

# Enhancing English Proficiency for Thai Music Professionals: A CLT Instructional Package

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## Abstract

The study aims to achieve three primary objectives: 1) To identify essential components for developing an instructional package aimed at enhancing English proficiency among individuals working in the Thai music industry; 2) To design an instructional package specifically tailored to improve the English proficiency of personnel in the Thai music industry; and 3) To implement the developed instructional package and assess its effectiveness in advancing English proficiency among music industry personnel. Employing the principles in developing an ESP course, the study comprises three phases: need analysis, instructional package development, and implementation. The need analysis phase involved surveying 150 individuals employed in the Thai music industry using a structured questionnaire. The instructional package development phase enlisted the expertise of five experts to evaluate the instructional model. Finally, phase three involved administering a pre-posttest study with 30 music professionals. The results highlight the successful creation of an English instructional package based on communicative language teaching (CLT) principles, leading to significant enhancements in participants' English proficiency. The study's significance lies in its identification of English language development needs within the music profession and its provision of a practical methodology for designing specialized English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses tailored to the unique requirements of music professionals.

**Keywords:** CLT, Music ESP, music professions, career development

## 1. Introduction

The music sector holds significant importance in the worldwide economy, making substantial contributions to job opportunities, economic expansion, and cultural enrichment. As evidenced by The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (2023), the global recorded music market experienced a growth of 7.4% in 2020, underscoring the industry's resilience in the face of adversity. Beyond the visible roles of performers and vocalists, this sector encompasses a diverse range of professions, including composers, producers, managers, technicians, and educators, all of whom play integral roles within the economic framework. Furthermore, music serves as a catalyst for various ancillary industries such as tourism, hospitality, and merchandise, further amplifying its economic influence (Stipanović et al., 2020). For example, live concerts and music festivals serve as drivers for local economies by attracting visitors, creating employment opportunities, and bolstering regional businesses.

In Thailand, a nation heavily reliant on its tourism and entertainment sectors, the music profession holds significant economic importance. According to data from the Office of Creative Economy Promotion (2019), the Thai music industry generated a value of 1,478 million baht, comprising 0.1 percent of the total creative industry value, which stood at 1,461,788 million baht. Analysis of data spanning the past five years, from 2014 to 2019, reveals a consistent upward trend in the economic contribution of the music industry. This sector encompasses various economic activities, including music recording duplication, sound recording for media, music publishing, distribution, copyright management, and music education.

However, individuals working in the Thai music industry encounter challenges in advancing and stabilizing their careers. As noted by Chaumklang et al. (2023), a majority of music industry personnel in Thailand are employed in nightlife establishments and lack formal employment contracts. Consequently, they are excluded from national

social security programs, depriving them of benefits and welfare. Moreover, during nationwide crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, music professionals face severe impacts as nightclubs and live music venues are shuttered, leaving them without income.

Improving English proficiency could significantly enhance the quality of life for personnel in the Thai music profession. Proficiency in English enables them to effectively communicate with a global audience, refine their musical skills, and explore a wider range of job opportunities (Lesiak-Bielawska, 2014). However, teaching English to individuals in the music profession poses unique challenges, particularly in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context where learners have limited exposure to the language in their work and daily lives (Harmandaoğlu Baz, 2023). This challenge is exacerbated for those already working as musicians, who may no longer attend formal schooling and thus have limited opportunities to develop their English skills. Additionally, music professionals, particularly music majors, face time constraints due to the demanding nature of practicing their craft, which often leaves little room for language learning. Consequently, it is unsurprising that English proficiency remains one of the most significant challenges faced by individuals in the music profession (Gerbe & Gerrity, 2007).

Taking into account that personnel in the Thai music industry have limited exposure to English and little time to dedicate to skill development, the approach to teaching English for music professionals must be tailored to their specific career needs. Therefore, adopting a communicative language teaching (CLT) method would be particularly suitable for their circumstances. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an instructional approach that prioritizes meaningful communication and interaction in the target language (Littlewood, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). It emphasizes real-life language use and situational contexts, focusing on developing learners' ability to express themselves effectively in various situations (Santos & Miguel, 2020).

Therefore, the CLT approach could be an alternative solution for music professionals as it caters to their practical needs and objectives. Instead of fixating solely on grammar and vocabulary, CLT prioritizes crucial communication skills like speaking and listening, vital for musicians who often collaborate with international artists, communicate with audiences, or negotiate business agreements. Through participation in authentic language tasks pertinent to their field—such as discussing music genres, conducting interviews, or negotiating contracts—music professionals can cultivate English proficiency that directly contributes to their career progression and enriches their overall quality of life.

Hence, the primary objective of the present study is to craft an instructional package tailored to enhance the English proficiency of individuals within the Thai music industry, driven by an investigation into their specific needs for career-oriented language development. The study endeavors to achieve the following aims: 1) To examine the requisite elements for formulating an instructional package aimed at fostering English proficiency among personnel in the Thai music industry; 2) To construct an instructional package designed to enhance the English proficiency of individuals employed in the Thai music industry; and 3) To execute the implementation of the instructional package, thereby facilitating the advancement of English proficiency among personnel in the Thai music industry.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Need Analysis on ESP for Music*

The need analysis process holds significant importance in the selection of English teaching methods, as it identifies the skills that learners truly aspire to acquire and perceive as crucial for their development. Defined as a systematic approach to gathering and evaluating information about learner needs, including specific objectives, language preferences, initial proficiency levels, and desired proficiency targets, the need analysis process entails collecting data from various sources, such as company personnel, instructors, and the learners themselves (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Ellis & Johnson, 1994). It serves as a cornerstone in shaping forthcoming educational strategies by empowering educators to grasp students' motivations and preferences, thereby facilitating the identification and validation of curriculum objectives that effectively cater to the language learning needs within specific educational settings. Furthermore, this process aids in comprehending students' motivations and preferences, as well as in defining and affirming curriculum objectives aligned with the language learning requirements of specific institutions (Kosimov & Nozimakhon, 2022). Additionally, Nation and Macalister (2010) delineated twenty design concepts for language curriculum, categorizing them into three primary domains: content and sequence, structure and delivery, and assessment and evaluation.

Scholars have conducted academic inquiries into the need analysis of English for music education, uncovering various insights. Hapsari (2015) discovered that music students perceive a necessity to learn English specifically for crafting meaningful song lyrics. Buakhampan (2020) highlighted that a significant proportion of respondents

expressed a preference for enhancing their speaking skills, identifying speaking as the most challenging aspect of language acquisition among Lanna musicians. Notably, they struggled with naming and describing parts of musical instruments as part of their learning content. Meanwhile, Harmandaoğlu Baz (2023) observed that music learners exhibit enthusiasm for English language acquisition, recognizing its importance for both communication and academic purposes. However, they may lack the requisite qualifications and effective strategies as language learners. As such, Harmandaoğlu Baz suggests pedagogical recommendations for language instructors and policymakers to address these challenges.

### *2.2 Communicative Language Teaching: CLT*

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach emerges as a promising solution to address language learning challenges, particularly in contexts where practical language skills are paramount. Rooted in the belief that language acquisition should prioritize effective communication, CLT is a comprehensive approach to language instruction. As described by Richards and Rodgers (2001), CLT is characterized by a theoretical framework and research paradigm aimed at developing learners' communicative competence—the ability to utilize the language proficiently in real-world situations. This approach, advocated by Hymes (1971), emphasizes the cultivation of learners' communicative abilities. While CLT lacks strict and universally defined characteristics, it serves as an umbrella term for various adaptable approaches tailored to specific educational environments. This adaptability acknowledges the significance of context, empowering educators to personalize their communication-oriented language teaching (COLT) strategies, as suggested by Littlewood (2011). By prioritizing practical language skills and real-life communication scenarios, CLT offers a holistic approach to language learning that aligns with the diverse needs and objectives of learners.

### *2.3 Previous Studies on CLT Approach in Music*

Previous studies have explored the integration of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses within the realm of music education, yielding positive outcomes. Kovačević (2019) designed an ESP course syllabus tailored to art music in the contemporary context, while Lebedieva (2023) focused on ESP writing as a practical means of cultural communication between Ukrainian music teachers and Chinese students. Lesiak-Bielawska (2014) developed an ESP course titled "English for Instrumentalists," addressing the specific language needs of musicians. Miralles-Alberola and Musté Ferrero (2020) utilized the drama "Whiplash" (2014) in an ESP course for higher music education, highlighting the effectiveness of innovative instructional materials. Sundrarajun (2022) indicated the efficacy of Soft Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), a CLT teaching approach, in teaching English for Music Business Course. Additionally, Wakeland (2013) contributed to the field by developing an English for specific academic purposes course tailored for music students. These studies collectively underscore the advantages of incorporating the CLT approach into ESP courses for music education, demonstrating its potential to enhance language acquisition and proficiency among learners in this specialized field.

It is noteworthy to mention that the instructional techniques intrinsic in the CLT approach have demonstrated efficacy in facilitating ESP music courses. Nevertheless, it is critical to emphasize that prior investigations primarily encompassed subjects enrolled in colleges or universities, with scant scholarly attention given to professional musicians. In response to this research void, the current study aims to design and implement an instructional package that utilizes the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodology to improve the English language skills of music professionals operating in Thailand. Our objective with this endeavor is to provide significant contributions to the field by examining the effectiveness of CLT-based instruction for this particular group, thus enhancing our comprehension of language learning approaches customized to the requirements of professional musicians.

## **3. Methodology**

### *3.1 Research Design*

The study was designed based on the principles of designing English for specific purposes courses as outlined by Strevens (1988), Robinson (1991), and Amel (2017). Consequently, it aimed to assess the needs of the target group, develop a course utilizing the most appropriate instructional methods, and implement it effectively with the target group. Thus, the study comprised three main phases as follows:

### *3.2 Phase 1 Examining the Requisite Elements for Formulating an Instructional Package Aimed at Fostering English Proficiency among Personnel in the Thai Music Industry*

Phase 1 of this study is dedicated to addressing the language skill enhancement needs encountered by personnel within the Thai music industry. The research methodology involves analyzing documents, textbooks, and

relevant literature to formulate a questionnaire that delves into language-related challenges and requirements. The study participants comprised 150 individuals actively engaged in various roles within the Thai music industry, including professional musicians, music educators, sound engineers, and record producers. They were selected through convenient sampling methods. The instrument in this phase was a questionnaire developed in the current study. In detail, the questionnaire, constructed on a 5-point Likert scale, encompassed 25 items covering topics such as challenges in the Thai music profession, the necessity of English for various purposes including preparedness for traveling and living abroad, job applications in the international music industry, and working as a musician overseas. The questionnaire items exhibited a high level of internal consistency with an item-total correlation (IOC) ranging between 0.6 and 1.0.

### 3.3 Phase 2 Developing an Instructional Package Designed to Enhance the English Proficiency of Individuals Employed in the Thai Music Industry

In Phase 2, an instructional package aimed at improving the English proficiency of individuals working in the Thai music industry was developed and assessed. The study involved 5 experts in both music education and English language teaching. The instruments used for this phase included the initial draft of the instructional package designed to enhance English proficiency among personnel in the Thai music industry, as well as a package evaluation form for assessing its effectiveness and appropriateness.

### 3.4 Phase 3 The Implementation of the Instructional Package to Enhance English Proficiency among Personnel in the Thai Music Industry

In Phase 3 of this study, the primary aim is to execute an instructional package designed to enhance English proficiency among individuals in the Thai music industry. The sample group comprises 30 participants from various roles within the industry, including 12 professional musicians, 8 music teachers, 5 sound engineers, and 5 sound technicians. Participants were chosen through purposive sampling while ensuring the confidentiality of their personal information.

The instruments utilized in this phase consist of the instructional package tailored to improve English proficiency within the Thai music industry, along with a proficiency test comprising 50 multiple-choice questions developed specifically for the study. These questions were designed to assess participants' language skills and knowledge relevant to their English needs in music. During the trial process, the test displayed a difficulty range of 0.3-0.6, discrimination values ranging from 0.25-0.44, and a reliability coefficient of 0.82, as tested by Cronbach's alpha.

The implementation of the instructional package spanned 4 weeks in August 2023, covering topics such as English proficiency necessary for international travel preparation, adapting to life abroad, job application in the music industry, and English skills specific to music work. Classes were conducted on weekends, and the attendees willingly engaged. The effectiveness of the instructional package was evaluated through a comparison of participants' pretest and posttest scores. Data analysis involved mean score computation, standard deviation calculation, and a paired samples t-test.

## 4. Result

### 4.1 A need Analysis on English for Music Professions

Table 1. Informants' demographics

<b>Career</b>	Professional musician (n=118, 78.76%)	Music teacher (n = 14, 9.33%)	Sound engineer (n= 8, 5.33%)	Sound technician (n=5, 3.33%)	Others (n=5, 3.33%)
<b>Experience</b>	5-10 years (n= 54, 36%)	1-5 years (n=42, 28%)	10-15 (n=33, 22%)	More than 15 years (n= 21, 14%)	
<b>Gender</b>	Male (n=112, 74.66%)	Female (n=25, 16.66%)	LGBTQ (n=13, 8.66%)		
<b>Age</b>	36-45 (n=75, 50%)	26-35 (n = 40, 26.66%)	15-25 (n= 19, 12.66%)	More than 46 (n=16, 10.66%)	
<b>Educational level</b>	Batchelor's degree (n = 98, 65.33%)	Lower than bachelor's degree (n = 44, 29.33%)	Higer than bachelor's degree (n = 8, 5.33)		
<b>Self-report English proficiency</b>	Limited (n= 80, 53.33%)	Average (n= 64, 42.66%)	Good ( n= 6, 4%)		

Regarding the demographic profile of the participants, out of the total 150 respondents, 118 (78.76%) identified as professional musicians, 14 (9.33%) as music teachers, 8 (5.33%) as sound engineers, 5 (3.33) as sound

technicians, and 5(3.33%) reported other music-related professions. In terms of professional experience, 54 (36%) participants had 5-10 years of experience, 42 (28%) had 1-5 years, 33 (22%) had 10-15 years, and 21 (14%) had over 15 years of experience. In relation to gender distribution, 112 participants (74.66) identified as male, 25 (16.66%) as female, and 13 (8.66%) as LGBTQ. Regarding age demographics, 75 participants (50%) were aged 36-45, 40 (26.66%) were aged 26-35, 19 (12.66%) were aged 15-25, and 16 (10.66%) were over 46 years old. Regarding educational attainment, 98 (65.33%) held bachelor's degrees, 44 (29.33%) had educational qualifications below a bachelor's degree, and 8 (5.33%) possessed qualifications higher than a bachelor's degree. Regarding self-assessed English proficiency, 80 participants (53.33%) reported having limited English skills, 64 (4.266 %) reported average proficiency, while 6 (4 %) reported possessing good English skills.

Table 2. Needs for developing English proficiency of music professions in Thailand

Issues	$\bar{x}$	S.D
Challenges in the music profession in Thailand	4.28	0.65
English proficiency required for preparing to travel abroad	4.27	0.65
English skills for adjusting to life abroad	4.34	0.65
English for Job application in the music industry	4.30	0.64
English for music work	4.13	0.76
<b>Average</b>	4.26	0.67

The research findings highlight significant challenges faced by the sample group and underscore a pressing need to enhance English language skills for various facets of foreign employment. On average ( $\bar{x} = 4.26$ , S.D = 0.7), participants emphasized the importance of English proficiency for adapting to life abroad ( $\bar{x} = 4.34$ , S.D = 0.55), navigating job applications within the music industry ( $\bar{x} = 4.30$ , S.D = 0.64), addressing challenges inherent to the music profession in Thailand ( $\bar{x} = 4.28$ , S.D = 0.65), preparing for international travel ( $\bar{x} = 4.27$ , S.D = 0.65), and undertaking music-related work overseas ( $\bar{x} = 4.13$ , S.D = 0.76), respectively. These findings underscore the pressing need for improving English language skills across various dimensions of foreign employment. Thus, developing instructional packages aimed at enhancing the English proficiency of music professionals should address these multifaceted challenges, ultimately contributing to the sustainable improvement of their quality of life in Thailand.

#### 4.2 The Development of an Instructional Package Designed to Enhance the English Proficiency of Individuals Employed in the Thai Music Industry

The instructional package designed to enhance the English proficiency of individuals employed in the Thai music industry comprises four components: course objectives, course content, application of the course, and course evaluation. The structure of the instructional package includes four learning topics of English proficiency required for preparing to travel abroad, English skills for adjusting to life abroad, English for Job application in the music industry, and English for music work. When the course was evaluated by 5 experts, the research findings were as follows:

Table 3. The instructional Package evaluation

Issues of evaluation	$\bar{x}$	S.D
The process of conducting activities is comprehensive.	4.44	0.89
The content aligns with the activities.	4.65	0.83
The content is comprehensive.	4.66	0.88
Each teaching and learning activity is mutually relevant.	4.44	0.89
The instructional media are appropriately aligned with the activities.	4.56	0.84
The activities are suitable for the content and the participants' level of knowledge.	4.44	0.89
They can be practically applied.	4.86	0.78
The learning content aligns with the time available.	4.32	0.65
<b>Average</b>	4.57	0.85

The findings indicate that the draft version of the developed instructional package is highly suitable ( $\bar{x} = 4.57$ , S.D = 0.85). Upon examining the aspects, it was found that the content aligns with the activities ( $\bar{x} = 4.65$ , S.D = 0.83), the content is comprehensive ( $\bar{x} = 4.66$ , S.D = 0.88), and the instructional media are appropriately aligned with the activities and can be practically applied ( $\bar{x} = 4.56$ , S.D = 0.84), all of which were evaluated as highly suitable. Meanwhile, the completeness of the activity implementation process ( $\bar{x} = 4.44$ , S.D = 0.89), the

relevance of each teaching and learning activity ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.44, S.D = 0.89), the suitability of activities to the content and the participants' level of knowledge ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.44, S.D = 0.89), and the alignment of learning content with time ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.32, S.D = 0.65) were assessed as highly appropriate. In conclusion, it can be inferred that the developed instructional package is suitable for improving the English language proficiency of the target group.

#### 4.3 The Implementation of the Instructional Package to Enhance the English Proficiency of Individuals Employed in the Thai Music Industry

Table 4. The impact of the instructional package on participants' English proficiency

Test	n	Fullmark	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	t	Sig.
Pre-test	30	50	24.6	4.17	10.774*	.000
Post-test	30	50	36.06	3.96		

\* $p < 0.05$

The outcomes of the investigation demonstrate an enhancement in participants' English proficiency subsequent to their exposure to the instructional package aimed at improving English proficiency among individuals employed in the Thai music industry. A paired t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between participants' pre-test scores ( $\bar{x}$  = 24.6, S.D = 4.17) and post-test scores ( $\bar{x}$  = 36.06, S.D = 3.96), with a t-value of 10.774 and a p-value of 0.00. Considering the higher average post-test score, it can be inferred that the developed instructional package positively influenced participants' English proficiency.

## 5. Discussion

The findings of the study suggest a notable enhancement in participants' English proficiency subsequent to their engagement with the tailored instructional model, which was meticulously designed to address the specific needs of the sample. This improvement resonates with several pertinent issues. Primarily, the results shed light on the challenges faced by music professionals within the Thai English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. These individuals encounter difficulties not only in utilizing English in their daily lives but also in advancing their careers. Remarkably, these findings align with those of Gerbe & Gerrity (2007), who similarly identified the hurdles associated with using English in music professions within EFL settings. This predicament arises from the constrained time and limited exposure to the English language among music professionals. Given their demanding schedules and predominantly non-English-speaking environments, opportunities for language acquisition and practice are scarce, thus impeding their proficiency development. Consequently, the findings underscore the critical need for targeted interventions aimed at bolstering English language skills among music professionals in EFL contexts, thereby facilitating their career advancement and overall professional development.

The study's findings underscore the effectiveness of the instructional package, which was meticulously crafted in alignment with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This outcome resonates with prior research endeavors that have similarly integrated CLT principles into the design of their interventions (e.g., Kovačević, 2019; Lebedieva, 2023; Lesiak-Bielawska, 2014; Miralles-Alberola & Musté Ferrero, 2020; Wakeland, 2013, particularly in the creation of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses tailored to the field of music. CLT, as an approach to language instruction, prioritizes the development of communicative competence by emphasizing meaningful interaction and real-life language use. Its efficacy in this context can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, it prioritizes practical language skills directly applicable to real-world scenarios encountered by music professionals, such as collaborating with international artists or negotiating contracts. Secondly, CLT fosters learner autonomy and motivation by encouraging active participation and engagement in authentic language tasks. This approach not only enhances linguistic proficiency but also cultivates confidence and willingness to communicate in English. Additionally, CLT promotes an integrated approach to language learning, wherein language skills are developed holistically through the integration of speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities. By aligning with the professional needs and objectives of music professionals, CLT facilitates effective language learning outcomes and enhances their ability to navigate English-language contexts within the music industry.

One of the critical factors contributing to the success of the instructional package lies in its careful design tailored to address the specific needs of the sample group. In this regard, conducting a comprehensive need analysis emerges as a crucial step in the development process. Need analysis serves as a diagnostic tool, allowing researchers and educators to identify the specific language learning needs, preferences, and objectives of the target audience (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). By gaining insights into the learners' linguistic deficiencies, as well

as their professional and communicative requirements, instructional designers can tailor the content, activities, and methodologies of the instructional package to effectively address these needs. Moreover, need analysis enables educators to prioritize and allocate resources efficiently, focusing on areas where learners require the most support and guidance (Ellis & Johnson, 1994). Additionally, by involving learners in the need analysis process, educators can enhance learner engagement, motivation, and ownership of their language learning journey. Ultimately, need analysis ensures that the instructional package is not only relevant and engaging but also aligned with the learners' goals and objectives, thereby maximizing its effectiveness in facilitating language learning outcomes.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study endeavors to enhance the English proficiency of music personnel in the Thai industry through a comprehensive approach comprising need analysis, instructional package development, and implementation. The findings culminate in the creation of an English instructional package grounded in communicative language teaching (CLT) principles, resulting in significant improvements in participants' English proficiency levels. The study's contributions extend to the identification of English language development needs within the music profession and the provision of a viable methodology for designing specialized English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses tailored to the unique requirements of music professionals.

Moving forward, the implications of this study underscore the importance of integrating language education initiatives within the music industry to address the pressing need for English proficiency. Stakeholders in the field can leverage the insights gained from this study to develop targeted language training programs that align with the communication demands of the global music landscape. Additionally, the adoption of CLT principles in instructional design can enhance the effectiveness and relevance of language learning interventions, fostering authentic communication skills essential for professional success in the music industry.

However, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations of this study. Firstly, the sample size was relatively small, comprising a limited number of informants from the Thai music industry, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the absence of qualitative methodologies in the implementation phase hinders a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions of the instructional package. Future research endeavors should aim to address these limitations by expanding the sample size and incorporating qualitative approaches to provide nuanced insights into the efficacy and usability of language learning interventions for music professionals in Thailand.

### **Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

### **Informed consent**

Obtained.

### **Ethics approval**

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Canadian Center of Science and Education.

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### **Provenance and peer review**

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### **Data availability statement**

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

### **Data sharing statement**

No additional data are available.

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