

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF A NEW JUNIOR GUIDE CAMP MODEL FOR DEVELOPING 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS' ENGLISH-SPEAKING SKILLS\*

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## Abstract

This research and development on teaching innovations aimed to compare the English language performance of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students using a junior guide camp between groups of students. In the first semester of the 2022 academic school year, 36 ninth-grade students at Niyomsilpanusorn School in Wichian Buri District, Phetchabun Province, Thailand, participated in this study. The purposive sampling technique was used in this study. The whole class of 36 students are selected by considering their underperformed English learning outcomes in the previous semester. Then, all participants were divided into an experimental group and a control group. The research tools were a tour guide speaking test and a junior guide camp teaching pack. In addition, independent sample t-tests were used to analyze the data. Finally, the comparison of the English learning

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outcomes between the experimental group and the control group was statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

**Keywords:** Speaking Skills, English Camp, New Model, Junior Guide

## Introduction

English is seen as vital and crucial for Thailand's youth, especially for developing the communication skills needed for higher education and future careers such as tour guides, flight attendants, language teachers, and etc. You can use it for business-to-business communication, commerce, or personal dealings. However, these young children continue to lack of assertiveness, which is possibly due to teaching techniques that emphasize different grammar skills, an unfavorable environment, the lack of foreign professors at the school, or even a lack of suitable examples and motivation. According to a study on the barriers to the development of students' speaking skills include a large number of students in each class, a lack of trained teachers, limited time to study English, and over-focus on grammar. As the result, the students' attempts to practice and improve their speaking skills were in vain, and they were unable to improve (Adisa Benjarattananon, 2009).

In English class, activities such as games, songs, role plays, and other fun exercises can help students improve their English skills. Teachers who incorporate these activities can motivate students to learn more English. English camps are designed to improve the communication skills of young students. Through a variety of engaging activities, English camps provide opportunities for students to practice their English in real-life situations, help one another, and share experiences. According to studies, English camps transform the classroom learning environment by integrating listening, speaking, reading, writing, and cognitive skills and providing a fun atmosphere for students to use English. These activities inspire students to learn the language while also helping them gain



confidence in using it (Arin Sa-idi and Suraiya Sulaiman, 2008). Furthermore, a study found that students' listening and speaking skills improved significantly after attending an English camp (Niracha Klinsorn, Neti Chaloeuywares, and Pratoom Sriraksa, 2017). Another study showed that English camps can improve students' academic achievement by up to 57.91% (Farida Kittivirote, Nuroa Yaseng, Detdanai Juychum, Kamiliya Hayeehasa, and Sulaiman Smahae, 2017). Therefore, English camps are an efficient strategy for learning English, as they increase learners' understanding of English proficiency, develop a positive attitude, and encourage students to study together for communication and social skills.

One of the most popular and successful strategies for teachers to improve their students' communicative English skills is organizing English camps. Activities at the camp aim to improve English language acquisition by integrating all four skills, particularly speaking skills in real-life situations, as well as improving vocabulary, sentence structures, pronunciation, and cognitive skills in a relaxed environment. The camp also encourages students to practice their English skills through activities that promote interaction between teachers and students and create a positive attitude towards English learning (Prathana Padungpote, 2017). Good English camp management requires the following elements: camp principles, camp goals, target audience, duration, camp organization, content and activities, camp media, and measurement and evaluation. These are the elements that ensure the success of the camp activity. According to the findings of one research, the students' speaking skills were much higher than the measurement before the training at the .05 level (Kanokwan Kunlasuth, Khacheenuj Chaovanapricha, Jakkrit Wutthisivachardkul and Nutthaporn Owatnupat, 2019). There was another discovery that almost all students' opinions about learning English improved after the camp. The result indicated that the students had more positive attitudes towards the language (Arin Sa-idi and



Suraiya Sulaiman, 2008). There was another finding that after participating in English camp activities, there were three positive results which can be described as follows: they were motivated to learn, their vocabulary skills increased, and they learned through interactions at English camp. As a result, knowledge of English camp management best practices can help the teachers achieve their goals (Kanokwan Kunlasuth, Khacheenuj Chaovanapricha, Jakkrit Wutthisivachardkul and Nutthaporn Owatnupat, 2019). According to camp organization, organizing English camp activities with proper planning and design will help to effectively develop campers' English skills, stimulate campers to build confidence in English communication, develop learners to be proficient in applying knowledge to educational institutions, and earn a good experience in the future (Panachanok Chanwaiwit, 2016).

In conclusion, the researchers conducting the study are interested in comparing the development of English language skills among 9th grade students from Niyomsilpanusorn School, located in Wichian Buri District of Phetchabun Province, through Junior Guide Camp activities. The English camp is an effective approach to improve students' English skills, make the learning experience enjoyable, and inspire them to learn more about the language. Proficiency in English can increase students' confidence in conversation, making the English camp a valuable tool to guide them towards higher education and future job opportunities, as well as to improve their attitude towards the language.

### **Research Objective**

To compare the learning achievements in English speaking of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students through junior Guide Camp activities between the experimental group and the control group.



## Research Methodology

### Population and Samples

The population used in this research was 280 of 9th grade students from 7 classes at Niyomsilpanusorn School, Wichian Buri District, Phetchabun Province, in the first semester of the 2022 academic year (Roobkaew, 2022) students in English – Arts from class 6 were chosen as the samples by considering their previous semester's poor learning outcomes in English.

### Instrument (s) and Procedures

1. There are four learning plans for junior guide activities. Each plan lasts 50 minutes and consists of 1) main themes, 2) content, 3) learning objectives, 4) teaching activities, 5) teaching materials, and 6) measurement and evaluation.

2. There are four themed rotations of the junior tour guide: Rotation 1 : Hok Pip Grilled Chicken, Rotation 2 : Khob Tamarind, Rotation 3 : Muang Thip (non-existent city), and Rotation 4 : Thung Thong Phayongdet Field. According to the guide steps, the participants learned and practice step by step, and then they and the researcher demonstrated roleplays before the measurement and evaluation with the English Camp rubric.

3. An English camp rubric to measure the participant's ability within 5-7 minutes consists of 1) Pronunciation, 2) Confidence, 3) Dealing with Facing Problems, and 4) Gestures.

### Data Collection

1. Ice-breaking and check the participants' knowledge background and speaking ability.

2. Teach, train, and practice the participants through the four themed camp rotations: Rotation 1 : Hok Pip Grilled chicken, Rotation 2 : Khob Tamarind, Rotation 3 : Muang Thip (non-existent city), and Rotation 4 : Thung Thong Phayongdet Field



3. Assess the participants' knowledge and understanding after each rotation and the rotation exercise.

4. Evaluate the participants' speaking ability through junior Guide Camp activities with the rubric on pronunciation, confidence, dealing with facing problems, and gestures.

#### Data Analysis

1. There are four learning plans, the guidebook of four themed rotations, and the English camp rubric were checked the Index of Item-Objective Congruence or IOC by 3 experts.

2. The results of the Tour Guide Speaking Test of each participant were assessed by 3 assessors (inter-rater reliability, or IRR).

3. The results of the learning achievements in English speaking were analyzed through frequency and percentage.

4. The results of the learning achievements in English speaking between experimental and control groups were compared through independent samples t-test.

#### Conceptual Framework

From the reviews of the literature and related documents, the researcher defines the research conceptual framework as shown on Fig. 1.

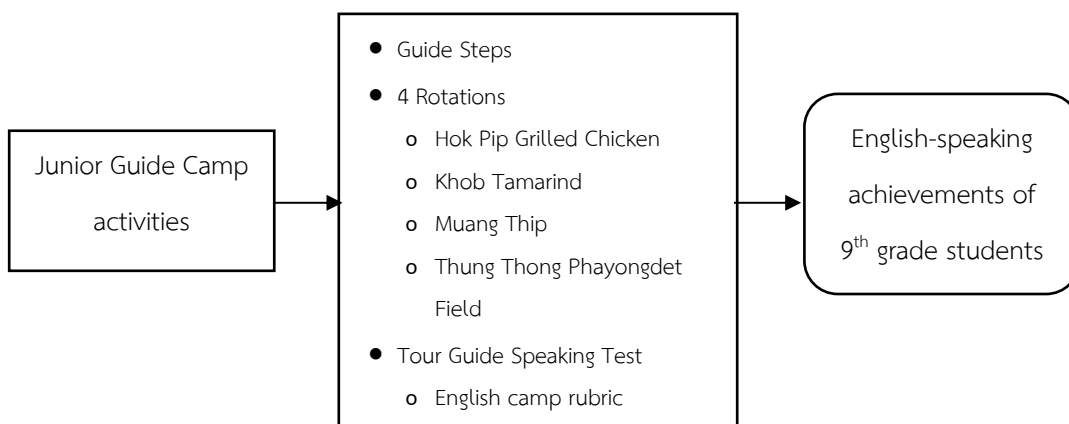


Fig.1 Conceptual Framework



## Research Results

Following data collection, the results were analyzed and presented in accordance with the following figures and tables:

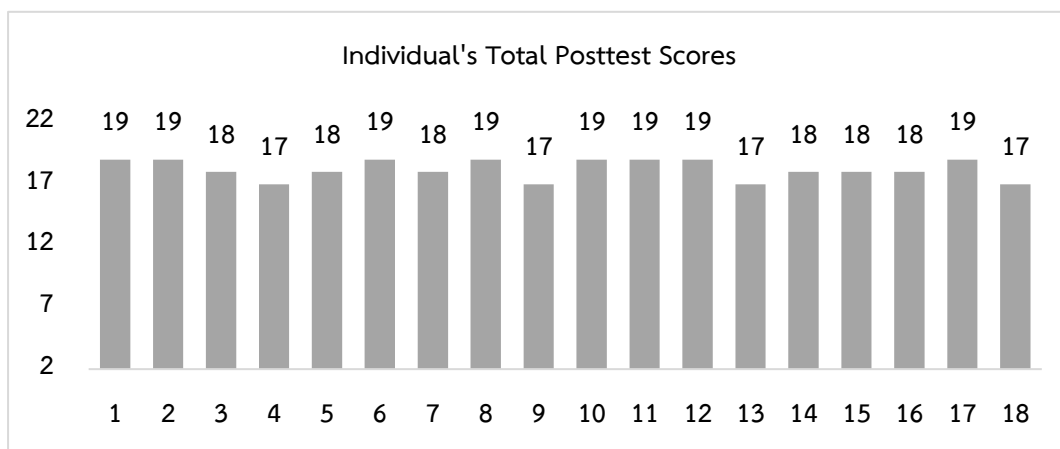


Fig. 2 The Total Posttest Score of Each Sample in the Experimental Group

From Fig. 2, the experimental group of 18 students received scores ranging from 17 to 19 out of the full score of 20. The total score was 328, which was 91.11 percent of the full score of 360.

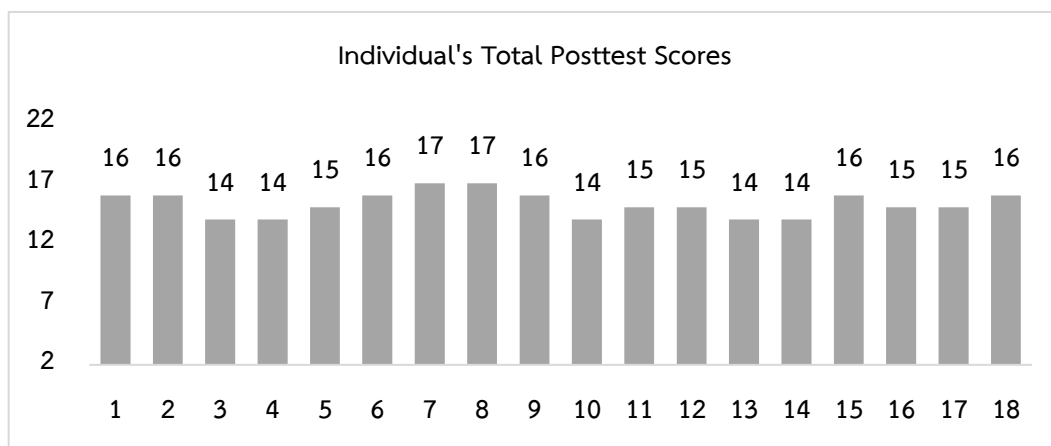


Fig. 3 The Total Posttest Score of Each Sample in the Control Group



From Fig. 3, the control group of 18 students received scores ranging from 14 to 17 out of the full score of 20. The total score was 275, which was 76.39 percent of the full score of 360.

**Table 1** A Comparison between the Experimental Group and the Control Group

Group	Subjects	M	SD	t	P
Experimental	18	18.22	.191	9.611	.000
Control	18	15.28	.240		

Note: M= mean; SD = standard deviation; t = t-test; P = significance

According to Table 1, the experimental group of 18 students had a mean score of 18.22 and a standard error of .191, while the control group had a mean score of 15.28 and a standard error of .240. As for the comparison of the learning achievement in English speaking skills development through junior guide camp activities for grade 3 students between the experimental group and the control group, there was a statistically significant difference at .05 (t 9.611 Sig. .000).

**Table 2** A Comparison of Each Aspect between the Experimental Group and the Control Group through Levels

Aspects	Experimental		Level	Control Group		Level
	Group					
	M	SD		M	SD	
Pronunciation	5.00	.000	Excellent	3.78	.428	Good
Confidence	4.56	.511	Excellent	4.22	.548	Good
Dealing with Facing Problems	3.94	.236	Good	3.22	.428	Good
Gestures	4.72	.461	Excellent	4.06	.416	Good
Total	4.56	.202	Excellent	3.82	.254	Good

Note: M= mean; SD = standard deviation





According to Table 2, the experimental group's mean scores of all four aspects were higher than the control group's ( $M = 4.56$ ,  $S.D. = .202$ ). When the skills were classified by aspect, it was discovered that the mean scores in the three skills, namely pronunciation, confidence, and gestures, were higher in the experimental group than in the control group ( $M > 4.51$ ), whereas the experimental group and the control group had the same problem-solving skills ( $M = 3.51-4.50$ ).

**Table 3** A Comparison of Each Aspect between the Experimental Group and the Control Group through t-test and P

Aspects	Group	M	SD	t	P
Pronunciation	Experimental	5.00	.000	12.121	.000
	Control	3.78	.428		
Confidence	Experimental	4.56	.511	1.886	.000
	Control	4.22	.548		
Dealing with Facing Problems	Experimental	3.94	.236	6.273	.000
	Control	3.22	.428		
Gestures	Experimental	4.72	.461	4.555	.000
	Control	4.06	.416		
Total	Experimental	4.56	.202	9.611	.000
	Control	3.82	.254		

Note: M=mean; SD = standard deviation, t = t-test, P = significance

Table 3 shows that the experimental group outperformed the control group in all four aspects of English-speaking skills acquired through tour guide camp activities at a statistically significant level of .05. Considering the levels of differences from highest to lowest in average, the experimental group's



pronunciation level was highest in average; meanwhile, the levels of dealing with facing problems, gestures, and confidence were subsequent, respectively.

## Discussions

According to the hypothesis, a comparison of learning outcomes in developing English skills through Junior Guide Camp activities for 9th grade students between the experimental group and the control group revealed that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.05. When comparing individual aspects, there was a clear difference between the experimental group and the control group. Aspect 1: Pronunciation – it was found that the control group received 68 points (75.56%) out of a possible 90 points, while the experimental group received 90 points (100%) out of a possible 90 points. Because the researcher had the experimental group's pronunciation practiced over and over again, there was a difference of 24.44%. In each rotation activity, participants learned how to pronounce words using graphics on slides. After the activities of the Junior Guide Camp, all participants in the experimental group achieved extremely good grades and met the researchers' evaluation criteria (inter-rater reliability, IRR). Aspect 2: Confidence – it was found that the control group received 76 points (84.44%) out of a possible 90 points, while the experimental group received 82 points (91.11%) out of a possible 90 points, a difference of 6.67%. Since the researchers recognized that the experimental group was shy and lacked confidence before engaging in the activities in the junior leader camp, the researchers prepared an ice-breaking activity to make them more relaxed and confident. This supports the idea that using games, songs, and other recreational activities can help learners relax and gain confidence to learn and apply language effortlessly (Aris Sa-idi and Suraiya Sulaiman, 2008). Positive learning outcomes were enhanced when learners gain confidence and feel involved in the activities. Aspect 3: Dealing with Facing Problems – it was found that the control group received 58 points (64.44%) out of a possible 90 points, while the experimental



group received 71 points (78.89%), the range of difference was 14.45%. In fact, the experimental group had practiced understanding unseen situations due to the possibilities, experiences, or occurrences of the tour, such as tourists not paying attention, tourists getting lost in tourist groups, asking for help in case of an accident, answering questions for tourists, and so on. The experimental group learned commands or phrases to get tourists' attention, such as "Sorry," when they lost concentration, or "May I have everyone's attention, please?" To warn of an impending collision, they said, "Please watch your steps." To inquire about some tour member's symptoms, they say, "Are you okay?" or "How do you feel?" To explain the ban on attractions, especially when there are no signs or only Thai text, they said, "Sorry, you cannot touch it," or "Sorry, photography is not allowed in this place," for example. Aspect 4: Gestures – it was found that the control group received 73 points (81.11%) out of a possible 90 points, while the experimental group received 85 points (94.45%) out of a possible 90 points, a difference of 13.34%. Because prior to participating in the activity, the experimental group also used inappropriate postures to act as signposts, such as pointing fingers at other things, laying on hands while standing, sitting with legs apart, and walking with excessively swinging arms, all of which were considered impolite, the researchers then taught the experimental group appropriate gesture skills, such as using hand gestures instead of finger pointing, putting her hands on her buckle while standing, sitting with her legs closed, and organically composing and strolling, which is a more polite movement.

### Knowledge from Research

According to the research on "A Comparative Study of a New Junior Guide Camp Model for Developing 9th Grade Students' English-Speaking Skills," the knowledge gained from research of using the junior guide camp to develop English speaking for students can be depicted in Fig. 4:

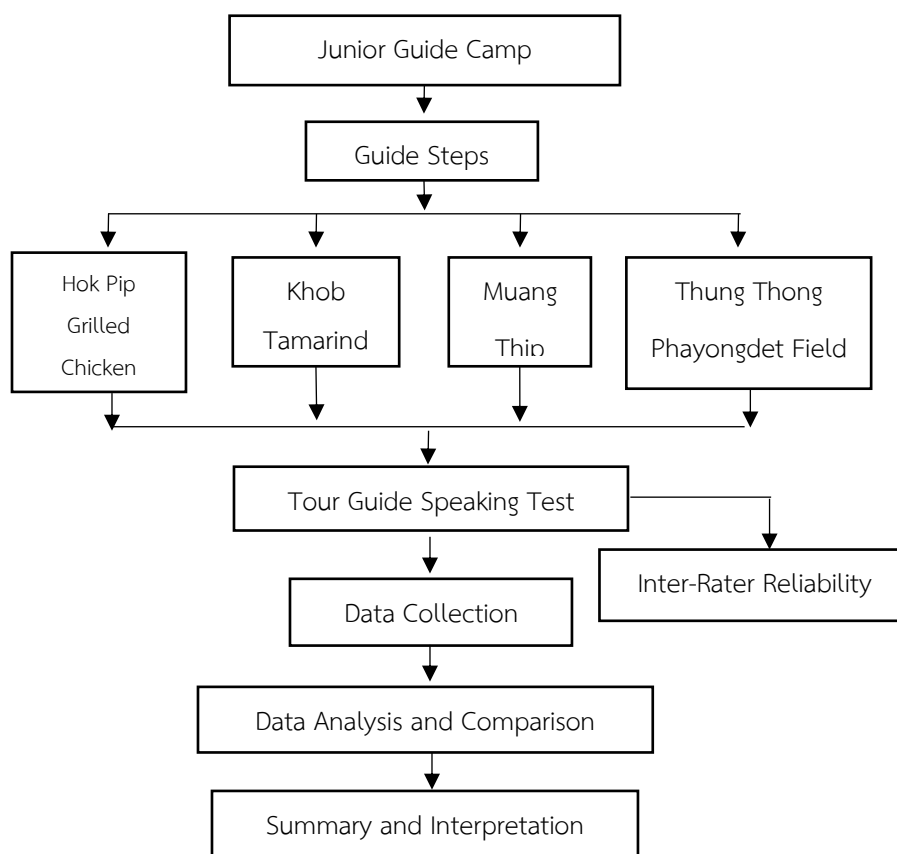


Fig. 4 Knowledge from Research

## Conclusion and Recommendations

English camps can be an effective way to develop students' speaking skills in English. The English camp activities often provide immersive language learning experiences that allow students to practice and improve their speaking skills in a natural and relaxed environment. Some key strategies for using English camps to develop students' speaking skills include: 1) Encourage conversation and discussion: Encourage students to engage in conversation and discussion with their peers and instructors. This can help students feel more comfortable speaking English and give them the opportunity to practice their speaking skills



in a low-stress setting. 2) Provide opportunities for role-play and presentation: Role-play and presentation activities can help students develop their confidence and fluency in speaking English. Encourage students to participate in these types of activities and provide feedback to help them improve. And 3) Use authentic materials: Using authentic materials, such as real-life conversations and news articles, can help students feel more connected to the language and motivated to practice their speaking skills. Overall, English camps can be a valuable resource for helping students develop their speaking skills in English. Educators can create a supportive and engaging learning environment that encourages students to improve their speaking skills by providing opportunities for conversation, role-play, and presentation, and using authentic materials. Implications: 1) Use modern and age-appropriate activities like Kahoot or Quizizz online quiz games, and songs such as "How do you do?", "English camp", and "If you're happy, you know it." 2) Have a recreational team and base assistant around the same age as the learners for easy communication and increased engagement. Further Study: A comparative study of learning achievements in speaking English through Junior Guide Camp activities between schools or between students in different study plans should be conducted.

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