Professional Development Needs of In-Service English Language Teachers in Thailand

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Abstract

This study, conducted on behalf of Thailand TESOL, investigated English language school teachers' professional development needs. The participants were 4,220 English language teachers in Thailand. An online questionnaire was randomly distributed via e-mails, a website, personal contacts, and Line groups. The four Likert-scale questionnaires asked the participants to complete five main parts, including 1) demographic information, 2) knowledge and skills development needs, 3) pedagogical development needs, 4) technological development needs, and 5) needs for involvement in future Thailand TESOL's activities. The questionnaire data were quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed using mean, standard deviations, percentages, and content analysis. The results showed that the teachers mostly needed to develop speaking, listening, pronunciation, and cross-cultural communication. Grammar and vocabulary were areas that needed to be improved the least. The teachers also needed to develop many pedagogical skills, e.g., creative material development, teaching speaking, game-based learning approach, 21st-century teaching management, teaching listening, and CEFR-based teaching. For technological development, most teachers needed to understand the technology-based/blended learning approaches and practice their technology and online material development skills. The study also revealed aspects of professional development, including preferred training designs, types, time duration, and channels. The results are helpful for policymakers, course designers, training organizations, and, of course, Thailand TESOL to provide appropriate assistance to meet the teachers' needs and improve the English teaching situation in Thailand.

Keywords: needs analysis, professional development, in-service teachers, primary schools, secondary schools, Thai EFL teachers

Introduction

Rapid societal changes and disruptive technology seem to challenge English language teachers to face greater academic and professional expectations. The COVID-19 has significantly altered education worldwide from face-to-face classrooms to remote teaching on digital platforms (Li & Lalani, 2020). As a result, the role of teachers in this transformed educational situation has been disrupted

(Barron et al., 2021). With shifted teaching and learning paradigms, teachers seem to be highly expected to be able to design lessons, activities, and assessments to support students' learning in the transformed educational situation. While the academic and professional expectations are clear, the teacher may not feel confident in keeping up with innovative teaching ideas and techniques or using technology-based teaching in their classroom. This leads to a need to equip the English teachers with new pedagogical knowledge and practices and build their confidence in English language teaching (ELT) in their countries.

English language teachers in Thailand have not only faced these worldwide challenges but also experienced unsolved national problems. The fact that Thailand's English proficiency continually dropped from 53 to 64, 74 and 89 out of around 100 countries from 2017 to 2020 (*EF English proficiency index*, 2020) shakes English education in the country to the core. Additionally, when the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the British Council Thailand assessed 40,000 English teachers in Thailand in 2018, after the Common European Framework of References (CEFR) was adopted (Council of Europe, 2001), they set a target for the English language teachers to be at least B2. The results showed that about 75% of the teachers were ranked at the A2 level, and less than half had passed B1 (Mala, 2021). The demand for using English globally is high, but both Thai students' and teachers' English proficiency is low. This seems to be a tragic truth. Thus, the need to improve the standard of English language proficiency in Thai teachers is urgent (Watson Todd & Darasawang, 2020).

To deal with the English educational crisis, the MOE requires the English language teachers to participate in training workshops to improve their teaching knowledge and methods. Teacher professional development has been given to English teachers at all levels. Several teacher training workshops/courses have been offered by the MOE and other public and private institutions, universities, and organizations to help the teachers enhance their knowledge and skills as well as facilitate their professional promotion. One of these professional organizations is the Association of English Teachers in Thailand (Thailand TESOL).

Thailand TESOL is a non-profit professional organization for teachers of English. Its main goals are to assist English language teachers in Thailand to enhance their language skills, polish their methodological practices, improve teaching methods and techniques, and increase their confidence in their career. The organization has worked closely with English language teachers in Thailand for about 40 years. Throughout the journey, the organization has continually supported teachers in both academic and professional aspects. A variety of activities, e.g., training workshops/programs, English language projects, international conferences, publications, were designed and offered yearly without charge to the teachers around the country. For the organization to design workshops, programs, projects, conferences that meet the teachers' current demands, the teachers' professional needs analysis project was created. This paper reports the results from the needs assessment of school teachers in Thailand.

Literature Review

Professional Development of English Language Teachers in Thailand

English language teachers are one of the key factors in the success of EFL learners. Teachers have been expected to update innovative teaching ideas and approaches, improve their teaching, and increase their students' learning outcomes (Moeini, 2008; Watson Todd & Darasawang, 2020). Therefore, it is important for all English language teachers to seek professional development to enhance their language proficiency and their teaching knowledge and skills (Cansiz & Cansiz, 2015; Kawanami & Kawanami, 2012), especially when the COVID-19 pandemic disrupts education (Barron et al., 2021)

Similar to other ELT contexts, there have been many teacher training projects and programs offered to ELT school teachers at all levels in Thailand. After a change mandated by the National Education Act of 1999, a school-based professional development program was conducted under the framework of a coaching approach, as a model of delivery, and the Task-Based Learning (TBL) approach, as the content of professional development (Iemjinda, 2005). The program aimed to help the teachers increase their skills and knowledge in managing their classroom and acquire a positive attitude towards professional training and classroom outcomes. This small sample with six school teachers and three supervisors showed that the teachers were satisfied with the training program. It can help them implement the new curriculum successfully, reduce the complexity and ambiguity of curriculum innovation, and increase their confidence in solving difficulties in their instruction.

Various professional development methods and models were designed and have been used to train English language teachers in Thailand. The English Resources Information Centre (ERIC) project, for instance, was established by the Department of General Education, MOE, with the support from the U.K. government, during 1984–1992, to improve the quality of English teaching and learning at secondary and high school levels. The centers had major missions regarding teachers' professional development and useful teaching resources. One of the important responsibilities was to provide a yearly intensive English training program for English language teachers. By the end of the project, before the Department of General Education was changed into the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), there were a total of 88 ERICs all over the country, eight in central educational areas and 80 in regional educational areas. After the U.K. support ended in 1992, this project was continued by ERIC domestic staff, regional supervisors, and leading local teachers until the number reached 185 centers by 2020. This is a very successful model for developing English teachers' instructional knowledge and skills.

The Regional English Training Centres (RETC) project, known as the "Boot Camp," ran from October 2016 to September 2018, managed by the British Council Thailand, working in close partnership with the Thai MOE (British Council, n.d.). The project sought to transform the teaching of English in state primary and secondary schools across Thailand. Around 17,000 primary and secondary school teachers were trained to improve their communicative teaching skills, methodological practices,

and English proficiency. The "Boot Camp" started with 12 British Council international teacher trainers based in four centers and quickly expanded to 15 centers across Thailand. By the end of the three-week intensive courses, "90% of teachers felt more confident using English, just under 90% had improved their teaching skills" (British Council, n.d.).

After the Boot Camp project, ERIC was restructured to be the Human Capital Excellence Center (HCEC) with broader objectives. HCEC is expected to be the professional development center for teachers and educators (Rohitasthira, 2020). More specifically, 77 HCECs were launched in each province of Thailand to support the teachers' individual development and serve as testing and training centers of English literacy, digital literacy, and 21st-century skills (Hongkhuntod, 2020).

Despite these training programs and workshops provided for the English teachers, there has been little evidence of whether the programs meet the teachers' demands. Most of the teacher training programs were claimed not to meet the needs and demands of the teacher trainees as they may ignore an adequate assessment of teachers' professional development needs (e.g., Fonghoi et al., 2019; Ulla & Winitkun, 2018). The training programs designed with a lack of needs assessment may affect the outcomes of the training. To address this issue, an assessment of teachers' needs should be seriously considered before organizing training programs and workshops.

Needs Analysis for Professional Development

Needs analysis is described as the process of identifying needs, attitudes, expectations, and preferred learning/teaching styles before designing any courses (Thornbury, 2006). Needs analysis is important for teacher professional development as it can help inform policymakers, training designers/organizers about language proficiency, methodological practices, curriculum, material design, and assessment (e.g., Cansiz & Cansiz, 2015; Kawanami & Kawanami, 2012; Moeini, 2008).

A needs analysis has been explored in many ELT contexts. In 2006, for example, the Japanese government started implementing English as a compulsory subject in all public elementary schools. Even though the implementation guideline was published two years later, the teachers were anxious and confused as they lacked sufficient input and discussion on teacher training, materials development, curriculum design, class sizes, and the influence of English on the first language (Otsu, 2005, as cited in Kawanami & Kawanami, 2012). The study pointed out that the implementation was not successful due to the lack of teachers' needs assessment. Teachers believed that they should be prepared by attending sufficient training workshops or programs about teaching methods and activities (Moeini, 2008). In order to obtain an effective development plan for professional development, teachers' needs in teaching knowledge and language skills are required. Moreover, teachers' needs are essential in implementing innovation in English education (e.g., Kawanami & Kawanami, 2012; Moeini, 2008).

To summarize, needs analysis is the systematic data collection and examination of all subjective and objective information required to describe and validate professional development goals that support the teachers' needs within the learning and teaching context (Brown, 2006).

Studies on Professional Development Needs of ELT Teachers in Thailand

In Thailand, there are a number of previous studies regarding teachers' needs in professional development. These studies focused on English language teachers' needs and revealed that the teachers needed to learn more about new knowledge, teaching strategies, teaching methods, teaching different Englishes, and materials development (e.g., Fonghoi et al., 2019; Klingkerd, 2015; Noom-ura, 2013; Oeamoum & Sriwichai, 2020; Ulla & Winitkun, 2018).

Noom-ura (2013), for example, surveyed problems with English language teaching and learning and the professional development needs of 34 high-school teachers in Thailand. The findings showed that pre-service teachers' problems were related to curriculum and textbooks, assessment, and other factors supporting teaching success. The study also reported the top needed areas for professional development, including the teachers' communicative teaching strategies, teaching listening and speaking, teaching language and culture, and teaching writing. Similarly, Ulla and Winitkun (2018) investigated 22 primary in-service teachers' beliefs, needs, and challenges in Thailand's teacher training programs. The quantitative and qualitative data revealed that the teachers needed engaging workshops, relevant teaching strategies, and teaching methods to complement their existing teaching style and suit students' learning styles. A few studies also reported that in-service teachers needed to practice their own language skills besides methodological practice. In Noom-ura's study (2013), the in-service secondary school teachers said they needed to improve their own English proficiency to teach English effectively. A need to improve language skills was also found in the needs assessment of 40 primary school teachers in Bangkok (Klingkerd, 2015). The questionnaire data reported that the teachers needed to improve their listening and speaking skills.

The need to be able to integrate technology in English instruction was also highlighted in previous studies. Yutdhana (2004), for instance, explored teachers' use and needs of the Internet in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). The study found that 1) most teachers in the study used Internet applications when preparing their teaching and when in the classroom, 2) the teachers who used Internet applications mostly had good opinions about using them, 3) the teachers had many concerns about using the Internet for their instruction including professional, infrastructure, and administrative concerns, and 4) the teachers needed a training course in using Internet applications for EFL teaching. Klingkerd (2015) investigated the needs of primary school English teachers and uncovered the problems that primary English teachers encountered during professional development. The results showed that the teachers needed to develop themselves by employing information technology or the Internet to improve their profession. Not only did the in-service teachers need technology-based knowledge and practice, but a study of pre-service teachers' needs also revealed that the pre-service teachers from five Thai universities needed to use diverse instructional materials and integrate web-based technology in their English classes (Oeamoum & Sriwichai, 2020).

The reviewed literature suggested gaps in studies regarding needs analysis for English language teachers in Thailand. Most of the previous studies used a small sample size and focused on teachers at

one level (e.g., Fonghoi et al., 2019; Noom-ura, 2013; Oeamoum & Sriwichai, 2020; Ulla & Winitkun, 2018). The results may not be generalizable to English language teachers in Thai schools. Moreover, a framework of professional development used in the studies seemed to be vague. The present study aims to bridge these gaps. Thus, it should be worthwhile to assess teachers' needs in the disruptive education era across the country. Particularly, the needs for content, pedagogical and technological knowledge, and skill development are emphasized. Information regarding preferred training workshop designs, types, and training arrangements was also explored.

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) Framework

       The TPACK framework is suggested by many researchers and educators to be used as a framework for teachers' professional development**,** especially in the disruptive technology era (e.g., Drajati et al., 2018; Kurt, 2019; Tseng et al., 2019**)**. The TPACK framework **(**Mishra & Koehler, 2006**)** focuses on technological knowledge (TK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), and content knowledge (CK).

Figure 1

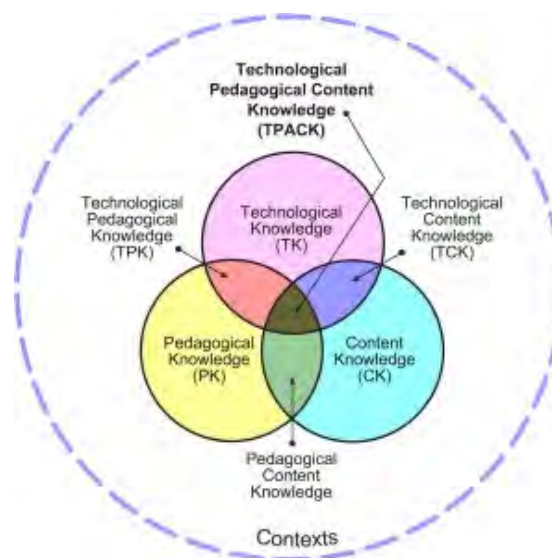*TPACK Framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006)*

       Figure 1 illustrates how these three types of knowledge work in relation to one another. The framework outlines how content, pedagogy, and technology can be interrelated in education. CK describes teachers' own knowledge of the subject matter. It may include knowledge of concepts, theories, evidence, and organizational frameworks within a particular subject matter. It may also include best practices and approaches to transmit content to students. PK means teachers' knowledge of the teaching and learning practices, processes, and methods. It may include more specific areas, i.e., understanding student learning styles, classroom management skills, lesson planning, and assessments.

TK explains teachers' understanding of educational technology and ability to use various technologies, technological tools, and associated resources to assist students' learning.

These three types of knowledge can interact with one another in three forms. Technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK) describes relationships and interactions between technological tools and specific pedagogical practices, while pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) describes the same between pedagogical practices and specific learning objectives. Finally, technological content knowledge (TCK) describes relationships and intersections among technologies and learning objectives. Mishra and Koehler (2006) suggested that there is no one monolithic combination of content, pedagogy, and technology for every setting and that TPACK is flexible for practitioners to adapt its framework to different circumstances.

As TPACK can be used to measure knowledge regarding content, pedagogy, and technology, knowing what the teachers need may potentially impact training and professional development offerings for teachers at all levels of experience. The present study, therefore, applied this framework as a guideline for the needs assessment. The results are expected to be useful for English language policymakers and the government, training centers, or the private sector organizations who are responsible for organizing professional development for English language teachers in Thailand.

Research Questions

The present study was guided by the research question: What are the needs in the professional development of in-service English language teachers in Thai schools? In particular, the study investigated the needs of primary and secondary school teachers in English language knowledge and skills development, pedagogical development, technology development, and the needs in Thailand TESOL involvement of the English language teachers.

Methodology

1. Participants

The participants of the study were 4,220 English language teachers from across Thailand. Approximately 81% were primary school teachers (n=3,439), and about 14% were secondary school teachers (n=589). The others (n=192, 5%) were teachers in the private sector, provincial schools, higher education, and unknown status. These teachers were randomly selected, and all agreed to complete an online survey voluntarily.

2. Research Instrument

The questionnaire

A questionnaire was used to investigate the needs for professional development of Thai English teachers. It was designed on the basis of the TPACK framework to explore the extent to which the teachers needed to develop themselves in technological, pedagogical, content, and knowledge about English language teaching. However, only three independent components of the TPACK model were the focus in the questionnaire (i.e., technological knowledge: TK, pedagogical knowledge: PK, and content knowledge: CK). The questionnaire consisted of five parts: 1) Thai English teachers' general information, 2) the needs for English knowledge and skills development, 3) the needs for pedagogical development, 4) the needs for technological development, and 5) the needs for Thailand TESOL involvement. The questionnaire was presented in the Thai language to avoid teachers' misunderstanding. It was designed with a four-Likert scale to enable teachers to express their attitudes clearly and avoid the teachers' neutral answers and ambiguity. The four-Likert scale includes the four descriptors: *most needed*, *much needed*, *less needed*, and *least needed*. At the end of each part, an open-ended question asking for other comments or suggestions is provided to gain detailed data. The questionnaire was validated by five experts who have more than 20 years of teaching experience and used to chair the ELT organization in the country. It was then revised based on the comments. After the final version of the questionnaire was finished, its online version was created to facilitate the data collection procedures.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected online from October 28 to December 12, 2020. The questionnaire link was distributed in both formal and informal channels, including the Thailand TESOL website, e-mails, the committee's personal Facebook pages, and Line groups. The questionnaire data was analyzed, based on the independent TPACK components, using descriptive statistics, i.e., mean, standard deviation, and percentage. The criteria for the mean interpretation were as follows:

3.26 -4.00 means *most needed*

2.51 -3.25 means *much needed*

1.76 -2.50 means *less needed*

1.00 -1.75 means *least needed*

The data from the open-ended section were analyzed, using content analysis, to supplement the quantitative data.

Results

The results are reported in five parts. The first part describes the general information of the teachers. The subsequent parts report the English language teachers' needs for English language knowledge and skills development, pedagogical development, and technological development. The final part reports the needs for future training programs or workshops to be provided by Thailand TESOL.

**1. Thai English Teachers' General Information**

This part reports the Thai teachers' general information, including 1) age, 2) educational background, 3) professional background, and 4) English proficiency.

1.1 Age

The results of the questionnaire revealed that the teachers' ages ranged from 22 to 60 years old. The average age of the teachers was 38.19 years old (SD=9.17). The group with the highest number was the 31-40-year-old teachers (n=1,625, 39%), and the lowest number was of the teachers aged between 51 to 60 years old (n=521, 12.4%). The other numbers of teachers divided by age are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Teachers' Ages (N=4,220)
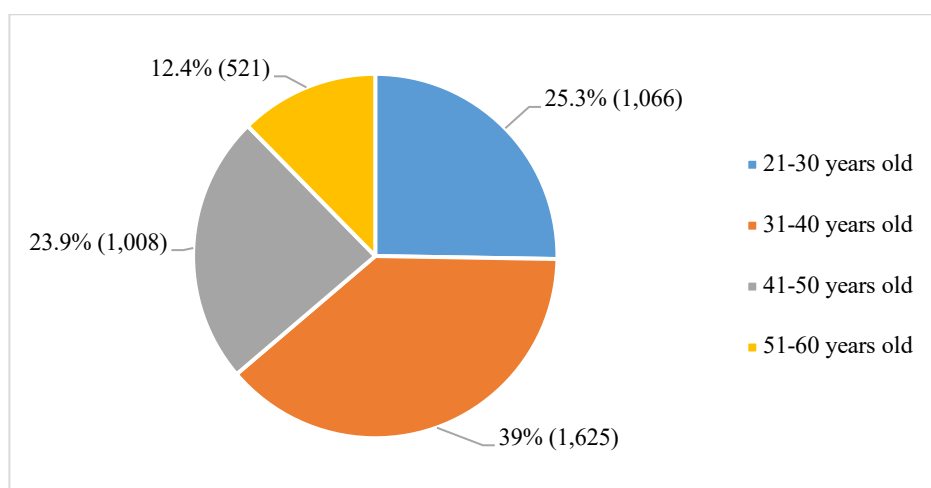
1.2 Educational background

The teachers' educational background is shown in Figure 3. Most of the teachers were holders of a bachelor's degree (n=2,783, 66%) and master's degree (n=1,412, 33%). Less than 1% held doctoral degrees (n=25, 0.6%) and diploma/high vocational certificates (n=19, 0.4%), respectively. Among those who had a bachelor's degree, 87.7% of them were in English or English-related majors (e.g., Business English, English Teaching, English for International Communication, English Studies,

English Literature, and TESOL), while about 12% held a non-English related degree (e.g., Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, Thai, Mathematics, General Sciences, Agriculture, and Social Sciences). For the teachers who had a master's degree (n=1,412), the degrees were Master of Arts (e.g., in English, English Translation, and Applied Linguistics) and Master of Education (e.g., in English, TEFL, TESOL, Educational Technology and Innovations, Education Administration, Curriculum and Instruction, Measurement and Evaluation, Psychology and Guidance, and Innovative Curriculum and Learning Management). There were a few respondents who had doctoral degrees, mostly concerning Education Administration and Innovative Curriculum and Learning Management. There were also a small number of Ph.D. holders in Applied Linguistics or TESOL. However, many of the teachers who had not obtained a B.Ed. Degree earlier received a teaching license from the Graduate Diploma Program in the Teaching Profession.
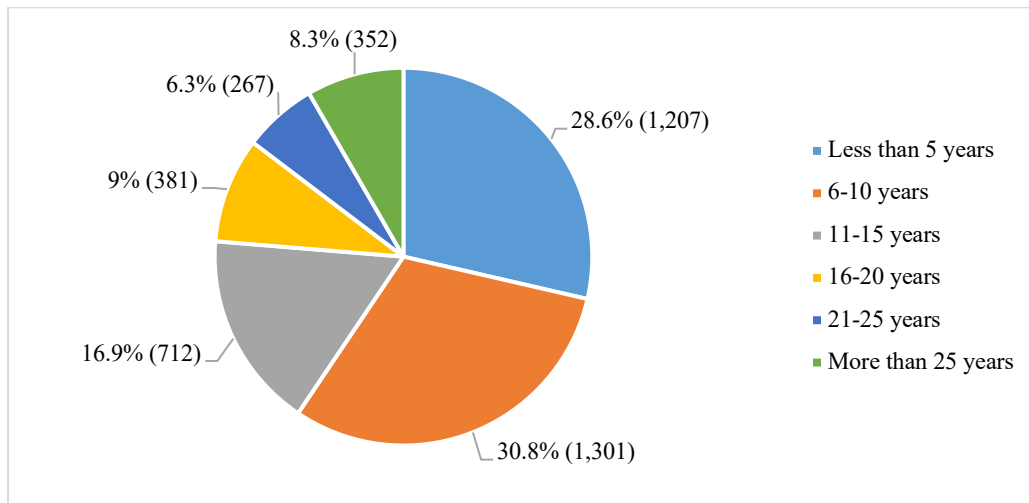
Figure 3

Teachers' Educational Background (N=4,220)
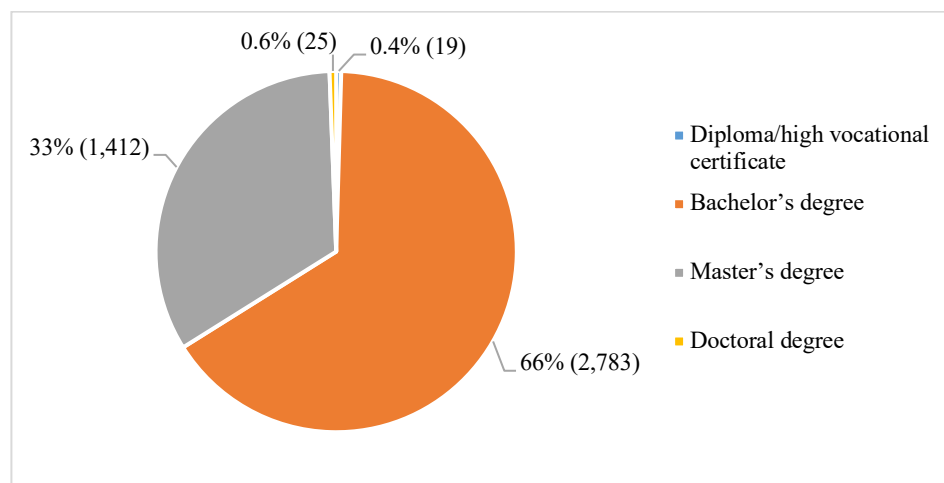
1.3 Professional background

The teachers had different numbers of teaching experience years. According to Figure 4, most teachers had six to 10 years of teaching experience (n=1,301, 30.8%) and less than five years of teaching experience (n=1,207, 28.6%). Only 8.3% of the teachers had more than 25-years teaching experience. The least number of teachers had 21 to 25 years of teaching experience (n=267, 6.3%).

Figure 4

Teachers' Teaching Experiences (N=4,220)

The teachers worked at schools in all regions of Thailand (Figure 5). Most of them were from north-eastern Thailand (n=1,581, 37.5%), followed by northern and southern Thailand (n=866, 20.5% and n=774, 18.3%). The least numbers of teachers were from western and eastern Thailand (n=263, 6.2% and n=130, 3.1%), respectively. Most of their schools are classified as medium schools (n=1,550, 36.7%) and small schools (n=1,039, 24.6%).

Figure 5

*School Regions (N=4,220)*
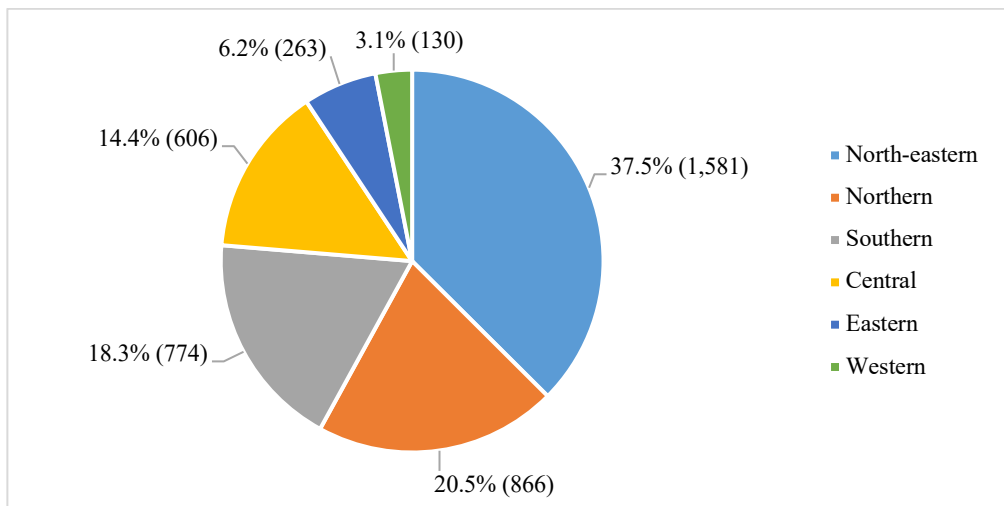
More than 80 percent of the teachers worked for the Primary Educational Service Area Office (n=3,439, 81.5%). About 14% worked for the Secondary Educational Service Area Office (n=589, 14%), and the rest (n=192, 4.6%) included those who worked for private or provincial schools or other educational sectors.

1.4 English proficiency

The teachers were asked to report their English proficiency based on their CEFR-based test given by the government. Figure 6 depicts the teachers' English proficiency levels. Most of them were at A2 (n=1,573, 37.3%), followed by B1 level (n=1,267, 30%). Around 14% of them were at A1 and B2 levels (n=564 and 588), respectively. Only a small percentage of the teachers achieved C1 and C2 levels (n=144 and 84), respectively.

Figure 6

Teachers' CEFR-based English Proficiency Level (N=4,220)
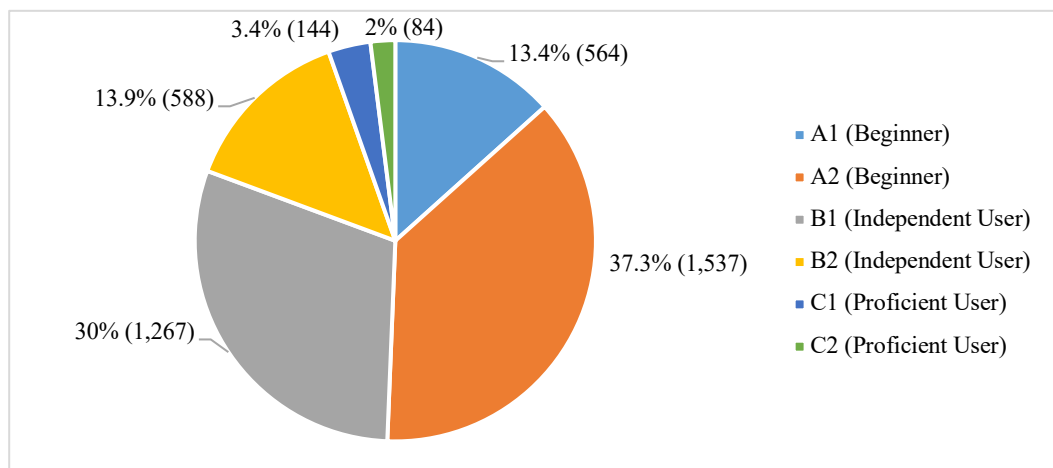
2. Needs for English Language Knowledge and Skills Development

The questionnaire investigated the content knowledge needs in eight areas: vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, reading, writing, cross-cultural communication, and pronunciation. The teachers were asked to rate the areas that they needed to develop themselves. According to Table 1, the results showed that the teachers needed to develop their speaking skills the most ($\bar{x}$=3.54, SD=0.65), followed by listening skills ($\bar{x}$=3.52, SD=0.64). Grammar ($\bar{x}$=3.28, SD=0.73) and vocabulary ($\bar{x}$=3.22, SD=0.72) knowledge are the least needed areas to be developed. However, the teachers' needs to develop other skills were high, as the average mean scores were found to be around 3.31 to 3.47.

Table 1

Teachers' Needs in Language Knowledge and Skills (N=4,220)

	Language knowledge and skills needs	Mean	SD	Need level
o	Speaking skills	3.54	0.65	Most needed
o	Listening skills	3.52	0.64	Most needed
o	Pronunciation skills	3.47	0.70	Most needed
o	Cross-cultural communication	3.40	0.69	Most needed
o	Writing skills	3.39	0.69	Most needed
o	Reading skills	3.31	0.72	Most needed
o	Grammar	3.28	0.73	Most needed
o	Vocabulary	3.22	0.72	Needed

When closely looking into the details, the needs of primary school and secondary school teachers are somewhat different (see Table 2). For primary school teachers, the results showed that the most needed skills for development were speaking ($\bar{x}$=3.53, SD=0.65), listening ($\bar{x}$=3.52, SD=0.65), and pronunciation skills ($\bar{x}$=3.47, SD=0.69). Similarly, secondary school teachers needed to develop their speaking ($\bar{x}$=3.54, SD=0.72) and listening skills ($\bar{x}$=3.51, SD=0.75), followed by pronunciation ($\bar{x}$=3.41, SD=0.85) and writing skills ($\bar{x}$=3.41, SD=0.83). However, grammar was still most needed for primary school teachers, while it was generally needed by secondary school teachers. Vocabulary was also still needed by the two groups of teachers despite the least demand among other skills.

Table 2

Language Knowledge and Skills Needs of Primary and Secondary School Teachers

	Language knowledge and skills needs	Primary school teachers (n=3,439)			Secondary school teachers (n=589)		
		Mean	SD	Need Level	Mean	SD	Need Level
o	Speaking skills	3.53	0.65	Most needed	3.54	0.72	Most needed
o	Listening skills	3.52	0.64	Most needed	3.51	0.75	Most needed
o	Pronunciation skills	3.47	0.69	Most needed	3.41	0.85	Most needed
o	Cross-cultural communication	3.39	0.70	Most needed	3.38	0.84	Most needed
o	Writing skills	3.37	0.69	Most needed	3.41	0.83	Most needed
o	Reading skills	3.30	0.72	Most needed	3.28	0.89	Most needed
o	Grammar	3.28	0.72	Most needed	3.15	0.97	Needed
o	Vocabulary	3.22	0.72	Needed	3.14	0.90	Needed

3. Needs for Pedagogical Development

The teachers were asked to rate their needs for pedagogical development. The results from the questionnaire showed that the teachers needed to develop their teaching skills. Table 3 ranks the most needed pedagogical skills in order. The teachers needed to improve their skills in developing creative material ($\bar{x}$=3.34, SD=0.67), followed by teaching speaking ($\bar{x}$=3.31, SD=0.64) and the game-based learning approach ($\bar{x}$=3.31, SD=0.68), teaching listening ($\bar{x}$=3.27, SD=0.64), and 21st-century teaching management ($\bar{x}$=3.27, SD=0.66), respectively. Among all other skills development needed by the teachers ($\bar{x}$ ranging from 3.09 to 3.25), the task-based learning approach ($\bar{x}$=3.09, SD=0.74) and drama/roleplay learning approach ($\bar{x}$=3.09, SD=0.76) were the least needed. The other teaching skills suggested by the teachers, from the qualitative data, included the active learning approach, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, classroom activities, English camps, creative thinking skills, the use of songs and games in the classroom, and conversation with native speakers.

Table 3

Teachers' Pedagogical Development Needs (N=4,220)

Pedagogical development needs	Mean	SD	Need level
o Creative material development	3.34	0.67	Most needed
o Teaching speaking	3.31	0.64	Most needed
o Game-based learning approach	3.31	0.68	Most needed
o Teaching listening	3.27	0.64	Most needed
o 21st-century teaching management	3.27	0.66	Most needed
o CEFR-based learning approach	3.25	0.69	Needed
o Teaching writing	3.24	0.66	Needed
o Teaching reading	3.21	0.67	Needed
o Teaching cross-cultural communication	3.20	0.70	Needed
o Teaching vocabulary	3.19	0.70	Needed
o Classroom management	3.18	0.72	Needed
o Teaching grammar	3.17	0.70	Needed
o Assessment and evaluation	3.17	0.72	Needed
o Test development	3.17	0.72	Needed
o Creative feedback approach	3.14	0.72	Needed
o Project-based learning approach	3.12	0.76	Needed
o Doing classroom research	3.10	0.76	Needed
o Task-based learning approach	3.09	0.74	Needed
o Drama/Role-play learning approach	3.09	0.76	Needed

When considering the pedagogical development needs for the two groups of teachers, primary school and secondary school teachers share some similarities while also contrasting in certain aspects (Table 4). Although both groups need all teaching skills, primary school teachers thought that the most needed pedagogical areas are learning how to develop creative materials (x̄=3.31, SD=0.67), followed by teaching speaking (x̄=3.29, SD=0.64) and game-based learning approach (x̄=3.29, SD=0.68), respectively. All other instructional needs were ranked as *needed* (x̄ ranging from 3.06 to 3.25). Similarly, secondary school teachers also shared the same rank of needs for creative material development (x̄=3.34, SD= 0.80), teaching speaking (x̄ = 3.31, SD=0.79), and game-based learning approach (x̄=3.28, SD=0.86). Four additional areas that the secondary school teachers most needed are CEFR-based learning approach (x̄=3.29, SD=0.85), teaching listening (x̄=3.28, SD=0.79), 21st-century teaching management (x̄=3.26, SD=0.83), and teaching writing (x̄=3.26, SD=0.82).

Table 4

Pedagogical Development Needs of Primary and Secondary School Teachers

Pedagogical development needs	Primary school teachers (n=3,439)			Secondary school teachers (n=589)		
	Mean	SD	Need Level	Mean	SD	Need Level
o Creative material development	3.31	0.67	Most needed	3.34	0.80	Most needed
o Teaching speaking	3.29	0.64	Most needed	3.31	0.79	Most needed
o Game-based learning approach	3.29	0.68	Most needed	3.28	0.86	Most needed
o Teaching listening	3.25	0.64	Needed	3.28	0.79	Most needed
o 21st-century teaching management	3.25	0.67	Needed	3.26	0.83	Most needed
o CEFR-based learning approach	3.21	0.70	Needed	3.29	0.85	Most needed
o Teaching writing	3.21	0.66	Needed	3.26	0.82	Most needed
o Teaching reading	3.19	0.67	Needed	3.19	0.88	Needed
o Teaching vocabulary	3.19	0.69	Needed	3.07	0.96	Needed
o Classroom management	3.19	0.71	Needed	3.04	0.99	Needed
o Teaching cross-cultural communication	3.18	0.69	Needed	3.15	0.92	Needed
o Teaching grammar	3.16	0.70	Needed	3.07	0.97	Needed
o Assessment and evaluation	3.15	0.72	Needed	3.07	0.99	Needed
o Test development	3.15	0.72	Needed	3.10	0.96	Needed
o Creative feedback approach	3.11	0.72	Needed	3.12	0.93	Needed
o Project-based learning approach	3.10	0.76	Needed	3.02	1.03	Needed
o Doing classroom research	3.08	0.76	Needed	3.02	1.00	Needed
o Task-based learning approach	3.07	0.74	Needed	2.99	1.02	Needed
o Drama/Role-play learning approach	3.06	0.76	Needed	2.98	1.04	Needed

4. Needs for Technological Development

According to Table 5, the teachers needed to be able to use new technology or applications in the classroom ($\bar{x}$=3.33, SD=0.67), followed by needing to gain some knowledge and practical skills concerning technology-based learning or the blended learning approach ($\bar{x}$=3.25, SD=0.70). The teachers also needed to learn how to develop online materials ($\bar{x}$=3.21, SD=0.74) and use LMSs in their English classes ($\bar{x}$=3.10, SD=0.76). The data from the open-ended section revealed that the teachers are interested to learn about the flipped classroom, online teaching methods and techniques, and online ELT games or applications.

Table 5

Teachers' Technological Development Needs (N=4,220)

Technological development needs	Mean	SD	Need level
o Use of new technology/applications in the classroom	3.33	0.67	Most needed
o Technology-based learning or blended learning approach	3.25	0.70	Needed
o Online materials development	3.21	0.74	Needed
o Use of different kinds of Learning Management Systems (LMS)	3.10	0.76	Needed

Further investigation (Table 6) shows that secondary school teachers needed to learn how to use technology in the classroom ($\bar{x}$=3.35, SD=0.79) and the technology-based or blended learning approach ($\bar{x}$=3.29, SD=0.83). Meanwhile, primary school teachers needed to know how to use technology or applications in the classroom the most ($\bar{x}$=3.30, SD=0.67).

Table 6

Technological Development Needs of Primary and Secondary School Teachers

Technological development needs	Primary school teachers (n=3,439)			Secondary school teachers (n=589)		
	Mean	SD	Need Level	Mean	SD	Need Level
o Use of new technology/ applications in classroom	3.30	0.67	Most needed	3.35	0.79	Most needed
o Technology-based learning/ blended learning approach	3.21	0.70	Needed	3.29	0.83	Most needed
o Online materials development	3.17	0.74	Needed	3.23	0.92	Needed
o Use of different kinds of Learning Management Systems (LMS)	3.06	0.77	Needed	3.13	0.94	Needed

5. Needs for Thailand TESOL Involvement

Apart from the TPACK-based needs, the teachers were asked in more detail about their familiarity with and participation in Thailand TESOL and about workshop sessions to be offered to them on different topics, including designing the workshops, types, length, and time according to the teachers' preferences. The results from the questionnaire are shown in this section.

5.1 Teachers' familiarity with Thailand TESOL

The results of the questionnaire revealed that almost half of the teachers (n=2,053, 48.6%) had already known about Thailand TESOL, whereas more than 50% (n=2,167) had not known about the organization before. The teachers who knew Thailand TESOL said that they learned about Thailand TESOL from school supervisors (n=1,809, 88.1%), colleagues (n=1,284, 62.5%), the Thailand TESOL website (n=1,041, 50.7%), its official Facebook Fanpage (n=863, 42%), and their principals (n=221, 10.8%). Other channels mentioned by the teachers were research articles or documents sent to their schools. Some heard of the organization from conferences or meetings or had been told by their teachers or advisors. Moreover, some of them said that they were already members of the organization. Primary school teachers knew Thailand TESOL via school supervisors the most (n=1223, 45.8%) followed by via colleagues (n=731, 27.4%), whereas secondary school teachers knew Thailand TESOL via colleagues the most (n=406, 44.6%) followed by via school supervisors (n=285, 31.3%).

5.2 Teachers' participation in Thailand TESOL activities

The data showed that, out of 4,220 teachers who responded to this question, a small number of school teachers (n=287, 6.80%) participated in Thailand TESOL activities, i.e., annual Thailand TESOL international conferences, Regional English Language Office (RELO) workshops, and other workshops held by Thailand TESOL. However, when asked about the preferred activities they would like to attend (of which they could choose more than one), the most preferred activities were the self-language improvement workshops (78.3%) and teaching development workshops (73%). The activities that the teachers were least interested in were attending international conferences (19.5%) and publishing their research articles (11.2%). Other future activities suggested by the respondents included online workshops, exchange study scholarships, and network creation among English teachers at provincial and regional levels (Figure 7).

Figure 7

Teachers' Preferred Future Activities Organized by Thailand TESOL (N=4,220)
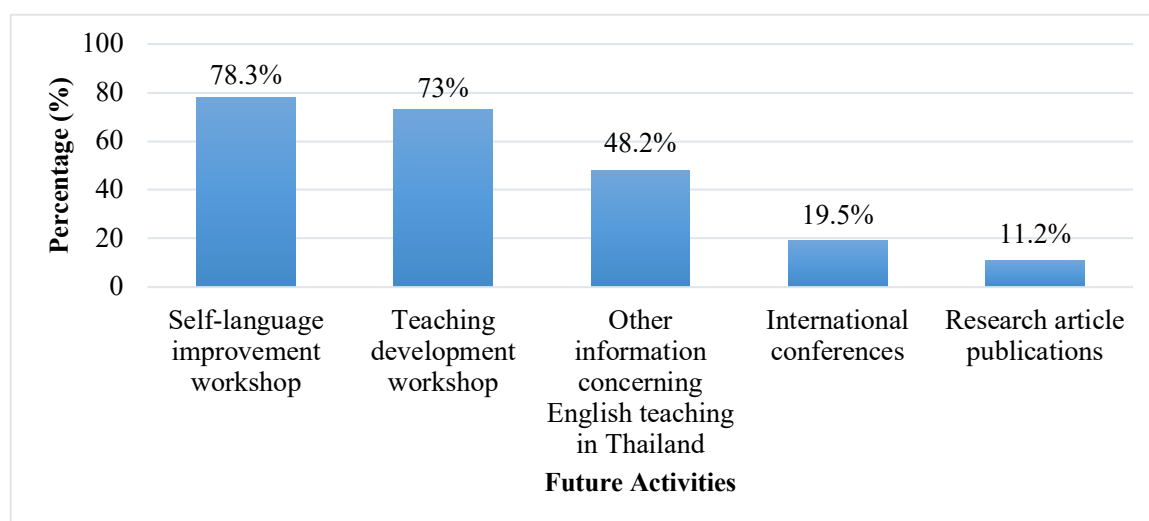
5.3 Teachers' preferences for future workshop sessions

The teachers were asked about future workshop sessions' designs, types, length, and time preferences. They could select more than one preference for designs and types. The data revealed that the most preferred design was a one-time workshop session (55.1%), followed by ongoing workshops (37.2%) and one-time workshops with follow-up feedback (21.6%). Moreover, another idea that the teachers suggested was holding an English camp for teachers. Regarding the types of workshops, four types of settings were proposed: face-to-face, webinars, online self-training, and blended training (both face-to-face and online together). Most of the teachers preferred face-to-face settings (78.6%), followed by online-self training (27.2%), blended training sessions (17.6%), and webinars (5.1%).

The teachers also reported that their preferred length of workshop sessions (Figure 8) was more than 12 hours (n=1,696, 40.2%), followed by 4-6 hours (n=939, 22.3%), 10-12 hours (n=753, 17.8%), 7-9 hours (n=523, 12.4%), 1-3 hours (n=283, 6.7%), and depending on skills or contents in each session (n=26, 0.6%). The main reason given in some comments was because a 20-hour workshop with a certificate is required to promote teachers' academic standing. Some comments suggested that session length should be based on skills and contents to be emphasized in the session. In addition to this, the teachers expressed their opinion that the most preferred time for holding workshop sessions (Figure 9) was during the summer break between March and April (n=1,471, 34.9%), followed by weekdays during a semester (n=1,324, 31.4%), and weekends during a semester (n=830, 19.7%). A very small number of teachers preferred onsite workshops at any time (n=28, 0.6%) and online sessions at any time (n=16, 0.4%).
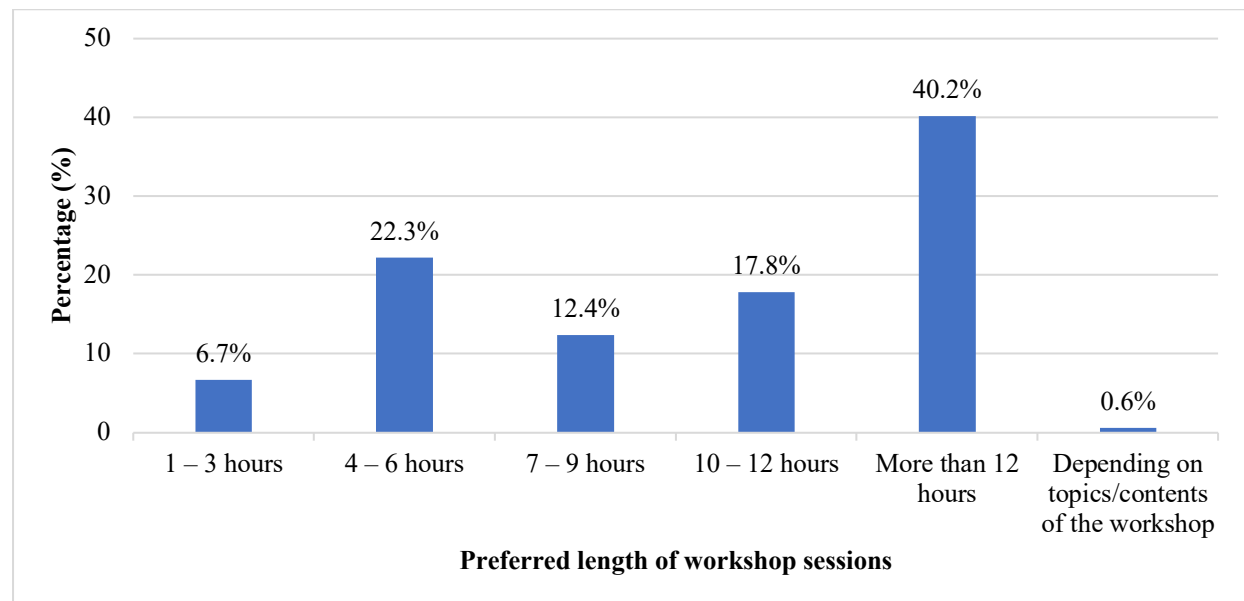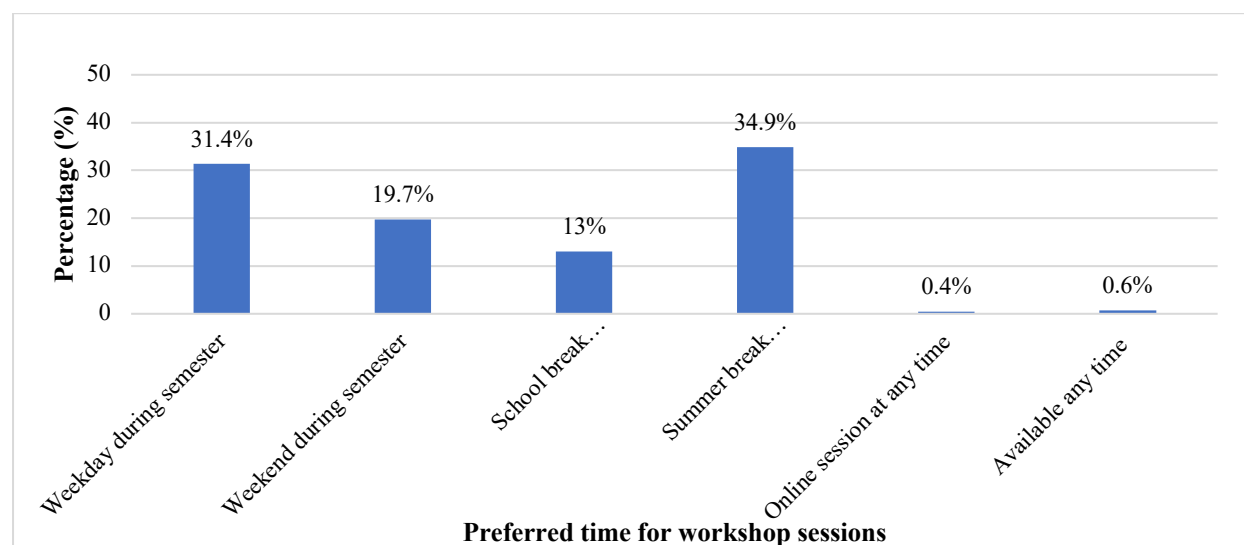
Figure 8

The Preferred Length of Workshop Sessions (N=4,220)

Figure 9

Preferred Time for Workshop Sessions (N=4,220)

Discussion

The findings of the present study revealed that the teachers expressed their needs to improve their content, pedagogy, and technological knowledge and practice. They also gave opinions about preferred training designs, types, time duration, and training channels. The following part first discusses these needs and later proposes a helpful guide to designing training workshops for the English language teachers in Thailand.

The first discussion point focuses on the content knowledge needs. The teachers in the present study have a very high awareness of the need to improve their English proficiency. They ranked almost every English skill and knowledge as most needed. Both primary and secondary school teachers would like to improve their communication skills, i.e., speaking, listening, pronunciation, cross-cultural communication, and writing skills. Most of them also intended to attend a self-language improvement workshop if Thailand TESOL holds it in the future. These findings are in line with the opinions of secondary school teachers in Noom-ura's study (2013), primary school teachers in Klingkerd's survey (2015), and pre-service teachers in Oeamoum and Sriwichai's investigations (2020). This could probably be explained by one main reason. Most of the teachers in the present study reported that their proficiency level was at A2, and this agrees with the teachers' level that the MOE and British Council revealed in 2014 (Mala, 2021). After the teachers knew their English proficiency level, they became concerned about practicing their English skills and improving their proficiency (Ulla & Winitkun, 2018). This probably calls for training workshops focusing on the enhancement of teachers' English ability for both primary and secondary teachers.

The teachers' most needed pedagogical knowledge and practice are also remarkable. Most teachers thought that they needed to develop their pedagogical knowledge and skills in creative material development, teaching speaking, the game-based learning approach, 21st-century teaching management, and teaching listening. This reflects that the teachers realized the significance of communicative English and the 21st-century learning skills which focus on creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking/problem-solving (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009). It is also interesting to find out that the secondary school teachers had stronger needs for CEFR-based learning and teaching writing than the primary school teachers. This means that it could be possible that the secondary school teachers were more aware about how to design their CEFR-based teaching activities than the primary school teachers. Also, it is reasonable to explain that the secondary level curriculum requires students to be able to write more than primary school students, so the teachers would like to improve their techniques in teaching writing.

The results about technological knowledge needs revealed that both theoretical and practical knowledge about technology were desired by most teachers. As the present study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic in Thailand, the teachers admitted that they highly needed to learn how to use technology in their classrooms and learn about technology-based learning or the blended learning approach. They also requested to learn how to develop online materials. These technological knowledge needs are specially interrelated with the pedagogical needs discussed earlier. The integration of a technology-based approach in the English classroom has always been needed by English language teachers in Thai contexts (Klingkerd, 2015; Oeamoum & Sriwichai, 2020; Yutdhana, 2004). However, the technological needs have become more significant during the widespread outbreak of COVID-19 in the country. Similar to other countries across the world (Barron et al., 2021; Li & Lalani, 2020),

Thailand should equip English language teachers with technological knowledge and its application to remote or online classes.

The present study reveals the teachers' vivid needs regarding their English competencies, pedagogical strategies for teaching all skills, and technological skills. Moreover, when designing a teacher training course/program, the needs should be prioritized, and circumstances should be considered. In this sense, the interaction between the three angles of the TPACK model should be encouraged to maximize benefits to the teachers' professional development (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). To illustrate, the rapid rise of online learning may accelerate the technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK) which can include training the teachers how to use technological tools to facilitate specific pedagogical practices such as teaching speaking or creating online learning activities or games. The technological content knowledge (TCK) design can be used to train the teachers to use technology in practicing their own skills or cross-cultural communication. The pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) design would allow the teachers to practice their own skills or vocabulary and grammar knowledge as well as allowing them to apply the ways they learn or practice their skills to their own teaching. Such integration of knowledge and skills could optimize the benefits for the teachers.

In addition, when designing a training course/program, matters that should be considered are the designs, types, time duration, and training channels. The teachers' most preferrable options regarding workshop design, type, time duration and training channel can be used to propose a teacher training model. The most preferrable model suggested from the results seems to be a one-time workshop with more than 12 hours of training in a face-to-face setting during the summer break. This seems to be the most familiar or secure model for Thai teachers as they have experienced this before, e.g., with the national ERIC projects. The model seems to be possible in normal situations when there has been no pandemic, but it may not work well in the current situation when the pandemic only allows all teachers and educators to work remotely with the use of technology. Practicality and safety should be a concern for teacher training design, especially during the pandemic. As many education experts predict, the *new normal* in the future will be far more technology-driven (Anderson et al., 2021), other technology-related options (e.g., webinars and blended training) could be considered.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

Limitations and recommendations for further research should be noted. First, since the study relied heavily on the quantitative data, this may not reveal details about the teachers' needs which may be interesting and useful for designing a teacher training workshop. Thus, future research should add other instruments, e.g., interviews or discussion groups, to gain in-depth information regarding the teachers' needs in both English proficiency and pedagogical development. Secondly, the present survey used random sampling to select its participants, so the number of teachers at primary and secondary school levels may not be in the same range. Future research may control equal numbers of teachers from both groups to increase research reliability. Third, the questionnaire only focuses on the three

independent components of the TPACK model, to have a clearer picture of teachers' integrated needs, the interrelation among the three types of knowledge should be applied to design a questionnaire in future studies. Finally, the current study presents only the fundamental needs of school teachers teaching at different levels. The relationship between teachers' needs and other general information (e.g., length of teaching experience or teachers' language proficiency level) are not addressed. Such a relationship may be worthwhile to be examining in future research.

Conclusion

This large-scale survey study revealed the English language teachers' professional development needs. The teachers in Thailand indicated their needs in content, pedagogical and technological knowledge and skills. This means the teachers needed to enhance their vocabulary and grammar knowledge and master English language skills, so that they can confidently help students learn English successfully. They needed to improve pedagogical knowledge and strategies to ensure their teaching quality. They also needed to improve their technological knowledge and skills to develop learning activities that facilitate students' language learning. The technological, pedagogical and content knowledge concept can be used to reveal the basic skills for English language teachers to develop their language competency and teaching quality (König et al., 2016). The results of the present study can hopefully be employed as up-to-date information about English language teachers' professional development needs in Thai contexts. Future training programs and workshops could be designed to meet the needs to ensure meaningful and successful professional support for English language school teachers in Thailand.

Acknowledgment

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