

King Bhumibol Adulyadej's "Learn Wisely" Concept: An Application to Instructional Design

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Abstract—This study is about an application of King Bhumibol Adulyadej's "Learn Wisely" (LW) concept in instructional design and management process at the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The concept suggests four strategies for true learning. Related literature and significant LW methods in teaching and learning are also reviewed and then applied in designing a pedagogy learning module. The design has been implemented in three classrooms with a total of 115 sophomore student teachers. After one consecutive semester of managing and adjusting the process by instructors and experts using collected data from minutes, assessment of learning management, satisfaction and learning achievement of the students, it is found that the effective SSRU model of LW instructional method comprises of five steps.

Keywords—Instructional Design, Learn Wisely Strategy, Pedagogy Learning Module, Teaching Method.

I. INTRODUCTION

A prestigious title unanimously accorded His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej by all Thais is "Teacher of the Land". Throughout his long reign, His Majesty teaches and educates Thai people, both in formal and non-formal education systems, through his royal activities and projects. One among his enlightened approaches and initiatives to teaching is "Learn Wisely" concept. This term is stated partially in his royal address at the commencement ceremony of Srinakharinwirot University on June 22, 1981:

"Knowledge is of utmost importance, as it forges wisdom, ability, and progress. This is why we humans keep on studying endlessly. But, pondering on it, sometimes more studying and learning would not result in more wisdom or progress, if the studying is not properly done, and real knowledge is not obtained. It is therefore essential to study for wisdom, or to learn wisely, that is, learning what can be of real use, with no harm. The "learn wisely" method is based on two principles: first, a thorough study of a subject, not just some parts or certain aspects, and second, what needs to be always kept in mind, is impartiality, without influences, good or bad. Otherwise, the knowledge will be veiled or distorted and cannot be applied beneficially, without harm [1]."

Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (FoE-SSRU) holds responsibility in training of pre-service teachers. The philosophy of SSRU teacher training curriculum

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[2] aims to produce professional teachers who are capable of living intellectually; integrating knowledge, skills and professional ethics in education provision; developing their pupils into virtual, intelligent, and happy persons; understanding changes and facing problems or crisis with wisdom. Moreover, one of the FoE-SSRU mission statements is to carry on His Majesty the King' ideas through teaching and learning application [3]. It is necessary to seek contemporary learning management models suitable for developing student teachers into well-prepared professionals who efficiently work in modern society of ASEAN community.

Hence, the Faculty members are obligated to explore, invent and design new practical learning management and methods that actually are able to enhance knowledge and skills of the student teachers. Therefore, the authors as teacher educators are interested in finding how the royal idea of "Learn Wisely (LW)" can be applied to teaching and learning in real classroom situation. The goal is an effective LW instructional model that significantly enhances learning process and achievement of the students.

II. RELATED LITERATURE

Between 1999-2000, the Rajabhat Institutes Council, granted by His Majesty, had taken up a research and development project on the royally initiated learning pattern known as the "Learn Wisely" method [4], [5]. This valid concept results in true learning and wisdom in learners, under the four principles of the "Learn Wisely" strategy (Fig. 1):

- 1) Determining with faith, as the strong will to seek knowledge in good faith, from proper and careful consideration, with impartiality and rationality.
- 2) Seeking knowledge with morality, referring to self-development in the following manners: a) in developing oneself, academic knowledge is needed for future work on the one hand, while moral knowledge is necessary for behavioral development on the other hand; b) learning has to be complete and thorough, with three means of learning that must be in harmony and contributing to one another which are (1) from others' acquired knowledge and ideas, (2) through contemplating by oneself; and (3) through practicing to achieve results; c) learning must be done with impartiality; d) learning needs to be complete and thorough, with the clear understanding that all disciplines are linked and contributing to one another.
- 3) Using knowledge wisely by bringing into real practice through the use of wisdom in adapting both theoretical

and practical knowledge to suit the condition, with honesty and in good faith, showing responsibility toward the discipline and the public.

- 4) Keeping abreast with changes and new developments. Knowledge has to be reviewed and developed in line with the social conditions and the environment.

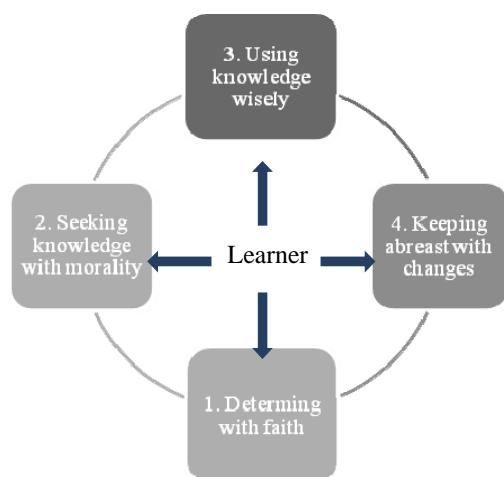


Fig. 1 "Learn Wisely" Strategy

According to His Majesty's three means of learning: 1) learn from knowledge and ideas of others, 2) learn from deep thinking and rationalizing, and 3) learn from practicing until achieving empirical results and expertise, the first mean can be performed through listening, reading, observing, watching, remembering, etc. This is a basic learning style because persons know or perceive without proving whether it is right or wrong, good or bad, and useful or useless. Nevertheless, this mean is necessary because there are too many knowledge needed to be learned in life. A person cannot study thoroughly in everything but starting from general studies and then selecting interested subjects for extensive studies. This second style is higher level of learning because acquired knowledge is self-constructed, reliable and more useful. All three means must be done accordingly in order to achieve true knowledge [6], [7].

In 2002, the LW strategy has been integrated into instructional processes. The result is a 9-step learning model (Fig. 2). The nine steps are [8]-[10]:

- 1) Determining knowledge to be learned
- 2) Understanding the importance of to-be-learned knowledge
- 3) Searching for related learning resources
- 4) Planning learning process
- 5) Implementing the learning plan
- 6) Summarizing acquired knowledge
- 7) Applying the knowledge into real-life situation
- 8) Assessing progress of learning
- 9) Sustainable developing of learned knowledge

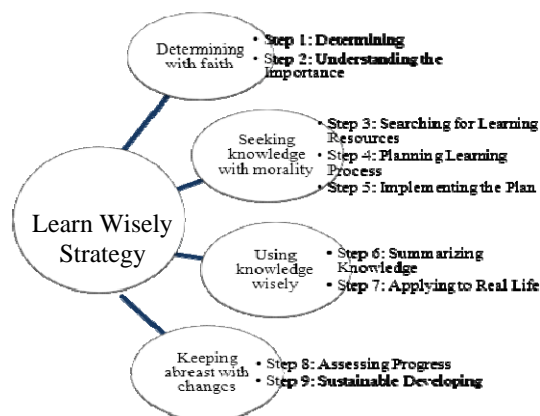


Fig. 2 A Nine-Step "Learn Wisely" Model

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Objectives

This study aims to apply a "Learn Wisely" concept of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej in an instructional design of a 5-credit pedagogy course entitled Foundation of Educational and Inclusive Education and implement the design in learning management of the module during the second semester of academic year 2011.

B. Research Questions

The research questions are

- 1) What is a suitable LW instructional process for the Foundation of Education and Inclusive Education course?
- 2) How effective is the designed model according to students' learning achievement and satisfactory?

C. Procedure

The research methodology composes of 5 steps: 1) investigate His Majesty's LW concept and review related literature, 2) design a LW instructional process by a team of instructors and experts, 3) apply the designed model into learning management of the target course taught by participated instructors, 4) evaluate students' achievement and assess students' satisfactory towards the learning via the designed model, and 5) analyze and conclude the finding.

D. Samples

The designed model is implemented by 3 instructors of 3 sophomore classes including a class of 50 Thai language major students, a class of 34 Early Childhood Education major students and a class of 31 Mathematics major students. Thus the samples are at a total of 115 student teachers.

E. Evaluation and Assessment Instruments

The instruments for evaluating and assessing effectiveness of the designed model include collected data from 1) minutes and comments of participated instructors and experts during the implementation, 2) a 5-point rating scale form for participated students to assess the LW instructional process, 3) a 5-point rating scale questionnaire for assessing satisfaction

of the students toward LW learning management, and 4) test items for evaluation of student learning achievement.

IV. THE DESIGN

The designed model for the target course consists of 4 learning units. Each unit requires 3-4 weeks of learning session. After the implementation of each unit, the design is assessed by the students and they are also evaluated. At least one meeting among instructors and experts is scheduled at the end of each unit. If necessary, additional meeting can be held.

At first, the 9-step learning model is applied to the design. However, after implementing the first session of Unit 1, a conclusion from instructors and experts meeting suggests the reduction of steps. Thus, the design is adjusted into 5 steps of learning process in every unit.

A. Learning Unit 1

The 5-step learning process of Unit 1: 1) *Learn from knowledge, ideas and practice of others.* The students determine various issues in education from video presentation. 2) *Learn from deep thinking and processing knowledge to conclude new knowledge on their own.* The students analyze, discuss, criticize, and comment on the importance of education, parenthood, children bearing, home and school environment, peers and teachers, and education provision. The students work in groups. 3) *Learn from practice and experiment until achieving empirical results and dexterity by working in groups.* The student plans their searching of knowledge, implementing the plan, writing reports on various topics such as educational theories, educational philosophy, Thai education history, comparison of Thai educational system and others, etc., and constructing assessment tools. 4) *Learn from verification and critical thinking by themselves and by working as a team.* The students present the findings to class members via ICT and ask questions. 5) *Learn from exchange and sharing of knowledge.* The students perform story-telling or role-playing, and write education news via blogs and social media.

B. Learning Unit 2

The 5-step learning process of Unit 2: 1) The students analyze and describe National Education Act, Section 4: Guidelines of Education Provision. They also reflect the importance of child-centered instruction and its relationship to educational philosophy and laws. 2) The students search various learning resources on National Education Act, Section 1-9. 3) The students plan their learning process, implements their plan and conclude the findings through group working. 4) The students verify their acquired knowledge through presentation and asking questions. 5) The students exchange and share their knowledge through blogs or social media.

C. Learning Unit 3

The 5-step learning process of Unit 3: 1) The students study situation of Thai and global societies, politics, economy, cultures, environment, and technology through given documents. 2) The students analyze the context of Thai and

global societies. Then, they propose guidelines for providing education appropriate with social changes by individually writing an academic article. 3) The students plan their learning process and study visiting of inclusive education in the schools of their choice and implement the plan. They also work in teams to organize academic camp projects for schools. 4) The students assess their projects, write reports and present their findings. 5) The students exchange and share of knowledge by individually writing an article on their impressive experience regarding inclusive education and academic service through blogs or social media.

D. Learning Unit 4

The 5-step learning process of Unit 4: 1) The group of students study assigned topics including educational administration, educational leadership, educational quality assurance and education for community development. 2) The students plan their learning process, implements their plan and conclude the findings through group working. 3) The students work in groups to write minutes of their meeting, design their innovative presentation with ICT application. 4) The students verify their acquired knowledge through self-assessment, questioning, discussion, suggestion, etc. Also, they are given summative testing. 5) The students exchange and share their knowledge by individually writing an article on assigned topics through blogs or social media.

V. RESULTS

The results are:

- 1) The suitable LW instructional process model for the Foundation of Education and Inclusive Education course consists of 5 steps. Step 1: learn from knowledge, ideas and practice of others. Step 2: learn from deep thinking and processing knowledge to conclude new knowledge on their own. Step 3: learn from practice and experiment until achieving empirical results and dexterity. Step 4: learn from verification and critical thinking by themselves and by working as a team. Step 5: learn from exchange and sharing of knowledge.
- 2) The designed model is effective according to the following findings:
 - a) It is found that the Thai Language students assess their LW learning process at the highest level in all four units ($\bar{x} = 4.29, 4.30, 4.52$ and 4.40 respectively), the Early Childhood Education students assess their learning at the highest level in one unit which is Unit 3 ($\bar{x} = 4.39$) while Unit 1, 2 and 4 are at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.04, 4.10,$ and 3.89 respectively), and the Mathematics students assess their learning at the highest level in two units which are Unit 1 and 2 ($\bar{x} = 4.29$ and 4.30) while Unit 3 and 4 are at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.18$ and 3.96).
 - b) It is found that the Thai Language students are satisfied the LW learning management at the highest level in all four units ($\bar{x} = 4.26, 4.26, 4.46,$ and 4.59 respectively), the Early Childhood Education students are satisfied at the highest level in Unit 3 ($\bar{x} = 4.54$) while Unit 1, 2

and 4 are at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.08, 4.03, \text{ and } 3.93$ respectively), and the Mathematics students are satisfied at the highest level in Unit 1 ($\bar{x} = 4.26$) while Unit 2, 3 and 4 are at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.03, 4.16, \text{ and } 4.07$ respectively)

- c) It is found that students' learning achievement as to their grade levels are mostly between Good and Excellent. The Thai Language class has 32% of Good and 30% of Excellent, the Early Childhood Education class has 97% of Excellent, and the Mathematics class has 61.26% of Good and 32.26% of Excellent.

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