

## Needs Analysis of Teacher Candidates for TOEIC Preparation Short-Course Instruction at Buriram Rajabhat University

**Pallapa Lertcharoenwanich<sup>1</sup>**

**Purisa Watcharenwong<sup>3</sup>**

**Puttachart Limsiriruengrai<sup>2</sup>**

**Chaleomkiet Yenphech<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, Business English Program, Buriram Rajabhat University, Thailand  
E-mail: pallapa.lert@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer, Business English Program, Buriram Rajabhat University, Thailand  
E-mail: khruuthai@yahoo.com

<sup>3</sup>Lecturer, English Program, Buriram Rajabhat University, Thailand  
E-mail: purisa.wat@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup>Lecturer, English Program, Buriram Rajabhat University, Thailand  
E-mail: chaleomkiet.y.p@bru.ac.th

### Abstract

The purpose of this research was to analyze the needs of teacher candidates for Test of English for International Communication or TOEIC preparation short-course instruction at Buriram Rajabhat University Language Center (BRULC). The sample group included 32 eligible teacher candidates under an initiative recruited teachers to work in their hometowns in 2017. The samples were also BRU alumni from 10 programs of Faculty of Education: Thai, English, Early Childhood Education, Social Studies, Math, Physics, General Sciences, Physical Education, Music and Thai Dramatic Arts. They were selected by using a purposive sampling method. The research instruments were composed of a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Statistics utilized in data analysis were percentage, mean, Standard Deviation, and content analysis.

The results showed that most of the samples were females (71.9%) and most of them were from Social Studies program (18.8%). The samples opined that they needed the instruction in terms of instructional materials at the highest level (4.79), followed by teachers (4.60), and content of the course (4.55), respectively. In terms of instructional materials, most of the samples viewed that they needed exercises and practice tests the most. Regarding the teachers aspect, most of them needed the teachers who experienced taking the TOEIC before and the teachers must be able to teach strategies to take the TOEIC in

each part. Concerning the content of the course, most of the samples viewed that they needed strategies as well as techniques in taking the TOEIC. It was suggested that the vocabulary, strategies and techniques in taking the TOEIC including tips for time management must be focused on and mainly taught in the course. In addition, the TOEIC preparation course must be organized by the BRULC continuously for the benefits of the test takers who needed the TOEIC score.

**Keywords:** needs analysis, TOEIC, preparation, short-course instruction

## 1. Introduction

English is a global language. It is a tool for communicating among people around the world since it is spoken by a quarter of the world's population (The English Effect, 2013) as native, second or foreign language. From a survey of the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2012, it was found that nearly 70 percent of executives said that their workforce will need to master English and 50 percent of their total workforce will need English ability (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2012). This is in line with requirement of the Office of Higher Education Commission (OHEC) that the teacher candidates under the "Teachers for Their Hometowns" project must have Test of English for International Communication or TOEIC score at least 400 out of 990 (Audjarint, 2017). This project seeks to recruit final-year education students to fill in teacher positions at their hometown schools. Since English is vital and made compulsory by Ministry of Education, the candidates must achieve the TOEIC scores or other relevant scores such as 3.5 of 9 for International English Language Testing System or IELTS; or 40 out of 120 for the Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet-Based Test, or TOEFL iBT (Mokkhasen, 2017). Even though, there were some arguments over the necessity of the English proficiency score required on social media about teacher candidates calling for lower English language requirements such as they have planned to urge OHEC to lower minimum TOEIC score to just 250, the OHEC Secretary General Supat Jampathong stated that the requirements will remain the same since this test (TOEIC) is meant to select capable teachers into the educational system (Audjarint, 2017; Mokkhasen, 2017).

Buriram Rajabhat University Language Center is one of the sections in Buriram Rajabhat University with one of its missions is to organize trainings to the BRU students and personnel as well as people in the local area because BRU is a public institute for local community. The needs for getting the required score of TOEIC came to the attention of the researchers who are lecturers of English and Business English programs. And, the organization of TOEIC preparation short-course was requested by the teacher candidates who are also BRU alumni. Therefore, the research on needs analysis of teacher

candidates for Test of English for International Communication or TOEIC preparation short-course instruction at Buriram Rajabhat University Language Center was conducted to investigate the real needs of the teacher candidates for the instruction they wanted. Due to the time constraint, the teacher candidates only had 2 months left before submitting their English language proficiency scores on October 1, 2017 resulted in the urge in finding the most effective instruction that meets with their needs since a comprehensive needs analysis is the absolutely crucial step to be taken by the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) practitioners who wish to design the course that will be beneficial to their learners at the maximum level (Wright, 2001). The research results will be very useful for designing TOEIC preparation short-course and assist the teacher candidates to meet the requirement of English proficiency.

It was noted that needs analysis on TOEIC was conducted by Anuyahong (2012) before this current study was done. His study on “Needs Analysis of English Reading Instructional Model to Enhance Proficiency in TOEIC Test Taking of Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology Students” aimed 1) to study the needs for English reading instructional model to enhance ability in TOEIC test taking for Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in four aspects: teaching method, teaching-learning materials, instructional management, and English reading strategies, and 2) to compare students’ needs on those aspects according to genders, ages, majors, levels, and 3) to gather supplementary suggestions. The samples used in his research were 389 undergraduate students in academic year 2011, selected by using stratified sampling method. The rating-scale and open-ended questionnaire was also used. Frequency, percentage, mean, Standard Deviation, t-test, F-test, and content analysis were employed in data analysis. The results showed that the main findings of this study showed that needs for the model as a whole was at high level. As for each aspect, it was found that their needs were at high level on teaching method, teaching-learning materials, instructional management, and English reading strategies. The samples had supplementary suggestions included to teach more vocabulary and techniques in learning vocabulary and should teach from basic to difficult level on teaching method, to have various supplementary reading materials on teaching-learning materials; to organize TOEIC class more than one time per week and the class should not be too serious on instructional management, and to emphasize reading strategies technique for finding main ideas on English reading strategies. His focus was on the reading instructional model for enhancing the English proficiency score of the students. However, no research on the current title has been conducted before.

## **2. Research Objective**

The objective of this research was to analyze the needs of teacher candidates for Test of English for International Communication or TOEIC

preparation short-course instruction at Buriram Rajabhat University Language Center in order to prepare the teacher candidates to take the test. Due to the time constraint, the teacher candidates only had 2 months (August-September, 2017) left before submitting their English language proficiency scores on October 1, 2017 resulted in the urge in finding the most effective instruction that meets with the needs of these teacher candidates. In addition, TOEIC is Test of English for International Communication. TOEIC test questions are based on real-life work settings in an international environment (meetings, travel, telephone conversations, so on). The teacher candidates must achieve the TOEIC scores of 400 out of 990.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Samples**

The samples were composed of 32 eligible teacher candidates under an initiative recruited teachers to work in their hometowns in 2017. The samples were purposively chosen because of the following reasons: 1) they are eligible teacher candidates who needed their English language proficiency scores of 400 out of 990 for TOEIC in order to finally secure a teaching job in their hometown. 2) They are BRU alumni from Faculty of Education. And 3) they signed up for the TOEIC short-course of BRULC. They were in 23-25 year old range from both genders and their current English proficiency level were in Memorized Proficiency (185-250) level and Elementary Proficiency level (255-400).

#### **3.2 Research Instruments**

Two research tools were employed in this study: a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: the first part focused on their personal information: genders and programs; the second part was about their opinions on the needs for TOEIC short-course instruction of BRULC (30 items); and the third part was about their other suggestions. The questionnaire was developed by the researchers through the study of related documents including related research studies. The researchers analyzed and synthesized the documents in order to write up a framework and draft the questionnaire. Three sets of the draft questionnaire were sent to three experts to examine for the appropriateness of the content, language used, and validity. And the Index of Item-Objective Congruence or IOC scores were given from the experts. Then the overall IOC was calculated and it was in the range of 0.67-1.00 which means the questionnaire could be used. Then the questionnaire was developed according to the suggestions of the experts. Later, 30 sets of the questionnaire were used in a try-out with 30 fifth year students from Faculty of Education. The results gained from the try-out were used to develop the questionnaire before using it with the sample group.

Regarding the semi-structured interviews, the samples were asked about their opinions on the needs for TOEIC short-course instruction of BRULC; and their suggestions on TOEIC short-course instruction of BRULC. The semi-structured interview form was developed via the study of the secondary sources such as related documents including related research studies. The documents were analyzed and synthesized in order to draw up a framework and draft the semi-structured interview form. Three sets of the draft semi-structured interview form were sent to three experts to check the appropriateness of the content, language used, and validity. And the Index of Item-Objective Congruence or IOC scores were given from the experts. Then the overall IOC was calculated and it was in the range of 0.67-1.00 which means the form could be utilized. Then the form was developed according to the suggestions of the experts. Later, 10 sets of the form were used in a try-out interview with 10 fifth year students from Faculty of Education. The results gained from the try-out interview were employed to develop the form before using it with the sample group.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The 32 questionnaire sets were distributed to the samples. The researchers collected the data by themselves right after the samples signed up for the TOEIC short-course at BRULC. For the semi-structured interviews, 10 representatives from the sample group were purposively selected as the research interviewees. It was noted that these tools constructed by the researchers were examined by three experts for their content validity approvals. In addition, the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) of the tools were between 0.67 and 1.00.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The data derived from the responses of the questionnaire part 1 and 2 were computed by using percentage, mean, Standard Deviation while the data obtained from the responses of the questionnaire part 3 and the responses of the interviewees in the semi-structured interviews were analyzed by using content analysis and descriptively presented.

## **4. Research Results**

The following results were presented in line with the research objective:

### **4.1 Personal Information of the samples**

The result representing the personal information of the samples was shown in Table 1.

**Table 1** Personal information of the samples

No.	Personal Information	Frequency (n=32)	Percentage (%)
1	Genders		
	Male	9	28.1
	Female	23	71.9
2	Programs		
	Thai	4	12.5
	English	2	6.3
	Early Childhood Education	2	6.3
	Social Studies	6	18.8
	Math	3	9.4
	Physics	2	6.3
	General Sciences	2	6.3
	Physical Education	2	6.3
	Music	4	12.5
	Thai Dramatic Arts	5	15.6

Table 1 revealed that out of 32 samples, the number of females (71.9%) was much greater than that of males (28.1%). The major samples were from Social Studies program (18.8%).

#### 4.2 Their needs for TOEIC short-course instruction at Buriram Rajabhat University Language Center (BRULC)

**Table 2** Teachers needed by the samples

No.	Teachers needed	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1	Teachers who can help to set the goals in learning.	4.53	0.67
2	Teachers who understand areas needed to be improved of the students for helping the students to get higher scores	4.59	0.67
3	Teachers who can design effective course and can manage the time properly	4.47	0.72
4	Teachers who experienced in taking TOEIC that can help the students to fulfill their goals	4.69	0.59
5	Teachers who can teach strategies in taking TOEIC in each part	4.69	0.59
6	Teachers who can guide and support the students in developing their skills in taking TOEIC inside and outside the training room	4.63	0.61
	Total	4.60	0.51



From Table 2, it showed that their needs for teachers who can teach in this TOEIC short-course at the highest level included the teachers who experienced in taking TOEIC that can help the students to fulfill their goals (4.69) and the teachers who can teach strategies in taking TOEIC in each part (4.69), followed by the needs for the teachers who can guide and support the students in developing their skills in taking TOEIC inside and outside the training room (4.63), and the teachers who understand areas needed to be improved of the students for helping the students to get higher scores (4.59), respectively.

**Table 3** Content of the course needed by the samples

No.	Content of the course needed	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1	Background and significance of TOEIC	4.25	1.02
2	Structures, parts, items of TOEIC and time in taking the TOEIC	4.50	0.76
3	Explanations on each level of TOEIC score	4.31	0.82
4	Patterns, directions, and types of questions used in each part of TOEIC	4.44	0.62
5	Time management in each part of TOEIC	4.38	0.79
6	English grammar	4.66	0.55
7	English listening strategies	4.69	0.59
8	English reading strategies	4.75	0.51
9	Strategies and techniques in taking TOEIC	4.78	0.49
10	Vocabulary frequently found in TOEIC	4.72	0.52
	Total	4.55	0.51

From Table 3, the content of the TOEIC course that the samples needed at the highest level was strategies and techniques in taking TOEIC (4.78), followed by English reading strategies (4.75) and vocabulary frequently found in TOEIC (4.72), respectively.

**Table 4** Learning and instructional activities needed by the samples

No.	Learning and instructional activities needed	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1	Individual work	3.16	1.14
2	Pair-work	3.38	1.26
3	Team/group work	3.50	1.32
4	Doing knowledge sharing between students	3.78	1.18
5	TOEIC quiz contest	3.13	1.21
6	Homework	3.19	1.26
7	Taking tests frequently and analyzing a lot of test questions	4.34	1.12
8	Doing repetitions and drills for reviewing	4.41	0.76
	Total	3.61	0.82

From Table 4, it was found that most of the samples needed the learning and instructional activities by doing repetitions and drills for reviewing at the high level (4.41), followed by taking tests frequently and analyzing a lot of test questions (4.34), and doing knowledge sharing between students (3.78), respectively.

**Table 5** Instructional materials needed by the samples

No.	Instructional materials needed	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1	Handouts	4.81	0.40
2	Exercises and practice tests	4.84	0.37
3	Up-to-date instructional materials such as apps or websites	4.72	0.52
	Total	4.79	0.39

From Table 5, it showed that exercises and practice tests were the instructional materials that needed by the samples at the highest level (4.84), followed by the needs for handouts (4.81), and up-to-date instructional materials such as apps or websites were needed at the lowest level from these three choices (4.72).



**Table 6** Measurement and assessment needed by the samples

No.	Measurement and assessment needed	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1	Pre-test and Post-test	4.66	0.55
2	Quizzes to assess the progress in each day	4.47	0.67
3	Frequent test score reports	4.31	0.74
	Total	4.48	0.51

From Table 6, it revealed that measurement and assessment that the samples needed at the highest level included pre-test and post-test (4.66), followed by quizzes to assess the progress in each day (4.47), and frequent test score reports (4.31), respectively.

## 5. Discussion

The following points based on the research results were discussed:

5.1 The teacher candidates needed the instruction in terms of instructional materials at the highest level. This is because the exercises and the practice tests have been used in the TOEIC preparation courses to be a benchmark for their progress. By taking the practice tests as much as they could, they would know themselves if they were ready for the sit-test in Bangkok or taking the test in other places that provided TOEIC or not. It is necessary for them to have the exercises and practice tests in hand to practice and review. This is in line with Trew (2007), he stated that when selecting appropriate materials for TOEIC, the student needs must be considered: teachers must use the needs of the students to be a shopping list when choosing the materials or content or textbook for the students because these are factors that will play a part in the students' success and it was suggested that the teachers must fill in any missing element where needed by themselves. This means that if the teachers observed that some things needed to be taught but the students did not choose them in the needs analysis. The teachers can provide those elements promptly. And taking the students' needs into account when designing the course will leave lots of advantages to the students which in accordance with Write (2001) that a comprehensive needs analysis is the absolutely crucial step to be taken by the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) practitioners who wish to design the course that will be beneficial to their learners at the maximum level.

5.2 The teachers' aspect was needed following instructional materials aspect. However, the expectations towards the teachers were also high because the samples needed the teachers who experienced taking the TOEIC before and the teachers must be able to teach strategies to take the TOEIC in each part. From the interviews with the selected 10 samples, it was found that the interviewees needed the teachers who used to take the TOEIC. They preferred the teachers with the TOEIC score higher than 800 out of 990. It was believed

that the teachers with the high score have seen the tests many times or have the strategies and techniques in taking the TOEIC to teach and share. In addition, they opined that they have limited time to prepare themselves for taking the TOEIC. So, they needed experts in this field. This is in line with the study of Tokunaga (2007) entitled “Students’ Assumptions for TOEIC Classes” that the 92% from 217 students agreed or strongly agreed that the Japanese teachers who teach TOEIC should have experience in taking TOEIC. Some of the reasons regarding this issue were listed as follows: 1) if the teacher has no experience taking the test, the students cannot ask questions with confidence. Also the teacher cannot teach with confidence. 2) TOEIC requires some techniques, so the teachers need to know the techniques from their experience. 3) It is not right to teach something you have never experienced. 4) Teachers without experiences lack conviction. 5) Knowledge alone cannot prepare students for the test, so the teachers need experience. 6) Learning TOEIC from the teacher who has never taken TOEIC is like learning about architect from somebody who is not an architect. 7) Teacher should not teach something they are not sure of. That would make students nervous. And 8) it is meaningless to learn from somebody who does not know TOEIC.

5.3 The needs on content included the needs for strategies and techniques in taking the TOEIC came at the third place from the list. The proper materials combined with the proper teachers who have experiences taking the TOEIC with the high score were not enough. They still needed strategies and techniques. Moreover, because of the time limitation in taking the test, the time in each part must be divided and managed wisely. The techniques in test-taking time management were requested by the samples. Some of the interviewees even stated that they needed to be able to see the structures of the questions or sentences in the TOEIC such as in “Incomplete Sentences” part and be able to choose the correct choice. Therefore, the appropriate techniques to do this must be taught. This is in accordance with Bundit Anuyahong (2012) in his study on “the Needs Analysis of English Reading Instructional Model to Enhance Proficiency in TOEIC Test Taking of Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology Students” that the samples suggested that more vocabulary and techniques in learning vocabulary should be taught, various supplementary reading materials should be provided, and reading strategies technique for finding main ideas should be emphasized.

5.4 It was suggested that the TOEIC preparation course must be continuously organized by the BRULC for the benefits of the test takers who needed the TOEIC score. Since English is vital and made compulsory and the English proficiency score is not less important than English itself. Even though, there were some controversies on social media but the OHEC Secretary General Supat Jampathong still made it clear that the requirements will remain the same because the test is meant to select capable teachers into

the educational system (Audjarint, 2017; Mokkhasen, 2017). Therefore, the continuation of the organization of TOEIC preparation courses must be conducted.

## **6. Conclusion**

This research focused on the analysis of needs of teacher candidates for Test of English for International Communication or TOEIC preparation short-course instruction at Buriram Rajabhat University Language Center (BRULC). The sample group included 32 eligible teacher candidates from 10 programs from Faculty of Education who selected by using a purposive sampling method. A questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used in data collection. Percentage, mean, Standard Deviation, and content analysis were employed in data analysis. Mainly the proper instructional materials such as exercises and practice tests, teachers who experienced taking the TOEIC and know how to teach strategies, techniques, and tips for test taking time management were needed by the samples who were the teacher candidates. By organizing TOEIC preparation course at the BRULC that meets with the needs of the test takers frequently will offer the maximum benefits to the test takers who needed the TOEIC score.

## **7. Recommendations**

The following are some recommendations based on the research results:

7.1 TOEIC preparation short-course for the teacher candidates should be organized based on the results of this research.

7.2 The needs analysis on the topics used in the instructional materials in TOEIC preparation short-course should be examined in details. So, the students will get the most benefit out of the instructional materials.

7.3 A 30-hours TOEIC preparation course should be organized for them.

7.4 The results from the study can be utilized with other groups with the same nature in organizing the TOEIC preparation short-course.

7.5 Further studies on needs analysis on TOEIC preparation short-course instruction for different groups of students should be conducted, and the focus-group discussion and observation should also be applied in the research methodology.

## References

- Anuyahong, B. (2012). *Needs Analysis of English Reading Instructional Model to Enhance Proficiency in TOEIC Test Taking of Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology Students*. Proceedings of The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Conference on Applied Arts: NCAA 2012. pp. 44-57.
- Audjarint, W. (2017). *Little Sympathy for Teachers' English Test Gripes*. Retrieved from <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/news/national/30320094> on 15 December 2017.
- Mokkhasen, S. (2017). *Teacher Candidates Demand English Requirements Be Reduced*. Retrieved from <http://www.khaosodenglish.com/culture/net/2017/07/06/teacher-candidates-demand-english-requirements-reduced/> on 15 December 2017.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit. (2012). Retrieved from [http://www.eiu.com/landing/special\\_reports](http://www.eiu.com/landing/special_reports) on December 2017.
- The English Effect. (2013). Retrieved from <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/english-effect-report-v2.pdf> on 15 December 2017.
- Tokunaga, M. (2007). *Students' Assumptions for TOEIC Classes*. Proceedings of JALT 2007 Conference. pp. 257-271.
- Trew, G. (2007). *A Teacher's Guide to TOEIC: Listening and Reading Test Preparing Your Students for Success*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wright, C. (2001). *The Benefits of ESP*. Retrieved from [www.camlang.com/art001.htm](http://www.camlang.com/art001.htm) on 15 December 2017