that the ones used in class were good, useful, and authentic. All the informants in the high group thought that they had met the unit objectives and were appropriate to the students' level, while only nine informants from the low group felt they had met the unit objectives, and only eight thought the objectives were appropriate to the students' level. Both groups (ten from the low and nine from the high ability groups) also suggested that VCD or movies be used more in the class. Few informants (two from the high ability group and three from the low ability group) suggested that prints with illustrations or cartoons be added. A few informants (two from each group) agreed that more listening materials for listening practice should be used. Two informants from the high and one from the low ability group wanted the teacher to bring an English native speaker to class so that they could practice listening and speaking with a real native

speaker. Finally, very few informants (one from each group) required a vocabulary book, CD's or other useful materials so that students could use them after the training ended. Brief ideas from students follow.

*H2: If possible, videos should be used more as teaching materials.*

*H4: The materials were good, but the quality of the teacher-made tape should be improved to make it clearer. Movies and songs would make good materials too.*

*L1: Good teaching materials provided high motivation to students. However, some tape was not clear so it was difficult to hear and catch the gist.*

*L8: In general the materials were good but they may be too difficult for some students*

These findings were reiterated in the interviews, as evidenced here:

*H2: The handout provided was very good, especially the lesson about traveling.*

*L2: The materials used in class were good. They show interesting illustrations and the text material I believe will be of use in the future.*

*L5: Tape, video, task sheets and all the tasks were great. I think there is no need to improve them. The signs and information provided were interesting and authentic.*

The students and teacher had similar ideas about teaching materials. From teacher's diary, on the day she taught unit 5 Getting around, she wrote

*I was really proud to present the authentic materials in this lesson. The maps of Thai temples were real and they looked nice. They really showed the students what they would face in their future.*

For the unit mentioned it was found later that the graduates who were working abroad stated that they felt comfortable to use English effectively in getting around. The nice and authentic materials may be part of the cause of that feeling. However, for unit 7



Talking about monks, teacher felt sorry for some materials that she could not find the better one in the market. She wrote in her diary:

*Since there's nothing suitable for monks in commercial English teaching materials, these materials were sufficient at the moment. In the future I hope to develop better lessons and materials to be used with the new class next year.*

Findings showed that some materials that could be found in the market or the authentic props helped prepare students for their job demands, but some materials related to monks' tasks may be hard to find so the teacher had to develop one herself.

#### 4. 4.4. Views on Evaluation

Evaluation was another topic that the majority of both groups (nine from each) agreed was appropriate, though one person from the high group stated the teacher should make some instructions clearer and more directly to the point and another from the low group thought the teacher should make clear to students what the evaluation meant. The quotes from the students' logs and the interview as well as the teacher's diary are presented below.

*H5: It is good to evaluate students' performance in every lesson. But the form is too long. The instruction should be made clear to students and be specific.*

*H7: The form can evaluate the students' attitude more than 90% but not 100%. I think the better evaluation is to get the students to talk or read English.*

These two students misunderstood what evaluation meant. They thought that the form that the teacher distributed by the end of the day was to evaluate the lessons; the fact was that this form was the guided topics for the students' logs but they thought the teacher used it as an evaluation form. This misunderstanding was also reflected in the interview.

*H1: The evaluation form is the same for every lesson. There should be specific questions concerning individual lessons. The evaluation in class using questions to get feedback from students was good.*

The next student was the only person who provided proper data for the study.

*L2: As for the evaluation, it depends on the teacher. If I were the teacher I'd focus more on the poor students, but as a student I'm not the kind who has high self-confidence, so I'm very scared to go up in front of the class. I think Pali is easier than English. Anyway I'm encouraged so much when I study here. Thank you so much.*

Even though the students did not understand clearly about the form distributed, they filled them out with their honest point of views and they did evaluation task in class, not knowing they were evaluated. The teacher recorded in her diary on this issue as follows:

*The evaluation task was relevant to the objectives. Unfortunately, only a few students could be evaluated because I could not have all 77 students perform a conversation in such a short time.*

#### **4.4.5. Views on Length of Time**

Class time seemed to be the problem that all students mentioned. All the informants said there was not enough time to work on, practice, and present the task, due to the time constraints of the program. However, the majority (eight from each group) agreed that lessons were well tailored despite the limited time. The following are what students wrote in their logs

*H3: The lessons were good but sometimes they continued for too long. The teacher should give the students a break and not worry about the unfinished lesson. I want the class to go on happily and I am concerned about the teacher's health.*

*H10: The problem of time could be solved by adjusting the teaching period. I'd suggest the teaching by the teacher should be done in the morning and the entire afternoon should be spent on student practice.*

*L4: The contents are clear and direct, to the point. There are various topics. They are all suitable for Buddhist missionary monks. The problem is there is not enough time. Seeing the teacher has prepared a lot of lessons and materials, I feel it's a pity we*

*don't have more time. I know she has good intention but it's time that matters.*

Every student provided data about the limitation of time during the interview.

*L7: Studying English for the whole day was too much; if possible I'd like to study only two or two and a half hours per day, every day.*

*L8: The content, materials, and methods are all good but the time is too little. I suggest the time be increased, and we should study English every day, but fewer hours a day. To study all day long like we did was too much for some students. The ability of the students is not the same and it's hard to control.*

The time allotted was limited, thus causing problems that were hard to solve. In learning English, students needed time to practice, and the teacher knew this but she could not change. She also mentioned in the diary about this problem:

*For the telephone part, we reached it when there was not much time left, so I rushed through it and tried to push the students to do the task. I managed to drag students along till the end of the lesson and to have time to do the last task. But I knew it would be better if there is more time for them to practice and if more students could come up to present.*

And she concluded:

*There were too many issues to cover in such a limited time. All of them were necessary. Problems continued because of the limited time.*

#### **4.4.6. Other Comments**

As for suggestions and comments, all informants said that the teacher showed good intention and willingness to devote herself to teaching the class. Two from the high group thought the teacher should teach strategies of how to learn English well. A few informants (two from high and one from low ability groups) mentioned that students should be divided into different classes according to levels of proficiency. A few had other ideas. For example, one from the high group said the teacher should teach culture together with English, and one from the low said the teacher should

require students to memorize the vocabulary. One student from the high group said the teacher should bring some native speakers of English to class to talk to students. This idea is also mentioned in many logs from other students in class. Here is what they actually said when expressing their ideas.

From students' log:

*H5: The lesson contents were good and appropriate; if possible, I'd like to learn about cooking food and giving advice to foreigners who come for consultation. The teacher should focus more on speaking practice, maybe by bringing in some native speakers of English. Tips about their culture were also needed.*

*L1: It would be better if the group were smaller too.*

*L2: I'd like to study Basic English. Then I can further my studies in the USA when I get there.*

From the interview:

*H1: I'd like to suggest that the students should be tested and divided into different classes based on their ability or their country.*

*H2: I studied majoring in English from a monk university. There was no tape, film, or any other media, just a microphone and a transparency. They focused on reading and writing only. I believe it would be better if the students are placed and taught separately according to their levels of proficiency. The inconsistency of the class schedule also leads to less success.*

*H8: The culture, especially social manners, should be emphasized too as we are going to work abroad as ambassadors of Dhamma.*

*L7: I'd like to reduce the number of students so that the ratio of students to teacher is more appropriate.*

*L8: The student- teacher ratio is not appropriate. When the teacher paid attention to one group, other groups felt bored. To solve this problem the teacher may assign the fast*

*students to help tutor the slow students and work in groups all the time. The group work helps a lot if all the students fully participate.*

The teacher also expressed comments in various topics, such as the number of the students, the problem that some students could not read and how she tried to solve it by coming to class early to teach basic English and the consequence of doing that.

Here are some parts of her dairy:

*The number of students was also a big problem. Instead of 20-30 students as planned, I had to take responsible for the entire group of 77 students.*

*This morning I came early and started a basic class for some slow students who complained yesterday that their English background was so poor that they couldn't even read a word.*

After she started a special basic class in Thai for the low-proficiency students she mentioned:

*The slow students felt more motivated to study because the teacher had done something special for them. They hope that one day in the near future they could read all by themselves. Thus they were more enthusiastic to learn.*

#### **4.4.7 Views from the Graduates Who Are Working Abroad**

The views were collected using the follow-up questionnaire sent to the subjects who went to work abroad a few months after the course ended. As graduates from the program were presently working in real situations, they were asked about the lessons taught in the open-ended part of the questionnaire. A total of ten graduates responded to the questionnaire (see Appendix D). The results of the graduates' responses in this section are given in Table 4.11.



Table 4.10 Views from the Graduates Who Are Working Abroad

Questions	Answers from missionary monks	Number (N=10)	%
Which lessons are very useful and should be emphasized more?	Talking about Thai festival & culture	4	40
	Telephoning	3	30
	Interviewing with immigration	1	10
	Talking about Buddhism	1	10
	Explaining Dhamma	1	10
	Asking and following directions	1	10
	Reading medicine label	1	10
	Which lessons are not so useful and should be shortened?	All lessons are useful	6
Talking about Thai festivals & culture 1		1	10
Visiting a doctor		1	10
Reading medicine label		1	10
Which lessons are not taught but should be included?	The lessons are good, nothing to add	4	40
	Shopping	2	20
	Money and banking	1	10
	Western social manners	1	10
	Advanced Dhamma vocabulary	1	10
	Local culture	1	10
	Small talk on weather, general knowledge,	1	10
	Our country's situation	1	10
	Western way of thinking	1	10
What do you think about presenting group work finding and role play (TBI)?	Very good, useful and helpful	7	10
	Well preparation for the real situations	2	20
	Very helpful in real situation and can be applied to other circumstances	1	10
		1	10
What do you think about evaluation by presenting group work findings or role play in front of the class?	Very good and most suitable	9	90
	No comment	1	10
What would you suggest for implementing this course next time?	Teach all the authentic lessons with longer practice, especially listening and speaking	3	30
	Focus more on conversation in daily life situations	2	20
	Using real forms that a monk has to fill in while traveling, e.g. the arrival form, and spend more time practicing them	1	10
	Add more time	1	10
	Bring native speakers to class	1	10
	Teach how to socialize in Western culture	1	10
	Practice Dhamma talks	1	10
	Practice answering the interview questions at the Immigration	1	10

The first question asked them to suggest the lessons that they found very useful in real life and should be emphasized for the next class. In order from highest frequency to lowest frequency, four respondents (40%) thought talking about Thai festivals and culture, was the most beneficial, three respondents (30%) thought the same with the telephone lesson, and one each (10%) recommended interviewing with immigration, talking about Buddhism, explaining Dhamma, asking and following directions, and reading medicine label.

As for the question asking which lessons are not so useful and should be shortened, the majority of the respondents (six monks 60%) agreed that all the lessons could be used in real situations and should not be removed or shortened at all. However, talking about Thai festivals and culture, visiting a doctor, and reading medicine label was mentioned by one respondent (10%) each.

The next question was "Which lessons are not taught but should be included?" The responses varied: four respondents (40%) were satisfied with the lessons provided and did not want any other addition, two respondents (20%) would like to learn about shopping in the ordinary market and a supermarket, and each of the remainders (10%) would like to have a lesson on money and banking, Western social manners, advanced Dhamma vocabulary, local culture, small talk on weather, general knowledge, our country's situation, and Western way of thinking.

When asked what they thought about presenting group work findings and role play (TBI), they all had positive responses. The majority (six monks 60%) said they were very good, really useful and necessary, while two of the remainder said that the methods were a good preparation for the real situations and one felt it was very helpful in real situation and can be applied to other circumstances as well.

This supported findings from their logs and interviews. Nine out of ten respondents (90%) found that the evaluation by presenting group work findings or role play in front of the class were very useful and most suitable. One respondent had no comment.

The last question asked them to suggest how to implement this course next time. Teaching all the authentic lessons with longer practice, especially listening and speaking, was recommended by three respondents (30%). The other two respondents (20%) suggested focusing more on conversation in real situations. The following suggestions were recommended by one respondent each: adding more time, bringing native speakers to class, teaching how to socialize in Western culture, practicing

Dhamma talks, and providing English versions of Dhamma talks for various occasions, and emphasizing more on practice answering the interview questions at the Immigration.

#### **4.5 Discussion**

##### **Research Question Number One: What are the language needs of Buddhist missionary monks?**

The needs of Buddhist missionary monks and the students were reported and their top needs were incorporated into the lesson outline. As already mentioned, the missionary monk training took place in April and May 2006. The needs of the students in class were collected from a questionnaire distributed on the first day of class. However, because it would have been impossible to collect their responses and prepare all the lesson content, materials, evaluation, and other support items for the class according to their needs in a few days, the students' needs incorporated in the outline were those from the students who had already undergone the same type of training in 2005. The researcher collected the needs of the class of 2005 before the course started. The reasons for using the data from the class of 2005 were because of the need to prepare all the lesson content and materials neatly, have them validated by the experts, as they were to be the part of the research tools, and use them in a real missionary monk class as a pilot study. Nonetheless, the needs of the students in the class of 2006 and those of the missionary monks on duty were found to be similar, even though the number of monks in each class was different. For example, both classes indicated a great need to listen to instructions or announcements and to ask and answer questions. Also, the needs of the students were not the only needs to be used as a basis for preparing lessons, the needs of other stakeholders, such as the program administrators, the teacher, and the missionary monks on duty, were taken into consideration because they were all important and relevant to the program (Brindley, 1984; Trim, 1977; Brown, 2001; Richards, 2001; and Graves, 2000). As for this training project, there are needs from the students to study Dhamma talks and teaching mediation in English but these two topics were not taught much in the English for Buddhist missionary monk course because the program administrators decided that the monks should study these topics more deeply and they should be

taught by the teachers who were the experts in the field so these two topics were arranged as two different courses for the monk students.

Findings indicated that needs to listen and respond to phone calls are high in demand among all stakeholders (4.29 from the missionary monks and 4.63 from the students). This is so because it is one duty of the monk to answer phone calls when staying at the temple. As it is more difficult to communicate in a foreign language with someone on the phone than face-to-face communication, these monks, therefore, want to make sure they are able to do this so that they can work effectively. Another need that received high ratings was to use English in explaining a monk's role and duties in Thai society. The monks are supposed to discuss their roles but they may lack the vocabulary and language to explain them in English. That is why they rated these needs as high (Hutchinson and Walter, 1987). This is also true with some other needs that they have selected simply because they lack the language, such as listening to instructions or announcement and responding properly, and discussing the significance of daily chanting. However, the monks in class and the monks on duty did not agree, as far as listening to congregation's problems and answering based on Buddhist way of life (4.54 for missionary monks and 3.88 for monk students) are concerned. This may be due to the fact that the students thought they did not have to use English in performing those tasks while the monks on duty found that not only Thai congregations who came for their advice, but foreigners sought their help too. As to the question which needs should be translated into a lesson, the acceptable level was set at 3.75. If the needs met this criterion, they would be included in the syllabus, except for one need that did not meet this criterion, but was still included was the need to make an appointment on the phone (monks on duty at 3.97 and 3.72 from monks in class.) The reason is that this need is quite essential in the western culture even though the monk students may not realize it yet. Another need that was specified as necessary in an open ended part of the questionnaire and in an interview was teaching meditation. However, the lessons were planned without a lesson on teaching meditation as if this need was ignored. Actually, this need was acknowledged and a course teaching meditation is set up and is taught by meditation experts using English. All monk students had to study this course for four weeks and pass this course before they study other academic courses (Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2005).



**Research Question Number Two: Is task-based instruction (TBI) workable in an intensive English course for Buddhist missionary monks?**

Based on the findings, TBI seemed to work with this group of students as they performed significantly better when they completed the course, especially as far as the speaking ability was concerned.

Based on the findings from the post-test, it appears that their speaking skills significantly improved but not their listening skills. The reasons are: First, the course was designed based on the students' needs and the need for speaking skills weighs four times more than listening so more oral communication practice occurred in the class than listening practice. Thus, in the post-test, their listening scores did not improve much. Second, there was not enough time for students to practice listening in class, and neither the teacher nor the program could provide additional supporting materials for the students to listen to English media on their own during their free time. Therefore, the students did not receive enough comprehensible input to acquire the listening skill in a short time (Krashen and Terrel, 1983). On the other hand, the TBI used in class was likely to increase students' speaking opportunities, especially for those with low affective filter. According to the TBI approach, students are given a lot of opportunities to practice both in groups and individually. It is obvious that in the initial step in the task cycle, students are supposed to discuss in English about the task until the group arrives at a conclusion. Then the group members plan how and decide who to present the result. Then the whole group helps the presenter to prepare the presentation in English. At this point the fast students can help the slow students in the group, and all students also have a chance to share ideas among the group members, as well as co-construct the knowledge in the peer teaching environment (Williams and Burden, 1997; and Sanchez, 2004). As students take turns in giving presentations, this allows them equal opportunities to practice speaking. All this may explain the significant increase in the speaking skill.

As for each component of speaking skills, students in both high and low ability groups seemed to improve the most in grammar. This is probably due to the fact that TBI also places some emphasis on grammar practice although communication is given first priority. Also it could be because the monks have had relatively strong background in grammar. As the graduates from the monk university mentioned, reading and writing were emphasized when they studied in their former



classes. Therefore, prior knowledge in grammar may facilitate the construction of grammar knowledge especially when they have a chance to work together. Moreover, during the language focus phase, students are allowed to ask questions about sentences to be used in certain situations, reinforcing their knowledge of grammar.

It is also worth noting that students from the high ability group got high scores in communication. This may be attributable to the fact that they have more confidence to discuss tasks in English while the students from the low ability group like to listen and sometimes discuss in Thai. It has been observed by the teacher that the high ability students would love to show they were discussing in English while the low ability students would lower their voice or even stop talking in the presence of the teacher. Thus, their communication gains were relatively low.

As for the question, "what are the views of the monk students on TBI?", the majority of the students have very positive attitude both while in class and after they have gone to work abroad. The majority of the students felt positive about the instruction and all the missionary monks abroad confirmed this idea. This can be explained by the fact that this method of teaching encourages students to work on tasks that they are supposed to accomplish in their real life, such as filling forms, boarding the plane, visiting a doctor, and talking about Dhamma. In other words, their needs were fulfilled (Brown, 2000). All the tasks in the class have prepared the students for their mission. The students who have the opportunities to practice these in class can readily apply them in real situations. Being adult learners, they felt motivated to study because they were working towards their goals (Lieb, 1991).

Also, a multilevel class is a challenge for adult learners. "A teacher may have a single class in which there are very advanced students as well as some beginners who are unable to write their own names" (Hilles & Sutton, 2001: 393). This seems to be the case in this class; the mixed ability students are assigned to work together in groups. Working in groups can help the students to learn how to work in teams, how to share the responsibility among members who have different levels of ability and proficiency. They learn to listen to others and compromise. The fast students can help the slow students while they are working together in groups. Students who had been abroad had opportunities to share their experiences with their classmates both in front of the class, during the question and answer sessions and in their groups when they work on tasks together. In so doing, they learn to co-construct knowledge. As some students suggested in their logs, they saw the benefit of peer learning. This result,

however, seems to contradict with Reid's findings in her learning style research, which indicated Thai people do not like to work in group (Reid, 1998). This may be due to the different nature of students in her study. The monk students in the present study all hold the same disciplines and precepts, and maintaining harmony is one of their goals, so they are able to work harmoniously.

Another reason why these students expressed positive attitude towards TBI is that the students get opportunities to take turns to present their ideas in English in front of the class. This activity enables a lot of students to express their ideas in English, to carry on conversations, to role play what they have to do in the future. The finding confirms the idea of Smith (2003) that adult students will feel good when their contributions are well accepted. Students who tend to adjust themselves well will favor this method of teaching, as they have opportunities to express their ideas, ask questions or ask for clarification from the teacher during the task cycle when the teacher walks around to facilitate the learners while doing activities, and after their presentation when the teacher gives feedback and focuses on language practice as illustrated by one of the monks in the low ability group: "I'd like to have this kind of class where students can learn by trial and error. Those who love to learn should ask." As Holyoake (1892 cited in Thanasoulas, 2002) mentioned, knowledge is everywhere for those who observe and think. This is reflected in a log of a low level student whose pre-test scores were 70 and the post-test were 167, who wrote, *'This kind of class offers opportunities for the students who want to improve themselves. If they were active, they'd learn more.'* His speaking pre-test was 70 and he got 167 in the post-test. These opinions reflect that some students could develop their learner autonomy while studying as they knew how to cope with their problems and what to do to construct knowledge for themselves in this learning environment, moreover they still have good attitude towards the TBL (Benson, 1997 cited in Palfreyman, 2003). Based on the findings from students' logs and the interview, shy students were encouraged to speak up and many students found that they could speak English much better than they previously thought if they could overcome their shyness.

For the students who still love to learn in the traditional method, the feedback session by the teacher during the third phase of TBI, is also a very useful part of the study. The students get to know their weak points and how to improve. Students can learn from their own or others' mistakes and try to find alternatives to replace what they had done wrong. They also learn how to react to their errors and unpleasant

feedback. As Smith (2003) suggested, for students who prefer teacher-led class, this part of the language focus really responds to their needs. Moreover, students can also give feedback and suggestions to the teacher in their students' log.

**Research Question Number Three: How can TBI be made effective in the intensive English course for Buddhist missionary monks?**

There are three criteria used to measure the effectiveness of this intensive English course for Buddhist missionary monks. The first criterion is expert validation of the lesson plans and the sample lessons. All the five experts approved of most of the lesson plans and sample lessons that the researcher prepared. They also gave invaluable comments and suggestions that the researcher accepted and thereby adjusting the overall plan accordingly (see Appendix L). The second criterion is the students' gained scores or improvement in the post-test. The students in this study gained significant improvement in speaking skills. The third criterion is students' attitudes towards TBI. It was found that the majority of students had very positive attitudes towards this type of instruction. Overall, it can be said that TBI works well with this group of students, therefore, this approach should be used in the future classes. The teacher's view is presented as a basic concern about the lessons. The suggestions from the students in their logs and the data from the interview, together with the feedback from the missionary monks who had just left the program, are taken into consideration to make improvements when implementing the course. All these comments are shown in the following table.

Table 4.11 Comments and Suggestions on the Lessons Taught

Lesson	From teacher	From students (N=20)	From missionary monks (N=10)
Which lessons are very useful and should be emphasized more?	All lessons	All lessons (90%) Conversation (80%)	Talking about Thai festival & culture (40%) Telephoning (30%) Interviewing with the immigration (10%) Talking about Buddhism (10%) Explaining Dhamma (10%) Asking and following directions (10%) Medicine label (10%)

Lesson	From teacher	From students (N=20)	From missionary monks (N=10)
Which lessons are not so useful and should be shortened?	Medicine label	Medicine label (15%)	All lessons are useful (60%) Talking about Thai festivals & culture (10%) Visiting a doctor (10%) Reading medicine label (10%)
Which lessons are not taught but should be included?	Talking about advanced Dhamma. Narrating stories. Discussing problems, situations, from video. Listening for pronunciation practice.	Advanced Dhamma vocabulary (15%) Basic English structure (15%) Preaching (10%) Western culture (10%) Interpreting what is going on in the video (80%)	Nothing to add (40%) Shopping (20%) Miscellaneous (10% each): money and banking, Western social manners, advanced Dhamma vocabulary, local culture, small talk on weather, general knowledge, our country's situation, and Western way of thinking.
What do you think about presenting group work findings and role play?	Very useful	Very useful (85%)	Very good, useful and helpful (70%) Well preparation for the real situations (20%) Very helpful in real situation and can be applied to other circumstances (10%)
What do you think about evaluation by presenting group work findings or role play in front of the class?	Very suitable	Very suitable (90%)	Very good and most suitable (90%) No comment (10%)
What would you suggest for implementing this course next time?	Adding more time Placing students according to their level of proficiency, if there are enough teachers Using more multi-media in class	Using films, VCD, tapes, to let students see real situations (100%) Should teach how to learn English well (10%) Should teach culture together with English (10%) Should divide students into different classes according to their level of proficiency (15%). Should encourage students to memorize the vocabulary (5%)	Teach all the authentic lessons with longer practice, especially listening and speaking (30%) Focus more on conversation in daily life situations (20%) Using real forms that a monk has to fill in while traveling, e.g. the arrival form, and spend more time practicing them (10%) Add more time (10%) Bring native speakers to class (10%) Teach how to socialize in (10%) Western culture (10%) Practice Dhamma talks (10%) Practice answering the interview questions at the Immigration (10%)



Data in Table 4.11 were from three different sources: the teacher who was teaching this course, twenty students who were the informants, and the missionary monks who completed this course at the end of May 2006 and are now working on duty abroad. Their responses were the same regarding the need to increase the time for this course and their positive attitude towards task-based instruction. However, there may appear to be points in question as quite unexpectedly the monks on duty gave fewer scores to some topics, while the students felt they needed these, such as applying for a visa, visiting a doctor, and talking about Thai festivals or Buddhism. This difference in response can be attributed to the fact that some monks had only recently arrived at their destinations and had spent all their time working in their assigned temples and had not been sick yet. Thus, they answered according to the reality of their situation. They had not been to the doctor's, or talked to any foreigners who were interested in Thai festivals yet because at that period of time there had been no festivals to celebrate. Therefore, they did not need to use the specific English necessary in these cases. Moreover, some were able to obtain their visas easily as the interviewer at the Embassy had been able to use the Thai language fluently. The majority of them wrote in their letters, or talked to the researcher via MSN messenger, that they seriously needed to use English at the Immigration and so the course should prepare the students by emphasizing the interview part more.

From all the results gained from these three groups, the researcher has drawn conclusions as to how to implement future classes.

### **Suggestions on How to Implement Future Classes.**

Skehan (1996: 58) mentioned that "TBI could be dangerous if it was implemented wrongly because it may create pressure to students instead of interlanguage change and growth." On the other hand, Thanasoulas (2002: 8) stated "if the learners get stuck with the 'traditional classroom,' and think that they can succeed only when they follow the teacher, they are likely to resist learner-centered strategies aiming at learner autonomy, and success is likely to be undermined." Therefore, the teacher of the future courses that aim to use TBI need to take this into consideration.

As Thanasoulas (2002) suggested, the way to deal with the multilevel class is that the students should be placed according to their level of proficiency, at least



separating high and low level students so that the teacher can focus on particular lessons that suit their levels. However, all the students have to study together because of the lack of teachers. The core lessons should be taught in both classes, but the low level may be introduced to the basic structures or how to read and pronounce each letter of the English alphabet first due to the fact that some students really lacked English background even though they have high education. As some of the low level students indicated, they found some of the materials too difficult while most high ability students found the materials and task-based instruction appropriate. The advanced students should get further training in advanced vocabulary and on how to give basic sermons or to socialize to help them learn through their highest potential as Vygotsky mentioned.

The success in oral communication of the course indicates that the method used in the class affects the students' performance. By working on a task together the students first focused on meaning and they tried to achieve the goal so they concentrated on conveying the message without much care on accuracy. Then after the task was completed, they helped one another to ensure that the group representative could effectively report the result of their group discussion using good English. At this point, they shifted their concentration to communication and fluency. And then when the reporting was over and it was time for language focus, the grammar and pronunciation could be reviewed, introduced, and practiced. The scores in each component of speaking test could confirm the effectiveness of TBI. Since the high ability group has acceptable prior knowledge in grammar, they made high improvement in grammar, followed by communication, fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary respectively. On the other hand, the low ability group gained the most in grammatical knowledge, followed by fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and communication respectively. The reason for this may be that they did not use much English communication during the task cycle or remained silent while the high ability group did the most discussion in English.

As all the stakeholders mentioned, the teaching time should be added and scheduled so that the students can get English training at least every other day during the whole month of training. Thus, they will be able to use English often enough to ensure that they have adequate practice to enhance their confidence when they have to use it in real situations. In case students are scheduled to study the whole day, the morning session should be for teaching using task-based instruction and the afternoon

session can be arranged for skills practice, especially for listening and speaking which were found to be in high demand. Multi-media, such as tapes, videos, and films, can be presented and students can practice listening for gist, interpreting, discussing, pronunciation, and so on. The lesson content can focus on daily routine and work-related topics. Both high level and low level groups must study the same core lesson, but they should have additional lessons according to their level of proficiency.

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data, most students seem to suggest that authentic listening materials should be added. Materials that motivate students' attention best would probably be films, VCD, or DVD, because they can listen to the conversations and see the events and atmosphere simultaneously. These kinds of materials can introduce the new world to the students, fulfill their imagination, give them more clues of what the conversations are about in case they cannot understand all of them, and serve as exercises for them to interpret and discuss. The stories should concern their daily routine in the foreign country or present procedures they must go through during their journey. These realistic support materials will help justify why students need to practice English a lot and it is hoped that students can be highly motivated.. If possible, a video clip should be made for particular lessons to let the students see the real procedures that they are going to go through, such as interviewing with the Immigration officers, visiting a doctor, boarding the plane and so on. The purpose of using the video clips is to present the real language use and the procedures in those situations.

Commercial tapes for listening practice can also be used as supplementary material for the students to use during their free time. Moreover, all kinds of authentic materials, such as forms that students will need to fill out, bus schedules, and actual city maps should also be introduced to them.

When students are separated into different groups according to level of proficiency, evaluation should be made more appropriate to their level. If there is enough time and personnel to take care of the classes, each student should be evaluated individually as suggested by some informants, especially in listening and speaking skills, because these two skills are needed the most to communicate with other people when they are finally on duty abroad.

#### 4.6 Summary

In this chapter, the results of the study were presented in three main areas: language needs, learning outcomes, and views on different aspects of task-based instruction. This was followed by discussion on the findings. Finally, suggestions on how to implement lessons in future classes were made.

To sum up, the language needs were surveyed from the monk students studying in the program in the year 2005 and 2006, together with the students who graduated from the program and were working as Buddhist missionary monks abroad. The needs were categorized into two main topics. The first one relates to their work, and the other is the survival skills needed in their daily routine. These two categories were rearranged into nine units of lesson content that focused on communication, especially on listening and speaking.

The pre-test and the post-test total scores of the high and low groups were compared. The statistics showed that task-based instruction could significantly increase their scores in speaking. The high group scored significantly better than the low group in every aspect. However, none of them made much progress in their listening skill.

The majority of the students had a positive attitude towards task-based instruction. The students who had finished the course and had gone to work abroad also emphasized the importance of authentic practice as reported in the questionnaire sent to them after they had been working abroad for some period of time. Their suggestions were added to the comments and suggestions gained from the students' logs in class and the students' interviews after the course ended, and were included in the suggestions on how to implement this training class in the future.