This chapter looks at the use of online communities of practice (OCoPs) for EFL teacher development. First, the chapter discusses issues concerning the professional development of teachers, focusing particularly on how situated learning and communities of practice (CoP) can be used to improve the development process. Then, the chapter provides a detailed discussion on how one particular OCoP, the website ajarn.com, functions as a CoP and can therefore be used as part of the EFL teacher development process.

Introduction
Teaching has been often described as a “lonely profession” (Wallace, 1998, p.207; Gephard and Oprandy, 1999, p.99). Even though teachers spend much time in classrooms interacting with students, they usually face their students alone, very rarely (and perhaps reluctantly) receiving peer feedback about their teaching. This situation is exacerbated when teachers find themselves in different cultures, a common occurrence for EFL teachers. Many of these teachers may also be relatively new to teaching in general and EFL in particular. So while teaching, they may encounter numerous problems: these problems may be pedagogical, or they may be cultural. But for teachers to develop professionally, it is important they recognize, reflect on and then attempt to solve these problems, turning them “into positive rather than negative experiences” (Wallace, 1998, p.5). One way to do this is by discussing problems with colleagues (Roberts, 1998; Wallace, 1998; Burns, 1999; Gephard and Oprandy, 1999), thereby participating in a community of practice (CoP). However, for EFL teachers, particularly those working alone in different cultures, discussion with peers and taking part in CoPs can become problematic. Fortunately, advances in information technology have given teachers opportunities to participate in group discussions and access shared resources; by using computers and the Internet, teachers can now take part in on-line
discussions and share knowledge and resources with peers, resulting in online communities of practice (OCoPs). This chapter aims to show that 1) OCoPs, like their face-to-face counterparts, allow knowledge resources to be created and shared by members of the communities, and 2) these co-constructed knowledge resources can help teachers develop professionally.

First, issues regarding the professional development of teachers, particularly how situated learning and CoPs can be used to improve the development process, are discussed. Then, there is a detailed discussion on how one particular OCoP, the website ajarn.com, functions as a CoP and can therefore be used as part of the teacher development process.

1 Theoretical background

1.1 Professional development of teachers

The process of professional development is valued by all professions. In some professions this process stops once an adequate level of experience has been achieved to do the job; however, other professions place higher demands on its practitioners, with the result that the development process can never stop (Wallace, 1998). Teaching is one of these professions and it uses a wide variety of activities to help its practitioners gain more knowledge or expertise. Wallace (1991, 1998) has grouped this knowledge into two categories: received knowledge and experiential knowledge. Received knowledge is generally presented as facts by experts and as such is not open for negotiation; hence, this knowledge is very objective. Learners are given sets of rules or procedures for doing things and are expected to follow them. Initial teacher education (ITE) programs traditionally follow this approach.

Experiential knowledge, in contrast, is generated by learners themselves when they reflect on their own actions; therefore, it is not fixed and more subjective in nature. The actions have been done using tacit knowledge, a process Schon (1983, p.49) refers to as “knowing-in-action”. It is only on reflection that this tacit knowledge becomes experiential knowledge. Educators have realized the importance of experiential knowledge, resulting in more teacher education courses, particularly in-service training (INSET) courses (see Kontra, 1997; Roberts, 1998; Guefrachi and Trudi, 2000), being created to allow for the development of experiential knowledge. However, these two types of knowledge are not mutually exclusive and the vast majority of teacher education courses incorporate aspects of both. Figures 1 and 2 below show how Kontra (1997, p.247) and Wallace (1991, p.15) have combined the two forms of knowledge in teacher education models.
Teachers may be able to learn and develop on their own by reflecting on their practice and making changes accordingly, but this type of “learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous” (Bandurra 1977, p.22). Additionally, as the two models above clearly show, reflection that incorporates some form of received knowledge is essential for an effective development process. This received knowledge could be from books and journals, lectures and workshops, or professional collaboration, but whichever form it takes it is the result of social action: the action of knowledge being spread throughout a community. “Learning to teach [better] is not a private journey” (Roberts 1998, p.36) but is a process of social participation and this process is considerably affected by the learning situation (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Smith, 1999). Therefore, learning is situated and for teachers to learn, they must interact and collaborate with people around them, be it in the teachers’ staff room, in a large scale teacher organization like TESOL, or in a centre of higher-learning. These interacting groups of people, or communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), and the situated learning taking place in them are key ingredients for successful professional development.

1.2 Situated learning and communities of practice (CoPs)
In Lave and Wenger’s (1991) Situated Learning model, they argue that learning should not be thought of as acquiring specific types of knowledge but rather as participating in social
engagements that allow learning or knowledge acquisition to occur. Knowledge is not “decontextualized, abstract or general” (Smith 1999, p.2) and the accumulation of knowledge and learning is done within CoPs. Wenger (1998) expands on the model by listing three characteristics of CoPs. First, CoPs are joint enterprises as understood by their members. They are based around “knowledge rather than task” (Allee, 2000, p.4) so they are continually open to negotiation and not subject to deadlines; as long as members see the need for CoPs, they will continue to function. Therefore, as they evolve, CoPs can become vast knowledge resources that can be used specifically for professional development. Secondly, CoPs are social entities binding their members through mutual engagement. Members communicate on a regular basis and the joint activities they engage in result in a strong relationship and trust (Smith, 1999; Allee, 2000). However, despite these strong bonds, CoP members are not always equal as positions of authority within CoPs result from “interaction around expertise” (Lesser and Storck, 2001, p.832). Depending on their level of expertise, members start on the periphery and move towards the centre as they gain more expertise (Smith, 1999; Mitchell and Myles, 2004). Finally, CoPs produce a capability in their practice. Over time, the knowledge built by the group is embodied by the development of a “shared repertoire and resources such as tools, documents, routines, vocabulary, symbols, artifacts, etc.” (Allee, 2000, p.5). This shared repertoire can then be used as a base for future learning and professional development.

1.3 Using CoPs to enhance the learning/development process

CoPs can improve the learning/development process in many ways. First, as participation in CoPs is a shared social practice that takes place over time and develops around things that are important to its members, the members have a greater “sense of joint enterprise and identity” (Smith 2003, p.3); hence, the learning process is enhanced. Secondly, on joining CoPs, members are usually on the periphery, but over time, as they gain more expertise, be it in the form of received knowledge or experiential knowledge, they may become core members of CoPs. The learning that is taking place in CoPs is moving away from the traditional received wisdom form of knowledge transference. Instead, it corresponds more to newer models of teacher education (see Figures 1 and 2 above) that emphasize the importance of both received and experiential knowledge. This allows for knowledge “outside of the traditional structural boundaries” (Lesser and Storck, 2001, p.832) to be shared by members. In addition, the learning that is taking place in CoPs is following one of the most important pedagogical trends of recent years—the move from traditional face-to-face learning to a learning...
environment that is more constructivist in nature (Hyland, 2002; Hacker and Niederhauser, 2000).

Finally, the shared repertoire and resources used to describe the knowledge within CoPs allow members to build on existing knowledge. As periphery members participate in CoPs, using the standard repertoire and resources allows them to switch from local language to professional language (Freeman, 1996) to describe their teaching. According to Freeman, this switch is a clear indication that teachers are starting to reform their thinking as the result of being exposed to new ideas and experiences, ultimately leading to reframing—“the process of generating new understanding” (Tsui, 2003, p.45). This reframing allows members to move closer to the core of CoPs. In addition, the more members are able to use professional language, the more they are able to theorize their experiential knowledge and apply theory or formal knowledge to their teaching, thus enhancing their experiential knowledge. Tsui (2003, p.265) believes this ability to theorize based on conscious deliberation and reflection is “one of the critical differences between expert and non-expert teachers”.

I have discussed how CoPs have the potential to enhance teacher learning/development. However, Smith (2003) has pointed out that when CoPs are weak, as in the case of EFL teachers working alone in foreign settings, very little development may be possible. Fortunately, even isolated EFL teachers can now participate in CoPs by going online and joining online communities of practice (OCoPs). One example of an OCoP is the website ajarn.com.

2 Ajarn.com and using it as part of the teacher development process

2.1 The origins of Ajarn.com

![Figure 3: The ajarn.com website homepage](image)
When I first moved to Thailand in 1998, teaching jobs were advertised mainly in two local English language newspapers. However, 1999 saw a radical change in the EFL teaching community in Thailand; ajarn.com (ajarn: Thai for “teacher”) came online. Initially, it was just a place for employers to post job advertisements for teachers. This service was free of charge, so within a few months, job advertisements for EFL teachers in the local newspapers had dried up. Anyone looking for an EFL teaching job in Thailand had to access ajarn.com. Consequently, companies providing services (training courses, legal assistance, etc.) to EFL teachers in Thailand realized that teachers were not looking in the newspapers so they too switched their advertisements to the website. The income that this generated led to a radical expansion ajarn.com services. These services included articles about living and working in Thailand, discussion forums and free teaching materials.

In the remainder of this chapter, two interrelated topics are discussed: 1) how the ajarn.com fulfills Wenger’s (1998) three criteria for CoPs, and 2) how ajarn.com’s shared resources allow knowledge to be created and transferred between its members, thereby allowing teachers to develop professionally.

2.2 How ajarn.com exhibits Wenger’s three characteristics of a CoP

Wenger (1998) listed three characteristics of CoPs. Firstly, CoPs are joint enterprises as understood by their members. Secondly, CoPs are social entities that bind its members through mutual engagement. Finally, CoPs produce capabilities in their practice. I will now discuss how these characteristics are evident in ajarn.com.

Ajarn.com is a joint enterprise as understood by its members: Ajarn.com’s origins were very humble. It was set up with the aim of helping employers find teachers and teachers find jobs. However, it has grown; now it includes articles by EFL experts, forums for discussing EFL issues, guides to professional development courses and various other resources for EFL professionals (see figure 4).

These resources are used as part of a joint enterprise in which EFL professionals create a knowledge base that can be used by all members of ajarn.com. The members understand this function and contribute accordingly. Ajarn.com has also been open to continuous negotiation
and has been not subject to deadlines. It has continued to exist because members still see a need for it. Moreover, the function of *ajarn.com* has not been to complete tasks but to build and share knowledge.

*Ajarn.com* is a social entity that binds its members through mutual engagement: A good example of this is the *ajarn.com* forums. When I logged on in May, 2008, *ajarn.com* had 9,791 members and 274 users (49 members and 225 guests) were using the forums. Since the forums started, *ajarn.com*’s members have made 874,092 posts within 24,114 threads (see figure 5).

A good example of a contributing member is “erwin64”. Since joining in 2005, he has made 308 postings to various forums (see figures 6 and 7). Of course, other members interact more or less than “erwin64” and the quality of their interactions varies widely: from simple one-line postings to more complex, analytical postings (see appendix A). However, the vast quantity of postings shows that members are contributing regularly and suggest that strong relationships are being built between those members who contribute regularly.
These forums suggest that members of *ajarn.com* contribute equally. However, positions of authority do exist within *ajarn.com*. The articles by more experienced EFL practitioners (see figure 10) and the “hot seat” interviews (see figure 11) with members in positions of power show that there is “interaction around expertise” (Lesser and Storck, 2001, p.832). So members of *ajarn.com* with little experience start on the periphery and move towards the core as they gain more expertise (Smith, 1999; Mitchell and Myles, 2004).

**Ajarn.com** produces a capability in its practice: *Ajarn.com* uses a number of shared tools and resources to co-construct knowledge. The first resource was the job-placement resource. By filling out an online form, employers can advertise their jobs. Teachers can also add their resume to the *ajarn.com* so that they can be contacted by prospective employers. A second resource used to share knowledge is the *Ajarn Writers* resource. This allows members with more expertise to pass on knowledge to those with less expertise. Another is the *Forum* resource where the knowledge transfer is less top-down and follows a flatter hierarchy. There are also other shared resources such as the *Ask Questions*, *Region Guides* and *TEFL courses*. 

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**Figure 6:** erwin64’s posting data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thread / Thread Starter</th>
<th>Last Post</th>
<th>Replies</th>
<th>Views</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self study course speaking English on tapes or cdfs?</td>
<td>18th February 2008 17:43 by erwin64</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas means abroad, so can I say …?</td>
<td>28th January 2008 15:50 by erwin64</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English for working people? Textbooks?</td>
<td>25th January 2008 12:26 by erwin64</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Interchange and level 1 to 408 C</td>
<td>3rd November 2007 18:03 by Big Bill</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Conversation Course ? Help appreciated (I 1 2)</td>
<td>20th July 2007 14:47 by Ray</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being recorded by your students (I 1 2)</td>
<td>9th June 2007 20:36 by philbert</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7:** some of the forums to which erwin64 has posted
By creating and using these shared resources, ajarn.com has produced a capability in its practice, thereby giving its members the means to continually expand the knowledge base.

Having outlined how ajarn.com can be classified as a CoP according to Wenger’s (1998) description, the chapter now outlines how the specific resources of ajarn.com are used to build a knowledge resource that can be used by teachers to develop professionally.

2.3 How ajarn.com resources enable members to create a knowledge resource which allows them to develop professionally

This chapter has discussed how ajarn.com is a CoP and as such can be used to create a knowledge resource for its members to share and expand. Some of this knowledge is in the form of received knowledge as it passed down from core, or ‘expert’, members to periphery, or ‘non-expert’, members; some of it is experiential as it has been generated by members reflecting on their own practices. However, the boundary between the received and experiential knowledge is not fixed. The knowledge that is being received by periphery members is generally based on the experience of core members. This process also allows both core and periphery members to develop professionally. By answering questions or writing articles, core members are forced to theorize about their practice based on conscious deliberation and reflection, creating experiential knowledge and becoming more ‘expert’ in the process (Tsui, 2003). In addition, periphery members may develop professionally by simply receiving knowledge. But for those with “the credibility of personal experience” (Shocker-von Ditfurth and Legutke, 2002, p.168), this intake of new knowledge may also cause them to reflect on their practice, thereby converting received knowledge into experiential knowledge and moving periphery members closer to the core. So the knowledge being created and transferred within ajarn.com cannot be neatly classified as either received or experiential: it has the potential to be both.

Figure 8 below shows the knowledge-building resources available to members of ajarn.com. How some of these resources are specifically used to build a knowledge resource that can be used by teachers to develop professionally is now discussed in detail.
Post a Job, View Latest Jobs and Post Resume: The first resources available to members were the Post a Job resource for employers and the View Latest Jobs for teachers. Later, the Post Resume resource was added for teachers. These resources allow members to create knowledge about the job market in Thailand; by using the knowledge in these resources, members can find out the availability of jobs and teachers, where jobs are located and expected salaries. This knowledge give teachers an opportunity to select jobs that are better suited for their professional development.

TEFL course news: Despite this resource only providing a list of TEFL courses in Thailand, it is an important resource for ajarn.com members. EFL teachers in Thailand now need an EFL qualification to get a teaching permit. Moreover, to get a secure, relatively well-paid job that offers more opportunity for professional development, qualifications have become more important in Thailand (as in other EFL teaching environments). This has resulted in a plethora of companies offering TEFL courses, some reputable, others not so. The ajarn.com TEFL courses resource helps its members by providing a list of reputable TEFL courses. On its own, this resource is just providing general information; however, when it is coupled with the Your Questions and Forum resources where members can ask questions about various TEFL courses, more detailed knowledge about TEFL courses can be created by core members for the benefit of periphery members—an example of the experiential/received nature of the knowledge being created and transferred within ajarn.com.

Articles, Ajarn Writers and Hot Seat resources: Apart from the face-to-face classroom, another traditional way for knowledge to be transferred has been in the form of books or journals. Ajarn.com also continues this tradition by providing the Articles, Ajarn Writers and Hot Seat resources (see figures 9-11). In the Articles and Ajarn Writers resources, core members supply articles based on their experience, thereby creating experiential knowledge, which becomes received knowledge when read by periphery members. These articles cover a wide range of topics: classroom teaching tips, teaching in Thai schools, reflections on Thai society in general, etc. The Hot Seat resource is slightly different as it features interviews between an ajarn.com interviewer and members who are considered experts within the Thai EFL community. Similar to the Articles and Ajarn Writers resources, knowledge is being created by core members to be shared by periphery members. However, the topics deal less with actual classroom activities but more with the general EFL market in Thailand.
Even though the knowledge generated by the above mentioned resources has both received and experiential elements, these resources generally follow the received wisdom model of teacher education. The core member, or “sage on the stage”, is providing the knowledge for the periphery members to receive without questioning; hence, the knowledge being created is hardly subjective. Therefore, to move away from the “sage on the stage” concept so as to embrace more constructivist modes of learning where the knowledge being created and
transferred is more subjective, a resource where the construction of knowledge is less top-down and the hierarchy of members is flatter is necessary. Ajarn.com’s Forum resource provides this.

**Forum resource:** Ajarn.com’s Forum resource is a good example of a constructivist learning environment. It offers a number of forums with a huge variety of topics (see figure 12) that provide its members with an environment in which they actively co-construct knowledge, building it up piece by piece. There may still be “interaction around expertise” (Lesser and Storck, 2001, p.832); however, compared with the previously mentioned resources, the interaction is less top-down and adheres to a flatter hierarchy: the distinction between core and periphery members is less clear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Last Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living, Working, and Teaching in Thailand</td>
<td>Practicalities Of Living In Thailand</td>
<td>1149</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 10:06 Unread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where to obtain that creature comfort in Thailand or whether to bring it with you. Where to get the best service whether it be dentists, doctors, or lawyers. If there’s something you need to know about practical living in Thailand it’s here, or will be where you ask about it! Sponsored by: Text &amp; Talk Academy</td>
<td>23456</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 10:06 Unread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Staffroom</td>
<td>1259</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 13:06 Mixes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Here we discuss general teaching matters. The Thai education system, school politics, job conditions, qualifications, recruitment matters, and other areas that concern life outside the classroom.</td>
<td>27323</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 13:06 Mixes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Classroom</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 11:06 going one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar to Games, Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing, Discussions About Teaching Experiences, Theory and Problems. Sponsored by: International House Bangkok</td>
<td>5356</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 11:06 going one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paperwork</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 14:06 Ismail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A forum which deals with the paperwork and official bureaucracy faced by foreign teachers in Thailand. Includes visas, work permits, teachers licenses, and tax issues. Sponsored by: The TEFL Forum</td>
<td>4567</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 14:06 Ismail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Newbie Zone</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 14:06 jimsol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whether you’re new to Thailand, new to teaching, or just new to Ajarn Forum, make sure you pop in here and introduce yourself. Feel free to ask any questions that spring to mind as you consider your emigration, career change, or have other considerations you may want to ask about. There are no stupid questions in this section! Sponsored by: The TEFL Forum</td>
<td>5567</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 14:06 jimsol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entertainment, Dining, and Travel</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 14:06 Unread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What’s new out in the town? Been anywhere good? Cut a restaurant you want to recommend? Anywhere we should avoid going? Seen any good movies or watched any good TV lately? Whether upcountry, downcountry, or out the country, this forum is dedicated to enjoyable stuff that you do in your free time. Sponsored by: On The Good British Cafe, Whipit Sam Road.</td>
<td>11956</td>
<td>Thu 23rd Jun 06 14:06 Unread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12: ajarn.com "forums"

A good example of how new knowledge is co-constructed by members can be seen in the topic “Common English language errors made by Thai learners” in “The Staffroom” forum (see Appendix). The topic was started by one member posting the following question: “Do any of you have links to good articles about common English language errors made by Thai learners? I am thinking of pronunciation as well as other areas like grammar and usage”.

Over a four-day period, this topic accumulated 24 postings from 14 different members. Even though the original question asked for links to articles, the responses by members contained a
huge amount of experiential knowledge based on personal practice. Clearly the members had consciously reflected on their practice and used this reflection to add experiential knowledge to ajarn.com. The co-constructed knowledge not only consisted of straightforward answers, for example, the English sounds likely to be mispronounced by Thai speakers, positioning of adjectives, etc., but also tips on how to teach the problem areas and some theorizing as to why Thai speakers have these problems. The final product, a knowledge resource on common English errors made by Thai speakers, is as a whole greater than the sum of the individual contributions made by members. This final product can be used by both core and periphery members alike. In addition, the process by which the final product was reached led to members reflecting consciously on their practice, thereby helping them gain more expertise. Therefore, both the end result of the topic and the process by which this result was reached allow members of ajarn.com to develop professionally. This is only one example, but other topics in the Forum resource can be similarly used by members as part of the professional development process.

Conclusion
Teaching, in common with all other professions, values the concept of professional development. In the past, this development was seen as the result of non-experts receiving knowledge from experts; however, present trends in teacher education also value the development of experiential knowledge—knowledge generated by teachers consciously reflecting on their own practices. Another trend in learning and teacher development is participation in communities of practice (CoPs), where people with a common purpose interact and collaborate to build a shared knowledge resource. However, for EFL teachers working alone in foreign settings, participating in CoPs may be difficult. Fortunately, with advances in information technology, teachers can now join online CoPs (OCoPs).

One such OCoP is the website ajarn.com. Not only does ajarn.com exhibit the typical characteristics of face-to-face CoPs but the variety of shared resources that it provides allows its members to construct and share a knowledge resource, a resource that can be used for the development and transfer of both received and experiential knowledge between members. It is this transfer of knowledge and the process through which the knowledge is constructed that can allow teachers to develop professionally.

Ajarn.com caters mainly for EFL practitioners in Thailand; however, there is a variety of OCoPs available, at institute level, regional level and global level, that can give EFL teachers
everywhere opportunities to construct and share knowledge resources and develop professionally in the process.
References

Last retrieved May 23, 2008
from: http://www.vernaallee.com/value_networks/KnowledgeNetworksAndCommunitiesOfPractice-28Jan07.pdf


Appendix: Sample topic thread from an ajarn.com “Forum”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Post subject</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thu 22nd Jun 06 01:00</td>
<td>1 quote</td>
<td>Post subject</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 22nd Jun 06 01:00</td>
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<td>Thu 22nd Jun 06 01:00</td>
<td>1 quote</td>
<td>Post subject</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Quote:

- Common English language errors made by Thai learners?

Trying to learn it. 😊

I and L asked a foundation class to name their favorite ESL team, had 5 that chose River Plate 😊

Perhaps problems with final consonant sounds (i.e. not making them), rather like the Cantonese?

and how do you deal with these problems? Or not?

Thu - Perhaps I should have put this in the “Classroom” forum?

and I understand what you are saying, aging one.

I was just adding another thought about the final consonant sounds.

Putting the adjective after the noun, instead of before.

In “bear gun” instead of “gay bear”, “tiger small” instead of “small tiger”.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Post subject</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thu 22nd Jun 06 01:00</td>
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<td>Post subject</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 22nd Jun 06 01:00</td>
<td>1 quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 22nd Jun 06 01:00</td>
<td>1 quote</td>
<td>Post subject</td>
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<td>Thu 22nd Jun 06 01:00</td>
<td>1 quote</td>
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<td>Thu 22nd Jun 06 01:00</td>
<td>1 quote</td>
<td>Post subject</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</table>

Quote:

- Common English language errors made by Thai learners?
There's always trying to put an /s/ sound into the middle of words where it doesn't belong, and leaving it off the ends of words where it does belong, especially pronouns.

There are also several incorrect pronunciation problems that Thai speakers of English word final /r/.

In English, there is usually a downward intonation in English sentences unless asking a question, this is common for native Thai speakers to place a rising intonation on individual words which end with the disphony /r/, the sonority/r/ and sometimes with the word has two or more syllables.

Phrases are especially common with words that have come into Thai from the English language.

Another very common and easily corrected pronunciation problem that Thai speakers of English hear is the sound of the word

In English the word final /r/ phoneme is very important both semantically and grammatically. Many Thai speakers of English fail to produce this sound regularly, however there is no reason why all Thai students cannot develop the ability to regularly produce this sound, regularly emphasizing the finals using plural nouns, some and third person singular forms of regular verbs is usually effective. One benefit of making Thai speakers produce the sound is that it leads to improved control of verb conjugation, plural, and possessive forms.

Pposed final /r/ 10, 18, 21, 40

Jared, named, believed, learned, disappointed, failed, crashed in bed, liked, employed, encroached, repaired, learned, hated, worked, interested, raised, removed, lasted, lasted, reduced, opened, reported, pointed, sounded, flopped, startled

Closing: This slide is an item. Not copied.
I am of the opinion that all this drivel of the correct past tense sound is as big a waste of time as the idea that only people with MG can work for the BBC. English is a world language and as such it is going to be destroyed by a lot more people than the Welsh and assorted who have been doing it for years.

breakings, friend: I am of the FHsenthiefasawen tite...

Too many to mention unfortunately but I see some kind of an

Word order. "Do you know where in the tetter?"

 pronunciation obvious. Anything with lots of consonants together like 'snaps', 'boxir', 'acts', 'stands', sounds like 'th' like in 'church', 'brush' and the difference between them and the 'th' sound in 'brush' or 'shirt'.

OP: Have you tried getting hold of a copy of Man J. Engels' book, Man Banous, Go to shopping. Easy ways for Thais to instantly improve their English. It contains most of the common errors made by Thais and could help in your search. I bought mine at Chiang's bookshop for about 1.00 bath 3 years ago.

And there's always the point in this kind of thread where we ask the OP:

So, did you put a TESL course for Thai learners, etc?

among and whilst are not too hard, but thus probably will never learn amongst and whilst. You know, whilst rhythm with metronome.

Similar words that shift intonation; and long words that have two levels of intonation.

Some questions and in an unkind fashion, other questions don't.

Thanks, everyone.

I have a general tnta, a diploma, have not taken a course for Asian learners in particular. I have been teaching primary Chinese students in recent years. Some of these problems appear to be similar and understandable such as intonation, consonant clusters and final consonants. Some will be different, though.

Would you recommend such a course, PeaceBlonde? If so, where? I am interested in hearing all your comments.
Ten errors I notice when teaching corporate adults:

1. Following the verb 'decide' with the preposition 'about'.
2. Saying 'take care of something' instead of 'take care of something'.
3. 'Almost Thai people love football'. These have nightmares with expressing quantities and percentages.
4. For someone has already asked, forming an indirect question or statement. 'I don't know what time it is.' 'Could you tell me where the book is?'
5. Very few students think in English, which leads to 'I wear go to Fatima' and 'I spend the time about 30 minutes to go to work'. Those are both Thai-English direct translations. There are many more.
6. As are right now - verb tense. You can spend 40 hours teaching verb tense and very few Thais (right up to advanced level) are comfortable with the subtle uses of the present perfect.
7. Thai will use one all-encompassing word when it's completely unsuitable. Trees are trees. Plants are trees. Ferns are trees. Cacti are trees. They're all trees. Good is either not delicious or delicious. There's nothing in between.
8. Let's not forget the legendary 'I go to shopping' till my favorite after all these years. You just can't knock that one out of them.
9. Overuse of the verb 'plan'.
   I buy an internet instead of I surf the internet.
   I play water instead of I throw water.
   Again, this is a direct translation from Thai to English.
10. In writing, the constant need to use relative pronouns when they should be avoided like the plague.
    I went shopping yesterday to a department store which I have been before when I was in Thailand.
    These don't get to the full stop quickly enough.
    And there's always the point in the kind of thread where we ask the OP.
    So, you didn't take a TESOL course for Asian learners, eh?
    Among and while are not used, but Thais probably will never learn amongst and whilst. You know, while flying with mobile
    Similar words that shift interaction; and long words that have two levels of interaction.

Some questions and in an upward intonation; other questions don't.

If you are Australian!

No, any Americans here teaching 'done' as past tense for 'time'?
I always thought it was done.

Hong Kong Phooey wrote:

It contains most of the common errors made in Thai:

I so bath.

Yep. There's a common one! HFP!

I find there has to be the most amusing error:

Me have a blue motorcycle!

Quote:

Very few students 'think' in English.

That's the key of the problem with adult learners. Once you've reached a certain (very basic) level of proficiency in a language, it's crucial to train to "think in" or "think in" the language if you want attain any kind of fluency. Many Thai adults just can't be tucked.

Quote:

I always thought it was done.

Yeah, I always supported him too.