

**A Study of Behavioral Cultural Knowledge in English Language of Students in English for
International Communication Program, Faculty of Liberal Arts,
Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya, Songkhla**

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were to study behavioral cultural knowledge in English and to compare knowledge of the samples who graduated from high school and samples who were vocational certificate holders. In addition, this research compared the behavioral cultural knowledge of the English language of the samples who studied three different minor subjects, namely English, Chinese and Hospitality.

The samples were 60 students from the English for International Communication Program, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya, Songkhla. Data collection was generated by means of a test in two parts: 30 - item test on conversational routines and 30 - item test on customs, lifestyle attitude and values. The time allotment was one hour. The data was analyzed for mean, percentage, standard deviation, T-test and F-test.

The findings of the study were as follows:

1. The mean score of the test of behavioral cultural knowledge in English was 31.60 equivalent to 52.66%. This showed that the mean score was lower than the set test value of 71-80% following Oller's criteria (1983)

2. There was a significant difference in the behavioral cultural knowledge between the samples who graduated from high schools and those from vocational colleges. Nevertheless, when studying the samples' mean score in each part, it was found that there was no significant difference in conversational routines.

3. There was no significant difference in behavioral cultural knowledge of the samples that chose the different minor subjects. The results of this study can be a guideline for adjusting the curriculum and incorporating behavioral cultural knowledge in order to enhance development.

1. Introduction

Maywadee Choterotpon (2011) states that nowadays the importance of English has increased in Thailand. It is a vital tool for communication, education, knowledge searching and occupation. It is a conduit for understanding the variety of cultures and the vision of the world community. It leads to friendship and cooperation with other countries. Moreover, Brown (cited in Allen, 2000) suggests that learners should study using the culture of English in their daily life in order to have more understanding. Thus, the learners who study English as a second language, need to study the culture concurrently. It is because language and culture are the same component.

Furthermore, language is also an output of culture. In the same way, language is a medium to transmit a cultural story to the public. Consequently, learning a foreign language and the English language mean learning the culture of native speakers also.

2. Literature review

According to the Department of Academic Affairs (2001) research on cultural contents for interested teachers and the problem in studying and teaching in order to produce unlimited knowledge. The results were from 300 schools in Thailand, both primary and secondary, including large and medium sized schools, by analyzing English cultural content in English textbooks that the Ministry of Education assigned. The main points are as follows:

2.1 Conversational routines

- 2.1.1 Greeting and farewell
- 2.1.2 Invitation, answering and refusing
- 2.1.3 Thanking
- 2.1.4 Congratulations and regretting
- 2.1.5 Apology and forgiving
- 2.1.6 Requesting and refuse a request
- 2.1.7 Introductions

2.2 Customs, living, attitude and values

- 2.2.1 Religion, worship and belief
- 2.2.2 Job application, working
and occupation
- 2.2.3 Social values
- 2.2.4 Participating in social events
- 2.2.5 Tradition and celebrations
- 2.2.6 Table manners

Moreover, Peterson and Coltrane (2003) support that understanding the cultural context of day-to-day conversational conventions such as greetings, farewells, forms of address, thanking, making requests, and giving or receiving compliments, implies more than just being able to produce grammatical sentences, it means knowing what is appropriate to say to whom, and in what situations. In addition, it means understanding the beliefs and values represented by the various forms and usages of the language.

3. Research methodology

3.1 Samples

Research samples were 60 third year students in English for International Communication, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Rajamangala Univeristy of Technology Srivijaya, Songkhla.

3.2 Hypothesis of the research

3.2.1 The result of behavioral cultural knowledge in the English language of the third year students in English for International Communication, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Rajamangala Univeristy of Technology Srivijaya was expected to be an average value of 71-80 percentage, which is considered to be a good level following Oller's criteria.

3.3 Instrument

The instrument of this research was a test on conversational routines - 30 items and custom lifestyle attitude including value - 30 items. The instrument of this research was checked by experts. The researchers used Oller's criteria to estimate the behavioral cultural knowledge of the samples as follows:

- Lower than 30 % = very poor
- 31-40 % = poor
- 41-50 % = fairly poor
- 51-60 % = moderate
- 61-70 % = fairly good
- 71-80 % = good
- More than 80 % = very good

3.4 Operation

3.4.1 Contacting and getting the cooperation of teachers in English for International Communication, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Rajamangala Univeristy of Technology Srivijaya for testing the samples.

3.4.2 Testing the samples at the specified time.

3.4.3 Describing the instructions of the test.

3.4.4 Starting the test.

3.4.5 The time allotment was 1 hour.

3.4.6 The researcher checked the test.

3.4.7 All the paper tests were analyzed by a statistic program.

3.4.8 The average values were used to assess the language ability by using Oller's criteria.

3.5 Statistics and Analysis of Data

Collected data was analyzed with statistical methodology as follows:

3.5.1 Data analyzing

In analyzing the data the researchers used statistic methodology analysis of T- Test and F- Test with the statistic program.

3.5.2 Basic statistical calculations

Basic statistical calculations were conducted by finding the average value (mean), percentage and the standard deviation (S.D.).

4. Results

Figure 1: Total score of behavioral cultural knowledge in English of third year students.

Figure 1 shows that the lowest score was 19 and the highest was 43. Therefore, the mean score was 31.60 equivalent to 52.66 %, it indicated that the behavioral cultural knowledge in English of the third year students was in the moderate level at 51-60 %. Thus, it didn't

Behavioral Culture Knowledge in English Language	Total score	Minimum	Maximum	\bar{x}	S.D.	Percentage
Total	60	19	43	31.60	6.13465	52.66

correspond with the set hypothesis of 71-80% in the good level according to Oller's criteria (1983).

Figure 2: Total score of students who graduated from general education and those with a vocational certificate.

Graduated Program	No. of samples	\bar{x}	S.D.	t	Sig.
General Education	28	29.6429	5.92055	-2.403	.019
Vocational Certificate	32	33.3125	5.88293		

Figure 2 shows that there was a significant difference in the behavioral cultural knowledge between the samples who graduated from high schools and those from vocational colleges. However, when contemplating the samples' means score in each part, it was found that there was no significant difference in conversational routines.

Figure 3: Comparison score between the samples who chose the different minor subjects.

Sources of variance	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Between groups	114.933	2	57.466	1.556	.220
Within groups	2105.467	57	36.938	1.556	
Total	2220.400	59			

Figure 3 indicates that there was no significant difference in behavioral cultural knowledge in English of third year students who chose different minor subjects.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the third year students in the English for International Communication Program, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya have knowledge of behavioral culture in English at 31.60 equivalent to 52.60%. Therefore, it shows that knowledge of the samples was in the moderate level. Thus, it indicated that they didn't meet the set hypothesis at the good level 71-80% according to Oller's criteria (1983). In addition, there was a significant difference in the behavioral cultural knowledge between the samples who graduated from high schools and those from vocational colleges. However, when studying the samples' mean score in each part, it was found that there was no significant difference in conversational routines. Regarding the result of comparing knowledge of the students who chose different minor subjects, the result of the research found that there was no significant difference in behavioral cultural knowledge.

6. Recommendation

Teachers should use the result of this research to be a guideline in order to add to the curriculum.

Moreover, teacher should insert behavioral cultural knowledge in English with the purpose of developing students in the program to have good knowledge and good competence in behavioral cultural knowledge. Furthermore, they can apply it while speaking and living abroad knowing what is appropriate to say and in what situation. For these reasons, it is recommended that teacher should pay attention to enhance the culture in the class or in the curriculum because it is useful for students in the future.

7. References

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