Integrating Academic Service Activities into Business English Translation Class Through Project-Based Learning of Business Administration Undergraduates

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Abstract   The purposes of this study were (1) to compare the translation scores of Business English students before and after participating in academic service activities in the course "Business English Translation" using project-based learning and (2) to compare the attitudes of students before and after participating in the academic service activities through project-based learning. The participants consisted of 73 third-year students majoring in Business English who were enrolled in the Business English Translation course. The research employed two types of research instruments: (1) experimental tools, encompassing a lesson plan that integrated community service activities through project-based learning in the Business English Translation course, and (2) data collection instruments, including a pre-and post-test to assess proficiency in English translation, and a questionnaire to measure students' attitudes towards community service activities through project-based learning. These research instruments underwent validation by three experts and exhibited a reliability coefficient of .93. The research findings revealed that the average scores for advertisement translation from Thai to English after engaging in community service activities through project-based learning were significantly higher than the scores prior to the activity participation. Furthermore, a statistically significant difference was observed in the average scores of students' attitudes towards participating in community service activities through project-based learning, with a significance level of .05.

Introduction

According to the National Education Act of 1999, as amended in 2002 by the Office of the Higher Education Commission, Section 22 provides guidelines for educational management. It states that education management must adhere to the principle that every learner can learn and develop themselves, and learners are considered the most critical factor. The educational process must promote learners' natural development and maximize their potential. Section 24, paragraph 3 of the National Education Act stipulates that learning activities should enable learners to learn from real-life experiences, engage in practical activities, think critically, act upon knowledge, love reading, and foster continuous learning. Section 24, paragraph 4, requires educational institutions to provide a balanced integration of various knowledge areas, including instilling good morals, values, and desirable characteristics in every subject. At present, teachers should organize teaching that will help learners have the knowledge and skills with new or similar experiences to real situations to develop graduates. This aims to develop graduates who possess comprehensive intellectual capabilities and can lead fulfilling lives. Academic services and teaching practices should be combined to enhance learning outcomes, improve academic proficiency, enhance analytical thinking, develop interpersonal skills, and cultivate a positive professional attitude (Turner et al., 2010). Learners can improve their analytical thinking and develop interactive skills, fostering a positive attitude toward their profession (Chompunud & Inkaew, 2017).

In order to align with Thailand's education policy (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2003), providing academic services to society is one of the main missions of higher education institutions. Institutions should provide academic services to communities, society, and the nation in various forms according to their aptitude and expertise. Melaville et al. (2006) described that academic services might be provided free of charge or at a reasonable cost, serving both public and private agencies, independent agencies, public agencies, communities, and society by specifying various forms of academic services such as allowing the use of institutional resources as academic references, providing consultancy services, training, organizing academic conferences or seminars, conducting research to address various inquiries or societal recommendations. Apart from benefits to society, educational institutions increase teachers' knowledge and experience, leading to curriculum development and integration for the benefit of teaching and research management. It also leads to enhancing academic positions for faculty members and establishing networks with different organizations, serving as sources of work for students and generating income for the institutions through providing services.

Operating a business in the digitally-driven world of advanced technology and rapid communication exchange requires effective communication skills in English, which remains the widely accepted language of communication globally. If organizations aim to expand their customer base internationally in the era of globalization without boundaries, proficiency in English communication skills is essential. Translational skills are crucial for all businesses' product and service communication. Based on the informal surveys interviewing the community entrepreneurs who were small and medium-sized enterprises, seeking to expand their foreign customer base, it was found that there needed improvement in using the English language for product and service communication. Some local businesses expressed a need to communicate their products and services in English but needed more confidence in translating English content such as product advertisements, instructional signs, product names, product details, and store information. Even though computer tools or programs are available to assist in translation, errors in machine translation have been identified. In a study conducted by Sasongkoar (2019), a comparison was made between the translation of hotel websites by humans and Google Translate (GT) language translation software. It was found that humans can employ diverse translation methods and possess more idiomatic characteristics than language translation software. In particular, translating motivational text can use multiple-meaning words,

including imaginative words. In contrast, language translation software has limitations in selecting motivational words and conveying cultural nuances. Given these limitations, errors can occur in translating product and service signage content, particularly in translating advertising messages that rely on language styles that evoke motivation and interest to stimulate customers' understanding and decision-making (Krujit, 2010). Therefore, conducting business requires translation skills to convey messages to foreign customers clearly, interestingly, and easily understood.

Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education has defined the desired characteristics of graduates in the 21st century, emphasizing skills in numerical analysis, communication, and information technology. These standards aim to enable graduates to use Thai and foreign languages accurately and appropriately, adhering to international standards and cultural norms (Office of the Higher Education Standards and Evaluation, 2015). Therefore, the Faculty of Business Administration and Liberal Arts at the Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna has implemented an academic service project for businesses, local communities, and society to disseminate knowledge to the community. The project focuses on enabling teachers to transmit knowledge and skills in their areas of expertise to students in the classroom and provide opportunities for students to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in real-life situations or practice those skills with community-based organizations. These academic service activities must respond to the needs of the participating organizations. The researcher was responsible for the "Enhancing English Language Knowledge for Business Development, Community, and Educational Institutions" project under the "Teachers Teach, Students Practice, Communities Benefit" initiative to promote students' knowledge and language skills in the business context. Students are encouraged to apply their English language skills and knowledge of business administration and related disciplines, such as technology, to generate benefits for community-based businesses. Additionally, academic service activities aim to stimulate students to see the benefits of business knowledge and English skills that can drive community entrepreneurship and apply academic service knowledge and skills in daily life and future business endeavors.

Based on the above reasons, the researcher integrated and designed the academic service with the "Business English Translation" course through project-based learning. The focus is on developing students' English translation competencies, business knowledge, and technology utilization and fostering a positive service-oriented attitude within the community. In project-based learning (PBL), the students work on an academic service project–that engages them in solving a real-world problem over a semester. They demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating a public product or presentation for a real audience. As a result, students can develop deep content knowledge and critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication skills.

Objectives
The objectives of this study were
1. To compare translation scores before and after participating in the academic service activities in the course "Basic English Business Translation" through project-based learning.
2. To compare students' attitudes before and after participating in the academic service activities in the course "Basic English Business Translation" through project-based learning.

Theoretical background
Integration, in the context of quality assurance in higher education, refers to the blending and grouping of information processes, resource allocation, operations, outcomes, and analysis to support the important objectives of an institution. Integration emphasizes the grouping of operational plans that are effective in order to achieve alignment as a cohesive unit. Each operation component will collaborate to create a complete and harmonized system. The Office of the Higher Education Commission (2017) defined the term "integration" as different from "alignment," as alignment focuses

on the coherence within each component of the operational processes. On the other hand, integration emphasizes the grouping and collaboration of processes to achieve a comprehensive and cohesive alignment.

Academic service to society, as defined by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (2022), refers to activities or projects that provide services to the community outside the educational institution or services organized within the institution with the involvement of external individuals. These services aim to meet the community's needs and contribute to the development of knowledge and academic quality. According to the ONESQA (2022), academic service refers to the role of higher education institutions as community or societal resources. They serve as academic references or fulfill roles that impact community development in knowledge and knowledge-based development, as well as national and international competitiveness. Academic service involves providing valuable and non-monetary services, utilizing knowledge and experience to enhance and integrate with teaching, learning, and research activities. In summary, academic service to society encompasses activities or projects that aim to provide valuable services to the community, either outside the educational institution or within it, with the involvement of external individuals. These services serve as resources for the community, contribute to developing knowledge, and impact community development, and national and international competitiveness. Academic service involves using knowledge and experience to enhance teaching, learning, and research activities.

Integrating academic service with teaching and learning means combining and merging knowledge and disciplines from academic service and teaching and learning related to making one smooth and complete thing. Melaville et al. (2006) described community-based learning as one of the learning methods within this framework. Service learning combines providing academic service with the knowledge to create complete learning experiences in both the classroom and the community. It involves teaching with a sense of community or social responsibility and aims to strengthen the community. Academic service as a learning activity must respond to the community's needs through research, investigation, and analysis of community issues. The solutions provided should relate to the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom, allowing students to transfer knowledge to the community and evaluate their work (Center of Academic Service, 2018). The objective is to establish a connection between academic service, teaching, and learning by enabling educators to integrate real-world experiences into their teaching practices. This allows students to learn from authentic situations and apply their knowledge to providing academic services to the community.

Soranastaporn and Posai (2018) defined project-based learning (PBL) as a learning approach that promotes learning and skill development by executing projects or tasks focusing on solving real-world problems or creating work relevant to the studied subject. Educators play a supportive role in assisting and encouraging students throughout the PBL process. In PBL, students are given challenges or tasks to solve or create independently, using the knowledge, skills, and available resources they have learned to address real problems or create meaningful outcomes. Through the execution of these projects, students experience immersive and authentic learning by applying their acquired knowledge to solve real problems, developing teamwork skills, fostering creative thinking, and enhancing problem-solving skills in real-life situations. The use of PBL stimulates students' active participation in the learning process and leads to problem-centered learning and the creation of valuable works in real-life contexts.

The study investigated the effects of integrating service-learning activities into English language courses for second-year nursing students. The project-based learning approach was used, and the service-learning activities were conducted with international students from the Bangkok Baptist Learning Center, providing opportunities for nursing students to practice English in real-life situations. The study results revealed that the nursing students' academic achievement was reasonable level. After the course, the student's perceptions of their English language proficiency were moderate. The average

English language proficiency scores after the course were significantly higher than before, at a statistical significance level of.001. The average satisfaction scores for the English language course were high (Turner et al., 2010). The result was consistent with another study by Chaleoykitti et al. (2017) investigating the integration of service-learning activities into psychiatric nursing practice courses. The study found a statistically significant difference of 0.05 in the military nursing students' psychiatric nursing practice competency scores before and after participating in the service-learning program with the course.

The study by Srisaket (2018) integrated knowledge of academic service and ethical development in the professional certificate curriculum of Community Public Health. The findings revealed that students utilized their knowledge to provide academic services and promote ethical behavior. The three most prominent areas were 1) promoting personal, family, and community health, 2) developing professional ethical behaviors, and 3) providing basic care. Additionally, the study by Pungbangkadee and Nakagasien (2019) examined integrating academic service and teaching management in the Psychiatric Nursing Practical Course for military nurses. The results showed a significant statistical difference in the psychiatric nursing competencies of the students before and after participating in the academic service and teaching management program in the Psychiatric Nursing Practical course. The study found that students learned from real-life experiences in the context of the field and applied the knowledge gained from theory in the course on promoting health and preventing diseases among international laborers with different languages and cultures. Furthermore, the faculty who conducted the fieldwork exchanged knowledge and understood the context of international laborers, leading to the development of appropriate teaching methods for international laborers. They incorporated their experiences regarding cultural and linguistic differences into teaching future courses in the Faculty of Nursing at Mahidol University.

Methods and measurement

This experimental research was conducted at a public university in Northern Thailand. The participants were 73 third-year students majoring in Business English who were enrolled in the Business English Translation course. The research employed two types of research instruments

1. The experimental tool

The lesson plan integrating community service activities through project-based learning in the Business English Translation course was used in this study, and the experimental process was divided into these six steps, which included:

Table 1 Process of integrated community service activities through project-based learning in the Business English Translation course

Week	Procedures	Activities
1-2	Step 1 Preparation and planning	The instructor explains the objectives of integrating community service into academic service and discusses knowledge and translation skills to produce work for the community. Students are provided examples of previous projects to help them understand and plan for future group work.
3-4	Step 2 Project development	The students form groups to hold meetings, brainstorm ideas, and plan to visit target communities, businesses, or organizations to survey, collect data, analyze problems, discuss, and find solutions." The purpose is to conduct

Week	Procedures	Activities
		surveys, gather necessary data for problem analysis, engage in discussions, and find suitable solutions.
5-7	Step 3: Project implementation (Providing services to the community)	The students implement their projects based on the plans and solutions developed in the previous steps. They actively engage in carrying out the tasks and activities to address the identified problems or achieve the project goals.
8-10	Step 4: Reflection and evaluation	The students analyze the results, reflect on the experiences and lessons learned, and evaluate the project's success in meeting its objectives.
11-13	Step 5: Presentation and sharing	The students showcase their project outcomes and share their experiences with others at the Business Administration and Liberal Arts (BALA) Exhibition Event. It involves presenting their work, findings, and insights to a broader audience, including peers, teachers, community members, or stakeholders.
14-15	Step 6: Documentation and assessment	The students compile all relevant materials, such as reports, presentations, research findings, and reflections, into a report. It also provides feedback for improvement in future projects.

Afterward, the lesson plans were assessed for their effectiveness by three experts who examined the content validity, language usage, and accuracy of the assessments. They applied the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) to determine the appropriateness of the questionnaire. The scoring criteria were +1 for congruence, 0 for uncertainty, and -1 for incongruence. The data analysis used the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) to calculate the IOC value. The IOC value was then compared against the predetermined criterion of 0.80 or higher. The obtained IOC value was 0.93, indicating a high level of congruence.

2. Data collection
2.1 Pre- and post-tests for English translation skills
The tests were given to students before and after they took part in the project-based learning approach of the integrated academic and service learning program. These tests were based on Munday et al. (2020) and the Institute of Linguists (IOL) Diploma in Translation, well-known in the United Kingdom for producing good translators. The assessment criteria were further adjusted to align with the characteristics of the researchers' learners. The researchers selected the following criteria for evaluating students' English translation abilities, content accuracy appropriate use of vocabulary, idioms, style, coherence and cohesion, and grammar and punctuation accuracy. The scoring was based on a maximum of 20 points. The test was derived from phrases or expressions on the menu and restaurant banners. Students were also given a short advertisement in Thai and asked to translate it into English. The students' translations were assessed for the accuracy of the content, appropriate use of vocabulary, idioms, and style related to the mood and tone of the advertisement, as well as grammar and punctuation accuracy. In addition, students were given a more extended advertisement in Thai and asked to translate it into English to assess their coherence and cohesion.
2.2 The questionnaire
The questionnaire on students' attitudes towards integrating academic and service learning in the community consists of two parts: general information about the respondents, including gender,

age, and experience in organizing activities. The questionnaire on attitudes toward providing academic services to community businesses through project-based learning was developed based on a literature review. It included 15 questions with a Likert scale rating system consisting of 5 levels to allow respondents to express their attitudes. The attitude levels and corresponding questionnaire statements are as follows:

Attitude Level	Scores
Strongly Agree	5
Agree	4
Neutral	3
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

The questionnaire was assessed for its effectiveness by three experts. Then it was tested by conducting a tryout with a sample group of 30 third-year English major students enrolled in the Business English Translation course in the first semester. The reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Vanichbuncha & Vanichbuncha, 2016). The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.89.

2.3 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher explained the study's objectives, the data collection process, teaching methods, and attitude questionnaires regarding integrating academic and service learning in the teaching process. The researcher then completed a pre-and post-test to assess their English translation abilities and attitude questionnaires before and after participating in the project-based academic service learning program.

2.4 Data analysis

This research used descriptive statistics, including percentages, means, and standard deviations. Using t-test statistics, the researcher examined the differences in mean scores of advertisement translation before and after participating in integrating academic services with project-based learning. Additionally, the researcher compared the mean scores of attitudes toward academic services in the community before and after participating in integrating academic service activities with project-based learning.

Ethical Issues

The researcher explained the objectives and detailed research process to ensure their understanding and willingness to participate. In this collaboration, students were experimental subjects using educational tools expected to benefit their learning and themselves. When providing data, students were encouraged to respond to the questionnaire based on their genuine opinions without impacting their grades. Additionally, the research process was conducted gradually within regular class time to minimize disruption to other subjects. This research has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna (ID number RUMTL - IRB 038/2023), certified on April 12th.

Findings

Table 2 The percentage of the demographic data for the seventy-three participants

Demographic characteristics	Number of participants	Percentage
Gender		
male	8	11
female	65	89
Age		
19-21	73	100
Experience		
☐ Attended the activities of the academic services	52	71.23
☐ Never attended		
	21	28.77

This study focused on the competency of knowledge, skills, and attitude of the seventy-three Business English students in their third year. Most participants were female (89%), and the rest were male (11%). All participants (100%) were aged between 19 and 21. More than half of the participants attended the academic services activities (71.23%), while 28.77% of the participants had never attended the activities, as demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 3 Comparative results of mean translation scores before and after participating in academic service activities through project-based learning

	n	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*	*p*
Pretest	73	11.25	3.63	72	7.31	0.00
Posttest	73	13.44	3.48			

n = 73, p < .05

Table 3 shows the comparative results of average translation scores before and after participating in academic service activities through project-based learning. It was found that the mean score and standard deviation ($M = 13.44$, $SD = 3.48$) of the translation from Thai to English after participating in the community service program were higher than the mean score and standard deviation ($M = 11.25$, $SD = 3.63$) of the translation from Thai to English before participating in the community service program. There is a relatively small distribution of scores and a significant difference between the two groups ($t = 7.31$, $p = 0.00$).

Table 4 Comparison of the overall results of students' attitudes towards participating in community service activities through project-based learning

Attitude scores	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*	*p*
Before	73	3.55	0.18	72	49.79	0.00
After	73	4.53	0.08			

n = 73, p < .05

The table indicates that the overall attitude scores of students after participating in the community service activities (M=4.53, SD=0.08) were higher than the overall attitude scores of students before participating in the activities (M=4.53, SD=0.08). The scores demonstrated a narrow distribution and a significant average difference between the before and after scores (t=49.79, p=0.00).

Table 5 Comparison of the mean scores categorized by students' attitudes before and after participating in the academic service activities through project-based learning

No.	Attitude toward the activities	Before		After		Meaning		
		M	SD	M	SD		t	p
1	Participating in community service activities through project-based learning provides opportunities to apply English language knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to practical work.	3.50	0.68	4.55	0.52	very high	11.71	0.00
2	Participating in community service activities through project-based learning helps students develop better planning and organizational skills in their work processes.	3.46	0.91	4.53	0.53	very high	9.73	0.00
3	Participating in community service activities through project-based learning allows students to analyze problems, gather information, and brainstorm to understand the business context and find solutions.	3.74	0.81	4.55	0.52	very high	5.89	0.00
4	After analyzing the problems, students can apply their knowledge and English translation skills and choose suitable tools to creatively address the problems encountered within the community business.	3.47	0.72	4.54	0.52	very high	6.15	0.00
5	Engaging in community service activities through project-based learning enhances teamwork skills, leadership abilities, and active participation in group discussions and expressing opinions.	3.63	0.73	4.55	0.57	very high	1.54	0.03
6	Participating in community service activities through project-based learning promotes self-responsibility, professionalism, social awareness, and environmental consciousness.	3.29	0.84	4.52	0.55	very high	9.73	0.00
7	Participating in community service activities through project-based learning promotes the development of specific problem-solving skills.	3.50	0.94	4.51	0.53	very high	3.22	0.03

No.	Attitude toward the activities	Before		After		Meaning		
		M	SD	M	SD		t	p
8	Participating in community service activities through project-based learning fosters strong relationships among students, faculty, businesses, and the university.	3.44	0.92	4.51	0.53	very high	9.13	0.00
9	By joining community service activities through project-based learning, students gain additional experiences that are beneficial for future work endeavors.	3.78	0.88	4.56	0.50	very high	9.73	0.00
10	Engaging in community service activities through project-based learning fosters self-pride for helping others.	3.68	0.68	4.51	0.53	very high	9.73	0.00
11	These activities effectively address the needs or specific problems of the community business.	3.80	0.74	4.51	0.55	very high	7.3	0.03
12	Participating in community service activities through project-based learning enhances proficiency in utilizing information technology skills in practical work settings.	3.49	0.76	4.55	0.50	very high	3.09	0.00
13	Engaging in community service activities through project-based learning enhances the necessary English language skills for conducting business operations or professions.	3.85	0.81	4.55	0.50	very high	2.20	0.00
14	Participating in community service activities through project-based learning promotes effective communication skills between students and business entities.	3.36	0.96	4.48	0.55	very high	10.72	0.02
15	Students gain knowledge in new business management disciplines and additional English language skills through participating in community service activities through project-based learning.	3.51	0.94	4.59	0.50	very high	4.71	0.00

Table 5 demonstrates that the average attitudes of students after participating in community service activities through project-based learning are higher than the average attitudes of students before engaging in these activities. The scores show a small dispersion and a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$). In particular, Attitude 15, which reflects students' learning of new business concepts and additional English language skills through participating in community service activities, has the highest average post-activity score ($M = 4.49$). On the other hand, Attitude 12, which relates to promoting self-responsibility, professionalism, social awareness, and environmental consciousness through community service activities, has the most significant difference between pre- and post-activities scores, with a difference of 1.23.

Discussion and conclusion

1. Comparative Results of Average Scores for Translating before and after participating in academic service activities in the English Business Translation course through project-based learning.

By comparing the average scores for translating before and after participating in community-based service activities in the English Business Translation course through project-based learning, it was found that the average scores for translating texts from Thai to English were higher after participating in the service activities. This indicates that students have improved their translation skills from Thai to English, which is consistent with the study conducted by Soranastaporn and Posai (2018). They examined the learning outcomes and strategies for English language communication through project-based learning to develop English communication skills among tertiary-level students. The study found that third-year students' average English scores for hotel management improved after implementing project-based learning. In addition, the integration of academic service in the psychiatric nursing practical course enhances the psychiatric nursing competency of military nursing students. The findings found that the average scores for psychiatric nursing competency were higher after participating in the academic service integration program (Chaleoykitti et al., 2017). This may be attributed to the preparedness for learning in the classroom through project-based learning, starting with problem analysis, systematic teamwork, planning, knowledge search, and practical implementation following the scientific process. They applied their skills and knowledge from the classroom to create innovative works for the community. Therefore, creating real-life learning experiences outside the classroom that involve actual situations allows students to practice their English language skills, especially translation skills. It also allows them to review their English language and business knowledge to apply to future work and further learning in the classroom. This is consistent with the views of Panyoyai et al. (2022), who emphasized that integrating academic service with teaching involves enhancing knowledge, experience, and authentic teaching methods where students are at the center of learning (student-centered). It follows the concept of community participation (Cohen & Uphoff, 1980), allowing them to use their existing knowledge and skills to conduct accurate surveys of community needs, summarize findings, and provide beneficial recommendations to the community. This approach is one way to develop learners and promote learning. Furthermore, community involvement at every integration is essential to develop contextually appropriate knowledge, stimulate mutual learning and facilitate effective problem-solving. It leads to continuous and sustainable development (Kreethep, 2020).

Recommendations

Recommendations for implementing the study's findings: educators can enhance instruction and learning by designing instructional management and courses emphasizing the integration of multiple disciplines that benefit students, faculty, businesses, and the community.

Implications for the study through project-based learning or community-based learning methodologies: researchers may incorporate service learning into other courses such as digital marketing, contemporary organizational administration, and being a socially responsible entrepreneur.

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