

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

Airline business plays an important role in Thailand as well as in several countries in many ways. Many universities offer a variety of airline business courses in their Business English curriculum. Apparently, a course book is considered to be essential for instruction and learning in an airline business course. Without a course book, studying airline business course is said to be like traveling without a navigator as Dickinson (1924) mentions the importance of a book in her poem:

*There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away,
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry.
This traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of toll;
How frugal is the chariot
That bears a human soul*

Instructional and learning efficiency of airline business course will be done in a better way if we have a course book to be an intermediate between instructors and students. Course book means a text book of which the teacher and each student has a copy and which is in principle to be followed systematically as the basis for a language course. Azadeh Nemati (2009) (as cited in Ur, 1996 : 183) states that in somewhere course book was taken for granted while in others they may not be used at all. In that case the teacher works according to a syllabus or according to his or her own program, and uses text book or supplementary materials as the need arises. A third, “compromise”, situation is where a course book is used selectively, not necessarily in sequence, extensively supplementary by other materials.

A course book is important for students because it is a cheap material and a convenient package. It is easy to carry around, so it is good for students to have one as Azadeh Nemati (2009) (as cited in Ur, 1996 : 183) mentions that course books represent a relatively cheap way of providing learning material and it is very appropriate for the needs of learners. When comparing them with alternatives as computer software, it is the cheapest means of learning. Therefore, a course book should be provided in airline business course for the advantage of the students. English for Airline business is a specific course that is rather difficult for students who have never been interested in this subject matter before, so a course book can be used by the students to review. Harmer (2007 : 152-153) mentions that students often feel extremely positive about course book because it is assuring and allows them to look forward and backward, giving them a chance to prepare for what is coming and review what they have done. Therefore, a better way to help students studying a course efficiently is to have a course book available as a guideline. Thanasoulas (1999) argues that a course book is extremely helpful, as it guides teachers on what and how to teach, giving them some useful advice on the best techniques for presenting the material. Many teachers agree that a very important instructional material that helps their students succeed in several courses is “a course book”. Moreover, before choosing a course book for the students in any course, it is important to create a needs-analysis for your own students. Once the needs-analysis is done, it's a good idea to create a list of items that you consider desirable in a course book. Based on these lists, any course book can then be analyzed. Richards and Rodgers (2001 : 39) state that course books are an unavoidable element of the curriculum because they specify content and define coverage for syllabus items. A course book will be used to follow instruction in that course.

A course book is defined as a created material design as materials for teaching learning process in order to increase the learner's knowledge and experience. Brown (1994 : 145). As an English teacher, she or he can not avoid using a course book which is important in giving instruction at school. It is not only for the teacher but also for the students who use course book. Brown (1994 : 145) argues: “the most obvious and most common from the material support the language instruction comes through textbook to support the success of teaching learning process”. Teachers can teach well if there is an appropriate course book guiding for the teaching learning process, not only inside but also outside of the classroom. The teachers and the students

can build and develop their competencies better if they use qualified course book which provide and support the material needed. Therefore, for effective teaching in several courses, most teachers will provide a course book for their students because it is a better way to lead their students to learning achievement.

Moreover, there are many advantages for choosing a course book. Azadeh Nemati (2009) (as cited in Ur, 1996 : 183) states that course books give many advantages for students as they provide a manifest framework in which the teachers and the students know where they are going and what is coming next. They serve as a syllabus which includes a carefully planned and balanced selection of language content. Second, they provide ready-made text and tasks with possible and appropriate level for most of the class and save time for the instructors. Third, they are the cheapest way of providing learning material for each student, as well as, they are convenient package to carry around. Fourth, they are useful guides especially for inexperienced teachers. Also, they provide autonomy that the students can use them to learn new materials, review and monitor their progress in order to be less teacher-dependent. A course book is, then, an essential element in any course, at any age, no matter how young or old of the students.

A course book is one of the most important instructional materials that instructors will have for their teaching. To evaluate a course book, instructors should evaluate its content coverage. A good course book will make a tremendous difference to a programme. For learners, it can give confidence and reassurance as well as the opportunity to look ahead and see the whole picture of a course. For teachers, it offers a framework for course planning as well as lesson-by-lesson support. In general, a course book should present clearly thought programmed with appropriate sequence and structure. Yochanna (1997) proposes that a good course book offers students stability and security. It should cover in text and it should not be complicated. It should offer the students a sense of progress and achievement. There is always something to go back to and revise. It offers the students a sense of confidence and satisfaction as they feel that they are working within a framework and they know where they are headed and where they have been.

In education, development of course books is the primary responsibility of instructors to transfer updated knowledge to students. Airline business is one of courses that should have a course book developed for the students as well. Currently, Phetchaburi Rajabhat University offers an airline business course as an elective subject for second-year Business

English majored students and there are many students interested in this course. However, an airline business course book has not been yet developed. A course book is being used is too difficult or out of Thai context. It is also expensive and unavailable. All of them are imported. A course book in Airline Business course should be developed for Thai students by using skill-based course book that contains activities, lessons and practice in four English skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Of course, other skills such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling all play a role in effective English communication. Some of these activities can be assigned as homework while others can be printed and used in class. This will help instructors save time on lesson planning.

Skill-based instruction is the teaching that focuses on English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Tarey (1988 : 45) proposes that skills are abilities that people must be able to do to be competent enough in a language, rather independently of the situation or context in which the language use can occur. The content of the language teaching involves a collection of particular skills that may play a role in using language such as listening to spoken language for the main idea, writing well-formed paragraphs, and delivering effective lectures. The chief rationale behind skill-based instruction is to learn the specific language skills. Another less important objective might be to develop more general competence in the language, learning only incidentally any information that may be available while utilizing the language skills.

Sydney Smee (2003) describes that skill-based assessments are designed to measure the knowledge, skills, and judgment required for competency in a given domain. An intensive skill-based instruction is designed to help students improve their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, increase their English vocabulary and give them more confidence with English language. Students can follow either the general English course or the intensive English course. The longer in the course, the better prospects of becoming fluent in the English language.

Consequently, the researcher realizes the need to make a new course book for English airline business course by using a skill-based course book. The course content will cover in-flight service and ground service with focus on four major English skills. I use a skill-based because it will prepare students who want to work in the airline business, as well as development of English communication for all students. This study will provide information on effectiveness

of a course book of English for Airline Business for university students. The research will focus on instructional and learning achievement of the airline business course.

Purposes of the Study

1. To construct and test the efficiency of the skill-based English for Airline Business course book for the second year English and Business English majored students at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University.

2. To compare student's learning achievement before and after using of the skill-based English for Airline Business course book

3. To survey students' opinion toward a course book.

Research Questions

1. Is the skill-based English for Airline Business course book efficient?

2. Do students have better learning achievement after learning English for Airline Business with the skill-based course book constructed by the researcher?

3. What extent of opinion did the students have after learning English for Airline Business with the skill-based course book constructed by the researcher?

Research Hypotheses

1. The skill-based English for Airline Business course book constructed by the researcher meets the efficiency criteria of 75/75.

2. The students' learning achievement score after learning English for Airline Business with the skill-based course book is higher than that of before learning significantly.

3. Students have a high level of satisfaction on English for Airline Business with the learning skill-based course book constructed.

Significance of the Study

This study will be beneficial as follows:

1. Instructors have a teaching material and guidance in teaching the English for Airline Business course at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University.
2. Students have useful and appropriate course book for learning English for Airline Business.
3. This study can also be used as a guideline for further studies and development of course book and learning materials.

Scope of the Study

This research studies on learning achievement on English for Airline Business of the second-year English and Business English major students at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University who are using a skill-based course book. The scope of the study consists of the following limitations.

1. Population

1.1 The population of the study will be all 17 second-year English major students and 18 second-year Business English majored students studying in the academic year 2010 at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University. All students of both majors are purposively selected for the study.

1.2 The study will be conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2010.

2. Content

This study will be focused on learning achievement and opinion of the second-year English and Business English majored students using the course book constructed by the researcher.

3. Factors

3.1 Independent factors

3.1.1 A skill-based course book of English for Airline Business constructed by the researcher.

3.2 Dependent factors

3.2.1 Learning achievement

3.2.2 Opinion toward using skill-based course book in learning English for Airline Business.

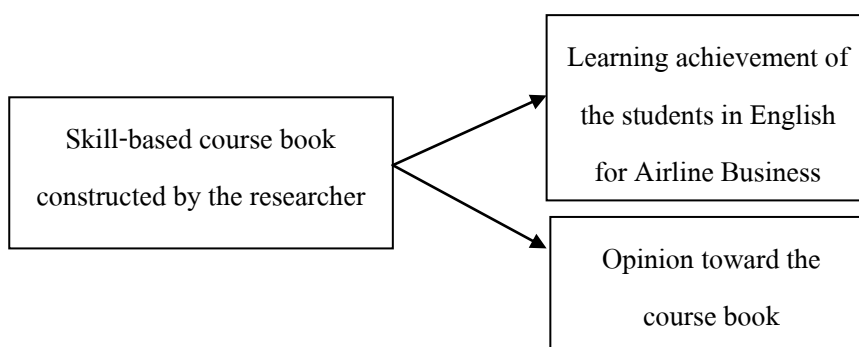
Limitation of the Study

This research does not include determining factors of English competency, gender, age, and social background of the students.

Research Framework

This research aims to study the learning achievement of English for Airline Business course for English and Business English majored students and their opinion towards a skill-based course book used in this course. The conceptual framework is presented as follows:

Figure 1.1 Research Framework



Definition of Terms

As this study deals with the English course book uses in the English class of Phetchaburi Rajabhat University, all the terms define here are focused specially for this certain place.

Learning achievement is defined as scores of testing of English for Airline Business course.

English for Airline Business is defined as a one of elective subjects in Bachelor of Art curriculum for English and Business English majored students to study.

Course book is defined as a text book of which instructors and students use for following basis of language course.

Students are defined as students who are in second year English and Business English majored students studying at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University.

Skill-based is defined as a skill that focuses on four English skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Students' opinion is defined as an idea about a particular subject of students

Efficiency of course book is defined as efficiency of learning during the course assessment based on lesson by lesson (E_1). The second efficiency is the post-test score assessed at the end of learning the whole course (E_2).

Efficiency criteria refers to the criteria set by the research for determining efficiency of the course book used for English for Airline Business learning of the students. It is set as $E1/E2 = 75/75$.