

## INTONATION ERRORS OF THAI STUDENTS IN SPEAKING ENGLISH

*Kesalahan Intonasi Siswa Thailand Dalam Berbicara Bahasa Inggris*

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine how the intonation errors of Thai students in speaking English especially in rising and falling intonation. This research used a quantitative method of analysis. The type of this research is classroom action research (CAR). Meanwhile, CAR research is to find or apply a method or approach to learning in the class that is appropriate to the problem encountered. Furthermore, the researcher chose the fourth grade of Prathom Miftahuddeen (Banpleetai) School Nathawee, Songkhla, Thailand totaling 46 students. However, the researcher only took 20 students especially the 4/2 classes the sample of this research. The data in this research were obtained through Pre-Test, Cycle 1, Cycle 2. The data from the mean of the Pre-test, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2 using the SPSS 21 application. The research showed that students' grades increase after being given the treatment using speech rising and falling intonation about the traditional food of Thailand (Tom Kha Kai). These are shown by the mean scores of the Pre-test (67,95% or 68%), the mean of Cycle 1 (83,15%), and the mean of Cycle 2 (95%). So the skill of the students in rising and falling intonation in the fourth grade of Prathom Miftahuddeen (Banpleetai) School Nathawee, Songkhla, Thailand has been successful and effective.

**Keywords:** Intonation Errors, Speaking English, Thai Students

### ABSTRAK

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana kesalahan intonasi siswa Thailand dalam berbicara bahasa inggris khususnya pada intonasi naik dan turun. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis kuantitatif. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas (PTK). Sedangkan penelitian PTK adalah mencari atau menerapkan suatu metode atau pendekatan pembelajaran di kelas yang sesuai dengan permasalahan yang dihadapi. Selanjutnya peneliti memilih kelas IV Sekolah Prathom Miftahuddeen (Banpleetai) Nathawee, Songkhla, Thailand yang berjumlah 46 siswa. Namun peneliti hanya mengambil 20 siswa khususnya kelas 4/2 sebagai sampel penelitian ini. Data dalam penelitian ini diperoleh melalui Pre-Test, Siklus 1, Siklus 2. Data diperoleh dari nilai rata-rata Pre-test, Siklus 1 dan Siklus 2 dengan menggunakan aplikasi SPSS 21. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai siswa meningkat setelah diberikan perlakuan menggunakan intonasi bicara naik turun tentang makanan tradisional Thailand (Tom Kha Kai). Hal ini ditunjukkan dengan nilai rata-rata Pre-test (67,95% atau 68%), nilai rata-rata Siklus 1 (83,15%), nilai rata-rata Siklus 2 (95%). Jadi keterampilan naik turun intonasi siswa kelas IV Sekolah Prathom Miftahuddeen (Banpleetai) Nathawee, Songkhla, Thailand telah berhasil dan efektif.*

**Kata Kunci:** Kesalahan Intonasi, Berbicara Bahasa Inggris, Siswa Thailand

## A. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is oral communication that consists of at least one speaker and listener to receive and send messages. Using English to communicate means to use it for expressing our ideas and opinions to others. Communication gives an easy way for a speaker to send her/his message and for the listener in chatting by all foreign English learners to communicate to use of English. (Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, 2020) argue that speaking is a productive skill that can be observed directly as well as empirically. (Keetha Kathirvel, 2020) says that speaking is a person's ability to speak fluently it is not only a feature of language but the ability to process information and language properly. (Bailey, 2017) argue that speaking in a new language is harder than writing, reading, and listening because speaking happens in real-time when you speak, you cannot correct pronunciation errors while talking to other people. In Thailand, English is a foreign language that is only taught in formal education. Besides that, it is also taught at playgroup schools namely Anuban, Elementary School namely Prathom is taught local content, and Junior High School and Senior High School namely Mattayum taught about national and international content. In school, English is

regarded as one of the national examinations to examine students before graduation. Talks about spoken English automatically have a relation with the intonation, word stress, juncture, and others as it is stated as well (Sardi et al, 2017). Intonation When we talk about intonation there must be something that arises in our minds that is related to vocals, therefore in vocal techniques, there are two important things that need to be noticed namely intonation and articulation. Intonation articulation is very influential when we speak because it will be noisy for the listener or audience (Surahmat et al, 2023). In talking there must be high and low intonation so when we speak and the intonation and articulation are not appropriate then no one will listen to us. Still, when the intonation and articulation are appropriate then people will listen to us. So the intonation is the height of the pitch of the voice, the rhythm of speech, or even the strains of the tone (Ermawati et al, 2021). Also when speaking intonation we do not monotonous will have an impact on others so make the listener not bored by what we are talking about. As for articulation is the technique of mentioning a sentence based on the correct syllable and consonant or clarity in the pronunciation of words. It usually happens when we talk so fast in

front of a lot of people that there are letters in sentences that are missing and in the end (Sardi, 2023), it will make the listener feel unclear what we are saying. So intonation and articulation are very critical when we speak and therefore we must remain careful in speaking, especially in intonation, different intonation so different meanings even though the same sentence.

Intonation in speaking English is very important in the world of education. Especially in Thailand, this is because English is an international language. Besides that to get a good lesson, especially in lessons of international standards (Sardi. A, 2023). However, Thai students at Miftahuddeen (Banpleetai) School were still not fluent in English, especially in their intonation when they speak, because their language accent is very thick. (Yangklang, 2018) learning stress and intonation pronunciation are very important for English communication in that they not only help to communicate ideas easily but also understand other speakers well. Then (van der Burght et al., 2019) intonation can dramatically change the interpretation of a sentence and also intonation is rapidly integrated with other phonetic components. Intonation is very important

in speaking because intonation can make the listener understand what is being conveyed because of the rise and fall of the tone of voice so that the listener drifts off and pays attention to what is being conveyed. (Varga, 2017) mentions in his book that the definition of intonation is a variation of the pitch where it is a manifestation of melodic prosodies step prosodies, and pause prosodies but must be separated from the language and also the prosodic. In falling intonation, the voice will start relatively high and then move down. Similarly in rising intonation where the starting point can be anywhere from mid to high. Low endpoint. There may be some upward movement before the note moves downward. In simple cases, the fall occurs in one syllable. Falling intonation is usually used in ordinary questions, namely Wh-questions. (Roni Nursyamsu, 2019) argue that intonation refers to the means of conveying information in a speech that is separated from words and sounds.

According to (Wells, 2019) intonation is a speech melody. In intonation lessons we will study the rise and fall of pitch and then how speakers use speech variations in conveying linguistic meanings and paradigms. There are two kinds of intonation namely rising and falling

intonation (Idrus et al, 2022). In rising intonation, the tone of voice will start relatively low and after that move up. The starting point can be anywhere from low to mid and the end point can be anywhere from mid to high. So when the point is on the last or only syllable in the intonation phrase, the increase occurs on that syllable. This can be seen when the intonation rises which is often used in an interrogative sentence, namely a yes or no question, and then in a sentence of improvement or astonishment. It can be concluded that rising intonation occurs when something happens, such as in an interrogative sentence or a sentence of improvement or astonishment. In falling intonation, the voice will start relatively high and then move down. similarly in rising intonation where the starting point can be anywhere from mid to high. Low endpoint. There may be some upward movement before the note moves downward. In simple cases, the fall occurs in one syllable. Falling intonation is usually used in ordinary questions, namely Wh-questions.

From the above statement, it can be concluded that intonation is the rise and fall of the voice in speaking, and intonation is the vibration of the mouth and low pitch in sentences that emphasize

certain words in sentences. With the rise and fall of intonation when speaking, the listener will appreciate, pay attention to, and be immersed in what the speaker is saying.

## B. RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher used a quantitative method and the design was classroom action research. This is done by a teacher who wants to help their students master the material. The essence of classroom action research is solving student problems in the classroom, especially in the learning process. According to (Arikunto, 2019) classroom action research is research on learning activities in the form of actions, which are deliberately created and occur in the classroom together. Therefore, what is meant by classroom action research is research carried out in the classroom. In this research, CAR aims to help Thai students correct intonation errors in speaking. The population of this study was all fourth-grade students at Prathom Miftahuddeen (Banpleetai) School in Nathawee, Songkhla Province Thailand. The researcher took 20 students for analysis from each class as samples, especially class 4/2. To analyze the data the researcher used SPSS 21 application.

## C. FINDINGS

### a. Identification of the field problem

As the researcher has said the purpose of this research was to know the intonation errors of Thai students in speaking. In this case, the researcher employed a test as an instrument to collect the data.

### b. The Activity of the Classroom

In this part before the researcher did cycle 1 and cycle 2 the first time the researcher did the pre-test to know the skill of the students without the learning process. After the researcher did it we can see the skills of the students through SPSS 21 application.

#### 1. The Result of Pre-Test

Table 1.1 The Result of the Pre-Test

No.	Name	Score of Pre-Test
1.	S1	55
2.	S2	62
3.	S3	64
4.	S4	65
5.	S5	60
6.	S6	70
7.	S7	75
8.	S8	70
9.	S9	95
10.	S10	75
11.	S11	74
12.	S12	75
13.	S13	65
14.	S14	75
15.	S15	50
16.	S16	70
17.	S17	73
18.	S18	76
19.	S19	60
20.	S20	50

Source : (Primary Data of Reskyani, 2020)

Table 1.2 Descriptive Statistics

The score of the test	Pretest	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
89,00	67,95	83,15	95,00

Source : (Primary Data of Reskyani, 2020)

Based on the data above, the researcher showed with the descriptive statistics by using the SPSS 21 application if the mean of the Pre-Test was 67,95 or 68.

#### 2. The Result of Cycle 1

Table 2.1 The Result of Cycle 1

No.	Name	The score of Cycle 1
1.	S1	70
2.	S2	74
3.	S3	76
4.	S4	70
5.	S5	76
6.	S6	80
7.	S7	95
8.	S8	81
9.	S9	97
10.	S10	85
11.	S11	93
12.	S12	92
13.	S13	85
14.	S14	90
15.	S15	70
16.	S16	90
17.	S17	91
18.	S18	93
19.	S19	85
20.	S20	70

Source : (Primary Data of Reskyani, 2020)

Table 2.2 Descriptive Statistics

The score of the test	Pretest	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
89,00	67,95	83,15	95,00

Source : (Primary Data of Reskyani, 2020)

Based on the data above, the researcher was shown with the descriptive statistics by using the SPSS 21 application if the mean of Cycle 1 was 83,15.

### 3. The Result of Cycle 2

Table 3.1 The Result of Cycle 2

No.	Name	The score of Cycle 2
1.	S1	85
2.	S2	92
3.	S3	94
4.	S4	85
5.	S5	90
6.	S6	100
7.	S7	100
8.	S8	97
9.	S9	100
10.	S10	97
11.	S11	100
12.	S12	100
13.	S13	98
14.	S14	100
15.	S15	83
16.	S16	100
17.	S17	100
18.	S18	100
19.	S19	95
20.	S20	84

Source : (Primary Data Reskyani, 2020)

Table 3.2 Descriptive Statistics.

The score of the test	Pretest	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
89,00	67,95	83,15	95,00

Source : (Primary Data Reskyani, 2020)

Based on the data above, the researcher was shown with the descriptive statistics by using the SPSS 21 application if the mean of Cycle 2 was 95.

## D. DISCUSSION

Based on the presentation of the researcher results above the application of the CAR (Classroom Action Research) method could correct intonation Errors and Improve student's intonation. (Alek, 2016) Classroom action research is an

activity that not only makes an effort to solve problems but at the same time searching scientific support for solving the problem. This method was used to further activate students in the learning process, especially in rising and falling intonation. This researcher conducted 2 Cycles of this research namely Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. Before entering Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 the researcher immediately gave a Pre-Test to students for speech using a paper that was prepared previously containing the Traditional Food of Thailand namely Tom Kha Kai.

In the planning process of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, the learning process was carried out in class based on the lesson plan (RPP) that has been made in detail specifically. In the learning process of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, there were 4 meetings per Cycle and the total was all 8 meetings. In the process of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, the researcher explained CAR (Classroom Action Research), then entered the place of articulation of rising and falling intonation. When the researcher explained this the students paid close attention and listened to what the researcher said.

After the researcher explained the intonation (Rising and Falling Intonation), the researcher asked the students whether they understood the material explained by the researcher.



Then the researcher saw the situation and conditions were quite good then the researcher divided into several groups or chose to be alone. Because the researcher knew that there were students who liked groups and some who liked to be alone. However, only a few want to be alone therefore the researcher divided evenly into groups. After the researcher divided several groups, the researcher explained how to use good intonation in the speech by using a paper containing a speech about the Traditional Food of Thailand (Tom Kha Kai). Therefore, the researcher read them readily by using good intonation, and the students listened. The researcher then asked the students to follow slowly several times so that students understood what was meant by rising and falling intonation when sopped or commas and stressed the word so that the intonation was good according to the meaning in the speech.

This was done during 4 meetings. However, some students saw the concept when they were speaking about a given topic. The result of Cycle 1 was quite good at 83,15% but the researcher wanted all students to pass the KKM (75%) so the researcher carried out Cycle 2 to correct the intonation errors of students.

Examine the process of activities from the results of the student's intonation in

Cycle 1 which was quite good but did not follow the objectives of the researcher. It could be said to have been successful but the researcher wants to do more than that so that all students achieve grades above 75%, so the researcher made improvements to students' activities to achieve goals for example which word includes rising intonation and which word includes falling intonation.

Cycle 2 activities appeared to experience major changes due to students' deepening in raising and falling intonation. If they do not understand, they immediately ask the researcher and the students even ask the researcher to write it on the board so they can see it, including rising and falling intonation. It was carried out over 4 meetings and the results were very different from cycle 1.

The result of the test of the student's ability to correct their intonation errors by using speech following rising and falling intonation was very satisfying and the goals of the researcher. All the students scored above the KKM criteria (75%). All speech students with rising and falling intonation were good and true without using the concept again. And the result of Cycle 2 was 95%.

Thus, the use of the classroom action research (CAR) method in the process of learning intonation especially the rising

and falling intonation of the students in the fourth grade of Prathom Miftahudden (Banpleetai) School was successful and effective.

The Researcher also found some reasons during the learning process why Thai students, especially in the fourth grade of Prathom Miftahuddeen (Banpleetai) School their intonation errors was because:

1. Their native language was very thick.
2. Their tongues were rolled up when they spoke English.
3. Some students were not very fluent in English because it was difficult to mention.
4. Some students have irregular teeth.
5. They did not know which intonation included rising and falling intonation.
6. They spoke English but their Thai accent was so thick and they always used the letter "E" for example:

Smile	Semile
Understand	Undersetand
Speech	Sepeech
Speak	Sepeak

7. Their mouths were a bit silly.
8. Sometimes some students did not know the reading of English so they wrote on it using the Thai language so they could read it.
9. Some of their tongues were short.

## E. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on research findings and data, it can be concluded that class IV of Prathom Miftahuddeen School (Banpleetai) still made intonation errors in using rising and falling intonation but it was different when the researcher carried out Cycle 2 which had more satisfactory results because the student average is 95%.

Prathom Miftahudden (Banpleetai) School students' scores were very satisfactory after receiving treatment through rising and falling intonation using a speech about Traditional Thai Food (Tom Kha Kai). We can see the average Pre-Test score (67.95% or 68%), Std. Deviation (10.45%) and Std. Average Error (2.33%). However, the KKM criteria were (75%) so only 6 students passed the KKM. For cycle 1, the average score for Cycle 1 (83.15%), Std. Deviation (9.35%) and Std Error Mean (2.09%). In cycle 1 15 students met the KKM criteria (75%). It can be concluded that Cycle 1 is good enough but the researcher wants all students to meet the KKM criteria (75%). Therefore, the researcher carried out Cycle 2. And finally, the Cycle 2 score (95%), Std. Deviation (6.24%) and Std, Mean Error (1.39%). It can be concluded that Cycle 2 is very satisfying and is a very good cycle



because all students passed the KKM criteria (75%).

The reason why fourth students at Prathom Miftahuddeen School (Banpleetai) make intonation errors in using rising and falling intonation is because of the class conditions and situation, their tongues roll when speaking English, their mother tongue is very thick, their mouth is a bit silly, there were some students who the teeth are irregular, and also because of the teacher's methods, students become bored during the learning process, poor communication between students and teachers, and student awareness. So by doing Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, the intonation errors of Thai students in speaking can be improved based on the results of Cycle 1 and 2 tests. The researcher hopes this research can provide a lot of information about intonation, especially in Rising and Falling Intonation, and for future researchers must pay attention to several aspects such as Involving participants from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds, exploring the impact of intonation errors on understanding and communication, investigating the influence of social and situational context on intonation errors, examining effective learning strategies to correct intonation errors, using technology to analyze

intonation effectively more in-depth, such as spectral analysis or machine learning models.

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