

The Method of Dhamma Teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar

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Abstract

This research entitled to “The method of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar.” The aim of this research was two objectives that are 1) to identify the problems in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar and 2) to solution of the problems on the method of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar. The research was a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative researches in nature. A questionnaire was used for collecting quantitative data from 14 teachers at Asokayama Buddhist Academy and in-depth interview was used for collecting qualitative data from 8 key informants. For analyzing quantitative data statistics including percentage, mean, and standard deviation (S.D). In the objective one, the answers of the respondents to the research questionnaire, the level of the study was moderate, $\bar{X} = 3.36$, and in objective two, the level of result was high, $\bar{X} = 3.72$. In in-depth interview section, the result was that the pupils must have Pali words, must have Nissaya and the teacher explain the Pali words in detail to pupils. The teacher gave the comments and suggestion as “the Asokayama Buddhist Academy have to change some method that is rote learning method.”

Keywords: Teaching Method, Dhamma Teaching, Buddhist Academy

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Introduction

The education is the importance for every country as well as the teaching methods are significant for the scholars. If someone constructs a building, at the first, someone must make the good foundation then the building will be last for a long time thus the state education system should have the good teaching methods for successful and developed of schooling. Every educational development country has good teaching method so that the countries are bright in the educational field. For example, United State of America, United Kingdom, Japan and so on. “University of Oxford Tops the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2018” after reading this article, the researcher thinks about the education of Oxford university position and then the researcher understands that Oxford university teaching method is very good so that the university is top university in the world. Likewise, in Myanmar, Asokayama Buddhist Academy readies to have very good teaching method that is a strong education system has long been seen as the standard pre-requisite of overall national progress for both developed and developing nations.

The Asokayama Buddhist Academy which is the main monastery, has many sub-monasteries for teaching technique to a traditional in Myanmar that was supported for building of knowledgeable society. Each country has own education policy and own teaching method as the Asokayama Buddhist Academy has it. The Myanmar government’s monastic education is very interesting style that is the examination-orientated method. The students who are condemned to repeat the same syllabuses until, have passed. However, these could not turn their backs on the examination-orientated method of study and instead pursue the study of “great texts”, because the majority of the monasteries are not teaching those texts any more so on the many students chose the good result and the excellent teaching method.

Khin Thidar (2002) described a research named, “A Comparative Study of The Pariyatti Courses in Mandalay and Pakokku.” That researcher aimed to show the importance of the grammatical skill in the method of Dhamma teaching. In Mandalay method, a lecturer would explain the various shades of meaning in a word for the examination system but also the Pakokku method did not encourage examination system it focuses on the skill of students. The research compared to Mandalay and Pakokku of teaching methods.

Dhammasami (Khammai) (2004) submitted a research “Between idealism and pragmatism a study of monastic education in Burma and Thailand from the seventeenth century to the present.” The researcher focusses on to show the problem of the method of Dhamma teaching in Myanmar. The researcher also explained the problem of the situation of the new Pathamapyan that syllabuses were designed so that a student who passed the primary level had a solid foundation in Pali literature and the Abhidhamma, and was able to read by himself the *suttas* in Pali, although no *sutta* was actually a part of the syllabuses. The present research content and scope will be focus on Pathamapyan students in Myanmar that is his considered opinion on the method of Dhamma teaching.

Nawshin Shakila (2009) noticed that some researcher has conducted studies about the grammar translation method to improve the ability in teaching mothed. The researcher investigated “Teaching Methods and Classroom Management: An Observation”, students in this method develop the ability to read prestigious literary texts. They also learn to read and write in the target language accurately, which is a necessity. However, this method is a particular analysis of the written target language, especially its grammar and vocabulary that are learned from bilingual word lists which can be boring as a main task.

In 2014, Ashin Jatila described a research named “leadership behaviors of school leaders in Pann Pyo Lat monastic education school, Pago division, Myanmar.” In that study, the researcher had shown the monastic education system, teaching

method and Myanmar students' situation. Monastic schools have generally a significant number of qualified teachers who train some programs such as Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking and Child-centered Approach teaching Method. That research content and scope were focused on monastic students in Myanmar.

In 2017, Ashin Indaka had conducted a research named 'A Study of University Students' Motivation for Learning English in Private Schools in Yangon, Myanmar'. In that study the researcher regarded about teaching method and the researcher described as a key to Grammar-translation that was later changed into the direct method, and translation was leaved.

The above described researches have conducted those researches concerning with teaching method. Though they regarded many researches about teaching method unfortunately, no one investigate the method of Dhamma teaching at Asokayama Buddhist Academy.

Therefore, it is necessary to describe the teaching method for the future generation because if the future generation comprehend the teaching method, they will be bright in Buddhist literature. Not only it is but also if the researcher describes the teaching method every Buddhist monastery and university's teacher and professor will understand how to teach the Buddha's teaching. And then, the researcher hopes that after reading the research, every Buddhist monk, nun and lay people will comprehend the teaching of Buddha in the clear style as well as the next generation have to know this teaching method that is the priceless as a diamond so the researcher reveals for this teaching method.

Objectives of Research

1. To identify the problems of the method of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar

2. To propose the solutions of the problems on the method of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar

Research methodology

1. Research Design: A mixed method between a quantitative research and qualitative research were used for this research. In addition, in-depth interview also included for to investigate the opinions, feeling, and beliefs of the teachers as regard method for Dhamma teaching in Asokayama Buddhist Academy.

2. Population and Key Informants: The population and sample of the study were 14 teachers at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar.

3. Research Tools: The questionnaire, in-depth interview sections and additional comments were the main research instrument for this study. The aims of questionnaires, interview and additional comments were to find out the teachers' the method of Dhamma teaching at the monastery. The questionnaires were designed by the researcher into three parts: (1) a research questionnaire with 16 questions including general background information of respondents, (2) an in-depth interview to 8 teachers (3) and additional comments of the respondents.

4. Data Collection: A questionnaire would be administered to 14 teachers who used to teach Dhamma teaching at the Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar by the researcher. After the 14 questionnaires having been filled in completely, the researcher has collected from them. An in-depth interview has been done by the researcher from 8 key informants by recording and observing. After interview, researcher has processed all information in recording and observing.

5. Data Analysis: This research used both qualitative and quantitative method in data collection. Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used for analyzing the findings of the research. The answers of the research question were analyzed by the Microsoft Excel 2019. The results of in-depth questions section were summary similar view and were analyzed by the researcher in terms of Dhamma method.

Results of Research

The general information of teachers

The results appeared that 14 of the teachers were Buddhist monks. All of the teachers have been teaching at Asokayama Buddhist Academy, LKM. Majority of teachers was over 30 years old. The experience of Dhamma learning of the teachers were 6-8 years and the experience of Dhamma teaching of the teacher were over 9 years. The favorite subjects of the teachers were Pali grammar. All of the teachers love to teach Dhamma and their favorite skill was reading skill. The teacher of the level of education was Dhammadariya degree.

The result of objective-one

This research objective-one is ‘to identify the problems of the method of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar.’ According to responses of the teachers, most of the teachers are facing and challenging problems in the method of Dhamma teaching. The level of the final result of this statement or questions were moderate ($\bar{X} = 3.36$). After analyzing the answers of objective-one questions, the result occurred that the level of the study was moderate because half of teachers have the problems in the method of Dhamma teaching. So, the researcher could illustrate as the following;

Table 1 The result of objective-one

No	Questions	\bar{X}	SD	Level
1	The time schedule is influenced much on the Dhamma teaching	4.21	0.57	High
2	Pupils have low ability in the memorized on the lessons	3.07	0.73	Moderate
3	Pupils have low ability in the Nissaya (a word for word translation from Pali)	2.79	0.80	Moderate
4	Pupils have low ability in acquiring the lesson	2.64	0.49	Moderate
5	It is very hard to teach Dhamma teaching skills to pupils in different Dhamma-class level	3.71	0.72	High
6	It is very hard to teach Dhamma teaching skills to pupils in different ages	3.50	0.94	High
7	Most of pupils pay less attention in the class	3.14	0.77	Moderate
8	Language communication is hard (for foreign teachers) between teachers and pupils	3.86	0.94	High
Average		3.36	0.74	Moderate

The result of objective-two

This research objective-two is ‘to propose the solutions of the problems on the method of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar.’ The research objective-two lead to regard the solution of problems in the method of Dhamma teaching. After analyzing, all responses of the teacher in the research objective-two, the average level was high. The occurrence of mean was $\bar{X} = 3.72$ and standard deviation (S.D.) was 0.55. Because, the more of teachers want to solve the problems in the method of Dhamma teaching as their responses. So, the researcher could demonstrate as the following table;

Table 2 The result of objective-two

No	Questions	\bar{X}	SD	Level
1	The teacher-centered method is good for improving Dhamma teaching skills to pupils	3.71	0.61	High
2	The Grammar-Translation method is good for improving Dhamma teaching skills to pupils	4.21	0.57	High
3	The Rote learning method is good for improving Dhamma teaching skills to pupils	4.07	0.82	High
4	The learner-centered method is good for improving Dhamma teaching skills to pupils	4.00	0.55	High
5	The Pakhokku teaching method is helpful for improving the method of Dhamma teaching skills to pupils	4.29	0.61	High
6	The Mandalay teaching method is helpful for improving the method of Dhamma teaching skills to pupils	4.21	0.42	High
7	The Asokayama Buddhist Academy's teaching method is helpful for improving the method of Dhamma teaching skills to pupils	4.21	0.57	High
8	All the teaching methods taught at Asokayama Buddhist Academy are completely useless	1.07	0.26	Very low
Average		3.72	0.55	High

The result of in-depth interview

After doing in-depth interview to 8 teachers, the researcher found the result in abbreviation: the teachers answered that the pupils must have Pali, must have the Nissaya (a word for word translation from Pali). The teachers explain the Pali words in detail to pupils. If the pupils needed, the teacher would explain by the table. Initially, the pupils must memorize the lessons and then the pupils have to repeat the lessons in front of his teacher without book.

Conclusion and Discussion

In this research, the researcher found that half of the teachers have problems in the method of Dhamma teaching at Asokayama Buddhist Academy. The problems were pupils have low ability in the memorized on the lessons, pupils have low ability in the Nissaya (a word for word translation from Pali), pupils have low ability in acquiring the lesson and most of pupils pay less attention in the class. According to the responses of the majority of the teachers agree with the method of Dhamma teaching at Asokayama Buddhist Academy but, a few teachers gave response that some method was useless so it is needed to change.

This section is to discuss the statement question and finding result of the research. In the present research, there were two statement questions: (1) what are the problems of the methods of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar? and (2) What are the solutions of the problems on the methods of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar?

After analyzing the answers of respondents by Microsoft Excel 2019, the result of statement number one was moderate because half of the teachers answered that they had problem in Dhamma teaching to their pupils and half of teachers gave responses that they do not have problems in Dhamma teaching.

After analyzing the response of the participants by Microsoft Excel, the result of statement number two was high because majority of the teacher's agreed with eight statements of objective two. They gave responses that if they follow these eight statements, they can solve the problem of Dhamma teaching at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar.

Suggestions

Openly speaking, many difficulties of Dhamma teaching instruction have existed in Myanmar monasteries. These challenging problems should be solved sooner or later for the progress of state education systems. Some educational policy should be reviewed such as curriculums, qualification of the teachers, teaching method and adequacy of the materials in the monastery that is relevant with the international standard. Since, as it was mentioned in the literature review motivation and learning are interrelated. All these can influence the monastic teachers' level of Dhamma teaching in any Dhamma subjects.

This present research was in general small limited research about to study the method of Dhamma teaching in English at Asokayama Buddhist Academy Loikaw, Kayah State in Myanmar. So, it will not complete all. Therefore, future research should be investigated about the teaching method of Asokayama Buddhist Academy in Tipitaka (three baskets).

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