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The challenges of Krabi Technical College of Vocational Education in the region
within curriculum planning and teaching in academics preparing
for entry into the ASEAN community.

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Abstract

The emergence of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a regional international organization in the Southeast Asia will have an inevitable impact on teaching and learning in Krabi Technical College of Vocational Education . Although the policy of support to Vocational Education within ASEAN is explicit, the implementation of policy into practice in Krabi Technical College has caused problems in many aspects of teaching and learning. One difficulty is the adaptation to the preparation of the English language skills of teachers and education personnel as all members are required to develop the potential to communicate in English and the language of the countries in ASEAN. The adaptation of vocational English skills for students is the main problem for the students. This creates limitations on the education, planning and management of the education

system. In addition, an important factor is to develop networking and collaboration of education systems of Vocational Education more efficiently.

For these reasons, the Krabi Technical College of Vocational Education in this region needs to have a system to enhance and support the development of education in the value chain with the paradigm learning of the modern Vocational Education goals by coordination and cooperation with all sectors to create opportunities for organizations to learn the foreign language skills to communicate more effectively. And most importantly is the need for the participation of the community in preparation and problem solving together to provide Krabi Technical College the skills to successfully face the ASEAN and quality challenges.

Key words; *challenges, Vocational Education, curriculum and teaching planning.*

1. Introduction.

Krabi Technical College is part of the Office of the Vocational Education Commission. The Institute is committed to a policy of educational management and professional training and development of manpower in order to produce professional performance towards the ASEAN Community in 2015. Krabi Technical College is the one of Vocational Institutions in the Andaman region, in a rapidly growing economy in a central that facilitates the Travel and Hotel industry in this region. For this reason, the policy of the Institute is to produce and develop the Vocational Education at all levels in the use of language for communication, the use of information technology and a desirable feature for visitors to the region.

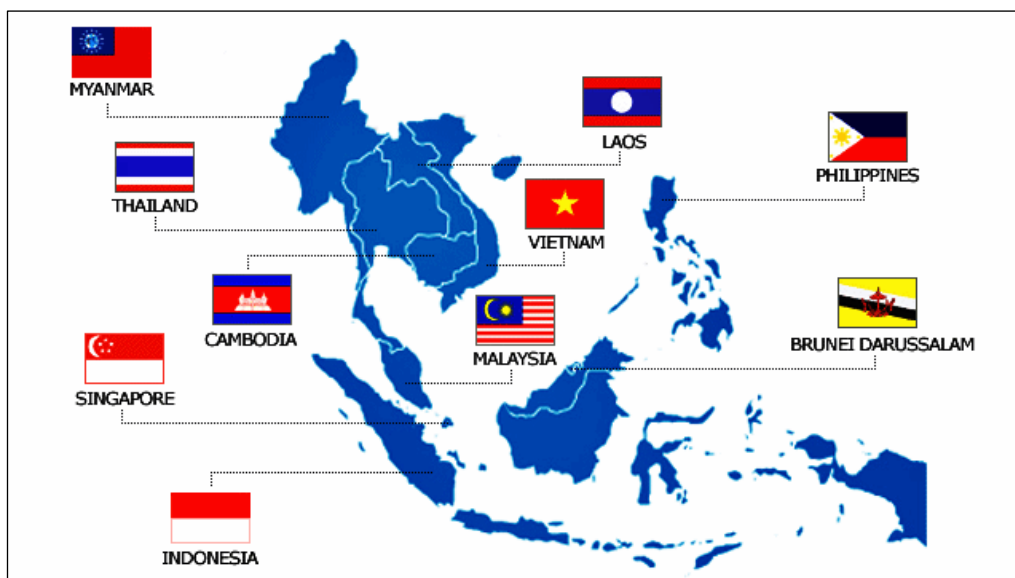


Figure. 1. Picture of the ASEAN map. (Source; <https://www.google.co.th/search?q=ASEAN+map&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source>; 24 April 2013)

Although the policy of vocational teaching and learning support to ASEAN is explicit, bringing it into practice highlights several educational problems such as adaptation to prepare the English skills of teachers and education personnel. There is a need to develop the capacity of staff to communicate in English and the language of the countries in ASEAN. The main problem of students the adaptation of communication skills in English. The limitations of the study plan of management education in curriculum planning includes the development of networking and collaboration for teaching courses in regional and international levels.

The English language is defined as a medium of communication between the 10 ASEAN nations. The main problem of Thailand is to use English as a means of communication. Based on a survey of the various academies it was found that in the use of English, Thailand was at low levels and can not compete with our ASEAN neighbors. Some people think that because Thailand was never a colony of any country or because we have not bothered to develop English language skills. The aforementioned factors can result in weakness of the English language of Thailand. As evidenced by the relative proportion of English-speaking countries in the region found that Thailand's English communication is only 10%, which makes Thailand Ranked # 5 of 10 countries in data communication English skills as follows.

- 1.1 Singapore has a population of 4.58 million people and 3.25 million people use English or 71%
- 1.2 Philippine has a population of 97 million and 49.80 million people use English or 55.49%.
- 1.3 Brunei Darussalam has a population of 0.38 million people and 0.14 million people use English or 37.73%.
- 1.4 Malaysian has a population of 27.17 million and 7.4 million people use English or 27.24%.
- 1.5 Thailand has a population of 63.03 million and 6.54 million people use English or 10%.

We can compare the TOEFL test (The Test of English as a Foreign Language) of graduates from the ASEAN countries that had average scores higher than 550, which includes Singapore and the Philippines. Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia average over 500. Graduates from Thailand had an average score of 500, which is lower than the same degree from Laos. Moreover the ranking of the EFI test (English Proficiency Index) divided into 5 levels of English language skills is very high, high, medium, low and very low, shows that Thailand is among the countries with a very low score, which is lower than Indonesia and Vietnam. This data indicated that Thailand's English skills need to be improved to ensure quality communication with the rest of the ASEAN Community in the next two years.

Meanwhile, for English language skills for communication in Vocational Education in the region, such as Krabi Technical College, the comparison of achievement scores in English for communication in certificate level and diploma level in the first semester of academic year 2012 were analyzed. The data of total number of students

enrolled was 716 students, and results showed that 188 students passed, or just 26%. That 528 students or 74% did not pass is worrisome for the English skills of Vocational students for those students who wish to pursue a career in the ASEAN community in the last few years. Therefore, the question of whether "Management education and manpower development to produce a professional performance towards the ASEAN Community in 2015" will need to find how communication barriers can be reduced.

This research aims to study the context of planning the teaching of Vocational Education in Krabi Technical College for entry into the ASEAN community. It includes the impact of Vocational Education in academics, and participation of all stakeholders in strategic planning in education in academic in order to provide graduates to the challenges of ASEAN.

2. Review Literature and Methodology.

This study consists of a review literature of relevant documents, such as policy management of teaching and learning to support to the ASEAN community of the Office of the Vocational Education Commission, and policies of Krabi Technical College, including academic articles to gather information as the framework for this study.

The scope of the study, is to study the context of Vocational Education planning and management for preparation to enter the ASEAN Community and educational barriers to education, and vocational English skills use. The study collects data from a population in the first semester of academic year 2012 by use of 928 samplings with qualitative research by in-depth interviews with key informants from the theoretical sampling of 20 samples, including administrators, teachers, students, parents and the establishment. After analysis, the academics concluded with a descriptive narrative.

Review Literature of this study is study the theory of Cultural Evolution by Charles Darwin (1809 - 1882) and Alfred Wallace (1823 - 1913), which Darwin and Wallace found that the basic mechanisms of life are two reasons, 1) evolution is linked to biological changes, the result of adaptation to the environment of the living. When the environment is always changing what life would adapt to the environment, and 2) to the survival of their own, so all creatures are to evolve from a simple organic to complex Organic and to have a high survival rate even more that beings to convey traits their ethnic heritage to the next. (Friedl, 1981 : 116)

Theory of Globalizationism in the social sciences is used to explain the reference in matters of politics, war and terrorism in the present. Indeed, Globalizationism is a phenomenon that has occurred since the late 19th century. It became widespread and well known in the late 20th century. Globalizationism started to be studied by social scientists since the 1960s, and has become prevalent and popular among economists since the 1980s. However, the concept of globalizationism is a concept developed to describe the study of several branches of the social sciences.

Globalizationism is used to analyze the study of political science, relating to social change that transcends authority of the state, and state barriers. Changing global trends is not limited to a single state but describes the state phenomenon that links together an international society, connected by communication. Action events that impact the entire world and create cooperation and development can be applied to explain the cause of change in strategy in many different fields, politic, finance, war and terrorism.

3. The obstacles in management education in academic to produce and develop the professional competencies towards the ASEAN Community in 2015.

The barriers to education and vocational skills in the use of English for communication, the study found that;

3.1 Policy management in academics.

Since 2012 the Office of the Vocational Education Commission. These conducted activities to promote preparedness in five respects: 1) raise awareness for students and administrators to understand citizenship in ASEAN and the ASEAN blueprint approach in the vocational provinces, 2) all educational institutions are developing policies to teaching English as a common language of ASEAN and enable the students to communicate. This requires the ability to assess the English language skills of students, especially in the field of tourism and hotel management. One additional language course such as Chinese, Japanese, etc., and support activities for all personnel assigned to the institute in one day a week to use English communication should be instituted, 3) development of teaching materials, and cooperation with enterprises to preparation of textbooks used in teaching, 4) develop competency curriculum by established professional standards in the production capacity of Thailand base and the establishment of professional association and certification, and 5) development of Mini English Programme (MEP) in the academic year 2012 by 32 institutions in all regions of Thailand. But in practice, it is difficult to manage the implementation of the policy, including the ongoing support for teachers, educators, and students to use English in one week or English speaking day, so this policy will be implemented gradually. The academic administrators should focus on budget support for teacher educators to attend the seminars to see both domestic and ASEAN countries which will be the result in them will having the spirit and power of the mind to transfer knowledge for teachers together and including support for the supervision or observation of class regularly.

In addition, there are difficulties as academic administrators are not linked to the involvement of vocational education and English language skills to communicate with those who have the knowledge and abilities in the community. They need to establish the availability of the supply of teachers who use English as a primary language and other languages in the ASEAN countries to participate in planning the budget, manpower, time and a concrete plan for teaching and learning.

3.2 The teachers and educational personnel.

The curriculum for the ASEAN Community, which must use English for communication demands English teachers to communicate to non-education teachers to use English on a daily basis. The results provide an overview of Vocational Education in academics does not meet international standards. The MEP program is a requirement that English teachers have to pass 550 points or more on TOEFL. In the other hand Krabi Technical College does not plan for TOEFL examinations for all teachers, even though some teachers have academic qualifications or knowledge required, and as a result Krabi Technical College may lack personnel to enhance the ability of students in an English Language Institute. These issues that need to be planned and implemented as a continuous process.

3.3 The learners.

Students in Krabi Technical College are not aware about the ASEAN Community because most of them do not understand the curriculum to support ASEAN community with the need to use English in the process of teaching and learning by the MEP programme. The Office of Vocational Education Commission requires that all courses have an integrated Thai language and English with a ratio of 50:50. The students are not sure that if according to the MEP programme, they will not survive as they worry that will be dropping out.

Such information are concerns to the management of Vocational Education in the region in trying to support teaching courses using English as the medium of communication. Learners may have limited communication in English skills because, in fact, the achievement of vocational students to learn English is at a very minimum level, which may affect the dropout rate of students in each class in each semester.

3.4 The parents.

Most parents are concerned that if ASEAN Community has evolved to the level that their son/daughter upon their graduation from Vocational Education may not be competitive in a career in ASEAN Community. If the basic study English skills is not good enough they simply can not compete with the other workers. Moreover, they worry that if academic courses taught using English as the medium of instruction students will be able to finish the course or not, the increased costs for English education will create higher fees, and whether they are able to accept a higher fee or not. Parents are also not sure when their children graduate to work in ASEAN Community whether they can compete fully with other ASEAN graduates.

3.5 The establishment and community.

The establishments and community are concerned that students who graduate from Vocational Education are able to compete in the English skills to pursue a career in ASEAN Community. If the study of the English language skills of students in the Vocational Education and English language skills are not good enough compared to

neighboring countries such as Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, workers from these countries move into the community. Of course, most of those workers with better English skills than Vocational students would have a better chance for employment and this means economic losses for the community.

4. The challenges of Krabi Technical College of Vocational Education in the region within the quality of curriculum planning and teaching in academics preparing for entry into the ASEAN community.

4.1 The academic policy management.

Institutions needs to be integrated into a plan that includes; 1) awareness event for students and administrators to understand citizenship ASEAN community according to the ASEAN Blueprint in Vocational Education, 2) All educational institutions must improve the teaching of English as a common language of ASEAN and enable the students to communicate. It also requires the ability to assess students of English in a concrete and standardized way. In particular, students in the field of tourism, hotels are set to learn another language, such as Chinese, Japanese, etc., and to support the policy of the Ministry of Education requires that all staff in academic to communicate with the English weekly one day, 3) development of teaching materials, English textbooks. Cooperation with enterprises.to in the preparation of textbooks used for learning and teaching, 4) develop competency curriculum based to establish professional standards in the production capacity of communities within the establishment of a professional association and certification and 5) provide English Programme (EP) and Mini English Programme (MEP). In addition, academics have to support the creation of a cooperative network of teaching management courses to cover all ASEAN countries, to exchange teachers and education personnel and learners, to collaborate with a network of management education institutions, human resources in all member States, such as credit transfer and academic cooperation between institutions.



Figure. 2. All students of Krabi Technical College respect to the Thailand flag and sing the Anthem on the morning before the classroom and listen to the information release on the ASEAN Community. (Source; Photography by Kitipong Tepjitara, 24 April 2013)

4.2 The teachers and educational personnel.

Teachers and educational personnel in Krabi Technical College need to accelerate the learning of English language skills. Currently, the development of strategies for teaching English language oriented integration will enhance foreign language aptitude and vocational levels, diploma level, and undergraduate courses are open soon. The improvement the quality of teachers to teaching foreign languages with the help of information technology in teaching and learning English needs to improve. Everyone will have to pass a national test in English before graduating in higher education. Teachers and educational personnel must pass an English test as well and to prepare for occupational education in ASEAN towards a world-class quality.

4.3 The learners.

Krabi Technical College was not bilingual from the start, and no language skills were required before. Therefore, it requires more effort to learn, especially if the students in are various academic levels. It must be difficult and students need to understand the importance of English language in ASEAN. In order to have the ability in listening, speaking, reading, writing, understanding the nuances of the language and including the cognitive, social, economic, political and cultural traditions that all of them can communicate with others in ASEAN. This will help students access knowledge both in the classroom and outside the classroom.



Figure. 3. Students of Department of Building Construction, Krabi Technical College with the pilot project of Bilingual Education (BEBC) and Mini English Programme on 1st semester, academic Year 2013. (Source; Photography by Kitipong Tepjitara, 14 may 2013)



Figure. 4. *The classroom of the Bilingual Education (BEBC) and Mini English Programme on 1st semester, academic Year 2013 of Students of Department of Building Construction, Krabi Technical College. (Source; Photography by Kitipong Tepjitara, 14 may 2013)*

4.4 The parents.

The parents need to participate in education in academics and understand the dynamics of the ASEAN Community, with awareness and mutual understanding of the importance of English language in ASEAN which every student must learn. In order to have the ability in listening, speaking, reading, writing, understanding the nuances of language, cognitive, social, economic, political and cultural traditions. In addition, parents need to understand that in teaching courses like MEP programme, parents need to share the burden of paying higher tuition fees. This will be required to bear the cost of hiring foreign teachers for English and other languages in the region according to integrated teaching of bilingualism.

4.5 The establishment and community.

The establishments and community should be involved in the push for Vocational students, which is regarded as being a large labor force to enter the labor market in the future with the participation of Vocational Education Institutions in the region with the curriculum to support ASEAN community. In addition, the role of the establishment in the community is important to brainstorm on education in developing capacity for the production and development of learners with quality ,and in accordance with professional standards of each line by participating in the development of the labor force in many aspects such as the development of the knowledge and competencies consistent with the structure of production. And a knowledge-based and creative economy development of agricultural workers by the education system to create a new generation of farmers is

linked to the industry, and preparation of the National Qualifications framework by creating a link between the qualifications levels of learning with professional qualifications as the ability to meet the needs of people that are comparable with international standards.

5. Conclusions.

English communication is consistent with the ASEAN Charter Article 34, which states that "The Working language of ASEAN shall be English". To prepare to step into the ASEAN community there are challenges of College Town in Vocational Education and training in the region to support ASEAN community teaching quality. Krabi Technical College need to be aware of the mission of integrated management education Teachers and the students, parents and educational establishments need to participate in management education using English as the medium of the first stage. In addition, the expansion of education in the gradual integration of ASEAN languages is required, including the schedule of educational measurement and evaluation of such a system and standards. The planning of the curriculum of Vocational Education at Krabi Technical College needs to support the development of the ASEAN community, and adjusting the learning paradigm of modern Vocational Education by defining graduate attributes that are desirable in ASEAN. These consist of 1) the skills and capabilities of English and the language of the neighboring countries in ASEAN, 2) knowledge about the neighbors both in culture and history, 3) all sectors to track information about the region and learn about the rules and regulations of the ASEAN, 4) develop skills to adapt to international working standards , 5) develop the ability to use information technology, 6) develop the paradigm of learning , and 7) ability to work with others especially working with people of different cultures. The conclusion of this study is a management approach to ASEAN and quality challenges in the future.

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