

The Testing of Nama (Mind) – Rupa (Body) Hypothesis in Second Language Acquisition

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Abstract

This research investigated the effect of Buddhist meditation hypothesis: Nama (mind) – Rupa (body) Hypothesis (NRH) in second language acquisition on students' academic performance and opinions. An experimental group and a control group were students who enrolled for the subject of English Language for (Thai) Student Teachers in the second semester of academic year 2017 at a Rajabhat University in Bangkok, selected through simple random sampling technique, and each group had 18 members. The instruments used in this research were the pre-test, post-test, and the survey for the students' opinion. The result showed that meditation practice had positive impact on the student's ability to learn language at the statistical significant level of 0.01 and the overall opinion of the students in practicing meditation prior to English lesson was high.

Keywords: Nama – Rupa Hypothesis, second language acquisition, Guided Meditative Techniques of Teaching

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1. Introduction

Initially, the Nama (mind) –Rupa (body) Approach was an educational hunt or food-for-thought paper presented in 1991. Later on, it was fully developed and a linked study was carry out in 1996 with 11 undergraduate students as control experimental group at a Western Language Department, Srinakarinwirote University. The finding was significance at .05 level (Brudhiprabha, 1996, p. 15). Besides, The new ‘Guided Meditative Techniques of Teaching’ (GMTT) was defined as the teaching language by using meditative techniques as a tool to gain knowledge, and it was utilized as the basis for the lessons in this research for second language acquisition which was the ability of the brain or mind to acquire first and second language.

2. Objective of the study

This research study intended to test the Nama (mind) – Rupa (body) Hypothesis (NRH) in Thailand at university level for the effects of Buddhist meditation hypothesis for second language acquisition.

3. Research Methods

3.1 Population

The population were students of the Faculty of Education enrolled in English for (Thai) Teachers in second semester year 2017, and there were 6 classrooms with 215 students. In this study, the experimental group and the control group each consisted of 18 students in the course “English for (Thai) Teachers at a Rajabhat University in Bangkok and they are selected by random sampling.

3.2 Research Instrument

The pre-test and post-test were designed by the researcher, and the purpose of the tests were to find out the level of learning achievements of the subjects. Besides, the survey was used in form of a five-point Likert scale to ask students about their opinions toward Guided Meditative Techniques of Teaching (GMMT).

3.3 Data Collection

The scores of pre-test and post-test were compared in order to find the differences of the students' scores after meditation before class. The scores collected from pre-test and post-test were analyzed to pinpoint the area of students' achievement in English language learning. At the end of the experiment, students answered the questions using the survey which was designed by the researcher in order to find out the opinions of students towards meditation before English language Learning class.

3.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed in the form of percentage and compared between the pre-test and post-test, results and the computer program SPSS. Besides, the data acquired from the questionnaires were analyzed in percentage. The data from this study was then analyzed in numerical and statistical analysis.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

Research Result

Table 1 The t-test scores of 18 students in the experimental group who meditated before the lessons using Guided Meditative Techniques of Teaching (GMTT)

English test scores	N	\bar{X}	S.D.	t-test value	Sig.(2tailed) level
Pre-test	18	17.33	4.77	1.729	.01
Post-test	18	19.13	4.82		

From Table 1, indicated the pre-test mean scores of the experimental group and the post-test mean scores. The table showed the average scores of these students. The average score of the pre-test is 17.33, with the average score of the post-test being 19.13. The table above also showed the post-test scores as being higher than the pre-test score. The standard deviation (S.D.) of the pre-test and post-test were 4.82 and 4.77, respectively.

Table 2 The t-test Scores of 18 students in control group who did not meditate before the lessons

English test scores	N	\bar{X}	S.D.	t-test value	Sig.(2tailed) level
Pre-test	18	18.94	4.13	9.440	.00*
Post-test	18	26.00	3.80		

From Table 2 indicated the mean scores of the control group on the pre-test and post-test. The table showed the average scores of these students. The average score of the pre-test was 18.94. On the other hand, the average score of the post-test was 26.00. The table above also showed that the post-test score was higher than the pretest score. The S.D. of the pre-test and post-test scores were 4.13 and 4.42, respectively.

Table 3 Opinion Survey of Students

Opinion Assessment Items	\bar{X}	S.D.	Opinion level	Order
1. Meditation before lessons helps increase their concentration in class more	4.93	0.26	Highest	1
2. Meditation before lessons wastes studying time	1.20	0.77	High	5
3. Meditation before lessons makes it easier to understand the lesson	4.33	0.72	High	4
4. Meditation before lessons makes the overall studying session better	4.87	0.35	Highest	2
5. Meditation before lessons makes learning more fun	4.73	0.46	Highest	3
6. Meditation before lessons makes the learners feel tired	1.20	0.77	High	5
7. Meditation before lessons confuses the learners	1.20	0.77	High	5
Total	4.32	0.59	High	

From Table 3 the finding showed the opinions of students towards meditation before class, where the overall level of satisfaction was high ($\bar{X} = 4.32, 0.59$).

Table 4 Means and Standard Deviation of the Four Language Skills before and after Learning with Guided Meditative Techniques of Teaching (GMTT)

Skills	Post-test		Pre-test		Different	t	p
	\bar{X}	S.D.	\bar{X}	S.D.			
Listening	4.55	1.42344	3.77	1.66470	0.78	2.026	0.0295
Speaking	4.72	1.44733	4.61	1.24328	0.11	0.325	0.3745
Reading	5.44	0.85558	4.55	1.29352	0.89	3.496	0.0015
Writing	4.44	1.29352	4.38	1.50054	0.06	0.164	0.4355

From table 4 the results showed that the post-test scores of students were statistically higher than the pre-test results ($p < .01$). The results also revealed that there was an increase in the post-test results following meditation before class.

4.1 Conclusion

Through pre-test, post-test, and survey of students' opinion, this study sought to discover the impact of meditation practice prior to English language lessons for (Thai) Teacher subject with regard to reading, listening, writing and speaking. Writing is one of the most challenging and, often stressful tasks for students. Although meditation may not aid all students, it is easy for many classroom teachers to prepare students with time and guidance in order to initiate and grow their own meditative practices and, potentially, provide them with emotional and academic benefits. Besides, the testing of Nama (mind) – Rupa (body) Hypothesis (NRH) was statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Moreover, students who practiced Buddhist meditation prior to an English lesson had higher achievement than that of pre-test at the statistical significant level of .01. Besides, the students' opinion in practicing meditation prior to English lesson, the overall level of opinion survey was high ($\bar{X} = 4.32, 0.59$).

4.2 Discussion

From the results, the results were consistent with Saita (2010, p. 6) who compared the perception skills of young meditated children before participating in group activities with 4-5 years old with 40 children. The results showed that perception skills of young children who meditated before group activities and regular group activities were significantly difference at .01 level. Moreover, Dechakraisaya et.al (1985, pp. 98-104) compared learning achievement in developing ethical and intellectual skills of students before and after meditation. The results showed that the average scores of students after practice meditation were higher than the average scores obtained before practice meditation at a significance level of 0.05 and the average scores from I.Q. test after the practice of meditation are higher than average scores before the practice with no significance level of 0.05 which coincided with this study. Besides this, the results from the students' opinion survey pointed towards an overall higher score.

4.3 Recommendations

From the research results, it was found that the writing skill got the lowest average score compared to listening, reading, and speaking Skills. Hence, more activities and exercised to improve students writing skills should be provided. Moreover, all English language teachers must understand the continuous process of developing writing skills and manage classes accordingly. Besides, it was also found that speaking test got the second lowest score. Therefore, activities and exercise to build students' confidence in speaking English. In addition, Guided Meditative Techniques of Teaching (GMTT) should also be applied with other learning theories to improve all English language skill.

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