

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into 5 parts: 1) a summary of the study, 2) a summary of the findings, 3) discussions of employee English language development and their attitudes towards the course, 4) conclusions, and 5) recommendations for further study.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

As globalization has emerged and English has become a universal language, it is inevitable for Toyota Motor Thailand Co., Ltd. to strive for itself, as well as its employees, towards a more international appearance. One of the most important human resource development areas is English language skills enhancement. Although the company has been focusing on English training and adopting TOEIC as a tool to measure English skills competency for three years, a concrete study about the effectiveness of the English training in terms of TOEIC score increases and employee attitudes towards the training and impact on their English development has not been carried out. Therefore, this study will be beneficial for the company not only to measure the effectiveness of the training but also to see areas which can be improved.

5.1.1 Objectives of the Study

The study of TOEIC preparation courses and their impact on employee English language development aims to explore the result of the TOEIC preparation course in terms of scores achieved before and after the course and to explore employee attitudes towards their own development after the course.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures

The subjects used in this study consisted of 44 males and 56 females who are currently employed with Toyota Motor Thailand Co., Ltd. and have taken TOEIC preparation courses provided by the company. In this study, data can be divided into two types. While the secondary data were collected from textbooks, journals, and websites,

the primary data were collected from the responses to the questionnaires as well as pre and post TOEIC scores. All primary data were analyzed by the SPSS program.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the study can be summarized as follows.

5.2.1 General Information

From the data study, it was found that the respondents' ages ranged from 25 to more than 40. Most of them were 30 years of age. While 56% of the respondents were women, 44% were males. The majority of employees (57%) responding to the survey hold Bachelor's degrees. 45% of employees have been studying English for 11 – 20 years. Moreover, 58.0% of the respondents did not study English at other institutes the rest 42.0% studied English at other institutes. Most respondents do not use English at work regularly (61.0%) and the remainder use English at work regularly (39.0%). Most respondents (91.0%) have not studied or worked abroad.

5.2.2 Impact of the TOEIC preparation course on employee attitude and TOEIC scores

RQ 1: Do employees have a positive attitude towards the TOEIC preparation course and their English language development after the course?

The respondent attitudes towards the TOEIC preparation course and their English language development were found to be relatively positive. They had the highest degree of positive attitudes towards the TOEIC course in the area of curriculum and content. They agreed that the class is fun and can motivate them to learn. What they have learned from the course is found to be useful for them at work to some extents. Moreover, they believed that this course will help them score higher in the TOEIC exam.

However, the area of teaching materials and the length of the course gained the least degree of positive attitude. Besides, the respondents felt undecided whether the TOEIC course can help them read more quickly or understand spoken English better.

***RQ 2:** What are employee suggestions for further improvement of the course?*

Suggestions from respondents for further improvements include 1) to align English for daily use and conversational English with TOEIC content, 2) to provide more listening practice in the course, 3) to increase the consistency of the course, 4) to assign more homework to practice at home, 5) to provide employees with audio CDs to practice at home.

5.2.3 Interpretation of attitudes towards the TOEIC course and impact on English language development

When interpreting the results of employee attitudes, it can clearly be seen while their attitudes towards the TOEIC course are relatively positive, their feelings towards the impact of the course on their English language development are somewhat uncertain. Most of them were certain that the course would help them have higher TOEIC scores, but they were not uncertain if their overall English skills, particularly speaking and listening will be better.

5.2.4 Hypothesis Testing

After the hypotheses testing, it is shown that the TOEIC preparation course has had an impact on employee TOEIC scores and their attitudes towards their English language development as follows:

Hypothesis 1.1 Employees' TOEIC scores are higher after completing the TOEIC preparation course.

When testing Hypothesis 1, significant differences were found between the pre test TOEIC and Post test TOEIC scores. Therefore, employee English language proficiency has improved in terms of higher TOEIC scores achieved.

Hypothesis 1.2 Employee attitudes towards their English language development after the TOEIC preparation program vary, but should be relatively positive

According to the findings shown in the form of frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation, this hypothesis is verified. It is verified because the results of overall attitudes about the TOEIC course were at the agreed level. Employees strongly agree that the curriculum and content were interesting.

5.3 DISCUSSIONS

In order to address issues relating to the TOEIC preparation course and its impact on employee English language development logically and theoretically, statistical analysis and research-based conclusions are generalized in relation to the literature and previous research.

The results of this study fell into three categories which can be clarified as follows.

1. Employee English language development in terms of TOEIC scores increase after completing the TOEIC preparation course
2. Employee attitudes towards their English language development after completing the TOEIC preparation course
3. Employee attitudes towards the TOEIC preparation course itself

The findings found that most employees could achieve higher TOEIC scores after finishing the course. This can be correlated with the “washback” effect in that the test has influenced both teaching methods and the ways people learn (Alderson & Wall, 1993). As a result, they were well-prepared and were taught to do the test effectively (Robb and Ercanbrack, 2004). According to the previous study done by Robb and Ercanbrack, it is

found that preparation courses will have an impact on learners' skills in terms of capability to do the test, not the capability to use communicative English.

The results of employee attitudes towards their English language development also confirm the fact found in a previous study that most employees were uncertain about their communicative skills improvement after completing the course. On the other hand, they were certain that the course would help them achieve higher TOEIC score. This is also one reason why the majority of employees have positive attitudes towards the TOEIC course, particularly in terms of content and teaching method. This result can be in alignment with the previous study from Boldt and Ross that these two aspects of the course are proved to be in association with an increase in TOEIC scores.

In the overall picture, this study is found to be relatively correlated with theory and previous studies gathered in the review. Washback effect does exist and makes contribution to both teachers and learners. While learners' English language development in terms of a higher score gain is proven, improvement in communicative skills are found to be regarded with skepticism.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are drawn from the discussion above.

5.4.1 Based on the results from the study, most respondents achieved higher TOEIC scores after completing the course.

5.4.2 Most employees have positive attitudes towards their English language development after completing the course, particularly in terms of ability to do the test.

5.4.3 Most employees were uncertain that the course could help improve their communicative English skills.

5.4.4 Most employees have positive attitudes towards the course itself.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for further research.

5.5.1 This study did not look into the details for other factors such as gender or education which may make a contribution to their attitudes or their English language development.

5.5.2 This study only focuses on the population of employees of Toyota Motor Thailand Co., Ltd. and attended a TOEIC preparation course provided by the company. In order to achieve more concrete data related to TOEIC, study population should be expanded.

5.5.3 TOEIC is a test which assesses only reading and listening skills. This is a limitation as it cannot cover all areas of English language development after the TOEIC preparation course. To obtain data in a broader area, other kinds of methods which measure all skills can be adopted.