**Title**

"Learning Without Intending to": A Qualitative Study of High School Students' Out-of-Class English Learning Practices

**Permalink**

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3bb2h9tb

**Author**

Chanjavanakul, Natpat

**Publication Date**

2017

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

"Learning Without Intending to": A Qualitative Study of High School Students' Out-of-Class

English Learning Practices

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Natpat Chanjavanakul

2017

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

"Learning Without Intending to": A Qualitative Study of High School Students' Out-of-class

English Learning Practices

by

Natpat Chanjavanakul

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Alison Bailey, Chair

This study, employing qualitative methods, examined high school English as a foreign language

(EFL) learners' English learning trajectories and their out-of-class English learning practices.

The main goal of this study was to understand, from a student perspective, the influence of social

factors on English learning trajectories and out-of-class English learning practices. In Phase 1,

students ($N = 45$) documented their out-of-class English activities in the forms of activity logs

and photos. Then in-depth interviews were conducted focusing on students' learning trajectories

and out-of-class learning practices. Phase 2 involved home observations of selected students

from Phase 1 ($n = 4$). In general, students described their learning trajectories based on what they

considered as critical events of their English learning experiences. These critical events typically

either dramatically improved or stunted English learning trajectories. Three types of critical

events were found: interactions with English speakers, formal instruction, and engagement in

informal out-of-school activities. Unexpectedly, despite the study's focus on external factors, two internal factors (self-concept and attitudes) were found to be highly connected to social factors: learning trajectories and out-of-class learning practices, which indicates complicated interrelated relationships among external factors, internal factors, and out-of-class learning. The findings indicate the critical role of social interactions and social structure on both overall English learning trajectories and out-of-class English learning practices. Out-of-class English learning practices found in this study consist of informal in-school activities, formal out-of-school instruction, informal out-of-school instruction, and self-sponsored study. The latter three were found to be highly influential to English learning of this group of students. Out-of-class learning practices were perceived to be helpful in several ways: helping with in-class learning, changing learning trajectories, increasing English exposure, making learning enjoyable, and helping with learning sociocultural aspects of the English language. This study provides practical suggestions to support students' English language development: (1) promote students' self-concept, (2) create quality home English language environment and (3) involve people in students' social network in school interventions.

The dissertation of Natpat Chanjavanakul is approved.

Teresa L. McCarty

Rashmita S. Mistry

John H. Schumann

Alison Bailey, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

DEDICATION

For mom and dad, who support me to follow my passion in education.

For Tony, who has always been there for me from the very beginning. Your unconditional love and support make this possible.

For Dr. Patricia Carroll, who has always been my personal cheerleader throughout this journey.

For K'Pao, Mint, Mild, Doam, Pao, P'Aey and all my extended families, who have always been supportive through this long journey.

For Ajarn Samai, who was the teacher starting the turning point in my English learning trajectory.

For everyone in RAC, who makes this journey fun and educational at the same time.

Lastly, for Dr. Alison Bailey, who has nurtured and cultivated the researcher in me. This journey would have been impossible without you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

VITA/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

## EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Los Angeles, CA                Fall 2013
Master of Arts in Human Development and Psychology
Northeast Normal University, Chang Chun, Jilin, China                Jun 2011
Senior Scholar in Pedagogy
Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA                Jun 2009
Master of Education in Mind, Brain & Education
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand                Mar 2007
Bachelor of Science in Medical Science

## SCHOLARSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS

American Association of University Women (AAUW) International Fellowship, 2012
Lee Memorial Fellowship, Department of Education, University of California, Los Angeles, 2012
Graduate Division Award, University of California, Los Angeles, University fellowship,2011
UNESCO/People's Republic of China co-sponsored (The Great Wall) Fellowship Program, 2011
P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship, 2008

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, 2017
Teaching assistant, PSYCH 100B Research Methods in Psychology

Samsen Wittayalai School, Bangkok, Thailand, 2014 – 2016
High school English teacher, EN31101-2 English Academic Writing and EN32219-20 English Writing for Specific Purposes

University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, 2011
Course Reader, Early Childhood Development

Satit Bilingual School of Rangsit University, Pathumthani, Thailand, 2007-2010
Bilingual science teacher

Varee Chiangmai School, Chiangmai, Thailand, 2007-2008
English teacher

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of California, Los Angeles, CA
The Dynamic Language Learning Progression Project, 2013
Graduate Research Assistant

Mahidol University and Thailand Research Fund, Bangkok, Thailand, 2009-2010
Development of Educational Neuroscience in Thailand Project
Educational Neuroscience for Early Childhood Development Project
Researcher

## ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Chanjavanakul, N. (2013). *Medium of instruction in Thai science learning* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertation and Theses (1548740).

Chanjavanakul, N. (2012). Motivational theories on language learning. In Della Chiesa, B., J. Scott and C. Hinton (eds.), *Languages in a Global World: Learning for Better Cultural Understanding* (pp. 79-88). Paris: OECD Publishing.

Chanjavanakul, N. (2011). *Scientific literacy in Chinese and Thai biology textbooks: A comparison study*. Fellowship report for UNESCO and China Scholarship Council.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Chanjavanakul, N. (2017, May 25). *"Learning Without Intending to": A Qualitative Study of High School Students' Out-of-Class English Learning Practices.* Paper session presented at the Fourth Annual Research and Inquiry Conference, Los Angeles, CA.

Chanjavanakul, N. (2015, April 16). *Bilingual instruction in middle school science classrooms: A privilege or a disadvantage?.* Roundtable session presented at American Educational Research Association 2015 Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

Chanjavanakul, N. (2014, June 4). *Medium of instruction in middle school science classroom.* Poster session presented at the First Annual Research and Inquiry Conference, Los Angeles, CA.

Chanjavanakul, N. (2009, May). *Curriculum design for conceptual change.* Poster session presented at the Second Biennial Conference of the International Mind, Brain, and Education Society, Philadelphia, PA.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

This study explored the phenomenon of what influences some English as a foreign language (EFL) students to take advantage of out-of-class English learning practices while others do not. The purpose of this dissertation was to examine how Thai EFL high school students perceive what influences their engagement in out-of-class English learning practices. Knowledge gained from this study could help provide insights and inform educators how to better support EFL out-of-class learning. This study employed a two-phase qualitative research method. The aim of Phase 1 was to explore the general phenomenon, while the purpose of Phase 2 was to gain in-depth details and verify Phase 1 findings. Phase 1 participants were 45 Thai EFL high school students in a school with high English learning resources and supports. Phase 2 participants were four students purposefully selected from Phase 1.

## Background and Context

Knowledge of English is considered a basic necessity to participate fully in the 21$^{st}$ century world, as English is widely considered a lingua franca (Graddol, 2006; Seargeant & Erling, 2013; Warschauer, 2002). Literature shows that English proficiency is correlated to positive outcomes in national development such as increasing employability for individuals, providing access to advanced research and information, and facilitating international collaboration (Coleman, 2010). English is also considered a contributing factor in narrowing the economic and developmental gap between developed and developing countries (Graddol, 2006). Because having English language skills often leads to better education, employment, and social opportunities, it is considered a gateway to a better socioeconomic status in many developing countries (Hann, Timmis, Alkhaldi, Davies, Troncoso, & Yi , 2014; Seargeant & Erling, 2013).

1

It is estimated that there are at least one billion English learners in the world, with more non-native speakers (NNSs) than native speakers (NSs) of English (Graddol, 2006). In language education, NNSs could also be called English language learners to emphasize their learner status. In general, there are two contexts of English language learning. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) refers to learning English in a place where English is not a commonly used language, while learning English as a second language (ESL) refers learning English in a place where English is a commonly used language (Snow & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2003).

Learners need to be in optimal language learning environments in order to acquire the target language (TL). According to research on second language acquisition, optimal language learning environments require high-quality inputs, ample opportunities for language use, and useful feedback (Egbert & Jessup, 1996; Jung & Kim, 2004; Zhang, 2010). These conditions can be easily met if learners are living in the environment where the TL is used most frequently, such as in the ESL context. However, many English language learners are in the EFL context, which means that the languages these learners use most frequently are not English. This brings up a question of how EFL learners create English learning environments when their local circumstances may have limited opportunities to use English.

Researchers agree that self-initiation and autonomy are crucial in learning a foreign language. Studies have shown again and again that successful language learners are learners that take control of their own learning and create language learning environments and opportunities for themselves (e.g., Benson, 2001; Bown, 2009). One way that learners exercise their autonomy in language learning is engaging in out-of-class language learning activities. Out-of-class language learning activities are activities learners choose to engage in to learn the TL. Learners use out-of-class language activities to create language learning environments for their specific

2

needs, learning styles, and goals. Some common out-of-class activities include self-study from textbooks, finding opportunities to interact with NSs, watching TV programs in the TL, and reading books in the TL. Ideally, an immersive language learning environment where learners interact with NSs on a regular basis is optimal for language learning. However, when learning the TL as a foreign language, learners generally do not have the option to interact with NSs regularly. Literature shows that learners in the EFL context create their own language learning environments by using various out-of-class activities (e.g., Chusanachoti, 2009; Inozu, Sahinkarakas, & Yumru, 2010; Zhang, 2010).

Several factors have been identified as influential to out-of-class language learning. Internal factors such as motivation, attitudes toward the TL community, anxiety, autonomy, and self-regulation are considered crucial in studying out-of-class language learning (e.g., Benson, 2001; Hyland, 2004). Additionally, language is a tool for communication, making it highly related to the outside world. According to the sociocultural perspective, learning a language is not just learning sounds, symbols and meanings, but it is also learning to use the language appropriately to communicate and be a part of the community. Literature in sociocultural theory (SCT) in second language acquisition shows that social factors can highly influence the language learning process (e.g., Lantolf, 1994; Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2011). By examining out-of-class English activities through the sociocultural theoretical lens, we can understand the roles of social influences on out-of-class English learning. While there are several factors that can influence out-of-class English activities, this study focused on how social factors affect learners' out-of-class language activities.

Most learners are aware of the benefits of out-of-class English learning practices. However, several studies have shown that students tend to not take full advantage of out-of-class

3

English practices (e.g., Hyland, 2004; Inozu et al., 2010; Pearson, 2003). Leaving the issue of accessibility aside, current literature explains this phenomenon by focusing on internal factors such as motivation and metacognition (Pearson, 2003). While this certainly helps us understand the phenomenon better, it does not provide a complete picture. While recent studies are starting to she light on the importance of social contexts on this phenomenon, the research of social factors in out-of-class language learning remains a relatively new research area (Palfreyman, 2011). This study seeks to help provide better understandings of social influences on why some students take full advantage of out-of-class activities while others do not.

Thailand provides a unique context for studying this phenomenon because of the important status given to English institutionally and personally. The status of English is generally perceived based on its functionality. English is the only mandatory foreign language in Thai public schools. English also relates to major activities influencing socioeconomic status (SES) such as college admissions, higher salary base or income, and promotions. Since Thailand has never been colonized by Western countries, there are no specific social or political complications associated with Western foreign languages, including English. Therefore, the attitudes of most Thai people toward English are about the functions of English rather than about its political history.

While Thai remains the official language and medium of instruction in school, students in Thailand are required to learn English from the first grade onwards. However, research shows that even with 10-12 years of instruction, the English proficiency of Thai students is generally low (Katsos, 2012). On average, a Thai middle-school graduate would have had less than 1,000 accumulative hours of in-class English instruction (Ministry of Education, 2008). This amount is not sufficient to acquire English proficiency (Nunan, 2003). Learners have to use English outside

their classrooms to be able to acquire English proficiency. Since research shows that out-of-class language learning is a significant part of language learning (Benson & Reinders, 2011; Lai & Gu, 2011). it is important to find out what learners' current out-of-class language learning practices are in order to understand the complete picture of English learning in Thai K-12 education.

Even though the focus of this study is on Thai students in the Thai context, findings can be applied to other countries. Most English learners do not live in English-dominant countries. The English learning situation in Thailand is similar to other countries where learners are growing up and going to school in different language(s). Granted, there will be differences in cultural, social, and political factors affecting English learning, but a study of this phenomenon in Thailand can contribute to building a better understanding the out-of-class language learning situations for NNSs learning English in non-English dominant countries elsewhere.

## Problem Statement

Research shows that despite knowing the benefits of out-of-class English learning practices and having resources to engage in out-of-class English practices, many EFL students do not take full advantage of out-of-class language learning practices (Hyland, 2004). Therefore, despite years spent learning English in class, Thai EFL students find it difficult to succeed in English language learning. However, little is known about how Thai EFL students choose to engage in out-of-class practices.

## Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explore what Thai high school EFL students perceive as the role of out-of-class English practices in their English-language learning and to study what

influences their choice of out-of-class English language practices. It is expected that with a better understanding of how students see their out-of-class English practices, educators could better support students and families in their out-of-class English learning endeavors.

The research questions that this study aims to address are:

1) How do high school EFL students describe their English learning trajectories?

2) What are the roles of social factors on high school EFL students' English learning?

   a) What are the social factors high school EFL students perceive as influential to their learning trajectories and out-of-class English learning practices?

   b) How do these social factors influence English learning trajectories?

   c) How do these social factors influence out-of-class English learning practices?

3) What are the characteristics of out-of-class English practices that students perceive as helpful to their English learning?

4) What do students perceive as functions of out-of-class English learning practices?

**Key Terminology**

1. *Formal in-school learning* refers to learning occurring during formal instruction in a classroom setting at school, with one or more teachers.

2. *Informal in-school learning* refers to learning occurring during an informal activity in school, such as extracurricular activities, either with or without teacher(s) present.

3. *Formal out-of-school learning* refers to learning occurring during formal instruction in a classroom setting outside of school, with one or more teacher present. An example of this type of activity is attending tutoring.

4. *Informal out-of-school learning* refers to learning occurring during an informal activity outside school. Some examples situations where informal learning may occur are reading books, listening to music, watching TV and playing games.

5. *Out-of-class learning practices* consist of informal in-school, formal out-of-school, and informal out-of-school learning. The term focuses on times that activities take place. If it is outside formal school time, it is considered an out-of-class activity.

## Positionality Statement

I am a native speaker of Thai and an EFL learner. My formal education from kindergarten to college was in Thailand with Thai as the language of instruction. I started learning English during the first grade, but I did not become fluent until my last year of high school. My own English learning experience involved formal in-school, formal out-of-school, and informal out-of-school English learning. The critical event of my learning trajectory was formal in-school instruction in middle school. Since then I actively and intentionally started engaging in formal out-of-school and informal out-of-school learning. From my experience, I believe that all three parts of English learning—formal in-school, formal out-of-school and informal out-of-school—have significantly contributed to my success in learning English. While I did not personally have significant experience with informal in-school learning, I did witness how it benefited some of my peers, for example, my classmate improved her English speaking skills exponentially after she had joined the school debate team. Additionally, I am a former middle school and high school teacher. I have seen many of my students engage in out-of-class practices as a significant part of their English learning journeys. My position toward out-of-class English learning is that they are helpful in overall English learning. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that there are multiple pathways to success in English learning and that out-of-class English

7

practice is merely one of the ways. By itself, out-of-class English learning might not be sufficient. My view is that out-of-class English practices are one of the ways learners can increase the opportunities to use English in their daily lives, and combining these out-of-class activities combined with formal learning in-school can lead to success in learning English.

## Significance of the Study

This study contributes to an understanding of how out-of-class language learning practices impact language learning trajectories. Existing studies show that out-of-class English learning practices impact learning trajectories, but they still lack specific details on how the process occurs (Murray, 2008; Sundqvist, 2011). This study specifically shows how social contexts shape out-of-class English learning practices, which then in turn influence learning trajectories.

The schema developed in this study suggests constructs to be included for future research. The study focused on identifying contextual factors influential in out-of-class learning. Understanding the mechanisms of how social contexts influence out-of-class language learning practices will likely yield information about constructs highly related to out-of-class learning practices. This will help in designing future research to further understand out-of-class language learning practices.

Determining which out of class activities learners engage in to improve their language acquisition contributes to the creation of practical guidelines for supporting out-of-class language learning practices. This will be useful for educators for designing educational programs and useful for students and parents for better planning their learning. Additionally, several researchers have pointed out that the field needs a large repertoire of learners' stories in order to better understand language learning beyond the classroom (Benson & Reinders, 2011; Murray,

2008). This study contributes to this collection of EFL learners' stories to help researchers better

understand the out-of-class learning activities participants engage in.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

## Out-of-Class Language Learning

*Out-of-class language learning* refers to any language learning outside of the classroom. This type of learning includes *learning in a naturalistic situation*, where learners live in the environment with speakers of the TL, and *self-initiated learning*, which can occur with or without contact with speakers of the TL (Benson, 2001). This study is concerned with self-initiated learning in the EFL context, where learners lack the opportunity to "bump into" NSs or to have other types of unplanned contact and interaction, and thus are forced to create opportunities to use the TL outside of the classroom. This type of out-of-class learning emphasizes learners' strong determination to apply the TL outside classroom (Hyland, 2004). Examples of out-of-class activities in the EFL context are reading books in English, watching TV in English, writing a diary in English, using language learning games, and listening to English songs and videos (Griffiths, 2013).

Compared with research on in-class language learning, the number of studies on out-of-class language learning is rather small (Benson, 2001; Benson & Reinders, 2011). Moreover, studies on this topic often focus on university students and pre-service teachers (e.g., Hyland, 2004). There are few studies on out-of-class language learning focusing on secondary school students. Research shows that adolescence is an important period in second language development (Taylor, 2013). Cognitive and psychosocial development processes in adolescents can greatly impact adolescents' linguistic development, especially in multilingual speakers (Bailey & Orellana, 2014). During the adolescent period, peers have an increasing influence on learning including language learning. Furthermore, adolescents are developing identity (Head, 1997). In second language acquisition (SLA) literature, learning a new language is considered to

be equivalent to developing a new identity (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Identity formation processes in the adolescent years partly contribute to learners' motivation for learning a language (Lamb, 2004). This makes the high school period a crucial time for students to develop life-long behaviors and attitudes that favor English language learning.

Out-of-class language learning activities are sometimes considered a type of learning strategy by some researchers (e.g., Griffiths, 2013; Pickard, 1996). Additionally, *language learning strategies* can refer to both mental and physical activities. This focus of this study will be on physical out-of-class activities using English of which the goal of learning English is a primary or secondary purpose. Thus, for the purpose of this study, the term *learning activities* is more appropriate than *learning strategies*.

**Importance of Out-of-Class Language Learning Activities**

Current literature indicates that engaging in out-of-class activities is a significant part of language learning process (Lai & Gu, 2011). For instance, a study of successful Japanese adults learning English without living abroad showed that successful English language learners consider out-of-class English activities to be a crucial part of their success (Murray, 2008). Similarly, a study of successful Thai college students learning English showed that students attributed their improvement in everyday and academic English skills to out-of-class English activities (Chusanachoti, 2009). These studies show that out-of-class English activities are a consistent part of successful English learners' lives, suggesting that further research on out-of-class English activities maybe important in understanding the process of learning English in the EFL context.

Other research shows that learners often use out-of-class activities to create language learning environment (Hyland, 2004; Pearson, 2003). While there is no consensus on what

11

constitute the required language learning environment, researchers agree that there are some conditions necessary in creating language learning environment (Ortega, 2009). Egbert and Jessup (1996) proposed four conditions for an optimal language learning environment: 1) learners have opportunities to use the TL with an authentic audience, 2) learners are involved in authentic tasks requiring both receptive and productive language skills, 3) learners have sufficient feedback and time to learn, and 4) the learning environment has an ideal anxiety or stress level. Later Zhang (2010) applied these principles to out-of-class English activities by summarizing three conditions in which technology can be used to create language learning environment: 1) high quality input, 2) opportunities for language use, and 3) high quality feedback. Some common conclusions about necessary conditions of language learning environments across researchers include high quality and sufficient input, high quality and sufficient feedback, and ample opportunities for TL use (Ortega, 2009).

Language learning environments in class are partly constructed by teachers and partly by learners. Outside the classroom, however, learners are the ones constructing the language learning environments themselves (Esch & Zähner, 2000). Learners of English as a foreign language generally do not have optimal language learning environments outside the classroom. This is because daily interactions with people and the environment are mainly conducted through the learners' first language. Motivated learners have to exert their autonomy and create appropriate language learning environments for themselves. Engaging in out-of-class English activities can be considered one way that learners create language learning environments outside classroom.

**Learners' Behaviors in Out-of-Class Language Learning Activities**

Even though research shows effectiveness of out-of-class language activities in improving language skills, learners do not seem to take full advantage of out-of-class language activities. Studies of students learning English as a foreign language show that learners tend to choose activities involving receptive skills such as listening and reading rather than productive skills such as speaking and writing (e.g., Inozu et al., 2010; Pickard, 1996; Zhang, 2010).

However, several other studies show that learners do not simply choose receptive language activities over productive language activities. Learners' preferences and external factors have been found to influence their choices as well. A study of German EFL students found that learners' interest also influence their choices of out-of-class English activities (Pickard, 1996). A study of Thai university students learning English found that students engaged in out-of-class English activities primarily for leisure purposes, such as watching movies or listening to music (Chusanachoti, 2009). Chusanachoti (2009) found that even though students were aware of the benefits of engaging in out-of-class English activities, they reported that they did not intentionally engage in out-of-class English activities for the purpose of learning English. They perceived improving their English as a secondary purpose. A study of Japanese EFL learners showed that pop culture influences learners' choices of out-of-class learning activities (Murray, 2008). This study found that learners chose cultural artifacts that were interesting and aligned with their learning goals, which in turn affected the activities they chose. For example, one learner in the study wanted to improve his oral skills. He chose to learn from his favorite American TV program because it contained current language usage. This decision led him to choose to use the DVD technology that allows him to first watch the show in Japanese and then in English. These findings suggest that there are internal and external factors involved in learners' out-of-class language learning practices.

Literature shows that media and technology impact adolescent development beyond entertainment purposes (Padilla-Walker, 2007). Adolescents are going through a period of changes in social relationships and identity formation. More often than not, adolescents turn to media and technology to learn about what is going on around them, how others perceive them, and what others expect of them. Given the high level of technology use and media exposure in adolescents, it is not surprising that technology and the media have great impact on adolescent learning as well.

In out-of-class contexts, students are free to choose to learn anything they want and how to learn it. Research shows that technology can provide great support for out-of-class language learning, especially in adolescents. A study of adolescent girls showed that using online communication benefits students' literacy practice (Chandler-Olcott & Mahar, 2003). Moreover, Black (2009) found that successful English-language learners can use multimedia popular culture and online communities to improve their English reading and writing skills. These findings suggest that for adolescents, technology could be one of the important components in their out-of-class learning.

## Learners' Perceptions

Several studies show that learners perceived engaging in out-of-class English activities to be helpful in improving their English skills (Chusanachoti, 2009; Inozu et al., 2010). Another study found that students perceived out-of-class English activities to be the most helpful in the area of vocabulary learning (Inozu et al., 2010). Chusanachoti's 2009 study also showed that students perceived out-of-class English activities to be helpful in improving both everyday and academic English. Egbert & Jessup (1996) found that learners' perceptions of the language learning environment is crucial in determining the type and amount of activities learners select.

These studies suggest that learners' perceptions of out-of-class activities are important in determining learners' participation in these activities, indicating a need for research about out-of-class English activities from learners' perspectives. However, there is a relatively small number studies that has examined learners' perspectives in depth. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring students' perspectives of out-of-class practices qualitatively.

## Factors Influencing Out-of-Class Language Learning

### Internal Factors

Motivation, undoubtedly, drives language learning. The motivation theory in language learning that integrates social contexts and L2 motivation is the *L2 motivational self-system* (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The *L2 motivational self-system* was proposed to widen the scope of L2 motivation theory and make it more suitable for the globalized language learning environment (Csiźer & Dörnyei, 2005). According to this theory, there are three components of the L2 self: ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience (Dörnyei, 2009). An ideal L2 self is considered a strong motivator in L2 learning because it consists of a desire to change from one's actual self to an ideal self that can use L2 proficiently. The ought-to L2 self refers to expectations that one feels one should meet as an L2 learner such as to pass an exam. This component is more extrinsic than the ideal L2 self. The ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self are future self-guides that could motivate language learners (Dörnyei, 2014). The last component is L2 learning experience, which is a component about experience in L2 learning such as the influence of the teacher, learning environment, peer learners, and so on.

Literature indicates that motivation and attitudinal factors are important in out-of-class language learning (e.g., Chusanachoti, 2009; Lai & Gu, 2011). A study of pop culture in English language learning showed that one of the reasons that the use of pop culture in out-of-class

15

setting works is that it enhances learners' motivation (Murray, 2008). One study of Thai college students showed that learners choose out-of-class activities based on personal interests and that learners found that the most useful activities in improving their English are activities they engage in most often (Chusanachoti, 2009). Research has consistently shown that motivated language learners engage in out-of-class language activities on a regular basis (e.g., Benson, 2001; Benson & Reinders, 2011; Hyland, 2004; Lai & Gu, 2011). These studies clearly show that internal factors can influence out-of-class English learning practices. The influences of external factors, however, are less clear. Therefore, this study focuses on the relationship between external factors and internal factors rather than considering these two factors separately.

**External Factors**

Research shows that external factors such as learners' social networks, social norms, and classroom learning also influence out-of-class language learning (Chusanachoti, 2009). A study of motivated Thai university students learning English found that family and friends were reported to be the most salient obstacle in engaging in out-of-class English activities. For instance, students chose to watch American movies dubbed in Thai or sing Thai karaoke songs instead of English because their families and friends preferred the Thai versions to English ones (Chusanachoti, 2009). Teachers and the classroom activities they choose have also been found to influence out-of-class language learning activities (Inozu et al., 2010). A study of university students in the United States learning a foreign language shows that teachers have an important role in encouraging out-of-class language activities (Bown, 2009). Research also shows that social factors can impact language learning motivation. For example, a study of Thai students learning English shows that learning activities that involve others can increase Thai students' intrinsic motivation (Schmidt & Savage, 1992).

The field of family language policy of second or minority languages shows the importance of language environment at home on children's language development. Family language policy is defined as "explicit and overt planning in relation to language use within home among family members" (Kendall, Fogle & Logan-Terry, 2008, p. 907). Parental beliefs and attitudes toward language learning determine their language choices at home, which then shape children's language development.  Literature suggests that family language policy is shaped by interactions between parents and children. As children become older, they become increasingly influential in shaping family language policy as well as their parents (Fogle & Kendall, 2013). Research in family language policy shows that external factors such as home language environment and parents' language policy are highly influential in shaping children's language development. Nonetheless, older children and adolescents also play a role in shaping their family language policies. This suggests that examining home language environment through children's perspectives might provide insights into how the home language environment is constructed and how it affects children's language development.

Several studies have shown that a learner's society and culture can significantly impact a learner's participation in out-of-class language learning activities. For example, a study of middle school students in China learning English as a foreign language demonstrated that teachers and parents have significant influences on the type, frequency, and quality of students' out-of-class English learning (Lai, Zhu, & Gong, 2014). Another study of Chinese university students revealed that the average English proficiency of a learner's peer group affects how a learner uses technology in out-of-class English activities (Zhang, 2010). These studies suggest that there is a need for research to consider the impacts of social and cultural factors on out-of-class English learning.

The connection between internal factors and external factors is also important and influential to language learning. Darvin and Norton's (2016) model of investment explains the relationship between learners' investment and their social identities. When a learner invests in a target language, he/she expects to gain cultural capital in return (Norton, 1995). The capital could be in many forms, such as future employment, sense of belonging to a community, and access to knowledge. Investment in learning a language is also an investment in one's own identities, which can change over time. In the context of learning English as a foreign language, the investment to learn English is connected to the imagined identity as a global citizen (Norton, 2015). In the digital age, technology affords flexibilities in using English in many social contexts, which influence learners' changing identities, which then affect investment in learning the target language. The concept of investment helps connect internal factors (investment) to external factors (social identities). This can help understand the relationship between individual learners and social factors.

## Sociocultural Theory

According to Vygotsky (1978), learning and development are rooted in interactions with the outside world. Therefore, any investigation of learning development should include sociocultural aspects of learning, such as social interactions, artifacts, cultural conditions, and tools. Trueba (1989) examined social interaction opportunities that are essential to learning in minority students, finding that looking at the interactional contexts in which minority students engage is helpful in understanding successes and failures of students' learning. He proposed a framework that examines four interactional contexts: community, school, home, and self. Students make use of their *funds of knowledge*, knowledge and cultural practices that households use to survive and create meaningful learning contexts (Moll, 1992; Moll & Greenberg, 1990).

18

Students learn by engaging in activities that they initiate or choose by themselves within a structure created by adults. The focus is on activities because students use funds of knowledge by participating in activities. Hence, the focus of this study is not only on how skilled students are in doing the activity, but also on the social matrix wherein students acquire such skills.

Bruner (1983) found that a child acquires language by interacting with adults. The subsequent interaction patterns the child forms with adults become routines through which the child communicates with the world. A child acquires language by first interacting with adults via formats and routines. Then, as the child develops his/her language skills, formats and routines become speech acts (e.g., requesting, naming) that the child can use in various situations other than the ones that he/she has learned them (Bruner, 1983).

These concepts guide this study, in terms of not only the activities that learners engage in, but also the formats and routines associated with the activities. While participating in a particular out-of-class English activity, learners may have to use certain formats and routines taught by teachers, parents, or peers, or that they learned via artifacts, such as books and audio recordings, in order to communicate with the outside world. Then, as the learners develop their language ability, they internalize these formats and routines and use them in other situations. For example, when learners first interact with a native speaker through a chat program, they may first use the language forms taught by the teacher in class such as, "Where are you from?" "How long have you been reading this book?" or "Have you come to Thailand?" In the beginning, the language forms they are using may be restricted to the forms she has learned before. As they develop their English language skills, learners internalize these formats and transforms them into their independent language repertoire. Learners are then able to use them in a wider range of situations.

Vygotsky (1978) proposed that the development of higher order cognitive functions cannot be examined out of context because cognitive function development is mediated by external stimuli. Therefore, it is essential to look at the origins of behaviors in order to understand the development of higher order psychological processes. This method is called the *genetic method*, which refers to examining a learner's history of learning experiences to reveal the origins and developmental paths of higher order cognitive functions. Moll and Greenberg (1990) also used the genetic method of looking at a learner's history to investigate the use of funds of knowledge. These examples show that examining a student's learning history can provide insight into how social and cultural factors have influenced the development of higher order cognitive functions, such as learning a foreign language.

*Mediation* is another sociocultural concept that guides this study. Interactions between an individual and the environment are mediated by artifacts, which can function as a material or symbolic mediator (Swain et al., 2011). A material mediator shapes interaction by making use of the artifact's physical properties, while a symbolic mediator shapes interaction by using symbols and signs. Learning a foreign language through out-of-class language activities involves interacting with the outside world, and these interactions are also mediated by artifacts involved in activities. For example, when a learner plays a role-playing game inspired by historical events, the interaction in which the game is communicated to the learner is mediated by the use of the computer. The computer is materially mediating the physical nature of the interaction (the learner has to sit down, look at the screen, and/or listen to the audio). The game communicates with the learner using English, which is the learner's foreign language. The English language is symbolically mediating the interactions between the game and the learner through human-created symbols to convey meanings. How this learner understands and responds to the game

20

depends on the type of English language used and the learner's level of English reading proficiency. The game also communicates with the learner using graphics and sound effects, which also impact how the learner understands and responds to the game.

Let us further say that this game uses many specialized words about ancient buildings and military units. When the learner encounters words he doesn't know, he may choose to look them up in the dictionary or guess from visual representations. The game itself mediates this interaction with the learner by using words that the learner doesn't know and by providing additional information about these words in visual forms. The game may invoke a different response from this learner if the game uses easier language or does not provide enough visual information for guessing. Moreover, the learner can respond only by clicking to select options that he wants. He cannot use voice or gesture because the computer mediating these interactions is limited by these constraints; instead, it provides the opportunity for him to read the texts, look at pictures and then click to select the desired option. This mediation also affects English language learning. In this interaction, the learner has opportunities to read English, but not listen to, write, or speak English. Hence, the extent to which the learner is learning English depends on how the artifacts in this interaction (the game, the computer, the type of English language) mediate the interactions between the game and the learner. This example shows that investigating the interactions between the learner and the world as well as how tools mediate the interactions can provide understandings of the language learning processes in out-of-class activities.

Vygotsky (1978) proposed that, if we want to examine emerging skills, we should consider the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD). The *zone of proximal development* refers to the distance between what a learner can do independently and what a learner can do with

assistance from more knowledgeable others. Vygotsky's idea of ZPD differs from the conventional meaning of development, which generally focuses on the learner's performance, as the ZPD focuses on the skills that are still in developmental processes. According to Vygotsky, what is in the ZPD today will become the actual development in the future. In order to investigate true development, we have to look at actual capacity and potential when assisted by others. This concept is important in guiding this study because when students are engaging in out-of-class English activities, they are assisted by inanimate objects (technology) or other people. Returning to the example above, examining the game that the learner chooses to play, how he responds to the game, and the kind of language used in the game can provide information about the learner's ZPD. For instance, the learner may first choose to play a game that uses easier language and provides abundant visual representations because he can play without overwhelming linguistic demands. As he gains more experience playing this game, he may choose to play a similar type of game that uses more difficult and specialized English language. In this case, the learner may choose a game suitable to his English ability. Thus, looking at his learning history and interviewing the learner can provide insights into how the ZPD affects the learner's choice of out-of-class activities.

The concept of the ZPD helps shape the idea that, in an examination of language development, actual linguistic ability may not change quickly, but the level or type of assistance that the student needs in order to perform the L2 task may change (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006b). Even in the case that the learner plays the same game for a long time, how he plays the game may change over time. For instance, the learner may ask his parents and older siblings for assistance with words and phrases in the game that he doesn't understand. His parent may teach him how to use an online dictionary. Subsequently, the learner no longer needs assistance

because he can use this online dictionary as his own English proficiency develops. His English proficiency then develops to the point where he understands all the language used in the game. In this example, the learner was first learning with assistance from others, and he moved on to being able to learn by himself. When he gets to the phase where he knows all the language in the game, his ZPD moves up. If he is still playing this game in the same way, engaging in this activity may no longer improve his language skills because the language skills required for the game are lower than his ZPD.

The concept of *regulation* is also helpful in examining the stages of development when engaging in out-of-class activities. Building upon the concept of ZPD, Lantolf and Thorne (2007) proposed three stages of developing self-regulation: object-regulation, other-regulation and self-regulation. *Object-regulation* happens when individuals have not yet mastered an activity. The second level is *other-regulation*, which happens when individuals try doing a new complex activity with the help of others. The highest level is *self-regulation*, which happens when individuals can do the activity independently. This concept allows me to examine data about changes of the ways students engage in out-of-class activities as they progress from beginner to advanced learners.

Another theory related to SCT that might be useful for this study is activity theory. Activity theory came from Vygotsky's work and was later developed by Leont'ev and Engeström (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006a). Activity is defined as "a socially and culturally meaningful activity that fulfills a basic biological or psychology or social need" (Swain et al., 2011, p. 99). Activity theory provides a way to analyze a person (subject), his/her goal (object) and mediational means of an activity simultaneously. Additionally, activity theory includes considerations of social influences (i.e., rules, community and division of labor) on an activity,

which allows us to analyze an activity with both individual and social factors together. Research in activity theory suggests that a tension or contradiction within or between system(s) allow for opportunities for learners to transform them into learning opportunities. In other words, a resolution of contradictions provides an opportunity for development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006b).

Activity theory offers a way to consider human activities as they are mediated by technologies and semiotic tools (language), communities, and sociohistorical influences. The focus on interactions of activity theory provides a means to analyze students' activities from how the activities connect with other social factors (Swain et al., 2011). It allows us to consider both individual and social factors, such as communities and division of labor, at the same time, which is helpful in examining the relationships between social factors and students' out-of-class English learning activities.

## The Context of Research: English Learning in Thai Society

### The Role of English in Thailand's Economy

Over 40% of Thailand's annual income comes from the tourism industry, either directly or indirectly (Loima & Vibulphol, June 2, 2014). In 2012, at least 12.4% of total employment in Thailand was related to tourism and at least 16.7% of GDP was attributed to the tourism industry (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2013). Thailand has a weakness in soft infrastructure in terms of international competitiveness because of low English proficiency in the population; comparative countries like Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam have long emphasized English language education (Runckel, 2012). The level of foreign language skill of the Thai people is considered to be one of the most significant weaknesses in Thai tourism competitiveness (Thai-AEC.com, 2013). The World Economic Forum report suggested that education in language and information communication technology (ICT) is an essential factor in

24

strengthening the human resources aspect of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) tourism sector (World Economic Forum, 2012). Thailand's tourism competitiveness can be strengthened by increasing the foreign language skills in this industry.

In Thailand, 42.7% of youth (aged 13-24) workers work in the agricultural sector (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2000). Other sectors of youth employments include technical workers, administration and executives, clerks, sales, transportation and communication, the craft industry, and the service industry. In 2012, youth unemployment was considered a significant problem in Thai socioeconomic situation (Youth Career Initiative, 2014). While there is no estimate of the percent of youth employment specific to the tourism industry, governmental and non-governmental organizations consider employment in tourism industry an important career option for youth. This can be seen from several initiatives initiated by governmental and non-governmental organizations to encourage youths to work in the tourism industry. For example, the Tourism Authority of Thailand is responsible for promoting the tourism industry and to support research on youth employment in the industry. An example of a non-governmental organization initiative is the Institut Européen de Coopération et de Développement (IECD) program called "Hospitality School for Vulnerable Young People in Thailand," which teaches Thai youth from the mountainous areas in the Northern provinces language skills (English and Thai) as well as professional skills for food, service, and accommodation in tourism industry (IECD, 2009).

**Status of the English Language in Thailand**

English is the most dominant foreign language in Thailand's media (Wongsothorn, Sukamolsun, Chinthammit, Ratanothayanonth & Noparumpa, 1996). A study of the linguistic landscape in Bangkok shows that English is the most used language after Thai (Huebner, 2006).

While in the past, English has been a way to communicate with native-speakers, English has recently become a language to communicate with other non-native speakers more than with native-speakers (Foley, 2005; Wongsothorn, Hiranburana & Chinnawongs, 2002).

English is the most commonly taught foreign language in Thailand. Compared to other foreign languages, English holds the status of the most important foreign language, as evidenced by English being categorized as a required subject in basic standard education, while other foreign languages are considered electives (Ministry of Education, 2008). Moreover, English proficiency is a part of the General Aptitude Test (GAT) in the national college admissions examination, which includes reading, writing, critical thinking, and problem solving, measured both in Thai and English (Office of Educational Council, 2012). This shows that, in the Thai education system, English is considered a basic skill (Foley, 2005). Nonetheless, English use in Thailand outside academia and the tourism sector remains low (Fitzpatrick, 2011).

**Expectations of High School Students in English Proficiency**

According to Thai educational standards, 12th grade graduates should be able to use English to communicate in daily life and to conduct research using a variety of informational sources (Ministry of Education, 2008). Educational standards from the Ministry of Education focus mostly on practical functions such as reading manuals, understanding news and researching for information rather than integrating with native speakers. Despite this focus on practical goals, a study of Thai college students in three Thai universities showed that the majority of Thai students cannot use English to complete daily life tasks, such as buying things in a department store or ordering a meal (Koul, Roy, Kaewkuekool, & Ploisawaschai, 2009). This indicates that many of Thai high school graduates have not passed the standards for English learning set by the Ministry of Education.

**Standardized Tests Show Low English Proficiency in Thai Students**

Despite having been compulsory for Thai students for a long time, English proficiencies of Thai people, as measured by standardized tests such as TOEFL and TOEIC, remain low compared to other Southeast Asian countries (Khamkhien, 2010). In 2016, the average TOEFL score of Thais was 78, which was lower than the average TOEFL scores in Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesian, Singapore, and the Philippines (Educational Testing Service, 2017). The 2016 Education First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) shows a similar result. Thailand ranks 56th out of 72nd countries and is categorized as "very low proficiency," which is the lowest category on the EF EPI (Education First, 2016). While this ranking is still above Cambodia and Laos, it is far behind other countries in Southeast Asia. Singapore is considered to be in the "very high proficiency" category. Malaysia and the Philippines are in the "high proficiency" group, while Vietnam and Indonesian are in the "moderate proficiency" group. According to Thai national tests from 2009-2011, among four core subjects (Thai, English, science, and math) Thai students scored the lowest in English, with an average of 28.34 out of 100 points (Saiyasombut, 2012). These results show that the English development of Thai students is low both in an absolute sense as well as comparatively with other nations.

Existing literature shows that the potential factors contributing to the failure of English language education in Thailand are unqualified teachers, large class sizes with mixed proficiencies among students, and the lack of opportunities to use English outside the classroom (Dhanasobhon, 2006). A quantitative study of high school English teachers in several provinces in Thailand found that from teacher's perspectives, the main obstacles for improving English learning in Thailand is the lack of perseverance in practicing English and the lack of opportunities to use English outside the classroom (Noom-ura, 2013).

# Chapter 3: Methods

The purpose of this study is to explore EFL students' out-of-class English learning practices. Understanding these practices can help educators be better informed in supporting EFL students' learning. This study aims to address the following research questions:

1) How do high school EFL students describe their English learning trajectories?

2) What are the roles of social factors on high school EFL students' English learning?

   a) What are the social factors high school EFL students perceive as influential to their learning trajectories and out-of-class English learning practices?

   b) How do these social factors influence English learning trajectories?

   c) How do these social factors influence out-of-class English learning practices?

3) What are the characteristics of out-of-class English practices that students perceive as helpful to their English learning?

4) What do students perceive as functions of out-of-class English learning practices?

## Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research methods were used for three main reasons. First, there was no measure, scale, or survey that was readily available to capture the development of learners' out-of-class language learning activities for high school students, and most of the previous research on this topic had been conducted on college students or adult learners. While existing literature from adult learners could inform the general direction of this study, it was not sufficient for identifying specific variables of this phenomenon for high school students. Second, qualitative research is suitable for understanding how people interpret a phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). Since learners' perceptions greatly impact English learning, it is crucial to understand their perceptions of their learning (Tse, 2000). Most existing research used survey methods which

limited students' expressions of their perceptions on the subject. Using a qualitative research design helps provide a deeper understanding of students' perceptions on out-of-class and overall English learning. Lastly, a qualitative research approach allows researchers to understand cultural-specific information such as opinions and social contexts of a particular population in the phenomenon (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005, p. 1). Since one of the goals of this study is to identify and understand social contexts that influence out-of-class English practices, qualitative research is the most appropriate choice. Table 1 shows types of data used to answer research questions.

*Table 1*

Data used to answer each research question

| Research Question | Activity Log | Photo | Interview | Observation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) How do high school EFL students describe their English learning trajectories? | | | x | |
| 2) What are the roles of social factors on high school EFL students' English learning?<br>a) What social factors do high school EFL students perceive as influential to their learning trajectories?<br>b) How do the social factors influence English learning trajectories?<br>c) How do the social factors influence out-of-class English learning practices? | x | x | x | x |
| 3) What are the characteristics of out-of-class English practices that students perceive as helpful to their English learning? | x | x | x | x |
| 4) What do students perceive as functions of out-of-class English learning practices? | | | x | x |

**Overview of Research Design**

| Phase 1 N = 45 | |
|---|---|
| | Activity log and photo documentation |
| | ↓ |
| | Interview |
| | ↓ |
| | Data analysis |

| Phase 2 n = 4 | |
|---|---|
| | Observation |
| | ↓ |
| | Data analysis |
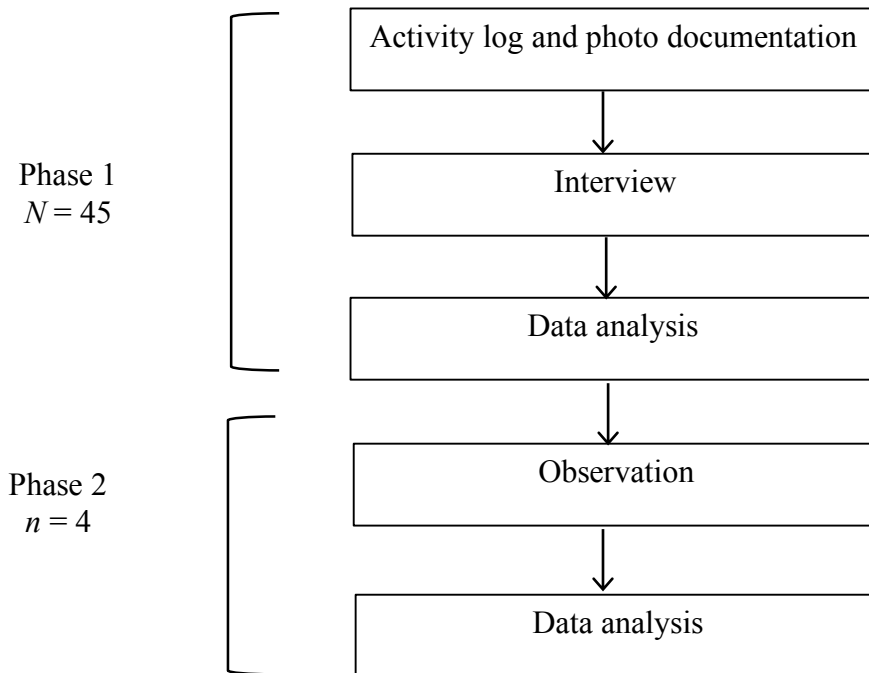
*Figure 1*. Overview of research design.

This study was divided into two phases (see Figure 1). For Phase 1, I purposefully selected 45 students, in which students were instructed to document out-of-class English activities by filling out activity logs and taking photos for one week. Then I interviewed individual students about their English learning histories, current English learning practices, and reflections on their English learning, with a special focus on their out-of-class learning activities. The interview data combined with activity logs and photos were analyzed recursively through several rounds of coding. Then in Phase 2 I conducted observations with four students from Phase 1 to gain in-depth information about students' out-of-class language learning practices.

**Research Sample**

A purposive sampling was used in this study. To obtain the most relevant information, selecting information-rich cases is suitable (Merriam, 2009). Information-rich cases refer to cases, in this study, individual students, that can provide large amounts of information for the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002). Information-rich cases for this study were students who highly engage in out-of-class English activities. In order to recruit a sufficient number of participants, I employed snowball sampling, wherein participants were asked to refer their acquaintances as possible research participants.

Participants who are currently involved in the phenomenon of interest tend to yield dynamic and robust information (Seidman, 2013). Literature shows that language development is dynamic and important during adolescence, which is when learners gain a significant amount of knowledge in various linguistic and discourse characteristics (Bailey & Orellana, 2014). Therefore, in order to examine the phenomenon of learning English outside classroom, adolescents seem to be the group that is the most likely to yield important information.

Since this study examines English language learning as it occurs in social interactions in out-of-class contexts, Bangkok was chosen as a research site because English is easily accessible. Participants from this context were not intended to be representative of all high school students in Thailand; rather, the goal of selecting this group of students was to investigate how social and cultural factors impact students' out-of-class English learning activities when there were ample interactions with the outside world in English. In Bangkok, there are several prestigious and academically competitive public high schools. One prestigious high school was selected because it is well-known for providing good English language instruction. Students in this school were more likely to engage in out-of-class learning activities because they had

resources and support. Students from this school were appropriate for this study because they could help provide information about students' out-of-class English learning experiences and the factors that positively or negatively affected their out-of-class English learning. The research site was limited to one school in order to decrease other confounding factors such as school curriculum, teacher quality, school funding, and the level of support for English language learning.

The target population for this study was Thai 10th grade students who were learning English as a foreign language. Students from a single high school in Thailand during the academic year 2014-2015 were asked to participate in the study. Tenth grade students were chosen to be in this study because by the time students are in 10th grade, they usually have had at least nine years of experience in learning English in school. Moreover, students in the 10th grade were less likely to be narrowly focused on college entrance examinations than 11th and 12th grade students. Studying 10th grade students allowed for the examination of their general behavior with fewer effects of test preparation activities.

The sample was of limited variation in order to allow for in-depth study of Thai high school students engaging in out-of-class English activities in the context of the Thai major city with abundant English learning resources. In order to focus on a particular phenomenon in a specific context, limited variation of cases is desirable since it allows intensive analyses of the specific phenomenon (Bazeley, 2013).

All participants in the study had to meet specific selection criteria. All participants:

- were 10th grade students learning English as a foreign language,
- were native speakers of Thai,
- started learning English prior to or during the first grade.

**Contextual Information**

The Thai education system is structured as follows: two to three years in kindergarten, beginning at age three, followed by six years in elementary school, and grades 7-12 in secondary school. The first semester usually starts in middle of May and lasts until the beginning of October. The second semester starts in November and finishes in March. Elementary and secondary schools are mandatory for all Thai children and are available for free at public schools. Elementary school grades are called *Prathom suksa 1-6* (P1-P6) and are equivalent to grades 1-6 in the United States. Elementary grades are commonly split between lower and upper elementary: lower elementary is P1-P3, while upper elementary is P4-P6. Secondary grades are called *Mattayom suksa 1-6* (M1-M6). These are also upper and lower divisions: lower secondary grades are M1-M3; upper secondary grades are M4-M6. Primary and secondary schools are usually in separate physical locations. Most secondary schools include M1-M6 except for a few specialized high school that only offer M4-M6. Thai children start P1 at 6 -7 years old and finish M6 at 17-18 years old. From this point in this study on, lower secondary school (M1-M3) will be called *middle school*, while upper secondary school will be called *high school*.

Middle school (M1-M3) are general studies, meaning all students study mostly the same main subjects, except for a few electives. After M3, students can choose to go to a vocational school or a regular high school. If students decide to stay in a regular high school, they have to choose which track of study they want to go to. The first track is science-math-focused. The second track is math-focused. The third track is language-focused. These tracks can have several variations dependent on individual schools. Requirements for entering specific tracks are usually grades of specific subjects in middle school (M1-M3). The tracks that students are study in also limit their choices of field of study in college admissions applications. In general, the first track

33

offers the most options in college admissions as it enables students to apply for all science-related majors. As for perceived social status of middle and high schools in Thailand, public schools are generally considered in higher regard and to be more prestigious than private schools. In general, well-known public schools are more difficult to get into than private schools.

The school selected for this study provides instruction from M1-M6. There were approximately 3,014 students at the time the study was conducted. The school has 61 classrooms and 121 full-time teachers. The school offers several programs with different emphases of study, including some slightly different programs than regular public schools because with the curricula included several pilot programs from the Ministry of Education. However, what I present here is based on the important factor of this study, language of instruction.

Table 2

*Summary of School Programs at the Research Site*

| Program | Language of instruction | M1-3 Classes | M4-6 Classes and tracks | Tuition | Class size (students/class) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thai Program (TP) | Thai | 1-6 | 1-8 Science 10 Math 11-12 Language | Fully subsidized | 45-50 |
| English for integrated Studies (EIS) | English for math, science, computer and English | 7-8 | 9 Math | Partially subsidized | 35-40 |
| English Program (EP) | English | 9-12 | 13 Math & Language 14-15 Science | Not subsidized | 25-30 |

*Note.* High school programs have three tracks: science-focused, math-focused, and language-focused. In the language-focused track, students choose among French, German, Chinese or Japanese as the third language.

Another piece of important contextual information is my relationship with the research site and students there. The research site was the school I attended during middle and high school. During that time, only regular or Thai program (TP) classes were offered. The head

34

teacher of the English program (EP) was the teacher that taught me during M5-M6 (grades 11-12). I knew none of the other English teachers prior to the data collection. At the beginning of the data collection, my plan was to collect data only from students in the TP. When the head of the EP requested that I teach an English writing class in the EP because one of their English teachers quit unexpectedly, I agreed to help out. As data collection and initial analysis progressed, it became necessary to collect data from the EP students as well. To prevent any potential bias from my conflicting roles of teacher and researcher, I only contacted the EP students for research purposes after all the instruction and grading had been finalized.

## Demographic Information

A total of 45 students participated in the study. Thirty-three participants (73%) were female, while 12 (27%) were male. There were 22 students from the Thai Program (TP) and 23 from the English Program (EP). The average age of participants was 15.67 years old. The majority of students used to learn or are currently learning other foreign languages beside English ($n$=34 or 76%). The education level of the fathers of most students was a 2-year college or higher, including 4-year college, master, doctoral degree, and professional degrees such as medical doctors or lawyers ($n$=35 or 78%). Similarly, the level of education of mothers of most participants was a 2-year college or higher ($n$=35 or 78%). The majority of students ($n$=33 or 73%) had never lived abroad for a significant amount of time (longer than two months). Some students have lived abroad short-term, mostly during the summer holiday ($n$= 11 or 24%). Only one student had lived abroad long-term (one year) in a country where English is not a main language of communication.

As there seemed to be substantial differences between students in Thai and English programs, the demographic information of students in each program was calculated. The

35

majority of students in the TP have never lived abroad (*n*=17). Five students in the TP had stayed

abroad for less than two months. Similarly, the majority of students in the EP have never lived

abroad (*n*=16). Six EP students had lived abroad for less than two months. One EP student had

lived abroad for one year. Concerning learning other foreign languages besides English, more TP

students were learning other languages than EP students. Twelve TP students were currently

learning other language(s). Three TP students used to learn other language(s), and seven have

never learned any other languages. In contrast, the majority of EP students used to learn other

language(s) (*n*=11), while eight were currently learning. Four EP students have never learned

other language(s). In addition, more EP students were going to be exchange students abroad for

one academic year following their grade 10: seven EP students were going abroad as exchange

students, while only two TP students were.

Students in the TP and EP also rated their English proficiencies differently. EP students

tended to rate their proficiencies higher than TP students (Table 3). The two groups of students

showed more differences in speaking and writing skills than listening and reading skills. Parental

education levels of EP and TP students are shown in Table 4.

Table 3

*Participants' Self-reported English Proficiency (N=45)*

| Self-reported Proficiency | n (%) | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Thai Program (*n*=22) | English Program (*n*=23) | Total (*N*=45) |
| **Listening** | | | |
| 1 Beginner | 1 (5%) | 0 | 1 (2%) |
| 2 Lower Intermediate | 3 (14%) | 2 (9%) | 5 (11%) |
| 3 Intermediate | 13 (59%) | 12 (52%) | 25 (56%) |
| 4 Upper Intermediate | 5 (23%) | 7 (30%) | 12 (27%) |
| 5 Advanced | 0 | 2 (9%) | 2 (4%) |
| **Speaking** | | | |
| 1 Beginner | 2 (9%) | 0 | 2 (4%) |
| 2 Lower Intermediate | 7 (32%) | 3 (13%) | 10 (22%) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 Intermediate | 8 (36%) | 13 (57%) | 21 (47%) |
| 4 Upper Intermediate | 5 (23%) | 6 (26%) | 11 (24%) |
| 5 Advanced | 0 | 1 (4%) | 1 (2%) |
| **Reading** | | | |
| 1 Beginner | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 Lower Intermediate | 1 (5%) | 1 (4%) | 2 (4%) |
| 3 Intermediate | 15 (68%) | 14 (61%) | 29 (64%) |
| 4 Upper Intermediate | 6 (27%) | 6 (26%) | 12 (27%) |
| 5 Advanced | 0 | 2 (9%) | 2 (4%) |
| **Writing** | | | |
| 1 Beginner | 2 (9%) | 0 | 2 (4%) |
| 2 Lower Intermediate | 10 (45%) | 6 (26%) | 16 (36%) |
| 3 Intermediate | 9 (41%) | 11 (48%) | 20 (44%) |
| 4 Upper Intermediate | 1 (5%) | 6 (26%) | 7 (16%) |
| 5 Advanced | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table 4

*Participants' Parental Education Level (N=45)*

| | Father *n(%)* | | | Mother *n (%)* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Education Level | Thai Program (*n=22*) | English Program (*n=23*) | Total (*N=45*) | Thai Program (*n=22*) | English Program (*n=23*) | Total (*N=45*) |
| Primary | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 (14%) | 1 (4%) | 4 (9%) |
| Secondary | 3 (14%) | 0 | 3 (7%) | 0 | 1 (4%) | 1 (2%) |
| Vocational school | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 (4%) | 1 (2%) |
| Two-year college | 2 (9%) | 3 (13%) | 5 (11%) | 3 (14%) | 2 (9%) | 5 (11%) |
| Four-year college | 10 (45%) | 8 (35%) | 18 (40%) | 8 (36%) | 7 (30%) | 15 (33%) |
| Master | 4 (18%) | 7 (30%) | 11 (24%) | 4 (18%) | 8 (35%) | 12 (27%) |
| Doctorate | 0 | 1 (4%) | 1 (2%) | 0 | 1 (4%) | 1 (2%) |
| Professional school | 1 (5%) | 0 | 1 (2%) | 2 (9%) | 0 | 2 (9%) |
| Unknown | 2 (9%) | 4 (17%) | 6 (13%) | 2 (9%) | 2 (9%) | 4 (9%) |

**Data Collection and Analysis Methods**

Using multiple data collection methods and triangulation allows for in-depth

understanding of the phenomenon. Different sources of data provide complementary and

confirmative evidence (Creswell, 2007). Thus, the data of this study was from in-depth

interviews, activity logs, photos, and observations. The study was divided into two phases: Phase 1 involved data collection from interviews, activity logs, and photos from each of the 45 participants, and Phase 2 involved data collection from home observations of four selected participants.

**Phase 1 Data Collection**

In the first one-on-one meeting with the researcher, each student received verbal instructions and a paper copy of the data collection protocol (see Appendix A). Students were asked to keep an activity log and photo documentation of their out-of-class English activities for one week. The goal of using the activity log and photo was to capture detailed and complementary information about out-of-class English activities as they happened and to be used as elicitation prompts for the interview. The daily logs were useful in examining learners' out-of-class activities because when students recorded the activities in real-time, they were less likely to forget to put down their activities. Previous studies on out-of-class language learning have used activity logs or diaries successfully to obtain information about students' out-of-class activity practices (Chusanachoti, 2009; Hyland, 2004). The activity log (see Appendix B) was in a pen-and-paper format: students were given a worksheet to record simple details about any out-of-class English activities that they did. Students were asked to record these activities within one day of doing them. Students were also asked to use their camera phones to take pictures or screenshots of out-of-class English activities. The photos revealed more details about the recorded activity. The photos were helpful because the activity name written by the student in the log sometimes meant something different for me as a researcher as it did for them as a student.

In Phase 1, a total of 309 photos and 92 pages of activity logs were collected. The activity logs and the photos provided complementary information. The photos ensured that I understood

what the students meant in the log, and the activity log provided information about people involved in the activity when photos might not be able to. The activity log provided general information about the place where the activity took place, while the photo provided further details about the place. The activity log provided information about the percentages of English and Thai used in the activity, as reported by the students (see Figure 2), and screenshots and photos provided additional information about how the languages were actually used in the activity, for instance, a chat history or a game interface (see Figure 3). This information was helpful in depicting how students were using the two languages differently for the activity. Additionally, both activity logs and photos were used as elicitation prompts during the interviews. The activity logs and photos helped me ask more details about students' activities. The activity log and the photo documentation protocol was piloted with two high school EFL students before using it with a large group of students.

| วันเวลาที่จดบันทึก | | วันเวลาที่ทำกิจกรรม | | ชื่อกิจกรรม | สถานที่ | กับใคร | เครื่องมือ | เปอร์เซนต์ของภาษาที่ใช้ | | การบ้าน/งาน | อื่นๆ (Notes) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| วัน | เวลา | วัน | เวลา | | | | | English | Thai | | |
| 20 พ.ย. 2014 | 20.20 | 20 พ.ย. 2014 | 6.30-7.30น | ฟัง เพลงสากล | ระหว่างทางไ โรงเรียน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 9.00-9.50 | เล่น PIFA 15 | ห้องเรียน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 18.50-19.10 | ฟังเพลง สากล | ระหว่างทาง กลับบ้าน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| 21 พ.ย. 2014 | 22.00 | 21 พ.ย. 2014 | 6.30-7.30น | ฟังเพลง สากล | ระหว่างทาง ไปโรงเรียน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 15.00-15.50 | เล่น Infinity blade2 เล่น Injustice | ห้องเรียน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 19.00-20.00 | ฟังเพลง สากล | ระหว่างทาง กลับบ้าน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 20.30-22.00 | ฟัง BBC 1 Radio | ที่บ้าน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| 22 พ.ย. 2014 | 21.00 | 22 พ.ย. 2014 | 9.00-11.00 | ฟัง MET 107 FM | ที่บ้าน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 11.00-12.00 | ฟัง BBC 1 Radio | ที่บ้าน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 12.00-13.00 | ฟัง MET 107FM | ระหว่างทาง ไปธรรมศาสตร์ | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 12.30-13.00 | อ่าน Whole-Earth Structure & Plate tectonics | ระหว่างทาง ไปธรรมศาสตร์ | คนเดียว | ชีท | 100 | - | / | |
| | | | 18.00-19.00 | ฟัง MET 107 FM | ระหว่างทาง กลับบ้าน | คนเดียว | โทรศัพท์ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 20.30-21.00 | อ่าน Hunger Games Mockingjay | ที่บ้าน | คนเดียว | หนังสือ | 100 | - | - | |
| 23 พ.ย. 2014 | | 23 พ.ย. 2014 | 10.00-13.30 | ฟังเพลง& ออกกำลังกาย | ที่ Fitness First Rama 9 | กลุ่มคนออกกำลังกาย | จักรยาน/combat | 80 | 20 | - | |
| | | | 15.00-16.30 | อ่าน หนังสือ ที่ Asiabook | Rama 9 | คนเดียว | หนังสือ | 100 | - | - | |
| | | | 18.00-19.00 | ฟังเพลง | ที่บ้าน | คนเดียว | Ipad | 100 | - | - | |

1/3

*Figure 2.* The first page of Ake's activity log. Used with permission.
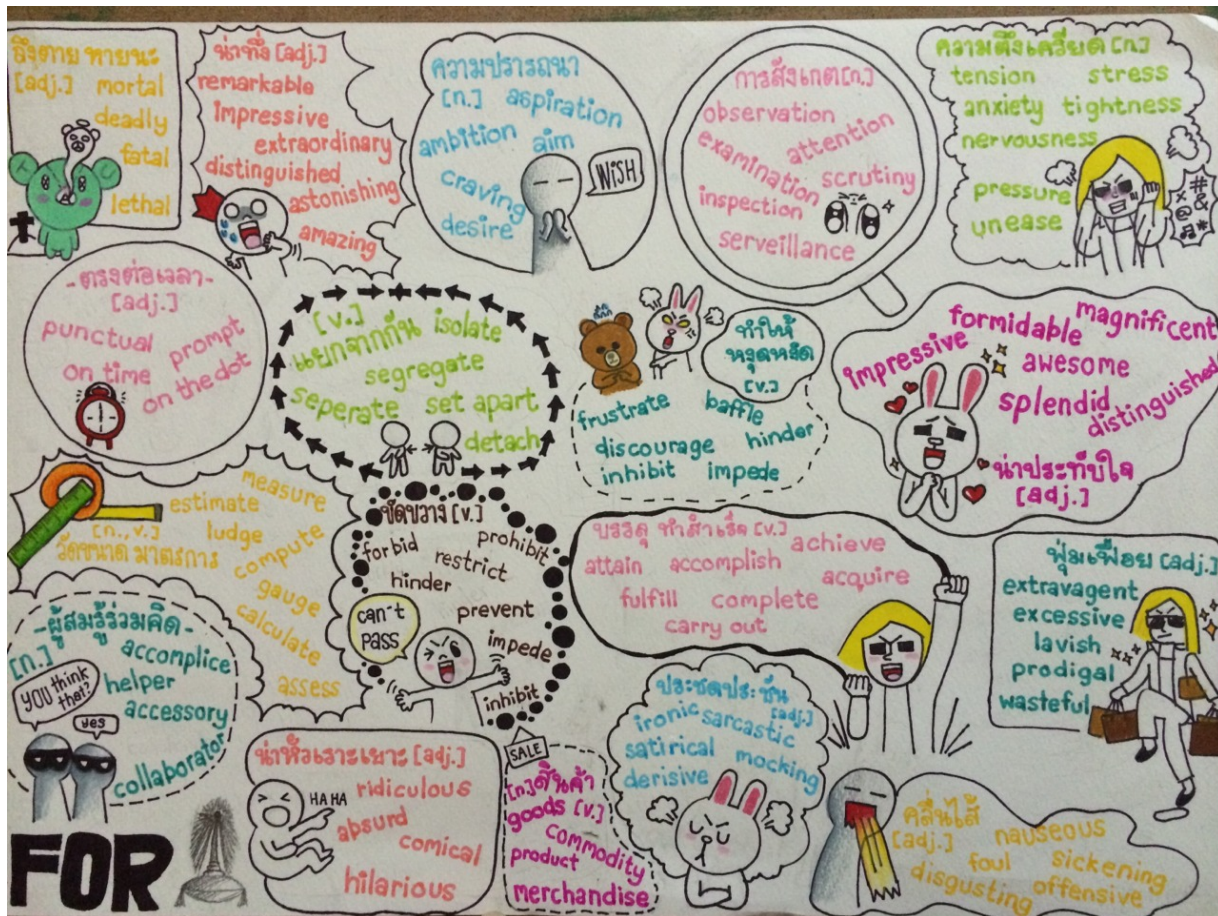
*Figure 3.* A photo of Max's note from a self-sponsored study. Used with permission.

As a recruitment strategy, I entered English classrooms with permission from teachers to inform students about the study and ask for volunteer participants. Interested students were given information sheets, assent and consent forms. I came back to the classroom about one week after the initial meeting to collect documents from potential participants. At the time of the data collection, there were 15 M4 [grade 10] classrooms at the school. The number of students for each class ranged from 35-50 students. I entered all 15 classrooms to inform students about the study, resulting in 51 students providing initial verbal consents. However, six students later decided to withdraw from the study because of scheduling conflicts.

After obtaining written consent forms from students and their guardians, students were contacted individually to set up an initial one-on-one meeting for me to go over the activity log

and photo documentation protocol. Each student was given a form to fill out with the date, time (begin-finish), activity, and with whom they did the activity (alone, family, friends, etc.). I reviewed the activity logs prior to the interview process so that I could use the logs as a point of reference to help facilitate interviews. The daily logs helped reduce the likelihood that students would forget to mention some activities during their interview. A paper format of the activity log was selected because it was convenient for students.

Then each student was scheduled for a one-on-one semi-structured interview. Students decided the time, date and place for interviews. During the interview, I used the activity log and the photo documentation as elicitation prompts. The interviews were audio recorded and lasted from 30 to 75 minutes, depending on students. Interviews were in the learners' native language of Thai because most Thai high school students were not fluent enough in English to do an interview. By allowing learners to answer in their native language, I was able to get richer and more meaningful data than what would be obtained by having learners use a foreign language.

The interviews were semi-structured in nature. The interview protocol was adapted from Seidman's three-interview series for phenomenological studies. Seidman (2013) proposed a three-step interview process as a method to capture the subjective experience of participants and what meanings participants make of the experience. Interview one is about focused life history, interview two is about the details of the experience, and interview three is about participants' reflections on the meaning of the experience. This kind of interview is generally conducted three times over a certain period of time. However, with the limitations of funding and access to students, the interviews in this study were conducted only once for each participant. The steps remained in the same order as proposed by Seidman (2013). The interview protocol was divided into three parts (see Appendix C). The first part of the interview focused on the participant's life

history. The student was asked to describe his/her English learning experience up to the present. The second part was about details of English learning experience. At this stage, each participant was asked about the details of learning experience, including out-of-class activities, rather than his/her opinions about them. The final step of the interview focused on each participant's reflections on the experience. The student was asked to provide opinions and reflections on his/her English learning experience.

During the last section of the interview, I asked for available information about English proficiency, for instance, the national exam score, an English class score/grade, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores, or the Thai university English proficiency test. Students were also asked to rate their own English proficiency in four areas (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and rate how much they liked learning English at school and using English as a communication tool (see Appendix D). This was included in the last part of the interview in order to reduce the effects on the responses that might arise from asking these questions.

**Phase 1 Data Analysis**

All the data was organized and coded using Nvivo 10 software. Interview audio recordings were transcribed. In additional to using activity logs and photos as elicitation prompts, they were used to triangulate information obtained during the interviews. For example, the three most helpful out-of-class activities that students mentioned in the interview were verified by the activity logs and/or photos. Additionally, the activity log and photos of each student were summarized into a chart as a data organizing tool. The summary chart helped me orient myself to see each student's "big picture" of his/her learning experiences before conducting coding on the transcripts in detail.

Because all of the activity logs and interviews were conducted in Thai, I had to make a decision whether to translate to English before or after analysis. Bazeley (2013) suggested that analyzing in the original language is preferred if analyzing in the foreign language leads to shallow interpretation. In order to capture students' perspectives as much as possible, I decided to analyze the data in Thai. Later I translated excerpts of Thai-language interviews into English for a reporting purpose. Only students' interviews used in reporting the findings were translated.

The data was analyzed in three rounds of coding. The first round of coding was open coding. The purpose of open coding is to bring forth themes in the data (Neuman, 2009). The open coding process for this study followed four guidelines proposed by Strauss (1987): 1) ask the data specific research questions, 2) scrutinize the data, 3) write ideas or thoughts about the data while coding, and 4) do not assume relevant factors unless there is a data to support. I conducted open coding by reading the data, and highlighting and labeling it with codes based on my understanding and interpretation. All the coding was done manually as I read through each interview, but all codes were stored and organized using Nvivo 10 software. In this round of coding, I used three types of coding concurrently. The first type was *in vivo coding* or *verbatim coding*, which uses participants' words as codes. This is appropriate for research that wants to focus on participants' voice (Saldaña, 2013). This type of coding generated a set of codes mostly in Thai, as they came from students' words. Another type of coding I used was *structural coding*, which is based on topics of inquiry or research questions (Saldaña, 2013). The last type of coding in the first round was *descriptive coding*, which uses words or short phrases to summarize the essence of a section of transcripts (Saldaña, 2013). During this process, key words and phrases emerged from the data. These codes were then sorted into piles and each pile was given a theme name (Bernard, 2011). In the beginning, codes were sorted into general themes first, with more

themes and sub-themes added later. The validity of the themes was checked by having another expert code a section of the data independently, as suggested by Bernard (2011). In this study, I asked my colleague, who has a master's degree in teaching English and is an English lecturer at a university in Thailand, to code a portion of the data. How my colleague organized the data into themes was compared to mine. Any disparities were discussed and adjustments were made to the themes. Then I wrote a description for each theme. This round of coding resulted in a coding scheme with 18 major themes and a total of 107 codes.

Once the keywords, phrases, and themes were extracted in the first cycle of coding, the connections among these themes were developed through the second cycle coding. In this coding cycle, the focus was on comparing codes and themes more than the original data (Neuman, 2009). Bernard (2011) suggested *memoing*, which is writing down thoughts while reading through the transcripts, as a way to accomplish this step. Memos were kept throughout the data collection and analysis. Keeping memos helped me see connections between themes as I was conducting the second cycle of coding. At this coding cycle, contextual factors influencing out-of-class learning practices and commonalities in students' profiles emerged. Two rounds of coding also showed that one common thread across all participants was their English learning trajectories. Therefore, I used two processes to analyze students' learning trajectories: *time-ordered matrix* and *growth gradient*. A time-ordered matrix presents when particular events occurred, while a growth gradient process creates a graphic representation illustrating qualities of changes over time (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). For the time-ordered matrix, I created a chart for each student based on time intervals (PreK, P1-3, P4-6, M1-3, and M4) the student used to describe his/her learning experience. Then I noted the student's specific experiences, interactions, and emotions as described in the interview in the corresponding time intervals. For

the growth gradient process, I created a semi-formal chart of an English learning trajectory based on the student's perspective on the Y axis and the time intervals on the X axis. I, then, noted specific events on the learning trajectory based on time intervals. These two processes helped me contextualize students' learning trajectories better and helped me identify influential social factors. With a better understanding of social factors in relation to learning trajectories, the coding scheme was adjusted. The coding scheme from this round of coding consisted of 10 major themes and a total of 71 codes.

For the third round of coding, I revised the coding scheme based on identified contextual factors (e.g., interactions with others, social structure, and home environment) and students' profile patterns. Then I recoded the data and conducted an inter-coder reliability check by calculating the percentage agreement. To accomplish this, I asked the same colleague who was a part of theme validity check to code 25% of the data independently. We discussed the disparities in our coding, which helped me adjust coding schemes and coded data. The initial inter-coder reliability check resulted in 65% agreement. After the adjustments of coding schemes, the percentage agreement improved to 87% agreement. At this stage, using Nvivo 10 was helpful because I could go back and made adjustments to coded data, specifically on the parts that caused the disparities between two coders without having to recode all the data. The final coding scheme had eight major themes (see Appendix E). Appendix F shows examples of interview excerpts for codes from the final coding scheme. Appendix G shows an example of how each interview transcript was coded.

**Phase 2 Data Collection**

Detailed observations provide useful information in understanding the contexts of events (Patton, 2002). Phase 1 informed me that two major factors played a role in the success of using out-of-class practices to improve English learning: 1) how students do activities, and 2) the influences of other people. Thus, the goal of Phase 2 was to observe how students do activities and how they interact with people around them in real-life.

Phase 1 also informed me that students that are likely to be information-rich cases in these two areas are students who succeed in using out-of-class practices to improve their English learning and have ample interactions with others that students deemed influential to their learning. Students from Phase 1 were rated using the following procedure to determine their eligibility for Phase 2.

First, I excluded students who indicated that they were not willing to be contacted for Phase 2 and students who were currently studying abroad. The number of students in this group was ten. This left 35 students eligible for Phase 2.

Next, I examined a summary of interview and activity log and interview transcripts of each student for three criteria:

1) Level of detail for specific out-of-class activities, which appeared in the summary of the most helpful activities from the whole group and from what individual students mentioned as helpful for him/her. The scale for evaluating these summaries ranged from 1 to 10, with 1 being no detail was provided on the activity and 10 being full specific details were provided on the activity.

2) Interesting details about specific activities and other people's influences. The scale for evaluation was also from 1 to 10.

The percentage which the student attributed the roles of out-of-class activities to his/her current English skill. Please note that for a few students this information was not available as this question was added shortly after Phase 1 data collection had started.

Next, I excluded some students based on these criteria:

1) The level of detail for specific out-of-class activities was rated as equal to or less than five.

2) No noteworthy details about out-of-class activities and other people's influences were included.

3) The percentage which the student attributed the roles of out-of-class activities to his/her current English skill was equal to or less than 50%.

4) The student recorded fewer than four types of out-of-class activities in activity log.

This left 20 students eligible for Phase 2. All of them were contacted via phone, resulting in six students (five female and one male) giving initial verbal consent to participate in the next part of the study. The reason that only one male student consented to home observation might be the gender mismatch between the researcher and the participant. Male students might not have felt comfortable having a female researcher visit their home. The scheduled observation sessions started were scheduled between March 29 and May 5, 2016. All students were on a summer break during this time. Two students who gave initial verbal consent later dropped out due to conflicting schedules. This resulted in four female participants in Phase 2. Each participant was observed for seven to ten hours arranged in two 3- to 5-hour sessions. The time between the two observations ranged from one day to two weeks depending on students' schedules. After obtaining consent, I visited each student at the places where she engaged in out-of-class English activities and took detailed observation notes. Some audio recordings and photos related to

activities during the observations were also collected per students' permissions. The fact that all participants in Phase 4 were female might generate gender biases when interpreting the data. Therefore, it is important to keep this limitation in mind when interpreting the findings.

The observation period was from March 29th to May 5th, 2016, during the Thai summer break for all students. Detailed information about Phase 2 participants and observations is shown in Table 5. I used a Phase 2 observation note form (Appendix H) and a notebook to record field notes.

Table 5

*Details of Phase 2 Participants*

| ID | Name | Program | Gender | Activities observed | Observation Date | Place |
|----|------|---------|--------|--------------------|------------------|-------|
| 07 | June | Thai Program | Female | Watch movies<br>Do homework<br>Study vocabulary<br>Watch TV shows<br>Listen to music | 4/7/16<br>5/5/16 | Home |
| 25 | Fah | English Program | Female | Authentic communication<br>Watch movies<br>Use the computer | 4/1/16<br>4/8/16 | Home |
| 34 | Vee | English Program | Female | Study vocabulary<br>Do homework<br>Read fiction<br>Browse media | 4/26/16<br>4/27/16 | Home<br>Mall |
| 43 | Koi | English Program | Female | Listen to music<br>Use the computer<br>Read online articles | 3/29/16<br>4/21/16 | Father's office |

**Phase 2 Data Analysis**

The main data for Phase 2 consists of field notes. Audio was recorded and photos were taken, as permitted. I transcribed these audio recordings. The field notes and transcriptions comprise the total data for Phase 2. The data were then highlighted and coded to examine two specific aspects of their behavior identified in Phase 1 (i.e., the ways in which students do out-of-class activities and students' interactions with others) that influence English learning. Then I combined data from both phases for final analysis.

## Ethical Considerations

This study employed a number of measures to protect participants. Written consent forms were obtained from students and their legal guardians prior to any data collection. The privacy of participants was ensured by using pseudonyms throughout the study. I also employed cautionary measures regarding the storage of data: Hard copies of documents were kept in a secure cabinet. Data on electronic files were stored in a secure server with password. No one other than the researcher has access to the data.

## Issues of Quality and Significance

Credibility or *internal validity* is the concern about "how research findings match realities" (Merriam, 2009, p. 213). This study employed several measures to enhance its credibility. First, this study used *triangulation*, which is a strategy to ensure consistency in findings by using multiple methods and multiple sources of data (Creswell, 2013). The multiple data sources in this study included interview transcripts, activity logs, photos, detailed field notes, audio transcripts from observations, and photos from observations. The multiple data collection methods included interviews, documentation (activity log, photo), and observations. I

crosschecked data across different sources and methods. The second strategy that I used in this study was *member-checking*, which entails obtaining feedback from participants on coded data to limit the possibility of researchers misinterpreting participants' words and actions (Merriam, 2009). I conducted member-checks by sending a summary of my interpretations and parts of the participant's transcript (in Thai) to each participant and asking for feedback. I also used the phone to contact participants individually when there was something I was not sure I understood correctly. Finally, I used a peer-debriefing strategy to enhance credibility. I asked colleagues in Thailand to scan some of the raw data and initial analysis. I also consulted with my advisor and colleagues at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

For enhancing dependability or *reliability*, I conducted an inter-rater reliability check, which is the process of asking colleagues to code parts of interview data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I asked my colleague to perform independent theming and coding using my data, and then compared her interpretation to my own. Disparities between her results and mine were discussed, and I made adjustments as a result. Additionally, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested researchers to keep an *audit trail,* which is a journal documenting researchers' thinking and decision-making processes. I have kept journals recording my thinking, decisions, and reflections throughout the study.

While qualitative research in general does not aim for generalization, transferability of findings to other contexts could be achieved by providing rich descriptions to enable readers to find findings relevant to another context (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). For this purpose, I tried to provide rich and detailed descriptions of participants and contexts. The combination of interview, activity logs, and photo documentation gave me the information necessary to provide rich description of students' out-of-class English activities. Furthermore, detailed observations in

Phase 2 gave me in-depth information about how students engaged in out-of-class English

activities. The findings from both phases are presented in Chapter 4.

# Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter is organized by research questions. The first research question concerns descriptions of students' learning trajectories. To answer the first research question, the data is drawn from the full sample interview data. Findings for the second research question concerning the roles of social factors come from a combination of interviews, activity logs and photos across the full sample and observation data of four students. The third research question regarding types of out-of-class English activities is answered by drawing upon the data from both phases. For the second and third research questions, the data from Phase 2 is woven throughout to provide context. The last research question regarding the functions of out-of-class English learning practices is answered through analysis of interview data from 45 students.

## How do high school EFL students describe their English learning trajectories?

As high school students who have been learning English for at least nine years, the respondents generally could pinpoint the critical events in their learning trajectories, the periods in their lives that they perceived to be especially meaningful to their English learning. When asked to talk about their English learning experience, the students in the study tended to mention these critical events first. Students would then describe how their English proficiency and attitudes have changed after the critical events.

Across the full sample, the direction of learning trajectories is upward. As students started learning English in kindergarten or elementary school and continued until the present, overall English learning trajectories of all students in this study have trended upward presumably due to developmental maturation and the amount of time spent learning English. Students usually compared their learning trajectories to prior time periods based on formal schooling (P1-3, P4-6, M1-3 and M4-6). For example, when asked to describe their English learning trajectories in

middle school (M1-3), learners tended to compare middle school learning with their learning

trajectories in upper elementary school (P4-6).

During the interview, students were asked to describe their English learning trajectories

and they could choose to draw accompanying graphs. Most students chose to describe, while a

few chose to do both. Students rarely described their learning trajectories as downward. In

general, after negative critical events, students described their learning trajectories based on

perceived English proficiency as no change. For students with positive critical events, they

tended to describe their learning trajectories as significantly changed after critical events.

The data showed four patterns of learning trajectories based on critical events. The first

pattern is *interactions with English speakers as critical events* (*n*=10). This could be interactions

with native or non-native speakers of English. The second pattern is *formal instruction as critical

events* (*n*=18). This pattern includes formal instruction in and out of school. The third pattern is

*engaging in out-of-class activities as critical events* (*n*=12). The last pattern is a mix among three

previously mentioned patterns (*n*=5).

The goal of this section is to illustrate how students described their English learning

trajectories. Narratives from selected students are presented (see Table 6). Students were chosen

based on their dynamic and information-rich narratives. All students were grouped based on

themes concerning their critical events. These included interactions with English speakers,

formal instruction, and engagement in out-of-class activities. After narratives of each group, a

summary and an analysis are presented.

All quotations are my translations from the original Thai. The translation aims for

maintaining the meaning of the utterances. I added linguistic and contextual information in

brackets to help make quotations easier to understand in English. There are some characteristics

54

of Thai language that require explanations when being translated to English. First, there are a

few pronouns in Thai that do not specify gender of the person being referred to. In these cases,

the pronoun 'he/she' is added in brackets to make the translated quotations understandable.

Moreover, the Thai language, especially in its spoken form, commonly omits pronouns and

nouns used as subjects and objects. These omitted words are also explained in brackets.

Table 6

*Characteristics of Phase 1 Focal Students*

| Critical events | Name | Gender | Program |
|---|---|---|---|
| Interactions with English-speakers | Fah | F | EP |
| | Vee | F | EP |
| | | | |
| Formal instruction | Gigi | F | EP |
| | June | F | TP |
| | Mai | F | TP |
| | | | |
| Out-of-class activities | Ohm | M | EP |
| | Tim | M | TP |

*Note:* TP = Thai Program; EP = English Program

**Interactions with English-Speakers as Critical Events**

It is unsurprising that for several students interactions with English-speakers or

immersion in English-speaking environments played a major role in their learning trajectories.

Two cases are described as examples here: Fah's case is illustrative of interactions with an

English-speaker in Thailand, while Vee's case demonstrates how interactions with English-

speakers abroad are often seen as critical events in their successful acquisition of English.

**Participant 1 -- Fah.** Fah spoke eloquently and enthusiastically about her English

language learning experiences. She currently lives with her mom, stepdad and older brother.

Her home environment underwent a dramatic change when she was five when her parents got

divorced and her mother married her current stepfather, who is a native speaker of English. This

change in home environment "forced" her to speak English at home:

> My parents got divorced, and then my mom married a foreigner. He later moved in with
> us when I was about five years old. Since then I had to learn and use English—like
> mandatorily. At first there were some problems similar to when Thais want to speak to
> foreigners. [They speak] some words that are not correct in English, but after a while I
> learned more and more and I started to have the courage to speak [English]. It was ok if I
> say something wrong because he [stepfather] would correct me.

Fah saw this change as highly positive to her English language development. She spoke

fondly of her interactions with her stepfather and how he has taught her English over the years.

Fah gave an example of how her stepfather taught her to speak English when she was young:

> I remembered that I had to say things word by word. Let's say I asked dad [stepfather]
> 'what are we eating today', I would ask him 'kitchen', then say 'food', then say 'eat' as
> another word. Just say it word by word. Then dad [stepfather] would tell me the sentence
> 'What do we have to eat in the kitchen?' Then he had me repeat after him.

Fah spent her elementary school years in a Thai school that used Thai as a medium of

instruction, but had many foreign teachers. One particular teacher in lower elementary had made

a long-lasting and significant impression on Fah that English learning is fun:

> Another important event was in primary school. I had a teacher that made learning
> [English] enjoyable, so at that time I started paying a lot of attention in English classes.
> [Since then] it was ingrained in my heart that learning English is fun. The influence of
> that teacher has continued into the present. I still think that English is an enjoyable
> subject to learn.

Fah had an early critical event in her English learning trajectory involving two key

people: her stepfather and her primary school teacher. Her experience in lower primary school

with a good English teacher as well as the major shift in her home language environment, helped

to shape her positive self-concept and attitude toward learning and using English. Speaking

English with her stepfather made her feel confident in her English language skills, while

studying with her teacher made her enjoy learning English in school. The way Fah talked about major events in her learning trajectory shows that she perceives both interactions with her stepfather and teacher as influential to her English learning, especially by making she feels more confident in her English abilities and in making her enjoy learning the language.

Fah switched to an English program in the neighborhood in middle school, but she described the learning experience as boring and unchallenging, especially in regard to English learning. As a result, Fah prepared to apply for admissions at a more prestigious and academically rigorous school. Preparing for the admissions tests made Fah realize that her English, although very good, was not sufficient for academic work at a high school level. This made her feel more motivated to learn English. Learning the fundamental rules of English during the test preparation, combined with the right level of learning challenges at the new school, has motivated her to learn English more actively and made her enjoy learning English even more than before:

> High school is the time that I feel I really understand English a lot more because in middle school, I didn't really pay attention. I thought that I has a good enough 'sense' of English. Like, I would read a test question, and I just picked the one [multiple choices] I felt sounded right. But when I was preparing for the high school admissions test, I needed to have the foundations of English, like tense, grammar, British grammar. I needed to have a lot of these. In M4 [grade 10], I felt I understood English more. It started to feel fun when I wrote [in English]. I would think "Aha I know why I got this part wrong!", "Why can't I use it this way?" "Aha, it's because this [sentence or phrase] is an oral language." Something like that.

Regarding out-of-class English learning activities, Fah considers talking with her stepfather the most helpful activity in learning English. Fah recounted the memories of her stepfather helping her learn to speak English as a child, for which she is grateful. She mentioned this lovingly several times both during the interview. Moreover, her parents have introduced her to several informal out-of-class English activities over the years. Activities Fah perceives to be the most helpful are watching movies/shows and reading fiction. Her family watches English-

language movies and television shows on a regular basis, as English is already the main language used at home. Fah described her learning process by watching movies and televisions shows as follows:

> My mom used to make me watch [TV series and/or movies] in English soundtrack with Thai subtitles. Since Dad [stepfather] came [to live with us], we continued to watch [TV series and/or movies] in English soundtrack with Thai subtitles because he wanted to watch with us.…When I was in elementary school, I watched [TV series and/or movies] with English subtitles because sometimes I understood [the English soundtrack], but sometimes I didn't. So I felt like I needed [English subtitles].

Fah said that it was not until middle school that she felt she could comfortably watch movies and series without any subtitles. Watching movies and TV shows also led to more conversation with her stepfather, as doing so allowed them to discuss their opinions of what they had just watched.

Fah considers reading fiction to be the third most helpful out-of-class activity. She started reading English-language books in elementary school by reading English-Thai bilingual books. She started reading English monolingual books in middle school per her mom and stepfather's suggestions. This distinguished her from her middle school peers, as they did not read English-language books for pleasure. Currently, Fah feels so comfortable reading English-language books that she prefers to read the original English instead of the translated versions. Despite being considered a major learning activity, reading did not appear in Fah's activity log, nor did it appear in the observation. Fah explained that the period when she was recording the activity log and the observation took place was during her final and college exam preparation, which allowed her no time to read for pleasure.

**Participant 2 -- Vee.** Vee did not discuss her home environment while talking about her English learning. It seems that Vee does not automatically perceive her family to be influential to her English learning. Most of the time, she mentioned school or school-related experiences.

58

Despite being an enthusiastic English learner now, Vee said she did not take English seriously until P5 [grade 5]. The trigger of this change of attitude was the change in school curriculum that focused more heavily on English from grade 5 onwards:

> When I was in primary school, English instruction wasn't really serious....Just learning basic vocabulary. It started to get serious in P5 [grade 5]. But it was a really heavy class load. [We had] more than 10 class periods per week, but they [teachers] laid the foundation systematically and gradually, so I felt ok with learning English.

Even though Vee's story shows that the change of in-school instruction in P5 might have shaped her attitudes toward English learning to somewhat neutral or slightly positive, she did not see this as a critical event in her learning as she did not feel that her English skills or behaviors had changed after P5.

From elementary to middle school, Vee switched from a Thai program to an Intensive English Program (IEP) that focused on English more than a regular Thai program, but did not use English as a medium of instruction in all subjects like an English program (EP). Her middle school environment also had significantly more foreign teachers, which may have influenced her decision to go study abroad in the summer of M2 [grade 8]. Indeed, Vee's decision to spend a summer abroad was solely her own, even though she received financial support from her parents. Vee spent six weeks in Canada and stayed with a Canadian host family, showing her strong determination and motivation to learn English. She described this period as a "turning point" in her English-learning trajectory, as it was the time she felt she could use English to communicate, and she started to enjoy learning English and liking the English language:

> I didn't study [English] seriously until M2 [grade 8], which was the time I spent a summer abroad in Canada. I think my stay in Canada was really helpful. [I have] improved listening, speaking, reading, writing. All of my English skills got better. When I came back, I started to like the English language and enjoy learning English.

It appears that since the critical event in which she felt more confident in her English skills and had positive attitudes toward English learning, she has increasingly engaged in out-of-

class activities. Activities that she deemed helpful were listening to music, communicating in English, and watching video clips. Vee has started listening to English-language music when she was in Canada. Her Canadian host sister introduced her to English-language music, albeit unintentionally. As Vee put it, "When I was in Canada, my host sister put on music every day, and I liked some, so I just kept listening." Since M2 [grade 8], she said how she learns English from music has evolved. In the beginning, she just listened without finding out the meaning of the songs, as opposed to what she does now:

> Before, I just listened passively, but now I started to find out the meaning, like the recent song 'Steal my Girl' from One direction. I scrolled down, read the comments, and found out "Hey! Compared to Taylor's [song], why does this one use 'You belong to me'? Why does that one use 'You belong with me?" So I tried to find out how they differ.

> Since coming back from Canada, she has felt that she does not have enough opportunities to use English in her daily life, so she has taken to communicating with foreigners via various online platforms. During the interview, she mentioned using KIK to find new friends, leading to her connecting with non-native English speakers daily. During the observation, she used KIK less frequently and used Facebook groups more to connect with new friends instead. She has recently received a scholarship to study in Hong Kong, and, as a result, she connects with incoming and current students in the program via Facebook group. Connecting with this group also prompted her to study vocabulary and reading in preparation for attending an international English-language high school in Hong Kong.

Despite engaging in several informal out-of-class activities, Vee attributes 60% of her English skills to in-class learning because she believes what she learns at school is the most important. During the observation, Vee also engaged in studying English by learning words from vocabulary lists and completing reading comprehension exercises. This suggests that she still considers English as an academic subject as well as a way to communicate.

**Summary.** These two cases show that interactions with speakers of English could be powerful events in learning trajectories. These interactions tend to be frequent and intensive in order to act as a part of critical events. Opportunities to have these interactions can be incidental, as in Fah's case when her stepfather moved in, or intentional, like in Vee's case when she chose to spent a summer abroad. As a main force in critical events, interacting with English speakers seems to shape students' positive self-concept as it reinforces the sense of "I can do it." While interacting with English speakers seem to directly influence attitudes toward the English language and English learning, it appears that a change in self-concept might also contribute to attitudinal changes. With confidence in their own English language skills, these students tended to view English learning as more enjoyable. They appeared to engage in out-of-class activities more frequently and actively after their respective critical events. Family members and peers usually introduce these activities. Vee's case shows that in a student with high motivation and autonomy, parental involvement might not be necessary. In contrast, Fah's case shows how past parental involvement (introducing English-language books and watching movies and TV shows together) shaped this student's current choice of out-of-class English activities.

Several SCT concepts could help explain these two cases. Fah's case shows how she learned English by first speaking word-by-word and then by creating a sentence with her stepfather.  This is a good example of how children learn language through the process of imitation. This case confirms Bruer's (1993) notion that children learn language by interacting with adults and imitating adults' language formats and routines.

SCT literature suggests that social interactions can mediate language learning (Lantolf, 2000). Interactions with others mediate how learners make sense of and internalize the symbolic meaning of L2 (Mahn, 2013). The two cases illustrate how interactions with speakers of English

61

became mediational means in English learning. Communicating with native-speakers provided Fah and Vee abundant affordances to learn and practice English. Additionally, their respective situations provided a helpful constraint, that is the inability to communicate with people in their environment in any other language. This constraint 'forced' the students to use English in their respective environments.

Interactions with others also helped these students' language progress. Effective language learning often occurs within a learner's ZPD, where a student moves from using L2 with assistance from others to being able to use L2 by him/herself (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). These two cases also illustrate how language learning occurred as students progressed from engaging in activities with assistance to engaging in activities on their own. In Fah's case, her stepfather was the one adjusting his language to suit Fah's level of English. At first, Fah was heavily relied on her stepfather's help to speak English. Later, she progressed to be able to speak conversational English by herself. In Vee's case, living in Canada during M2 [grade 8] was the appropriate time given her level of English. After her time in Canada, Vee regulated her own learning by adjusting out-of-class activities to suit her ZPD, such as how she has changed the way she listens to English-language music.

Interestingly, even though Vee perceives studying abroad as her critical event, she still attributes her English language success to in-class instruction. Fah, on the other hand, attributes most of her success to language use outside the classroom. It seems that Vee might perceive her experience studying abroad as an outcome of changes in her learning trajectory, instead of the cause. This might be because Vee's interactions with native-speakers in her environment abroad was only for a short period of time. In contrast, Fah feels that she has had to use English for

communication every single day since she was five. Therefore, it was unsurprising that she attributes her English proficiency to everyday English use.

**Formal Instruction as Critical Events**

Most students in this study reported having formal instruction in or outside the classroom to be the start of changes in their learning trajectories. Although formal instruction varies greatly from case to case, the effects that students mentioned are often similar, which is that formal instruction has changed their self-concept and/or attitudes. Three cases have been selected here to illustrate a range of influence of formal instruction on learning trajectories during critical events. Gigi had a steadily positive trajectory following the specific formal instruction experience. June had a positive experience during her critical event, but her trajectory did not move consistently upward. Mai had a negative experience with formal instruction that had since hindered her learning trajectory.

**Participant 3 -- Gigi.** Gigi's family has a high level of English use and her parents maintain a high degree of involvement in Gigi's out-of-class English activities. Gigi has engaged in out-of-class English activities with her parents and older brother since she was a child. For instance, while watching movies together, her father would ask if she understood the stories. When they were listening to English-language news, her mother would often ask if she understood what was being reported. Additionally, her parents, who are quite good at English themselves, frequently helped Gigi with her English homework.

Gigi's parents have always discouraged her and her brother from consuming Thai-language media, including music and TV shows. They told her that Thai-language media is nonsense. Gigi's parents imposed certain rules concerning television, for example, she is only allowed to watch cable channels in English. Gigi mentioned that since as far as she can

63

remember, she has never watched any Thai-dubbed animated movies, even when these movies were the norm for Thai children to watch. While discussing current activities, Gigi still mentions her father's rules of not allowing her to watch cable TV in Thai. Nonetheless, her tone did not convey a feeling of restriction or resentment. It appears that Gigi has accepted this as being a part of her family and that she feels rather grateful for being "forced" to consume English-language media. Nonetheless, despite a high level of exposure to English language at home, Gigi did not mention this as a critical event in her learning. This might be because the changes were gradual and subtle, and, as a result, felt natural for her.

Despite having a family that regularly consumed English media at home, Gigi did not have a positive attitude toward English learning during her childhood. Even though she seemed to have accepted her family's view that English-language media is better than Thai-language media and recognized that English is important, Gigi did not feel particularly motivated to learn English.

Gigi studied in the Thai program from P1 to M3 [grades 1 to 9]. In elementary school, she did not like learning English because she thought English was not important. Later in middle school, she did not pay attention to learning English, as she and her peers focused more on math and science. Her critical event was the preparation for the high school admissions exam. At that time, she attended several tutoring institutions, partly because her parents "made her attend". In regards to learning English, Gigi realized that attending a lot of tutoring sessions was not as helpful as practicing on her own. This experience has shaped her view toward English learning. Since then she has taken to practicing English on her own in several ways, including listening to music, watching movies, and reading books:

> During M3 [grade 9] when I was preparing to take the test to apply for [high school], I went to a lot of tutoring sessions. I was tutored at every institution I could. I tried to make

64

my English better and do a lot of [English-learning] exercises. What I've learned is that studying a lot doesn't help unless I practice. So, I watched a lot of movies and listened to music. [I] tried to listen to what they were saying and tried to understand. Also, I bought novels and tried to read them. Even if it's tiring [to read English novels], I still have to try.

At the same time as she prepared for the high school admissions test, Gigi had a positive experience with one teacher who changed how she felt about English learning and her own English skills:

> I think it was around M3 [grade 9]. There was a teacher who used to teach in the EP [English program]…The teacher really emphasized learning English, and in a way that I understood. At the time, I really wanted to enter the [English program] so the teacher emphasized confidence [in using English]. He/she made me understand [English] better, a lot better than any other teachers had had since middle school.

Given the experience with her favorite English teacher in M3, Gigi felt that she understood or "got" English. This made her feel more confident in her own English skills. Gigi also increased her English learning substantially during this time to prepare for high school admissions test. Attending several tutoring classes made her realize that she had to use English in order to acquire the language. This was where her change in attitude toward English learning began

Another critical change was her transition to the English program in high school. Gigi felt that her world had turned upside-down from being in an environment that did not focus on English learning to an environment where the English language was used in learning every subject. She used to feel at ease with English learning, but as she entered the English program, she struggled with using English as a medium to learn academic content. As she became more used to learning in the English program, she realized the importance of English, which has motivated her to learn more.

In her current school environment, Gigi's peers also have a great impact on her English learning. Gigi admires her classmates' English proficiencies and aspires to be like them:

65

I want to be as good [in English] as my friends because all my friends put a lot of effort into reaching their dreams. I want to be like them, because all my friends are good at English. They are good without having to try too hard. Some are good because they play games. Another one is good because [he/she] likes to watch movies. …Another friend likes to read eight Wikipedia entries per day. He/she reads really fast, like [he/she] can do reading [reading comprehension exercises] in four minutes and hand in the paper. I had to use half an hour. Everyone around me is so good at English.

Moreover, studying abroad is popular among her classmates. Many of her classmates are spending a year abroad. A few months after the interview, Gigi also went to the United States as an exchange student for one year in order to improve her English language skills.

Concerning out-of-class activities, as mentioned previously, Gigi has engaged in out-of-class English activities with her family since she was a child. Nonetheless, she did not start initiating her engagement in out-of-class English activities until M3.which was when she started reading English fiction. This was ultimately what made her feel more comfortable with her English reading skills. Even though the original goal for reading fiction was not to learn English, it shaped her positive self-concept of her English abilities. During this time, the availability of English-language media in Bangkok might have played a role in the start of English-language reading, as she mentioned liking a movie, which in turn led her to read the original book.

At the time, I watched a movie and I really liked the main actor, so I bought the book. There was only one [copy] left in Asiabook [a bookstore], so I bought it. Reading the book made me change from being a lazy person to a person who loves to read. While reading, I had to try to understand the feeling of the character because he was a zombie. Otherwise I couldn't understand his emotions.

Gigi also mentioned that sometimes she just reads some books because they were available:

Sometimes I go to Siam Square and walked past Kinokuniya [a bookstore]. I would go in and flip through a few comic books. That really helps me learn English because I usually find some English words that were on the tests. I was like, "Wow they [English words from the tests] are here as well." I was surprised. I flipped through a few pages more and I found some [English words from the tests] again. So I kept reading in case they [English words] come up in tests again.

Following changes in M3 [grade 9], Gigi's school environment changed completely from Thai program to English program. Because of the high amount of English used in instruction and her classmates' high level of English proficiency, Gigi feels more motivated to learn English. This new environment has shaped her view about the English language. Because she has to use it in every class and she sees friends using it fluently, she now sees English as important and a desirable skill to have. This attitude is constantly reinforced by the availability of English-language media in her environment.

Gigi attributes her English skills to be 60% from in-class learning and 40% from out-of-class learning. She sees studying in the English program as greatly helpful to her English learning. Studying in the English program requires her to read plenty of English texts, which helps her acquire a lot of academic vocabulary. Currently, Gigi considers several out-of-class activities to be helpful in learning English. The activities that Gigi mentioned as the most helpful is talking to teachers at school, which has helped her feel more confident in speaking English. Another activity that Gigi deems helpful is watching TV series. She considers this to be helpful in improving her listening skills and understanding slang. Gigi also expressed that watching series in English is better than in Thai because sometimes the translated or dubbed versions are wrong. Gigi considers reading to be another helpful activity. She mentioned reading both comic books and fiction. She feels that it was "cool" that she could understand these books. According to the activity log, apart from these three most helpful activities, Gigi also used English to communicate with her friends and teachers via Facebook and "studied" English by completing error identification exercises.

Overall, Gigi's out-of-class activities involve English naturally, especially since her main environments (i.e., home and school) involve a high level of English use. Her family members

usually play English-language media, so she consumes them without intentionally selecting English-language media. Furthermore, her school environment, including language of instruction, leads her to feel that she is learning and using a lot more English.

**Participant 4 -- June.** June is a student in the Thai Program. She lives with her parents and younger brother. The whole family tends to watch Thai-language TV shows when they are together. Her parents are not particularly proficient in English. Although her parents know some English, June admitted that her English skill is probably the best in the family.

Despite little use of English at home, June perceives both of her parents to be influential to her English learning. Over the years her father has emphasized how important the English language is in today's world. Her mother is also heavily involved in her English learning by arranging for her to study with tutors. June feels that her mother was "insistent in making her like English" by sending her to study with tutors. As a result, June's English learning experience mostly involved formal instruction in and out of school. June studied in the Thai program from P1-P6 [grades 1-6]. She does not see her elementary school experience as influential to her English learning. Up until P5 [grade 5], she did not like learning English: "I didn't understand, didn't like [English], and I didn't know anything about English. When there were tests, I just made guesses." June's critical event came during her preparation for the middle school admissions exam, when her mother sent her to study with a tutor:

> I had an opportunity to meet one tutor….I didn't know whether [the reason I didn't learn English well before studying with this tutor] was that I didn't pay attention or that this tutor taught exceptionally well, or that it was a small or one-on-one [class]. I know "if it's rule like this, how should I [say it] in English?" For example, the grammar of present simple. Let's say, the subject is singular, we add 's'. I continued studying with this tutor for a while. I did a lot of [English learning] exercises because I was preparing for a middle school admissions exam. I learned a lot from him/her.

It seems that studying with a tutor made June feel that she could "do" English, which in turn shaped her fondness toward learning English:

I'm usually interested in something when I can do it well. When I studied with this teacher, I felt that I could do it [taking English tests]. So I liked it [English]. Regardless of how many test items, I could do them all. I felt that I liked [learning English]…. My English score really helped me to pass the [admissions] exam and get admitted here. After I studied with this tutor, I felt that I could do what I couldn't do before [with English]. And then in M1 [grade 7], comparing with others, I felt I was not that weak.

This quote illustrates how June's perception of her English abilities improved and her attitude toward English learning became positive during this period. However, her positive perception about her English abilities was still tied to academic English (in the form of exams) and not in using English as a way to communicate. She still saw English as an academic subject, and her perception of her English abilities was primarily tied to her ability to excel in English classes at school.

Nonetheless, despite positive perception of her own English abilities and attitude toward English, June's learning trajectory did not progress dramatically during middle school because she felt that, compared to her classmates, her English skills were weaker. This might be because in middle school, June studied in the EIS program that used English as a medium of instruction in core subjects. Therefore, her classmates in this program were likely to have a higher level of English proficiency than those in the Thai program:

In middle school, at first, I didn't think too much about my English because I didn't study in EP [English program] so I didn't use a lot of English….But when I compared myself to classmates at this school, I'd think "I'm still weak," especially in listening. I'm not very good at listening. My friends could understand, but I couldn't. When I tried to come up with an English sentence, I couldn't. I knew what I wanted to say in Thai, but when I had to say it in English, I couldn't.

From M3 [grade 9], June started to integrate more English into her daily life by consuming English-language media such as music, movies, and TV shows. This engagement with English-language media was partly influenced by her close friend, who was already good at English and was listening to English-language music at the time. It is unclear how consuming English-language media directly related to June's learning English, but it seemed to foster an

attitude of "English is cool". Peers also seemed to shape her attitudes toward the English language and/or English learning: "I like English. I think English's cool when I can say it. When I see my friend speak English with foreigners, I'd think 'That's so cool!'"

Despite having started engaging in informal out-of-school English activities since M3, the majority of her current out-of-school English activities are academically orientated. June mostly engages in out-of-class activities that treat English as an academic subject, including studying vocabulary, studying grammar, completing practice exercises, and so on. Even when she does engage in informal out-of-school activities such as watching English-language movies, she does it with a deliberate intention of learning English rather than for entertainment.

**Participant 5 -- Mai.** Mai's family members seem to have had a minor influence on her English learning. Mai mentioned that her parents, especially her father, often told her how important English is, but there was little use of English at home. Teachers and peers seem to have had more influence on her English learning.

In P3 [grade 3], Mai had a bad experience with an English teacher who wrongly punished her in class. The incident made her hate and ignore English learning from then on.

> I really hated English in P3 [grade 3]. The teacher was awful. One day I forgot to bring a book and a notebook. He slapped me with a metal ruler. Another classmate forgot his book and notebook as well but didn't get slapped. So, I asked him why I got punished but my classmate didn't. So, the teacher called the other student and slapped him/her as well. I told Mom about it. She called to talk to the teacher and asked why the teacher slapped me with a metal ruler. I didn't want mom to call the teacher. She did that on her own. Then in class the teacher called the other student to get slapped, right in front of me, and the teacher said, "Is this what you want?" Slap! Slap!

Her subsequent critical event was the transition to middle school. Mai chose to apply for an EIS program because she wanted to improve her English skills and she believed that classmates in an EIS would be better than in the Thai program. However, Mai struggled a lot in middle school because she had to learn math and science in English, a language which she had

70

not yet mastered. Additionally, her classmates often made fun of her English speaking. As a result, her middle school experience in regard to English learning was mostly negative.

For Mai, teachers and peers appear to have instilled a negative self-concept and attitude toward English learning. The incident in P3 [grade 3] described earlier, though not directly related to English-learning, caused her to ignore learning English at school, and caused her to harbor a negative attitude toward the teacher and English learning.

In middle school, Mai struggled while learning core subjects in English, which led her to form a negative self-concept about her English skills. In addition, learning with English-speaking teachers reinforced Mai's view of her low English ability. The more she could not understand, the more she felt she was not good at English. Mai also mentioned one incident during a test where she could not understand a problem. The teacher saw that Mai was struggling and suggested that she should move to the Thai program. This remark angered Mai greatly. Even though she persevered and stayed in the EIS program, Mai seems to harbor feelings of resentment and frustration toward learning English:

> The first term [M1, grade 7] I was in EIS [English integrated studies], I almost quit. When taking a test, I couldn't understand the math problems. I didn't even understand addition and subtraction. Then the teacher walked by and saw I couldn't do the test. I think the teacher meant well, knowing that there are students who are not suited for this program. The teacher told me, since I was not good at language, I should move to the normal program. The teacher told me "If you can't stand it, then quit." I was really angry, but I still stayed in the program until M3 [grade 9].

Another negative effect during middle school came from peers criticizing her speaking ability. Mai mentioned this several times: as an important event in her learning, as an obstacle to learning, and in regard to her relationship with classmates:

> My classmates teased me "What did you say? What a horrible accent!" It made me not want to speak [English] at school….My friends criticized my accent, making me feel that my English was so bad, making me feel that I didn't want to improve. On the other hand, I think if possible, I want to be able to speak [English].

In addition to criticism from teachers and peers, Mai's lifelong struggle with learning

English led her to make a heart-breaking conclusion about her own English abilities:

> For the most part I know nothing about English. I don't know grammar. I don't know vocab. That's why I can't speak English. There is not even a sentence I could say. Period. So I don't speak [English]. The main reason is that I'm stupid.

Mai feels that English is not as important as other subjects in school to her immediate

goal, which is gaining admissions to college. Even though English is one of the subjects in

college admissions exams, she feels that other academic subjects, such as physics, chemistry, and

biology, are more important. Her attitude toward learning English right now is just to get by. Mai

feels that she has to prepare for other subjects and that she has no time for English:

> I tell you now, I don't allocate a lot of time to study English because I'm studying in the science track. Just physics, chemistry, biology are three [subjects] already. I want to just be able to answer questions. Just to pass the class for now….I know that in the future I need to do it [use English]. I just need to stick with it, give it time, but right now I don't have time for it. I'll do it later, but I don't know when.

Nonetheless, the reason she has decided to give up on English could also be because her

self-concept of English is already low.

Her negative attitude toward learning English could be explained by her belief that

English should be learned while the learner is still young:

> If we learn [English] when we have already grown up, it's difficult. Like now when I force myself to memorize vocab words, I can't remember them well. If I had started [learning English] as a kid, I could have done well. If we had learned English from the time we were young, we'd speak with perfect accent. I sometimes asked my dad why he didn't raise me in English.

That said, her current attitude toward learning English is that she pays attention and studies

because she has to, not because she likes it:

> Mai:          In middle school, math was taught in English. I liked math, but I didn't like English. But I didn't feel like I couldn't study. I usually could study anything, but if I was asked if I liked it [English], I would certainly say no.
>
> Researcher:   What about now?

Mai:            Now I believe I just have to study it.

Compared to her favorite subject, chemistry, which she rated at a ten in terms of fondness, Mai rated English only at a two. Nevertheless, Mai emphasized that she still studies hard and pays attention in English classes. She just does not like studying English. Mai also has conflicting views about the necessity of English. Sometimes she thinks it's important, while other times she negates this view. When asked about how important she thinks English skills are, she first said, "English skills are not that important if you live in Thailand. If you live abroad, they [English skills] will be the most important." But then later in the interview as she talked about the use of English in college, she said "I think every profession has to have contact with others. Foreigners do business with Thais. If you can't speak [English], that'd be bad." It appears that Mai realizes the importance of the English language, especially in school and work, but at the same time, she does not believe English matters that much to her immediate life goals.

According to her activity log and interview, Mai engages in a few informal out-of-class activities, but she pays little to no attention to the English components. She does not use out-of-class activities to learn English. These activities just happen to involve English. For example, when Mai listened to English-language music, she said she did not focus on the English language, and instead just focused on the rhythm. In her activity log, Mai indicated playing English-language games, but in the interview she spoke of how she rarely paid attention to the English language in the games. When she watched a movie, she indicated mostly reading the Thai subtitles. When reading English blogs, Mai mostly looked at pictures. The activities Mai deemed most helpful were school-related activities, such as doing homework.

**Summary.** These three cases illustrate that students with positive self-concept and attitudes toward English learning and/or the English language tend to engage in out-of-class activities more often. In the cases of Gigi and June, they both had positive formal instruction

experiences that triggered their positive learning trajectories. However, Gigi seemed to naturally engage in out-of-class activities, while June did not. This could be because Gigi already did all these activities in English even before realized she liked learning English. For June, her self-concept was slightly improved before M1, but when she was in M1 she felt that her English was weak compared to her classmates. This could explain why June did not engage in out-of-class activities right after she had improved her self-concept. Nonetheless, this improved of self-concept before M1 might have laid the foundation for her to feel that she could engage in out-of-class activities later. As for Mai, her experiences at school led her to develop a negative self-concept concerning English and negative attitudes toward English learning and the English language. Therefore, even though Mai engages in out-of-class English activities, she chooses those where she does not have to focus on the language components.

From this study, it appears that interactions with teachers and tutors are influential in students' English learning. In Gigi and June's cases, interactions with teachers led them to believe that they are getting better at English. In Mai's case, the teachers and peers made her hate English and feel afraid to speak English. In addition to social interactions, material and symbolic artifacts also mediate how students learn English. In June's case, learning materials available in her environment focused almost exclusively on English in exams. This might be the reason June only sees English as an academic subject. Gigi, saw English as a communication tool because of her interactions with teachers, the availabilities of English-language media at home, and the pervasive use of English in her English program learning environment at school. For Mai, the learning materials in the EIS program appeared to be too difficult for her level of English, which might have mediated her learning in a way that caused her to dislike or ignore the English language in learning materials.

These three cases illustrate how working in students' ZPD could influence their learning trajectories. During June's critical event, when her tutor tailored the learning materials and teaching style to suit her ZPD, June started to feel that she "got" English, thus shaping her positive self-concept. In Gigi's case, reading novels shows how she made use of other objects to assist her in working within her ZDP. Gigi chose to use movies and a dictionary to help her read novels at a point when her reading ability had not yet allowed her to enjoy reading for pleasure. Later on, she could read on her own without or with minimal help from these objects. As mentioned earlier, Mai's experience during middle school was challenging because the learning materials were too difficult for her. She did not seem to have support from others or objects to help her work within her ZPD.

**Engagement in Out-of-Class Activities as Critical Events**

**Participant 6 -- Ohm.** Ohm seemed comfortable talking about his English learning, and he mentioned that English was his favorite subject. Ohm even spoke English a few times during the interview. It was clear that learning English was a positive experience for him. Ohm considers his father to be one of the most influential people in his learning. Ohm's father often speaks English with him, which he finds to be helpful. His father also encouraged Ohm to attend extra formal instruction sessions and to read English-language books. His father did not read books with Ohm, but successfully introduced Ohm to reading by buying him young adult fiction. Since then Ohm has grown to like reading English-language fiction and has sought out books to read on his own:

> I started reading English-language fiction around P3 or P4 [grade 3 or 4]. I remember the first one. It's a fiction called Blasphemy. It's about challenging Gods. My dad bought it for me so that I could try reading [English]. He said, "This one was on sale. Do you want to try reading it?" I gave it a try and I liked it. After that I like going to see if there are any good English-language fictions. Right now there are 7 or 8 [titles] that I'd just finished reading.

Regardless of numerous positive experiences using English at home, Ohm did not

consider his home environment to be responsible for his English learning trajectory. This might

be because he felt that these experiences are "normal"; thus, he did not feel as if these home

experiences caused any changes. Rather, he viewed his experience attending a small class with a

native speaker and playing online games as critical events. In P2-P3 [grade 2-3], Ohm and his

neighbors attended a regular formal instruction class with a teacher from South Africa. The class

focused on conversations and playing fun games. This experience made him feel interested in

and develop fondness for learning English:

> The teacher made learning English really enjoyable. [He/she] made me feel really
> interested in English. When we were doing activities, the teacher taught us to say
> everything in English. We played games and computer games, something like that. From
> that point on, I started to like learning English.

His experience learning English with a native-speaker in a small group most likely has

shaped his positive attitudes toward English learning and the English language. Using English in

a fun and low-stakes environment with his peers made Ohm associate the English language with

fun and made him feel that using English was not as intimidating as he had thought.

Ohm studied in a Thai program in elementary school, but switched to an English program

in middle and high school. Ohm views school experiences as having little impact on his English

learning, except for peer influence on playing online games. In middle school, Ohm's classmates

introduced him to playing online games, which he views as a critical event in his English

learning because that is when he started to use English on a daily basis. Since then, according to

his recollection, Ohm has developed a genuine interest in learning English and has tried to learn

English in any way he can.

Ohm started to communicate with other players while playing games because the nature

of massive multiplayer online games requires communication and collaboration among players.

He often uses the gaming platform as a way to communicate, including text, voice call, and video call. Interestingly, Ohm's communication does not usually involve native speakers, but non-native speakers of English from Thailand, China, and Russia. In other words, Ohm uses English as a *lingua franca* to communicate with others. As for connecting with other Thai players, Ohm mentioned English as a more convenient and faster language to communicate in through keyboards. In addition to using English on a regular basis, Ohm also asks other players whose English is better than his to correct his English:

> When I tried communicating with foreigners, if I couldn't [communicate], I'd tell them "My English is not that good, so please guide me whenever if I'm wrong." [original in English] Then they would help correct me from time to time….I skype or use online calls with them. It has to be in English. Some friends are really good at English, like at a mastery level. So they help me. They'd tell me, "This is grammatically wrong." "You should say it like this."

Moreover, Ohm has changed the way he plays these games. These changes have led him to interact with other players even more frequently:

> I met online players from other countries in M3 [grade 9] because that was the time I started to live in the game, like talking to people instead of just playing….In M1-2 [grade1-2], I played it the way they called on the Internet as try hard [original in English], meaning you play just to get number one and don't care about anything else. But after a while I watched videos and saw how others played games differently, so I checked them out. They played in an entertaining way, talking to friends and stuff. So I tried something like that. In the end, I found it fun.

Ohm has a classmate, Bay, whom he mentioned as having a major influence to his English learning. They often play online games together while they are at home, and they communicate with each other using English. Ohm said, "I connect with classmates from school. At home, nobody types Thai to communicate, only English because typing in Thai is slow. So, we get to practice language, grammar, and so on because when we type wrong, there'll be grammar correct [original in English] or something like that." Additionally, Ohm views Bay as a person leading him to use English more often: "I felt that Bay is the one who bring me up to

77

speak English [original in English]. Like he was the one who started to speak English in conversation [original in English] [with me]."

In addition, Ohm sees one YouTuber, in particular, as his role model by showing him how using English could reach millions of people and showing him that it is possible for a non-native speaker of English to use English fluently in media.

Ohm:        Apart from that teacher [in P2-P3], I have one YouTuber as my role model. He's already famous. I got to know and talk to him. He's really well-known and has like 12 million subscribers.

Researcher:  How did he become your role model?

Ohm:        He's famous because he makes [videos] in English. He's from Russia, but he speaks English, does things in English, which makes things easier [for people to understand]. So, people like him.

When he started playing online games in middle school, Ohm was forced to use English more often. He probably felt that he could use English to communicate, which might have shaped his positive self-concept toward his English abilities. Ohm specifically mentioned that being able to guess and learn words in games made him feel more confident about his language skills. Additionally, communicating with others in English and having a YouTuber who was a non-native speaker of English as a role model have probably shaped his view of English as a lingua franca.

Ohm attributes his English abilities to 40% in-school learning and 60% out-of-school learning. He views learning in school as focusing on grammar and vocabulary, which Ohm deems unhelpful and boring; thus, he does not pay much attention in class. Ohm prefers to learn by engaging in out-of-class activities because he gets to choose what he wants to do. The majority of Ohm's time outside school involves using English. He considers authentic communication, reading books, watching movies, and playing games as the most helpful activities for learning. Ohm communicates in English with his father, classmates, and online

78

friends. The fact that Ohm's father had talked to him in English since he was a child might be why he was comfortable with continuing to communicate with his friends and foreigners in English.

Ohm mentioned reading fiction and watching movies as one activity, most likely because he tends to do the two activities in tandem. In general, Ohm chooses to watch movies before reading books, as it makes reading easier. He mentioned reading *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* in M1 [grade 7] after watching the movies. Based on the activity log, Ohm was reading *Orphaned World* for an hour a day, three days a week. He also watched the movie *Karate Kid* without subtitles.

Playing online games takes up a large portion of Ohm's out-of-class activities time. According to the activity log recorded during his summer vacation, Ohm played online games for about 3-5 hours a day, five days a week. The games he played were English-language first-person shooter games such as *Team Fortress 2* and *Counter Strike*. Additionally, Ohm did activities related to playing online games such as watching YouTube clips about game play and Skyping with foreign players.

**Participant 7 -- Tim.** Tim is a student in the Thai program. His home environment rarely includes English, and his parents are not as proficient in English as Tim is. Like other Thai students, Tim started learning English in P1 [grade 1], but he did not perceive any progress during elementary school. Tim considers his critical event to be during middle school, when he moved to the EIS program and started playing online games. In the EIS program, Thai teachers use English as the main language of instruction, and learning materials in core subjects are all in English. Tim feels that studying in the EIS and playing online games in middle school marked the start of his real use of English. During M3-4 [grades 9-10], his English reading skills

improved significantly because he followed his computer teacher's advice to read English-

language books to learn programming. Tim summarized his own learning trajectory:

> My English development in P1-P6 [grades 1-6] was stunted, maybe improved a little bit. But in M1 [grade 7] I found online games, and studied in EIS [English for Integrated Studies]. The games were in English, so I got some [English] skills from games. I also learned English in EIS classes, studying science and math in English, so I learned a little bit [of English] from there. M1-2-3 [grades 7-9] were like that. Then in M3-M4 [grades 9-10], I wanted to write [computer] programs. I tried reading Thai books but they were difficult to understand. My teacher recommended ordering English-language books from Amazon. So, I ordered them in M3 [grade 9]. I read them and felt that my English was developing really quickly.

Tim's reading skills have developed gradually. In the beginning, Tim struggled to

understand the texts and had to use a dictionary. He persevered in his reading because he wanted

to gain information. After a while, Tim felt he could read more easily: "At first I read [English-

language books] and didn't really understand. I kept trying to read. If I didn't understand, I

guessed words' meanings…After reading for a while, it got easier. Toward the end of the book, I

read normally."

Tim started playing online games on Thai servers with Thai players, but he switched to

foreign servers in M3 [grade 9] because he did not like how Thai players play the games. Once

he made the switch, he felt a strong need to improve his English, as foreign servers require all

players to communicate only in English. Furthermore, playing online games prompted him to

learn more about how to play games better, which led him to engage in other activities involving

heavy uses of English. Some examples include participating in online message boards, watching

YouTube videos, reading games wikis, and connecting with other players. Tim felt that playing

games and engaging in these activities significantly improved his reading and listening skills.

Tim described how he learned English from watching YouTube clips and reading online

forums:

When I started reading forums, I didn't understand a thing. I looked up every word in a dictionary. I used Google translate. I copied the whole words then pasted them….Using Google translate [original in English] helped a little, but [I] still couldn't understand. In the end, I translated them word-by-word. When I put them together, I started to understand a little because these forums have a lot of illustrations, so I wasn't too confused…. For YouTube [clips], sometimes I didn't need to listen to what they said because there were mostly videos/pictures. But when I kept watching, it was like [the English] sounds were in my ears [head], like they sounded familiar to me.

Reading books, playing games, and finding information about online games and computer programming have significantly improved Tim's reading and listening skills. Since Tim struggled in the beginning while doing these activities, he later had a strong sense of accomplishment once he had achieved his goals. Doing these activities successfully has most likely shaped Tim's positive self-concept about his English reading and listening skills. Nonetheless, it was clear that Tim's goal in doing these activities was not to learn English. Instead, gaining English skills appears to be a by-product instead of a primary goal. Indeed, reading books on programming and finding information about how to play games in English might have shaped his attitudes that better information is available in English. Tim expressed this sentiment in other activities, such as looking up scientific knowledge as well: "If I want to know something in science, like I just got curious about something, I need to search Google in English because Thai websites usually don't have the content."

Tim believes that the best way to learn English is to use it, or in his words "to learn without intending to." This view is most likely shaped by his own experience of learning English incidentally while doing out-of-class activities. Even though Tim feels confident in his reading and listening skills (which he rated as upper intermediate and intermediate), he mentioned his insecurity of his academic use of English skills. He rated his writing to be lower intermediate and speaking to be beginner levels. Tim also mentioned that he often has a problem with grammar. Moreover, he does not enjoy studying English at school and rated his fondness of English as an

academic subject as a 5 out of 10. Tim's case suggests that self-concept of English abilities could be domain-specific. Students may have high self-concept in one area, but low in others.

While engaging in different out-of-class English activities every day, Tim considers playing games and reading books to be the most helpful in learning English. He considered playing games and game-related activities, such as watching YouTube clips about games, reading game forums, and communicating with other players, to be one activity. Tim considers game-related activities to be helpful because they "force" him to use English. Despite considering reading as one of the most helpful activities, Tim does not read English-language books on a regular basis. During the week he kept the activity log, no reading was documented. Tim explained that as a high school student, he did not have time to read books during the semester. Moreover, Tim would normally choose Thai over English-language books, if they were available. The only reason Tim would choose to read English-language books is that the same information is not available in Thai-language books. In a way, Tim does not have an intention to learn English by reading at all. He merely sees English as a medium to get to information and entertainment.

**Summary.** In both Ohm's and Tim's cases, engaging in out-of-class English activities has significantly shaped their self-concept and attitudes. Positive self-concept and attitudes lead to more engagement in out-of-class activities. Ohm expressed some level of intention of learning English from out-of-class activities. On the other hand, Tim did not show any intention to engage in out-of-class activities in order to improve his English skills. Since Tim's attitude is that better information is available in English than in Thai, he reads English books. However, because he does not intend to use reading as his way of learning English, he would not choose to read English books if information is available in Thai language. In contrast, Ohm appears to seek out

English reading because he intends to learn English, not because the books are not available in Thai. The contrast between the two cases suggests that intention might play a role in the frequency in which students engage in out-of-class activities.

Activity theory offers a way to analyze human activities as they are mediated by technologies and semiotic tools (language), communities, and sociohistorical influences (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006b). These last two cases are good examples of how activity theory can be used to explain the process of language learning through out-of-class activities. During their critical events, Ohm and Tim engaged in out-of-class activities with the objective of accomplishing specific tasks such as playing games and getting information rather than learning English. Because mediational means in accomplishing these activities include the English language, students most likely formed learning English as a sub-goal. The communities, rules, and division of labor for accomplishing these activities reinforce the importance of achieving the sub-goal of learning English. Students felt the need to become fluent enough in English to accomplish their objective of doing these activities. In Ohm's case, he also engaged in another activity, which can be explained as another activity system in which the objective is learning English. He sought out English books to read, not because they were not available in Thai, but because he wanted to learn English. Yet in Tim's case, he did not form another activity system like this. The purpose of his English activities remained to accomplish something else, with the English language as one of the mediational means. This shows that even within the group with engaging in out-of-class activities as critical events, there are still differences in how students learn English from out-of-class activities.

A comparison of all the previous cases suggests that the presence of the English language in out-of-class activities alone is not sufficient to influence learning. It is likely that the English

language functions as a mediating tool to influence a student's English learning trajectory. For example, in Mai, Ohm, and Tim's cases, playing games included the use of the English language. However, Mai selected games where she did not need to use English. She could simply ignore the English language component and still be able to play the games. In other words, the English language was not a mediating tool in Mai's case. In Ohm and Tim's cases, on the other hand, the English language was a crucial part in playing games, thus mediating most actions involved in playing games.

## Roles of Social Factors on English Learning

The second research question is divided into three sub-questions, and the findings are presented based on each sub-question. The first sub-question concerns identifying social factors influencing learning trajectories and out-of-class learning practices. The second sub-question concerns how the social factors influence students' English learning trajectories. The last sub-question deals with how the social factors influence students' out-of-class English learning practices. Findings for this research question and all its sub-question are drawn from the data from both phases.

### What Are the Social Factors High School EFL Students Perceive as Influential to Their Learning Trajectories and Out-Of-Class English Learning Practices?

This section presents social factors participants identified as influential to their English learning trajectories and out-of-class English learning practices. Investigating students' learning trajectories in depth showed that English learning does not happen in a vacuum. Contextual factors more often than not played a role in shaping their English language development. Two major social factors: social interaction and social structure, emerged as influential to English

learning for students in this study. These two factors are not mutually exclusive, but for the purpose of describing the concepts, they will be mentioned separately.

**Social interaction.** People in students' lives undoubtedly have an influence on students' learning, including out-of-class activity practices to a certain extent, either directly or indirectly. Throughout the learning trajectory, each student had countless interactions with others, which influenced their English learning. Interactions reported here will focus on interactions that students considered as influential or related to critical events in their trajectories.

***People identified as influential to English learning.*** Students considered three main groups of people as influential to their learning trajectories: family, peers, and teachers. *Family* refers to parents, siblings, step-parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins. *Peers* are defined as people in students' social circles excluding family members and professional teachers. This includes peers, classmates, older/younger peers, acquaintances, online friends and so on. The last group consists of teachers, which refers to any people in professional teaching positions, such as teachers at school, tutors at tutoring school, and private tutors, but excluding family and friends who help teach or tutor students. The number of students who considered family, peers and teachers as influential are 34, 31 and 20, respectively.

***Interaction patterns.*** Social interactions that students considered influential to their English learning trajectories and out-of-class practices have several specific patterns. The most common patterns are described here with examples. The number of students who mentioned specific interaction patterns as influential to their English learning is shown in Table 7.

Table 7

*Students Indicating Interactions with Other People as Influential to their English Learning* ($N$ = 45)

| People | Inspiring | Engaging in Out-of-class Activities | Cultivating Attitudes | Communicating in English | Praising/ Criticizing | Teaching |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family | 8 | 21 | 12 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| Peers | 13 | 17 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 0 |
| Teachers | 4 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 18 |

*Inspiring.* This type of interaction refers to a person whose good English skills inspire the students to acquire English proficiency. People with this kind of interaction with students tend to become the student's role model. Participants mentioned peers as inspirations most often ($n$ = 13). Eight students considered family members as their inspirations, while only four students mentioned teachers as their inspirations.

For students that mentioned having family members for this kind of interaction, the interactions tended to start from a young age. For some students, the influential interaction has continued into the present, while for others the interaction has become infrequent. That said, students still identified these relationships as important to their learning. For example, Fah admires her mother and sees her as a role model in learning English:

> My mom is my role model. She is a little bit over 50 years old. There are few women her age who can speak English fluently. She is so successful in her career [as an entrepreneur], which makes me want to speak English as fluently as she does.

In Thai society where involvement with extended family is common, it is unsurprising that several students reported relatives such as cousins, aunts and uncles as influential to their English learning. One participant, Pla, stated:

My cousin has a lot of experience, and she's good at learning languages. I already like learning languages. Well, now it's mainly English. She likes learning English too. She also studied other languages. She's my idol. I want to be like her because she's doing really well. She is successful in her career and that makes other areas of her life such as family successful as well.

Sometimes this group of interactants did more than display good English skills. They also showed and exposed students to how they learned English, which students then emulated. For example, Ou likes to translate English lyrics into Thai (see Figure 4). When asked about how she learned to do that, she revealed that she learned it from her older sister. Ou was not conscious of the influence from her sister at first, but when asked more about the particular way that she translates the lyrics, she mentioned emulating what her sister used to do.
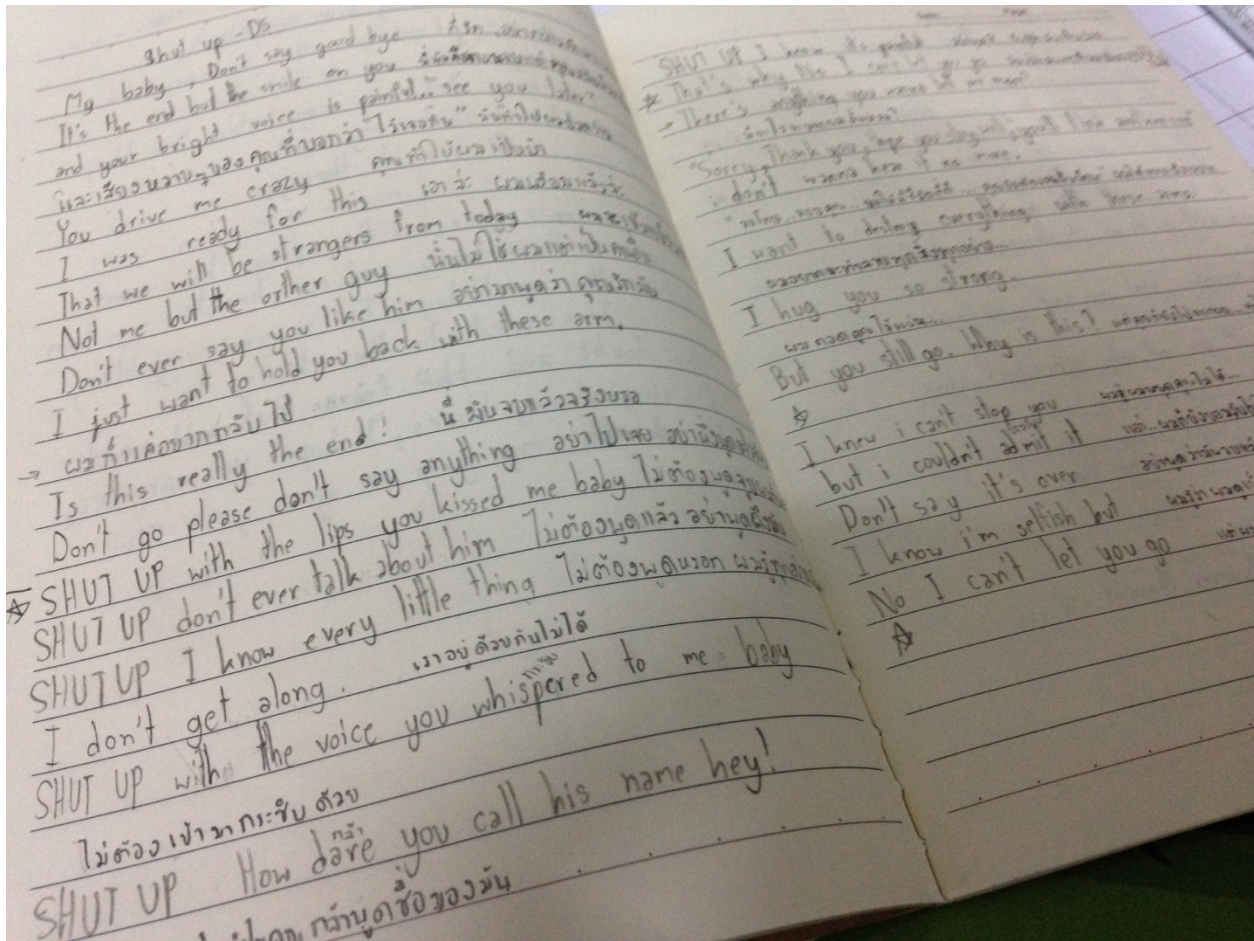


*Figure 4.* Ou's translated lyrics. Used with permission.

Another group in this type of interaction was peers. Students said frequently, "I want to be like him/her." In contrast to family influence, peers tended to become more influential in the more recent years, usually in middle and high school. For example, Bo described her critical point as performing in a skit competition in M3. She saw her older peers perform with a clear speech, which made Bo want to practice more to be able to speak like them. Sometimes it is not only that the peers become role model, but it is also the need to fit in with the group, like in Gigi's case where she felt the need to be good at English to be like her classmates. During the observation, Vee mentioned her motivation in studying and preparing for her study abroad came from interactions with other students in the scholarship programs. She felt that they are all serious about their studies and that she had to be prepared as well.

*Engaging in out-of-class English activities.* This interaction pattern refers to any interactions related to out-of-class English learning practices, including engaging in activities with students, encouraging/pushing students to engage in activities, and engaging in activities themselves while students observing them engaging in activities. Family members and peers appear to be in the majority for this kind of interaction ($n = 21$ and 17, respectively). Only five students mentioned teachers as influential to their engagement with English activities. This type of activity is usually positive to the learning trajectory.

Family often influences students to read written media, listen to music, and watch audiovisual media, while peers tend to influence students to listen to music, to play games, and to watch audiovisual media, like in June's case when she started listening to English-language music because of her friend. Family members influence students' reading by buying books and/or reading books with students. In Pom's case, she states, "My dad would buy me English books. When I was young, whenever my dad went abroad, he would buy [English-language]

88

children's encyclopedia." With friends, they often shared their love of specific genres, artists, songs and albums. During the observation Vee was reading the book *Love, Rosie*, which was suggested by a senior at her school.

Another way of bringing activities into students' lives is regulating students' out-of-class activities, which come in multiple ways. For example, a person would design a structured-activity he/she believed would help students learn English, such as studying vocabulary together or having students read books aloud, while the other person would correct pronunciation. This type of interaction could influence students' learning trajectories in a positive or negative way, as the excerpt below illustrates:

Nong:          Most of the time my mom bought [English-language] cassettes. Then she turned them on for me to listen. Then my mom would summarize and translate [them] for me.

Researcher:    How did she play the cassette?

Nong:          It's a cassette for English listening practice. There was a book in Thai, translated the English dialogue. Mom would open that book and then asked me to read, listen to the tape, and then ask me to translate and tell her what they had said.

Another example is how Boss's mother got him to learn vocabulary:

My mom forced me to memorize vocabulary since I was a kid.…She made me sit down and copy every word. Copying five words and then their meanings. Doing this, I got writing [skill]. Now when I listen [to English words], I can write them down. Sometimes I don't understand the meanings, but I can write them down.

*Attitudes*. This usually manifested in the form of students citing another person's words in the interview. Unsurprisingly, family is the most common group of people in this type of interactions ($n = 21$). Only one student mentioned peers and two students mentioned teachers in this type of interactional pattern. The common messages are along the line of English is necessary in working and living in today's world:

If I 'get' English, I would never be unemployed. (Ploy)

My mom wants me to learn the language. My stepmom also wants me to learn the language because they want me to 'get' English. They want me to be able to work abroad. Like if we are good at languages, people would want to work with you. [They] want me to have a good career, well-paid so I don't have to struggle. (Mink)

[English is] very important. ..Mom said that when applying for jobs, being able to speak English is a requirement, otherwise we can't compete with others. (Fah)

The degree to which each student seems to have internalized these messages varied. For instance, Ning mentioned that adults often said that learning English would open more opportunities:

Adults like to tell us that learning English would open up new opportunities. Because most people in the word speak English, if we speak English, we can communicate with a lot more people. This would broaden our world view. If we only speak Thai, we would only know things happening in Thailand.

However, later in the interview, Ning said that she did not think English is that important:

Researcher:    Do you think English is important to you?

Ning:          I think not really. Living in Thailand, [I] don't need to talk to foreigners. No need to use it [English]. … It might be necessary sometimes but it's not on a level that is important to me.

This shows that even though Ning acknowledged the values and beliefs adults are attaching to English, she has not yet internalized these messages.

*Communicating in English.* This pattern is about other people using English to communicate with students. Students mentioned three groups of people as influential in this type of interaction almost equally with seven participants mentioned family members communicating with them in English as influential and six students mentioned peers and teachers in this type of interaction. This could be a Thai person using English to communicate with students to help students learn English or a speaker of English using English to communicate as the only way to

communicate with students. Fah's situation with her British stepfather is a good example of her family members communicating in English.

Based on the observation, interactions between Fah and her stepfather show how close they are with each other and how comfortable she is using English. Fah calls him "Dad," while he calls her by her nickname. She always talks about him in a loving and respectful manner, signaling that she sees him as a father figure. Their interactions were often playful, frequently including puns and jokes. Fah mentions multiple times during the interview and observation that her stepfather made her feel confident and comfortable in speaking English. Observing Fah's interaction with her stepfather confirms the description she mentioned in the interview about her stepfather being one of the most influential people in her life. Their interactions were playful. It was clear that Fah has learned to use English comfortably by interacting with her stepfather.

In some cases, people in students' lives choose to use English with students to help them learn English. Lily's situation shows how Thai people speaking to students in English usually involves code-switching between Thai and English as a way to help student learn:

> My mom likes to speak English as well. My dad would tell me English words all the time. My dad's a doctor so he knows a lot of medical vocabulary. He would divide the words and teach me word roots and so on….They spoke with me in English since I was a kid. As a kid, when I was to take a bath, [they would] say "take a bath ไหมลูก [Thai words for creating a question and a pronoun referring to the child]." I didn't understand, but every time I was to take a bath, I heard "Take a bath. Take a bath." I didn't know that this meant taking a bath, not until later on did I understood that this meant taking a bath.

This interaction pattern also includes communicating with teachers outside classroom. In this case, students in the English program seem to have an advantage because they have more English-speaking teachers leading to more opportunities to speak English.

Researcher:    When do you talk to native-speakers?

Gigi:    Talk to teacher [original in English]. We have a native-speaker teacher teaching R&K [research and knowledge]. He teaches....He had a lot of

91

information [knowledge]. I talked to him very often because most work from his assignments can be used in my daily life.

*Praising/Criticizing.* This type of interaction refers to the other person commenting on students' English abilities. The most influential group is peers with three students mentioned this type of interaction to influence their learning trajectories. Only one student mentioned family and the other one student mentioned teachers as influential through this pattern of interaction. Comments included positive interactions, such as praising or giving compliments, and negative ones, such as criticizing, mocking, and/or bullying. This type of interaction does not regulate students' English activities directly, but usually influences how students feel about their English skills. Positive interactions like praising did not get mentioned as particularly influential or relevant to learning trajectories. The negative ones, on the other hand, seemed to be highly salient in some students. For example, Ou mentioned her older sister as having some negative influence, but the pressure did not come directly from her sister, but from her parents.

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Is there anyone influencing your English learning? |
| Ou: | My sister. |
| Researcher: | How so? |
| Ou: | Actually, not her, but because of her, I got pressured. |
| Researcher: | How did she make you get pressured? |
| Ou: | She's very good at English, like out of this world. It made me feel that I'm not good, so I tried to change, but I couldn't. [sarcastic soft chuckle] |
| Researcher: | Did your sister pressure you or someone else? Or did you pressure yourself? |
| Ou: | My mom pressured [me]. |
| Researcher: | How so? |
| Ou: | She would say "Your sister is so good [at English]." Other people would say "Wow, your sister's so good [at English]. That means you must be good [at English] too." But it's not like that. |

Peers also have this kind of negative influence, such as in Mai's case when she was teased about her accent so much that she stopped speaking English at school. In one case, speaking with too good of an accent could also lead to a negative behavior. In P3 [grade 3] Ning transferred to a program that used less English than her previous program, so she had a better accent than her new classmates. She said, "When I was in P3 [grade 3], I excelled in English class. My classmates were jealous, so I used English less often."

*Teaching.* This includes instances where students mentioned formal teaching in or outside school as influential to their out-of-class English learning practices. Eighteen students mentioned this interaction pattern with teachers as influential to their learning trajectories.

> In M3 [grade 9], the teacher taught really well. What the teacher taught me then, I still remember it today.…[Studying with this teacher] makes me feel that I have made a progress. He/she taught grammar rules like verbs and so on. It helps in doing tests as well. (Ning)

> Teacher Aor. She teaches advanced English and uses difficult [exercise] problems. It's challenging. Normally, I get really high scores. When I got a low score, I was shocked. It made me want to study more. (Pla)

> My tutor in P5 [grade 5]. Well, accent is difficult to learn, but my tutor in P5 trained me really hard, for like a year or two. The tutor trained me until I could speak with the right accent. Then my tutor taught vocabulary and how to do English tests. My tutor taught everything, which made me feel that I was getting better. (Bell)

To sum up, the patterns of interaction that most students considered as influential are activities and inspirations. The data suggests that most students perceived out-of-class activities as having an influence on their learning trajectories (see Table 7). This activity interaction pattern shows that family members tend to have influenced students since they were young, while peers begin to exert an influence starting in middle school. Inspiration usually results in students aspiring to become like their role models. At this age, peers seem to have more influence for students. Unsurprisingly, family members are most influential in sharing attitudes

93

and values toward English. This could be because in order to transmit attitudes and values, they need to be repeated over and over until students internalize the messages. Family was found to be the group that spent the most time with students, thus it was their values and attitudes that were transmitted to the students most easily. In using English to communicate with students, there are similar numbers of cases in all three groups of people. In praising or criticizing students' English skills, peers seemed to have the most influence. Nonetheless, positive comments are usually not perceived as influential, thus do not appear in this table. Teachers, predictably, have the most influence on learning trajectories by teaching.

**Social structure.** *Social structure* refers to the environment surrounding students. In contrast with social interaction as a factor mentioned previously, social structure represents something more general, namely, the environment where students' English learning takes place. This social structure inevitably includes interactions with other people. However, the focus of describing social structure as a separate construct from social interaction is to highlight contextual factors unspecific to significant people in students' lives but influential to students' English learning trajectories and out-of-class practices. Social structure is constructed based on social and cultural values. This section will, therefore, present social structures that students considered to be influential to their English learning.

*Home language environment.* The present study shows how varying degrees of English in students' home environment can influence English language learning and engagement in out-of-class activities. While, naturally, the amount of English language used at home depends on parents, several students chose to create their own English language environment at home. The observation data and activity logs revealed three patterns of English language environment at home. The first pattern is that English language at home happens naturally, such as in cases of

intercultural families. In this pattern, English is an automatic language of choice to communicate among family members without intentionally using English to help students learn. The second pattern is when parents make no active efforts in creating English language environment at home but provide their children with the resources to do so. In this pattern, it is almost entirely up to the students. As high school students, some participants in this study, such as Vee and Tim, seemed to control the amount of English used in their home environment most of the time as seen in the activity logs showing how much time students used English at home environment. The third pattern is of parents who actively created an English language environment at home. In this pattern, parents intentionally create a home English language environment to help their children learn English, for example, by watching movies in English or listening to English-language music at home.

Fah's family is a good example of the first pattern. In the observation, Fah told me that her mother does not allow her or her brother to use the computer before noon on non-school days. Therefore, she usually spends her mornings with her stepfather, talking or watching movies or documentaries. On the day of the observation, they decided to watch a documentary titled *Carbon Nation* (2010) with no subtitles. Fah's stepfather is very interested in renewable energy. He mentioned that he had solar panels installed on their roofs, which is not common in Thai houses either, especially in densely populated areas. Fah told me that she often watches documentaries with her stepfather. Many of these documentaries are about renewable energy, which sparked Fah's interest in studying engineering with a concentration in renewable energy.

While watching the documentary, Fah and her stepfather would often talk about what was shown. Usually these were short interactions. Sometimes her stepfather said things and looked at Fah to see her reactions. Sometimes Fah would ask questions, and he would answer. For

95

example, this conversation happened as they were watching the documentary:

| Fah: | Why do they have to use nuclear? Why not use solar? It takes years to clean up [nuclear] |
| Stepfather: | What do you mean? You don't think nuclear is bad, do you? |
| Fah: | It's bad, and I don't want it. |
| Stepfather nodding: | Yeah, you've got the problem like Chernobyl, or like in Japan. |

Furthermore, Fah has to speak English at home even with her mother or brother, because her stepfather does not want to feel left out. This creates the English language environment at home that she has become accustomed to. Fah only speaks Thai with her mother and brother when her stepfather is not present, which is rare, since he is retired. Based on the observation, it is evident that Fah's home environment involves the English language more than Thai language, which undoubtedly has a positive influence on her English learning.

The next pattern is students constructing home English language environment by themselves such as in Vee and June's cases. Vee's home environment is more typical to regular Thai students than Fah's. The observation shows that Vee lives with her extended family, which includes her parents, grandparents, an aunt and a cousin. Observing Vee confirms what she had said in the interview, which is that her family does not use English at home. It appears that Vee is the only one in the family who uses English. Although her grandfather does not use English, he noted during the observation how proud he is of his granddaughter: "She's the only one in the family who can speak English. And she's very good." Although Vee's parents are supportive in any English-learning activity she wants to do, they have not engaged in these activities with her. For the most part, Vee has been active in her English learning and has sought out English learning activities on her own. This suggests that home English language environment does not have to come from family members. Students can construct their own English language

environment at home.

Similar to Vee, the observation shows June living with her parents and a younger brother in their house a suburb of Bangkok. June mentioned that her parents and younger brother do not speak English fluently. They almost never use English at home. The amount of English used at home is limited to June watching movies or TV shows in English with Thai subtitles with her brother in their study room. The observation shows June's attempt to construct English language environment at home.

Koi's story shows how parents can actively creating home English language environment to support their children's English learning. From the interview, activity log, and photos, Koi mentioned that she usually engages in out-of-class English learning practice activities because of her parents. For example, her mother started speaking English with her while she was transitioning from middle to high school. Koi was already in the English program [EP] during middle school. Her mother said that if Koi did not speak English at home, she would be moved to the Thai program [TP] in high school. Koi wanted to be with her friends so she spoke English with her mother.

During M3 [grade 9], her mother told her to write anything in English for 40 lines every day, which prompted her to search for information in English. In the interview, she mentioned that this activity led her to the Listverse.com website. In the observation, she continued to read this website even though she no longer had to practice writing. In addition, reading fiction is another activity initiated by her parents. Koi did not read English-language books during the observations, but there were several English-language novels in her father's office. She explained that these were books that her parent suggested for her to read to improve her English.

During the observations, Koi mentioned that she usually listens to English audiobooks on

the ride home with her parents. At the time of the observation she was listening to a Harry Potter audiobook. She mentioned that it was helpful in learning English. This activity was also initiated by her parents playing audiobooks in the car during the commute time. Her parents would discuss the stories with her from time to time.

Koi mentioned that, at home, her parents watch and listen to English-language media most of the time. She feels that her home environment always involves English because her parents both earned their doctoral degrees in Australia. Koi mentioned several times that her parents are fluent in English and that they try to involve Koi in informal out-of-school English activities as much as they can. Koi's case shows parents' efforts in creating home English language environment.

*Admissions exams.*  In major cities in Thailand (especially Bangkok), there are certain schools that are considered more prestigious or academic than others. Most families try to get their children into a more prestigious school as they move to higher grades, especially when it comes to high school, as this level is considered the most important stage in terms of preparing students for college entrance exams. These prestigious schools are difficult to be admitted into, creating a highly competitive environment for students and parents alike. Students are admitted based on grades and/or test scores. Therefore, in a transition from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school, students' parents often make arrangement for extra tutoring classes to prepare their children for the admissions tests. This is considered the norm in middle to upper-middle class level of families in Bangkok and its suburbs. In this study, many students mentioned preparation for admissions exams as their critical events. As English is considered one of the more important parts of a high school admissions test, studying for the exams generally prompts students to study more English and take English more seriously.

June's behavior helps to confirm the significance of the admissions exams structure. In June's observation, she was working hard to prepare for the college admissions exams, which include English as one of the main subjects. The workbook she was using was based on different parts of the exam. In other words, the practice exercises from her tutor mimic the admissions exams' structure.

*School structure.* This includes the program, learning materials, curriculum, and classmates' level of English. The significance of school structure usually does not become noticeable to students until they change schools. Once students have changed schools, they can pinpoint how the changes in school structure have affected their learning. The way that schools in Bangkok are structured lends itself to segregate students based on their academic abilities, especially as indicated in grades and test scores. More often than not, students who get into prestigious schools will end up with classmates who have high levels of academic achievement, although not exclusively with respect to English abilities. The school in this study is considered a prestigious school in Thailand, as it has ranked in the top five or ten public high schools in Thailand in recent years. All students were admitted based on their performance on admissions tests. However, in the Thai program, the weight of English scores in admission criteria was much lower than those of the English program. Moreover, students in the English program had to pay a higher tuition fee, implying a difference of socioeconomic status between students in Thai and English programs. This structure creates different learning environments for students. Students in the English program tend to have higher English proficiency than those in the Thai program, not purely because of what students learn in the program, but because of students' different socioeconomic status. In other words, these factors mattered even before students had started the program.

***Optional formal instruction***. Attending tutoring classes was the norm for students in this sample. Most students started attending tutoring classes during primary school. The numbers and the level of intensity of classes usually increase as students move to higher grades. In regards to English learning, there are generally two types of formal instruction outside schools. The first is studying in small groups with native-speakers, focusing mostly on listening and speaking skills. The other type is studying in with Thai teachers focusing on mainly on grammar and test preparation. The degree of engagement in this type of formal instruction vary greatly. In one-on-one and small-group tutoring classes, students usually have some level of interactions with real teachers. In other cases, students merely watch recorded videos of teaching with no real interactions with teachers at all.

During the observation, June spent a significant amount of time completing homework from her tutoring school. Her homework with the tutor and her description of her tutoring sessions show that she mainly attends the tutoring school for the purpose of preparing for the college admissions exam.

***English-language media.*** In Bangkok, English-language media is readily available with the click of a button. Stores are filled with English-language CDs, DVDs, and books, although in certain districts more than others. However, Thai public TV channels do not have English-language media. Only people with access to cable can watch English-language media on TV. Nonetheless, students in this sample have taken to using the Internet as a source of media instead of TV. This means that they generally have access to English-language media with little to no barriers.

***Globalization.*** Students in Bangkok see plenty of tourists and expats in the area. Students are observing the manifestation of globalization. Many students mentioned the advent of the

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community, as their reason to learn English. All students acknowledge the importance of English in school and the workplace. Moreover, being a metropolitan city, Bangkok has a structure that supports interactions with foreigners in terms of religious, sport, and recreational communities. Globalization also affects Thailand's popular culture. Students in the study were exposed to popular culture from an international perspective. To them, popular culture means media from Thai society, the "English-speaking world" (the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand), Japan, Korea, China, and international communities in general. With media from non-English-speaking countries, students often use English or Thai as a means to consume the media. With these changes, English is no longer considered an advantage, but more as a requirement.

The impact of globalization and media on English learning was observed in Vee's case. In the afternoon of the second day of the observation, Vee and her friend went to the mall nearby. They spent some time browsing English-language books, DVDs and music albums. They did not look exclusively at English-language media, though. They also looked at Thai, Korean, and Japanese media. This suggests the influences of globalization and international media on the availabilities of different types of media in Bangkok. Like many Thai students in Bangkok, they have exposure to international media. English-language media is merely one of the many languages. However, since English is also a part of mandatory education, students seem to try to make use of the media by learning from it, as well as finding entertainment in it. Vee's case shows the physical influence of international media at the mall.

*Information flow.* *Information flow* is related to the availability of English-language media in society. Most information, especially specialized knowledge, is often translated from English. Much specialized information has not been translated into Thai, and, thus, if students

want to find information that is not part of mainstream Thai culture, they must look to English-language media. Furthermore, information available in the Thai-language tends to be subjected to critical analysis and scrutiny from experts less frequently, which has led to the belief that information in Thai is usually, though not always, less reliable than in English. In some areas, information in Thai maybe available, but it is more difficult to search for information in Thai than in English because of the way search engines work with the Thai language.

The impact of information flow structure can be seen in Koi's case. She used English keywords to search for information even when writing a report in Thai. She believes that most information can be easily found if searched for in English rather than in Thai. For example, she used the phrase "reference on soap making" instead of a Thai phrase. She said that the search results tended to be better if she used English keywords.

**How Do Social Factors Influence English Learning Trajectories?**

In this section, influences of social factors on English learning trajectories are explained through three selected students from previously mentioned stories. In the description of each student's learning trajectory, influential social factors are identified and connected to the learning trajectory. While not in the original focus on the study, self-concept and attitudes emerged as one of the crucial parts of learning trajectories. The patterns of self-concept and attitudes are described at the end of this sub-section.

**Vee's learning trajectory.** Vee's learning trajectory started to change in P5 [grade 5], and she had little control over it. The school she was studying at changed the learning structure and made English a top priority. With this change, Vee started to get a sense that she liked learning English. This could mean that she felt she could learn English successfully and that English was important.

Nonetheless, Vee did not feel she had made any changes personally in terms of learning English. Instead, she merely perceived this period as having laid the foundation for her English learning. Furthermore, when she transitioned from her primary to middle school, her learning program changed from the Thai Program (TP) to the Intensive English Program (IEP). Vee explained that in the IEP in middle school, she had to use English more often than in the TP. However, she felt that this change had only a minor positive impact on her learning trajectory.

She studied abroad in Canada in the summer of M2 [grade 8], which had a significant impact on her learning trajectory in two ways. First, she interacted with native-speakers in a real-life setting daily because she was staying with a Canadian host family and was attending a Canadian school. This forced her to use English intensively over a short period of time. Second, this event made her feel that her English was improving. Since she was forced to use English all the time, she might had positive results from interactions with native-speakers, which was made her feel competent in her English abilities. The effect of this event has continued, even after the event ended.

It seems that the change in school programs (social structure) started the positive change in her learning trajectory by teaching Vee the foundations of English and instilling some positive attitudes toward learning English. Then when she went to Canada, her interactions with native speakers (social interactions) shaped her positive beliefs about her own English abilities and attitudes, which made her engage in out-of-class activities more often, as observed in her increased engagement in out-of-class activities such as listening to music, communicating with online friends, and reading books after coming back from Canada.

**Mai's learning trajectory.** Mai had several negative experiences influencing her English learning trajectory. Mai felt that she was wrongly punished by her English teacher in P3

[grade 3]. Even though the experience did not involve the English language itself, as a child Mai drew an association between her English teacher and learning English. Thus, from the time of this incident with the teacher, she stopped paying attention to learning English.

As she transitioned to middle school, Mai made a choice to change from the Thai Program (TP) to English Integrated Studies (EIS). This decision, even though it increased the amount of English used in her environment, had a negative impact on Mai. She was in an environment where teachers expected students to possess a certain level of English proficiency and classmates expected peers to have a similar level of proficiency. Mai was heavily criticized by her teachers and peers, which reinforced her belief that she was not good at English.

Throughout her learning trajectory, Mai rarely engaged in out-of-class activities. When English was used in her out-of-class activities, such as listening to music or watching movies, she admitted that she did not pay attention to the English language components.

In short, even though Mai has been learning English since P1 [grade 1], her learning trajectory does not reflect positive development. Her first negative interaction with the English teacher in P3 [grade 3] and further negative interactions with teachers and peers caused her to avoid English. From Mai's experience, it is evident that interactions with teachers and peers (social interaction) had negative impacts on her, making her feel that she was incompetent in English. Here, the change of the learning program (social structure) was the background for this critical event, as it was the change to the EIS program in middle school that brought her to interact with said teachers and peers. It could be further explained that the level of challenges in the EIS program might not match Mai's proficiency level, causing her to feel incompetent in her English skills.

**Tim's learning trajectory.** Tim's learning trajectory has two main critical events. Tim's English did not improve much during primary school. He started to use English more often when he transitioned from the Thai Program (TP) to the English Integrated Studies (EIS) program in M1 [grade 7], which required him to use English in core subjects. At this point, his friends also got him interested in online games. The combination of these two factors started Tim on the upward learning trajectory, but it was not until he followed his teacher's advice and started reading English-language books on computer programming that he felt a significant change in his ability. At the same time, Tim started playing online games with players from foreign countries. It appears that the school program and English-language games (social structure) started Tim's regular use of English. Then the teacher (social interaction) influenced him to start reading English-language books. This activity, as it turned out, had a significant impact on Tim's learning trajectory.

Nonetheless, Tim's learning trajectory does not reflect his view of academic English. Tim still believes that his in-school learning is subpar. Tim's story shows that his improved abilities outside the classroom did not translate to in-school learning. He still does not like in-school learning and feels insecure about his abilities in academic English. It appears that while he perceives himself as capable in reading English outside of the classroom, he perceives himself as less capable in academic English, as measured by in-class exams.

**Changes of self-concept and attitudes toward English.** Another interesting pattern that emerged from mapping students' learning trajectories is the changes in students' perceptions about their own English abilities and attitudes toward English. These changes usually happened in conjunction with or just after critical events. For example, during her stay in Canada, Vee realized that her English was good enough to communicate with others. She also came to view

105

learning English in a more positive light. After she was back from Canada, she started engaging in more out-of-class English activities. On the contrary, Mai had several negative experiences in primary and middle school, causing her to view herself as not good at English. From her narrative, she did not have a significant change in her out-of-class English learning practice. This could be because her perception of her English abilities and attitudes toward English had become more negative over time. In Tim's case, during the critical event of reading English-language, technical books, he started to see himself as capable of reading English books. Across all 45 participants, the patterns of changes common in this study are self-concept and attitudes toward English.

*Self-concept.* Self-concept in foreign language learning is defined as "an individual's self-description of competence and evaluative feelings about themselves as foreign language learners" (Mercer, 2011a, p.14). Self-concept in this study refers to students' perceptions about their own English language abilities. In general, students develop a more positive self-concept toward their English abilities as they grow up and the number of years of English language instruction increases. In students whose learning trajectories changed rather dramatically, changes in self-concept seem to co-occur with the critical events.  It should also be noted here that self-concept in this study was found to be both global and domain-specific. Some students have a positive self-concept toward their own English skills in one area, but low in another, while others generalize their self-concept from specific English language skills to their global English skills.

Students' interview data revealed the changes of self-concept over the course of their English learning experiences. Vee said, "I think my stay in Canada was really helpful. [I have] improved listening, speaking, reading, writing. All of my English skills got better." This suggests

that Vee links her experience in Canada with the change of her evaluations of her English skills. For Mai, her middle school classmates made her feel insecure about her English accent. Mai mentioned during the interview, "My friends criticized my accent, making me feel that my English was so bad, making me feel that I didn't want to improve." Tim said "I read them [English books] and felt that my English was developing really quickly," which suggest the positive change of his self-concept toward his English reading ability.

Engagement in out-of-class activities can lead to a change of self-concept as well. From the observation, Vee was memorizing vocabulary by studying the list of words, looking up their meanings and composing sentences. Even though Vee felt that memorizing vocabulary this way was quite boring, her view was that since she had to learn these words sooner or later, she might as well learn them now. Nonetheless, she mentioned her excitement when she could compose her own sentences from these words. It made her feel that she started to be able to use these words in real life.

*Attitudes toward English.* Three types of attitudes toward English emerged from this study:

*a) Attitude toward English learning. Attitude toward English learning* refers to what students feel or think of English learning. The three most common attitudes found in the data were that 1) English is fun/boring (*n*=29), 2) English is easy/difficult (*n*=7), and 3) "I like learning English" (*n*=16). These kinds of attitudes appear to be heavily related to self-concept. Most students feel that English is fun or easy when they think they can do it. When they cannot do it, they feel it is boring or difficult. Nonetheless, how students perceive and define 'do' is different. For most students, 'do' means in-class participation, assignments, homework, and tutoring classes. For some, 'do' is about actually using the language in the real world, such as

speaking to others or consuming English-language media. For some, 'do' is a combination of all of these things.

Certain out-of-class activities also appear to tie to self-concept and attitudes toward English learning more heavily than others. For example, reading books seems to be closely related to self-concept and attitudes toward English learning, even though reading was not the most common activity cited as being the most helpful. Listening to music, on the other hand, despite being very popular, does not usually relate to self-concept and attitudes toward English learning.

*b) Attitude toward the English language. Attitude toward the English language* refers to what students think of the English language. The common ones among students in this study were English as a necessity for studying/working in the future ($n$=34); English as a lingua franca ($n$=16); English as a medium to knowledge and/or entertainment ($n$=26); and English as an academic subject ($n$=28).

When one kind of attitude was more salient in the students, it impacted how they chose to do out-of-class activities. For example, students who viewed English as an academic subject tended to engage in out-of-class activities related to studying, such as doing exercises or memorizing vocabulary. In contrast, students who viewed English as a medium for knowledge and/or entertainment tended to engage in reading, watching movies/series and playing games.

The observation confirms that June views English as an academic subject rather than a means to communicate. Her informal out-of-school activities are a result of her deliberate intention to learn English. She makes a conscious choice to engage in English activities to learn English. She watches movies in English because several teachers had told her that watching movies and shows in English would help her learn English. In a way, June still perceives English

as an academic subject, but she tries to integrate out-of-class activities as another way of learning.

Social structure might also have affected students' attitudes toward English. Observations of Vee and June show how attitudes toward the English-language as an academic subject manifested in students' behaviors. In Vee's case, she was preparing for her study abroad. June, on the other hand, was preparing for her college admissions exam. Both cases show the way Thai students treat English learning. For these students, it was clear that English is an academic subject to be learned intentionally. They prefer to sit down, study vocabulary, and complete exercises. It is unclear whether they learn this way because of how the English-language is measured in the school system, or if it is because they perceive it as the best or only way to learn English.

Most students considered English a lingua franca and admitted that English was required to communicate with people from other countries. However, this did not always lead to motivation in learning English. Motivation was found to depend on how students saw their needs to communicate with foreigners. If students believed that they will need or want to communicate with foreigners, they chose out-of-class activities that allowed them to communicate with others in English. If they did not see English as important to their life goals, they tended to stick to the "studying" types of activities.

*c) Attitude toward English-speaking communities.* Most students did not see the English language as associated with specific native-speaker cultures, but rather see English as a language for international communities. Only one student mentioned his desire to learn English in order to study and work in the United States. All other students expressed the desire to be able to communicate and integrate with international communities. Interestingly, many students (*n*=25)

109

mentioned non-native speakers of English as their target group for communicating in English. This shows that in Thailand, the goal of learning English for high school students might no longer be to integrate with the native-speaker society, but rather to integrate with international communities in general.

In conclusion, social factors (social interaction and social structure) could influence English learning trajectories in at least two ways. Social factors could provide foundation for critical events such as providing opportunities to use English and connecting students with groups of people using English regularly. Furthermore, social factors could shape students' self-concept and attitudes toward English such as instilling positive beliefs toward learning English and confidence to use English.

### How Do Social Factors Influence Out-Of-Class English Learning Practices?

Social factors were found to impact the students' choices of out-of-class activities and the ways they engage in the activities. The analysis suggests that social factors can influence students' out-of-class English learning practices in two ways: direct and indirect.

**Direct influence.**

Evidence from the narratives demonstrates that social factors can directly influence students' out-of-class behavior in at least two ways: choices of activities and how students engage in activities. The choice of activity was generally influenced by the people in students' lives. The people that they interacted with most usually introduced the activities or did activities with students (as shown in Table 7. For example, Fah watches documentaries in English because her stepdad watches with her. Similarly, June started listening to music because of her friend in M3 [grade 9]. Gigi's parents overtly discourage her from watching Thai-language media. Ohm started reading fiction because his father gave him the first book. Tim started reading English-

language computer books because his teacher suggested them. From the observation, Vee started studying a list of vocabulary in preparation for her study abroad. She mentioned that this list of *100 Words Every Middle Schooler Should Know* was recommended via a Facebook group by current students of the scholarship program. June's activities show the influence of her teachers and tutors. June mentioned that she started watching movies with English subtitles because her teachers and tutors advised it as an excellent way to learn English. Her tutors also encouraged her to engage in a self-sponsored study more often.

In addition, social structure influences choices of out-of-class activities, although the influence may be less observable than the influence of social interactions. For example, in many of these cases, students can engage in reading, listening to, and watching English-language media because they have access to the media, as a result of globalization. The structure of admissions exams as students transition from primary to middle school, middle to high school, and high school to college, has a large impact on students' choices of out-of-class activities. As seen in the interviews and activity logs, students in this study heavily participate in formal out-of-class instruction and self-sponsored study, which seem to be largely influenced by students' desires to succeed in admissions exams.

Social interactions seem to have a direct influence on how students engage in these activities as well. For example, June watched movies twice: once with Thai subtitles and then with English subtitles, because her tutors suggested it. Vee studied a vocabulary list and tried to compose her own sentences from the new words she had learned, because her online friends told her it was an effective way to learn vocabulary.

Moreover, social structure can influence how students engage in the activities. For example, Ohm changed the way he played games to involve other players more because he

watched YouTube clips of how other players played the games. This is partly a result of globalization, which provides access to English-language media and connection to other people. The structure of admissions exams, which use multiple-choice test items focusing on grammar and reading comprehension, undoubtedly influences how students engage in formal out-of-school instruction and self-sponsored study. Students tend to focus on grammar and reading skills because these were tested in the exam. Most students do not focus on practicing listening and writing skills because these are not assessed in the admissions exams.

**Indirect influence.**

Social factors were also found to influence out-of-class practices by shaping internal factors such as self-concept and attitudes toward English. Once students have developed positive self-concept and/or attitudes toward English, they tended to engage in out-of-class activities more frequently and actively. This can be observed in the narrative examples. Fah's interactions with her stepfather (social interaction) has gradually changed Fah's self-concept. As she used English to communicate with her stepfather more often, she felt more capable and confident in her English abilities, which, in turn, might have influenced her active and frequent engagement in informal out-of-class English activities. June developed a positive self-concept while she was preparing for her admissions exam (social structure). After that she engaged in out-of-class activities, such as formal out-of-school instruction, informal out-of-school activities, and self-sponsored study more often and more actively.

### What Are the Characteristics of Out-of-Class English Practices That Students Perceive as Helpful to Their English Learning?

Students reported engaging in several kinds of helpful English learning activities outside school. From the interview data, activity logs, and photos, four main types of out-of-class

activities emerged: 1) informal in-school activities, 2) formal out-of-school instruction, 3) informal out-of-school activities, and 4) self-sponsored study. Please note that all activities in this section were only activities that students identified as helpful to their English learning.

**Informal In-School Activities**

The first type, *informal in-school activities*, include homework and assignments that require students to complete them outside of school hours, and extracurricular activities, such as clubs and sports. A small number of students ($n = 5$, or 11%) mentioned this type of activities as helpful to their English learning. Only one student specifically mentioned homework as helpful. The other students reported extracurricular activities such as participating in debates or a skit competition as influential to their learning.

**Formal Out-of-School Instruction**

The second type of English learning activity was *formal out-of-school instruction*. The kinds of instruction with this type of activity varied from interactive learning with native-speakers to a lecture at tutoring school with Thai instructors. The mode of instruction varied from face-to-face to virtual learning. The size of the learning group varied as well, including one-on-one with a real tutor, one-on-one with a computer or virtual tutor, small groups, and lecture-type classes with several dozen students. This type of activity was common among participants. Most students ($n = 44$) reported having optional formal instruction outside school at some point in their lives. Nevertheless, only 18 students reported formal instruction outside school as having a significant positive influence over their English learning. Students did not report negative effects of this type of activity on English learning; instead, it was reported as either positive or neutral effects. This is understandable, as attending these instructional sessions was voluntary or semi-voluntary. Students who reported formal instruction having no effect

noted how they either did not pay attention in class or that the particular instructional approach did not help.

Learning with native-speakers either in small groups or one-on-one settings tended to help students to think that learning English was both fun and helpful. This attitude then contributed to feelings of comfort when using English. Studying with Thai teachers, real or virtual, also tended to be helpful, as it assisted students to understand specific language components like grammar or vocabulary. This finding confirms the common belief that Thai teachers teach language structure, while native-speakers teach fundamentals of English communication.

Formal instruction outside of class is considered the norm in this population. Only one student reported never attending tutoring classes. In students' learning histories in P1-M2 [grades 1-8], it seems that parents were the most influential in pushing/encouraging students to engage in this activity. However, during M3-M4 [grades 9-10], there seemed to be a social component added, as many students mentioned attending tutoring schools because their friends were attending. Students could have engaged in this activity to be a part of peer groups as well as to learn.

**Informal Out-of-School Activities**

The third type of activity was *informal out-of-school activities*. Students' intentions in engaging in these activities varied greatly. Some students did certain activities in English specifically for the purpose of learning English. Some students did these activities for other purposes, such as for entertainment or for gaining information. These activities relegated learning English to a secondary purpose. Some students engaged in these activities for their own sake without an intention to learn English.

**Common informal out-of-school activities.**

*Audiovisual media.* This activity refers to watching audiovisual media in various methods of delivery, such as movie theaters, TV, computer, tablets, and cell phones. The content watched included movies, TV series, entertainment shows, documentaries, news shows, animation, shows on YouTube, and reality shows, among others. This was the activity that the most students found helpful ($n = 30$ or 67%). The degree of English used in this type of activity varied. Audiovisual media that students found helpful were movies and shows in English with various uses of subtitles. The general pattern for students with an intention (primary or secondary) of using this activity to learn English was that they usually started with watching the media with Thai subtitles. As their English proficiency progressed, they moved on to English subtitles and then to no subtitles at all. However, the choice of using subtitles also depended on the availability as well. Students reported learning multiple language elements (i.e., spoken language, new vocabulary, particular phrases/idioms/colloquialisms used in specific situations, pronunciation, and accent) from these media. Students also reported that watching movies and TV shows helped them learn about the culture of English-speaking society and how to use English language in everyday life.

A detailed example of how Thai students learn English from watching audiovisual media can be seen in June's case. On the first day of the observation, June watched the movie *Hitman* (2007) with English subtitles. She told me that she had already watched this movie once with Thai subtitles. This time, she had a small notebook, and she noted down a few words or phrases from the movie. She said that she had intended to do this more often while watching movies, but she found it difficult at times. However, she did not look up word meanings in the dictionary for every word she wrote down (see Figure 5).
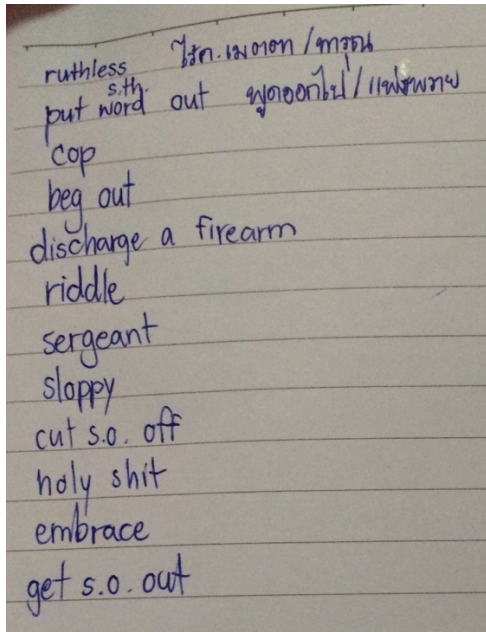
*Figure 5*. The list of vocabulary she learned while watching the movie *Hitman* (2007). Used with permission.

On the second day, June watched the animated movie *Hotel Transylvania 2* (2015) from the DVD with her younger brother in their study room. She watched this movie in English with Thai subtitles, but she did not take notes this time, because she said she had not watched it yet. Therefore, her attention would presumably be on the story, not the language. Nonetheless, her note shows that she had filled out Thai meanings of the words she wrote down on the first day of the observation and added more words she had learned during the time between day one and day two of the observations (see Figure 6).
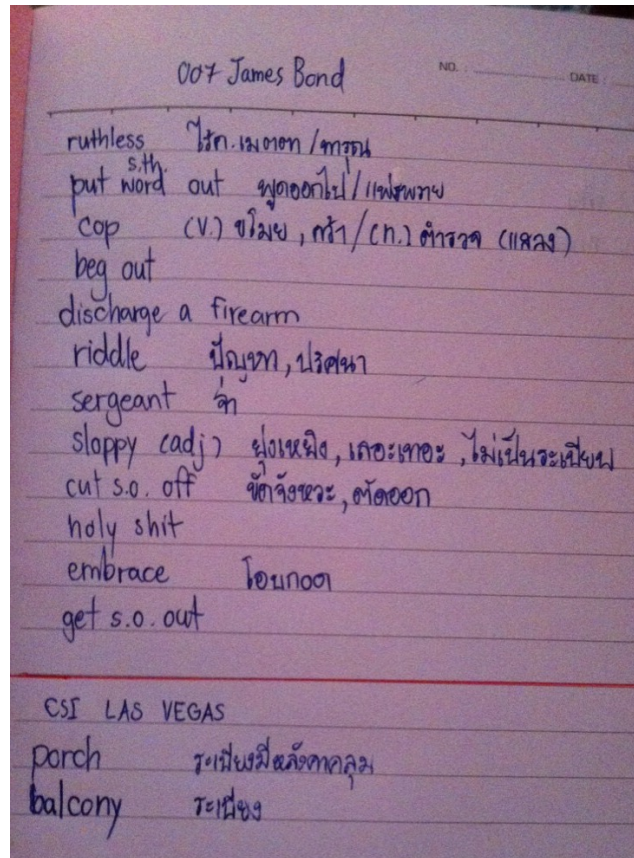
*Figure 6.* June's notes of vocabulary she learned by watching movies and series between observation Day 1 and Day 2. Used with permission.

YouTube is another medium of consuming audiovisual media frequently mentioned by

participants. On the second day of the observation, Vee's friend stopped by and spent some time

at her house. They watched several YouTube clips together. During the short interview about the

activity, Vee said she regularly watches video clips on YouTube. Most of the clips she watches

are DIY crafts and makeup tutorials. She described how she learned English from watching these

video clips by rewinding and watching them again or slowing the speed of the videos when she

did not understand them. When she caught only a few words, she would type them into Google

to find the whole phrases. During the observation, she and her friend watched video clips of a

Thai-British girl hosting a show with two other British hosts about tasting Thai sweets. The host

constantly code-switched between Thai and English and used several English words instead of

Thai words, yet Vee did not seem to have any problem understanding them at all.

Several students mentioned watching audiovisual media spoken in other languages such as Chinese, Japanese, and Korean with English subtitles. Even though these students reported this activity as a part of using English in their everyday lives, they did not consider it particularly helpful in learning English. For the group of students doing this activity, English learning was not an intention at all, but students did perceive that the English language was a part of their lives through this activity. What made audiovisual media one of the most helpful and common activities was the availability of a wide range of materials that matched students' interests and convenience and affordable access to the materials.

*Music.* This activity involved English-language music with lyrics. The activity included listening to music, singing, translating lyrics, and looking up the meaning of lyrics. The majority of students ($n = 28$, or 62%) mentioned listening to music as a helpful activity for learning English. What they reported learning from music was vocabulary, slang, and pronunciation. As was commonly cited by participants, the major advantage of learning English from music was convenience, as they could listen to music anytime and anywhere they wanted by using electronic gadgets. Additionally, it seems that music was connected much more with peers than people in other groups. In other words, peers seem to have more influence on this activity than family members or teachers.

*Written media.* Types of written materials mentioned were fiction, non-fiction, fanfiction, essays and articles, grade level readers, comic books, and manga. The methods of delivery mentioned were physical books, e-books, websites, and social media. The most common one that students considers helpful was children and young adult fiction in the form of physical books. A considerable number of students ($n = 16$, or 36%) mentioned reading as helpful. Even though

many students considered reading helpful, it did not show up often in their activity logs. Most students reported how reading helped them learn English when they were young up until middle school. Most said that in high school they did not have time to read because of schoolwork. What they learned from reading were essentially vocabulary and reading skills. Another interesting finding was that reading seemed to happen when students set out with a specific intention to read. This means that reading usually did not happen spontaneously like listening to music or watching TV. Groups of people who seemed to have the most influence on reading written media were family members, followed by teachers. Family members usually introduced students to books and encouraged students to read them. In a few cases, students started reading books because of teachers' recommendations and later sought out books to read on their own. Additionally, most students mentioned using either a physical dictionary or an electronic dictionary to help them read English at some point.

How students read English-language books was shown in details during the observation. On the first day of the observation, Vee read a book, *Love, Rosie,* which she said was recommended by a senior at school. She mentioned that she read it about two to three times a week. She felt that it was fun to read. During the observation, she rarely stopped reading to look up words in the dictionary unless she felt it was absolutely necessary. During an hour of reading, only twice did she look up words in the dictionary.

*Communication.* This refers to authentic communication with other people, including communicating with teachers/tutors outside school, with others during time abroad, with foreigners living in Thailand, and with other Thais. This includes both face-to-face and online interactions. A number of students ($n = 15$, or 33%) reported communicating in English as helpful. Students mentioned the confidence to use English, especially when speaking with

119

foreigners, as the most important thing they got out of communicating in English. Students also reported learning new vocabulary and pronunciation.

During the observation, Fah communicated with her friends through various platforms including Facebook, LINE (an instant messaging app), and Steam (a gaming platform). Fah interacted with some friends using Thai and other friends using English. She said that it depended on the person with whom she was communicating. For someone she met in person on a regular basis, like a classmate or a neighbor, it was more natural to use Thai. But with a person with whom she did not meet regularly, she thought using English felt more natural. Fah also used *code-switching*, mixing two or more languages in discourse (Poplack, 2001). From the observations, Fah code-switched at both sentence and discourse levels. She mixed English and Thai in the same sentences and also in alternative sentences. When asked to reflect on it, Fah stated that she switches freely between languages without conscious thought. She uses whichever language she feels can better express what she means at that moment. It was only after I asked about it that she thought about her code-switching patterns or methods.

*Games.* This category comprises playing games on computers or handheld devices, both online and off. Eleven students found this activity helpful (24%). Students reported learning new vocabulary, listening, reading and writing skills by playing games. For some students, playing games involved authentic communication with other players through within-game messaging. In this category of games, all students had learning English as a secondary purpose or not at all. However, even students not having English learning as an intention for doing this activity still reported learning English as a by-product.

In Phase 2, I observed Fah played online games with her friends. The games were in English, and the communication platform was also in English. She mentioned that her older

brother introduced her to online games when she was 12 years old. Fah explained that she

learned vocabulary from playing games by choosing to play games with rich backstories wherein

she had to guess the meanings of unknown words.

During the observation, Koi explained how she learned English from playing games. She

frequently played a game where she had to find a specific object in the scene. Most of the words

used in the game, she already knew. From time to time, she would learn a new word by guessing

from the context. The observation confirms what she had said in her Phase 1 interview about

how she learns specific words from playing these games:

> I play several games, so I think games help me learn a lot. I usually play games by Big
> Fish Games [company]. The goal is to find specific objects in the scenes. This scene
> required me to find a *noose*. I didn't know what that meant, so I had to look it up. I
> learned a lot of vocabulary and I think these are commonly used words. In another scene,
> the goal was to find a *monkey wrench*. I was confused. I know *wrench* is some kind of
> tool, like screwdriver or something like that, but I didn't know what a monkey wrench
> was. I clicked on a hint, then I learned that it was a tool that we can adjust in the middle. I
> think I've learned a lot of everyday vocabulary from playing these games.

**Summary of students' informal out-of-school English language activities.**

Observations show different ways in which students use out-of-class English activities. For Fah,

all activities observed were for entertainment. She did not set any intention of learning English

by engaging in these activities. It showed in her observation, as she did not consult a dictionary

or her stepfather. She asked her stepfather some questions, but those were not about the English-

language. Vee, on the other hand, seemed to use out-of-class English activities for both learning

English and enjoyment. She did some activities in English-language because she had to, such as

communicating with online friends from other countries. While she still did activities that

approached English as an academic subject, Vee also engaged in activities, such as watching

YouTube clips, for pure enjoyment. For some activities, such as reading a novel, she aimed for

both pleasure and learning English. June used most of her free time to engage in academic

English-language activities, including attending a tutoring school, completing assigned homework, and studying a vocabulary list. June engaged in entertainment-related activities, such as watching movies and TV series as well, but her purpose of engaging in these activities was about learning as much as entertainment. This influenced her behavior to watch movies twice: once in Thai and then again with English subtitles. Koi is an example of a student whose out-of-class activities contain minimal English. The use of the English language appeared here and there in some activities, especially those involving technology. Nonetheless, she did not seem to pay attention to the language components.

**Self-Sponsored Study**

The fourth type of helpful activities found in this study is self-sponsored study. Twelve students (27%) perceived this activity as helpful. This activity includes studying and memorizing words, completing textbook exercises and test preparation materials, and so on. This activity is somewhere between the three types of the aforementioned activities. This activity can be seen as a school-related activity such as optional homework, an activity related to formal out-of-school instruction, or even as an informal out-of-school activity. Most students consider this to be an extension of formal instruction both in and outside school, even though the engagement in this activity is optional. This activity is usually prompted by preparation for school and college admissions.

The context might help explain why self-sponsored study is a common activity among students in this study. The school itself is a prestigious school that highly values academic achievement and college admissions, as the school is located in Bangkok where the study environment is highly competitive. Social structure might play a major role in encouraging or pressuring students to participate in this activity.

122

Self-sponsored study usually signals students' serious intention and effort in learning English. Since this is an optional and voluntary activity, only those who set out with a specific intention to learn English would engage in it. Most students started doing this activity during or after critical events. Even students learning English naturally from speaking with foreigners or unintentionally by engaging in activities still engaged in self-sponsored study activities, especially as they progressed through their academic careers. This might not be limited to the English subject, as students reported spending more time studying other subjects as well. Nonetheless, it shows that Thai students are taking English more seriously as they move to higher grades.

Vee starting vocabulary from the list *100 Words Every Middle Schooler Should know* is a good example of self-sponsored study. On the day of the observation, Vee continued studying the list from the day before, starting at the seventeenth word. The way she studied this set of vocabulary is interesting. Vee would look at the vocabulary list on her cell phone, and then she would copy the English words into her notebook. Then she would use her other cell phone to look up a word's meaning from the electronic dictionary application. She would keep doing this for a while. On the observation day, she studied about 15 words (until the 31$^{st}$ word of the list). The way she took notes was color-coded (see Figure 7). She wrote the English words with black ink, meanings in English with red ink and meanings in Thai with blue ink. After she noted words and their meanings in Thai, she came back to her list and memorized each word. She used a pencil to write additional information that helped her memorize the words. She also tried to compose her own sentences from the words she was studying. After studying the vocabulary for a while, she closed her notebook, picked up a blank notepad, and started writing down words she could remember. Then she would open her notebook and check if the words she had written in

the notepad were correct. She would put check marks next to the words that she recalled correctly. While checking her notebook, she would also write down words that she could not recall to remind her to pay more attention to these words next time she studies (see Figure 8).
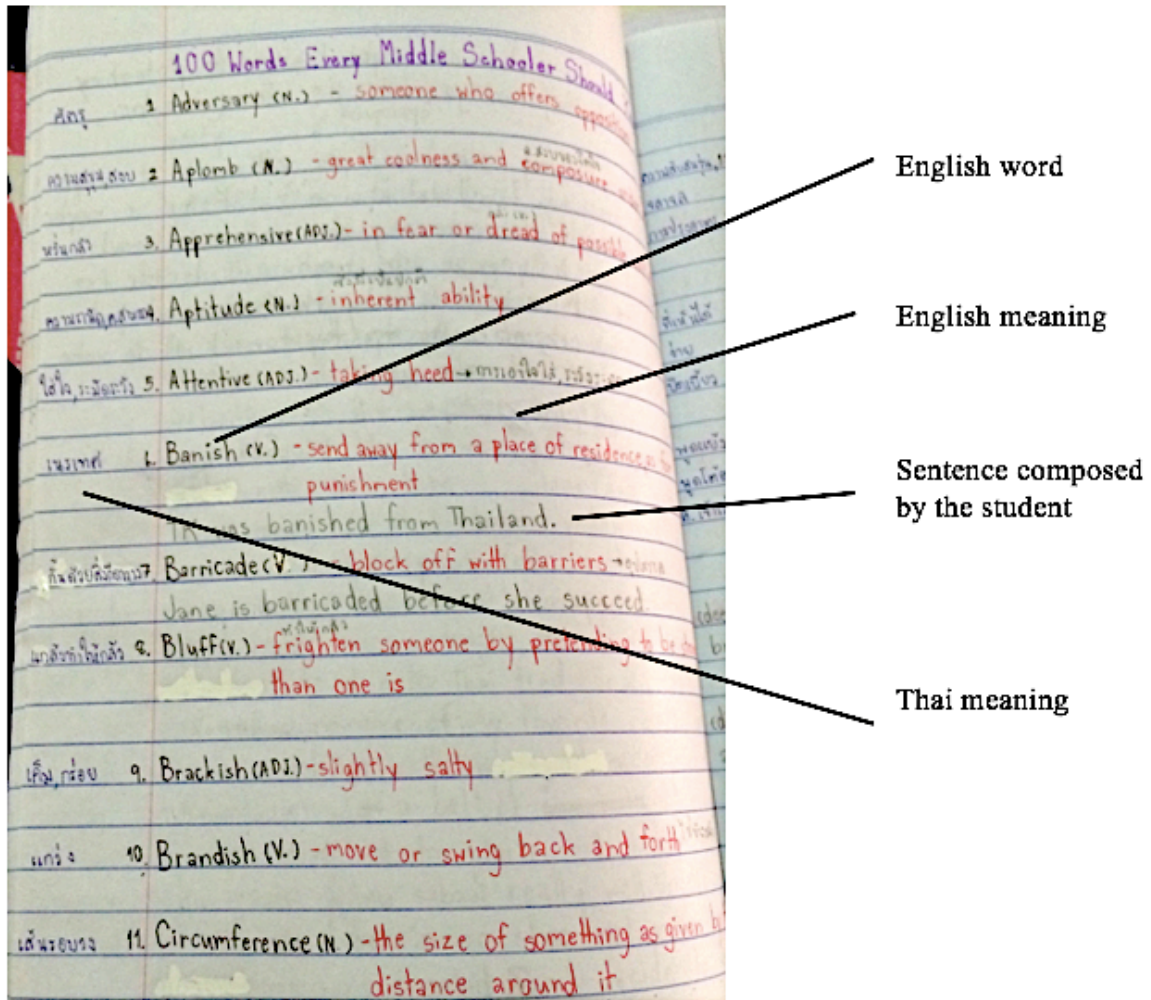


Figure *7. Vee's vocabulary notes.* Used with permission.
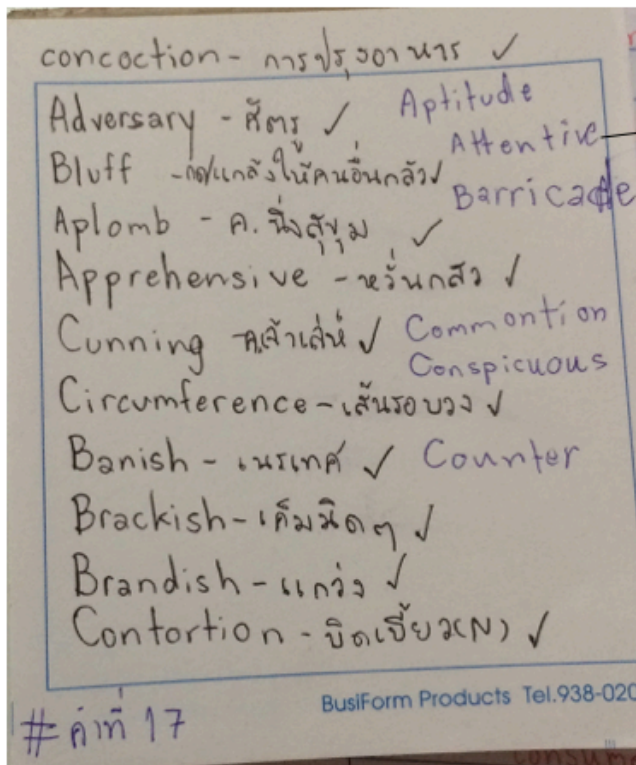
*Figure 8.* The notepad Vee used to write down words she could recall. Used with permission.

She also spent her time doing homework assigned by her tutor. To prepare for her study abroad, she studied with a tutor three times a week, focusing on academic reading and writing. The homework she did during the observation was a reading comprehension exercise. She used the electronic dictionary on her cell phone to help her with the reading as well.

As for completing the homework assigned by her tutor, Vee says she enjoyed it because she felt it was fun to read about something new. She liked that she had a chance to learn about new things through reading. For example, the reading comprehension exercise that she did during the observation was about NASA's experiments in space, which she found really interesting.

The observation of June also show how students engage in self-sponsored activity as an

extension of formal out-of-school instruction. June mentioned during the observation that she

had a lot of homework from the tutoring school she attended, and she set aside specific times to

complete these assignments. She mentioned that she learned tremendously from this activity. For

June, the most helpful out-of-class activities were attending tutoring classes and doing

homework. She said that this is because she paid full attention in tutoring classes, thus learned

much more than just doing informal out-of-class activities. She also mentioned that doing

homework from the tutoring school is helpful because it helps her recognize her own mistakes.



*Figure 9.* June's notes from studying vocabulary with the tutor. Used with permission.

In the afternoon of both observation days, June studied a vocabulary list from her tutoring

class (see Figure 9). She explained that every class each student has to come up with one word

used in everyday life. Next the tutor discussed each word in class. Every student then writes

down words learned from each class. Students are expected to study and memorize this word list as there are quizzes in tutoring class from time to time.

**Gender Differences**

*Table 8*

Frequency Table of Activities that Students Identified as One of the Three Most Helpful

| Activity | Female (*n*=33) | Male (*n*=12) | Total (*N*=45) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | N (%) | | |
| Audiovisual media | 10 (30%) | 7 (58%) | 30 (67%) |
| Music | 22 (67%) | 6 (50%) | 28 (62%) |
| Written media | 11 (33%) | 5 (42%) | 16 (36%) |
| Communication | 11 (33%) | 4 (33%) | 15 (33%) |
| Self-sponsored study | 10 (30%) | 2 (17%) | 12 (27%) |
| Games | 5 (15%) | 6 (50%) | 11 (24%) |

During the interview, each student was asked to identify three out-of-class activities that they perceived as the most helpful in learning English. The results are shown in Table 8. Based on the percentages, there are some gender differences. Therefore, a chi-square test of homogeneity was performed to examine the distribution of each activity between genders. The significance level used for the test was $p$=.05. For games, the result was significant, $\chi^2$ (1, $N$=45) = 5.79, $p$ = .02. Boys were more likely to identify playing games as a helpful out-of-class activity than girls. For audiovisual media, the data suggests the trend of male students more likely to identify it as a helpful out-of-class activity than female students, but the result of a chi-square test of homogeneity of groups only approached significance, $\chi^2$ (1, $N$=45) = 2.94, $p$ = .09. The data shows that higher proportion of female students identified listening to music as a helpful out-of-class activity than that of male students. However, the statistical test showed no significant difference between gender, $\chi^2$ (1, $N$=45) = 0.01, $p$ = .90. From Table 8, it appears that boys tended to identify consuming written media as a helpful activity more than girls, but a chi-

127

square test of homogeneity revealed no significant difference of the distribution of the activity between gender, $\chi^2$ (1, $N$=45) = 0.27, $p$ = .61. For self-sponsored study, girls tended to identify it as a helpful activity more than boys but again a chi-square test of homogeneity showed no significant difference of the distribution of the activity between gender, $\chi^2$ (1, $N$=45) = 0.83, $p$ = .36.

In sum, the chi-square test of homogeneity revealed that the distribution of perceiving playing games as helpful to English learning differs between boys and girls. In other words, male students tend to perceive playing games as a helpful out-of-class English learning activity more than female students. While there are no significant differences of the distributions of other out-of-class activities between gender, the data provides suggestive trends that might be worthwhile to investigate in future research.

**Summary of Out-of-Class English Learning Practices**

Findings suggest that sociocultural factors could impact out-of-class practice directly and through shaping self-concept and attitudes. This study confirms what was found in Swain et al. (2011): that interaction with others and with artifacts plays a role in how learners construct their identities in regard to language learning, which then, in turn, mediates learning behavior. In this study, social interaction and social structure appeared to mediate how students constructed their self-concept and attitudes, which then influenced out-of-class behaviors. Social interaction and social structure could also impact out-of-class behavior directly; for instance, when people in students' environments introduced students to specific out-of-class activities, or when popular culture propelled students to English-language media.

Engagement in out-of-class activities influenced students' learning by mediating students' internalization of symbolic systems of the English language. For instance, the act of

reading books provided students with opportunities to internalize the English language. Similarly, while playing online games, interaction with games and other people offered learners opportunities to internalize the English language.

It seems that there is no one activity or one factor that lead to success in out-of-class English learning and overall English learning. For instance, a family foundation of English use at home was neither necessary nor sufficient for students' English learning success. No one way of instruction was considered "perfect" for all students. Some students might have improved self-concept and attitudes because of formal instruction with native-speakers focusing on conversation, while other students might have improved their self-concept and attitudes more from traditional lecture-type English classes. This finding suggests that as educators, we should be aware of how students feel about themselves, English learning, and the English language after participating in out-of-class activities, as it is students' interpretations of activity engagement that will shape their self-concept and attitudes.

**Patterns of Out-of-Class English Activity Engagement**

Patterns of out-of-class English language practices emerged from the data. When students are still learning to use English more naturally, they have to intentionally engage in English-language activities (such as in June's case). When students are accustomed to engaging in these activities in English, they do not appear to learn English as much (like when Fah plays games or watches movies). From the ZPD perspective, we might be able to say that if students reach a certain level of proficiency, engaging in the same out-of-class activities might not help them learn as much. Students need to change the level of language used in their out-of-class activities in order to further their learning. The analysis suggests that there are at least two levels of engagement in out-of-class English learning activities. The first level is to intentionally learn

English while using entertainment to help make learning enjoyable. At the first level, learning English could be a primary or a secondary purpose. Based on the data, some students purposefully engaged in out-of-class activities to learn English. Some students engaged in these activities mainly for other purposes, such as entertainment or gaining information, but they still kept learning English in mind as a secondary purpose. The data suggests that engaging in out-of-class English activities benefits students regardless of whether the English learning is the primary or secondary purpose. The second level is for students whose English proficiency allows them to engage in out-of-class activities without much effort. They might still need to exert some effort to engage in this activity, but their primary intention here is usually to consume media or interact with others, while learning English is a secondary purpose. It seems that at this level, students tend to focus on engaging in the activities more than in learning English. This could be because students feel that they have already acquired sufficient proficiency for their purpose, as a means to an end, which would be to engage in the activities. In order to reach a higher level of proficiency, students might have to adjust the level of English language required to engage in the activities. Once the students start to engage in activities that require a higher level of English, they would have to exert some effort, which might require them to be more intentional in engaging in the activities. Then as they develop a higher proficiency, they would be able to engage in the activities with ease, suggesting that they would not be learning English as much as when they were in the previous level. This pattern is in line with ZPD, which suggests that in order to develop target skills, learners might need to be in a learning zone between the place where they could do the activities by themselves and the place where they need assistance to engage in the activities (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006b). Once students could engage in the activities by themselves, they might need to adjust the level of skills required to engage in the activities to

further develop their skills. This pattern can be explained with the diagram seen in Figure 10.
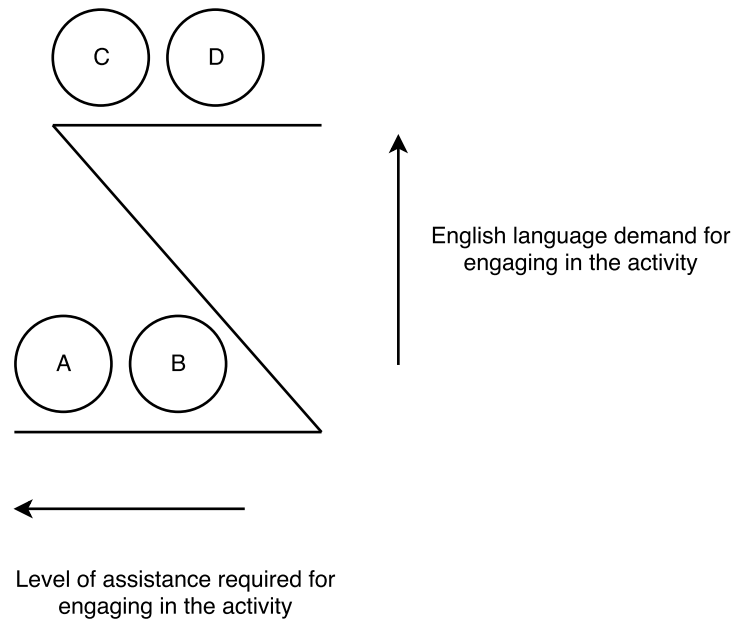


*Figure 10.* A diagram of patterns of out-of-class English learning activity engagement.

Based on the data, students' out-of-class English activity engagement can be described in four stages to demonstrate different levels of English language demand and level of assistance:

*Stage A*  Students purposefully engage in an out-of-class activity to learn English. Additionally, students tend to need assistance to successfully engage in the activity. Students need to exert a high level of effort to engage in the activity. At this stage, learning English could be a primary or secondary purpose of activity engagement.

*Stage B*  Students have learned adequate English skills to engage in this activity with minimal effort. They can engage in the activity by themselves. At this stage, learning English tends to become a secondary purpose of activity engagement.

*Stage C*  Similar to Stage A. Students set an intention to engage in the activity to learn English. However, the activity now requires a higher level of fluency than in Stages A and B. Students tend to require assistance to engage in the activity. Learning English could be a primary or secondary purpose of activity engagement.

131

*Stage D*  Similar to Stage B.  Students have developed required language skills, which are higher than those in Stages A and B. Students engage in the activity without exerting much effort and without assistance. Learning English at this stage tends to be a secondary purpose.

The diagram in Figure 10 could help explain findings in Phase 2. Considering watching movies as a focused activity, June seems to be in Stage A. June sets an intention to watch movies with Thai subtitles first and then with English subtitles for the second time. The purpose of watching movies seems to be for entertainment, but she also purposefully chooses to watch them twice with different subtitles. June writes down vocabulary and phrases that she does not understand in her notebook for reviewing later. She also uses Thai subtitles to assist in her comprehension of the movies. It seems that the amount of learning by watching the movies is quite high for June, but she still requires assistance. Fah, on the other hand, has sufficient proficiency, so she does not require much assistance.  She can watch movies without subtitles and still fully comprehend them. The observation suggests that she does not learn much English by watching the movies anymore, because she already possesses the level of language required in watching the movies.  This is not to say that she is not learning anything new by watching movies, but the amount of English learning seems to be lower than in June's case. If Fah wants to continue learning English from watching movies, she would have to watch movies that require a higher level of English skills (e.g., stage C).

Considering the 45 students in this study, Figure 10 could be used to illustrate how students learn English from out-of-class activities. In the beginning of learning, students usually have to set an intention to do the activity in English. This stage usually requires a high amount of effort from students and outside assistance. For example, students need to use the dictionary to help while reading a novel, or students pause the video clips to listen to the utterances several

132

times. For most students, the purpose of the activity seems to be both for entertainment and learning. As students develop their English proficiency, the intended purpose of learning English and the amount of knowledge learned usually decrease. As students do the activity without much effort or assistance, they enjoy doing the activity and focus less on learning since the activity does not require language knowledge that students have not yet mastered. This suggests that students can succeed by learning from out-of-class activities. Nonetheless, if they wish to keep learning English by doing the activity, they would have to change the activity so that it requires a higher level of English. For instance, students could change from reading contemporary young adult fiction to reading literary classics.

### What Do Students Perceive as Functions of Out-of-Class English Learning Practices?

According to the interviews and observations, out-of-class English activities serve several functions in students' learning trajectories. Students were asked to identify out-of-class English activities that they considered as the three most helpful activities in learning English. Then they were asked to reflect on their answers, focusing on how these out-of-class activities had helped them learn English. Across all 45 participants, out-of-class English learning activities played five common roles in English language learning: they help with in-class learning; they have a significant influence on learning trajectories; they give students new ways to integrate English into their everyday lives; they help make learning enjoyable; and they help with learning sociocultural aspects of the English language.

### In-Class Learning Help

Contrary to a study of Thai college students, which found that students usually engaged in out-of-class English activities for entertainment (Chusanachoti, 2009), one of the reasons for engaging in out-of-class activities for students in this study is that it helps improve their in-class

133

English learning. Students (*n* = 10) mentioned that after they realized their engagement in out-of-class activities had helped them in in-class learning, they started to engage in out-of-class activities more often and more seriously:

> The first time I started watching [series and movies], with an English soundtrack, I thought, "Why did they have to speak so fast?" Most of the time, I didn't understand anything because there were no subtitles. When I was watching, I was like, "They are speaking so fast." I felt I couldn't understand. But later on, when I had to talk to foreign teachers, I actually spoke more fluently. Like, when we had a test, I would get higher scores than other students, so I thought, "Hey! I have to watch [series and movies] more seriously, because it helps me [learn]." (Belle)

Students also recognize that engaging in out-of-class activities helped them in exams:

Kaew: For me, the second most helpful activity is listening to music. When I listen to an English-language song, I think, "Wow! This song is really beautiful." It makes me want to learn what the song means. So I looked up the lyrics and memorized vocabulary in that song. This one time, when I listened to a song from *Frozen,* I found a word that I didn't understand. I eventually looked it up in the dictionary, but I forgot about it. But then when I took a test at school, that word was on the test. I remembered that it was the word from the *Frozen* song. I guessed the meaning of that word and compared with other choices. This word seemed to be the most correct, so I chose it. After the test, I looked it up in the dictionary and saw that the answer was really what I thought. This made me realize that I can learn vocabulary from songs I really like. I could look up words in the dictionary and memorize them. It will help me understand the songs as well.

Researcher: Do you remember what that word was?

Kaew: I can't remember. It's in the song *Let It Go*. Oh! I think it's the word 'conceal', meaning cover or don't show.

Based on the interviews, exams usually refer to in-class and admissions exams. These examples show that students in this study highly value their performances in academic settings. It seems that students are likely to continue to engage in activities that they perceive as helpful to their academic performances. How these students started out-of-class activities appear to be quite

serendipitous or unintentional. For example, Belle started watching English-language TV shows because she wanted to practice for the debate competition in which she was assigned to participate. Kaew merely listened to songs that were popular at the time. She happened to like the songs, which motivated her to look up the lyrics. She later recognized that it had helped her learn English. The recognition of how out-of-class activities help improve English performances in academic settings seems to relate to students' metalinguistic awareness. Students who reported that out-of-class activities had helped their in-class English learning are usually able to identify language features in out-of-class activities and connect them to in-class learning materials. Some students, on the other hand, engaged in out-of-class activities without an awareness of linguistic features, thus not learning from the activities. This can be seen in Mai's case.

**Influence on Learning Trajectories**

Several students ($n = 7$) perceived out-of-class learning practices as having a significant influence on their learning trajectories. Common types of out-of-class practices that students mentioned as having significant influence on their English learning trajectories are formal out-of-school instruction and informal out-of-school activities. Students who are especially academically-oriented tended to view formal instruction outside school as influential, as mentioned in Gigi's and June's stories. Examples of the significant influences of informal out-of-school activities on learning trajectories can be seen in Ohm's and Tim's narratives. The points when they started to engage in out-of-class activities seriously were shown to be critical events that shaped their learning trajectories. Ohm's learning trajectory improved dramatically when he started playing online games seriously. Similarly, Tim's learning trajectory improved significantly when he started reading English-language books.

**Integrating English into Daily Life**

135

A number of students (*n* = 12) perceived engaging in out-of-class activities as a way to integrate more English into students' daily lives and increase exposure to the English language. This is in-line with existing research showing that EFL students tend to use out-of-class activities to substitute for the lack of opportunities in using English in their daily lives (Murray, 2008). Moreover, students perceiving this as a role of out-of-class activities tended to intentionally engage in these activities to learn English. In other words, these students set specific intentions to integrate English into their activities for the main purpose of learning the language.

Yin is a great example of this. She started watching TV series and movies with the original English soundtracks (instead of Thai-dubbed) around P4-6 [grades 4-6]. The reason for the switch at that time was because she believed watching series and movies in English was more fun. But during that time, she still watched with Thai subtitles. Later during M3, she switched to English subtitles because she wanted to improve her English.

Researcher:  When did you start watching [TV series and movies] with English subtitles?

Yin:  Around the first semester of M3 [grade 9]. At that time, I got serious about learning English. I was determined to be good at English because I needed to apply for a new school. I tried everything that could improve my English skills.

This example shows that when some students got serious about learning English, they turned to informal out-of-school activities to help them learn.

During the observation, June watched English-language movies and TV shows. The primary purpose of these activities was for entertainment, but June adjusted a few things with an intention to learn English. For example, June watched the movies twice: the first time with Thai subtitles and the second time with English subtitles, writing down any words or phrases she did not understand. What prompted June to watch movies this way was the advice of her teachers

and parents. Several teachers had told her that watching movies and shows in English would help her learn English. The observation showed that June still consumes a lot of Thai-language media. The television in the living room can only play Thai-language media, so when the whole family watches TV together, it is always Thai-language media. It appears that, for June, watching English-language media is a deliberate action for practicing English mixed with a desire to consume English-language media.

**Making Learning Enjoyable**

Another common perceived role of out-of-class learning is making learning English enjoyable. Sometimes students have to interact with groups of people or artifacts, such as media or books, in English because English is the only medium available to access these groups of people or artifacts. Students in this group ($n = 38$) tended to hold the view that their personal interests in other areas help make learning English enjoyable. These students started engaging in English activities without a clear intention of learning English from the activities, but as they continued engaging in the activities, the students realized that they were learning English while enjoying doing activities related to their personal interests. For example, Ann chose to watch Korean TV series with English subtitles because she couldn't find ones with Thai subtitles. As Ann put it, "I really like Korean pop stars but sometimes I can't find [the shows] with Thai subtitles, so I watch ones with English subtitles."

The observation of Fah's activities shows that Fah seems to be comfortable using English in her daily life. It seems that the primary purpose of her informal out-of-class activities is entertainment. She does not intentionally select English-language media to learn. She simply chooses media based on the topic of her interests. For example, she reads newsfeeds from her friends and specific websites in Thai. But she also follows English-language websites and feeds

of artists in English because these types of websites are only available in English.

Another pattern of this perception is that students choose to do activities in English because they believe doing the activities in English is more enjoyable. A considerable amount of students (*n* = 27) mentioned that they prefer to do certain out-of-class activities in English, for instance, preferring to watch movies in English because emotions conveyed in the original English soundtrack are better in English than in Thai-dubbed, or preferring to listen to English-language songs because of the songs' uniqueness:

> Music helps me learn [English] a lot. I like singing. And singing English-language songs is more fun. I also like watching movies with English original soundtracks. Watching movies in Thai, for me, doesn't evoke my emotions as well as the ones in English. (Amy)

**Learning Sociocultural Aspects of the English Language**

Some students (*n* = 10) perceived engaging in out-of-class activities as a way to learn the cultures of English-speaking societies. This helped with understanding real-life use of language, such as a variety of spoken and written languages, colloquialisms, and slang.

> I think watching a movie is like being transported into their society. Not everybody speaks in the same way; not with the same accent, not with the same intonation… If we are to understand them, we have to practice listening to them. And there is usually some vocabulary we don't know, like spoken vocabulary or slang…Also watching movies helps us understand their cultures. They created the media, so the media reflected their culture. [I] learned from that. (Boss)

In summary, students identified several roles of out-of-class English learning practices in their English learning experiences. One of the reasons students engage in out-of-class English practices is that doing so helps improve their English performances in academic settings such as in-school or admissions exams. This is in line with existing research showing that out-of-class language behavior tends to relate to what students do at school (Inozu et al., 2010; Sundqvist, 2011). Another role of out-of-class English practices is significantly changing English learning

trajectories. In addition, out-of-class activities provide a means for students to increase the amount of English used in their daily lives. Furthermore, engaging in out-of-class activities is perceived as a way to make English learning enjoyable by using English as a medium to connect with their outside interests. Lastly, some students use out-of-class activities to learn social and cultural aspects of English-speaking societies, which helps them understand the use of the English language.

**Summary**

Chapter 4 presents findings from the qualitative analyses of Phase 1 and Phase 2 data. Selected narratives from participants provide descriptions and depict English learning trajectories in these high school EFL students. Two social factors, social interactions and social structure, have been identified as influential to learning trajectories. The roles of social factors on learning trajectories are explained through the learning trajectories of three participants, revealing two other influential factors: self-concept and attitudes toward English. Helpful out-of-class activities are presented with detailed descriptions of how students engage in these activities.  Findings from observations help situate Phase 1 findings in authentic contexts and help triangulate Phase 1 findings.

# Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter focuses on summarizing interpretations of the findings and connecting them to the SLA literature. One key finding is that the changes in students' out-of-class English practices follow changes of the students' English language development. A second key finding is that students' self-concept has multiple complex roles in English language learning. A third key finding is that family circumstances appear as one of the main influences on English learning trajectories and out-of-class English learning experiences. The chapter that follows presents a more thorough discussion of these three key findings, including the contributions they make to the SLA field, suggestions for practice, limitations of the study, and areas for future research.

## Changes in Students' Out-of-Class English Practices Mirror Changes of their English Language Development

Findings from the present study show that changes in students' out-of-class English practices seem to correspond with their self-evaluated levels of English proficiency. I contend that changes in choices and the ways students engage in out-of-class activities are a reflection of the students' English language development. These findings support previous studies of good language learners that showed that learners perceived a change in their out-of-class activities or learning strategies when their learning had improved (Griffiths, 2008; Takeuchi, 2003).

In this study, students were asked to construct narratives about their English learning experiences, including out-of-class learning. Students usually thought of English-language learning trajectories as divided in two phases: before and after critical events. Critical events were parts of learning trajectories that had undergone significant changes. Later, in the interview, students were asked details about their out-of-class practices before and after critical events. The

data clearly show that there are major differences of out-of-class practices between these two periods.

Changes in out-of-class English practices were found in the types of activities and how students engaged in activities. Students with positive learning trajectories engaged in more types of activities after critical events (e.g., studying abroad, attending private language classes, and engaging in out-of-class activities). For students with negative critical events, the number of out-of-class activities they engaged in were the same or fewer than before their critical events. Differences in the types of activities were also apparent in what skills were required for the activities. Advanced students tended to engage more in interactive activities that required both receptive and productive language skills, while less advanced students tended to engage only in receptive activities. This finding supports existing research showing that advanced learners engage in all four skills (reading, listening, speaking, and writing), while students making slow progresses tend to engage in receptive activities (Griffiths, 2008). Advanced learners also tended to engage in activities more actively after critical events. For less advanced learners, the way they engaged in activities usually remained the same. In term of frequency, advanced learners increased their level of informal out-of-class activity, while less advanced learners tended to maintain or decrease their level of activity.

Changes in students' out-of-class English practices also seemed to correspond with changes in English developmental stages. Gardner (2007) posited that there are at least four stages of second language development. The first stage is *elemental,* referring to the stage where students learn the basic elements of the language, such as vocabulary and pronunciation. The second stage is *consolidation,* where learners put elements together and create some understandings of the language. At this stage, students also familiarize themselves with the

language. The third stage is *conscious expression,* where students can use language to communicate but with significant conscious effort. The fourth stage is *automaticity and thought*, which is when learners can use the language automatically in most contexts. At this phase, learners can think in the L2 as well.

Gardner's four stages of SLA concern the overall process of acquiring a second language (L2). However, for this study, I utilized this characterization of language learning to look specifically at how out-of-class practices moved students through the stages. Out-of-class activities were useful in the elemental stage and did not necessarily require a lot of effort or linguistic intention. Many students learned vocabulary and phrases by casually consuming English-language media. This was what most students, even the ones with negative critical events, perceived as a benefit of out-of-class activities.

Many students use out-of-class activities to help them progress through the second stage. Participants confirmed this by saying that they did these activities in order to get used to specific language components, such as in Tim's case, in which he continued listening and watching YouTube clips with English-speaking hosts until he felt familiar with sounds in the English language. At this stage, out-of-class activities are also used to consolidate knowledge from in-class instruction. For example, Gigi mentioned recognizing language patterns learned from class used in English-language media.

In this study, out-of-class activities seemed to have less important roles in stages three and four. This is most likely because students in this study were rarely in situations which required them to communicate in English on a regular basis. Nonetheless, in cases where out-of-class activities seemed to help in stage three and four, it was related to authentic communication with others. From the current data, it is difficult to distinguish between the roles of out-of-class

activities in stage three and four, so they will be discussed in unison. An interesting finding here is that out-of-class activities seemed to lower barriers to communicating in English, usually by communicating online. Students appear to have the courage to express thoughts in English online more frequently than in person, regardless of whether it was a conscious or automatic effort. This finding supports previous research indicating that online communication provides a low-risk, nonthreatening environment suitable for L2 language practices (Gao, 2009; Rama, Black, van Es, & Warschauer, 2012; Sykes, AnaOskoz, & Thorne, 2008).

When looking at advanced learners in this study, their engagement in out-of-class activities tended to correspond with the stages of their English development. The more advanced the students, the more out-of-class activities they did. Students in the advanced stages of learning tended to engage in out-of-class activities more actively than they had before. Examples of this can be seen with Vee and Gigi. Before their critical events, Vee and Gigi engaged in out-of-class activities, but only passively, without paying much attention to the language components. After their critical events, both students engaged in out-of-class activities more actively and paid special attention to the language components. Vee even progressed to making a conscious effort to communicate with others online. This finding coincides with previously published data showing that as students' proficiencies improved, the more they sought out English-language media and engaged in interactive English activities using technology (Lai & Gu, 2011). In contrast, less advanced learners tended to use out-of-class activities to develop in stage one. For example, Mai reported engaging in out-of-class activities, but she did not pay attention to the language components, thus limiting what she could learn from doing these activities.

From these examples, we can see how changes in students' out-of-class practices over time follow their English language development. The data from this study does not allow for

143

determining the direction of causation between out-of-class practices and English language development. It is highly possible that students' English language development influences their out-of-class practices as well. What I believe is more important than determining the direction of this relationship is highlighting that out-of-class language practices are crucial when examining learning trajectories. Researchers could examine out-of-class learning practices to indicate students' L2 development. Educators could also use information about how students engage in out-of-class activities at different stages of English language development to encourage out-of-class practices appropriate for the individual students' levels of English language development.

## The Role of Students' Self-Concept in English Language Learning

This study has shown that students interpret their past experiences and make conclusions about themselves and their English language abilities, which then influences their motivation and behaviors in learning English. Every interaction, either with people or artifacts, potentially impacted students' self-concept toward their English abilities. This finding supports current literature indicating that self-concept is a crucial part of the language learning process (Mercer, 2011, 2014).

The self-concept construct in the existing literature commonly refers to one's self-concept toward ones' own abilities. According to the literature, self-concept includes an evaluation of one's own abilities and a feeling of self-worth (Mercer, 2011). Students make judgments about themselves and their abilities and form their self-concept in relation to specific goals, persons, or groups (Mercer, 2014; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). In this study, learners formed their self-concept based on how they perceived their current abilities in relation to their goals in English learning, in relation to others' appraisal/opinion about their English abilities, or

in relation to identification with larger social groups such as classmates, school, or Thai teenagers.

However, only looking at self-concept toward competence does not explain the entirety of the phenomena found in this study. Why do some students with low self-concept still feel motivated to learn, while others do not? Why are some students who think they are not proficient in English skill able to progress through learning trajectories successfully, while other students with the same belief struggle to improve their English learning?

From this study, I propose that self-concept has two components: self-concept toward current abilities and toward an ability to learn. As mentioned previously, in this context, students' self-concept toward their current abilities is student's evaluations of their own English abilities. This often includes the feeling that they have sufficient English skills, resulting from perceived success in using English in their lives. Self-concept toward an ability to learn, on the other hand, would be students' evaluations of their ability to acquire new English language skills.

Additionally, self-concept of the ability to learn English could be conceptualized as future self-guides in the L2 Motivational Self System. L2 Motivational Self System consists of three components: *ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self*, and *L2 learning experiences*. *Ideal L2 self* and *ought-to L2 self* are future self-guides which influence students' motivation to learn L2 (Dörnyei, 2014). If students can see their future selves being fluent in English, they are more likely to be motivated to learn (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). A qualitative study of Indonesian adolescents shows a relationship between future L2 selves, L2 learning motivation, and self-directed learning (Lamb, 2011). This current study builds upon existing literature and supports L2 Self System in the aspect of future selves and how they are connected with the motivation to learn. Based on this current study, I speculate that one's self-concept of the ability to learn the English language

might be connected to the ability to see one's future self as fluent in English. If students see themselves as having an ability to learn English, then it will be easier for them to visualize themselves being good at English in the future. Moreover, existing literature shows that future L2 selves change during the times L2 learners considered critical stages of their L2 learning experiences (You & Chan, 2015). Findings from this study indicating that changes of self-concept tend to happen during what students perceived as critical events support the previous research. This suggests that changes of self-concept might play an important role during critical events of L2 learning experiences.

The idea of self-concept of one's own competence and of the ability to learn can help explain the cases where students had a negative self-concept about their English skills but still felt motivated to learn. For example, Max perceived his English abilities to be a lot lower than his classmates, but he held the belief that he could learn English. Therefore, he learned English actively, sought out ways beyond school to improve himself, and seemed to enjoy learning. It appeared that his positive evaluation of his own abilities to learn English was what kept him motivated despite perceiving himself as not (yet) proficient in English. In other words, he could picture himself as successful in learning English in the future even though he believed that he was not yet fluent.

There are many cases in this study that show that students can hold both global and domain-specific self-concepts (Mercer, 2014). Many students held positive self-concepts of their global English abilities when they were young. By the time they got to high school, however, they usually showed a separate level of self-concept in separate language domains. For example, June felt rather positive about her English competence in academic settings but not in everyday English, while Tim's story shows that he was confident in his technical book-reading abilities,

but not in academic English as used in the classroom. This supports current literature showing that self-concept can be either global or domain specific (Mercer, 2014).

## Family Circumstances as a Key Influence on Out-of-Class English Learning and Overall English Learning

Findings of the current study confirm existing literature showing that people in students' social networks influence students' out-of-class language learning practices (Chusanachoti, 2009; Pearson, 2003; Swain et al., 2011). Nonetheless, groups of people impacting out-of-class practices differ across different populations. In studies of college students, teachers were found to be the most influential on students' out-of-class learning practices (Chusanachoti, 2009; Inozu et al., 2010). This current study, however, found that for high school students, family, followed by peers have the most influence on students' choices of out-of-class activities and the ways they engage in them, consistent with Lamb's (2007) study showing the high influences of family members on out-of-class English learning practices in Indonesian middle school students. Although this present study has found that family and peers are more influential to out-of-class practices than teachers, this is only applicable to instances of direct influence. In contrast to family and peers, teachers play a crucial role in shaping learning trajectories, thus influencing students' out-of-class learning practices indirectly. These findings suggest the distinction between direct and indirect influences of social factors might be useful when interpreting out-of-class language learning research.

As mentioned previously, this present study found that family influences not only students' choices of activities, but also how students engage in the activities. These findings align with those of a study of Hong Kong university students showing that family influences how students use technology to engage in out-of-class English learning activities (Lai & Gu, 2011).

Additionally, Chusanochoti's (2009) study of Thai college students shows students believing that family members engage in English activities influence their own engagement in out-of-class activities.

Existing literature indicates that family influences children's language development in many ways. Parental attitudes, parental involvement, and home language environment are some of the factors have been shown to highly influence language learning (Brisk, 2006). This present study supports and expands existing research. From the data, we can see that family circumstances impact students' English learning in many ways. The most obvious impact is family using English with students directly. This includes family communicating with students in English, using English-language media at home, doing activities together in English, and using English in front of students. Family behaviors can impact not only students' behaviors, but also attitudes and self-concept.

Literature shows that parental involvement has a high impact on students' learning success (Hill & Tyson, 2009). This current study suggests that parental involvement could influence students' success in out-of-class English learning specifically. The levels of parental involvement in out-of-class activities in students' lives varied among individual students. The most extreme on the positive side was using English as the only way of communication at home, as was the case for Fah. On the other end of the spectrum, parents were not involved in activities with students except providing access or means for students to engage in activities as in Vee's case. Most families in this study were located somewhere along the continuum. Parents whose English proficiency was high tended to be involved in students' out-of-class activities more often and more actively than parents whose English proficiency was low. However, the degree of parental involvement by itself was not always commensurate with students' success in English

148

learning. There were some cases where parents had low involvement in students' out-of-class activities, but the students still succeeded, and others where parental involvement was high, but the students did not progress very well. However, regardless of the level of parental involvement, family members bringing the English language into the house seemed to impact students' learning, as it became the students' primary source of exposure to English language at home, which was important during the early years of their lives. This is consistent with existing research showing that parents play an important role in English language learning outside the classroom by providing private language courses and extra resources, such as books and movies (Lamb, 2007).

While helpful, access to English language media or the use of English at home does not guarantee success in English learning. Students need to have enough autonomy and interest in making use of English in their home environment as well. This finding supports family language policy literature showing that home language environment is "necessary but not sufficient for children's language development" (King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry, 2008, p. 916). Moreover, this present study shows that sometimes the level of English in the home environment might come from students' requests, like Tim when he asked to order books from Amazon or Vee's decision to study abroad. This confirms literature showing that both parents and children shape home language environment (Fogle & King, 2013).

A study of students' in mainland China shows that the ability to provide resources is highly connected to the socioeconomic status (SES) of each family (Butler, 2013). While most students in this study came from a relatively similar SES, there were slight differences in students from different learning programs. Students in the English program seemed to mention English-language media and learning resources at home more than students in the Thai program.

This could be because of the difference in SES. As the English program requires a higher tuition fee than the Thai program, parents of students in the English program might have been able to afford English learning resources more easily than parents of students in the Thai program. However, other factors such as English proficiency and attitudes of parents or classmates in the same learning programs might have been a factor here as well.

Another way that family influenced English learning was by influencing attitudes toward English learning or the English language. Almost every student mentioned family members saying positive things about the English language, or English learning, or the benefits of being able to use English. This confirms previous research indicating that interactions with significant others, especially family members impact motivation to learn English (Chusanachoti, 2009; Lamb, 2007). Existing literature also shows that in children language learning expectations most often come from parents (Schumann, 1975). Nonetheless, it seems that just saying these things was not enough to influence students' learning. Students that saw their family members use English were more likely to internalize the positive attitudes. For example, Mink was impressed by her aunt's ability to communicate fluently in English, which made Mink believe that English skills are useful and important. Ning, on the other hand, mentioned that her parents often tell her how important English is for her future, but later in the interview, she said "I don't think [English] is that important. If I stay in Thailand, I don't need to talk to foreigners. I don't need to use English." This could be because her parents do not engage in English-language activities at home. This finding could be explained by the notion of *active* versus *passive* parental roles in language learning. Active parents involve in their children's language learning. Passive parents, on the other hand, might encourage their children to learn the language, but exhibit negative attitudes toward language learning (Schumann, 1975).

Influencing students' attitudes could also be a result of how parents viewed the role of English language in their children's future. Many students in this study held strong beliefs about the importance of English in education and the workplace, and ultimately to successful lives. Students mentioned their parents saying these beliefs to them regularly. This corroborates the results of a study of multilingual children in the United States which showed that the language status perceived by parents tended to influence children's attitudes toward learning the language (Bailey & Osipova, 2016).

Families' opinions of students' English abilities often mattered. When family members perceived students' English learning abilities as high, it helped improve students' self-concept. When family members thought students' English learning progress was low, it often lowered students' self-concept. However, it also seemed to depend on how family members framed their opinions. In some cases, parents thought that students' English needed to be improved, so they pushed for students to get extra tutoring classes, which proved to be positive critical events for learning trajectories. This seemed to be in the cases where parents did not attribute students' low proficiency to the student's inability to learn, but more to the lack of appropriate instruction or practices. For instance, Yin's father saw that Yin did not do well in grammar, so he sent her to study with a private tutor. Yin disagreed at first because she did not think she needed more instruction. However, after the first session, Yin realized that her father was right. When she reflected on the experience during the interview, she said studying with this tutor was the critical event that changed her learning trajectory for the better. In some cases where parents attributed low level of proficiency to the student's innate or personal abilities, the students tended to adopt negative self-concept about themselves, for example, Ou did not memorize vocabulary very well.

Her mother questioned her about what was wrong with her, why couldn't she memorize vocabulary.

In addition, family circumstances appeared to highly influence students' school environment. This is because, in Bangkok, selecting a school depends on the SES of the family. Schools with more English language instruction tend to require higher tuition and/or competitive grades and test scores. Even though most families do not exclusively choose the school for the sole purpose of learning English, it is undeniable that English language instruction is one of the major factors in their choices. Moreover, families' attitudes toward English learning influence how they select schools and learning programs. When the families perceive English as a critical skill, they tend to choose schools with high English language environment as opposed to schools focusing on other subjects or other aspects of learning.

Another common strategy families in this study employed to increase the level of English in students' lives was to arrange for formal out-of-school instruction, which was a common activity among students in this study. It seems that this type of activity is quite common for middle-class students in Asia in general (Lamb, 2007). Out of 45 students in this study, only one did not engage in this activity. As shown in Chapter 4, most students have attended formal out-of-school instruction since primary school. There are two factors that influenced out-of-class formal instruction: 1) the family's SES and 2) the family's attitudes toward English learning and the English language. First, it costs money to send students to these additional formal instruction activities, so the family must be able to afford them. Additionally, how family, especially parents, view English and English learning influenced the types of formal instruction outside school that families provided to students. If the family perceived English as a way to communicate, they sent students to communication-focused formal instruction; families that

perceived English as an academic subject or as a way to enter higher education sent their

children to an exam-based tutoring school. Most students in this study attended both types of

formal instruction. Compared to the Thai program, students in the English program tended to

attend extra classes that focused on communication more frequently. Both groups of students

also seemed to increase the number of exam-focused formal instruction as they moved to higher

grades, most likely due to the upcoming college entrance exams. During students' early years,

family seemed to be the sole decision-maker as to what kind of formal out-of-school instruction

students would get, if any. However, as students moved to middle and high school, they

mentioned that peers influenced their choices of additional formal instruction as well. In any

case, it still depended on the family's SES to be able to afford and to approve students attending

extra formal instruction. This finding corroborates existing research showing that people in

students' immediate environment, such as family and peers, affect students' choices of out-of-

class activities (Chusanachoti, 2009; Pearson, 2003).

In sum, findings from this study show the extent of influence that a family's

circumstances have on students' English learning trajectories. Family influences English learning

not only through their direct interactions (e.g., communicating, engaging in activities) with

students, but also through their indirect actions such as selecting a school, arranging for tutoring

classes, providing access to English media, and shaping the self-concept and ideologies of

English language learning.

**Implications**

**Contributions of the Study to Research on Language Learning**

The findings in this study highlight the role of learners' perceptions in shaping language

learning trajectories. This study has shown that it is not so much specific activities or experiences

that matter, but how students interpret these experiences. This is similar to existing research showing that how students perceive and make sense of their experiences has a profound effect on their language learning (Doyle & Parrish, 2012; Ortega, 2009). Moreover, this study illustrates how other people (i.e., parents, teachers, and peers) made great impacts on learning trajectories, especially during critical events, for example, teachers providing good instruction causing students to enjoy learning English or peers involving the student in out-of-class activities. This supports current literature showing the important complementary roles of parents and teachers in creating the language learning environments for multilingual learners (Bailey & Osipova, 2016).

As a specific contribution to the research of out-of-class language learning, this study responds to the need of the field to gather learners' narratives in order to understand various impacts of out-of-class language learning (Murray, 2008). Furthermore, this study shows the long-term effects of out-of-class activities, which is an area that has not been the focus of out-of-class language learning research. By showing the long-term effects of out-of-class reading practices on learning trajectories, this study calls for more attention to out-of-class language experiences and their relationships to language learning success.

Moreover, this study contributes to the knowledge of the distinction between everyday and academic language, which supports a study of adolescents' foreign language learning showing that students perceive English as an academic subject and as a communication tool (Taylor, 2013). Most students in this current study also perceive English in two domains: academic and everyday English. Bailey (2007) defined academic language as the language students need to complete academic tasks at school. Using this definition, we can see that Thai students see academic English with the same definition, to complete academic tasks. The definitions of everyday language, on the other hand, appear to be different between ESL and

154

EFL learners. For ESL learners, it is about communicating authentically with people around them in an immersive environment. For EFL learners, on the other hand, everyday English is communicating with people and media/artifacts/tools in an environment in which English is not the primary language. Research in ESL shows that ESL students tend to struggle more in academic than everyday language (Bailey, 2007). In contrast, this study shows that in the EFL context, such as in this current study, students struggle more with everyday English than academic English. For example, June struggles when she has to speak English, but she feels quite comfortable with English assignments and exams. The differences between definitions of everyday and academic languages in ESL and EFL contexts are something to be aware of when designing future studies involving ESL and EFL learners.

In addition, this study contributes to the knowledge about gender differences in language learning. The findings show that male students are more likely to find playing games helpful to their English learning more than female students. Literature shows that games seem to help students learn English because in playing games, English is a means to accomplish something such as gathering information and communicating with teammates (Sørensen, Birgitte, & Meyer, 2007). This is in contrast with English use in school where students tend to see using English as a goal. In other words, when students are playing games, English becomes a means to achieve a goal rather than being a goal in itself. A study of attitudes toward game playing in middle school students found gender differences in gaming preferences in three modes of games: active, strategic, and creative (Kinzie & Joseph, 2008). Active mode includes typical shooter and arcade-style games. Strategic mode is when players have to plan on how to use resources overtime. Creative play allows players to create elements such as buildings and cities in the games. The study shows that boys tend to like games with active and strategic modes, while girls

tend to prefer a creative mode. In general, the active and strategic game plays tend to require a higher degree of English to accomplish goals than creative games. This might explain why boys see playing games as more helpful as they tend to engage in the types of games that require a higher degree of using English.

**Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

This study focused on students' perceptions of their proficiency and learning experiences. The data about students' actual English proficiency are limited. Even though current literature shows that students' perceptions of their own language learning experiences have great influence on success or failure in language learning (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Tse, 2000; Williams, Burden, Poulet, & Maun, 2004), and that it is students' perceptions more than what actually happened that determine motivation and future actions (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003), it would still be beneficial to have the data on students' actual performance and learning experiences.

Phase 2 of this study shows that information about real-time interactions and engagement in learning activities is helpful in understanding the phenomenon. One of the limitations of Phase 2 of this study is the limited number of participants. Additionally, all Phase 2 participants are female. The findings might be different with male students. Moreover, the presence of the researcher could have impacted how students engaged in the activities. While Phase 2 findings of this study help triangulate and situate Phase 1 findings, future research would benefit from observing more diverse groups of participants with researchers spending more time with students.

Another limitation is the time that the data were collected. It was obvious after collecting data for two months that there were core activities such as sports days, final exams, and holidays that greatly influenced their out-of-class activities. These activities changed students' free time

(or how they spent their free time). Therefore, data collected in these periods tended to not reflect their usual out-of-class activities engagement. I counterbalanced this effect by asking for their usual activities if I saw that the activity logs and photos were clearly influenced by core activities. Future studies could limit this interference by planning data collection around the school's schedule or employing multiple researchers to collect data at the same time to make sure that the data from all students is collected during the same time period.

In this study, students' socioeconomic status (SES) was estimated based on the nature of the school and learning programs. Actual data on any individual student's SES is, however, very limited. As findings in this study suggest that home environment plays a large role in shaping learning trajectories and out-of-class language learning activities, future studies might benefit from collecting individual SES data to help understand differences among families and students.

Another limitation is that there were only a few examples of negative experiences of out-of-class English learning, which could make this study seem biased, as it highlights mostly positive aspects of out-of-class learning. This is because the goal of this study was to examine what was working for students, which was why the selection of participants was focused on information-rich data from students already participating in out-of-class English activities. Nonetheless, future research could include both ends of the spectrum and compare the positive and negative influences of out-of-class English learning practices.

Additionally, gender bias could be a limitation of this study as the majority of the participants are female (73%). Furthermore, only female students participated in Phase 2. This could be because of several reasons. Female students might be more comfortable volunteering to be in a study with a female researcher than male students. Similarly, female students and their parents might be more comfortable having a female researcher visit them at home more than

male students and their parents. As a result, the findings should be interpreted with this issue of gender in mind.

**Practical Suggestions for Supporting Students' English Language Learning**

Stories from students and observations of their language learning activities provide concrete and helpful suggestions for supporting English language learners.

**Suggestions related to self-concept.** Adults can promote students' self-concept by increasing quality interactions. As Mercer (2014) suggested, there are ways to use this understanding of self-concept to help students learn English more effectively. Parents and teachers could help promote student's positive self-concept by increasing quality interactions with them and providing and helping students interact with tools, such as books and other media, better. An example from this study is June's case when her tutor adjusted the teaching to fit her level, which helped June feel better about her abilities.

As past experiences seem to shape self-concept, parents and teachers could help students look at their past experiences in a different and more positive way. For instance, they could help students to look at a past failure on English tests as part of the learning process, not as a failure in performance. Additionally, adults can help students develop goals in a way that would influence self-concept positively. This study showed that when students felt that they could use English and/or had the ability to learn English, their learning trajectories improved quite dramatically. Therefore, it is important that students feel a sense of achievement while they are progressing through their learning trajectories. One possible way is for parents and teachers to help students set incremental goals to help students feel more encouraged and confident as they progress. Another way might be for adults to help students reflect on what makes of positive changes.

**Suggestions for family.** One of the most important things family can do to support students' English learning is to structure a quality English-language environment at home. This study clearly shows that an English-language environment at home plays an important role in students' English learning trajectories. Based on knowledge from families of participants, specific suggestions regarding out-of-class activities emerged.

*Communicate in English*. The data shows that speaking English at home can be helpful for students learning English. Parents do not necessarily have to speak English all the time, even just code-switching could be helpful. Speaking the whole time in English impacts students' self-concept. When just speaking a few words or phrases from time to time, it might not impact students' self-concept, but it could foster a positive attitude toward English learning and the English language.

*Involve students in out-of-class English activities more actively.* This can be done by starting slowly and gradually if needed. Some students might be comfortable starting English-language activities, but some students might feel uneasy starting English-language activities on their own without support. Parents can try to involve students in activities and gradually increase the amount of English language used in the activities. Since this study shows that students engage in out-of-class activities more actively as their proficiency improves (e.g., looking up meanings of words in song lyrics instead of merely listening), parents should also try to raise the level of active participation as students get comfortable with the level of English used in the activities.

*Encourage and support reading books.* This study found reading books to be one of the most influential activities that has the most potential to change a learning trajectory. Since reading occurred most frequently with family members, it makes sense that family would be the

one creating the environment conducive for reading English-language books. Findings for this study also show that reading books does not occur spontaneously: Families must intentionally cultivate reading habits in students.

***Provide English-language audiovisual media.*** The most commonly helpful activity cited by students is consuming audiovisual media. Students in this study seem to begin consuming English-Language audiovisual media because of their parents. For families with low proficiency in English, using audiovisual media is a great way to structure English language environment at home. One student, in particular, mentioned her father subscribing to cable TV as one of the critical events that led her to use English more in her daily life.

Besides supporting students through out-of-class English learning practices, families can support students in other ways. To begin with, families should also be aware that an English-language home environment could continue to influence students' English learning well into their teen years, as we saw in the current study. Thus, it is vital that family members continue to support students' English-language learning at least until high school.

Moreover, family members can influence students' attitudes by being a good example of using English. The most effective way to influence attitudes is for family members to do English activities themselves. This study has shown that children tend to emulate what their parents do rather than what their parent say. All parents have mentioned that English is useful; however, the degree to which the students internalize this message differs. When their parents use English as well as talk about its importance, it is more likely that students will internalize this message. On the other hand, parents who merely say how important English is, but do not use it, seem to have a harder time getting students to internalize the message.

Families in this study also had a great amount of control over the students' school language environment, not by directly changing the school environment, but by choosing schools that provided good English language environment. The influential decisions on school environment are not only about which schools, but also about which specific learning programs that value English-language education. This is not to say, though, that parents should always choose a learning program and a school that use English as the main language in the school environment. For some students, being put in a learning program that uses English more than students can handle actually resulted in a negative self-concept, as it was the case with Mai, when she studied in the EIS program but was not yet proficient enough in English to study subject matter content in English. On the other hand, school environments that present unchallenging English uses to students could also slow down students' English language development, as was the case for Fah. She mentioned that she did not learn much English during middle school because it was too easy for her. In contrast, she finds her high school environment to be challenging and leading her to learn more English. An important goal for parents is to find a place that fits students' level of proficiency, as well as to keep in mind that the school environment may need to be changed as students' English proficiency develops.

Moreover, family can support extra formal instruction in areas where the students might be lacking. Many students in this study found extra formal instruction to be helpful, and most of those extra learning sessions were arranged by their parents. It helps if parents know what their children are lacking, so they can try to compensate by arranging extra lessons.

Strategies used to promote English learning in this study were similar to those used by families in the United States to promote the learning of a heritage language, which is a language spoken by family or ancestors (Bailey & Osipova, 2016). The first similar strategy is *language*

*immersion*. In families promoting a target language (TL) that is a heritage language, parents often try to speak the TL as much as possible and they usually have the proficiency to do so. In this study, on the other hand, only a handful of parents had enough English proficiency to create a language immersion environment for students. Therefore, in this study, parents that had the means to do this were only those who were fluent speakers of English. Nonetheless, families in this study used different ways to infuse English into their children's lives. One was selecting study programs such as the English program offered by the school. By selecting a school environment that uses English more often than normal, parents who cannot create English immersion or infusion at home could provide it through school environment instead. Another strategy families used to create language immersion was to send children to live abroad, which was a strategy found in both EFL and ESL contexts. The next common strategy was literacy, meaning using reading in the TL to promote language learning (Bailey & Osipova, 2016). Many parents in this study used reading books to promote English learning as well. This could manifest in several forms, such as reading together and choosing books for students. Another similar strategy across these two contexts is the use of technology and "fun" activities to create a language learning environment. Another strategy that seems similar across contexts is bringing TL-speaking role models into students' lives. The difference is that in the case of heritage or second language learning, parents seem to do this intentionally—they tried to bring role models into children's lives. In the EFL context of this study, however, having English-speaking role models seemed to happen more incidentally, whether they were fluent English-speaking relatives, foreign friends of parents, or people at religious community.

**Suggestions for teachers and schools.** Teachers can try to involve other people in students' lives in their English language activities. The findings here show that most of the major

critical events in students' learning trajectories involved other people. Hence, interventions for English learning would be more effective and have a more lasting impact when they involved other people in students' social network. With elementary and middle school students, family seems to be the most influential group; therefore, it might be effective to involve immediate and extended family in interventions. As students get older, the influences of peers become more relevant. Thus, for high school students, it might be beneficial to involve peers as well. This could come in several forms, for example, assign a reading project together with family, support students' projects in translating lyrics, or help students engage in watching movies in English with family members.

Teachers should try to understand students' family background in English language learning. It might be helpful for teachers/educators to know parental background, including their English proficiency, their attitudes toward English learning, the use of English in their lives, and English language practices at home. While this information might be difficult to obtain, it would be beneficial in designing effective intervention to involve family members. Teachers might try to spend some time exploring students' home English language environment to help design intervention to increase the level of English language in home environment.

When designing curricula and interventions, teachers should take into account various levels of home English language environment among students. For instance, students whose family are already engaging in watching audiovisual media and listening to music together, the intervention might be to encourage students to discuss the content and language components of these media with their family. For these students that already use English in their lives, educators might consider targeting specific language components that students are lacking such as conversational dialogue, vocabulary, etc. For students whose families do not have English in

their home environment, educators might start with something simple, like watching audiovisual media in English with Thai subtitles and encourage students and their family to discuss both language components and content. Educators might also consider involving peers, siblings and cousins as some students might spend more time with age-mates such as siblings and cousins than adults in the family.

**Conclusion**

This study explored English learning trajectories and out-of-class learning practices of high school EFL students in Thailand. Results provide insight that could be applied to EFL learning and teaching. First, this study depicts how English learning occurs within social contexts. Students' narratives illustrate how social factors profoundly influence and shape English language learning. Moreover, this study indicates a high level of family influence in English learning and out-of-class learning practices. Family plays an important role through interacting with students and shaping their social structure. These influences have been found to manifest well into adolescence. In addition, this study shows the relationship between changes of self-concept and changes in learning trajectories. How students interpret their experiences seem to influence their self-concept, which then appears to influence learning trajectories. Findings show that students evaluate their English abilities in relation to social expectations. This point, once again, shows why social factors play a critical role in shaping learning trajectories. Last, but not least, students' out-of-class English learning practices follow their English language development. Advanced students tend to engage in out-of-class activities actively and frequently, while less advanced students tend to do so passively and infrequently. Additionally, successful students change how they engage in activities overtime to correspond to their stages of English development. While findings from this study are not generalizable to the Thai population more

164

generally, they do highlight important factors in EFL learners' English learning trajectories and the roles of out-of-class English learning practices in English language development. Findings from the students' perspectives could help teachers and families understand students' learning practices and provide insights as to how teachers and families can support students' English learning through out-of-class English learning practices.

# Appendix A: Data Collection Protocol (translated from Thai)

The goal of this study is to get information about your participation in out-of-class English activities. Out-of-class English activities refer to activities involving the use of English that you do outside of your classrooms. Activities do not need to involve only the use of English. The use of English in combination with other languages is still considered English activities. Any activities that require even partial use of English should be included. Examples of out-of-class English activities are writing e-mails using English words or phrases, watching TV programs in English, playing games in English, chatting with friends using English words and phrases, and so on.

You should include any extension of in-class activities that happen outside of class. For example, if the teacher assigns your group to do a class presentation on a topic and your group decides to do a short play. You should include your group's practice outside of classroom time, whether it happens at school during breaks or at someone's home. Another example of an extension of in-class activities that you should include is when you do work outside the classroom beyond what the teacher requires. For instance, the teacher asks you to complete a worksheet with a printed dialogue and multiple-choice questions for homework, and at home you decide to practice the dialogue out loud, even though it is not required. In this case, you should include practicing the dialogue as an out-of-class English activity.

In case you are uncertain if activities are considered out-of-class English activities or not, assume that they are and include them in the activity log and photo documentation.

## Photo Documentation Protocol

- Take a photo of any out-of-class English activities that you are doing.
- The photo may or may not include yourself.
- The photos should not intentionally include other people. However, it is acceptable if others are in the photos as a background.
- If the activity involves the use of digital screens, take one or more screenshots of the activity.
- The photos can be taken with any camera. A phone camera is acceptable.
- You can send the photos and screenshots to me via e-mail or upload to a shared Dropbox folder.
- Examples:
  - If you are watching YouTube videos online, you can take a screenshot of the video you are watching.
  - If you are playing an online game, you can take a screenshot of the game you are playing.
  - If you are helping a tourist asking for directions on the street, you can ask the tourist for permission to take a photo with him/her, or if not possible, you can just take a photo of yourself at the place where you are helping him/her to represent the activity.

## Activity Log Protocol

- Record any out-of-class English activities in the following table as soon as you finished the activities.
- If you later realize that you forgot to record some activity, please record it as soon as you remember. If the recording time is not immediately after the end of the activity, please write down the recording time as well.
- Record who is involved in this activity. This includes people involved in the activity virtually.
- Record tools used for the activity such as computers, the Internet, software, websites, games, etc. Please record the specific names of the tools you used, if available.
- Indicate the percentages of languages used in the activity. For example, if you mainly used English with the occasional use of Thai, you can write 75% English and 25% Thai. If you used only English, write 100% English. This does not need to be precise—just giving an estimate is acceptable.
- If you have any concerns or questions about the activity, feel free to record them in the notes column. You can also record additional information in the notes column if you wish.

# Appendix B: Activity Log Form (translated from Thai)

| Recording Date | | Activity Date | | Activity | Place | With? (By yourself, others) | Tools | Percentages of language(s) used | | Assignment (Yes or No) | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Date | Time | Date | Time | | | | | English | Thai | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

# Appendix C: Interview Protocol (translated from Thai)

Introduction (2-3 minutes)

Thank you for meeting with me today.

This interview will be audio-recorded for note-taking purposes. Your information will be confidential. You have the right to drop out of this study at any time.

I have a list of questions to remind me of the questions I want to ask, so from time to time, I will look at my question sheet because I want to make sure I ask everyone the same questions. I am also going to take some notes to help me remember what you have talked about, not to evaluate your answers. This interview will take about one hour.

You have been selected to be interviewed today because you have been identified as a motivated English language learner. The goal of this research is to examine how Thai high school students create an English language learning environment, especially outside the classroom. The aim of this study is to learn from successful students like you to inform us about how we may be able to help the English learning experience in Thailand. This study is not intended to evaluate your learning experience, study methods, or skills. I simply want to learn what Thai students are doing to improve their English.

Part 1. English learning history (15-20 minutes)

Now let's talk about your experience learning English.
• When did you first start learning English in school? At which grade level?
• Tell me a little bit more about the time you first started learning English in school. (Where? With whom? Voluntary/obligatory? etc.)
• Please share your English learning experience from when you first started until now. (Preschool, elementary, middle school).
• Who has influenced the way you learn English? (Explore.)
• What specific events influenced the way you learn English? (Explore.)
• Where are your parents' educational and career backgrounds? What are their English proficiency levels?
• Tell me a little bit about your siblings. What are their English learning experiences, as far as you know? (Explore.)
• Tell me a little bit about your extended family (cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents). How did they affect your English learning experience? (Explore.)
• How did your friends influence your English learning? How has this changed over the years? (Explore.)
• Tell me a little bit about teachers that influenced your English learning?
• From preschool until now, what types of schools have you attended? (Public, private, prestigious, bilingual, etc.)
• What types of English learning programs outside school have you attended? (Tutoring, foreign language institutions, summer camps, studying abroad, etc.)

169

Part 2. Details for English learning experience (15-20 minutes)

Now we are going to talk about the details of your English learning experience. Please describe in as much detail as you possibly can. We will start with your current learning activities and then we will move to past activities that were important to you.

- Let's start with what you currently do to learn English. Please describe your typical English learning activities in more details. You can refer to the activity log, if you'd like.
- Ask follow-up questions about experiences and activities that the student gave in the first part.
  - You mentioned that you did this activity. Can you tell me more about it?
  - How did you start doing this activity?
  - How often did you do this activity?
  - How long did you do this activity?
  - How did the way you did this activity change over time?
  - What resources did you need to do this activity?


Part 3. Reflections on the English learning experience (30-45 minutes)

Now we are going to talk about your opinions about your learning experience.

- How important it is for you to be fluent in English?
- What are your reasons to be fluent in English?
- Which are the top 3 activities you find the most helpful in improving your English? Why?
- What do you like most about doing these activities?
- What has motivated you to continue learning English?
- What, if any, are your obstacles in learning English?
- How do you think the increased use of information and communication technology (e.g., computer, the Internet, movies, etc.) in daily life impacts your English learning experiences?
- How do you see yourself using English 10 years from now? What skills would you have? How would you use them?
- If you were to give advice for other Thai students learning English, what would you tell them?


Demographic questions (5 minutes)

Before we finish the interview, I would like to ask you a few questions about your background information and English proficiency.

Ask any for demographic information that hasn't already been obtained.
- How old are you?
- Do you have any siblings? How old are they? What do they do/study?
- What is your English grade in the past semester?

170

- What is your overall high school GPA so far?
- Have you taken any English proficiency tests (e.g., O-NET, A-NET, TOEFL, IELTS, CU-TEP, TU-GET) within the past three years? Would you mind sharing the results?
- Have you spent time living abroad? Where and when?
- Are you learning other language(s) besides English?
- Please rate your English proficiency in four domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1=beginner, 2=lower intermediate, 3=intermediate, 4=upper intermediate, and 5=advanced).

Thank you very much for your time.

## Appendix D: Participant Background Information (translated from Thai)

Research ID _____

Age_____ years

Grade in English class in the last semester_____

Total GPA _____

Standardized test score (i.e., O-NET, A-NET, TOEFL, IELTS, CU-TEP, TU-GET)

| Test | Date taken | Score |
|------|-----------|-------|
|      |           |       |
|      |           |       |
|      |           |       |

?Have you lived abroad

| City, Country | Month/Year | Duration |
|---------------|-----------|----------|
|               |           |          |
|               |           |          |
|               |           |          |

Other languages that you are learning or have learned in the past

_____

How would you rate your English abilities in these areas?

| Area | 1 Beginner | 2 Lower Intermediate | 3 Intermediate | 4 Upper Intermediate | 5 Advanced |
|------|------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------|
| Listening | | | | | |
| Speaking | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | | |
| Writing | | | | | |

How much do you enjoy learning the followings?

Subject that you enjoy learning the most _____

Do not enjoy at all                                                    Very much enjoy

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
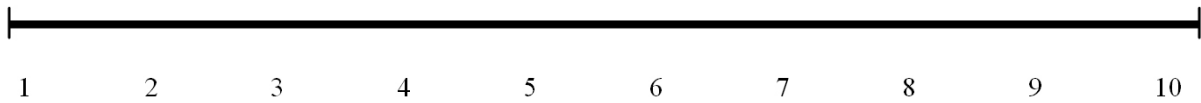
English subject

Do not enjoy at all                                                    Very much enjoy

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

English skills (English as communication skills, not as an academic subject)

Do not enjoy at all                                                    Very much enjoy

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

How would you draw your English learning trajectory?

English Proficiency

เวลา

| อนุบาล | ประถมต้น | ประถมปลาย | มัธยมต้น | ปัจจุบัน | |
| PreK | P1-3 | P4-6 | M1-3 | M4 | Time |

# Appendix E: Coding Scheme

1. Descriptions of learning trajectories
   a. TRAJ          Profiles of learning trajectories
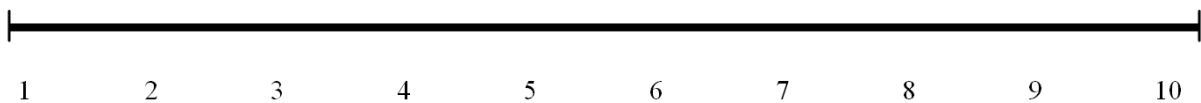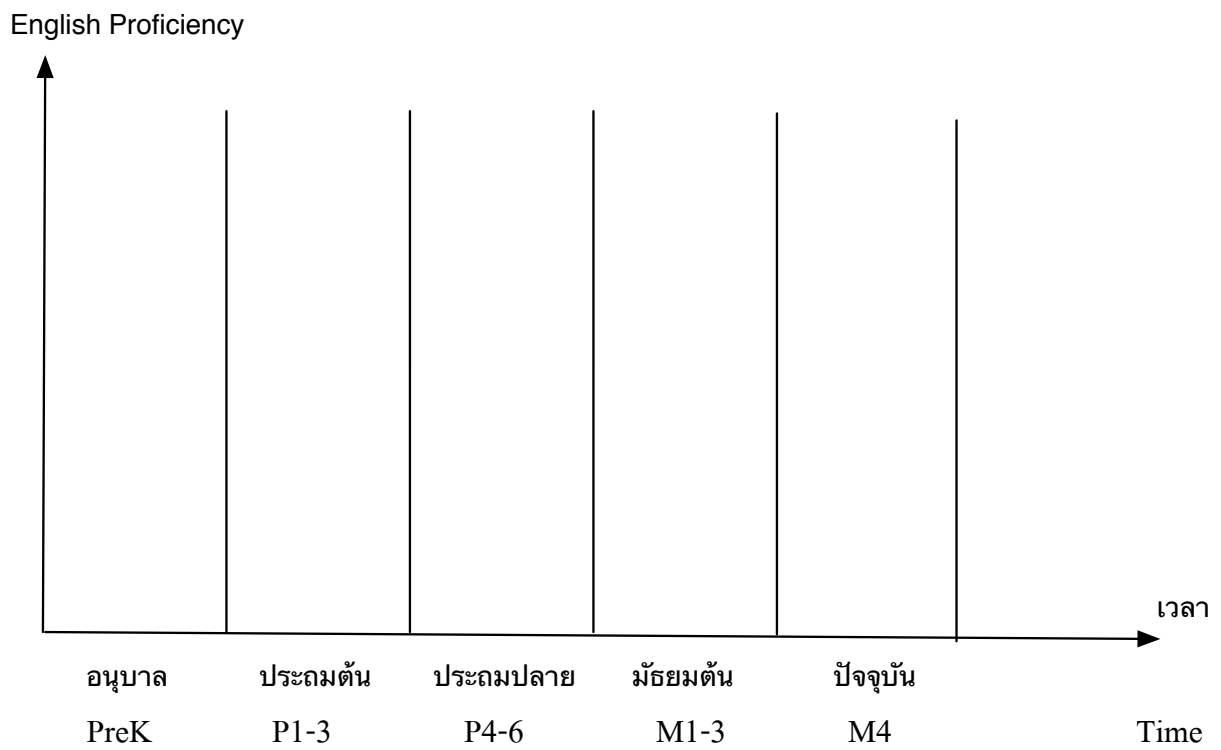   b. EVENT         Critical events in learning trajectories
      i. TrajEvent-INT      Interactions with speakers of English as critical events
      ii. TrajEvent-FOR     Formal instruction as critical events
      iii. TrajEvent-ACT     Engagement in informal out-of-class activities as critical events

2. Social and internal factors influencing English learning and out-of-class English learning practices
   a. PEO    People in students' social network
      i. PEO-FAM        Family members
      ii. PEO-PEER       Peers
      iii. PEO-TEACH     Teachers and tutors
   b. INP    Interaction patterns concerning English learning
      i. INP-INS          Inspirations
      ii. INP-ACT         Activities
      iii. INP-ATT         Attitudes
      iv. INP-COMM      Authentic communication
      v. INP-COMME     Comment about or criticism of students' abilities
      vi. INP-INSTR       Formal instruction
   c. SOCSTRU          Social structure
   d. SELFCON          Changes in self-concept
      i. SELFCON-POS     Positive changes in self-concept
      ii. SELFCON-NEG    Negative changes in self-concept
   e. ATT               Attitudes
      i. ATT1            Attitudes toward the English language
         1. ATT1-ACD       English as an academic subject
         2. ATT1-COMM    English as a means to communicate

175

        3. ATT1-LIN          English as a lingua franca

  ii. ATT2          Attitudes toward English learning

        1. ATT2-POS        Positive attitudes toward English learning (e.g., learning English is fun/enjoyable)

        2. ATT2-NEG        Negative attitudes toward English learning (e.g., learning English is difficult or boring)

  iii. ATT3         Attitudes toward English-speaking communities

3. Types of learning experiences and characteristics of helpful out-of-class activities

  a. ACT         Learning activities

    i. ACT1       Formal in-school instruction

    ii. ACT2      Informal out-of-school activities

    iii. ACT3     Formal out-of-school instruction

    iv. ACT4     Informal out-of-school activities

        1. ACT4-AUVIS     Audiovisual media

        2. ACT4-MUS       Music

        3. ACT4-WRI        Written media

        4. ACT4-COMM     Authentic communication

        5. ACT4-GAME     Games

    v. ACT5       Self-sponsored study

# Appendix F: Examples of Codes from Transcripts

| Code | Description | Example |
|------|-------------|---------|
| TRAJ | Descriptions of learning trajectories | My English development in P1-P6 [grades 1-6] was stunted, maybe improved a little bit. But in M1 [grade 7] I found online games, and studied in EIS [English for Integrated Studies]. The games were in English, so I got some [English] skills from games. I also learned English in EIS classes, studying science and math in English, so I learned a little bit [of English] from there. M1-3 [grades 7-9] were like that. (Tim) |
| EVENT | Critical events in learning trajectories | |
| TrajEvent-INT | Interactions with speakers of English as critical events | My parents got divorced, and then my mom married a foreigner. He later moved in with us when I was about five years old. Since then I had to learn and use English—like mandatorily. (Fah) |
| TrajEvent-FOR | Formal instruction as critical events | When I studied with this teacher, I felt that I could do it [taking English tests]. So, I liked it [English]. (June) |
| TrajEvent-ACT | Engagement in informal out-of-class activities as critical events | I met online players from other countries in M3 [grade 9] because that was when I started to live in the game, like talking to people instead of just playing (Ohm) |
| PEO | People in students' social network | |
| PEO-FAM | Family members | I started reading English-language fiction around P3 or P4 [grade 3 or 4]. I remember the first one. It's a novel called *Blasphemy*. It's about challenging gods. My dad bought it for me so that I could try reading [English]. (Ohm) |
| PEO-PEER | Peers | When I was in the drama club, there was one older peer. He/she was so good. His/her voice is clear. At that time, I was shy and afraid to speak English. After I saw him/her perform, I decided I had to be like him/her. (Bo) |
| PEO-TEACH | Teachers and tutors | Another important event was in primary school. I had a teacher that made learning [English] enjoyable, so at that time I started paying a lot of attention in English classes. [Since then] it was ingrained in my heart that learning English is fun. (Fah) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| INP | Interaction patterns concerning English learning | |
| INP-INS | Inspirations | My main reason [to acquire English] is my dad. I want to be fluent [in English] like my dad. (Lily) |
| INP-ACT | Activities | My brother bought a videogame. I played with him and I got addicted. After that I sought out more games on my own. They were a lot of fun, so I continued playing. (Boat) |
| INP-ATT | Attitudes | My mom wants me to learn the language. My stepmom also wants me to learn the language because they want me to 'get' English. They want me to be able to work abroad. Like if we are good at languages, people would want to work with you. [They] want me to have a good career, well-paid so I don't have to struggle. (Mink) |
| INP-COMM | Authentic communication | My friends at the church study in international schools, so I practice speaking English with them. (Bee) |
| INP-COMME | Comment about or criticism of students' abilities | [In elementary school] When I spoke English, my friends teased me, like I was different from other classmates. (Max) |
| INP-INSTR | Formal instruction | Teacher Aor teaches advanced English and uses difficult [exercise] problems. It's really challenging…It made me want to study more. (Pla) |
| SOCSTRU | Social structure | When I was in primary school, English instruction wasn't really serious....just learning basic vocabulary. It started to get serious in P5 [grade 5]. But it was a really heavy class load. [We had] more than 10 class periods per week, but they [teachers] laid the foundation systematically and gradually, so I felt ok with learning English. (Vee)<br><br>If I want to know something in science, like I just got curious about something, I need to search Google in English because Thai websites usually don't have the content. (Tim) |
| SELFCON | Changes in self-concept | |
| SELFCON-POS | Positive changes in self-concept | I started to feel better in M4 [grade 10] because I moved to the EIS [English for Integrated Studies] program, which uses less English than the EP [English Program], but they still have foreign teachers, so we need to communicate with them. My friends are not as good at English, so I help them. When I help them, I realize I actually know a lot of English. (Mink) |
| SELFCON-NEG | Negative changes in self-concept | My classmates teased me "What did you say? What a horrible accent!" It made me not want to speak [English] at school…. My friends criticized my accent, making me feel that my English was so bad, making me feel that I didn't want to improve. (Mai) |

| ATT | Attitudes | |
|---|---|---|
| ATT1 | Attitudes toward the English language | |
| ATT1-ACD | English as an academic subject | I have no other reason. It's just that I have to pass the tests. If I have to take a test, then I have to know it. (Mai) |
| ATT1-COMM | English as a means to communicate | I want to speak fluently so that I can speak with foreigners. (Fon) |
| ATT1-LIN | English as a lingua franca | [English] is important because it's an international language that people use to communicate and do other things. (Nong) |
| ATT2 | Attitudes toward English learning | |
| ATT2-POS | Positive attitudes toward English learning | What I've learned is that studying a lot doesn't help unless I practice. So, I watched a lot of movies and listened to music. [I] tried to listen to what they were saying and tried to understand. |
| ATT2-NEG | Negative attitudes toward English learning | If we learn [English] when we have already grown up, it's difficult. Like now when I force myself to memorize vocab words, I can't remember them well. If I had started [learning English] as a kid, I could have done well. (Mai) |
| ATT3 | Attitudes toward English-speaking communities | I want to work with foreigners… They are friendlier. (Ohm) |
| ACT | Learning activities | |
| ACT1 | Formal in-school instruction | I think it was around M3 [grade 9]. There was a teacher who used to teach in the EP [English program]….The teacher really emphasized learning English, and in a way that I understood. (Gigi) |
| ACT2 | Informal out-of-school activities | In M3 [9th grade], I was on a debate team. My teacher coached me every morning and evening for two months, so I could speak. After that, I really liked speaking English. (Belle) |
| ACT3 | Formal out-of-school instruction | In P2 [grade 2], my dad forced me to study English. He said I could only watch cartoons if I stayed home, so he took me to private language classes. When I was preparing for the admissions exam for junior high school, he wanted me to study at [school's name] so he made me take tutorial classes at [tutorial school's name]. (Gigi) |

| ACT4 | Informal out-of-school activities | |
|------|----------------------------------|---|
| ACT4-AUVIS | Audiovisual media | So, I watched a lot of movies and listened to music. [I] tried to listen to what they were saying and tried to understand. (Gigi) |
| ACT4-MUS | Music | When I was in Canada, my host sister put on music every day, and I liked some, so I just kept listening. (Vee) |
| ACT4-WRI | Written media | At first I read [English-language books] and didn't really understand. I kept trying to read. If I didn't understand, I guessed words' meanings. (Tim) |
| ACT4-COMM | Authentic communication | I remembered that I had to say things word by word. Let's say I asked dad [stepfather] 'what are we eating today', I would ask him 'kitchen', then say 'food', then say 'eat' as another word. Just say it word by word. Then dad [stepfather] would tell me the sentence 'What do we have to eat in the kitchen?' Then he had me repeat after him. (Fah) |
| ACT4-GAME | Games | But in M1 [grade 7] I found online games, and studied in the EIS [English for Integrated Studies] program. The games were in English, so I got some [English] skills from games. (Tim) |
| ACT5 | Self-sponsored study | I practiced on standardized tests. For the first time, I would do the practice without dictionary. When I finish, I would check the answers to see why I got some of the items wrong, like in error identification. Then I would note all my mistakes on a separate notebook. (Max) |

# Appendix G: Example of Coded Interview

Researcher:   Could you tell me about your English learning experiences?

Noi:          When I was a kid, I studied at School X on weekends and I think it helped a lot. **[ACT3, TrajEvet-FOR]** Learning English there made me feel unafraid to use English. At that time, I was pretty good at English. **[SELFCON-POS]** They didn't make students sit down and write. But we did activities with teachers, like playing games to earn a coin or a certificate. But when I grew up, I had to sit down to work on grammar and writing. I hated it so I didn't really pay attention. English wasn't important to me anymore. **[ATT2-NEG]** Everyone seemed to care more about math. Nobody cared about English. When I was in primary school, it was easy so I earned a high score in English. But when it was P4-P5, my peers were better. **[PEO-PEERS, INP-ATT]** When I got older, I took a test to apply for an Intensive English program in middle school, but I didn't pass. My mom really wanted me to study in the program, but I didn't get accepted. My mom compared me to my sister because she got accepted. **[PEO-FAM, INP-COMME]** When I was young, I think I was good at English. But when I grew up, I compared my abilities to my sister's, and she is better at English. **[SELFCON-NEG]**

Researcher:   So that was in kindergarten and primary school. What about middle and high schools?

Noi:          Actually, I think that success in learning English depends on whether I want to learn it. If I don't want to learn, I won't remember, no matter how many times I try to memorize vocabulary. When I looked up words in the dictionary, I would have to look them up again even if I had just looked them up a few minutes ago. If I really wanted to learn, I would remember. **[ATT]**

# Appendix H: Phase 2 Observation Notes

Student _____

Date _____

Place _____

Activity _____

Other people involved _____

Physical setting_____

| Time | Description | Researcher's notes/comments |
|------|-------------|----------------------------|
|      |             |                            |

## Follow-up questions for each activity

- What was your goal for this activity? What did you expect to get from doing this activity?
- What were your thoughts and feelings during the activity?
- Why did you do (a specific action)? What made you do (a specific action)?
- What did you get at the end of the activity?

# References

Bailey, A. L. (2007). The language demands of school: Putting academic English to the test. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Bailey, A. L., & Orellana, M. F. (2014). Adolescent development and everyday language practices: Implications for the academic literacy of multilingual learners. In T. Boals, E. Sato, & D. Molle (Eds.), *Sociocultural contexts of academic literacy development for adolescent English language learners*. Washington DC: American Educational Research Association.

Bailey, A. L., & Osipova, A. V. (2016). Children's multilingual development and education: Fostering linguistic resources in home and school contexts. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Bazeley, P. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: Practical strategies*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning*. Harlow, England; New York, NY: Longman.

Benson, P., & Reinders, H. (2011). Introduction. In P. Benson & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Beyond the language classroom* (pp. 1-6). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bernard, R. (2011). Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches (5th ed.). Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Black, R. W. (2009). English-Language learners, fan communities, and 21st-century skills. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 52*(8), 688-697. doi:10.1598/jaal.52.8.4

Bong, M., & Skaalvik, E. M. (2003). Academic self-concept and self-efficacy: How different are they really? *Educational Psychology Review, 15*(1), 1-40.

Bown, J. (2009). Self-regulatory strategies and agency in self-instructed language learning: A situated view. *The Modern Language Journal, 93*(4), 570-583. doi:10.2307/25612232

Brisk, M. E. (2006). *Bilingual education: From compensatory to quality schooling* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bruner, J. S. (1983). *Child's talk: Learning to use language*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Butler, Y. G. (2013). Parental factors and early English education as a foreign language: A case study in mainland China. *Research Papers in Education, 29*(4), 410-437. doi:10.1080/02671522.2013.776625

Chandler-Olcott, K., & Mahar, D. (2003). "Tech-savviness" meets multiliteracies: Exploring adolescent girls' technology- mediated literacy practices. *Reading Research Quarterly, 38*(3), 356-385.

Chusanachoti, R. (2009). EFL learning through language activities outside the classroom: A case study of English education students in Thailand. (Doctoral dissertation), Michigan State University. ProQuest database. (3363815)

Coleman, H. (2010). *The English language in development*. London, UK: British Council.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Csizér, K., & Dörnyei, Z. (2005). The internal structure of language learning motivation and its relationship with language choice and learning effort. *The Modern Language Journal, 89*(1), 19-36.

Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2016). Investment and language learning in the 21st century. *Langage et société, 157*(3), 19-38. doi:10.3917/ls.157.0019

Dhanasobhon, S. (2006). *English language teaching dilemma in Thailand*. Retrieved from http://www.curriculumandinstruction.org/index.php?lay=show&ac=article&Id=539134523&Ntype=7

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). *The psychology of second language acquisition*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2014). Future self-guides and vision. In K. Csizér & M. Magid (Eds.), *The impact of self-concept on language learning* (pp. 1-18). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (Eds.). (2009). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Harlow, England; New York, NY: Longman.

Doyle, H., & Parrish, M. (2012). Investigating students' ways to learn English outside of class: A researchers' narrative. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal, 3*(2), 196-203.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, U. N. (2000). *Youth in Thailand: A review of the youth situation and national policies and programmes*. New York, NY: United Nations.

Education First. (2016). *EF EPI: EF English proficiency index*. Retrieved from http://media2.ef.com/__/~/media/centralefcom/epi/downloads/full-reports/v6/ef-epi-2016-english.pdf

Educational Testing Service. (2017). *Test and score data summary for TOEFL iBT Tests* Retrieved from http://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/94227_unlweb.pdf

Egbert, J. L., & Jessup, L. M. (1996). Analytic and systemic analyses of computer-supported language learning environments. *TESL-EJ, 2*(2), 1-24.

Esch, E., & Zähner, C. (2000). The contribution of information and communication technology (ICT) to language learning environments or the mystery of the secret agent. *ReCALL, 12*(1), 5-18.

Fitzpatrick, D. (2011). Making sense of the English language policy in Thailand: An exploration of teachers' practices and dispositions. (Doctor of Education thesis), University of Exeter.

Fogle, L. W., & King, K. A. (2013). Child agency and language policy in transnational families. *Issues in Applied Linguistics, 19*, 1-25.

Foley, J. A. (2005). English In...Thailand. *RELC Journal, 36*(2), 223-234. doi:10.1177/0033688205055578

Gao, X. (2009). The 'English corner' as an out-of-class learning activity. *ELT Journal, 63*(1), 60-67. doi:10.1093/elt/ccn013

Gardner, R. C. (2007). Motivation and second language acquisition. *Porta Linguarum, 8*, 9-20.

Graddol, D. (2006). English next: Why global English may mean the end of 'English as a Foreign Language.' London, UK: British Council.

Griffiths, C. (2008). Strategies and good language learners. In C. Griffiths (Ed.), *Lessons from good language learners* (pp. 83-98). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Griffiths, C. (2013). *The strategy factor in successful language learning*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Head, J. (1997). *Working with adolescents: Constructing identity*. London, UK; Washington, DC: Falmer Press.

Hill, N. E., & Tyson, D. F. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Developmental Psychology, 45*(3), 740-763. doi:10.1037/a0015362

Huebner, T. (2006). Bangkok's Linguistic Landscapes: Environmental Print, Codemixing and Language Change. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 3*(1), 31-51. doi:10.1080/14790710608668384

Hyland, F. (2004). Learning autonomously: Contextualising out-of-class English language learning. *Language Awareness, 13*(3), 180-202. doi:10.1080/09658410408667094

IECD. (2009). Hospitality school for vulnerable young people in Thailand.   Retrieved from http://www.iecd.org/en/hospitality-school-and-practical-training-for-the-mountain-people-in-thailand/

Inozu, J., Sahinkarakas, S., & Yumru, H. (2010). The nature of language learning experiences beyond the classroom and its learning outcomes. *US-China Foreign Language, 8*(1), 14-21.

Jung, H.-J., & Kim, S. H. (2004). Opportunities in technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) classroom environments. *Teaching English with Technology, 4*(4).

Katsos, N. (2012). *EF English proficiency index*. Retrieved from http://www.ef.co.th/sitecore/__/~/media/efcom/epi/pdf/EF-EPI-2011.pdf

King, K. A., Fogle, L., & Logan-Terry, A. (2008). Family language policy. *Language and Linguistics Compass, 2*(5), 907-922. doi:10.1111/j.1749-818X.2008.00076.x

Kinzie, M. B., & Joseph, D. R. D. (2008). Gender differences in game activity preferences of middle school children: Implications for educational game design. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 56*(5), 643-663. doi:10.1007/s11423-007-9076-z

Koul, R., Roy, L., Kaewkuekool, S., & Ploisawaschai, S. (2009). Multiple goal orientations and foreign language anxiety. *System, 37*(4), 676-688. doi:10.1016/j.system.2009.09.011

Lai, C., & Gu, M. (2011). Self-regulated out-of-class language learning with technology. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 24*(4), 317-335. doi:10.1080/09588221.2011.568417

Lai, C., Zhu, W., & Gong, G. (2015). Understanding the quality of out-of-class English learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, *49*(2), 278-308. doi:10.1002/tesq.171

Lamb, M. (2004). Integrative motivation in a globalizing world. *System, 32*(1), 3-19. doi:10.1016/j.system.2003.04.002

Lamb, M. (2007). The impact of school on EFL learning motivation: An Indonesian case study. *TESOL Quarterly, 41*(4), 757-780.

Lamb, M. (2011). Future selves, motivation and autonomy in long-term EFL learning trajectories. In G. Murray, X. Gao, & T. Lamb (Eds.), *Identity, motivation, and autonomy in language learning* (pp. 177-194). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Lantolf, J. P. (1994). Sociocultural theory and second language learning: Introduction to the special issue. *The Modern Language Journal, 78*(4), 418-420. doi:10.2307/328580

Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Second language learning as a mediated process. *Language Teaching, 33*(2), 79-96.

Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006a). Activity theory 1: Theoretical framework. In *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development* (pp. 209-232). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006b). Activity theory 2: L2 development. In *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development* (pp. 233-262). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2007). Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning. In B. van Patten & J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction* (pp. 201-224). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Loima, J., & Vibulphol, J. (2014, June 2). Motivating kids to learn English is vital for the country's future growth. *The Nation [Newspaper]*.  Retrieved from http://www.nationmultimedia.com/webmobile/opinion/Motivating-kids-to-learn-English-is-vital-for-the--30235183.html

Mack, N., Woodsong, C., MacQueen, K. M., Guest, G., & Namey, E. (2005). *Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide*. Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International.

Mahn, H. (2013). Vygotsky and second language acquisition. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics.* Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing.

Mercer, S. (2011). Language learner self-concept: Complexity, continuity and change. *System, 39*(3), 335-346. doi:10.1016/j.system.2011.07.006

Mercer, S. (2014). Re-imagine the self as a network of relationships. In K. Csizér & M. Magid (Eds.), *The impact of self-concept on language learning* (pp. 51-86). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: Expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Ministry of Education, Thailand. (2008). *Central curriculum of basic education A.D. 2008*. Retrieved from http://www.curriculum51.net/upload/cur-51.pdf

Moll, L. C. (1992). Bilingual classroom studies and community analysis: Some recent trends. *Educational Researcher, 21*(2), 20-24.

Moll, L. C., & Greenberg, J. B. (1990). Creating zones of possibilities: Combining social contexts for instruction. In L. C. Moll (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education* (pp. 319-348). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Murray, G. (2008). Pop culture and language learning: Learners' stories informing EFL. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 2*(1), 2-17. doi:10.2167/illt018.0

Hann, N., Timmis, I., Alkhaldi, A. A., Davies, B. Troncoso, C. R., & Yi, Y. (2014). *The impacts of English on learners' wider lives*. London, UK: British Council.

Neuman, W. L. (2009). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Allyn and Bacon.

Noom-ura, S. (2013). English-teaching problems in Thailand and Thai teachers' professional development needs. *English Language Teaching, 6*(11). doi:10.5539/elt.v6n11p139

Norton, B. P. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly, 29*(1), 9-31. doi:10.2307/3587803

Norton, B. P. (2015). Identity, investment and faces of English internationally. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics (Quarterly), 38*(4), 375-391.

Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region. *TESOL Quarterly, 37*(4), 589-613. doi:10.2307/3588214

Office of the Educational Council. (2012). *สภาวการณ์การศึกษาไทยในเวทีโลก พ.ศ.2555 [Thailand educational situations in comparison with the world 2012]*. Bangkok: Office of the Educational Council.

Ortega, L. (2009). *Understanding second language acquisition*. London, UK: Hodder Education.

Padilla-Walker, L. M. (2007). Developmental needs of adolescents and media. In *Encyclopedia of children, adolescents, and the media* (Vol. 1, pp. 2-5). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Reference.

Palfreyman, D. M. (2011). Family, friends, and learning beyond the classroom: Social networks and social capital in language learning. In P. Benson & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Beyond the language classroom* (pp. 17-34). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Pavlenko, A., & Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Second language learning as participation and the (re)construction of selves. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 155-177). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Pearson, N. (2004). The idiosyncrasies of out-of-class language learning: A study of mainland Chinese students studying English at tertiary level in New Zealand. In *Proceedings of the Independent Learning Conference 2003*. Paper presented at the Independent Learning Conference, University of Melborne, Melbourne, 13-14 September, 2003.

Pickard, N. (1996). Out-of-class language learning strategies. *ELT Journal, 50*(2), 150-159.

Poplack, S. (2001). Code switching: Linguistic. In Neil J. Smelser & Paul B. Baltes (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 2062-2065). Oxford, UK: Pergamon.

Rama, P. S., Black, R. W., van Es, E., & Warschauer, M. (2012). Affordances for second language learning in World of Warcraft. *ReCALL, 24*(3), 322-338. doi:10.1017/S0958344012000171

Reyes, I. (2004). Functions of Code Switching in Schoolchildren's Conversations. *Bilingual Research Journal, 28*(1), 77-98. doi:10.1080/15235882.2004.10162613

Runckel, C. W. (2012). Asia opportunities: Asean Economic Community (AEC) in 2015. Retrieved from http://www.business-in-asia.com/asia/asean_economic_community.html

Saiyasombut, S. (2012). Thai education failures – Part 4: Dismal English-language training. Retrieved from http://asiancorrespondent.com/78647/thai-education-failures-part-4-dismal-english-language-education/

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Schmidt, R., & Savage, W. (1992). Challenge, skill, and motivation. *PASAA, 20*, 14-28.

Schumann, J. H. (1975). Affective factors and the problem of age in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, *25*(2), 209-235. doi:10.1111/j.1467-1770.1975.tb00242.x

Seargeant, P., & Erling, E. J. (2013). Introduction: English and development. In E. J. Erling & P. Seargeant (Eds.), *English and development: Policy, pedagogy and glocalization* (pp. 1-20). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Sedikides, C., & Brewer, M. B. (2001). *Individual self, relational self, collective self*. Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Seidman, I. (2013). Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences (4th ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Snow, C. E., & Freedson-Gonzalez, M. (2003). Bilingualism, second language learning, and English as a second language. In J. W. Guthrie (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of education* (2nd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 181-185). New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA.

Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Sundqvist, P. (2011). A possible path to progress: Out-of-school English language learners in Sweden. In P. Benson & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Beyond the language classroom* (pp. 106-118). Hamshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillian.

Swain, M., Kinnear, P., & Steinman, L. (2011). Sociocultural theory in second language education: An introduction through narratives. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Sykes, J. M., AnaOskoz, & Thorne, S. L. (2008). Web 2.0, synthetic immersive environments, and mobile resources for language education. *CALICO Journal, 25*(3), 528-546.

Sørensen, B. H., & Meyer, B. (2007). *Serious games in language learning and teaching- A theoretical perspective.* Paper presented at the Digital Games Research Associations (DiGRA) International Conference: Situated Play, The University of Tokyo, Hongo Campus City: Tokyo, Japan.

Takeuchi, O. (2003). What can we learn from good foreign language learners? A qualitative study in the Japanese foreign language context. *System, 31*(3), 385-392. doi:10.1016/s0346-251x(03)00049-6

Taylor, F. (2013). Self and identity in adolescent foreign language learning. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

ธุรกิจท่องเที่ยว พร้อมรับ "AEC" หรือยัง? [Is tourism industry prepared for AEC?]. (2013, October 26). Retrieved from http://www.thai-aec.com/612

Trueba, H. (1989). *Raising silent voices*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House Publishers.

Tse, L. (2000). Student perceptions of foreign language study: A qualitative analysis of foreign language autobiographies. *Modern Language Journal, 84*(1), 69-84. doi:10.1111/0026-7902.00053

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Warschauer, M. (2002). A developmental perspective on technology in language education. *TESOL Quarterly, 36*(3), 453-475.

Warschauer, M. (2004). Technological change and the future of CALL. In S. Fotos & C. Brown (Eds.), *New perspectives on CALL for second and foreign language classrooms* (pp. 15-25). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Williams, M., Burden, R., Poulet, G., & Maun, I. (2004). Learners' perceptions of their successes and failures in foreign language learning. *Language Learning Journal, 30*(1), 19-29.

Wongsothorn, A., Hiranburana, K., & Chinnawongs, S. (2002). English language teaching in Thailand today. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 22*(2), 107-116. doi:10.1080/0218879020220210

Wongsothorn, A., Sukamolsun, S., Chinthammit, P., Ratanothayanonth, P., & Noparumpa, P. (1996). National profiles of language education: Thailand. *PASAA, 26*, 89-103.

World Economic Forum. (2012). The ASEAN travel & tourism competitiveness report 2012: Fostering prosperity and regional integration through travel and tourism. Retrieved from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TTCR_ASEAN_Report_2012.pdf

World Travel & Tourism Council. (2013). *Travel & Tourism economic impact 2013: Thailand*. London, UK: World Travel & Tourism Council.

You, C., & Chan, L. (2015). The dynamics of L2 imagery in future motivational self-guides. In Z. Dörnyei, P. D. MacIntyre, & A. Henry (Eds.), *Motivational dynamics in language learning* (pp. 397-418). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Youth Career Initiative. (2014). YCI country report: Thailand. Retrieved from http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=12&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCcQFjABOAo&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.youthcareerinitiative.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2014%2F01%2FYCI-Thailand-country-report-March2014.pdf&ei=iOfjU4qwFIze8AXEj4AY&usg=AFQjCNH3-BrQvWh68SDTC3AA5fPkk84kpA&sig2=G7FpZH3zuVEdJLOJUbzIJg&bvm=bv.72676100,d.dGc

Zhang, G. (2010). *Technology uses in creating second language learning environments: When learners are creators.* (Doctoral dissertation), Michigan State University, Ann Arbor, MI. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I database.