

## Integrating English into Agricultural Tourism through the *Khok Nong Na* Model to Enhance Sustainable Livelihoods, Thailand

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### Abstract

This research aimed to 1) investigate the needs for English language use of the tourism community, 2) enhance a participatory English communication model suitable for the agro-tourism community based on the Kok Nong Na Model, and 3) evaluate the satisfaction of the agro-tourism community based on the Kok Nong Na Model towards the innovative English communication model. The research instruments of which the validity and reliability were assessed included: a questionnaire, an innovation model evaluation forms, a semi-structured interview, and a satisfaction assessment form. This research employed research and development methodology, utilizing surveys and in-depth interviews with a sample group from people in the Kok Nong Na Model community. This study demonstrated that the innovative model effectively met community needs. Its adoption in interactions with foreign tourists has led to increased revenue and better accommodation capacity. English speaking and listening skills were deemed the most critical. Effective information management was crucial for enhancing tourist comprehension and interest. Community involvement in developing the model fostered ownership and responsibility. The study emphasized that a participatory English communication model was key to promoting agro-tourism and increasing community income.

**Keywords:** Creative Tourism, English Language Used in the Community, Agro-Tourism Community, Kok Nong Na Model, Innovative English Communication

### Introduction

Thailand stands as the “Land of Smiles” worldwide because of its historical heritage and cultural traditions and welcoming nature (Lertcharnrit & Watanasawad, 2023). The country provides multiple tourism options, which include cultural and agro-tourism (Sahatsathatsana et al., 2023). Cultural tourism requires visiting heritage sites, but creative tourism goes beyond this by providing interactive skill-based activities that stem from local cultural traditions (Richards & Raymond, 2000). These experiences promote income generation and stronger community-tourist relationships (Masiero & Hrankai, 2022). Globalization has shifted tourism towards quantity over quality, negatively impacting resources and attractions (Banozic & Ružić, 2022). The country's abundant cultural heritage together with its natural wonders makes Thailand an ideal destination for creative tourism which supports cultural heritage protection and local community growth. The creative tourism model which focuses on local arts and skill development and experiential learning has gained popularity in Sukhothai, Loei

and Phuket. The model receives support from UNESCO and the Tourism Authority of Thailand to deliver sustainable meaningful tourism through cultural and learning-based experiences (Smith, 2016).

The tourism potential of Buriram Province remains strong in its natural attractions and cultural and historical sites yet the industry has shown minimal expansion during the last 8 - 9 years. Sports tourism under the “Sports City” concept which includes stadiums and race tracks has become a major growth factor for visitor numbers thus establishing Buriram as one of Thailand’s leading tourist destinations (Dodok et al., 2023; Smith, 2010; Beirman, 2018). Sustainable growth requires the government to work together with the private sector and local communities. Tourism has expanded from urban to rural areas. Researchers targeted specific communities—such as Ban Khok Wan and Nawatwithi Village—for English language integration to enhance agricultural tourism through the *Khok Nong Na* Model. Community leaders aim to promote creative tourism and local economies to increase household income (Thundee & Noppanatwongsakorn, 2023). Farming remains a respected occupation in these communities. Ban Khok Wan in Buriram is a historic, multilingual village rich in cultural heritage and agricultural stability, exporting over 60 million baht of Khao Mao annually. Researchers aim to integrate English into its *Khok Nong Na* tourism model to boost the local economy and promote agricultural tourism and creative tourism.

### Research Objectives

1. To investigate the needs for English language use of the tourism community.
2. To enhance a participatory English communication model suitable for the agro-tourism community based on the *Kok Nong Na* Model.
3. To evaluate the satisfaction of the agro-tourism community based on the *Kok Nong Na* Model towards the innovative English communication Model.

### Research Questions

1. What Problems and Needs of Using English in the *Khok Nong Na* Model Agritourism Community?
2. An innovative English communication approach that is participative and relevant to the commercial tourist community. How should the *Khok Nong Na* Model be developed?

### Literature Review

#### 1. Agricultural Tourism

Agricultural tourism, or agro-tourism, centers on agricultural activities to generate income for farmers and promote community involvement (Ammirato et al., 2020; Barbieri, 2020; Lamie et al., 2021). It comprises three core elements, including agricultural resources, the tourism market, and tourism services, all relying on natural assets and effective human management (Chase et al., 2018; Schmidt et al., 2022). The key resources consist of farms, orchards, livestock and activities such as harvesting and organic fertilizer production (Presenza et al., 2019). The tourism market focuses on visitors who want to experience agriculture through learning and relaxation and cultural immersion. Tourism services offer homestays together with local cuisine and farming participation and festivals. The long-term benefits require proper and sustainable management of these components.

Agricultural tourism teaches visitors about farming practices while simultaneously raising environmental awareness (Brune et al., 2021).

## 2. Cultural Tourism

The preservation of cultural heritage through cultural tourism management protects traditional ways of life together with historical stories and architectural elements and artistic expressions. Cultural tourism enables visitors to experience local culture through deep and purposeful interactions which generates economic value while protecting heritage for sustainable development (Smith, 2016). It also fosters personal growth through participation in arts and culture via place-based learning (Richards & Raymond, 2000). According to UNESCO (2006), creative tourism emphasizes active participation in authentic cultural experiences. It enhances skills and creates lasting memories by engaging with intangible and everyday cultural practices (Chen & Rahman, 2018).

### 2.1 Cultural Resource Management

Cultural resources consist of tangible and intangible elements which include historical sites together with history, arts, and community culture (Ford, 2023; Noonan, 2006; Lee & Na, 2023; Rucitarahma, 2024). Human culture and events, along with past and present activities, form these resources, which hold value in archaeology and history as well as art, architecture, and community culture (Samanchit et al., 2025). Cultural resources serve as tourist draws because they bring visitors to specific locations, thus playing a vital role in the tourism industry (He, 2024; Tao et al., 2023; Zayim, 2024).

### 2.2 Stakeholder Analysis

The expansion of cultural tourism has created substantial effects on different groups of stakeholders. Stakeholder analysis helps to understand the policies and roles and responsibilities of each entity involved (Amado & Machado, 2023; Gao et al., 2024). This stakeholder analysis can be categorized into three levels: internal, intermediary, and external.

## 3. Development of Tourist Attractions

The development of tourist attractions constitutes a fundamental concept in the study and analysis of strategies and components for establishing tourist routes. Tourist attractions are regarded as significant destinations for attracting visitors. The *Khok Nong Na* agricultural tourism model in the Khok Wan Subdistrict, Nang Rong District, Buriram Province, serves as a notable example.

### 3.1 Components of Tourist Attractions

The three essential components of tourist attractions are attraction, accessibility, and amenities (Miller et al., 2014). Attractions may encompass natural features, arts, culture, or various other activities. Accessibility must be characterized by convenience and safety, while amenities should encompass the services required for tourists.

### 3.2 Planning for Tourist Attraction Development

Multiple essential steps comprise the planning process for developing tourist attractions which include surveying attractions and zoning areas and identifying amenities and organizing sustainable tourism activities and evaluating the carrying capacity of tourists and allocating budgets. The main goal of these plans was to achieve balanced and sustainable development (Braune, 2021).

### 3.3 Development of New Tourist Attractions

The development of new tourist attractions encompasses the identification of potential sites, enhancement of amenities, implementation of tourism promotion strategies, establishment of responsible organizational structures, allocation of financial resources, and preparation of knowledgeable and skilled personnel to provide services and information to tourists (Daam, 2023).

## 4. Creative Tourism

Tourists in creative tourism actively participate in learning about the local arts and cultural heritage of specific destinations. According to UNESCO International Conference on Creative Tourism (UNESCO, 2006) creative tourism involves genuine tourist engagement through participatory learning experiences in arts and cultural heritage.

### 4.1 Community Participation

The development of creative tourism depends heavily on community participation as its essential foundation. Communities serve as essential managers of resources while driving development forward. The involvement of communities leads to sustainable development and effective growth according to Lamajeen et al. (2021), Lo et al. (2019), and Principe (2023). Community participation helps reduce conflicts while building better cooperation for developing tourist attractions (Hollands, 2023).

### 4.2 Planning for Tourism Development

Tourism development planning includes multiple stages which start with resource assessment and surveying followed by policy creation and action planning and budget allocation and promotion and finally monitoring and evaluation (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2019; Saarinen & Manwa, 2008). Sustainable tourist attraction development depends on proper planning according to Cárdenas et al. (2015).

## 5. Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy

His Majesty, King Rama IX, emphasized that development should commence with establishing a foundation of sufficiency prior to advancing further prosperity. The philosophy of a sufficient economy underscores the efficient and moderate utilization of resources (Dhammasaccakarn et al., 2019; Wichian & Untong, 2023). Furthermore, it accentuates sufficiency in terms of mindset, society, natural resources, technology, and economy to promote sustainability and long-term self-reliance (Boonlue, 2018).

### 5.1 The New Theory

The New Theory, or New Agricultural Theory, is a concept introduced by His Majesty King Rama IX for integrated agricultural development (Sanont & Kittirakshakula, 2021). It emphasizes enabling farmers to produce sufficient quantities for their consumption while also processing or selling surplus products to generate income. The management of land and water resources, as proposed by New Theory, provides farmers with stability in their livelihoods and income (Wattanasanaen et al., 2023).

### 5.2 Learning Management in the 21st Century

Learning management in the 21st century is learner-centered, utilizing cognitive and social processes to facilitate the construction and effective application of new knowledge (Yenphech, 2018). Educators function as facilitators and sources of knowledge (Mecklenburg-Faenger & editor,

2022). The learning process emphasizes the simultaneous development of multiple aspects of intelligence, including cognitive processes, practical skills, and emotional awareness (Pongsiri & Yenphech, 2022).

## Research Framework

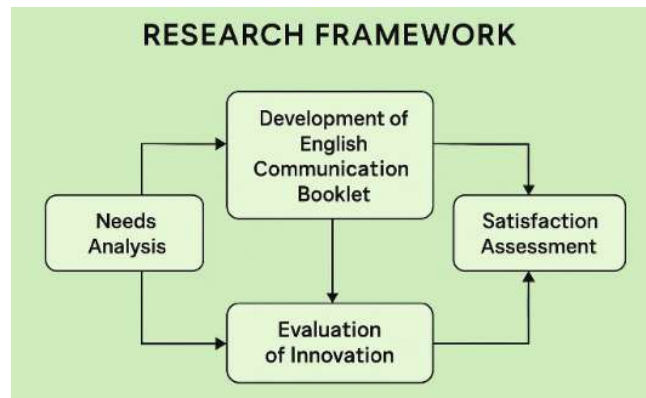


Figure 1 Research Framework

## Methodology

### 1. Research Design

The study utilized a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative strategies to assess the needs, develop materials, and evaluate an English communication model tailored for the *Khok Nong Na* Model agricultural tourism community in Buriram Province.

### 2. Population and Sample

#### 2.1 Population

The research population consisted of Life Quality Development Learning Center residents who received the new theory adaptation of the *Khok Nong Na* Model in Buriram Province during 2024 with a total of 1,735 plots/individuals (Buriram Provincial Community Development Office, 2024) and the sample comprised 50 residents from the Life Quality Development Learning Center who received the new theory adaptation of the *Khok Nong Na* Model in Ban Khok Wan, Nong Sano Subdistrict, Nang Rong District, Buriram Province.

#### 2.2 Samples

A two-stage sampling process was used: stratified random sampling ensured diversity by gender, age, and tourism experience, followed by purposive sampling of 50 individuals with relevant experience in community English communication. This approach ensured both representation and alignment with research goals.

### 3. Instruments

#### 3.1 Needs Analysis Questionnaire

The study was based on literature and community analysis to identify English needs. Three experts validated content using the IOC method (score = 1.00), and pilot testing confirmed reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89.

### 3.2 Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

The researchers developed a framework which matched their research objectives by using open-ended questions to gather detailed information about English communication practices and needs. Three experts reviewed the protocol to ensure it was clear and relevant while maintaining alignment with research goals and achieved an IOC score of 1.00.

### 3.3 Booklet

Researchers created a bilingual English communication booklet for the *Khok Nong Na* Model, based on needs analysis. It focused on Thai-English communication in real contexts and included four chapters: 1) *Khok Nong Na* Model; 2) Essential Communication; 3) Farm and Market Conversations; 4) Enjoying Your Stay. Three experts evaluated the *Khok Nong Na* Model English communication manual for clarity and cultural suitability and relevance by giving it a high mean score of 4.04 (above the 3.50 threshold). The manual was refined through four testing stages—one-on-one, small group, and field testing—with feedback from local residents to enhance usability. Grounded in the New Theory, the finalized manual was found practical and ready for use across Buriram Province (Asanok, 2018).

### 3.4 Innovation Evaluation Form

The researchers assessed the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of the innovative English communication model through a 5-point Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. Administered after experts checked the innovative communication model with standardized instructions to reduce bias.

### 3.5 Satisfaction Assessment Form

The study assessed community satisfaction using a 5-point Likert scale and open feedback. Content validity was confirmed by three experts, with all items achieving an IOC score of 1.00. After revisions, a pilot study showed strong reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82.

## 4. Data Collection

The study combined surveys, interviews, and document analysis to assess English communication needs in the *Khok Nong Na* agricultural tourism community. Data from 50 participants and 10 key informants, along with relevant secondary content, supported the development of a context-specific, participatory communication model.

## 5. Data Analysis

The data were interpreted and analyzed utilizing percentages, means, and standard deviations (*S.D.*). The results were presented in tables with descriptive analysis using 5-point Likert scales across three tools: (1) The Needs Analysis used Best's (1970) scale, where 4.51 - 5.00 indicated the highest need; (2) The Innovation Evaluation followed Kannasut's (1999) scale, where 4.50 - 5.00 signified excellence; and (3) The Satisfaction Assessment used Best's (1981) scale, with 4.51 - 5.00 representing the highest satisfaction.

## Results

### 1. Phase 1 : Analysis of Issues and English Usage Needs of the Tourism Community

#### 1.1 Section 1 : General Information

The data analysis of general information is shown in Table 1 – 5.

**Table 1** Gender

Gender	<i>n</i>	Percentage
Male	18	36
Female	32	64
Total	50	100

Table 1 indicates that the majority of respondents were female, comprising 32 individuals (64%), while male respondents numbered 18 (36%).

**Table 2** Age

Age	<i>n</i>	Percentage
Under 18 years	6	12
19 - 25 years	7	14
26 - 35 years	11	22
36 - 45 years	13	26
Over 45 years	13	26
Total	50	100

Table 2 showed that the largest age groups in the sample were 36 - 45 and over 45, each comprising 26% (13 participants). Other age groups included 26 - 35 (11 participants), 19 - 25 (7 participants), and under 18 (6 participants).

**Table 3** Education

Education	<i>n</i>	Percentage
Secondary Education (Lower)	12	24
Secondary Education (Upper)	15	30
Vocational Certificate (Vocational Education)	10	20
Higher Vocational Certificate	8	16
Bachelor's Degree	5	10
Total	50	100

The results from Table 3 showed that the majority of the respondents had attained upper secondary education level, 15 individuals, which is 30% of the sample. This was followed by those with lower secondary education, 12 individuals (24%), vocational certificate level 10 individuals (20%), higher vocational certificate level 8 individuals (16%), and bachelor's degree level 5 individuals (10%).

**Table 4** Duration of Agricultural Practices

Duration of Agricultural Practices	<i>n</i>	Percentage
1 - 3 years	6	12
4 - 6 years	18	36
7 - 9 years	22	44
10 - 12 years	4	8
Total	50	100

Table 4 showed that most respondents (44%) had 7 - 9 years of experience in the *Khok Nong Na* Model, followed by 36% with 4 - 6 years, 12% with 1 - 3 years, and 8% with 10 - 12 years.

**Table 5** Landowner

Agricultural land	<i>n</i>	Percentage
Owner	50	100%

Table 5 indicates that all respondents possess agricultural land, constituting 100 percent of the sample.

## 1.2 Section 2 : Needs for Using English

The result is shown in Table 6.

**Table 6** Opinions on the Need for Using English

Statements	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	Results
1. The English language plays a crucial role in facilitating the development of agricultural tourism.	4.74	0.44	Highest
2. Speaking proficiency is essential in the workplace.	5.00	0.00	Highest
3. Listening proficiency is crucial for professional endeavors.	3.76	0.72	High
4. Reading comprehension is essential for occupational success.	4.08	0.78	High
5. Written communication skills are fundamental in the workplace.	3.28	0.73	Moderate
6. Grammatical competence is imperative for professional effectiveness.	2.04	1.05	Low
Total	3.82	1.20	High



From Table 6, it can be seen that a high overall need for English in the *Khok Nong Na Model* (mean = 3.82). Speaking was the top priority (5.00), followed by recognition of English as vital for agro-tourism (4.74), while grammar was seen as the least needed (2.04).

### 1.3 Section 3 : Content for English Skill Practice

The result is shown in Table 7.

**Table 7** Contents

Statements	Mean	SD.	Results
1. General English vocabulary and structure are essential for work.	4.24	0.82	High
2. General English conversations are essential for work.	5.00	0.00	Highest
3. English vocabulary and structures related to agricultural work are essential.	4.02	0.84	High
4. English conversations related to agricultural work are essential.	3.96	0.78	High
5. Other content is also necessary to practice English skills.	3.40	0.88	Moderate
Total	4.12	0.90	High

Table 7 showed high relevance of English content for work, with an overall mean of 4.12. General English conversations were rated highest (5.00), followed by general vocabulary and structure (4.24), and agricultural English content (4.00). Other practice content was moderately needed (3.40).

### 1.4 Section 4 : Topics Needed for Practicing English Skills

The result is shown in Table 8.

**Table 8** Topics

Statements	Mean	SD.	Results
1. Greetings	5.00	0.00	Highest
2. Expressing gratitude	3.84	0.74	High
3. Apologizing	3.52	1.09	High
4. Politely refusing	3.30	1.02	Moderate
5. Asking for help	4.56	0.58	Highest
6. Asking about residence	4.08	0.75	High
7. Providing information about farming	5.00	0.00	Highest
8. Asking for the time	4.22	0.68	High
9. Asking for and giving directions	5.00	0.00	Highest
10. Asking someone to repeat	3.44	0.73	Moderate
Total	4.01	1.09	High

Table 8 showed positive opinions on English practice topics (mean = 4.01). The most needed topics were greetings, farming information, and directions (all scored 5.00), while polite refusal was least needed (3.30).

#### 1.5 Section 5 : The English Language Training Needs

The result is shown in Table 9.

**Table 9** Innovative Model for the English Training Needs

Innovative Model	Mean	SD.	Needs
Booklet	3.70	0.95	High
Brochure	5.00	0.00	Highest
E-book	3.52	0.95	High
CD	3.18	0.96	Moderate
VDO	3.44	0.93	Moderate
Audio	5.00	0.00	Highest
Others	5.00	0.00	Highest
Total	4.12	1.05	High

Table 9 showed high overall appropriateness of the English practice models (mean = 4.12). Brochures, audio files, and other media scored highest (5.00), while CDs scored the lowest (3.18).

#### 2. Phase 2 : The Evaluation Results of the innovative, Participatory, and Appropriate English Communication Model for the *Khok Nong Na* Model Agricultural Tourism Community

The data analysis of general information is shown in Table 10.

**Table 10** Evaluation Results of the English Communication Innovation Model

Statements	Mean	SD.	Results
1. Clarity of content	4.00	0.50	Good
2. Systematic organization of information	4.33	0.49	Good
3. Accuracy of information	4.00	0.59	Good
4. Appeal and engagement	3.67	0.66	Good
5. Appropriateness of language	4.00	0.72	Good
6. Use of images and graphics	3.67	0.67	Good
7. Alignment with objectives	4.67	0.70	Excellent
Total	4.04	0.62	Good

The innovation model demonstrated effectiveness according to Table 10 with a mean score of 4.04. The scores for content clarity, accuracy and language use were 4.00 while organization received 4.33 and alignment with objectives achieved the highest score at 4.67. Visual appeal scored lowest at 3.67.

### 3. Phase 3 : Satisfaction with the innovative, participatory English communication model for the *Khok Nong Na* Model agricultural tourism community

The data analysis of general information is shown in Table 11.

**Table 11** Evaluating Satisfaction with the English Communication Innovation Model in Agricultural Tourism Community

Statements	Mean	SD.	Results
1. Ease of understanding the English content in the innovation	4.66	0.48	Highest
2. Relevance of the content in the innovation to the community context	4.64	0.48	Highest
3. Benefits gained from using the innovation for English communication	3.98	0.62	High
4. Practical application of the innovation in real community tourism situations	3.60	0.73	High
5. Overall satisfaction with the English communication innovation model	4.08	0.70	High
Total	4.17	0.60	High

The English communication model received a high satisfaction rating of 4.17 according to Table 11. The participants rated comprehensibility as the highest at 4.66 followed by contextual relevance at 4.64. The model received a lower score for practical use at 3.60 yet the community members found it useful and effective for their needs.

## Conclusion and Discussion

### Conclusion

The study developed a participatory and context-appropriate English communication model for the *Khok Nong Na* agritourism community, which was well accepted and effectively enhanced communication with international tourists, supporting sustainable tourism and income growth (Asanok, 2018). English speaking and listening were identified as the most essential skills for delivering quality services and positive tourist experiences (Herasimovich et al., 2024). Systematic content presentation also improved tourist understanding and engagement, contributing to community income (Chen & Rahman, 2018).

### Discussion

The study found that English speaking and listening skills are highly needed in agritourism, aligning with research on their role in improving tourist satisfaction (Herasimovich et al., 2024). Clear information presentation enhances understanding and community income (Chen & Rahman, 2018). The involvement of communities in innovation development creates ownership and enhances communication which supports global tourism readiness (Dimitrovski et al., 2021). The sustainable utilization of local resources plays a crucial role in maintaining both cultural heritage and environmental conservation (Leka et al., 2022). The study recommends developing locally relevant innovations with community involvement and suggests further research for broader application.

The model's development received support from community members who became invested in its practical applications and recognized the requirement to enhance student English language abilities. The model enhanced communication abilities while simultaneously supporting both economic and tourism sustainability in the long term (Dimitrovski et al., 2021; Leka et al., 2022). The research offers essential guidelines for other agritourism communities seeking to enhance their international market presence.

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