CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Thailand in Brief

Thailand is a part of South-East Asian countries and covers an area of 513,115 square kilometres. Thailand measures 1650 kilometres from the North to the South, and 800 kilometres from the West to the East. The narrowest part is about 64 kilometres. Its general outline is popularly visualized as an ancient axe.

Thailand is bounded by Malaysia on the South, Cambodia and Vietnam on the East, Lao and China on the North and Myanmar on the West. Thailand is divided into four natural regions:

1. The North is a mountainous region of which the leading city is Chiang Mai.
2. The Central Plain, or Chao Phraya River Basin, is the most fertile and extensive rice-producing area of the country. Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, is located in this region.
3. The Northeast is an arid region characterized by a rolling surface and hills.
4. The Southern region is the centre for the production of rubber and the cultivation of other deposits of minerals and ores. There are three seasons in Thailand; summer, rainy and winter, but there are only two seasons in the South; rainy and summer.

The total population according to 1997 census is 60.6 million—30,245,000 males and 30,357,000 females, Thailand is categorized as an agricultural country. About 85 per cent of its population lives in rural areas with the remaining 15 per cent clustered mainly in Bangkok, the centre of social commercial and political life. Buddhism is the national religion. About 95 per cent of its population is Buddhist, 4 per cent is Muslim. Christian, Hinduism and the others are embraced by the rest of the people. Thai is the official national language spoken by almost 100 per cent of the population.

Thailand is a democratic country. The constitution is the Supreme Law of the State. According to the constitution, the King is the Head of the State. All three powers; executive, legislative and judiciary are exercised by the King; that is, he exercises his legislative power through the House of Parliament, executive power
through the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister, who is the head of the political party that gets a majority in the general elections, and judicial power through the courts.

At present, Thailand is divided into 75 provinces, excluding ‘Bangkok Metropolis’. Each province is further divided into districts, sub-districts and villages. In 1996 there were 830 districts, 7,255 sub-districts and 66,078 villages. Each province is administered by an appointed governor, district by the head of district, sub-district by the head of sub-district and village by village headman. Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is administered by an elected governor and is divided into 38 districts.

1.2 The Educational System in Thailand

In the past (about 1220-1868 A.D.), education in Thailand was traditional. It was not formal education in the modern concept. There were two types of education, one in the monastery and the other in the palace. Education in the monastery was organized by the monk who was the abbot and acted as the headmaster. The monks who stayed in the monastery acted as the teachers. All the boys who wanted to study had to go to the monastery. Only some monasteries which were located in the town or city, could run the course. The monastery which was located in the local areas could not undertake any teaching because of the paucity of educated monks who could teach the children. The main hall of the monasteries was the classroom. They were offered non-formal learning of the family social norms in the classes. The Buddhist monks played their important role in the country education. The education in the monastery played an important role in education in Thailand through Ayutthaya up to Thonburi and Early Bangkok period. The philosophy of education in these days was imparting of children literacy along with ethics and religion for life in society and for the monastic life. The majority of people in Thailand were the farmers who worked in the fields. They did not give much importance to education. They taught village history, folk song, and local philosophy to their children by transmitting it orally. The children of the royal household and from families of the nobility were offered education in order to work in the court and the provinces. It was said that during those days only the girls who had been staying in the palace
could get education. The Inner palace became school for women and many people, who wanted their daughters to get education, sent their daughters to live in the palace. They were given some kinds of education in craft and etiquette. The girls who stayed outside were taught the art of handicraft, weaving, sewing, cooking and helping in the fields by their parents or their relatives.

During the period of 1868–1932, formal education was introduced in Thailand. Many missionaries who came into the country as doctors influenced the education in those times. King Chulalongkorn constructed the first school in the palace in 1871 because he realized that if he wanted to improve his country, the first thing which he must do was providing education to the people. This idea had germinated from his western education and his tours abroad. When the country improved rapidly, the need for more educated personnel to administer his reforms occurred. He supported education out of the palace in order to produce a new generation which was needed for the reform of the government and administration. As a result, the first public school for commoners was established in Bangkok in 1884. Many schools for commoners were established in the main provinces such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Khon Kaen. The first university, Chulalongkorn University, was founded in Bangkok in 1917, and after that many universities were established in the main regions throughout the country, that is, Chiang Mai University in the North, Khon Kaen University in the Northeast and Prince of Song Kla University in the South.

In 1932, the National Scheme of Education was introduced. This plan focused on four years of elementary education and eight years of secondary school. Then this system was revised in 1936. This plan highlighted 5 levels of education: preprimary or kindergarten, primary, secondary, pre-university and higher education. From those days, Thailand has improved its education system several times to prepare the Thai people to cope with the problems in the kingdom or outside. Thailand has eight National Education Development plans. Each plan lasts five years. Now Thailand is under the Eighth National Education Development plan (1997-2001)

According to the Office of the National Education Commission (1997), the education system according to the 1992 National Scheme of Education is of two types: one in school–related system and the other from Way-of-life learning process.
A. Education in a school-related system is provided by educational institutions, characterized by a class / grading system, and the use of curriculum specified for the level and type of education so as to develop learners in accordance with curriculum objectives. It is divided into 4 levels.

1. Pre-school education
2. Primary education
3. Secondary education
   - Lower secondary education
   - Upper secondary education
4. Higher education
   - Lower than bachelor’s degree level.
   - Bachelor’s degree level
   - Graduate level

Education in a school—related system can be also divided into many types depending on characteristics and need of target groups as follows.

1. Teacher education
2. Vocational education
3. Special Vocational education
4. Vocational education for specific purposes
5. Special education
6. Education for ecclesiastical personnel and spiritual leaders. (Buddhist school and Buddhist University)

B. Education from way-of-life learning process is self-learning from various sources of knowledge and environment related to way of life naturally existing or modified to enhance learning. Non-formal education programmes also constitute a crucial input in developing a learning society. The activities provided are of two characteristics: school-related system, which is organized in terms of continuing education programmes using curriculum equivalent to those of formal education, and informal or self-learning process from various sources of learning.
The educational systems of the Buddhist monks and novices in Thailand are of two levels:

1. **Secondary education**
   - Lower secondary education level
   - Upper secondary education level

2. **Higher education**
   - Bachelor’s degree level
   - Graduate degree level

A candidate who has finished grade 6 of the governmental education can apply in this school by being a novice or monk first. Before the schools for novices and monks were established, they studied only Dhamma and Pali subjects. Later, the Department of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education approved to set up the schools for novices and monks on July 20, 1971. They realized that studying only Buddha’s teachings is not sufficient for Buddhist monks because the heart and core of monks’ duty is to apply the Buddha’s teachings in real-life of Thai people. The subjects taught in the school are Thai, Mathematics, Sociology, Health, Religious Practice, Pali, Dhamma knowledge, and other optional subjects. The education for novices and monks in Buddhist schools proposes to educate and equip novices and monks with the following qualities:

1. Knowledge, ability and responsibility in their duties.
2. Ability to apply the Buddha’s teachings in real life of people.
3. Ability to compare the Buddha’s teachings with other religious teachings.
4. Co-operation and broadmindedness, having wisdom while preaching the people.
5. Habit of health and hygiene that brings about good physical and mental happiness of the individual and social health.
6. An appreciation of the need to maintain the national identity and culture, and also other cultures beside their own.
7. Loyalty to the nation, religion and monarch to bring about the national unity and security.

Boarding speaking, the schools for novices and monks can be divided into the three sections as follows:
1. Nakdham Course (Dhamma Study)
   - Nakdhamtri (Elementary Grade)
   - Nakdhamto (Intermediate Grade)
   - Nakdham-ek (Advanced Grade)

2. Pali Course (Pali Study)
   - Prayok 1-2 (The First-Second Grade)
   - Prayok 3 (The Third Grade)
   - Prayok 4 (The Fourth Grade)
   - Prayok 5 (The Fifth Grade)
   - Prayok 6 (The Sixth Grade)
   - Prayok 7 (The Seventh Grade)
   - Prayok 8 (The Eighth Grade)
   - Prayok 9 (The Ninth Grade)

3. The Phrapariyatidhamma Course in the form of Secondary School (General Subject)
   - Low Secondary School
     - Grade 7
     - Grade 8
     - Grade 9
   - Upper Secondary School
     - Grade 10
     - Grade 11
     - Grade 12

The novice and monk learn Nakdham Course and Pali Course in the morning, but some schools may provide Nakdham Course to the students from Monday to Wednesday and Pali Course on Thursday and Friday in the evening. The school is suited within the compound of the monastery. One class may have 5-10 students, it depends on the novice and monk in that monastery. The abbot takes responsibility for the study, he has to invite the teacher monk from another monastery to teach in his monastery in case the teacher in his monastery is not sufficient. The examination in Nakdham and Pali Course is an annual examination. The novice and monk attend the Phrapariyatidhamma Course after lunch. They study secular subjects as the
ordinary students who are studying in the government or private school; English, Thai, History, Mathematics etc. They have to study five hours a day from Monday to Friday. It starts from 13.00-18.00 p.m. There are two semesters; the first semester spreads from May to October, and the second from October to April. Each semester is of minimum 18 week studies. Three sections of the school for novice and monk get the financial support from the Department of the Religious Affairs.

The students who graduate from the schools for novices and monks benefit the religion and the country. If they remain in the monkhood, the religion will get good Buddhist novices and monks in knowledge and behaviour, and they can study in the Buddhist universities to improve their knowledge and can go abroad to preach the Buddha’s teachings. But if they disrobe, they can help to develop the country because they have knowledge of both—the affairs of the world and religion.

1.3 Background of Buddhist Universities

Thailand is a Buddhist country. Sometimes it is called “the Land of Yellow Robes” because there are many Buddhist monks. According to Thailand’s history, Buddhist monasteries had always been used as schools for the Thai people. Most of the teachers were Buddhist monks. It is said that monks and novices played an important role in the education of the Thai people in olden days. “Buddhism is the national religion of Thailand, it has played an important role in the psychological and intellectual development of the people of Thailand. With the passage of time, a Buddhist monastery became a powerful centre of social and cultural activities. Thai education, hence, was conducted in a monastery where monks as the spiritual leaders of masses stayed. They instructed people on morality and pure knowledge and also acted as the guardians of morals in the society. At the same time, they themselves had to study the Buddhist scriptures. This resulted in the spread of Buddhist culture and knowledge. That is why, the ecclesiastical education in Thailand, if well-organised, can not only be beneficial to the individual but also be an asset to the society” (Ruensat 1996, p.1).

Most of monks and novices in Thailand belong to Theravada Buddhism, consisting of two groups i.e., the Mahanikaya Order and the Dhammayutika Order. About 90 per cent of the monks and novices in the county is the Mahanikaya.
King Rama V supported not only the establishment of schools for princes, princesses and nobility in the palace, and schools or universities for commoners but also Buddhist schools and Buddhist universities for novices and monks all over the country. “King Rama V had a clear policy of ecclesiastical education. He permitted the establishment of two institutions of higher ecclesiastical education; Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya and Mahachulalongkorn Rajavidyalaya for the Dhammayutika and the Mahanikaya Order of Thailand respectively. This was done for the sake of improving the progress and stability of the Buddhist education. His Majesty provided patronage to both the institutions by financial help in person” (Ruangsilpa 1978, p.214).

There are two main Buddhist universities in Thailand i.e., Mahamakut Buddhist University and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

Mahamakut Buddhist University was initially established in 1893 and officially opened a real-university in 1946 with the following objectives:
1. To provide for the study of Phrapariyatidhamma (subjects related to Nakdham (Dhamma Scholar), and Pali courses).
2. To provide for the study of national and foreign subject.
3. To propagate Buddhism in Thailand and abroad.
4. To acquaint Buddhist monks and novices with good knowledge and good behaviour in order to provide benefits to the public.
5. To equip Buddhist monks and novices to deeply and widely explain and discuss Buddhist topics to Thais and to foreigners.
6. To provide progress and stability to Buddhist faith for good.

The Academic Committee of Mahamakut University had realized that the main university in Bangkok was narrow and inconvenient for all Buddhist monks who wanted to study at the undergraduate level. Besides, the Buddhist monk from the other provinces who wanted to study at the main university could not find the monasteries to stay during their study. So the first campus was established in 1973 in Ayutthaya province and after that other campuses were established. Mahamakut has seven campuses all over the country. They are:

1. Mahavajiralongkorn Rajavidyalaya Campus, Ayutthaya, (Central)
2. Sirindhorn Rajavidyalaya Campus, Nakorn Pathom, (Central)
3. Isan Campus, Khon Kaen, (Northeast)
4. Lanna Campus, Chiang Mai, (North)
5. Sri Thammasokarat Campus, Nakorn Sri Thammarat, (South)
6. Roi-Et Campus, Roi-Et, (Northeast)
7. Sri Lanchang Campus, Loei, (Northeast)

At present, Mahamakut Buddhist University can open only four faculties at the undergraduate level: 1. Faculty of Religion and Philosophy 2. Faculty of Humanities 3. Faculty of Social Science, and 4. Faculty of Education. All students have to study the same subjects in the first year and second year, but when they are in the third year, they can choose one of the departments of Arts. This is because the number of students in Mahamakut is smaller than Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. All the students who want to complete their study at the undergraduate level in the Faculty of Religion and Philosophy, Humanities, and Social Science have to earn the credits, not fewer than 150, whereas those who are in the Faculty of Education have to earn the credits, not fewer than 165.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Major Subjects of Buddhism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. General Fundamental Subjects</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Major Subjects</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Minor Subjects</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Free Optional Subjects</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Faculty of Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Major Subjects of Buddhism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. General Fundamental Subjects</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teacher's Professional Subjects</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major Subjects</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Minor Subjects</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Free Optional Subjects</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>165</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On December 25, 1987, the Graduate School was established by accepting the recommendations of the University Council. It started the class-hour on June 1, 1988, with the following objectives:

1. To produce Buddhist and Philosophical scholars appropriate to the modern society.
2. To produce scholar in administration and development through the spread of Buddha's teachings.
3. To support education, tradition and culture concerning Buddhism and Philosophy.
4. To support the research work of Buddhism and Philosophy.

The Graduate School offer the following programmes of study: the Master's Degree and the Doctoral Degree. At present, Mahamakut can offer only two major: 1. Buddhism and Philosophy and 2. Buddhist Studies, whereas the Doctoral Degree has not yet been opened.

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University is an ecclesiastical institution founded by His Majesty King Rama V, (King Chulalongkorn) to educate Buddhist monks and the public. The institution began functioning on November 8, 1890.

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University is the second university for a Buddhist monk in Thailand. It started functioning officially on July 18, 1947. It was founded for the following main purposes:

1. “To give monks and novices adequate education that would enable them to have a profound understanding of the true spirit of Buddhism to lead a worthy monastic life expected of them, and to present the fundamental Buddhist principles and doctrines in terms understandable to modern man in the manner applicable to modern living, both individual and social.
2. To encourage the virtue of compassion and the spirit of sacrifice and strengthen the roles of the monks as spiritual friends and leaders of the people in religious, social and cultural activities which are conducive to the welfare and happiness of many.
3. To produce pedagogically able and morally upright teachers and competent propagators of the Buddhist way of life” (Srivichai 1986, p.19).
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University maintains 10 campuses and four Sangha colleges throughout the country. Main Campus is in Bangkok and there are two Sangha Colleges under it; Nakorn Sawan Extension and Phitsanulok Extension. These campuses are:

1. Nong Khai Campus (Northeast), Sangha College, Nakom Phanom Extension
2. Khon Kaen Campus (Northeast), Sangha College, Loei Extension
3. Nakorn Ratchasima Campus (Northeast)
4. Ubon Ratchathani Campus (Northeast)
5. Surin Campus (Northeast)
6. Chiang Mai Campus (North), Sangha College, Lamphun Extension
7. Phrae Campus (North)
8. Phayao Campus (North)
9. Nakhon Si Thammarat Campus (South)
10. Pali Sueksa Buddhaghosa, Nakorn Pathom Campus (Central)

At present, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University can open four faculties: 1. Faculty of Buddhism, 2. Faculty of Humanities, 3. Faculty of Social Science, and 4. Faculty of Education. All students can choose an area of major interest for themselves from the first year of four-year curriculum at the undergraduate level because of a large number of the students. All students who have joined each faculty and want to complete their study in this university have to study the following subjects and credits.

The number of credits required for graduation of Faculty of Buddhism (Plan A and B) is not less than 150, dividing into the following projective subjects:

**Plan A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General Subject</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Core Subjects in Buddhism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Major Subjects</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Minor Subjects</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Free Elective Subjects</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Plan B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General Subjects</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Core Subjects in Buddhism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Specialized Subjects</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Free Elective Subjects</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of credits in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General Subjects</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Core Subjects in Buddhism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Specialized Subjects</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Free Elective Subjects</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of credits in the Faculty of Education (Plan A and B) is different from the above faculties as follows:

### Plan A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General Subjects</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Core Subjects in Buddhism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Professional Subjects for Teachers</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major Subjects</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Minor Subjects</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Free Elective Subjects</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162</td>
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</table>

### Plan B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General Subjects</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Core Subjects in Buddhism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Professional Subjects for Teachers</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Specialized Subjects</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Free Elective Subjects</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A curriculum of B.A. degree of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya can be divided into 5 groups:

1. Gist-Buddhism Subject Group: This is a compulsory subject for all students. It includes at least 50 credits and aims at offering the religious knowledge to students in accordance with desire of the university.

2. General Subject Group: This is also a compulsory subject for all students. It is of 30 credits. It aims at offering every branch of knowledge which is provided the basis to continue to further their studies.

3. Major Subject Group: This includes the specialized subject. This is provided to enable students to choose in accordance with their personal skill and ability.

4. Minor Subject Group: This includes the free optional Subject. It aims at offering the higher religious knowledge to students as who are students of Buddhist University. Besides, general subjects i.e., English can be chosen by students.

5. Professional Subject for teacher Group: There are of 30 credits. This group is provided to provide teaching skills and accurate instructional experience to the teachers.

On January 23, 1998 the University Council unanimously resolved to establish a Graduate School. At present, Master's degrees are offered in four majors: 1. Pali, 2. Buddhist Studies, 3. Philosophy, and 4. Dhamma Communication. Until now the educational programme has been in Thai and students have mostly been Thais or foreign students who can speak Thai.

The Graduate School has decided to intensify postgraduate education, especially in Buddhist Studies, so that students from all over the world who are interested in Buddhist academic affairs will have an opportunity to carry out research work in Buddhist Studies. An international Master's degree offering a major in Buddhist Studies will therefore be conducted from the academic year 2000 onwards.

The purpose of the establishment of the Graduate School was:

1. To establish Graduate School for the Thai Sangha.
2. To promote Buddhist studies and research for adapting in solving problems of society.
3. To produce lecturers, academic experts and administrators on Buddhism for Buddhist and State Institutes.

4. To educate monks and novices for spreading Buddhism in Thailand and abroad.

5. To be the educational centre of Buddhism for foreigners.

For the method of examination in both universities, the percentage system is the same as was used before 1968, that is to say, a student must secure 60% in each of the compulsory subjects and 50% in all optional subjects. Since 1968 the grading system has been used instead. At present, the examination results of the undergraduate level are prepared as follows:

### Mahamakut Buddhist University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Grade Equivalent</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-74</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Grade Equivalent</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-84</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>Almost Good</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Almost Fair</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-39</td>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In both universities the students who pass in all the subjects at the undergraduate level must get trained in the meditation course (15 days in the forest monastery) and perform religious duties for a year. All students who do not follow this rule have no right to receive any kinds of documents from the universities.

A student who cannot pass some subjects is given a chance to make up for marks by re-examination. The first re-examination in any subjects has to be held
1.4 Background of Teaching English in Thailand

Most of the educators say that the reign of King Mongkut was the beginning of the teaching of English in Thailand. But some scholars say that English came into Thailand during the reign of King Rama III as stated by Waidee (1977) in Aksornkool (1980). Waidee mentions that Mrs. Mattoon, an American missionary started giving English lessons to young children for the first time in 1848. Soon afterwards, Dr. House, another American missionary, arrived in the country and introduced the study of science, astronomy and geography. Dr. House received a sensational response from the Thai aristocratic community. He was enthusiastically requested to open a school for teaching academic subjects of the western tradition. The reign of King Rama III witnessed Thailand’s initial step in the direction of modern western style education—a practice which was strengthened and expanded during the reign of his successor, King Rama IV.

King Mongkut or Rama IV realized the importance of English, so he took English classes himself by hiring the tutors from the western countries while he was waiting to ascend the throne. Thus, he became the first Thai who possessed a control over the English language. After he ascended the throne, he opened the first English school in the palace for the princes, princesses, and the children of the nobility. He hired a British tutors, Mrs. Anna Leonorans, to teach English to them in the palace school. He not only supported to established the school inside the palace for the royal families, but also for the commoners outside the palace walls, all of which were ordered to use English as the medium of instruction. He also changed the educational system because he realized that the traditional education which was being imparted was not sufficient or suitable in the changing political situation. The purpose behind teaching of English in those days was the country’s survival and the maintenance of the Thai sovereignty. It was the age of colonial expansion of the western countries. It was very difficult for Thai people to conduct business and diplomatic matters with the western countries because before King Mongkut nobody could speak any western language. As a result, the foreign interpreters were
necessary for Thai people. But after he and his people had learned the foreign languages, especially English, they could look after the Thai interest. Aksornkool (1980) quotes Syamananda (1969) as narrating “an episode describing the complexity of the interpreting procedures. Dr John Crawford ... encountered greater difficulty in carrying on this negotiations with the Thai Minister of Finance ... for the simple reason that there were no Thais who could speak English. Whatever Crawford had to say, he had to translate the Malay version into Thai ... The answer to Crawford was received in the same manner” (p. 73).

King Rama V continued King Mongkut’s educational policy and modernization of Thailand. He sent more and more princes and princesses abroad to study the foreign languages. Some nobility and the well-to-do families also sent their children abroad to study because they realized that if their children graduated from English speaking countries, they could easily obtain a career in the royal services and the foreign affairs. During the reign of King Mongkut, as Aksornkool states, the aims of teaching / learning English were as follows:

1. As a means to communicate with native and non-native speakers of English, in state and foreign affairs as well as in international commerce.
2. As a primary tool for the acquisition of modern and scientific knowledge, particularly in English speaking countries.
3. As a means to accelerate the country’s modernization.
4. As a means to eliminate having to send potential key personnel to study in English speaking countries.

In the reign of King Rama VI, the teaching of English was developed in the same style as that of Europe because King Rama VI himself had received his education from Europe. He established the first university, Chulalongkorn in 1917. This university was named after his father. More and more princes, princesses, the nobility and well-to-do citizens who had received their education and training in the foreign countries came back home and became teachers at schools or universities. So, when the boys or girls who graduated from the famous high schools or universities, possessed a command of the English language, the English language became one of the most important subjects in school and universities. The teachers here taught their students by using the English language. The medium of instruction was
English, particularly at the university level. The purpose of teaching English in this reign is to help the children acquire sufficient knowledge of English so that they could use English efficiently in and beyond the classrooms. In this way, the teacher used the Direct method in teaching of English. When they completed their study, they could use English very well in government, in private business and in service. So the English language was a vehicle of both professional and personal prestige.

In the reign of King Rama VII, the teaching of English continued in the same way as at the end of King Rama VI’s reign. After the revolution, the political system of Thailand was changed from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. The change affected the teaching of English drastically. English had played an important role in the educational curriculum as a compulsory school subject from 1921-1978—from the fifth grade through the university. But other foreign languages—French and German—were included into the English curriculum. So the status of English language was changed from a compulsory subject to an optional subject though only in grade 11 and 12. “The Ministry of Education in Thailand (1960b) declares that the English language should be made part of the curriculum and the aims of teaching English should be:

1. To make pupils see the necessary to study English as a medium of international communication, as a key to a great treasure house of knowledge and information, and as a means to learn about the world at large.
2. To enable pupils to use English for communication, and to develop skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in accordance with the level of education and the age and ability of the pupils.
3. To make pupils realize the importance of English in their daily lives, and the frequent opportunities for the use of the language.
4. To develop an interest and a spirit of inquiry, so that pupils keep increasing their knowledge of English.
5. To enable pupils to continue their study of English in the higher levels of education’ (Noisaengsri 1976, p. 4).

But the 1978 foreign language policy states that English is to be an optional subject at all levels and will not be included at the elementary level unless special permission is granted. Students were to choose between a course in foreign language
and English was one of these or a course in other subjects, notably vocation oriented, such as agriculture, carpentry, home-economics and the like. The fact worth stressing is that English is no longer the first foreign language but that all foreign languages are being considered equal.

From 1978 to the present, the status of English continues to be of an optional subject because the 1978 policy states that the teaching of the foreign language as a compulsory subject at the fifth grade to the university may be the cause of failure. Aksornkool (1980) describes that the English language is made optional. In practice, however, English is still a de-factor compulsory subject. Therefore, millions of students, both at the pre-university and university levels, are exposed to some kind of English as foreign language lessons each year. Because of the pervasiveness of English as a foreign language, the success and failure of English as foreign language instruction is bound to have some serious consequences. Moreover, some students will have to study the foreign language even if they have no need to use it in their daily lives. The learning of a language is left to the individual. It depends on the learners’ interest. According to the present curriculum, Thai students study every subject as a Unit. Thailand uses a grade system as in America. According to the Office of the National Education (1997), the primary school curriculum does not single out subjects into fragmented courses, but it is made up of 5 learning experience groupings as follows:

1. Basic Skills Group, comprising Thai language and mathematics as the tool subjects.
2. Life Experiences, dealing with the process of solving social and daily life problem with an emphasis on scientific process skills for better living.
3. Character Development, dealing with activities necessary for developing desirable habits, values, attitudes and behaviour, which will lead to a desirable character.
4. Work-Oriented Experiences, dealing with general practical work experiences and basic knowledge for career preparation.
5. Special Experience, dealing with activities based on learners’ interests provided for those in grades 5-6 only. The learning activities in area of special experiences can be organized by each school according to learners’ needs and interests and may include the knowledge and skills selected from other four groups such as English for everyday life.
Ministry of Education (1995) in The 1990 Revised Edition of The 1978 Lower Secondary School Curriculum states that the aims of the study of foreign languages as follows:

1. To develop competence and aptitude in a foreign language according to learners’ interest.
2. To master basic skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing of the selected language for the purpose of communication, pursuit of knowledge, formation of basis for higher language studies, and understanding of culture embedded in the language.
3. To appreciate the study of the selected language and to develop reading habits.

The learning of the foreign languages at the Primary School and the Lower Secondary School levels is optional. At the Upper Secondary School and University levels also it is optional but this varies according to the field of specialization. The status of English at the secondary school level of the Buddhist school is also an optional subject. But all of the Buddhist schools consider that the English language is very important in the present time, so the committees of each school provide the subject for all students who have joined their schools. All of them have to learn this subject although the curriculum mentions that the English language is optional subject. The student of the Buddhist universities who are in the first and second year each faculty have to learn English at least not less than 6 units. The third and fourth year students learn the subjects which depend on the field of specialization.

The objectives of teaching English to the Buddhist monk in Buddhist school and university are as follows:

1. To enable students to listen to, speak, read and write English correctly.
2. To enable students to use English for a research study of Buddhism.
3. To enable students to apply English for Buddhadhamma propagation officially.
4. To enable students to use the language at the higher education level.
5. To enable students to accumulate to the language before they go abroad to spread the Buddha’s teachings.
6. To enable students to have the knowledge of literature and culture of the native speaker.
1.5 Statement of the Problem

In Buddhist schools or universities English is not used as a medium of instructions, even in the teaching of English. The teachers resort to Thai as a medium of instructions while teaching English. So we can say that English is not fully/properly learnt even in Buddhist schools or universities. Noisaengsri (1976) quotes Marchwardt as saying “English as a second language (ESL) is a situation where English becomes a language of instruction in the schools as in the Philippines, or a lingua franca between the speaker of widely diverse language, as in India. English as a foreign language (EFL) is taught as a school subject or at an adult level solely for the purpose of giving the subject a foreign language, competence which he may use in one of several ways—to read literature, to read technical works, to listen to the radio, to understand dialogue in the movies, to use the language for communication possibly with transient English or Americans. He further states that according to this definition, English in Thailand is considered ad EFL, since English is taught as a school subject, and is not a language of instruction” (p. 32).

In Thailand Thai is the official language as well as the medium of instruction in all levels of education from the pre-school to the university. The learners in Thailand—Buddhist monks and Non-Buddhist monks—all face the problem of learning the English language. We find that they can use English neither correctly nor fluently, even though they have been exposed to the language for many years.

Some of the factors responsible for the poor current English teaching in Buddhist universities may be summarized as follows:

1. The Incompetent Teacher

It needs to be understood that all who have completed their education can not be the teachers of English. Some teachers of English at the undergraduate level are general teachers, holding postgraduate certificate from inside and outside the country. Most of the teachers have been the students of Buddhist universities. “After graduating, some of them go for higher education like Master degree programme, both in Thailand and abroad. India is the first foreign country Thai students opt for due to the following reasons:
1. The academic fee is reasonable.
2. India was the former and novices studying in the land of the Buddha.
3. The standard of education is rather good compared to Asian countries. The medium of learning is English in which the Thai students want to practise and experience the language in more natural conditions.
4. The Thai Sangha Administrators have absolutely no objection to the students coming and studying in India. Their attitude is different from other countries like U.S.A. and Britain” (Ruensat 1996, pp. 187-188).

To elaborate, some of students who have just finished their education, become the teachers at Buddhist universities. But they have not graduated from the department of language or a department related with the English language. Their knowledge of the English language is not sufficient and their pronunciation is defective. They also do not know the latest techniques of teaching language specially English. So these teachers often create unmentionable situations in English teaching in Buddhist universities. They are not prepared to teach English specifically. Due to the lack of financial support, Buddhist universities cannot hire the teachers who have specialized in this field. When there are no qualified teachers to carry out the teaching work in English, the unqualified teachers have to do this work instead. The result is an irreparable inability in the subject.

2. The Defective Methods

Teaching methods are also very much responsible for proper teaching English. Most of the teachers in Buddhist universities still use the Grammar-Translation Method in teaching English. However, this method produces some ill effects in English teaching in the universities. J.P.B. Allen and H.G. Widdowson (1976) describe that under this system students do not achieve a fluent use of English because they spend much of their time studying abstract grammatical rules, memorizing word lists and translating from the native to the target language.

This method plays an important role in Buddhist universities because it is easy for the teacher to teach their students. Generally speaking, the teachers in Buddhist universities have been accustomed to this method because they use it even while teaching Pali language to monks and novices every morning. So, when they teach English, they may think that Pali language is like English. In fact, Pali
language can be taught by this method because no one uses it in daily life all over the world but the status of English is different, we can say that Pali language is a dead language. The teachers feel that their job is finished as soon as they have translated some structural pieces i.e., sentences of English into their mother tongue i.e., Thai. Then they encourage the students to take up similar exercises as follow up after classroom hours.

In very rare situation, when a foreigner who does not know Thai is appointed in the Buddhist universities, the Direct method and the Structural Approach are used, but this has not worked successfully in Thailand. The first calls for direct exposure to the target language and its active use throughout the learning process without interference of the mother–tongue. But, this method ignores the study of grammar which is undesirable because a knowledge of grammar is essential for the students to correct errors and strengthen language habits. It requires sufficient reinforcement outside the classroom which is not available in Thailand. The later emphasizes the fact that acquiring a command of the basic structures of a language rather than learning words in it is the most important thing in learning the language. The usefulness of vocabulary is limited without a knowledge of basic structures. This method insists that to acquire a practical command of English, the learner should know well, how the word order, the structural words and the word forms are employed to construct sentences or meaningful patterns of expression. This method has not been successful because it exploits more of memory than comprehension faculty of the learner.

3. Inadequate Teaching Materials

Buddhist universities are not equipped with audio-visual aids such flashcards, charts, pictures, slides, filmstrips, movies, tape recorders, overhead projectors etc.,. Moreover, the seats of language laboratories in both universities, when compared to their students, are not sufficient for a large number of students. These materials play a very meaningful role and the students in language learning. Almost all English language textbooks are chosen by the teachers who are in charge of the subject. Sometimes these selections are neither in keeping with the chronological nor the mental age of the learner. These do not relate to the students’ daily life. It is very difficult for the teachers to arouse students’ interest in learning English through such teaching materials.
4. Lack of Motivation

The students at the undergraduate level do not consider English as a tool for gaining the living stream of ever growing knowledge from foreign countries where English used, and for further study. But they consider that they learn English to get through the examination, that English itself is not needed for daily life. The environment is also still not conductive to learning of foreign language. The students learn English in the classroom, but in real life situations they find it is hard to get a chance to make use of anything learned by them. Moreover, Buddhist monks and novices are generally very shy to speak English among themselves or with the teachers. Aksornkool (1980) quotes Suwanatat (1975) in her study of Thai students’ achievement in English as a foreign language as saying “the low achievement in English as foreign language is caused by the absence of linguistic environment and circumstances conducive to successful use of English as foreign language learning” (p. 32).

5. Lack of Supervision

The supervision of teaching of English in university is neglected. The teachers in Buddhist universities have no confidence because they do not receive guidance in their teaching. As a result, they are not acquainted with the latest techniques of teaching English. They go back to the Grammar Translation Method of teaching the language.

6. The Difficulty and Complexity of English

English is very difficult for Thai students because the sound system and its structure is not similar to Thai. “The individual who comes in contact with a foreign language brings with him his native linguistic habits—its sounds and structure, which he tends to transfer of the new language. This is true of Thai speakers of English. They carry over portions of their native sound system into English. For example, in Thai there is no such as /θ/ of the English words think and breath. It is difficult for Thai speakers to recognize and produce this sound. The Thai sound /t/ and /s/ are close enough to the English /θ/ in place of articulation. So the words think and breath will become /tink/ or /sink/, and /bret/ or /bres/.

The same principle holds true in area of structure. There is no verbal indication of tenses and person in Thai grammar. The Thai speakers tend to
substitute “He go to school” for the English “He goes to school” or “He went to school”, because the Thai word /pay/ which means go can be used in Thai grammar in the place of the English go, goes, going, went, and gone” (Kruatrachue 1960, pp.10-11).

David Smyth in his article “Thai Speaker”, in the book entitled Learner’s English: A Teacher’s Guide to Interference and Other Problems edited by Michael Swan and Bernard Smith (1987), states that in matter of pronunciation in English, stress, juncture, and pitches are very important. Thai speaker, find them difficult, in spite of their mastery of all the sounds of English, either because the above features do not appear in their language, or because of the role that tone plays in the Thai language.

Although the committees of both the universities made great efforts to improve English teaching in their university, most of the students who have completed their studies from these universities are generally poor in English, that is, they are neither able to speak English fluently, nor are they able to write English correctly. They do not possess a good reading comprehension ability. “The improvement of the students’ knowledge of English is dependent more upon the students’ interest than the improvement in teaching methods. In fact, it is dependent upon relevant factors” (Noisaengsri 1976, pp. 15-16). So, it is necessary to remove the existing weaknesses;

1. The board of universities should prepare qualified teachers in language teaching.
2. The methods relating to the students’ daily life should be used.
3. The textbooks should be improved in accordance with the students’ interest.
4. Both universities must mention the names of the books which all the teachers have to follow and the teachers should be trained how to use audio-visual aids and other teaching aids.
5. The teachers should advise the students that English is an international language and a window on the world.
6. Universities should make provision for effective supervision of English in their university to enable experts to provide guidance to the teachers.
7. The teachers should know the nature of both languages and how to use the scientific and linguistic methods of teaching a foreign language.
As is clear from the preceding discussion, there are many factors responsible for the poor current English teaching situation in the Buddhist universities. There are some of the remedial suggestions in this regard. It may have also been thought of the committees of both the universities to change some of the unfavourable circumstances in which English is taught all over the country today. This necessitates the need for new approaches which are economical and effective, and relate to the students’ interest and daily life. So far the teaching of English in the Buddhist Universities has been taken up primarily through Grammar-Translation Method or Direct Method, but has no positive effect. Sometimes when some foreigners were assigned the English language teaching task, they used the Structural Approach which proved helpful but no effect was made as follow up activity when such teachers left Thailand. Therefore, it may be well to introduce the Structural Approach once again in ELT in the Buddhist Universities. This modified approach which will be different from the earlier one in the following aspects should prove effective.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The teachers of English in Buddhist universities of Thailand have to take care of such students as have been studying English for at least five to seven years at the school level. But when they join the university they know practically no English except the bits they have mugged up to pass the examinations. They generally have little knowledge of sentence patterns and are not in a position to construct even simple sentences. Even those who make a hard effort fail to construct correct sentences. So, there is a great need to provide a course in the grammar of English for the students in Buddhist universities as there is an acute inability in the knowledge of rules of grammar. The errors made by students in written English show that mistakes in the use of tense, voice and narration are very common. The present study is a modest attempt at strengthening the learning of students of the undergraduate class in the segment of English syntax which deals with tense, voice and narration. These are the basic aspects of the English language. So, the present study aims at providing exposure and practice in these areas of student deficiency.
The problem now was how to handle the situation and which method to use for conducting the course. A number of methods / approaches detailed below were available which needed to be critically examined in terms of their suitability in the present situation.

1.6.1 Alternative Methods available

There are various language teaching methods / approaches for teaching a foreign language. Some methods and approaches gained popularity from time to time, and then they are out of fashion. These situations have taken place, not because of the failure in an actual practice, but because of change in the attitude towards language acquisition / learning in the field of linguistics, psychology and education. As a result, the attitude to learning and teaching of language also undergoes a change. We cannot distinguish which methods or approaches are not most popularly used or very perfect. This is because of the fact that these methods and approaches used for various skills depend on the purpose to be achieved. Suppose our objective is to translate a foreign language into our language and to know well about the rules of language; we have to choose the Grammar-Translation Method. The following methods and approaches are the methods of teaching a foreign language.

1. The Grammar-Translation Method

This method has been used for a long time and was in vogue in teaching Latin and Greek which did not emphasize speaking and listening but focused on studying grammar and translation in order to help a learner to read a textbook and literature. “The Grammar-Translation Method had a natural evolution all over the world and no one is known to be the initiator of such a method” (Mukalel 1998, p. 45). “Grammar-Translation Method is the offspring of German scholarship, the object of which, according to one of its less charitable critics, is to know everything about something rather than the thing itself” (Richards and Rodgers 1995, p.3).

This method is based on the idea that the language has a rule and system. The learning of the language is learning to know the principles of language and grammar rules. “The three principles or assumptions on which the Grammar-Translation Method is based are: (1) Translation interprets the words and phrases of the target language in the best possible manner and ensures comprehension of the vocabulary items, collocations and sentences, (2) the foreign phraseology is best assimilated in
this process of interpretation, and (3) the structures of the foreign language are best learnt when compared and contrasted with those of the mother tongue” (Gautam 1988, p. 34). The purpose of the foreign language study according to the Grammar-Translation Method is to enable the students to read its literature. The students learn a language through detailed analysis of its grammar rules and apply these for translating sentences into and from the target language. The language used for composing poems would rather be learnt than a spoken language. Reading and writing are a major focus. Besides, the learner will know the culture of the native speaker through these poems. The knowing of the forms of a language is necessary for the learners. If the learners know the grammar rules and vocabularies of a foreign language and can translate it into their own language, they will be considered successful in learning a language. Gautam says that this method aims at training the student to write the language accurately by regular and systematic practice in translating words and sentences from his mother tongue.

2. The Direct Method

The Direct Method is the method of teaching a foreign language through conversation and discussion by avoiding the learner’s language, translation and the study of formal grammar. “The common features are (a) emphasis on the oral language; (b) intensive speech practice, usually with training in phonetics; and (c) the exclusive use of the new language. The approach initially precludes any resort to the mother tongue either for exercise and translation or for elucidation of vocabulary and grammar. It was sanguinely expected that by banishing the vernacular from the classroom the pupils would be compelled to do their thinking in the new medium” (Morris 1954, P. 10). This method involves learning the foreign language with the native speaker or the person having full command of the language he is teaching. This method emphasizes speaking. According to Gautam, the Direct Method is one of the most widely known methods. It enjoys immense popularity because it overcome the two major defects of the Grammar-Translation Method. It substitutes ‘language contact’ for ‘grammar recitation’ and ‘language use’ for translation.

This method is based on the idea that the language is speech, the learning of the language is helping the learner to communicate with others by using the language he is studying and know how to think in the target language. So the learning of the
language should always use the language that the learners are studying. The learners converse with one another as if they are in the real situation. When the learners listen to the spoken language, one of the important factors in language learning, they can improve their speech habits and think in the language they are learning without the aid of the mother tongue because this method is based on oral work. “The Direct Method is characterized above all by the use of the target language as a means of instruction and communication in the language classroom, and by the avoidance of the use of the first language and of translation as a technique” (Stern 1983, p. 456).

The purpose of this method is to enable the learner to use the language for communication, especially when they have to do some business in overseas countries, travel the world in search of opening the doors, to co-operation with one another in international trade, tour the world and migrate to other countries.

3. The Audio-lingual Method

This method was developed in the United States during World War II because of the need to enable the personnel to be fluent in German, French, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Malay, and other languages. These personnel could work as interpreters, code-room assistants, and translators in the war time. The Grammar-Translation Method could not enable the learner to speak a foreign language fluently. Although the Direct Method enabled the learner to communicate by using the foreign language, the new idea for learning language gaining in popularity based on the idea of descriptive linguists and behaviorist psychologists. So, the Audio-lingual Method have taken place. “The distinctive characteristics of the Audio-lingual Method are (a) separation of the skill—listening, speaking, reading and writing—and the primacy of the audio-lingual over the graphic skill; (b) the use of dialogues as the chief means of presenting the language; (c) emphasis on certain practice techniques, mimicry, memorization and pattern drills; (d) the use of the language laboratory; (e) establishing a linguistic and psychological theory as a basis for the teaching method” (Stern 1983, p. 462). This method is based on the idea that the language is speech, the learning of the language should start by listening and speaking because this is the basis of reading and writing. Hence the language used in learning should be a day-to-day language because this method is not learning about the language. Gautam cites Moulton (1963) as saying “the characteristic feature of the language teaching in
terms of the following five assumptions: (a) Language is speech, not writing, (b) A language is a set of habits, (c) Teach the language, not about the language, (d) A language is what its native speakers say, not what someone thinks they ought to say, and (e) Languages are different” (pp. 41-42).

This method also is based on the theories of the condition of behaviourist psychologists believing that the language is behaviour occurring from the absolute relation between a stimulus and a response, that is, the response was triggered by the stimulus. The learning of the language will be immensely increased when the learner is praised or is given a prize, when the learner gets a reinforcement and encourages a repetition, he can learn automatically and eventually it becomes a habit. Increasing the characteristic of the language is a repetition. “This method is strongly influenced by a belief that the fluent use of a language is essentially a set of habits which can be developed with a lot of practice. Much of this practice involved hours spent in a language laboratory repeating oral drills” (Yule 1997, p. 193).

4. The Silent Way

The Transformational Generative Grammarians and the Cognitive psychologists criticize the idea that the learning of the language is a habit formation through repetition, viewing that the learning of the language does not occur by imitating because human beings can produce words or sentences which he never heard before. The learning of the language derived from inner criteria which are called the understanding of the discovery of the principle of the target language. “The Silent Way was evolved by Cabea Gattegno, a teacher of mathematics. In the 1960s, he proposed this method, which was based on the tenet, ‘teaching must be subordinate to learning’. In the Silent Way, the teacher is almost silent, the learners do all the talking” (Nagaraj 1996, p. 57).

Paying attention to or focusing on realizing human beings capacity leads to the Cognitive Code Learning Theory, which impels the learner to hypothesize to find out the principles of the target language by using his own mistakes in examining that hypothesis. As a result, the learner will develop learning a language little by little and simultaneously the four skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—from the beginning. The teacher in the Silent Way, like the complete dramatist, writes the script, chooses the props, sets the mood, models the action, designates the players,
and is critic for the performance. This method focuses on the meaning in the same case as the form of the language. “The learning hypothesis underlying Gettegno’s work is the followings: (a) Learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remember and repeats what is to be learnt; (b) Learning is facilitated by accompanying (mediating) physical object; (c) Learning is facilitated by problem-solving involving the material to be learnt” (Richards and Rodgers 1995, p. 99).

5. Community Language Learning

This method was developed by Charles A. Curran in 1960s. He had experience about the adults’ learning for many years, he finds that the adults feel to be disturbed by new approach, that is, they are disturbed from changing naturally and they fear that they will show a silly action. Curran believes that one way which can stop the learners fear is the teacher, who will advise the learners how to learn the language. The counselor is not the person who has been trained in psychology, but is the person who can understand the problem which the learners are facing while they try to understand a foreign language. The teacher who can understand this feeling will recognize the learners.

“Curran has distinguished community language learning from the other two types of learning. In the first view, the intellectual and factual process alone are regarded as the main intent of learning, to the neglect of engagement and involvement of the self. The second view of learning is the behavioural view referred to by Curran as animal learning, in which learners are passive and their involvement limited” (Gautam 1988, p. 73). The student feels that he is a part of a group, the teacher must accept the learners’ needs, each learner participates in the activities and confirms the needs for learning. The teacher is only the language counsel, makes the learner think freely and persuades the learner to participate in the group to help and exchange the ideas between the learner and the learner or the learner and the teacher. “Since a CLL Course evolves out of interactions of the community a textbook is not considered a necessary component. A textbook will impose a particular body of language content on the learners, thereby impeding their growth and interaction.” (Richards and Rodgers 1995, p. 123)
6. Suggestopedia Method

This method was developed by the Bulgarian psychiatrist Georgi Lazanov in 1975 and was in popularity in Soviet, Canada, the United State and so on. He believes that human beings’ capacity in learning a language is better than animals and says that the failure of learning has happened because one fears mistakes and failure, as a result, one can not use the power of brains properly. Lozanov claims that there is no sector of public life where Suggestology will not be useful. Memorization in learning by suggestopedia method seems to be accelerated 25 times over that in learning by conventional method.

According to Gautam, the central assumption that underlines the suggestopedia method is that the learner learns not only from the effect of direct instruction but from the environment in which the instruction takes place. The bright décor of the classroom, the musical background, the shape of the chairs, and the personality of the teacher are considered as important in instruction as the form of the instructional material itself. The purpose of the suggestopedia method is to let the learner study the daily language, the teacher is only an official in the classroom, he is a person whom the learner respect because the learner can remember the information from the person whom the learner trusts. The environment around the learner should be managed well. Richards and Rodgers say that the most conspicuous characteristics of suggestopedia are the decoration, furniture and arrangement of the classroom, the use of music, and the authoritative behaviour of the teacher.

7. Total Physical Response Method

This method is a new method focusing on the Comprehension Approach which starts with the listening skill, not like other methods emphasizing the learners’ speaking skill at the beginning. This idea is derived from linguists’ observing about the child’s native language acquisition. The children take several months to listen to people’s speaking around them before they begin to speak themselves. So, they have enough time to guess the meanings from the sounds which they have heard. Besides, no one compels them to speak, they will speak when they are ready. This method is developed by James Asher, Professor of Psychology at San Jose State University, California, he attempted to make use of the Total Physical Response language teaching method in 1969. He sums up that the learners cannot study a language
rapidly because they are in hurry to speak before they can understand a language by listening and know a vocabulary considerably.

“Asher sees successful adult second language learning as a parallel process to child first language acquisition. He claims that speech directed to young children consists primarily of commands, which children respond to physically before they begin to produce verbal responses. Asher feels adults should recapitulate the processes by which children acquire their mother tongue. At present, there are several language teaching methods based on the Comprehension Approach on which is based the belief that: (a) comprehension abilities precede productive skills in learning a language; (b) the teaching of speaking should be delayed until comprehension skills are established; (c) skills acquired through listening transfer to other skills; (d) teaching should emphasize meaning rather than form; and (e) teaching should minimize learner stress” (Richards and Rodgers 1995, pp. 87-88).

The students should develop listening competence before they develop the ability to speak. They may learn a language from seeing the action of people and practise themselves. When they feel that they are in progress, this is the important factor to help the learner be able to learn a language effectively. So, for correcting some mistakes of the learners, the teacher should tell them in such a way they will feel comfortable. The teacher may repeat an order or make himself as an example for the students. The correction in detail should be done until the learners get ready to study. Richards and Rodgers further say that the teacher’s role is not so much to teach as to provide opportunities for learning. The teacher has the responsibility of providing the best kind of exposure to language so that the learner can internalize the basic rules of the target language. Thus the teacher controls the language input the learners receive, providing the raw material for the cognitive map that the learners will construct in their own minds.

8. The Communicative Approach

The linguistics propose the Communicative Approach from the belief that the language is not only a grammar system consisting of sounds, vocabularies and structures, but also is a system used for communication. According to Richards and Rodgers, the Communicative Approach in language teaching starts from a theory of language as communication. The goal of language teaching is to develop what
Hymes (1972) referred to as “communicative competence.” Hymes coined this term in order to contrast a communicative view of language and Chomsky's theory of competence. “At the level of language theory, Communicative language Teaching has a rich, if somewhat eclectic, theoretical base. Some of the characteristics of this communicative view of language follow: (a) Language is a system for the expression of meaning. (b) The primary function of language is for interaction and communication. (c) The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses. (d) The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse” (Richards and Rodgers 1995, p. 71). This method is based on the idea that the language is a tool of communication and the purpose of teaching a language is to develop the learner to have an ability to communicate with other people. “The three principles of an underlying learning theory in some CLT practices have been identified as follows: (a) Communication: activities that involve real communication promote learning, (b) Task Principle: activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning (Johnson 1982, Prabhu 1982). (c) Meaningfulness Principle: language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process” (Gautam 1988, p. 88).

9. The Structural Approach

This approach has the basic principles and techniques being similar to the Direct Method which entertain certain prejudices against the teaching of skills other than the aural-oral skills. It differs from the Grammar-Translation Method because it emphasizes the practice of speaking skills, and the learning of the foreign language—in case of the structure items and sentence patterns, vocabularies and functions—being able to be taught best through the aural-oral skills. It is a very scientific and systematic method. The Grammar-Translation emphasizes reading, writing and using the mother tongue for learning and teaching a foreign language in the classroom. L.A. Hill (1974) describes that it is fashionable nowadays to attack the old ways of teaching English and to campaign for their replacement by structural syllabuses. The argument goes as follows: The old Grammar-Translation method, and even the newer Direct Method, failed, therefore they must be wrong. The Structural Approach is based on a more scientific analysis of language, therefore it will succeed where the
others have failed. Yardi (1977) quotes Menon and Patel (1963) as saying “the objective of Structural Approach are as follows: (a) To lay the foundation of English by establishing through drill and repetition about 275 graded structures. (b) To enable the children to attain mastery over an essential vocabulary of about 3000 root words for active use. (c) To correlate the teaching of grammar and composition with the reading lessons. (d) To teach the four fundamental skills namely understanding, speaking, reading and writing in order named. (e) To lay proper emphasis on the aural oral approach, active methods and the condemnation of formal grammar for its own sake” (pp. 146-147).

This method is based on the idea that the language consists of structures and that the learning of the structures of the language is more important than the vocabulary. At the beginning the teacher should tell the learners about the mastery of phonological and grammatical structures rather than the mastery of vocabulary. Learning in structural paradigm is thus assumed to entail mastering the elements of the language and learning the rules by which these elements are combined, from phoneme to morpheme to phrase to clause to sentence. “The selection of the structures to be taught is made on the following principles: (a) Usefulness—Since one aim is to impart only working knowledge to the pupils, we should teach only those structures which occur more frequently than others. (b) Productivity—Some structures are productive i.e., other structures can be built on them. Consider the two sentences patterns: ‘Mr. Sony is here’ and ‘Here is Mr. Sony’. The former pattern is productive because we can have many other sentences from it, such as ‘he is here’, but we cannot have any such sentences from the latter. We cannot say ‘here is he’. So, one structure is more productive than the other because it helps in building other structures. (c) Simplicity—The simplicity of a structure depends on its form and meaning. The structure ‘I am playing’ is simpler than the structure ‘The patient had died before the doctor came’. The simpler structure is preferred to the more complicated one. (d) Teachability—One structure can be taught more easily than the other. For example, the structure ‘I am writing’ can be demonstrated in a realistic situation” (Gautam 1988, p. 52).

To achieve the target it was decided to adopt the Structural Approach but with certain modifications in the presentation of tense, voice, and narration forms. The
plans to present tense, voice, and narration forms in pair, in groups of three, four and six to help the learner see and imbibe the difference in the structure of these forms to facilitate learning and production of syntax.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

Due to constraints of time and finance, this study will be limited for the undergraduate students of the first year of both the Buddhist universities, i.e., Mahamakut Buddhist University in Isan Campus, Khon Kaen province and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya university in Nong Khai Campus, Nong Khai province. Both these are located in the Northeast of Thailand. Fifty students of each university will be given the course.

1.8 Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to determine whether the Structural Approach with the certain modifications can play a fruitful role in impressing the current ELT situation in Buddhist universities. It is also the objectives of this study:

1. To diagnose the error pattern in the use of tense, voice and narration in English through a Diagnostic Test.
2. To prepare a remedial course in teaching syntax for the students of both Buddhist universities.
3. To introduce the Structural Approach with certain modifications in the teaching of English to the students in Buddhist universities.
4. To study the performance of the students taking this remedial course with the objective of verifying if the contrastive/parallel presentation of structures in the same language i.e., L2—a modified way of using the Structural Approach—can help the students to improve their use of the basic English structures, and enable them to produce correct grammatical constructions.
5. To explain the rational and methodology of the remedial course to a teacher in one of these Buddhist Universities and involve him in the conduct of the course.
6. To involve an observer—a teacher in English—who observes the researcher and the other teacher referred to in 5 above while they teach the students in both universities and gives his comments regarding the classroom procedures i.e., methodology of teaching and the teaching materials in the format entitled ‘Observation Instrument’—a modification of CIEFL Hyderabad document.
7. To analyze and evaluate the improvement of students in the use of English tense, voice and narration patterns at intervals through 12 interim tests and the final Achievement Test.

8. To further ascertain of the learning of basic structural patterns through the method also promoted a better and faster learning of voice and narration patterns in English.

1.9 Hypothesis of the Study

It is hypothesized that the Thai students in Buddhist universities will do better in learning English if the teacher makes a concerted use of the structural model with modifications in conjunction with certain provisions of the communicative approach. At present the students are made to rely mostly on memorization and mechanical learning, and they are taught only one tense form at a time, so that before they are in a position to make use of it correctly, they are made to move on to the next. The teaching syllabus being linear, the result is that they are bored and by the time they are exposed to the twelfth tense-forms, they have usually forgotten the first one. In order to overcome this problem, the students would do better if the tense patterns are presented to them not one by one but in pair or in groups of three, four and six. The contrastive / parallel presentation of tense-forms—by adding a simultaneous visual dimension to presentation of English syntax may prove more effective. Moreover when the tense-forms are presented first in pairs and then in groups of three, four and six—by coming back to the patterns again and again—one of the requirements of learning i.e., spaced controlled reinforcement will also be met. This is likely to promote faster learning and longer retention.

These learners are studying in Buddhist universities and would most likely be future monks and messengers of Buddhism. Thus they need to be not only grammatically correct but also situationally appropriate in their communication. The researcher feels that if the teaching materials for this language course incorporate information about Buddha and Buddhism, the switch over from class-room to field performance may become easy for these learners. The course is basically about teaching of syntax but has a definite communicative extension underlying it.