

## THE STUDY OF “INPUT-BASED INSTRUCTION” AND “PRODUCTION-BASED INSTRUCTION” TO TEACHING ENGLISH PREPOSITION

### การศึกษาวิธีการสอนคำบุพบทภาษาอังกฤษ

ผู้วิจัย

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#### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to compare the effectiveness of the “Input -based instruction” and the “Production -based instruction” approaches to teaching the English prepositions of place and time ‘in’, ‘on’, and ‘at’. Forty-six Mae Fah Luang University students who studied English 2 in semester 1/2015 were selected after analyzing pre-test scores of 100 students from three sections (section 1 = 33, section 7 = 34, and section 24 = 33). During this study, they implicitly learned the English prepositions of place and time ‘in’, ‘on’, and ‘at’. Participants were divided equally with each teaching approach applied to one-half of the participants. The participants took a pre-test, an immediate post-test, and a delayed post-test in order to compare the differences how they retained their memory between these two approaches. T-test was applied to compare the scores of the immediate post-test and the delayed post-test between two groups of participants. The results showed that “Input-based instruction” was effective for low English level students while “Production-based instruction” was effective for students who had a higher English level of long term learning.

**Keywords :** Input-Based Instruction Production-Based Instruction Teaching, English Prepositions

#### บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาประสิทธิภาพของสองวิธีการสอน คือ “Input -based instruction” และ “Production -based instruction” ในการสอนการใช้คำบุพบทภาษาอังกฤษสำหรับบอกสถานที่และเวลา ประชากรในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ คือ นักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยแม่ฟ้าหลวง ที่เรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ 2 จำนวน 3 ตอนเรียน (ตอนเรียนที่ 1 = 33 คน ตอนเรียนที่ 7 = 34 คน และตอนเรียนที่ 24 = 33 คน) ในภาคการศึกษาที่ 1 ปีการศึกษา 2558 โดย 46 คน จาก 100 คน ถูกเลือกเพื่อใช้เป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่าง จากคะแนนก่อนสอบ หลังจากนั้น กลุ่มตัวอย่าง 46 คน จะถูกตัดไปยังสองวิธีการสอนดังกล่าว วิธีการสอนละ 23 คน โดยที่นักศึกษาไม่ทราบว่ากำลังเรียนการใช้คำบุพบทจากวิธีการสอนดังกล่าว หลังจากนั้นกลุ่มตัวอย่างทั้ง 46 คน ทำแบบทดสอบหลังเรียน 2 ครั้ง คือทำแบบทันที และทำแบบทดสอบเดิมอีกครั้งในหนึ่งเดือนถัดมา เพื่อหาความแตกต่างของคะแนนในการเรียนรู้จากวิธีการสอน ผลการศึกษาครั้งนี้พบว่า “Input-based instruction” มีประสิทธิภาพสำหรับผู้เรียนที่มีความสามารถภาษาอังกฤษน้อย ขณะที่ “Production-based instruction” มีประสิทธิภาพสำหรับผู้เรียนที่มีความสามารถภาษาอังกฤษที่สูงกว่า

**คำสำคัญ :** การสอนตามอินพุท การเรียนการสอนตามการผลิต การสอนคำบุพบทภาษาอังกฤษ

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## Introduction

English prepositions are one of the grammar elements that Thai students easily transfer from Thai to English. This is due to the influence of their native language when producing English prepositions. English prepositions are regarded as English grammar elements that Thai students find to be extremely difficult due to the fact that not all English prepositions can be directly translated from Thai to English. Pongpairaj (2002) stated that preposition errors in her study could be found when preposition is used unnecessarily and incorrectly.

This can be seen from the student' response in the study of Bennui (2008) in which the student stated, "I stay *with* (*Kab* in Thai) home." It should be 'I stay *at* home' in English. The example is easy to understand because in Thai, *with* or *Kab* can mean *with*, *at*, or *to* in English. These mistakes can be seen when Thai students transfer Thai prepositions into English prepositions when writing English sentences. Because Thai and English prepositions are very different in both grammatical form and meaning, it is difficult to categorize what Thai prepositions actually are. In addition, Warotamasikkhadit (1990) and Indrambarya (1999) stated that Thai prepositions were not actually prepositions as they are understood to be in English, but could be categorized as verbs, nouns, conjunctions, and derivations of words.

### Language transfer and teaching English prepositions

Language transfer is the transfer from L1 to L2 (in this research L1 refers to Thai and L2 refers to English) when producing the second language by learners. Many scholars have discussed "language transfer' such as *language transfer* (Gass and Selinker, 1983; Odlin, 1989) and *cross-linguistic influence*

(Kellerman and Smith, 1986; Ringbom, 1987; Jarvis and Palenko, 2008). Odlin (1989, p.27) defined this term as "the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired." Corder (1983), Ringbom (1987), and Odlin (1989) have posited that if structures and contexts between L1 and L2 are similar (positive transfer), learners will have less tendency to transfer from L1 to L2. For Thai and English prepositions, for example, positive transfer may happen such as *on* the table (บนโต๊ะ in Thai), *in* the classroom, (ในห้องเรียน in Thai), *in* the picture (ในรูปภาพ in Thai), think *about* (คิดถึงเกี่ยวกับ in Thai), look *around* (มองรอบ ๆ in Thai), and talk *about* (พูดเกี่ยวกับ in Thai) due to the semantic transfer between Thai and English (Lukkhanasriwong, 2012).

Below are examples of negative semantic transfers between English and Thai prepositions.

#### English prepositions

##### Thai Prepositions

- **In** bed
  - **On** bed
- **Get in** the car
  - **Get on** the car
- **At** the same time
  - **In** the same time
- **Married to**
  - **Married with**

(Lukkhanasriwong, 2012)

Table 1 : Different meanings between Thai and English prepositions

<u>Prepositions</u>	<u>Thai</u>	<u>English</u>
At	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “in, at” (Higbie and Thinsan, 2002, p.275)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a specific time and place (Hewings, 1999)</li> </ul>
On	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “on, up in” (Noss, 1964, p.147)</li> <li>● “on, top, surface” (Indrambarya, 1995, p.102)</li> <li>● “attached to, on top of” (Higbie and Thinsan, 2002, p.280)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a surface and indication of day and date (Hewings, 1999)</li> </ul>
In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “inside” (Warotamasikkhadit, 1990, p.73)</li> <li>● “at, in” (Higbie and Thinsan, 2002, p.275)</li> <li>● “in, inside” (Higbie and Thinsan, 2002, p.276)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a broader area and a longer period of time (Hewings, 1999)</li> </ul>
With	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “together, along with” (Higbie and Thinsan, 2002, p.285)</li> <li>● “at, to” (Bennui, 2008, p.86)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● action to do something (Hewings, 1999, p.110)</li> </ul>

(Lukkhanasriwong, 2012, p.10)

According to Table 1, it can be seen that Thai prepositions can convey more meanings than English prepositions. Because Thai prepositions can convey various different and added meanings, negative transfer is unavoidable. Examples can be seen from the study of Bennui (2008), in which Thai students produced the sentence consisting of English prepositions, for example: “I smiled *with* my new friends in AUA language classes and introduce myself.” In this case, the English preposition “*with*”

can mean the same as the Thai prepositions “*at*” or “*to*”.

This can be seen that English prepositions could cause confusing for Thai learners, so alternative teaching English approaches should be considered. For this research, “Input-based instruction” and “Production-based instruction” are chosen to be studied.

## **Input-based instruction and Production-based instruction**

### **a. Input-based instruction**

This approach is under “Cognitive Approach”. Ellis (1990) pointed out that this approach would help learners transfer the new knowledge to the previous knowledge they had before. This can also be seen from “Input Processing” introduced by VanPatten (1996, p.164) that learners would learn “Input” (the new knowledge) and this would be transferred to learners’ comprehension called “Intake” by image and learners eventually develop this to their learning process which would be short term or long term memory. In the cognitive view of language, input and implicit knowledge correlate due to three processes. The first is ‘noticing’ which occurs when learners perceive particular language characteristics from the input. The second is ‘comparing’ which occurs when learners compare characteristics from what they notice (noticing) to their production of output. Lastly, ‘integrating’ occurs when learners create new assumptions in an attempt to connect characteristics resulting from the ‘noticing’ process to their existing knowledge (Ellis, 1997b). In this instruction approach, enhanced-input and structured-input methods will be applied. According to Ellis (2012, p.285), enhanced-input occurs when learners are given highlighted input. On the other hand, the structured-input approach uses activities in which the learner uses to show an understanding of the target features, such as matching sentences with pictures. Rassaei (2012) explained that textual enhancement and input enrichment could help learners to pay more attention on specific features due to the frequency of increased forms. This is relevant to Noticing Hypothesis of Schmidt’ (1990

cited in Rassaei, 2012) which stated that if learners can notice target features, they can convert from “Input” to “Intake”. This can be implied that learners should learn implicitly to notice the target forms. Ellis (1997b) explained implicit knowledge that consists of formulaic knowledge and rule-based knowledge are innate, and in which the learners do not know that they are learning. Thibeau (1999) applied structured- input to his research and it positively affected the students’ performance in learning English phrasal verbs. The previous research studies which also successfully applied input-based instruction in teaching and learning English prepositions such as Ganji (2011), Waehayi (2012), and Lee (2012) who used images in their class activities in teaching English phrasal verbs.

### **b. Production-based instruction**

This approach is under “Communicative Approach”. A number of scholars have proposed this theory. For instance, Hymes (1972 cited in Bagaric, 2007, p.95) introduced “Communicative Competence” which is the ability of using grammatical features in a number of situations. Ellis (1997a) explained implicit grammar instruction as that in which learners learn grammar by practicing it in meaning-oriented ways. Littlewood (1998) stated that a teacher should prepare activities which motivate learners to practice and monitor them to learn necessary grammar. Long (1991) stated that this approach should be applied to various situations in learners’ lives both inside and outside class. However, to avoid the problem that some grammar might not be suitable for communicative tasks, implicit instruction would be applied and corrective feedback given to ensure the students’ understanding.

Shintani, Li and Ellis (2013) mentioned that production-based instruction focuses on communication, so giving corrective feedback can give more opportunities to learners to understand more on target features.

The previous research studies which successfully applied production-based instruction in teaching and learning English prepositions such as games, role plays, and simulation from Buyukkarci (2010) and English songs from Pongsai (2010).

#### Scope of the research

The comparison of the effectiveness between “input-based instruction” and “production-based instruction” in teaching English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at” to two groups of participant with different English levels.

#### Objectives of the research

1. To investigate whether “input-based instruction” or “production-based instruction” can facilitate English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at” learning.

2. To investigate whether “input-based instruction” or “production-based instruction” can help learners to retain their memory to learn English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at”.

3. To investigate whether “input-based instruction” or “production-based instruction” is more effective in teaching English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at” to different learners’ English level.

#### Research Methodology

This section would explain how the research was conducted.

#### Research population and sample

One hundred non-English major students who registered to take English 2 in semester 1/2015 from three sections (section 1 = 33, section 7 = 34, section 24 = 33) were population in this study. They all asked to take a pre-test. Then, the students who got the highest scores were eliminated from consideration for participation in this study. If students were very good at using English prepositions, they could do the test very well and they may know that this research was about learning English prepositions.

#### Variables

Dependent variable: “input-based instruction”, and “production-based instruction”

Independent variable: Participants’ scores of pre-test, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest

#### Method of data collection

The remaining forty-six students were from population after taking the pre-test and divided into two equal groups of twenty-three students (Group A and Group B). Group A consisted of five social science students and eighteen science students. Similarly, there are eight social science students and fifteen science students in Group B. The participants were asked to join this research outside their usual class time. “Input-based instruction” was used with Group A and “Production-based instruction” was applied to Group B. Data was collected and categorized as follows.

Table2: Research plan

Days	Duration	GROUP A: Input-based instruction (Experimental group)	Group B: Production-based instruction (Comparison group)
Day 1	2 hours	Activity	Activity
	1 hour	Immediate Posttest	Immediate Posttest
Day 2	1 hour	Delayed Posttest (one month later)	Delayed Posttest (one month later)

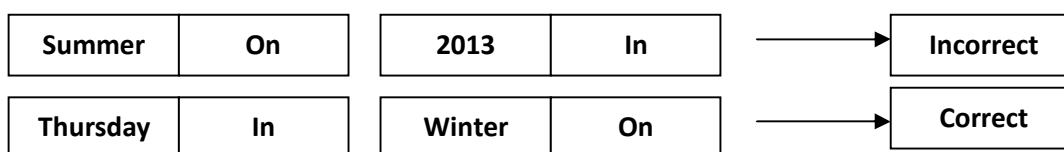
When analyzing data, students in each approach would also be grouped as high and low levels. If they got the pretest scores between 0 and 2, they were grouped as low level (LA: low level students in “Input-based instruction”, LB: low level students in “Production-based instruction”). However, the students whose pre-test scores were more than 2 were grouped as high level (HA: high level students in “Input-based instruction”, HB: high level students in “Production-based instruction”).

Prepositions could not be explained explicitly to the participants. However, the participants could implicitly learn by participating in class activities and receiving corrective feedback from an instructor. In other words, they did not know that they were learning the English prepositions of time or place, ‘in’ on’, and ‘at’. There were two approaches in this research: “Input-based instruction” and “Production-based instruction”.

#### a. Input-based instruction

In this study, class exercises would be used to apply the structured-input approach because the students could learn the English prepositions many times when playing dominoes. This method could support the learners to learn without their awareness or implicit knowledge that they were doing so.

One participant started playing a game by taking one card in front of the class that contained two halves: one word and one preposition and placed it at a blackboard. Then, another student would take another card that went with English prepositions of the time or place from the previous card. If any participant chooses the wrong card that does not match the previous one, corrective feedback from the instructor would be applied so that the participants would learn preposition usage. For instance, Are you sure? Is that right? On 2013? Followings are examples of matching cards.



After completing all dominoes, each participant was required to make sentences about themselves using a prepositional phrase reflected in the cards.

#### b. Production-based instruction

In this study, the researcher applied implicit instruction to the students by using materials which contain target English prepositions allowing the students to notice the rules implicitly. Thereafter, the students practiced using English prepositions. In this stage, the teacher may apply corrective feedback to correct a student's response.

Every participant was asked to answer eighteen questions in full sentences. They had to work in a group of 4-5 students. After that, a teacher would randomly ask the participants those questions verbally. Moreover, the teacher would motivate every participant to express their ideas. When the participants answered the questions, they would automatically use the target prepositions. The following items are examples of questions used in this activity.

- Do you have a birthday in July?
- When were you born?
- Do you live in Bangkok?

If they used a wrong preposition, corrective feedback could be given to reinforce proper usage to help the participants learn the target preposition usage. The following is the example how the first question was used in this approach:

**Teacher:** Do you have a birthday in July?

**Students:** No

Yes, I do.

**Teacher:** Student 1. You were not born in July. What month?

**Student 1:** January.

**Teacher:** OK. You were born in January.

**Teacher:** Student 4, when were you born?

**Student 4:** I born on 1999.

**Teacher:** I born on 1999?

**Student 4:** I was born on 1999.

**Teacher:** I was born on 1999?

**Student 4:** I was born in 1999.

**Teacher:** Very good. Before moving on to the next question, student 10 please share the best birthday in your life to the class

### Research instruments

There were two instruments in this research: a pre-test and two post-tests (immediate and delayed). Both the pre-test and the post-tests were the same to measure the effectiveness of the teaching approaches. Error detection was applied to measure the participants' understanding and to ensure that they could not guess the answers. In other words, the participants did not know that they were being tested for their English preposition usage and target words covered the English prepositions of time and place 'in', 'on' and 'at'. Following are examples of sample questions from the pre-test and the post-tests.

Instructions: Circle one mistake in each sentence and correct it in the provided space. If you do not know the answer, please do not answer the question and circle "I don't know".

- I had lived at Nan before I moved to Chiang Rai.

Correct the mistake \_\_\_\_\_ I don't know

- I will go to Tesco Lotus in Thursday to buy new clothes.

Correct the mistake \_\_\_\_\_ I don't know

The above examples show that the questions do not provide the participants any indication that they were being tested for their preposition usage. If they do not circle the preposition in the sentence or if they circle the answer "I don't know", it can be predicted that they did not understand preposition usage and they would not receive any mark. If they circle the preposition, but they correct it wrong, they will get one mark. If a participant circles the preposition and corrects it, they will get two marks. There are 30 questions. 60 marks total are possible. In addition, the teacher applied the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) to three experts who gave comments and advice about the tests before the participants took them as shown in Table 3 below. This was an important process to review and edit the tests before distributing to the participants.

Table3: Index of item-objective congruence: IOC

No.	Statements	Comments			Total	IOC	Meaning
		Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3			
1	This test is relevant to the objective of the research.	+1	0	+1	2	0.67	Appropriate
2	This test is appropriate for measuring preposition of place (in/on/at) usage.	+1	0	0	1	0.33	Not Appropriate
3	This test is appropriate for measuring preposition of time (in/on/at) usage.	+1	0	0	1	0.33	Not Appropriate
4	Language use is appropriate.	+1	+1	+1	3	1	Appropriate



No.	Statements	Comments			Total	IOC	Meaning
		Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3			
5	The numbers of questions is appropriate.	+1	0	+1	2	0.67	Appropriate
6	Format is easy to follow.	+1	0	+1	2	0.67	Appropriate
7	Rubric is used appropriately.	0	+1	+1	2	0.67	Appropriate
8	Instructions are clear for participants	+1	+1	0	2	0.67	Appropriate
9	Contents in questions are appropriate for English level of participants.	+1	+1	+1	3	1	Appropriate
10	Test duration is appropriate.	+1	+1	0	0.67	0.67	Appropriate
	IOC	6.68/10 = 0.67					Appropriate

### Data analysis

#### Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data analysis was conducted by applying the t-test which was used to compare the results of the participants' scores of immediate post-tests and the delayed post-tests between the two groups of participants such as mean scores, standard deviation, and p values. These can help analyze whether "input-based instruction" or "production-based instruction" is appropriate to assist learning to learners with various English level.

### Results

T-test was conducted to the different pre-test and post-tests (immediate and delayed) mean scores of the two groups. Sixty was the maximum possible score. The results of the study are divided into three sections: a comparison of Group A and Group B (all participants), a comparison of Group LA and Group LB (the pre-test scores between 0 and 2), and the comparison between Group HA and Group HB (the pre-test scores more than 2).

#### A. The comparison of scores between Group A and Group B (all participants)

Table 4: Mean Scores and SD of Group A and Group B

	PRE-TEST	IMMEDIATE POST-TEST	DELAYED POST-TEST
GROUP A	Mean 3.48 SD 2.63	Mean 34 SD 17.40	Mean 38.96 SD 17.58
GROUP B	Mean 7.22 SD 5.27	Mean 19 SD 14.88	Mean 26.17 SD 19

Table 5: P Values of Group A and Group B

	P Value (Immediate post-test and Delayed post-test)
GROUP A	0.07
GROUP B	0.004

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Overall, students in both groups improved their usage of these prepositions from pre-test to both the immediate and delayed post-tests respectively. According to Table 4, the mean scores of participants in Group A improved (Mean = 3.48, 34, 38.96/ SD = 2.63, 17.40, 17.58) while those scores of Group B were 7.22, 19, and 26.17 respectively (SD = 5.27, 14.88, 19). When comparing both groups, as reflected in Table 5, there was a highly significant difference in the immediate post-test and delayed post-test scores of Group B (P value of 0.004). However, there was no significant difference between the immediate post-test and delayed post-test scores of Group A (P value = 0.07).

#### B. The comparison of scores between Group LA and Group LB (the pre-test scores between 0 and 2)

Table 6: Mean Scores and SD of Group LA and Group LB

	PRE-TEST	IMMEDIATE POST-TEST	DELAYED POST-TEST
GROUP LA	Mean 0.56 SD 0.88	Mean 20.56 SD 18.14	Mean 28.67 SD 18.19
GROUP LB	Mean 0.63 SD 0.92	Mean 18.5 SD 21.52	Mean 22.13 SD 26.3

Table 7: P Values of Group LA and Group LB

	P Value (Immediate post-test and Delayed post-test)
GROUP LA	0.08
GROUP LB	0.23

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

There were nine participants in group LA and eight participants in Group LB. Even though they had low pre-test scores, they could appreciably improve their usage of the target prepositions. This can be seen by comparing the mean scores from all three tests of both groups as shown in Table 6. Mean scores of Group LA were 0.56, 20.56, 28.67 (SD = 0.88, 18.14, 18.19) while those of Group LB were 0.63, 18.5, and 22.13 (SD = 0.92, 21.52, 26.3) respectively. Nevertheless, according to Table 7, students in both Group LA and Group LB could not do the tests better since there was no significant difference in the scores between the immediate post-test and delayed post-test (P values = 0.08 and 0.23 orderly).

## C. The comparison of scores between Group Ha and Group HB (the pre-test scores more than 2)

Table 8: Mean Scores and SD of Group HA and Group HB

	PRE-TEST	IMMEDIATE POST-TEST	DELAYED POST-TEST
GROUP HA	Mean 5.36	Mean 42.64	Mean 45.57
	SD 1.22	SD 9.71	SD 14.1
GROUP HB	Mean 10.73	Mean 19.27	Mean 28.33
	SD 2.29	SD 10.79	SD 14.39

Table 9: P Values of Group HA and Group HB

	P Value (Immediate post-test and Delayed post-test)
GROUP HA	0.26
GROUP HB	0.004

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

There were fourteen participants in Group HA and fifteen participants in group HB. It is clearly seen that mean scores and SD indicate that students of both groups improved their use of the target prepositions noticeably. This can be seen by comparing the mean scores from all three tests of both groups as shown in Table 8. The mean scores of Group HA were 5.36, 42.64, 45.57 (SD = 1.22, 9.71, 14.1) while those of group HB were 10.73, 19.27, and 28.33 (SD = 2.29, 10.79, 14.39) respectively. Interestingly, there was no significant difference between the immediate post-test and delayed post-test scores of Group HA (P value = 0.26). On the other hand, there was a highly significant difference between the immediate post-test and the delayed post-test scores of Group HB (P value = 0.004).

### Discussion

The results of the study can answer the research objectives as follows:

1. To investigate whether “input-based instruction” or “production-based instruction” can facilitate English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at” learning.

This can be seen that participants in both groups can learn English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at” very well. According to Table 4, the participants’ mean scores between pre-test and immediate posttest of both groups improved (Group A: Mean 3.48 and 34, Group B: Mean 7.22 and 19). However,

this cannot be said that both approaches should be applied or fit in all classroom settings. All participants were asked to take an immediate posttest after completing activities, so their short term memory might be still fresh.

2. To investigate whether “input-based instruction” or “production-based instruction” can help learners to retain their memory to learn English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at”.

The results showed that participants in Group B improved their preposition usage more than those in Group A. This is because one month

after taking the immediate post-test, all participants were required to take a delayed post-test which was the same test as the immediate post-test. When comparing the immediate post-test scores and the delayed post-test scores of the two groups, it is clearly seen from Table 5 that students learnt from “Production-based instruction” improved the most (P value = 0.004). Nonetheless, it cannot be certain that the “Production-based instruction” approach is more effective than the “Input-based instruction” approach in teaching the target prepositions because the results vary when the participants were analyzed separately. It could be said that learning autonomy or autonomous learner is one of learning goals in English language teaching and learning, retaining memory was raised in this study. As it was mentioned earlier that Thai students may feel difficult when they apply English preposition in communication due to the differences between Thai and English structures, learning implicitly might be helpful. If the students can develop cognitive abilities to learn, they can also notice the rules by themselves in other grammar elements and this may help them learn faster.

**3. To investigate whether “input-based instruction” or “production-based instruction” is more effective in teaching English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at” to different learners’ English level.**

Learner differences such as English level can affect students’ learning in a classroom and eventually an applied teaching approach/method. Therefore, participants’ pretest scores were concerned. Participants who got between 0 and 2 in the pre-test were categorized as low level since they could

not find preposition errors in the test. For those who got more than 2, however, were in a higher level.

When analyzing scores of high level of participants, it was found that they improved quicker than those who scored between 0 and 2 after being subjected to the “Production-based instruction” approach. This could be predicted that students who scored more than 2 on the pre-test had a long term performance (P value = 0.004, according to Table 8). This might be because the students who had higher level may have better understanding complicated grammar elements and can apply well. Thus, learning implicitly may work well with these participants.

On the other hand, students who had low pre-test scores and learnt from “Input-based instruction” (P value = 0.08, according to Table 6) improved the second most. It seems that the “Input-based instruction” approach was more effective for those students who had low pre-test scores. This is relevant to Ellis (2006, p.102) who said that grammar may not be effective if learners don’t have enough English level. In addition, Swain (1985, p.78) said that the complicated rules of grammar may affect learners if they are taught by communicative tasks.

According to class activities of the two approaches, it could be seen that teaching implicitly could assist the students to notice and produce the English prepositions at the same time. This is similar to the research study of Shintani (2011) who compared the vocabulary acquisition between input-based instruction and production-based instruction and found out that the learners could have opportunities to produce Chinese adverb from the first approach and the second

approach could help the learners to notice the input.

In addition to the class activities which a teacher can select or design to suit learners, feedback is also significant. According to the study, the researcher also gave feedback to the participants in both teaching approaches. This can help the learners to negotiate meaning and improve their learning ability.

It seems that both “input-based instruction” and “production-based instruction” are effective in teaching and learning the English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at” to Thai university students. They can also retain their memory. This may depend on classroom settings and how a teacher can apply the teaching approach/method. It cannot be denied that classroom is dynamic even if a teacher tries very hard to select the best approach/method. In addition to students’ English level, many things can be factors in teaching and learning English such as class size, topics or themes that can motivate or relate to the learners or learner differences such as age, background knowledge or experiences, or even if personalities which can affect how they engage in prepared activities/tasks or response questions from a teacher. Therefore, it is teacher considerations.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, both “input-based instruction” and “production-based instruction” can assist students to retain memory in using English prepositions “in”, “on”, and “at”. However, this might depend on students’ English background. “Input-based instruction” is effective for low English level students while “Production-based instruction” is effective for students who

have higher English levels in retaining memory to learn English prepositions of place and time “in”, “on”, and “at”. The researcher can also apply these two approaches to teaching other English prepositions, phrasal verbs, or other grammar elements.

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