A Study of the Use of ICT Blended Instruction
in the Teaching of English in a Thai University

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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this dissertation is the result of original research, the greater part of which was completed subsequent to admission to candidature for the degree.

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(Signed): ...........................................(Candidate)

Date: February, 2015
Dedication

First of all I would like to dedicate this work to my family, Sisaket Rajabhat University and the University of Newcastle.

Next I would like to dedicate this work to Assistant Professor Kanok Tosurat, Assistant Professor Dr. Prakasit Anupabsandyagon, Dr. Asana Chedchoo, Dr. Lamyai Singsook, Taweewat Kanta, Gary Don Campbell, John Revington, Dr. Margaret Freestone, Graeme Murray and Renee Dorricott.

Finally, I dedicate this work to the Thai and Australian governments for helping me to accomplish my dream of helping others through education and self-improvement.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description/ Glossary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BL</td>
<td>ICT blended instruction (blended learning): online learning combined with F-to-F traditional class teaching methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL instructor</td>
<td>Instructor or lecturer who taught in BL class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a foreign language: English being learned as a Foreign Language where there is little or no access to English in the community at large of the learner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a second language: English being learned by a student with another first language, within a community where English is the general first language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETS</td>
<td>Educational Testing Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technologies is used predominantly to describe computer-based or computer-related devices and other devices that may be used for information and communication purposes (e.g. computer, mobile phone, IPad, talking dictionary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>F-to-F</td>
<td>Face-to-Face: Traditional class, based on textbooks and lectures within a conventional classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-to-F instructor</td>
<td>Instructor or lecturer educating the traditional face to face class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NECTC</td>
<td>National Electronics and Computer Technology Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONESQA</td>
<td>Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Version 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSKRU</td>
<td>Sisaket Rajabhat University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEIC</td>
<td>Test of English for International Communication, administered by ETS (Educational Testing Service) used to measure a student’s ability to use every-day English in an international workplace environment</td>
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Abstract

Due to economic, vocational and educational changes resulting from globalization, Thailand has acknowledged the need to prepare its people to cope with the changing world and competition in the global market place. Under the Thai National Education Act, the Thai government launched a series of educational reforms with the aim of developing Thailand into a knowledge-based society. One of these reforms focuses on using information and communication technologies (ICT) in the educational system. In addition, the government also encourages students to acquire knowledge and skills in English language and educational technologies to promote life-long learning skills.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of introducing ICT into the compulsory, first year English syllabus in Thai higher education through Blended Learning pedagogy. This researcher seeks to advance Thai university students’ English achievement through a greater understanding of the influence of ICT and its impact on students’ English language achievement, students’ participation within English classes and student attitudes towards learning English. The use of ICT blended instruction may provide Thai students with more modern - or less traditional pedagogy than is currently used. This study investigates the expansion of the range of texts and contexts through which these students may experience and subsequently learn English.

This mixed method study was conducted using a pre-test, post-test design. Participants were 278 students attending a rural University in North-eastern Thailand, who were arranged into blended learning and face-to-face classes. A course web site was developed for course instruction. This site and social network tools such as Skype, Twitter and Facebook were utilised by the blended learning class for communications and language acquisition. Data was collected from the pre-test and post-test instruments, class room observation check lists, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and researcher’s field notes in order to compare ICT blended instruction and traditional face to face instruction.

Results of the data analysis revealed ICT blended instruction as showing a significant, positive difference in student’s English learning achievement when compared with the English learning achievement of students participating in traditional F-to-F classes.
Furthermore, this study establishes that ICT blended instruction can affect a significant, positive difference in student’s behavioural participation within the classroom when compared with student’s behavioural participation within the traditional F-to-F classroom. Finally, this research has identified a significant, positive difference in students’ attitude after learning English through ICT blended instruction.

Positive outcomes in learning achievement, participation and student attitude reveal the value ICT blended instruction may afford to the teaching of English language within Thailand. These encouraging results for English pedagogy may be directly transferable to the pedagogy of other academic spheres within Thai education and may inspire further investigation in these directions. As identified by the Thai government through the National Education Act, English language and ICT skills are steps toward a knowledge-based society; advances in the delivery of these skills to the population will potentially benefit an entire Nation. This study also recognises the essential requirement for ICT proficient instructors in order to transfer these skills to the populace. The positive outcomes observed in this study may fortify administrators resolve in implementing English language and ICT policy and encourage educators to pursue additional training in ICT enhanced education and contemporary, blended pedagogy.