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A STUDY OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS' IDENTITIES AND INVESTMENTS
IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS
IN RELATION TO THEIR IMAGINED COMMUNITIES



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INVESTMENTS IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
CLASSROOMS IN RELATION TO THEIR IMAGINED COMMUNITIES



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หัวข้อวิทยานิพนธ์	การศึกษาอัตลักษณ์และความทุ่มเทในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ ในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศของนักศึกษาอาชีวศึกษาจากมุมมอง ชุมชนจิตกรรม
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บทคัดย่อ

แรงจูงใจและความสำเร็จในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นประเด็นที่ถูกหยิบยกขึ้นมาพิจารณาอยู่บ่อยครั้ง และยังคงเป็นที่ถกเถียงกันเรื่อยมาเป็นเวลายาวนานระหว่างผู้มีส่วนได้เสียทางการศึกษา การศึกษาวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อสำรวจอัตลักษณ์และความทุ่มเทในชั้นเรียน และความสัมพันธ์ของทั้งสองปัจจัยกับชุมชนจิตกรรมของนักศึกษาอาชีวศึกษา ระดับประกาศนียบัตรวิชาชีพชั้นสูง โดยอ้างอิงแนวคิดของนอร์ตัน (2543, 2544) เกี่ยวกับชุมชนจิตกรรม และความทุ่มเทในชั้นเรียน เพื่อค้นหาแนวทางการจัดการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษที่สัมฤทธิ์ผลสำหรับการอาชีวศึกษา ผู้เข้าร่วมการศึกษาคือ นักศึกษาระดับประกาศนียบัตรวิชาชีพชั้นสูง และครูผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษ จากวิทยาลัยเทคนิค ม.พ. ซึ่งเป็นวิทยาลัยเทคนิคของรัฐบาล ตั้งอยู่ในจังหวัดระยอง นอกจากนี้ ยังมีครูฝึกในสถานประกอบการจำนวน 3 คนเข้าร่วมในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ด้วย เครื่องมือวิจัยที่ใช้ในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ คือแบบสอบถามแบบกึ่งโครงสร้าง และแบบบันทึกการจัดการเรียนการสอน งานวิจัยนี้วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพโดยใช้เทคนิค content analysis ร่วมกับ intra-coder และ inter-coder เพื่อความน่าเชื่อถือของผลการศึกษา ผลการศึกษาพบว่า นักศึกษาส่วนใหญ่มีความทุ่มเทในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ เนื่องจากเล็งเห็นว่า ภาษาอังกฤษจะมีประโยชน์กับการศึกษาและการประกอบอาชีพในอนาคตของตนเอง อย่างไรก็ตาม ความทุ่มเทในชั้นเรียนของนักศึกษานั้น มีความผันแปรตลอดระยะเวลาการศึกษา กล่าวคือ นักศึกษาส่วนใหญ่เลือกทุ่มเทกับบทเรียนที่คิดว่าจะเป็นประโยชน์แก่ตนเองในชุมชนจิตกรรม ส่วนการสร้างอัตลักษณ์นั้น นักศึกษาส่วนใหญ่พยายามสร้างภาพลักษณ์นักศึกษาที่ดีตลอดระยะเวลาการศึกษา โดยในระหว่างการฝึกงานในสถานประกอบการ นักศึกษาส่วนใหญ่พยายามปรับเปลี่ยนภาพลักษณ์ของตนเอง จากเดิมที่เป็นเพียงผู้เรียนภาษา เป็นผู้ใช้ภาษาที่ดี เนื่องจากพวกเขามีโอกาสได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อสื่อสารในสถานการณ์จริง นอกจากนี้ ผลการศึกษายังพบว่า หากภาพชุมชนจิตกรรมของนักศึกษามีความชัดเจนมาก ความทุ่มเททางการเรียนและการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ก็จะชัดเจนมากยิ่งขึ้นด้วย ข้อเสนอแนะจากการศึกษาครั้งนี้คือ ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างชุมชนจิตกรรมและความทุ่มเทในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของผู้เรียนอาชีวศึกษาควรได้รับความสนใจเพิ่มมากขึ้น ผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษควรเปิดโอกาสให้นักศึกษาได้พูดคุยหรืออภิปรายเกี่ยวกับชุมชนจิตกรรมของตนเอง นอกจากนี้ ผู้จัดทำหลักสูตรอาชีวศึกษาควรออกแบบหลักสูตรที่ตอบสนองความต้องการจำเป็นของนักศึกษาในการนำภาษาอังกฤษไปใช้เพื่อการประกอบอาชีพในอนาคตหรือในชุมชนจิตกรรมอื่น ๆ ของตนเอง

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ABSTRACT

Issues surrounding Thai vocational students' success and motivation in learning English have long been controversial among stakeholders. Drawing on Norton's (2000, 2001) conceptualization of an imagined community and reconceptualization of motivation as investments, this qualitative study aims to examine the investments and identities of vocational diploma students in relation to their imagined communities in order to discover potential pedagogies for the English language teaching for vocational education. The participants were ten vocational diploma students and two English teachers from MP College, a public technical college in Rayong, the eastern part of Thailand; and three internship supervisors from the companies where the student participants interned. The research instruments used in this study were a semi-structured interview and a teacher log. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using content analysis techniques. To achieve high reliability in analyzing the data, intra-coder and inter-coder reliability methods were employed. The results revealed that most of the student participants invested in their English classes as they could perceive the power of English over their future studies and careers. However, their investments tended to fluctuate along with their learning trajectory. The strong investments were regularly demonstrated when the participants realized the exact benefits of the English lessons to their imagined communities. In terms of their identity formation, they regularly put effort into shaping their good student identities during their study at every level of education. During their internship, the students gradually transformed their identities from mere language learners to good language users as they had more opportunities to use English in authentic milieus. The results also showed that when the participants could envision an imagined community where they wanted to gain membership, they would have stronger investments in their English learning and identity formation. This study suggests that attention should be paid to the interplay between vocational students' imagined communities and their investments in English language classes. It is recommended that English teachers initiate an open dialogue to discuss with the students their imagined communities. English language curricula and pedagogy for vocational students should be thus designed in response to the students' needs in using English in their prospective careers or chosen imagined communities.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
THAI ABSTRACT	I
ENGLISH ABSTRACT	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS	IV
LIST OF TABLES	VIII
LIST OF FIGURES	IX
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Purposes of the Study	6
1.3 Scope of the Study	6
1.4 Significance of the Study	7
1.5 Definitions of Terms	8
1.6 Chapter Summary	8
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Communities of Practices	9
2.2 Imagined Communities	10
2.3 Identities and Language Learning	11
2.4 Investments	13
2.5 Empirical Studies on Imagined Communities, Identities, and Investment	14
2.6 Empirical Studies on Thai Vocational Students’ Learning of English	20
2.7 Chapter Summary	24

TABLE OF CONTENT (CONTINUED)

	Page
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
3.1 Research Design	25
3.2 Research Setting	27
3.3 Research Participants	29
3.4 Research Instruments	30
3.5 Data Collection	33
3.6 Data Analysis	34
3.7 Research Ethics	35
3.8 Chapter Summary	36
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS	37
4.1 Overview of Research Participants	37
4.2 Biographical Background of Student Participants	40
4.3 The Students’ Perceptions of Their Investments in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms	51
4.4 The Students’ Perceptions of their Identities as English as a Foreign Language Learners	60
4.5 The students’ investments and identities in Relation to Their Imagined Communities	66
4.6 Chapter Summary	68
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	69
5.1 Summary of the Findings	69
5.2 Discussion of the Findings	72
5.3 Implications of the Findings	78
5.4 Limitations of the Study	83
5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies	84
5.6 Chapter Summary	85

TABLE OF CONTENT (CONTINUED)

	Page
BIBLIOGRAPHY	86
APPENDICES	97
Appendix A: Student Background Questionnaire (English Version)	98
Appendix B Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 1 (English Version)	101
Appendix C Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 2 (English Version)	103
Appendix D Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 3 (English Version)	105
Appendix E Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Supervisor (English Version)	106
Appendix F Teacher Logs (English Version)	107
Appendix G Student Background Questionnaire (Thai Version)	108
Appendix H Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 1 (Thai Version)	111
Appendix I Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 2 (Thai Version)	113
Appendix J Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 3 (Thai Version)	114
Appendix K Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Supervisors (Thai Version)	115
Appendix L Teacher Logs (Thai Version)	116
Appendix M Item Objective Congruence Form (IOC Form) for a Student Background Questionnaire	117
Appendix N Item Objective Congruence Form (IOC Form) for a Semi-Structured Interview (student)	121

TABLE OF CONTENT (CONTINUED)

	Page
Appendix O Item Objective Congruence Form (IOC Form) for a Semi-Structured Interview (supervisor)	127
Appendix P Item Objective Congruence Form (IOC Form) for a Teacher Log	129
Appendix Q List of Experts Validating Instruments	131
AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY	132



LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.1 The specialized internship programs	29
3.2 Population	29
4.1 Background Information about Student Participants	37
4.2 Background Information about Supervisor Participants	39
4.3 Background Information about Teacher Participants	39



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
3.1 Conceptual Framework of this study	26



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

As the world has been more globalized and borderless, English has become a lingua franca among people who do not share the same language. Nowadays, English is widely used throughout most of the business organizations where employees are of diverse nationalities, religions, and ethnicities. These multiracial societies are rapidly expanding and growing in numbers in response to the smaller world enabled by the advent of faster and more convenient transportation around the world.

In Thailand, in the public sector, several authorities hire expatriates from different countries, such as the U.S., the U.K., Germany, Japan, and Korea. In the private sector, a large number of multinational companies, with cultural and linguistic diversity, have been established. Therefore, English is inevitably used as a medium of communication in these workplaces. To cope with this dynamic sphere, Thailand's Ministry of Education (MOE) has continuously initiated various schemes that are believed to promote Thai students to be capable of communicating fluent English, for instance, adopting the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as an official framework for English language pedagogy throughout Thai schools, developing online English language learning applications named 'Echo English' and 'Echo Hybrid' available for students through smartphones or tablets, and boosting in-service teachers' English language competencies through intensive language training called 'English Boot Camp' (Office of the Education Council, 2019).

Regarding vocational education in particular, to respond to prospective employers' requirements, English language curricula at this level are developed and thus implemented in order to equip students with English proficiency covering both general communication skills and job-oriented communication skills. Vocational certificate level students (equivalent to Grades 10-12) are required to complete six

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compulsory English language courses, one course per semester, covering all four main language skills plus some professional English relevant to their fields of study (Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), 2019). For vocational diploma students (equivalent to 1st-2nd year undergraduate students), they are required to complete one general English communication course and two more profession specific English courses (OVEC, 2020). Furthermore, apart from providing English as a compulsory subject, many vocational colleges offer English programs (EP) and Mini English Programs (MEP), where English is used as a medium of instruction in certain subjects, so as to prepare their students for the growing international business. Besides, the OVEC attempts to upgrade vocational students' professional English skills to meet international standards by promoting training abroad programs with its associated organizations, for example, exchanging students between member countries of SEA-TVET (Southeast Asian Technical and Vocational Education and Training) Consortium (SEAMEO Secretariat, 2019). Unfortunately, despite much effort, according to the most recent V-net (Vocational National Educational Test) results, the English for daily and job-oriented communication skills of Thai vocational diploma students in 2018 and 2019 were seriously low. Out of 20, the average scores are 6.88, and 6.10 respectively (Bureau of Vocational Education Standards and Qualification, 2020). The poor results have long been controversial issues among stakeholders. Some distrusted the quality of the tests, while others questioned the English language pedagogical practices in vocational institutions.

Pedagogically, there are many factors believed to affect students' success or failure in learning additional languages. One of the most discussed factors is language learning motivation. To some language practitioners and researchers, motivation plays a vital role in learning an additional language. Gardner (1985) identified motivation as a combination of a desire to learn and an effort to achieve language proficiency. A seminal work by Gardner and Lambert (1972) studied Canadian high school students learning French in Montreal and found that motivation could be divided into two main types: integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation refers to language learning for personal advancement and cultural enrichment. To elaborate, language learners

learn a language because they wish to successfully integrate themselves into the culture of the target language society and involve in social interchange among that society. In contrast, instrumental motivation includes a desire to learn a language for functional or external reasons, such as passing exams, career advancement, or financial rewards. The study results confirmed that both types of motivation accompanied the success or failure in second language learning. However, success in that learning could be more attributed to integrative motivation as it maintains better long-term motivation than its counterpart.

Nevertheless, simply investigating students' language learning motivation has been criticized for its imperviousness to social contexts of learners (Dörnyei, 2001; Norton, 2000). Most studies on motivation conceptualized it as a fixed characteristic residing in each language learner and concluded that learners who were unsuccessful in learning target languages did not possess a satisfactory level of desire to learn the language. These studies excluded the existent impact of the social world to second or foreign language learners' engagement in classrooms. To elaborate, Norton (2000) observed that the traditional social psychological notion of motivation in second language learning could not accurately explain her research participants' motivation in learning English in relation to their actual classroom commitment. To support her claim, Norton (2000) discussed findings from her influential study. Felicia, one of the immigrant women in her study reluctantly left her privileged life in Peru, her native country, because of politic situations. She desired to maintain her status as a Peruvian superior person and resisted the identity of an 'immigrant.' She envisioned herself as a 'foreigner' from the Peruvian superior class with satisfying English, living in Canada. Felicia had been being actively engaged in ESL classroom practice until her teacher neglected to mention her point about Peru during class discussion, making an excuse that Peru was not a major country under consideration. Felicia felt mad and never returned to the class despite her high motivation to learn English. Norton (2001) pointed out that Felicia's 'imagined community' – an envisioned community that transcended across time and space (Norton, 2001) - of Peruvian superiors was not accessible to the teacher who focused more on tangible classroom practices. When

Felicia's English class did not relate to her imagined community anymore, she decided to quit. According to Norton (2000), to better explain this ambivalent desire to learn and practice languages, it was necessary to reconceptualize the construct of motivation as a form of 'investment' in an 'imagined community'.

Being a social psychological perspective, the construct of motivation is conceptualized as a fixed personality trait belonging to each language learner. In contrast, the notion of investment, capturing the relationship between language learners and the changing social world, regards learners as social beings with complex identities and variable desires. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1977) economic metaphors, Norton (2001) also advocated that learners 'invest' in the target language because they expect a good return that will boost up their cultural capital through acquiring a wide range of resources, for example, language, education, friendship, real estate, and money. It should be noted here that the concept of investment that Norton (2001) proposed is not the same perception as instrumental motivation. The distinctive contrast between the two concepts is that motivation is constructed as a fixed and ahistorical characteristic that belongs to learners who desire to gain material resources valuable to the target language speakers, while the notion of investment perceives language learners as having "a complex social history and multiple desires" (Norton, 2000, p. 10). The notion additionally presupposes that while learning or exercising the target language, learners are also forming and reforming their preferred identities corresponding to their social situations (Peirce, 1995). Thus, investing in the target language is also investing in learners' own identities which keep changing across time and space. For example, students may stay silent in a language classroom with their teachers' presence as they are afraid that they may make mistakes. However, these students may confidently teach English to their younger schoolmates as they feel confident that their English is better.

The notion of imagined community and investment has been laid as a foundational theoretical framework for a number of research studies within language learning fields. In the context of the present study, research participants were vocational diploma students in petrochemicals and electrical engineering specialized

programs. They were boarding school students studying and residing at MP College (pseudonym), a technical college located at the center of the petrochemical industry area in the eastern part of Thailand.

The major mission of MP College is to supply business sectors with quality manpower equipped with functioning English proficiency in petrochemical fields. Students enrolling to these two specialized programs are exposed to international workplace communities through the specialized internship programs, in parallel to their formal education at the college, which are approved by both the college and the business establishments where they do their internship. Regarding their English language learning, apart from compulsory English courses regulated by the Curriculum for the Diploma of Vocational Education, students are required to attend the Test of English for International communication (TOEIC) preparation classes organized by a private tutoring school during their weekends for eight weeks. This test preparation training is financially supported by the college. After graduation, students from these specialized programs are accepted as permanent staff at the company where they do their internship.

However, like other vocational colleges, MP College has been challenged by the issue of students' low English language proficiency. More dismally, their proficiency has still been low despite several adaptation and improvement in pedagogical practices and approaches. With reference to the previous research investigating language learning problems among Thai vocational students, the spotlight has been on the concept of motivation. For example, Aiyakorn and Somphong (2019) explored the motivation level of vocational certificate students toward studying English and also defined whether the students instrumentally or integratively motivated, while Phonsawai and Chetchumlong (2019) observed whether vocational diploma students' motivation is higher when they studied English through the project-based learning approach. Moreover, Choosri and Intharaksa (2011) captured the differences in the level of motivation between vocational students with high and low achievement. Nevertheless, as discussed earlier in this section, merely paying attention to students' motivation in English classes may lead to disregard for the students' social context

and personal history. Therefore, this study set out to explore vocational diploma students' investments and identities from different angles through the lens of the notion of imagined communities. It was strategized to illuminate a richer understanding of language learning processes and shed light on effective practices in English language pedagogy for vocational education. Additionally, the study could be of great help to educators to design and develop language learning curricula with enhanced perceptions of learning as a socially constructed activity.

1.2 Purposes of the Study

The main goal of this study was to examine the investments and identities of vocational diploma students in MP College in relation to their imagined communities (Norton, 2001) in order to discover potential pedagogies for the English language teaching for vocational education. To reach the goal, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1.2.1 How do the students perceive their investments in English as a foreign language classrooms?

1.2.2 How do the students perceive their identities as English as a foreign language learners?

1.2.3 To what extent are the students' investments and identities related to their imagined communities?

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study employed a qualitative research design using interviews and teacher logs to investigate investments and identities of the vocational diploma students in relation to their imagined communities. The population of this study was 408 diploma-level students enrolling in English courses at MP College in the academic year 2020. Using a purposive sampling technique, this study recruited ten boarding school diploma students studying in petrochemicals and electrical engineering specialized programs to serve as research participants.

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1.4 Significance of the Study

In this study, vocational students' imagined communities, investments, and identities were investigated. Drawing on Norton's (2000, 2001) concepts of imagined community, investments, and identity, the study delved into vocational students' class engagement, learning investments, and experiences in disciplinary communities during their study and internship, including their imagined communities. It gave priority to students' voices which had been usually overshadowed by researchers' diagnoses of curricula or content deficiency in the past literature. Additionally, another unique contribution of this study was the efforts to examine vocational students through a different lens of the sociocultural perspectives of investment focusing on the interplay between social contexts and language learning, instead of the psychological perspectives of motivation having been criticized as static and dichotomous.

This study adopted a qualitative design to examine the investments and identities of vocational diploma students while existing research on vocational students' language learning primarily relied on quantitative surveys and analyses. Those studies have yielded valuable statistical data but often lacked the depth needed to fully comprehend the underlying nuances and individual experiences of students. The use of the qualitative research approach in this study offered unique opportunities to delve into the subjective experiences and perceptions of vocational students over their identities and investments in the English language classes, unfolding the complexities that quantitative measures might overlook. By employing qualitative methods, this research has captured the richness of stories and narratives that the student participants brought to their English learning experiences.

The findings of this study have shed light on students' language learning trajectories, with particular reference to their identities and investments which are less explored in the vocational context in Thailand, in corresponding to their imagined communities. It signaled vocational education stakeholders for possibly effective improvement in pedagogical practices or curricula development, for instance, reorganizing internship schemes, more exposing students to real working experiences, or improving vocational curricula. Findings from this study have enhanced our theoretical understanding of the notion of imagined communities as adopted by practitioners and researchers from second and foreign language education fields.

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1.5 Definitions of Terms

The operational definitions used in this study are presented as follows:

Imagined community	The desired language communities that learners aspire to belong to when they learn a language. (Norton, 2013)
Identity	A person's understanding of themselves in relation to the world and their possibilities in the future. (Norton, 2000)
Investment	Attempts of learners to acquire a language in order to gain commensurate returns. (Pierce, 1995)
Vocational diploma students	Students who are studying in specialized programs at the diploma level at MP College.
Internship	A training program in a company or an organization as part of a vocational diploma degree at MP college.

1.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the study including the background of the study, the purpose of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, and the operational definition of terms. In the following chapter, a literature review delving into both theoretical perspectives and empirical studies will be discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter first discusses the theoretical framework of this research. It includes an overview of communities of practices, imagined communities, identities and language learning, and investments in language classrooms. The chapter also places emphasis on the review of previous empirical research studies relevant to imagined communities, identities and investments in language learning.

2.1 Communities of Practices

There has been an increase in interest in re-conceptualizing ‘learning’ from a traditional view of learning as a mere acquisition of knowledge in an individual’s cognitive system to a social view of learning as participation or engagement in a socially situated activity. This re-conceptualization of learning has gained considerable attention for some decades from scholars from different disciplines, including those from foreign language education and applied linguistics. Lave and Wenger’s (1991) seminal work also supports this social perspective of learning, advocating that learning occurs in social context within a ‘community of practice’ through the process of learning called ‘legitimate peripheral participation.’ One of the most simple but comprehensive definitions of a community of practice that is regularly mentioned is from Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) describing that:

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis. (p.4)

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), learning within a community of practice takes place through the process called “legitimate peripheral participation” where newcomers interact with old-timers and gradually develop from the peripherality towards a full membership in a community. The term “legitimate peripheral

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participation” illustrates the engagement of members in social practice. It shows how newcomers take part in community activities that they are not yet masters of, get slowly familiar to their new communities as they learn from old-timers, gain skills that the old-timers possess, then, develop mastery and access full membership.

Nevertheless, learning within a community of practice is broader than interactions between newcomers and old-timers. It covers identity formation and transformation within learners’ participation (Wenger, 1998). As explained by Wenger, learning is a social practice that includes a whole person involving in new activities, performing new tasks, and mastering new understanding. There is a set of relationships within the practice that help define who that person is in each particular context by shaping the person’s perception of his or her place within the community. As such, participating in communities of practice is also involving in a process of identity construction.

Not only is the notion of communities of practice concerned with participation, but it also lays critical emphasis on non-participation. Non-participation also determines the shaping of identities. Wenger (1998) suggested that members in a community define themselves as who they are or are not through their participation or non-participation in community activities, and also through their imagination of what they can or cannot be in their communities of practice. According to Wenger (1998), to gain a full membership in a community of practice, people not only participate in different tangible interactions, but also learn through their imagination to form their new images as community members and to envision their possibility in a community of practice. To deeper delve into imagination and identity formation, the subsequent sections will further discuss the notion of imagined communities, identities, and investment (Norton, 2000).

2.2 Imagined Communities

The notion of imagined communities has been increasingly investigated within the fields of language education and applied linguistics. The term ‘imagined communities’ was originally coined by an anthropologist named Benedict Anderson

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(1991) in an attempt to revisit the construct of nationalism. He suggested that a nation should not be clarified based on its actual frontier but should be viewed as an imagined political community due to the fact that a nation is a community where members not actually know each other, meet, or even hear of; but they conceive their membership through imagination. Accordingly, a sense of nationalism is mostly created through imagination which enables community members to connect to and to bond with other members whom they do not know and may not ever meet throughout their lifetimes.

As discussed earlier, Wenger (1998), inspired by Anderson (1991)'s concept of imagined communities, mentioned imagination as an important factor that empowers learning and engaging in a community. Later, Norton (2001) extended the notion of imagined communities to the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) field in an attempt to deeper investigate her research participants' motivations and investments in language development. In conjunction with second language learning, Norton proposed that there are not only learners' actual, face-to-face communities that determine their language learning, but also their distant communities created through their imagination. These imagined communities serve them some spaces to picture themselves as a full member in their desired communities.

It is important to note that, according to Kanno and Norton (2003), learners' imagined communities are not fantasies which are uncombined from reality and can hardly be envisioned. Actually, it is "hopeful imagination" with rules and regulations, which guides learners' behaviors and leads them to identity change and possible bending learning trajectories (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2001). Furthermore, Norton (2001) argued that "a learner's imagined community invites an imagined identity, and a learner's investment in the target language must be understood within this context" (p. 166).

2.3 Identities and Language Learning

In order to understand identity and its relationship to language learning, it is important to first understand the poststructuralist theory of language, which is

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based on, yet distinct from, structuralist theories of language. While structuralists believe in idealized meaning of signs (words), and homogeneity and consensus of linguistic communities, poststructuralists view practices of a particular society as sites of struggle; and linguistic communities as heterogeneous realm filled with conflicting claims to the truth and power (Norton, 2010). Hence, language is not merely a medium of communication, but it should be understood within its social context. To understand identity and language learning, it is imperative to understand how 'power' is related to individuals, communities, and nations.

Influenced by feminist poststructuralists' idea on "subjectivity", Norton (2010) described that "a person's identity must always be understood in relational terms: one is either subject *of* a set of relationships (i.e. in a position of power) or subject *to* a set of relationships (i.e. in a position of reduced power)" (p.350). As such, some identity positions may constrain learners from speaking, reading, or writing, while other identity positions may enhance learners to express their individual power and involve in social interactions. Peirce (1995) proposed a theory of social identity, assuming that power relations play a crucial role in social interactions between language learners and target language speakers. She also criticized the limited perceptions of language learners, where they are defined dichotomously as motivated or unmotivated, and introverted or extroverted, without recognizing that those affective traits are socially constructed. They are shaped during the process of negotiations in unequal relations of power, changing over time and space, and probably coexisting in conflicting ways within a single person. Furthermore, she mentioned a need in SLA to conceptualize language learners as having complex social identities with distinctive relations to a given socio-cultural context and negotiation through daily social interaction. Therefore, Norton (2000) described identity as 'multiple' and as a 'site of struggle' and thus defined it as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p.5).

2.4 Investments

To challenge the traditional view of learners as unitary, fixed, and ahistorical, Norton (1997) introduced the notion of investment as a complementary to the notion of motivation, with an emphasis on the contextual, social, and historical elements of the target language and learners. Through the lens of poststructuralism, Norton (2000)'s notion of investment reflects "the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it" (p.10). With reference to Bourdieu's (1977) economic metaphors, Duff (2012) gave a comprehensive yet simple explanation of investment as "the degree to which people actively put symbolic, material and other resources into their language learning based on a kind of cost-benefit assessment, and in light of their desires and hopes" (p. 413). From this perspective, investment is similar to motivation to a certain extent as they are both developed to explain what drives language learners to make efforts and spend time in studying additional languages. Nonetheless, Norton and Toohey (2011) pointed out that unlike motivation, which is generally considered as a fixed psychological attribute, investment is a sociological aspect which views language learners as having complex and multiple identities which may change across time and space, and constructed with reference to their social activities.

As exemplified by Norton (2000), "a learner's motivation to speak is mediated by other investments that may conflict with the desire to speak - investments that are intimately connected to the ongoing production of the learners' identities and their desires for the future" (p. 120). From this viewpoint, Norton (2000) suggested that learners invest in the target language because they expect a good return that will boost up their cultural capital through acquiring a wide range of symbolic resources (e.g., language, education, friendship) and material resources (e.g., capital goods, real estate, money). Drawing on this explanation, when learners practice the target language, they are not only exchanging information, but are also shaping and reshaping their identities and their relationships with others. Consequently, an investment

in the target language, as Norton (2013) put it, is equivalent to an investment in the learner's own identity.

2.5 Empirical Studies on Imagined Communities, Identities, and Investments

Norton (2000, 2001) is regarded as a pioneer in exploring relationships between language learning, identities, and learning investments through the lens of imagined communities. Norton (2000) investigated experiences and perceptions of five female immigrant language learners in Canada through interviews, diaries, and observations. This one-year long case study unveiled the resistance and non-participation caused by negative self-perceptions and an obstructed passage to an imagined community. Norton (2001) highlighted that although her research participants were engaged in ESL classroom activities, their perceived communities were extended to the imagined world outside the classroom. For example, when Katarina, one of the participants, was discouraged from fulfilling her imagined community, she felt that her imagined professional identity was discarded. Then, she resisted to participate the course. Katarina, before moving to Canada, had been a teacher in Poland, her homeland. In Canada, she was a successful learner in her first ESL classroom and was offered an opportunity to join the higher level ESL class. In her new class, the teacher had always stressed her status as 'immigrants' and stated her English as 'immigrant English'. Moreover, Katarina felt insulted when the teacher trivialized her desire to attend a computer course by saying that her English was not 'good enough'. Humiliated by the teacher, Katarina perceived that her desired membership to her imagined community of professionals, which could be accessed through finishing the computer course, was denied. Finally, Katarina dropped out of the class and never returned to it. After leaving the ESL class, she successfully completed the 18-month computer course as she wished. Norton (2001) concluded that "[n]on-participation was not an opportunity for learning from a position of peripherality, but an act of resistance from a position of marginality" (p. 165).

Following Norton's (2000, 2001) lead, other researchers started to focus more on how language learners' envisioned future influenced the way they learned languages. Their central interests were mostly among immigrants and international students. Song (2010) constructed a multiple case study to explore highly skilled Korean immigrants' experiences, focusing on interconnections between their language learning, identities, and workplace communities. The study asserted that imagination played a significant role at the bottom line of the notion of imagined communities. It provided evidence which suggested that the immigrants' language learning was an investment as well as a distinct participation in a learning community aiming to reach their target workplace communities. Furthermore, the study disclosed that the participants' identities were essentially challenged and negotiated, and thus, "language learning involves crafting, negotiating, and reconstructing of learners' identities" (p.191).

Trentman (2013) also adopted the notions of investments and imagined communities to explore study abroad experiences of 54 American students in Cairo, Egypt. She delved into the reasons for the students' investments in the Arabic language, their desired imagined communities, and also the alignments of their imagined communities and the communities of practice. Data came from interviews, questionnaires, and observations. According to the study, before studying abroad, the participants perceived themselves as "cross-cultural mediators and dedicated language learners" (p.559) in the Middle East. However, the students' participation in the various communities of practice, including the Language Pledge Program (LPP), sport teams, and leisure activities illustrated both alignments and misalignments with their imagined communities.

More recently, a number of studies and dissertations in language learning areas that adopted the notion of imagined communities have been increasingly published. Their central interest has been expanding to cover different levels of education and various groups of learners. Ramanayake (2018), for example, carried out a mixed-methods study to examine adult language learners' imagined communities in order to identify potential pedagogy for the two contexts of language learning, English

as a Second Language (ESL) and Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL). The study recruited 25 ESL and 21 SFL learners from a large Midwestern university in the USA. All participants were international students, over 18 years of age, who enrolled on the mentioned language classes. Qualitative data obtained from the interviews and journals revealed that SFL learners tended to have travel related imagined communities while ESL learners tended to have career related imagined communities. Further, there were some nonlinguistic skills that learners valued as essential for reaching their imagined communities, such as confidence and content knowledge. According to quantitative results from an online survey, capital gains (returns from learning investment) were the most agreed reason for language learning investments. Ramanayake claimed that language learners might better invest in language learning if they perceived clear visions of their imagined communities and recognized how to gain membership to them.

Similarly, Dawson (2017) investigated imagined communities of adult learners of English in a New Zealand university and the relationship with identities. The key participants were two government officials, Hue from Vietnam and Jose from Timor Leste. The research was conducted through naturally-occurring conversational data and a discourse analytic approach to uncover the significance of imagination in the construction of identities. The key finding of this study was that the same imagined communities might lead to different identity formation and variable investments in language learning. Both Hue's and Jose's identity formation seemed to be governed by their influential visions of being a member of a postgraduate community studying in an English-speaking environment. Nevertheless, their identity formation and learning investments were very different. Hue mainly focused on demonstrating her knowledge, investing strongly in the community's academic side, while Jose primarily invested in the relational or authentic interactions among community members. Dawson (2017) highlighted that one way to develop classroom potential was to provide learners with opportunities to access multiple identity positions, by encouraging them to utilize the advantage of valuable intellectual and social resources, and advancing themselves beyond the less powerful position of 'second language learner'.

Apart from adult language learners, Park and Schallert (2020) tried to identify how educational psychology doctoral students built their professional identity by envisioning their own possible future identities in their disciplinary field. In this qualitative study, 20 focal participants were observed and interviewed as they faced the important mandatory requirements of their degree plans, for instance, qualifying process, dissertation proposal, final oral defense, and internship application. The results interestingly illustrated the connection between professional identity development and the ability to envision possible future identities, particularly, possible future professional identities. Participants created their possible future identities through interactions within various communities which they encountered during graduate school studies. These various communities helped to build students' professional identities by serving as places for demonstrating professional roles and for developing their professional practices through interactions. In addition, the findings suggested that participants often encountered a lack of motivation, anxiety, and even feelings of imposter syndrome when they were not able to imagine their possible future professional identities.

Wu's (2017) qualitative case study examined the relationship between imagined identities and investments through the analysis of English learning histories of three high achieving EFL learners in Taiwan. The three participants were from the TESOL master's and doctoral programs who passed the program's strict candidate screening process to confirm their high ability in English writing and good knowledge of TESOL theories and linguistics. The findings indicated that the participants' different imagined identities, influenced by particular social and personal aspects, affected their choices of investments in each learning stage. Limited imagined identities as English learners constrained their learning investments in school while more expanded imagined identities, such as a fluent English speaker or an English teacher, governed them to more investments in both formal and informal language practices. Alicia and Brie, as an example, in their early stage of learning, imagined themselves as 'a good learner studying in good schools', thus, they invested in the target language by participating in mandatory classes which directly linked to promoting skills that were

emphasized and tested at school, such as grammar and reading practices. During their middle learning stage, they extended their imagined selves to an English teacher or an English user; and that guided them to more varied types of investments to strengthen other language skills, such as practicing listening using online media, in complement to their communitive competence. However, it is also interesting to find that imagined identities could also negatively force participants into resistant acts, leading them to reduced learning investments. In Leo's case, to avoid being regarded as less proficient or less fluent in front of his classmates, he resisted to participate in English classes despite his imagined identity of becoming an English teacher and a perfect or superior English speaker. Besides, the study confirmed that both sociocultural factors and personal factors interplay in the construction of imagined identities.

College students' imagined identities and communities have also been a focal point among researchers. Goharimehr (2018) analyzed how the Japanese EFL learners' cultural identities impacted their construction of identities and their motivation as members of imagined communities. Data were collected from eleven undergraduate students in a Japanese university through open-ended questionnaires. The results showed that most of the participants had clear images of their future identities as overseas students or fluent English speakers, and they were motivated in English classes. However, the other participants felt that their English learning was not integrated into their future identities, nor did they hope to join any English language related communities. They passively learned English just to pass the schools' requirements and usually ignored opportunities to interact with their English teachers. In conclusion, the findings confirmed the roles of imagined future goals and identities as significant factors in learning foreign languages. Gaining clear goals and being able to imagine oneself in favorable future are essential for maintaining motivation in learning.

Further, Teng (2019) investigated how learners negotiated and navigated identities in the process of English learning in an institutional context in China. Data were drawn from three Chinese college English major students through the triangulation of multiple sources of data: learners' autobiography and narrative

interviews. The findings indicated that the learners showed identity transformation within and across various communities. Their identities shaped their investments in English learning, and likewise, their investments framed their identities. Teng (2019) proposed that generally, EFL learners' identity formation and learning investments were a complex and interactive process which included at least four contributing factors. First, EFL learners' ideologies guided the construction and development of their identities. Second, the failure to retain hopes, aspirations, or expectations in future learning affected learners' perceptions of advantages and opportunities related to their language learning. Third, learners' agency also mediated identity development and investments in language learning. Finally, an affiliation between the practiced community and imagined community facilitated the development of learners' identities while a mismatch undermined the investments in EFL learning.

High school students' imagined communities, identities and investments were also investigated. For example, Aiello (2015) examined the nature of language learners' attitudes, motivations, and self-perceived language proficiency among Italian high school learners residing in Naples and Rome. Data were drawn from 205 questionnaires and eight participants' interviews and classroom observations. Findings informed that the learners' attitudes, motivations, and language proficiency are uncertain. They were intellectually interconnected to social constructs and impacted by power and capitals. It was also unveiled that the learners' complex experiences and identities, together with social contexts, affected their language learning attitudes, which correspondingly mediated learners' sense of belonging to imagined communities of English speakers and their self-perceived language competencies. This study emphasized the needs for educators, policymakers, and researchers among the English language vein in global contexts to question previous assumptions about the meaning and the goals of English language learning.

Likewise, Ilori (2016) explored senior secondary school students' imagined communities and identities against the language ideologies of English that the Nigerian society reflected within the Nigerian educational context. The study sought the answer to how the students conceived of their imagined communities and identities; and what

resources or mechanisms mediated their negotiation. The data collection was designed around a qualitative strand involving open-ended questionnaires and official document analysis. Findings suggested that the imagined identities of the participants are “anything but neutral as some language and identity options are privileged above others” (p.164). According to this ideology, students tried to acquire new social and linguistic resources which provided them with abilities to defy identities that led them to undesirable positions; and to envisage desirable future identities for themselves. As such, Ilori (2016) argued that learners would no longer be considered as social beings with multiple identities that just appeared during some specific learning paths, but as beings with “deep-rooted ambiguities” (p.177) that must be illustrated reasonably and justifiably.

To summarize, this collection of research studies cumulatively demonstrates the intricate interplay between imagined communities, identities, and learning investments across diverse educational settings and among a variety of learners. It underscores the significance of understanding and harnessing the power of imagination and identity construction to enhance learners’ learning experiences and elevate educational outcomes.

2.6 Empirical Studies on Thai Vocational Students’ Learning of English

Even though Norton’s (2000, 2001) notions of investments and imagined communities have been investigated in different levels of education among different groups of learners from different parts of the world, it seems that the notions have not yet been used to study Thai vocational students’ English learning. The most likely perspectives that have been widely explored and discussed on this group of learners are surrounding motivation and attitudes towards English language learning. As an exemplar, Phunkate (2014) investigated English reading-writing abilities and motivation towards English Learning of the vocational certificate students who studied English through the genre-based approach. The participants were 40 vocational certificate students from a private vocational college in Ratchaburi, the central of Thailand. This quasi-experimental research was conducted using one group pretest-posttest design.

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The results revealed that the students' reading-writing English abilities were higher than those before they were taught using genre-based approach. Apart from their reading-writing English abilities, their motivation towards English learning was also higher. Concerning the higher motivation in particular, since this research applied genre-based approach to the classroom, the students had a good chance to learn English through social activities, for instance, pair works, group work and class discussion. Moreover, the news report genre features which they studied were considered meaningful and situated learning. Thus, their English classes were more enjoyable than those of traditional pedagogy. The research findings were great contributions to pedagogical improvement for teachers of English who want to upgrade their students' English competencies and enrich their classes with enjoyable and meaningful activities.

Choosri and Intharaksa (2011) studied relationships between motivation and English learning achievement of the vocational certificate students from Hatyai Technical College, the southern part of Thailand. The participants were inclusive of 140 students from Electronics and Building Construction programs. Employing questionnaires and in-depth interviews, the research informed that motivation of the students with high and low achievement were both at high levels. Moreover, their motivation and their English learning achievement was significantly correlated. Yet, analyzing each type of motivation, it was found that the integrative motivation was not significantly correlated with English learning achievement. Confirming the findings with information from the in-depth interviews, it was found that the students were more motivated by instrumental motivation than by integrative motivation. Their instrumental motivation ranged from future studies, learning scores to future careers. The interviews also revealed that integrative motivation seemed to be an inaccessible concept for the students. Most of them pointed out that it was difficult for them to integrate because of their limited English abilities and their far distance from the native countries and cultures. It is interesting to note that the students mentioned the changes of their motivation during different periods of their studies.

Mastan and Teo (2017) explored the students' preference to teachers' motivational strategies together with their perceptions of their own motivation toward

learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies. The participants are 320 vocational certificate students from seven private colleges in Songkhla, the southern of Thailand. The data collection included questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The results showed that the students, in general, greatly preferred the 24 strategies that the teachers used for motivating them. To clarify, 22 motivational strategies were preferred at the preference level of "greatly preferred" while the other two items were rated at the preference level of "preferred". The three items with the highest mean value were concerning friendly teachers, interesting teaching materials, and avoiding comparing students. On the other hand, the three least preferred strategies for the students were concerning self-evaluation by explaining the reasons for learning each lesson, self-evaluation by describing their own strength, and beginning the classes with ice-breaking activities. The results from the interview confirmed that the students thought of self-evaluation as unpreferable because they found it too hard to complete without the teachers' guidance. Referring to the students' perceptions of their own motivation towards learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies, the students agreed that the teachers' use of 24 motivational strategies could motivate them. The students mentioned in the interviews that the teachers' use of more preferred strategies affected their solid desire to learn in the particular class. This particular finding suggests that teachers should apply strategies that are preferable for students in their classroom to enhance students' motivation toward learning English.

Aside from the notion of motivation, attitudes towards learning English are regularly investigated among vocational students. For instance, Borja (2016) studied the attitude towards English and English competencies of vocational students in the private technical college situated in Rayong, eastern part of Thailand. The research focused on 961 students from industrial, financial, and information technology fields. The data collection was conducted quantitatively through questionnaires. The results interestingly demonstrated that the participants have a significantly higher attitude towards how English 'is taught' in their school than how English 'is learned'. To illustrate, the participants were concerned more on their teachers and the teaching

rather than on their own learning practices in the classrooms. This implied that the students might behave well in the classroom. They might be polite or even too polite. This asserted that the participants usually studied English passively, preferring to be taught rather than to practice the language skills. The research findings might signal vocational educators and teachers for developing pedagogical practices to motivate students to practice the language skills in classes.

Further, Weerasang (2017) explored vocational students' awareness of and attitudes towards the importance of English, including their language preparations for the ASEAN community. The participants were 350 vocational diploma students from technical colleges situated around eight provinces of the upper-northern of Thailand. The quantitative data was collected through questionnaires while the qualitative one was obtained through semi-structured interviews with 64 selected participants. The findings revealed that the participants' attitudes toward varieties of English used in the ASEAN community were positive. Most of them recognized that English plays a vital role as a working language in the ASEAN community. In addition, they were aware of varieties of English which were different in each country. They also agreed that not trying to sound like native English speakers can help them reduce the pressure in speaking English with foreigners. The research findings can be of great implications for teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Recognizing varieties of English will enable students' confidence in using English of their own varieties without over concerning to just British or American accents, or to grammatical rules. This will benefit them for reaching the communication success.

As discussed in the literature, studies of learners' identities and learning investments in relation to their imagined communities have vigorously contributed to rich understandings of language learning. It provided both pedagogical implications and further recommendations for future research. However, it can be observed that even though there has been interest in investigating issues surrounding learners' imagined communities, investments, and identities in ESL and EFL contexts, these issues have not yet been rigorously explored in the Thai educational establishments, particularly in the terrain of vocational education.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed the background information of the notion of community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) and imagined communities, investments, and identities (Norton, 2000, 2001). It has also investigated empirical studies conducted in different educational levels and settings. The next chapter will address the research methodology employed in the study.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative design to examine the investments and identities of vocational diploma students in MP College (Pseudonym) in relation to their imagined communities in order to uncover potential pedagogical implications for the English language teaching for vocational education. This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology. It includes the research design, the research setting, participants, instruments, data collection, data analysis, and ethics. This chapter also discusses strategies employed in ensuring research ethics in conducting this research.

3.1 Research Design

To gain insights into investments and identities of a group of vocational students in relation to their imagined communities, this study adopted a qualitative research design, which is defined by Guba and Lincoln (1994) as interpretive and humanistic methodology preserving multiple realities. The merit of qualitative research is situated in the ability “to understand cultural values and social behavior” and their power “to capture the nuances of human living” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 28). The demand for rich and meaningful responses from the prospective research participants in the present study fit well into the strengths that qualitative orientations have in studying “phenomena which are simply unavailable elsewhere” (Silverman, 2006, p. 43).

The decision to employ different research methods or only one research method in conducting a given study is usually informed by research objectives. According to Cohen et al. (2007), using the qualitative research design as the only research method is advantageous in delving into individuals’ lived experiences in their natural settings. However, it needs refined research skills and is time-consuming, requiring the researcher to have sufficient time for establishing a good rapport with the

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participants, and for collecting, processing, analyzing, and interpreting collected data. When time allocation designated to qualitative research is woefully insufficient, it is likely that the researcher will work under time pressure. This can possibly result in superficial data on queries, thin analyses, poor interpretations, and unsound implications (Cohen, et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In this current study, the complexity of the notion of investment in both tangible and imagined communities, and identity formation required an in-depth and careful investigation made by the researcher and through the eyes of the participants. Hence, the qualitative research design was employed to capture participants' detailed experiences from their real life. Rather than adopting the quantitative or mixed-methods research design, the researcher chose the qualitative research design in order to ensure ample opportunities and sufficient time to concentrate on unfolding the particularity and complexity of the research participants in their real-life context.

The following conceptual framework (Figure 3.1) was used in this study.

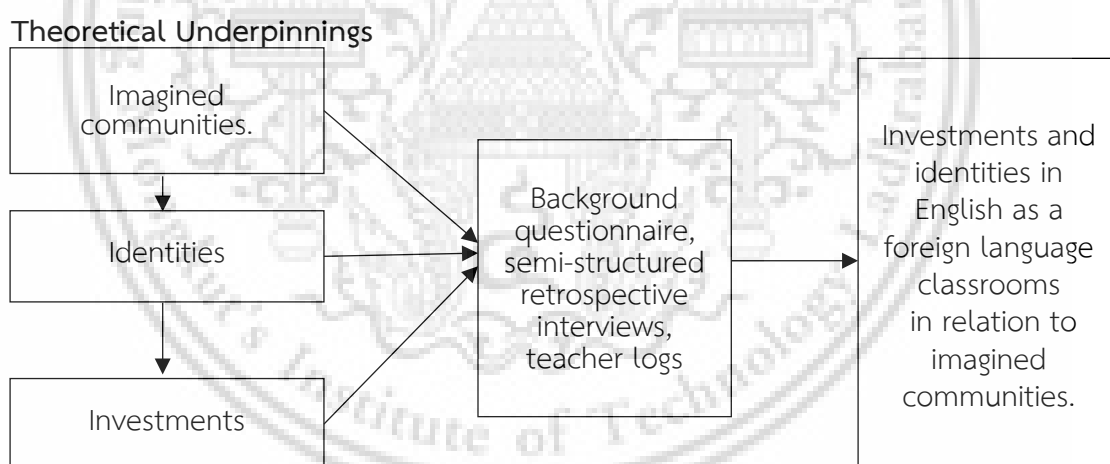


Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework of this study

To investigate the vocational diploma students' investments and identities in relation to their imagined communities, this study adopted three interwoven premises: imagined communities, identities, and investments (Norton, 2000, 2001).

The study employed a background questionnaire, semi-structured retrospective interviews, and teacher logs in collecting data. A student background

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questionnaire was meant to help the researcher gather basic information about the student participants. With information from the returned questionnaires, the researcher obtained sufficient background information about the participants, which was useful for the subsequent interview process. Semi-structured retrospective interviews with individual research participants were used to collect the participants' detailed personal information, learning history, and learning trajectories, including in-depth data concerning their learning investments and identities as framed by the concept of imagined communities. Apart from the student participants, three supervisors from the companies where students interned were interviewed for students' additional work-related information.

In complementary to the interviews, this study also used teacher logs as a tool for collecting supplementary data. To use the logs, two teachers of English - one Filipino teacher teaching Petrochemical students and one Thai teacher, who also served as a researcher of this study, teaching Electrical engineering students - observed the participants' engagement in classroom activities and then recorded and kept track of events in logbooks.

Using both methodological and data-source triangulation, this study could obtain rich data for the study. The data were then analyzed and interpreted in order to shed light on the students' investments and identities in English as a foreign language classroom in relation to their imagined communities.

3.2 Research Setting

This research project was conducted at MP College (pseudonym), a public technical college in Rayong, the eastern part of Thailand. The college is situated in the center of the eastern economic corridor (EEC) area where petrochemical industries and modern logistic facilities are strongly accelerated by the Thai government. Consequently, vocational and technical colleges in the area are expected to supply skilled manpower equipped with a sound English proficiency to the business establishments.

With over 1,000 students, MP College offers two-year diploma programs and three-year vocational certificate programs in different 17 fields, for instance, Mechanics, Electronics, Instrumentation, and Petrochemicals. Courses offered in the college, both general studies subjects and vocational skills subjects, are delivered in Thai by native speakers of Thai. As for English courses, they are taught by a Filipino teacher or Thai teachers. While the Filipino teacher delivers the responsible courses in English, the Thai teachers conduct their courses using a mixture of Thai and English.

With particular reference to the diploma level in this college, most of the students in the diploma programs are day students. However, MP College is also a boarding school for students from two specialized programs at the diploma level: Electrical Engineering and Petrochemicals. All students from these two specialized programs, inclusive of around 100 students, are required to reside on campus. Unlike the students from the other programs, the students from the two specialized programs are required to attend specialized internship programs which have to be approved by both the college and the business establishments where the students will do their internship. At the beginning of their first semester in the college, they start their observing phase of internship during May to June. This one-month phase allows them to observe real working environment and learn to adjust themselves to new surroundings. The second phase starts in October and ends in March of the next year. At this phase, the students learn and practice their specific jobs, usually as technicians, for example, operating machines, machine maintenance, and documentation. From May to September, the second year of their study, they do the last internship phase. At the end of this phase, all students are evaluated by the teachers and their supervisors from the companies where the internship takes place. Their unique three-phase internship program is believed to provide them with a clearer picture of their imagined communities which consequently inspire them to strongly invest in English language learning.

With Regard to these students' English language learning, according to the Curriculum for the Diploma of Vocational Education, they are required to complete one general English communication course and two more profession specific English

courses. Moreover, to better serve the companies where these students will do their internships, MP College offers them tutoring classes for Test of English for International communication (TOEIC) preparation, organized by a private tutoring school during their weekends for eight weeks.

Table 3.1 The specialized internship programs

Year	Internship Period	Details
1 st year diploma/semester 1	May-June	Observing phase
1 st year diploma/semester 2	October-March	Practicing phase
2 nd year diploma/semester 1	May-September	Practicing & evaluating phase

After graduation from these specialized programs, students who pass the evaluation are immediately offered permanent jobs in local leading companies, where they do their internship during their study.

3.3 Research Participants

The population in this study was 408 diploma level students enrolling on English courses at MP College.

Table 3.2 Population

No.	Program	1 st Year	2 nd Year	Total
1.	Mechanical Technology	35	20	55
2.	Production Technology	36	39	75
3.	Metal Technology	12	15	27
4.	Electrical Engineering	44	34	78
5.	Instrumentation	22	17	39
6.	Information Technology	21	6	27
7.	Petrochemicals (specialized programs)	39	40	79
8.	Electrical Engineering (specialized programs)	14	14	28
Total		223	185	408

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Using a purposive sampling technique, this study recruited ten students from the specialized programs to serve as research participants: five students from Petrochemicals and another five from Electrical Engineering. The major reason why the students from these two programs were selected was that they had notable internship plans which might unhide new angles of the impact of imagined communities on their learning trajectory. This study recruited the participants with the following criteria:

- 1) The participants were from Electrical Engineering and Petrochemicals;
- 2) The participants completed their 3rd phase internship before the interview sessions started;
- 3) The participants had no experience in studying abroad;
- 4) The participants finished their earlier vocational certificate degree from normal (Thai) programs, not English Program (EP), Mini English Program (MEP), or other programs where English is used as a medium of instruction; and
- 5) The participants agreed to take part in this research project on a voluntary basis.

In addition to the ten student participants, two supervisors from the companies where students did their internships were invited to participate in this study. The criteria for selecting the two supervisors were as follows:

- 1) They had experiences in supervising student participants in the 3rd phase; and
- 2) They agreed to take part in this research project on a voluntary basis.

3.4 Research Instruments

Three research instruments were used in this study: background questionnaires, semi-structured retrospective interviews, and teacher logs.

3.4.1 Background Questionnaires

The background questionnaires were given to 10 student participants prior to the first interview session. Data obtained from these questionnaires included the basic personal and academic background of each student participant. This information

helped the researcher identify and include certain questions that were previously overlooked.

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

As one of the most favorable data collection methods, a research interview has been widely used among researchers, particularly those from social sciences. Compared to a questionnaire, an interview is more powerful in obtaining narrative data and allowing researchers to investigate participants' views in greater depth (Kvale, 2007). Additionally, Cohen et al (2007) remarked that "interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself, its human embeddedness is inescapable" (p.349). This kind of interview, as Berg (2007) argues, enables in-depth exploration whereas allowing the interviewer to keep the interview within the framework outlined by the aim of the research.

In this research project, semi-structured interviews were opted. The three interview sessions were held in Thai as the students, the supervisor, and the researcher used Thai as their first language. This enabled both the students and the supervisors to accurately understand the questions and clearly discuss their points. All interviews were audio-recorded.

The student interviews were divided into three sessions to capture the most comprehensive data from the participants. They were as follows:

3.4.2.1 Student Interviews

Interview Session 1

The first session was constructed to collect the students' basic personal information and learning history. Their general investments in classroom lessons and activities were obtained. The presence of students' imagined communities was also elicited.

Interview Session 2

The second session was carried out to gather more in-depth data concerning especially the students' investments in both tangible and imagined communities. This session mainly aimed to elicit data on the students' investments in the language

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classrooms, the present communities of practice, and the imagined communities; and the interplay between those investments, present communities, and imagined communities.

Interview Session 3

The last interview session was implemented to clarify any points from the earlier sessions that might be unclear. Data from this session augmented all data obtained from the first and second sessions. It was expected to help highlight and confirm significant issues that might contribute to a better understanding in students' learning trajectories.

3.4.2.2 Interviews with the Supervisors

After the students' interviews, supervisor interviews were set up. The purpose of the supervisor interviews was to gain detailed information on students' investments to their works during their internship in the companies. Based on the supervisors' observation, the presence of students' imagined communities was investigated. The acquired information was complemented to all those from the three sessions of the student interviews.

3.4.3 Teacher Logs

Teacher logs are self-written records of classroom practices widely used to reflect lessons and their results on students. In this study, the two English teachers recorded their teaching and students' classroom behaviors concerning their engagement, investments, identities, and other aspects related to imagined communities. For Petrochemicals students' classes, Mr. J (pseudonym), the Filipino teacher, recorded the logs. For Electrical Engineering students' classes, the researcher, also serving as a teacher of English at MP College, recorded the logs. Data obtained from teacher logs were used to triangulate with data from the interviews.

3.4.4 Quality of the Instruments

Drawing on the relevant literature and experiences in teaching vocational students, the researcher developed the background questionnaire, the interview protocols for the students and the supervisors, and the form for teacher logs. These

research instruments were approved by the thesis advisor and subsequently validated by three experts. One of them was a teacher of English from a public vocational or technical college, with over ten years of teaching experience. The other two experts were university lecturers from the fields of applied linguistics and English language teaching, with experiences in conducting qualitative research on English language teaching and communities of practice. Both English and Thai versions of the instruments were given to the experts. The three experts validated the instruments using the Item-Objective Congruence form (IOC form), which was sent to them by the researcher. They examined the construct validity and content validity of the instruments. Since all instruments were first developed in English and then translated into Thai, the English-Thai translation accuracy of the instruments was also examined. Results of the validation and additional comments from the experts were used to refine the instruments. The revised versions of the instruments were sent to the three experts for approval before use.

3.5 Data Collection

3.5.1 Data Collection Procedure

After an official approval for data collection from MP College (see section 3.7), the researcher proceeded as follows:

1) The background questionnaire was administered to the student participants in early January 2021. The data obtained from the returned questionnaires were analyzed and summarized. The researcher then went through the data to gain background information about each participant prior to interviewing each participant.

2) The student interviews were conducted during January – February 2021, which was around the middle of the second semester of the academic year 2020. At this stage, the students were first informed of the purposes of this study, and its contribution to the future language pedagogy. They were also assured that it was not an obligation to take part in this study, and if they felt uncomfortable to participate, they were free to leave without any negative consequences. Furthermore, students

had chances to ask questions about any aspects of this research project and to express any concerns they might have. The data from student interviews were concluded in order to be useful for further supervisor interviews.

3) The supervisor interviews were carried out in March 2021, after the student interviews.

4) The teacher logs were immediately recorded after each period. Four periods of each class were recorded (one period per week for each class). The class were observed and recorded during January – February 2021.

3.6 Data Analysis

As this study employed a qualitative design, the data obtained were analyzed qualitatively.

3.6.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews and the teacher logs were analyzed using a content analysis technique. For the semi-structured interview, the data from the audio records were first transcribed before the analysis was performed. The qualitative data analysis was conducted as follows:

- 1) reading all data in order to obtain an overview of the data,
- 2) reading approximately 20 percent of the data and identifying major issues relevant to the research objectives so as establish codes for data analysis,
- 3) combining these codes into themes,
- 4) using the established codes and themes to analyze all of the data,
- 5) revising the established codes and themes, and
- 6) using the revised version of the codes and themes to reanalyze all of the data.

It is important to note that to ensure the reliability of the qualitative data analysis, the researcher performed both intra-coder and inter-coder reliability checks.

3.6.1.1 Intra-Coder and Inter-Coder Reliability

The core of the reliability check in coding qualitative data is to ensure that the data coding is consistent across time and coders. Intra-coder reliability shows that the coder codes the data consistently over time while inter-coder reliability shows that coding is not distinctively different even different coders code the same data.

The intra-coder and inter-coder reliability checks were processed as follows:

1) Twenty percent of the data was randomly chosen and then duplicated into two copies.

2) Based on the previously established codes, the first coder (the researcher) analyzed the first copy of the sample data without looking at the results of the previous coding performed a week before. The results of coding in this round were then compared with those of the previous round.

3) The second copy of the sample data was analyzed by the peer debriefer, who worked together with the researcher and held impartial views of this study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the primary goal of peer debriefing is to bolster the credibility of a qualitative study through integrating an external perspective on the data analysis. The coding results were then compared with those obtained by the researcher. After that, the researcher and the peer debriefer discussed the problematic results and reanalyzed the data until they reached a consensus.

3.7 Research Ethics

To maintain ethical principles in order to protect the participants' dignity, this study took into consideration their rights and welfare. Several strategies were used as follows.

First, an official permission letter from King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, defining the purposes and essential details of this study, was sent to the director of MP College to ask for permission to collect data from this college. A summary of the research proposal, along with the research instruments, were attached to the permission letter to present the details of the study.

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Before each interview session, the researcher verbally presented the participants, both students and supervisors from the companies, their rights in this research project. The consent forms were presented and emphasized. The participants confirmed their willingness to participate in the interviews by signing the consent forms before the interviews start.

Member checking was performed in this study in order to increase not only the trustworthiness of the study, but also a high level of ethical practice. Duff (2008) suggests that member checking is another form of triangulation or verification of researchers' interpretations that helps to establish the "authenticity or credibility" (p. 171) of data interpretations. In this study, doing member checking provided research participants with opportunities to review their statements on interview scripts. This helped ensure the data accuracy and confirm participants' willingness to take part in the research project.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has elaborated on the theoretical and methodological aspects that frame this study. It has also pointed out the rationale for employing qualitative design and adopting semi-structured interviews as a major research instrument for data collection. Additionally, the research ethics has been discussed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This study aims to examine the investments and identities of vocational diploma students in MP College (Pseudonym) in relation to their imagined communities in order to uncover potential pedagogical implications for English the language teaching for vocational education. The data were collected from ten boarding school students: five students from petrochemicals and another five from electrical engineering. In addition, the data drawn from three internship supervisors from the companies where the students had their internship and the teacher logs recorded by the two English teachers at the college were used to augment the data from the students. The results of this study will be reported in the following sections.

4.1 Overview of Research Participants

4.1.1 Background Information about Student Participants

The student participants in this research were ten boarding school diploma students: five students from petrochemicals and another five from electrical engineering. They were studying at the diploma 2 level. All of them finished their third phase internship and were spending their last semester at the college. They were referred to by pseudonyms as shown in the table below.

Table 4.1 Background Information about Student Participants

Student	Age	Gender	Program of study	Self-perceived	
				English proficiency	Career Goal
Cole	19	Male	electrical engineering	good	Clear (Engineer)
Eric	19	Male	electrical engineering	poor	Clear (Fruit exporter)

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Table 4.1 (continued)

Student	Age	Gender	Program of study	Self-perceived	
				English proficiency	Career Goal
Bale	22	Male	electrical engineering	poor	Not clear
Alex	19	Male	electrical engineering	medium	Clear (Technician)
Jess	20	Male	electrical engineering	good	Clear (Technician/ Business owner)
Sam	19	Male	petrochemicals	poor	Clear (Technician)
Dylan	19	Male	petrochemicals	high	Clear (Engineer)
Potter	19	Male	petrochemicals	medium	Clear (Technician)
Terry	19	Male	petrochemicals	poor	Clear (Technician)
Hugo	19	Male	petrochemicals	good	Clear (Offshore worker)

4.1.2 Background Information about Supervisor Participants

Three supervisor participants took part in this research. All of them were experienced technicians or engineers working for the internship organizations. They were the main staff members responsible for supervising and evaluating the interned students. They were referred to by pseudonyms as shown in the table below.

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Table 4.2 Background Information about Supervisor Participants

Supervisors	Position	Years of experience in trainee supervision	Student under supervision
Buncha	Senior Training Supervisor	17 years	Cole, Bale, Alex, Sam
Paitoon	Supervisor	16 years	Eric, Jess, Potter, Terry
Amarin	Supervisor	7 years	Dylan, Hugo

4.1.3 Background Information about Teacher Participants

Two teacher participants participated in this research. Both of them were experienced teachers teaching English at MP College. They were responsible for designing English courses for the diploma students at the college and supporting the interned students regarding the English language use. They were referred to by pseudonyms as shown in the table below.

Table 4.3 Background Information about Teacher Participants

Teachers	Gender	Qualification	Nationality	Years of experience in Teaching English
Mr. J	Male	Bachelor of Education (English)	Filipino	8 years
Ms. Siri	Female	Master of Arts (Pending) (Applied Linguistics) Bachelor of Arts (English)	Thai	15 years

Ms. Siri, one of the teacher participants, also served as the researcher of this Study. Ms. Siri and Mr. J always participated in designing the college's English course, arranging the course schedule, integrating English lessons into students' internship plans, and facilitating interned students' English use. In this research, they recorded information from classroom observation on the teacher logs.

4.2 Biographical Background of Student Participants

Drawing on multiple sources of data, including background questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and teacher logs, this section describes individual participants' narrative biographical backgrounds. The biographical background of the student participants helps provide valuable context and insight into their educational journeys. Understanding their personal histories, such as their family backgrounds, prior English language learning experiences, and family dynamics allows readers to appreciate the diverse perspectives that shape the student participants' identities and facilitate their language learning trajectories.

4.2.1 Cole : The Strong Investor and His Distinct Imagined Self

Cole, 19, was from a mid-range family. His parents worked in a private company and were always supportive of Cole in both his studying trajectory and future career. Cole declared himself a strong investor in the English classes. He strongly considered himself a vocational student who was more proficient in English than most of his counterparts in the class. However, when asked about his favorite subjects, Cole did not mention English. He recounted that his early English learning experiences were negative and discouraging because his English teachers were very strict and had only a little tolerance for mistakes. Despite uninspired learning experiences, Cole tried his best to regularly keep good scores on school English tests only to fulfill his good student identity.

Cole's English learning experiences became more relaxing when he enrolled in vocational education at the age of 16. The English classes at the college were more engaging. Also, the teachers were open-minded and put less pressure on his studies. This material is reserved for educational use only, not allowed for commercial use.

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Cole enjoyed lessons on everyday conversations with only a few of grammar points. It was at this time that his preference for English subjects developed.

Cole started studying English in a more serious fashion when he began the first phase of his internship at one international petrochemical company. At the company, he often found himself in the middle of incomprehensible conversations, and this made him feel disappointed in his English language ability. At the college, he was one of the top students, but at the company, he could understand just a few ideas that the staff discussed. Cole tried to develop his English communication proficiency by devoting his evening time to researching for troublesome English language points.

After finishing his internship and going back to study in class in the last semester, Cole put more effort into practicing English. In class, he paid more attention to arranging sentences grammatically and pronouncing words correctly. He believed that good English would impress his future bosses and colleagues. He wanted to make sure that the company would treat him as someone who could be promoted to be an engineer or offered a scholarship for an engineering degree. Cole could start his job once graduating from college. The internship made him realize that English was really important for work even if it was work that included only Thai staff.

4.2.2 Eric and His Divergent Dream Job

Eric, 19, had studied electrical engineering since the vocational certificate level. Nonetheless, his dream job was not actually related to his field of study but was clearly linked to his family occupation - fruit farmers. Eric started his vocational education at the certificate level. He chose an electrical major because his family wanted someone to deal with the electricity problems at their fruit farms. At first, Eric agreed to the idea, but later, he found that expanding their farm into an export business was more challenging. Furthermore, he believed this kind of international business would increase their income as well.

Eric shifted his dream job from an electrician to a fruit farmer and exporter. The shift led him to more exposure to English language use. He, with his elder brother, regularly browsed the Internet for more information on the fruit sales and export business to ensure the possibility of expanding his family farm into a fruit export

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business. He used English for searching for information on the global fruit export business because English helped expand the search results. Eric's English reading skill was relatively better than most of the average students. He usually took a shorter time doing reading exercises. However, his speaking and writing skills needed to be improved.

Eric always paid attention to the English classes, not because he liked them, but because he realized that English was very important for his future career, whether as an electrician or a fruit exporter. He needed English for researching about being a fruit exporter and preparing for the internship. In his opinion, English classes were times he could practice with adequate support from the teachers whilst out of class, he might practice without the teacher's support, which was a bit more difficult.

In relation to his internship, Eric worked as a technician in one petrochemical company. He regularly met his bosses who were foreigners and had ample chances to talk with them. Additionally, he was responsible for collecting machine reports and summarizing them in a one-page template. For English writing, which was quite problematic for him, he resorted to *Google* and *Google Translate*.

Eric was offered a permanent technician position at the company after his graduation. He might accept the position. It was a good alternative while he was trying to find a way to expand his fruit farms into an export business.

4.2.3 Bale and His Unsteady Dreams

Bale had been changing his study path several times. He was 22 and could have graduated from a university. In fact, Bale finished his vocational certificate in electrical engineering, and then pursued an engineering degree at one public university in Bangkok. After two years, he was terminated from the program for some reason. Hence, he decided to study at this college as he thought studying for a diploma degree might be much easier than completing an undergraduate degree in engineering. Disappointment from his university studies seemed to intensely distort him from his dream job as an engineer. He lost his self-esteem, feeling that he was too dumb to study engineering and be an engineer. Feeling pity for his parents, he quickly moved

on and found this college. The offer the college promised for all diploma graduates was so appealing – a permanent job in a reputable company.

Bale pursued his diploma degree at the college without any specific dream job. He just thought about the very near future after his graduation. He hoped that the company where he took his internship would accept him as a permanent employee. He would just do his job, save money, and later think more about what he really wanted to do. He especially paid attention to trendy jobs, for example, gamers, YouTubers, and digital money traders.

In the English classes, Bale always studied passively. He did what the teachers told the class to do. It seemed he did not want to participate in any active activities, for instance, group discussions, demonstrations, and role plays. He could not see why he had to do those activities, and how the activities were related to what he called “trendy jobs”. His desired English learning experiences were at online game platforms talking to foreigners in real English.

Referring to his internship experiences, Bale disclosed that it was like a real working life without formal in-class instruction anymore. Interestingly, Bale experienced the use of the English language among the company staff members, especially in writing skills, yet he believed that English language proficiency was not a keystone of a work promotion.

After his graduation, his application for work at the company was still pending. He was informed that the company wanted to consider more on his qualifications and behaviors. Additionally, his contribution to the company was still uncertain. More interviews might be required.

4.2.4 Sam : The Determined Boy from The Far Western

Sam, 19, was a tribesman from the far western side of Thailand. His family originally lived near the border between Thailand and Myanmar. He spoke Karen and Thai. Sam had been an outstanding student since he was studying at the primary level. When he finished junior high school, the village headman decided to support his further education and brought him to the town where he continued his study at the local vocational college. Sam was determined to raise his status and improve his family's

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life quality, so after the vocational certificate level, he decided to pursue a diploma degree at MP College - over 400 kilometers from his hometown - where he was promised a permanent job with high pay after graduation. Another main reason was that Sam wanted to maintain his identity as Thai - real Thai, not Thai-Karen or Karen from the periphery.

Concerning Sam's English learning history, he expressed that his primary and secondary schools were located in the deprived countryside area, very far from the province's main city. At school, he did not learn English until he was in grade five. He recounted that he wanted to study more English, but the schools could not offer more because there was only one English teacher at the school. It was until he went to the vocational college in town where he had more opportunities to study English. Unfortunately, he felt that it might be too late for him to develop good English. It appeared that he could not do well in English classes. At that time, he felt that his English language background was not good enough to help him develop good English communication skills.

However, his English proficiency could not constrain Sam from paying attention to the English lessons. In class, he always asked questions, asked for clearer clarification, and asked the teacher if his assignments were good enough. His questions always implied his perfectionism. He expressed that the reason behind his attention was the fear of inferiority. He was worried that his classmates, schoolmates, and teachers would disdain him as he came from a far village and graduated from a countryside college.

Concerning his internship, Sam worked as a trainee technician in an international petrochemical company. At the company, all the documents were in English and the staff spoke Thai or a mix of Thai and English. Sam had to write daily machine reports in English. He placed great effort in writing them by imitating the staff's reports. *Google* and *Google Translate* were very handy for him in searching for appropriate vocabulary for the reports. Sam mentioned his desire to improve his English language skills as he found that some staff in higher positions could use very good English. He held the belief that English could help him in his work promotion.

4.2.5 Alex : The Lazy Boy and His Dream Job

Alex, 19, was from a merchant family living in the heart of Rayong city. He went to a famous school where most of the graduates aimed for a university degree. At first, he wanted to pursue a university degree in Engineering. Later, after junior high school, Alex's study plan veered onto vocational education when he was informed that he could get a high-paid job if he graduated from MP College's specialized program. Nonetheless, he admitted that he knew almost nothing about the job; only the expected income that attracted him. Furthermore, Alex honestly accepted that he was too lazy to study for four years to get a university degree.

At the early time of his diploma study, Alex was quite a passive English learner. He completed all the classroom assignments on time, but in a sluggish way. He finished his worksheets in the easiest way regardless of the quality of the work. Fortunately, he was a quick learner and his English proficiency was good enough to complete the assignments independently. This might be attributed to the standard of English teaching he received from the famous primary and secondary schools from where he graduated.

During the internship, he attended to the authentic use of English in the workplace. More importantly, he witnessed a misunderstanding between the Thai staff and the foreign boss which derived from pragmatic unawareness. Hence, after his internship, Alex demonstrated more investment in English classes. He asked questions about language use in the current world. He asked for clarification on cultural issues that might arise at the workplace. He also expressed his concerns about the expected level of the English language he should use with his colleagues and bosses.

4.2.6 Dylan : The Boy from The Family of Engineers

Dylan, 19, was born and raised in a family of engineers. With his parents, uncle, and cousins who were engineers, Dylan was fully inspired to become an engineer. His study plan was carefully determined by his parents. As they planned it, after junior high school, Dylan earned a pre-engineering certificate at one vocational college. After that, he came to study at MP College to get a diploma in petrochemicals, and he would then pursue an engineering degree at the university. In this way, he could avoid high competition in the university admission examination, as his parents advised him.

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During the certificate level, Dylan studied English with a foreign teacher who was Filipino, so his English oral communication was quite good. He always paid attention to the classes and finished assignments before his classmates. Furthermore, he was helpful when his classmates had difficulties with the assignments. He believed that it was another way to practice his English. Dylan was always an active learner. He preferred active classroom activities – presentations, roleplays, and demonstrations - to grammar study. In his opinion, those active activities resembled what really took place at a workplace.

Regarding his internship, he stated that he had worked as a technician trainee. At the company, he found that most of the staff mainly used English for all documentation, but for conversation, they used a mix of Thai and English. Dylan mentioned that this was what he had been told by the teachers and his parents. He felt no worried about it because he was confident that he was well prepared. Dylan was offered a permanent position in the company immediately after the internship ended. This was a result of his outstanding internship work. Nonetheless, he could not accept this excellent opportunity because he had a greater passion – pursuing an engineering degree in university.

4.2.7 Jess and His Long-Term Plan

Jess, 20, had been raised by his aunt and uncle since his parents passed away when he was studying in Grade 3. His uncle and aunt were running a local grocery store in a small province in the north of Thailand. At the vocational certificate level, Jess studied electrical power because his family wanted him to be an electrician and run his own electrical shop. Jess agreed to the plan until he heard about MP College's specialized program. As the program offered a full scholarship and a great opportunity to work in a global reputable company, he started to change his mind. It was a good alternative for him to help alleviate his family's financial burden. Moreover, he believed that after graduation, he could have a permanent job in a big company where he could earn a high salary. He mentioned that the salary he could earn there would be twice higher than that in his hometown. It was also a great opportunity for

him to have savings for his future plan – to open his own electrical shop without or with only a little financial help from his uncle and aunt.

During the diploma level at MP College, Jess maintained a good score in every subject he studied. With reference to the English classes, he showed persistence in all the assignments. He preferred real-life English taught at the college to unauthentic and grammar-based lessons taught at his previous schools. Active learning activities were his favorite lessons. He enjoyed speaking assignments rather than writing exercises.

Jess did his internship at a reputable petrochemical company. He experienced the use of English among the staff, both Thais and foreigners. The English language they used was a “Thai style English” – a mix of Thai and English vocabulary in Thai sentence patterns. Oftentimes, although it was not grammatically correct, it was understandable by the foreign staff.

Back to college after the internship, Jess still showed strong investment in English classes. He discussed his experiences with his classmates and found that mixed Thai-English conversation might be common among company workers. Nevertheless, Jess believed that correct English was still needed for keeping a good English language user identity. It would in particular, as he believed, benefit work promotions and salary increase.

4.2.8 Potter : Life Driven by Poverty

Potter, 19, was born and raised in a rice farming family in the northeastern part of Thailand before they moved to Rayong province. Unpredictable weather forced them to abandon their land and head to this industrial city to look for construction work. Potter did not have many alternatives for his education. He enrolled in primary education at ‘a temple school’ because it was the safest education his family could afford. After that, he pursued a vocational certificate at MP College. Then he won a scholarship to study in this specialized program. Potter was so deeply perceiving his family’s suffering from financial instability that he wished he could improve his family’s status as soon as possible. He heard that some of his seniors could improve their financial status in just a couple of years, and he would

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like to succeed in that as well. Potter consistently showed his strong will to improve his family status through both hard work and hard study. He started working part-time jobs when he was at the certificate level. While he was in this specialized program where he could not do a part-time job, he devoted himself to studying.

Regarding his English language learning, Potter always paid attention to the lessons. He preferred working quietly to active activities such as public speaking or role plays. He was an autonomous learner, trying his best to find answers before asking the teacher. His autonomy was developed by his fear of asking questions because his English teachers at the primary level seemed to be irritable.

Potter did his internship at an international petrochemical company. He was mainly responsible for operating machines and making daily machine reports. English was used for all written documents, including daily reports, machine manuals, and work procedures. For daily communication among staff members, English was used as much as Thai. Potter emphasized that his supervisor, who was Thai, always used English with other Thais and foreigners because he did not want to switch languages all the time.

After the internship, Potter was offered a permanent position in the company. During the last semester at the college, he tried hard to improve himself in both technical skills and generic skills including English communication. He wanted to best prepare himself ready for his future career.

4.2.9 Terry in The Middle of Industrial Town

Terry, 19, lived in the middle of a petrochemical industry neighborhood. His hometown was being aggressively developed to attract global investment. The growth of the industrial estates and the convenient life of people who worked in the area brought Terry to vocational education which he considered more affordable than pursuing a university degree. After completing the certificate in Electronics, Terry applied for a scholarship in this specialized program because the program offered permanent jobs for every graduate who had good academic results. He hoped for a stable job to secure his family's future.

At college, even though Terry was a disciplined student, his academic results were just average. He was assigned to be a leader of the Students Council and admired by the juniors. He tried his best to keep a good status among the teachers and college mates to impress the company where he interned. He expected that his teachers could help convince the company to accept him as a permanent employee. In his opinion, this seemed to be the only way to get the job since his academic results were not as distinctive as those of his counterparts.

Terry's English learning experiences were not very impressive. He started his English learning with an unfriendly and strict teacher. This developed his negative attitude toward English learning. However, in college, Terry always paid attention to every lesson. Even though he was not one of the quickest students, he continuously showed persistence in completing each task or assignment correctly. He asked for clarification for every confusing point, hoping that it might help him to effectively complete the tasks. He wanted to assure that his score would not be too low.

Regarding his internship at a global petrochemical company, Terry witnessed extensive use of English in his department. As his supervisor was a Canadian engineer who knew only a little Thai, Terry had to develop English communication skills by himself to be able to communicate with his supervisor. It was quite tough for him to communicate with a foreigner at first. Fortunately, with his supervisor's support, his self-adaptation, and his use of *Google*, the communication became smoother. However, Terry considered that better grammar would be a benefit for his future job.

Before Terry's official graduation, he was offered a permanent job at the company. He would be back to work with his Canadian supervisor again. Terry believed that his supervisor was the one who nominated him for a permanent technician position. The support from the supervisor, he believed, was attributed to his perseverance that impressed the supervisor.

4.2.10 Hugo Who Wanted to Fly Far

Hugo, 19, was born in a rice farmer family living in the northeastern part of Thailand. The village was deprived of infrastructure and public utilities, including educational institutions. Hence, his parents decided to send him to live with his uncle

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and aunt who worked for a big hotel in Pattaya – a famous tourist city located along the eastern coast of Thailand. In Pattaya, Hugo received an appropriate education. He finished junior high school and then pursued a vocational certificate in Tourism as recommended by his uncle, who tried to reserve a position at the hotel for him after graduation. Unfortunately, later, Hugo recognized that he could not study Tourism, and thus he moved to the Electrical Department with approval from his uncle and settled there until he graduated. Studying electrical engineering, Hugo had many chances to participate in various vocational guidance fairs which led him to discover the most appealing career for him – an offshore worker. The significantly high remuneration in this industry attracted him and made him forget the job at his uncle's hotel.

Referring to the English language's roles in pursuing his desired job, Hugo strongly admitted that it was one of the key qualifications for all candidates for this career. Without strong skills in English, one would find it difficult to get this position. Those who wanted to be an offshore worker were required to work with people from around the world, including Asia, Europe, and America. Therefore, English was necessary not only for work but also for daily life and socializing activities. Being aware of this, in the English classes, Hugo always showed his perseverance to achieve every assignment. He also exhibited his leadership while working in a team. Since his English was better than most of his classmates, he usually facilitated them for individual assignments. He believed that helping his classmates with their assignments was beneficial to him as it was a good way for him to review the lessons.

Unfortunately, it was impossible for Hugo to have direct experience as an intern worker at an offshore oil platform. He did his internship at one reputable petrochemical company where English was used in both documents and daily conversations. In conversation, a mix of Thai and English was witnessed. Hugo usually found difficulties with terminology. Sometimes, he asked the supervisors, and other times he researched it by himself. Most of the time, he used some handy language tools - *Google* and *Google Translate*. Even though this internship was not exactly related to his dream job, Hugo was still highly invested in improving his English.

He believed that it was a chance to prepare himself within the petrochemical industry, which was relevant to his desired career as an offshore worker.

Hugo was already confirmed for a permanent position in the company. He accepted this opportunity and thought it was a good start for experiences in the petrochemical industry that might be beneficial for searching for his dream job.

To sum up, the 10 participants were of diverse family backgrounds, learning trajectories, and future career aspirations. Their diversity highlighted the findings of this study which will be presented in the next section.

4.3 The Students' Perceptions of Their Investments in English as A Foreign Language Classrooms

The interview data obtained from the student participants revealed their investments in the English classes. The interviews also showed what the students had done to improve their English communication skills during their internship in a company, which in turn impacted their investments in the English classes. The data from the student interviews were also augmented by those from the supervisors and teacher logs.

4.3.1 Students' Investments Against Their Preference for English Subjects in Their Learning History

Most of the participants recounted that they invested in their English language learning regardless of their preferences for English subjects taught in schools or colleges because they perceived that the English language would in turn provide them with more opportunities for recognition, admiration, desired jobs, or higher education. Cole, Potter, and Terry, who were from the same primary school, reported their negative and discouraging English learning experiences during their primary-level study. It was their first time learning English; unfortunately, it was not a good start. They felt that their teachers were very strict, intolerant, and humiliating. This gradually instilled a dislike of English in these students. Nevertheless, all these three students maintained

constant investments in all English classes at MP College as they wanted to form and maintain good student identities. Cole, for example, said that:

My English teachers at the primary level were very strict. They had only a little tolerance for mistakes. One of them always gave humiliating comments when students failed to achieve assigned tasks. Many students were punished because of their misspellings. I managed to survive by keeping silent and finishing the tasks in time, trying not to make any mistakes. To be honest, as a student at MP College, I put a lot of effort in learning English because I wanted to be seen as a good student.

(Cole: Interview 1)

Potter also shared his unimpressive experiences in learning English when he was in a primary school. One of his English teachers was very irritable and got angry easily when students tried to ask questions. He was once scolded for his scribbly handwriting. He elaborated that his dislike of English might start from such experiences. According to Potter:

Despite my dislike of English, I never misbehaved in English classes at MP College. I didn't want to disappoint my parents. Also, I wanted to be a good boy for the teachers.

(Potter: Interview 1)

Terry's dislike of English language learning started when he was in primary school where the English teachers were so strict and unkind. He was occasionally punished because of some mistakes on the worksheets, and he felt humiliated. He recounted that:

Despite my poor experiences at primary school, at MP College, I always paid attention in classes. I want to maintain my good student status. I didn't want the teachers to think that I was a lazy or naughty boy.

(Terry: Interview 1)

Although some students did not have bad experiences in English classes while they were in primary and secondary schools, it seemed that they could not develop an affection for English language learning. Still, they performed as good investors in the classrooms as they foresaw the importance of English in their future careers. From Eric's view:

English is very important for my future occupation whether it is an electrician or a fruit exporter. That's why I always paid attention to English classes even though I didn't like them. It was always hard for me to catch up with what the teachers said or explained, and it was worse when the teachers were foreigners.

(Eric: Interview 3)

Hugo shared that he did well in English since he had been at the primary level. He felt it was easy. However, he mentioned that he could not say English was one of his favorite subjects. As he said:

I didn't like English, but not hate it. However, I still paid attention to English classes and participated in every activity that I was requested to do because it would be helpful for my future job. Also, I wanted to be acknowledged as a good student.

(Hugo: Interview 3)

As can be seen, the participants invested in their English classes regardless of their English language learning preferences. Even though they had negative English learning experiences, they still invested because they wanted to maintain their good student identities. Also, some of them foresaw the benefits of the English language in their future career.

4.3.2 Students' Investments in Their English Classrooms Against Their English Language Proficiency

The data collected from both the interviews and the teacher logs showed that most of the participants had constantly invested in their English classes regardless of their English language proficiency. The participants with low English proficiency

revealed that they always paid attention to English lessons because they wanted to improve their communication skills at work. They realized that, at a workplace, interns and staff who possessed good English communication skills could gain recognition from their supervisors or bosses.

Sam, one of the low-proficiency participants, expressed that even though he was not good at English, he was trying his best in the English classes because English was a must for interns at the company. The data from the teacher logs disclosed that Sam always tried to finish the assignments by himself using *Google*. He asked his classmates and consulted the teachers when he felt the assignments were too complicated.

Before the internship began, I was a bit worried about my English communication skills. My seniors told me that I would need to communicate with German and Japanese supervisors sometimes. And most of the time, I might write engine check reports in English. So, I practiced a lot. I paid much attention in the classrooms. Out of class, sometimes I watched YouTube and Facebook videos for conversation lessons.

(Sam: Interview 1)

Eric was another low-proficiency participant. To him, English was a major tool in seeking information for his passionate job – a fruit exporter. He constantly devoted his time to English classrooms, especially when the lessons were related to business English. As he mentioned:

I'm not good at English but I need English if I want to be a fruit exporter. And at present, I need it for researching about being a fruit exporter and preparing for my internship. English classes are times I can practice with good support from the teacher. Outside the classroom, I can also practice, but without the support. That's a bit more difficult.

(Eric, Interview 3)

From the perspectives of the moderate proficiency participants, English played a major role in their careers and career paths. The teachers' appreciation was also one of the reasons behind their persistence. As Alex, one of the moderate proficiency participants said:

What keeps me on the track of learning English is its important role in work promotion. I believe that one with better English could get a better position and more money at the company. Also, I want to be appreciated by the teachers.

(Alex, Interview 3)

Like Alex, Potter was well aware of the importance of English, as experienced from the internship program. As he put it:

When I wanted to know the answers, I relied on *Google* before asking the teacher. This skill helped me a lot when I was an intern. At the company, the staff only taught me how to use the machine and how to process department documents. Other than that, like English vocabulary, I learned by myself.

(Potter, Interview 3)

The high-proficiency participants also reported their constant investments in English classes. They realized the important roles that English would play in their future careers. Their interest usually went to terminology and English for engineering. As Hugo, one of the high-proficiency participants explained:

I really like it whenever the teacher taught us about English used in the industry. I like the demonstration lessons most. As far as I know, working offshore requires this ability a lot. And it's a good time to work in groups preparing the script and practice demonstration.

(Hugo, Interview 2)

Jess was another high-proficiency participant. At the primary and secondary levels, he experienced grammar-based English classes and felt bored and useless.

At MP College, he paid special attention to speaking activities that he considered beneficial for his future career. He elaborated that:

When we practiced speaking, we had to prepare a script by ourselves. I like this. I liked to imagine situations that might happen at work. this way, our conversation looked realistic and useful.

(Jess, Interview 2)

According to the results, most of the participants invested in their English classes despite their cheerless learning experiences, their dislike of English, and their limited language proficiency. It is interesting to find that one participant, Bale, reported feeling vacant while studying English. He expressed that he never liked English because the grammar lessons were too hard to understand, and the classroom activities were pointless for him.

In class, I only did what I had to because I didn't want the teacher to reprove me for not paying attention. I could do written exercises, but I didn't like activities like presentations or role plays. I wondered why the activities couldn't be something like playing online games in English where I could talk to real foreigners who speak real English.

(Bale: Interview 2)

In sum, most of the participants invested in English classes as they perceived that the language would bring them acceptance, admiration, and bright future careers. They paid attention to their English classes because they wanted to preserve their good student identities. In addition, they kept practicing English as they understood that the English language would play an important role in their future careers and education.

4.3.3 Students' English Learning Investments Driven by Challenges During Their Internship

All participants completed their internship at a company and were studying their last semester at MP College. During their internship, there were not many chances for them to meet with their English teachers. Hence, they were obliged to confront

challenges concerning English language communication by themselves. Consequently, the challenges drove them to English language investments. It is worth noting that without the teachers' facilitation, the participants demonstrated altered forms of investments, for instance, employing digital tools to mitigate their English communication issues. As Potter revealed:

I worked closely with my Canadian supervisor. He could understand only a bit of Thai, so, we sometimes had communication problems. I solved such problems by using *Google Translate*, where my supervisor could record his speech and *Google* would return the Thai translation.

(Potter, Interview 2)

Alex also shared notable English language communication challenges at his workplace. His foreign boss accused one staff of having no manners because of some words the staff mistakenly and unintentionally used.

To avoid that kind of situation, I searched *Google* for "Good manner in speaking English" and I found so many interesting topics about talking politely to foreigners and what were big differences between Thai and foreign manners.

(Alex, Interview 2)

Sam reported that he himself tried to improve his writing by imitating the staff's writing with some help from *Google*. As he said:

I liked reading the staff's machine reports to learn how to write appropriately. And if I found unknown words, I memorized them and *Google* for their meaning later.

(Sam, Interview 3)

Apart from employing digital tools, some participants exhibited their investments through posting their issues on their group chats - *Line* and *Messenger* - asking for help from their English teachers. Many participants reported issues on the

company staff's use of English mixed with Thai and spoken in Thai sentence patterns. As Dylan explained:

When I had difficulty with English communication at the company, I mainly used *Google*. Only for a really big thing, I asked my teacher via *Line*.

(Dylan, Interview 3)

Jess also witnessed the use of English mixed with Thai. He viewed it as supportive evidence that imperfect English can be understood. In his opinion, what he should improve is his knowledge of terminology. He described that:

I didn't have many problems with English. Only a few times that I didn't know the meaning of some difficult terminology. In that case, I used *Google Translate*. If *Google* couldn't help, I asked the teacher via *Line*.

(Jess, Interview 2)

Likewise, Potter revealed his experiences working with a Thai boss who spoke English to both Thai and foreign staff to avoid code-switching. What is problematic is that the boss's English was actually a mix of Thai and English. As he mentioned:

It was quite hard for me to understand him at first, but when I knew more terminology, it was a lot better. To deal with terminology, I used *Google Translate*. If *Google* and my friends could not help, I asked the teacher through *Line Group*.

(Potter, Interview 3)

The data from the interview with the supervisors confirmed that student participants were exposed to certain language challenges at the sites. The supervisors also shared their views and solutions for those challenges, placing critical emphasis on fostering learning autonomy and developing responsibility. For example, Bancha said that at his department, interns were treated like one of the permanent staff. Whenever there were problems with their responsibilities, they were encouraged to propose solutions themselves. He explained that:

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We believe this will develop their autonomy and responsibility. ... Regarding their English language use, I believe they can be an autonomous learner who can successfully develop their communication.

(Banacha, Interview 1)

Paitoon also mentioned the strategies employed in teaching the interns tricks of the trade as well as promoting learning autonomy among the interns. He elaborated that:

All interns were assigned to do maintenance for machines. They needed to report their work in both Thai and English. The staff closely supervised them in written or spoken reports only for the first time. Then, they had to complete all the reports by themselves.

(Paitoon, Interview 1)

Amarin shared his idea on fostering interns' autonomy and responsibility that the close supervision at his department was only for safety issues. All interns were required to manage their daily working life by themselves. He expressed that:

Under my supervision, I found that most of the interns always tried their best to achieve communication with foreign staff and bosses. It was like their habit to search for solutions independently.

(Amarin, Interview 1)

It is noteworthy that one participant, Bale, did invest in practicing English during the internship even though his investments in the formal English classrooms were not evidently observed. He reported that he did not feel any difficulty with English communication during his internship, nor did he foresee the power of English in his work promotion. Bale liked the internship program because it was like real-life work and made him feel grown up. He also mentioned that he needed to use English, especially reading, because all documents were in English. Sometimes, he communicated in English with foreign bosses or visitors. As he put it:

Not a problem for me. I could read and speak, but for writing, I had to do it slower than usual because I didn't know how exactly I should arrange the word order in a sentence. In that case, I used *Google* or *Google Translate*.

(Bale, Interview 2)

Bale further elaborated that he thought English could not help him with his work promotion, and basic English was just enough. To him, “technical skills are more important” (Bale, Interview 3).

As can be seen, all of the participants invested in English learning and practicing because they were driven by the challenges at their workplaces. To deal with those challenges, they first relied on the handiest language tools – *Google* and *Google Translate* – which could help them achieve their work assignments. For the more complicated language issues, the participants consulted their English teachers through *Line* or *Messenger*.

4.4 The Students' Perceptions of Their Identities as English as a Foreign Language Learners

The participants' identity construction had been disclosed through the interview with the student participants. The data showed that participants' identities had been formed along their English learning journey - from the early stage at the primary level until their study at MP College. Most of the participants were well-behaved in the English classes despite their unpleasant learning experiences. Some of them studied English just only because it was a compulsory subject. Most of the participants could foresee a clearer picture of the role of English in their careers when they studied at MP College.

4.4.1 Identity Construction at The Early Stage of English Language Learning

Good Students with Fear and Low Confidence

Some of the student participants were expected to start their formal English language learning at the age of seven, Primary 1 level. Unfortunately, they did not

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receive such English education according to the curriculum until they were in Primary 5 due to a shortage of full-time English teachers.

Despite an uninspiring English learning history with uninfluential teachers, Cole, Potter, and Terry were trying their best to keep their good student identities. They were well-behaved and diligent, unfortunately, they could not develop cheerfulness and self-confidence. As Cole expressed:

In classes, I was silent most of the time. I feared the teachers. And I didn't want to be humiliated in front of the class. I kept maintaining good scores in English only to fulfill my image of a good student. Even at the secondary level, I was still unconfident to speak. I feared making mistakes. I usually work quietly.

(Cole, Interview 1)

Similarly, Potter tried to maintain his good student identity by being well-behaved. The fear of the teachers pushed him to complete the assignments on time, with a lot of help from his classmates, whereas he understood only a little of what the teacher explained. He said:

The English exercises were difficult. The teachers were very strict. Yet, I was not naughty. I wanted to be a good student in the eyes of the teachers. I always finished my assignments with help from my classmates. I didn't ask the teachers because I didn't want to annoy her with my slow understanding.

(Potter, Interview 1)

Terry also experienced a hard time studying English at primary school. He was definitely not good at English. He could not enjoy the classes because he needed to rely on his classmates' help in finishing his assignments. He pointed out:

I didn't ask the teachers for help as I feared that I would upset them. This also happened at secondary school. Although I wasn't good at studying, I wanted the teachers to recognize me as someone with high responsibility.

(Terry, Interview 1)

As is evident, the participants tried to maintain their good student identity regardless of their uncheerful learning experiences. They were always well-behaved yet unconfident and fearful while studying English.

Learning English as A Compulsory Subject

Some participants reported their English learning experiences without any specific target in their future careers or higher education. They studied English only because it was compulsory for primary and secondary students. They were too young to envision the jobs they wanted to pursue in the future. Most of them studied with cheerful teachers; however, the lessons were not influential enough to convince the participants of the importance of English for their future.

Eric recounted the active learning activities during his English classes at the primary and secondary levels. Still, he could not see the relevance of English to his future study. He studied English only because it was compulsory. He described that:

I didn't enjoy it much, yet, not too bad. We listened to conversations, sang songs, and sometimes played games. Anyway, I can't see how all these activities can help me in the future. Though, I behaved well; only sometimes I could not help falling asleep.

(Eric, Interview 1)

Alex, too, experienced cheerful English learning activities at the primary and secondary levels. Unfortunately, the busy activities he had could not confirm the relevance between the English lessons and his future study or career. He elaborated:

I had pleasant English classes and activities during the primary level. It was a bit harder at secondary school. The teachers always trained us for the national test which I felt was too difficult and pointless. Though, I could not ignore it. It was a compulsory subject.

(Alex, Interview 1)

Jess had a pleasant English teacher at the primary level. She introduced interesting out-of-class learning activities. Nevertheless, those activities could not convince the role of English in Jess's future studies and career. As he revealed:

My English classes at the primary school were enjoyable. We spent a lot of time out of the classrooms. It became more difficult at secondary school. To be honest, I didn't know why I had to study English so hard. I kept studying only because it was compulsory.

(Jess, Interview 1)

To conclude, the interview data demonstrated the blank feelings of the participants while studying English. They were satisfied with the various lively activities. They invested in English lessons to maintain their good student identities. Unfortunately, they felt pointless in learning English because they could not see the relevance between the lessons and their future study and careers.

4.4.2 Identity Construction at The Vocational College

The More Authentic Lessons, The Stronger Investments, The Clearer Picture of Future Selves

Progressing up from secondary schools to vocational education was a big leap for most vocational students. The participants experienced a disruptive change in their learning. Regarding the English learning experiences, they reflected that it changed from a compulsory subject to a course that was more related to their lives as a future technician. They felt more engaged as they practiced the language that they could use for their future careers. Furthermore, the active learning environment supported them to give more investments. As a result, they acquired clearer pictures of their future jobs and were aware of the impacts of English on their future careers.

Cole found his English classes at the college more related than those he experienced during his primary and secondary schools. The authentic materials, exercises, and assignments reflected what he was expected to encounter at a workplace. This promoted his anticipation of being a technician with fluent English. As he explained:

Most of the lessons were everyday conversations with only a few grammar points. It was not very difficult. So, I felt that it was not too hard to speak fluent English at work. Then, I practiced English much

more than in the past and wished that I could be a fluent English speaker at the workplace.

(Cole, Interview 1)

For Dylan, he preferred practicing English presentations to reading and writing because it was a language function he was required to perform when he had internship interviews. He believed that his good English presentation skills could convince his teachers and prospective employers that he possessed fluent English communication skills. He told that:

The presentation helped promote my speaking skill and improve my personality at the same time. And both made me stand out among other students and interns.

(Dylan, Interview 1)

Jess preferred English classes at MP College to those he attended at the primary and secondary levels. Most of the lessons reflected the everyday English used at the workplace. Jess considered that paying attention in class and hard practice could smoothen his communication at the workplace. As he elaborated:

I liked it when we did role-plays. We could just note down the conversation and speak out. No writing. This was like what happened at the company. So, I could hope for more fluent English if I practiced in the classes hard enough.

(Jess, Interview 1)

From the interviews, the participants' identities, as a future technician working in a company, could be observed. They perceived the English language as a means to be recognized as a good English language user at the workplace. Simply put, they gave strong investments in their English classes. Moreover, the active learning activities allowed them to study cheerfully.

The Internship: Moving from The English Language Learner to The English Language User

After the last phase of the internship, all the participants' identities as an English language user were strengthened and became more apparent due to the practical lessons reflecting their certain future communities of practice. Most of them reported that the internship gave them exceptional opportunities to involve in English-speaking communities. During the internship, they gradually transformed from merely language learners to language users. As Alex discussed:

As we were allowed to practice the English language by ourselves with less help from our supervisors, I felt like I was one of the company staff. It was not like studying in class anymore. It was real life. I must try my best to make who I was talking to understand.

(Alex, Interview 3)

Potter also reported on authentic working experiences. He encountered various English communication problems and had to rely only on himself. He considered that, based on his problem-solving abilities, he was recognized as one of the company staff members.

I faced many communication problems, especially in conversation. I could rely only on myself because no one was there to help. This was the true working life I would live after graduation. No more study! No more help from the teacher!

(Potter, Interview 3)

Likewise, Sam revealed his internship as an actual working environment. He witnessed the English language used in the workplace and its role in promoting acceptance in working communities. Beyond a shadow of a doubt, this drove him to stronger investments and obvious construction of his identity as a recognized technician.

I saw many engineers in my department using very good English. That's something for me. English's one criterion they use to tussle with others for promotions. English will hold me up to that level.

(Sam, Interview 3)

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To put it simply, the participants gradually transformed their perceived roles from interns to true staff. Referring to their English language use, they reinvented themselves from merely language learners to language users. They realized the English language as the foundation of gaining recognition from the company.

4.5 The Students' Investments and Identities in Relation to Their Imagined Communities

Most of the participants acquired clear pictures of what they wanted to be when they started their diploma degree. Along one year of the internship, they gradually perceived the authentic working experiences and involved in the real English-speaking communities. After the internship, they gained a stronger perception of the coherence between their expected future selves and their imagined communities. Further, they realized the important role the English language played in their expected career and study. This led to more investments in English language learning, both in class and outside the classroom. As Cole described:

The direct experiences from the internship confirmed myself that I really wanted to be an engineer. I needed English to be successful in this job. I needed to practice more. I must have a high score on the TOEIC test if I want a higher salary.

(Cole, Interview 3)

Eric reported that the internship gave him unique experiences in practicing English communication skills within the real-life environment. The English communication challenges helped identify his language needs that should be developed to match the working communities' expectations. He explained that:

Now, it seemed like I studied with a clearer target point. I knew exactly what language point I should focus on. People with good English could get better career opportunities here at the company.

(Eric, Interview 3)

Terry, who worked with the Canadian supervisor, were regularly challenged by conversation issues. He attempted to smoothen his communication by himself in order to gain acceptance from his supervisor and other staff members. He believed that acceptance would be the guarantee for his position in the company. As he explained:

I tried my very best to assure my supervisor that I was suitable for a permanent position there. I practiced my listening and speaking skills to solve my communication problems with my supervisors. I want to make sure that I could work smoothly with my Canadian boss in the future.

(Terry, Interview 3)

Jess had been convinced by his family about the importance of English in both higher education and work. When he interned, he witnessed that staff with good English were admired by their boss and colleagues and were likely to be rewarded with higher salaries. To qualify himself, he invested more in English lessons both in the class and out of class activities. As he informed:

I hoped I could do well when I got a permanent position like them. Before I started my permanent job, I enrolled in a TOEIC tutoring course. With the TOEIC certificate, I could earn a higher salary.

(Jess, Interview 3)

From the interview data, the participants acquired more distinct images of themselves and their roles in their imagined communities. Before the internship, they had a plan for their future careers and their imagined communities. After the internship, they envisioned their roles, including what they were expected in playing those roles, and also the compliments they could earn. The idea of gaining admiration and reciprocation drove them to stronger investments in the English language learning. Furthermore, their identities were gradually transformed from merely English language learners to English language users.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has summarized the findings of the study, resonating with the participants' identities, investments, imagined communities, and their interrelationship. The findings revealed that the participants invested in English classes regardless of their preferences and proficiency of English because they foresaw the returns that they could later acquire, for example, good jobs with high salary. Additionally, some participants reported that they invested to preserve their good student identities. Their English language learner identities became stronger when they were studying vocational education where English was taught to mainly serve workplaces' needs. The participants invested more in both inside and outside of the English classrooms during their internship at the companies where they acquired clearer pictures of their imagined communities of practice.



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a summary and discussion of the major findings. It also proposes theoretical and pedagogical implications, acknowledges limitations of the study, and discusses recommendations for further studies.

5.1 Summary of The Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the investments and identities of vocational diploma students in MP College pertaining to their imagined communities and thus offer potential pedagogical implications for English language teaching for vocational education. The data were collected from ten boarding school students: five students from petrochemistry and another five from electrical engineering. The data from the student interviews were augmented by the interview data from the supervisors and teacher logs recorded by two English teachers from the college. These qualitative data were analyzed using a content analysis technique. The intra-coder and inter-coder reliability checks were performed to ensure consistency and accuracy of data analysis. The findings of this study can be divided into three main areas in response to the research questions: the students' perceptions of their investments in EFL classrooms, the students' perceptions of their identities as EFL learners, and the students' investments and identities related to their imagined communities.

5.1.1 The Students' Perceptions of Their Investments in EFL Classrooms

Based upon the interview results, it was found that the student participants invested in their English language classes throughout their learning history. Some participants reported that they did not like studying English due to their unpleasant learning experiences during the primary and secondary levels. Others did not express a negative attitude toward their English classes. The student participants could also be divided into three groups on the basis of their self-assessment of their English

proficiency levels: high proficiency, moderate proficiency, and low proficiency. Regardless of their preference toward English language classes and their English language proficiency level, most of the participants invested in their English classes. Their investments were encouraged by their commitment to preserving their good student identities. They wanted to gain admiration as well-behaved and diligent students from their families, teachers, and classmates. Furthermore, they perceived that the English language would be beneficial for their future studies and careers.

During the student participants' internship, they worked at the companies and were not required to attend classes at the college. They were expected to learn, and be able to deal with, English at work. They were apprenticed by experienced internship supervisors who provided them with optimal opportunities to be exposed to authentic work experiences, including challenges in using English in real-life situations. Driven by those challenges, the participants exhibited their investment in English language learning in different forms. In lieu of studying in classes, they relied on themselves to overcome the challenges. Digital tools were the language tools most used by the student participants to resolve their language challenges, such as unknown vocabulary or terminology, word orders, and pronunciation. The most used digital tools included *Google* and *Google Translate*. For more complex challenges, they asked for help from their English teachers. As they could not meet in person, the participants posted their challenges in online chat rooms or groups, such as *Line* or *Messenger*, to seek help from the teachers.

5.1.2 The Students' Perceptions of Their Identities as EFL Learners

Most of the participants started their formal English study at their primary level, at the age of 11 to 12. Some of them experienced uncheerful English classes which resulted in negative attitude formation. They feared making mistakes and being humiliated in front of the classes. Despite their unpleasant classes, they managed to preserve their good student identities while they felt uneasy and fearful. At this stage, they perceived themselves as English language learners who studied with fear.

Later at the secondary level, at the age of 13 to 15, most of the student participants received proper English language education according to the Basic

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Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008). Their classes were usually enjoyable. Active learning activities were enabled. Unfortunately, most of the participants reported that their English lessons were not related to their real-life or expected future studies and careers. As a result, they invested in vagueness without specific purposes. Although they enjoyed their active English language activities, they studied English only because it was a compulsory subject at school. In their perception, they were English language learners who study the language only because it was mandatory.

At MP College, the English classes were quite different from what the student participants experienced at the primary and secondary levels. The lessons were more related to their real-life situations and what they were expected to encounter at work. In addition, their internship provided them with greater opportunities to involve themselves in their expected work communities. Most of the participants invested in their English language learning because it could bring them more opportunities to be accepted as a good intern, or even a good technician. Their expectation for future permanent jobs at the companies drove them to form a new identity – a good language user.

5.1.3 The Students' Investments and Identities Related to Their Imagined Communities.

According to the interview results, the student participants spent the early stage of their English learning trajectory forming identities of good students. Their investments in English lessons are somewhat limited to only secure their good reputation among their teachers and peers. At this time, they did not clearly envision a specific picture of their imagined community. To put it another way, at their young age, their investments were simply connected to their intention to maintain their good student identities.

Most of the student participants had clear career goals when they had been studying at the diploma level. However, they did not seem to gain precise images of the future communities of practice to which they would belong. In classes, huge investments were placed in the lessons that they foresaw the benefits to their career goals. For example, Eric always paid attention to business English as he considered

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that he could use it when he ran his farm business in the future. In short, the student participants devote their investments to the lessons they could expect some benefits in their future studies and careers.

The internship gave them experiences delving into the communities of practice where they were exposed to different challenges driving them to strong investments in learning the English language and strengthening their identities as language users. It was during this time that they gained more precise images of the communities they would involve in the near future after graduation. It was also at this time that they came very close to their imagined communities. In the communities, they were forming their expected identities as fluent English language users. These expected identities governed their investments in different language-learning activities. For instance, they applied digital tools to help improve their English communication while they were away from their English teachers' help.

To conclude, the student participants invested in their English classes regardless of their preferences and English language proficiency level. In addition, they still invested even though they did not study in a classroom, as can be seen from their internship experiences. They invested in English language learning because they were driven by language issues they faced at work. At the diploma level in particular, they reserved their high investments in English classes. During their internship, they apparently formed an identity of good language users, in lieu of language learners, in order to increase their chances to get permanent positions at the companies where they interned. It can be said that the participants' investments were characterized by their expected identities in their imagined communities of practice.

5.2 Discussion of The Findings

To foreground the potential implications for English language teaching for vocational education, this section will discuss three remarkable themes derived from the findings as follows: the participants' investments in disliking and unpleasant classes, the fluctuations in the participants' investments along their English learning

journey, and the participants' investments to gain membership in their imagined communities.

5.2.1 The Participants' Investments and Identities in Disliking and Unpleasant Classes

According to the interview data and teacher logs, the participants maintained their investments in the English classes regardless of their English language preference and proficiency level. Most of them mentioned that the major reason behind their investments was more opportunities for recognition, admiration, desired jobs, or higher education. This is consistent with Norton and Toohey's (2011) observation in that learners "invest in the target language at particular times and in particular settings because they believe they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will, in turn, increase the value of their cultural capital" (p. 420). As primary students, they wanted to gain recognition and admiration from their families, teachers, and peers. They invested in their English lessons even though the classes were not very pleasant. One instance is when the class was very strict and unpleasant, Cole just kept quiet and tried to finish the assignments in time.

Notwithstanding the participants' apparent investments, their 'engagement' in the English lessons was still questionable. As informed by some participants, in spite of the unappealing English classes, they always paid attention to the lessons, stayed quiet, and finished their work in time. These could be considered 'investments.' Considerably, 'engagement' might not be included. According to Fredricks et al. (2004), learning engagement refers to the active participation of individuals in the process of learning activities. Considering Cole's case, he managed to survive by keeping silent and finishing the tasks in time, trying not to make any mistakes. For Terry, he could finish the assignments only because of the help from his classmates. This implies that he did not engage with the lessons since he could not finish the work by himself. From this viewpoint, Cole and Terry did not show any engagement in their classes. They finished the assignments only to fulfill their identity as 'a good student.' This is in line with Norton's (2000) argument that learners' language investments were also investments in their identities. Unfortunately, Cole's and Terry's achievement in gaining

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a good student identity was not very productive in terms of English communicative skill development because they did not seem to have an adequate opportunity to develop listening and speaking skills through participating in active learning activities or other forms of language practices. As suggested by Skinner et al. (2009), although learners maintain their emotional or physical attachment in school, unless they are actively engaged with available learning opportunities, their academic journeys cannot be deemed successful. Thus, English language teachers, curriculum developers, policy makers, and researchers should consider the ways in which, and the extent to which, learners' investments and learning engagement work in tandem and can be thus conducive to their further language development.

Another interesting point is that it can be seen from Cole, Potter, and Terry's interviews that they could not gain access to the English-speaking student community because of their strict teacher who acted as what Norton (2001) called 'the gatekeeper.' At this point, Cole, Potter, and Terry might invest in their learning and achieve a good student identity, yet they could not get access to their foreseen community of English-speaking students. The failure to gain membership caused them to 'stay quiet,' which otherwise known as resistance in the learning of English (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007) and non-participation (Norton, 2001). On the other hand, language learners are more inclined to invest in speaking when the target language communities are safe, non-aggressive, and supportive (Norton & Gao, 2008). For this reason, students should be provided with safe and cheerful classes, full of interactions between teachers and students in convivial fashions. The enriching experiences of learning English, and of increasing communicative competence, can help the learners gain self-confidence in using their learned English. It can also be beneficial for developing a relaxing atmosphere while conversing in English in their future study and careers.

It can be concluded here that to deal with the students' lack of engagement and non-participation in English classes, educators and teachers should provide students with secure, enthusiastic, supportive, and jovial classes. This can inspire them to learn and to use what is learned in their real-life English communication with positive attitudes.

5.2.2 The Fluctuations in The Student Participants' Investments Along Their English Learning Journeys

The findings revealed that the majority of the participants exhibited altered investment along their English learning journeys. Their fluctuating investments were in accordance with the alignment between the English lessons and their imagined communities. For example, Eric, who dreamed to be a fruit exporter, paid special attention to business English during his study at MP College because he saw the important roles of English in his imagined communities – the world of fruit exporters. In contrast, during his primary and secondary schools, Eric did not invest much in his English classes even though they were filled with active activities. To Eric, the classes were not related to his prospective career and study. This resonates with Clement and Norton's (2020) argument that learners' investments in learning the target language at specific times and in specific milieus are attributed to their beliefs in receiving “a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will increase the value of their cultural capital and social power” (p. 162). Simply put, Eric's investments became stronger when he could envision the authenticity of the lessons in his imagined communities; otherwise, he would have studied passively.

Another instance is from Hugo who desired to work as an offshore worker. Hugo preferred the English lessons related to the industry and showed the strongest investments in English demonstration activities. His experiences from attending vocational guidance fairs suggested to him that English demonstration competency was critical in achieving his career goal. He highly invested in practicing English demonstrations to assure that whenever an opportunity arose, he was ready. This corresponded to Norton's (2001) argument in that when learners were actively engaged in classroom activities, “the realm of their community extended beyond the four walls of the classroom” (p. 165). Hugo did not consider English as only the language used in the classrooms, but he envisioned significant roles of it in his dream job as an offshore worker. He particularly invested in English demonstration practices because he foresaw that this specific ability would be beneficial to his future career and further support him to gain money and admiration. On the contrary, Bale,

the student with unsteady dreams, studied passively in English classes. He had only vague pictures of trendy jobs he wished to pursue. Without any precise imagined communities to help him transcend from the four-wall rooms, he studied passively only to pass the English courses he enrolled in.

Based on the above information on students' investments, it is crucial for teachers to acknowledge students' imagined communities and engage students in class activities. It is recommended that teachers transcend their four-wall classrooms into unlimited spaces of future visions. This can be made possible by initiating sharing times among students and teachers so that the students can speak about, and listen to, viewpoints on their imagined communities where they aspire to attain after their college graduation. In addition, teachers and educators should pay more attention to those without, or with vague, imagined communities. To deal with this situation, teachers may, for example, bring into the class lessons about life in famous companies or hold a company tour. This can inspire and trigger students to think about their future careers in a more determined fashion.

5.2.3 The Participants' Investments to Gain Membership in Their Imagined Communities

All of the student participants had their internship in a company relating to their fields of study. Those companies were leading manufacturers in the petrochemical industries. Their names were desirable among job seekers, including the student participants. The internship in those companies provided them with optimal opportunities to experience their imagined communities. Considerably, even though the student participants were accepted to be apprenticed in their imagined communities, their status was only as 'interns.' To gain full-fledged access to their desired communities, they had to gradually transform their identities from 'interns' to 'technicians.' In terms of language learning, they had to reshape themselves from 'language learners' to 'language users.' To fulfill those dreams and ambitions, the student participants invested a great deal to achieve their English communication and to exhibit their good language user identities. All of them chose to use digital tools,

as a survival strategy, to handle less complex challenges in using English. For more complex challenges, they resorted to their English teachers for help.

It is important to highlight that the student participants' investments in constructing their identities here were significantly different from their past experiences at the primary level when the gatekeepers were their teachers. At the company, the gatekeepers – the internship supervisors, the bosses, and the staff – were more flexible. The participants felt free to search for solutions for their language challenges without feeling embarrassed or humiliated. This reflects what Norton (2013) proposed as “unequal relations of power” (p. 6). To elaborate, in the classrooms, the student participants perceived that their investments in identities and learning were limited by an unequal power of English language use between them and their teachers. They feared making mistakes and being humiliated in front of the classes. They felt that the identities they were forming and investing in were threatened. They sensed an uncomfortable learning milieu which restricted their class participation and engagement. Thus, they switched to resistance and non-participation, staying quiet and only preserving their good student identities. Comparatively, during their internship at the companies, their investments in language learning were stronger. Their identities as language users were constantly shaped when they felt comfortable. They sensed that power relations between them and the company personnel were negotiable, resulting in their seeking to parallel the power by performing strong investments in improving their language competency and reshaping their identities as language users.

Another remarkable aspect that emerged from this study is concerned with the English language use in workplace communication. All of the student participants witnessed the use of English with some grammatical mistakes among company personnel. They also used English mixed with Thai. Oftentimes, sentences in English were structured following Thai patterned sentences. To them, in certain contexts of language use, comprehensibility seemed to be more important than grammar and sentence structure rules. This seemed to be an explanation for the participants' comfort in English communication: they did not need to be overly concerned about making language mistakes and being punished. There were however some student

participants who recognized the importance of grammatically correct English. These participants were ones planning to pursue an engineering degree at a tertiary level. As they could foresee the roles of grammatical English in another imagined community, they still wanted to study in formal classes where English correctness is always ensured. This reflects Peirce's (1995) argument that "although it is important for language learners to understand the rules of use of the target language, it is equally important for them to explore whose interests these rules serve (p. 18)".

Founded on the information from the student participants' internship, the English classrooms should be transformed to cover students' possible needs in gaining membership in their imagined communities. The learning environment must be safe and non-threatening. Students' expectations, desires, and opinions should not be ignored since the ultimate goal of learning a language is unavoidably determined by learners.

5.3 Implications of The Findings

This study paves the way toward a deeper understanding of the power of imagined communities on investments and identities among the vocational diploma students at MP College. The qualitative results provide practical implications that can contribute to improving English language teaching for vocational education.

First of all, the results revealed the needs for the students to have safe spaces to exercise their investments in their identities and language learning. A safe space refers to an environment where students can address difficult and uncomfortable conversations in a supportive way (Harpalani, 2017). It offers a setting in which students can alleviate stress and loneliness, while also forming connections with those who are in comparable situations. In a safe space, students can practice the language safely without embarrassment and humiliation. Their mistakes were clarified and rectified generously. Students can also express their opinions without worrying that they will be devalued because of their unfamiliarity or uniqueness. It is important for teachers to introduce their classrooms as safe spaces from the beginning of their courses to

affirm students that they are always safe to practice their target language. To achieve this, teachers should describe what safe spaces are, and what students are required to do to keep these spaces always available.

In addition to safe spaces for practicing the language, authentic lessons are essentially required. One example of a pedagogical approach that enables authentic lessons is context-based learning. Context-based learning is an instructional approach usually applied within science and technology education. It involves utilizing real-world scenarios or fictional situations in teaching processes to facilitate students' learning through hands-on or practical involvement, as opposed to solely acquiring theoretical knowledge (Putter-Smits et al., 2013). Wiyarsi et al. (2020) studied the effect of the context-based learning approach on vocational students in chemistry classes and reported that the use of the context that resembled daily-life problems and future careers helped promote students' interest in chemistry and positive attitudes towards chemistry. Luo and Chen (2021) tested the efficacy of contextual vocabulary instruction among Chinese EFL students and found that the context-based strategy led to better vocabulary learning performance compared to the direct instruction strategy. Moreover, Annisa (2015) investigated the effect of a context-based approach in English-speaking classes for vocational students in Malaysia and discovered that the students taught using a context-based instruction achieved significantly better scores in speaking than those taught using the conventional method.

With particular reference to vocational education in which most students expect that English taught in college must be consistent with what they will confront at work, context-based learning, as discussed above, can be applied. To avoid a mismatch between reality and their expectation that lead to non-participation in English classrooms, teachers can initiate authentic lessons by cooperating with content teachers and creating interdisciplinary collaboration. According to Gladman's (2015) survey of student perceptions, team teaching was recognized to develop students' learning outcomes and prompt more questions from students. Also, Giles and Yazan's (2019) synthesis of the most recent literature revealed that collaboration between English teachers and content teachers increased students' participation in the

mainstream classroom. To exemplify interdisciplinary collaboration within English classes for vocational education, when students study how to program a circuit board through Arduino application in an electrical subject, English teachers can cooperate with content teachers and design English demonstration lessons teaching how to present programming circuit boards through Arduino. The correlation between content subjects and English subjects can not only engage students but also help students smoothly transfer their learned knowledge to situations they know they will encounter in later working life. Accordingly, the relevance of English classes will not be questionable (Hargreaves, 2019).

Besides, the relevancy of classroom materials is vital in engaging students with English lessons and preparing them for their expected communities of practice. Using authentic materials helps prepare students with the necessary vocabulary and sentence patterns that they will tentatively deal with in the future. Nunan (1999) characterizes authentic materials as spoken or written language information that arises within actual communicative contexts, rather than being intentionally written for language instruction. The recent study with Colombian university students by Bernal (2020) illustrated that when students were exposed to authentic materials, they were provided with chances to expand their knowledge of language use within real-life contextual scenarios. Namaziandost et al. (2022) investigated EFL male Iranian students and found that authentic materials enhanced their reading motivation and their reading comprehension ability. Moreover, their reading anxiety was mitigated. It is recommended that vocational English teachers enrich their classroom materials by expanding good cooperation with business sectors and gaining advice from them. Good cooperation can be triggered through internship supervisors. Teachers can ask them for recommendations on creating materials that resemble the authentic documents used at a company.

Another important implication for English teachers concerns students' imagined communities and identities. The findings indicate that the student participants' imagined identities significantly influenced their investments, which consequently affected their English learning paths. Therefore, it is recommended that language

teachers not only focus on imparting linguistic knowledge to students but also acknowledge the impact of students' imagined identities in the language learning process (Peirce, 1995). Designing appropriate learning activities that encourage students to connect their personal aspirations, such as personal growth, career advancement, and job opportunities, with language learning would be beneficial. By adopting this approach, language teachers can encourage students to envision themselves as members of various communities, such as the classroom community, the target language community, and other imagined communities. The vivid imagination of themselves can aid them in acquiring the language with clear directions during their long journey of foreign language learning (Cummins, 1996).

The results of the study showed that the student participants' investments in identities and English language learning were very high during their internship compared to those during their class time at the college. This finding may point to several possible reasons, for example, the powerful pictures of their imagined communities, the more relaxed learning environment, and the relevance between their career growth and their English learning. In this light, it could be safe to propose that students' internships should be strongly emphasized. Teachers who are responsible for students' internship programs should be aware that the closer relevant the internship is to students' imagined communities, the stronger investments can be encouraged. Furthermore, as informed by the study results, student participants were exposed to challenges that they had to deal with by themselves. To help them effectively handle their difficulty, it is highly recommended that teachers scaffold students' autonomy during their studies in college. Little (2007) argues that the development of learner autonomy and the advancement of proficiency in the target language are interdependent and seamlessly intertwined. According to Benson (2010), learner autonomy is closely connected to learning strategies that teachers employ in their language classes, resulting in students' active learning and responsibility for their own learning. To enable autonomy, teachers should act as facilitators or learning partners rather than knowledge providers. Giving students challenges relating to target lessons and giving them time for self-discovery would foster great autonomy, leading

to lifelong learning. Importantly, teachers should always spare space for mistakes. A successful failure can provide students with valuable lessons.

The last major theme to be discussed here is the significant differences between the English language use in the workplace and what students have learned at college. As the students in this study observed, the English language used at the company focused on communication. On certain circumstances, speakers with limited English proficiency communicated in English with grammatical mistakes, but they could get the messages across. Thus, the student participants felt more relaxed and confident to communicate in English. Relatively, they felt less necessity to learn grammatical English. Meanwhile, some student participants mentioned that they wanted grammatical English for their future studies and careers such as studying engineering and being engineers. Considering this, English teachers should balance well between practical and formal English. Too much weight on one side of this might cause disengagement, resistance, or non-participation (Norton, 2001). One possible recommendation is that teachers may place greater emphasis on practical English, where grammatical mistakes are tolerated to some extent in listening and speaking lessons, particularly when teaching students with limited English proficiency. When teaching reading and writing lessons, teachers may emphasize more on grammar rules. To put it another way, English teachers should critically and strategically decide when to focus on fluency or accuracy in delivering the lessons and assess the students' performance. Another possible suggestion is to use accuracy activities to complement fluency activities (Yang, 2014). To exemplify, based on students' performance on a fluency assignment, the teacher could assign another accuracy task dealing with grammatical or pronunciation errors observed while students are completing the first assignment.

In conclusion, the findings of this study have highlighted several key implications for English teachers in vocational education settings. By applying these implications, English teachers can create a more supportive and conducive learning environment that fosters students' investments in their identities and English language

learning. This, in turn, can lead to more effective language acquisition and better preparation for their future careers and communities of practice.

5.4 Limitations of The Study

This study was conducted as comprehensively as possible to ensure that it would provide pedagogical contributions to the field of EFL. Nevertheless, there are some limitations to be acknowledged and further set as springboards for future research.

Firstly, this study was limited to ten Thai vocational diploma students in one technical college. Although this sample was not inadequate for the purposes of the current qualitative study, it may not be considerably large enough to be automatically generalized to other educational contexts. For future research, it would be more applicable to include more students from a variety of fields of study and locations.

Secondly, the current study used interview data as the main data source. Although backed up by the data from the classroom observation, the interviews could still reflect the subjective views of the participants which may be distorted by their personal life and educational experiences. Moreover, most of the interviews were retrospective. Participants were asked to recall their past experiences which may, to some extent, be incomplete due to the inaccuracy of their memories.

Thirdly, time constraints were another limitation of this study. Only one semester, the last semester of the student participants at the research site, was available for the interviews and observations. Had more time for the class observations been allowed, more critical and insightful portrayals of investment and identity construction would have been greater captured.

The last limitation of the study is that the interview data from the supervisors played a secondary role in this study. This study would have obtained more insightful and multi-perspective data if more interview sessions with the supervisors had been conducted.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

Based on the findings of the study, the limitations of the study, and some unexplored aspects of the power of imagined communities on investments and identities, recommendations for further studies can be made as follows.

According to the first limitation mentioned in the previous section, it would be more insightful if further research can include more student participants receiving different forms of internship or apprenticeship, such as ones with shorter or longer periods. The length of internship may shed brighter light on how imagined communities are constructed by the students. Additionally, if students without internships could be recruited, comparative pictures of the impact of imagined communities on students' identity construction and learning investments could be more accurately and insightfully captured, interpreted, and understood.

With reference to the limitation of using retrospective interviews which may cause subjective views of the participants, focus group interviews are suggested to complement the comprehensiveness of the data gathered. Focus group interviews offer the advantages of group dynamics that help foster discussions and lead to diverse perspectives and experiences. Focus groups' dynamic environment encourages participants to share and build upon each other's thoughts, enriching the data with collective insights (Carey & Smith, 1994). This approach not only enhances the validity of the findings but also provides a more holistic and comprehensive view of the obtained data (Morgan & Krueger, 1993). Therefore, by incorporating focus group interviews alongside retrospective interviews, researchers can achieve a more robust and multi-dimensional understanding of the issues under investigation.

Referring to the duration of this study, it has been conducted for only one semester, which is equivalent to five months. As such, some aspects of the student participants might not be comprehensively captured. As argued by Fernando and Ravanera (2000), longitudinal data can offer identification of the growth, development, and changes taking place in individuals or groups. Thus, longitudinal research covering multiple semesters or academic years could offer a more in-depth understanding of

how their investments in identities and language learning evolve over time. By observing changes and developments over an extended period, researchers can uncover valuable insights into the long-term effects of the power of imagined communities on students' investments in language learning and their own identities that may affect their language competency. Moreover, a longitudinal approach would allow for the exploration of potential fluctuations in students' investments and identity formation in relation to their imagined communities across different stages of their academic journey. It can effectively reveal patterns of growth of the mentioned items and shed brighter light on critical factors that influence the students' language learning trajectories.

It is also recommended that further studies inquire into internship supervisors' experiences in apprenticing vocational students. Studies may explore critical issues that have not been explored in-depth in this study, including but not limited to roles of internship programs in promoting students' self-efficacy in using English, perceptions of English in workplace communication, and collaboration between EFL teachers and supervisors in designing English for Specific Purposes courses for vocational students.

5.6 Chapter Summary

The aim of this research was to investigate the investments and identities of vocational diploma students in MP College pertaining to their imagined communities to discover possible pedagogical implications for teaching the English language in vocational education. The data were obtained from ten diploma students through semi-structured interviews and augmented with the data from internship supervisor interviews and teacher logs. Drawing on Norton's (2000, 2001) notion of investments, identities, and imagined communities, this study illuminated students' intricate process of identity negotiations and their level of learning investments which fluctuated according to the vividness of their imagined communities. The study has also provided several pedagogical implications for developing and reshaping English language classrooms, particularly those geared toward vocational students.

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Appendix A

Student Background Questionnaire (English Version)

Instructions: Please provide your background information by placing a tick (✓) in the box and filling in the blank provided. Note that your name will not be disclosed in reporting the results of this study.

Name..... Class Electrical Engineering Petrochemicals

1) Personal information

1.1) Age: years

1.2) Gender Male Female

2) Family Background

2.1) Who do you live with?

Both father and mother

Father's occupation.....

Mother's occupation.....

Only father/mother (Please specify.....)

Father's or Mother's occupation.....

Other caregiver(s) (Please specify.....)

Caregiver's occupation.....

2.2) Does your father/mother/caregiver help direct your learning trajectory?

Yes No

2.3) Does your father/mother/caregiver help direct your future career?

Yes No

2.4) Is your father/mother/caregiver based in Rayong province?

Yes No

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3) Educational Background and English learning experience

3.1) Your previous college (Vocational certificate level)

.....

Public college Private college Province

GPA

Number of English courses taken

GPA of the English courses

3.2) Current study

GPA

Grade received from each English course

1. English for Social and Business Communication Grade received

2. English for Project Work Grade received

3. English On-the-Job Grade received

3.3) Did you take any private English tutorial before starting your study at MP College?

Yes The latest tutorial was about

No

3.4) Please self-assess your current level of the following English skills.

5 = Excellent 4 = Good 3 = Fair 2 = Poor 1 = Very Poor

	5	4	3	2	1
Speaking					
Listening					
Writing					
Reading					

3.5) Are you confident in doing learning activities (e.g. asking your class teacher questions, volunteering to answer questions, doing role play, sharing your ideas with others in class) in your English classes? Please give reasons to support your answer.

.....
.....

3.6) What is your dream job? In your opinion, is English important for your dream job (future career) and your further education? Please give reasons to support your answer.

.....
.....

4) Internship Background

4.1) Internship at the Certificate level

Company name.....

District..... Province.....

Position..... Duration.....

4.2) Internship at the diploma level

Company name.....

District..... Province.....

Position..... Duration.....

4.3) From your experience, did English play an important role during your internship? Please give reasons to support your answer.

.....
.....

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix B

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 1

(English Version)

Part 1: Personal information and family background

1. Why did you decide to study... (field) ...at this college?
2. As you mentioned in the questionnaire that your parents/caregiver **helped** direct your learning trajectory, could you please describe how they did that?
3. As you mentioned in the questionnaire that your parents/caregiver **did not** help direct your learning trajectory, then, did you direct your learning trajectory yourself or was there someone else who helped you? In what way?
4. What is your dream job? Do you have a clear picture of it?
5. What have you done so far to help you reach your dream job?
6. In your opinion, would English skills take part in helping you to get such a job? How?

Part 2: Learning History

7. When did you start studying English in school?
8. From your experience, what did you like and dislike about studying English? Give some examples.
9. As a diploma student, what challenges have you encountered in learning English?
10. What have you done to overcome those challenges?
11. How would you see yourself as an English language learner (as a student at MP College and as an individual in society at large/before and after having internship experiences)? (For example, lazy, punctual, diligent, successful/unsuccessful learners, interior to 1st and 2nd year university students etc.)
12. How would you want others to see you as an English language learner now?
13. At present, how do you invest in your English language classroom? (For example, finish all assignments in time, pay attention to the teacher, be a

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leader in group activities, etc.) Has your investment in learning English been affected by your internship experience?

Part 3: Internship Experiences

14. What did you usually do during your vocational certificate level internship time at the company?
15. What did you learn from the internship?
16. Did you have an opportunity to use English in your vocational certificate level internship? Give examples. (For example, reading documents, talking to customers, etc.) If so, did you have any problems?
17. Did other staff members in the company use English in their work?
18. During your vocational diploma level internship, did you think you were the company's employee or just an intern?
19. Did you think your internship during vocational diploma level was an experience that you would face in your real working life?
20. Did you have an opportunity to use English in your vocational diploma level internship? (For example, reading documents, talking to customers, etc.)
21. Did other staff members in the company use the English language in their work?
22. Did you think better English language skills would bring better opportunities during the vocational diploma level internship? (For example, opportunities to join training courses or to be moved to a better position)
23. Did the English courses taken at MP College equip you well for the internship?
24. When you returned to the college after the vocational diploma level internship, did you pay more attention to your English class? Why?

Appendix C

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 2

(English Version)

Part 1: Investment in learning English

1. What are your opinions about the English classes you have taken at MP College? What do you like or dislike about them?
2. What are your opinions about your current English class?
3. What makes you want or not want to go to your English class?
4. What is your participation in classroom activities like (in your English classes and other subject classes)? Why are you active/passive in the class?
5. What kinds of out-of-class activities did you do to improve your English?
6. Do you think that your interactions with other classmates (e.g. doing pair or group work) and your class teacher help you learn English? How?
7. What challenges have you encountered in learning English?
8. In your opinion, does MP College provide students with enough support for learning English?

Part 2: Identity

9. Some people say that vocational students lack motivation in learning English and have a low English language proficiency. What do you think about it?
10. What are your impressions of vocational students who have good English skills?
11. How do you see yourself as a student who studies English as a foreign language?
12. How do you see yourself as a student in your English class?
13. How do you see yourself as a student in other subject classes?
14. Many people English is important for their future. Do you have a clear picture of how English is important for you?

Part 3: Internship experiences

15. From your experience, do you think what you have learned in your English classes is useful for your internship? And for your future job?
16. Can you recall any situations during your internship where you needed to use English?

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17. Have your internship experiences made you more aware of the importance of English? How?
18. Did your internship supervisor or other staff members in the company discuss with you (or make you aware of) the importance of English for your internship or future job?



Appendix D

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 3

(English Version)

1. From our previous interview, you said that Could you elaborate on it?
2. In your opinion, do you think good English skills have a role to play in helping you reach your dream job and further your higher education?
3. Can you reflect on your overall efforts, or activities you have engaged, in learning English both inside and outside the English classrooms?
4. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve MP College students' English, for MP College and internship companies?



Appendix E

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Supervisors

(English Version)

1. How long have you served as a supervisor for the internship program in this company?
2. Do you think the student under your supervision has a clear picture of what they want to do after graduation?
3. From your experience, how is English important for students under your supervision during an internship program?
4. How is English important for the student's future job and their job promotion?
5. From your supervision experiences, what do you think about MP College students' English proficiency?
6. Does your company have any policy on staff' English language proficiency requirements?
7. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve MP College students' English proficiency?

Appendix F

Teacher Logs (English Version)

Date: Class:

Student:.....Teacher:.....

Instructions: Please write down your reflections on the student's participation in your classroom. Your reflections may include, but not limited to, the following aspects:

Asking questions	
Contributing to class discussion	
Working with peers	
Interacting with the class teacher	
Working on an assigned task	
Volunteering appropriately (e.g., volunteering to answer questions in class or to give an oral presentation in front of the class)	
Maintaining interest and attention	
Other	

Teacher Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix G

Student Background Questionnaire (Thai Version)

คำแนะนำ: กรุณากรอกข้อมูลส่วนตัวของท่านโดยการตอบคำถามและทำเครื่องหมาย (✓) หน้าข้อความที่ตรงกับความเป็นจริง ทั้งนี้จะไม่มีการเปิดเผยชื่อของท่านในการรายงานผลการศึกษาคั้งนี้

ชื่อ..... กลุ่มเรียน ไฟฟ้าควบคุม ปีโตรเคมี

1) ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล

1.1) อายุ:

1.2) เพศ ชาย หญิง

2) ข้อมูลด้านครอบครัว

2.1) ท่านอาศัยอยู่กับใคร

บิดาและมารดา

อาชีพของบิดา.....

อาชีพของมารดา.....

อยู่กับพ่อหรือแม่ (คนใดคนหนึ่ง โปรดระบุ.....)

อาชีพของพ่อหรือแม่ (ที่ท่านอยู่ด้วย)

ผู้ปกครองที่ไม่ใช่พ่อหรือแม่ (กรุณาระบุ.....)

อาชีพของผู้ปกครอง.....

2.2) พ่อ/แม่/ผู้ปกครองช่วยชี้แนะทิศทางการเรียนของท่านหรือไม่

ช่วย ไม่ช่วย

2.3) พ่อ/แม่/ผู้ปกครองช่วยชี้แนะการประกอบอาชีพในอนาคตของท่านหรือไม่

ช่วย ไม่ช่วย

2.4) พ่อ/แม่/ผู้ปกครองของท่านอาศัยอยู่ในจังหวัดระยองใช่หรือไม่

ใช่ ไม่ใช่

3) ประวัติการศึกษาและประสบการณ์การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ

3.1) วิทยาลัยที่ท่านศึกษาก่อนหน้านี้ (ระดับ ปวช.)

.....

วิทยาลัยรัฐบาล วิทยาลัยเอกชน จังหวัด.....
 ผลการเรียนเฉลี่ย.....
 เรียนรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษมาแล้วทั้งสิ้น.....รายวิชา
 ผลการเรียนเฉลี่ยในรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ.....

3.2) การเรียนในปัจจุบัน

ผลการเรียนเฉลี่ย

ผลการเรียนรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษแต่ละรายวิชา

1. ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสารทางธุรกิจและสังคม ได้เกรด.....
2. ภาษาอังกฤษโครงการ ได้เกรด.....
3. ภาษาอังกฤษสำหรับปฏิบัติงาน ได้เกรด.....

3.3) ท่านเคยเรียนพิเศษภาษาอังกฤษก่อนที่จะเข้าเรียนที่วิทยาลัย MP หรือไม่

เคย โดยเป็นการเรียนเกี่ยวกับ.....

ไม่เคย

3.4) กรุณาประเมินความสามารถในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษของตนเองตามทักษะต่าง ๆ ดังต่อไปนี้

5 = ดีเลิศ 4 = ดี 3 = พอใช้/ปานกลาง 2 = อ่อน 1 = อ่อนมาก

	5	4	3	2	1
การพูด					
การฟัง					
การเขียน					
การอ่าน					

3.5) ท่านมีความมั่นใจในการร่วมกิจกรรมการเรียนการสอนในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษหรือไม่ (เช่น สอบถามข้อสงสัยกับครู อาสาตอบคำถามของครู แสดงบทบาทสมมติ แสดงความคิดเห็นร่วมกับครูและเพื่อนร่วมชั้นเรียน) กรุณาให้เหตุผลประกอบ

.....

.....

- 3.6) งานในฝันของท่านคืออะไร ท่านคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษมีความสำคัญกับงานในฝัน (งานในอนาคต) และการศึกษาต่อในอนาคตของท่านหรือไม่ กรุณาให้เหตุผลประกอบ

.....

4) ประสบการณ์การฝึกงาน

- 4.1) การฝึกงานในระดับ ปวช.

บริษัท.....

อำเภอ..... จังหวัด.....

ตำแหน่ง..... ระยะเวลาที่ฝึกงาน.....ปี/เดือน

- 4.2) การฝึกงานในระดับ ปวส.

บริษัท.....

อำเภอ..... จังหวัด.....

ตำแหน่ง..... ระยะเวลาที่ฝึกงาน.....ปี/เดือน

- 4.3) จากประสบการณ์ของท่าน ภาษาอังกฤษมีบทบาทสำคัญในการฝึกงานของท่านหรือไม่ กรุณาให้เหตุผลประกอบ

.....

ขอขอบคุณสำหรับการให้ข้อมูล

Appendix H

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 1

(Thai Version)

ส่วนที่ 1: ข้อมูลส่วนตัวและข้อมูลด้านครอบครัว

1. ทำไมคุณถึงเลือกเรียนสาขา.....ที่วิทยาลัยนี้
2. ตามที่คุณตอบแบบสอบถาม คุณให้ข้อมูลว่า พ่อ/แม่/ผู้ปกครองของคุณช่วยกำหนดทิศทางการเรียนของคุณด้วย ท่านช่วยกำหนดอย่างไร
3. ตามที่คุณตอบแบบสอบถาม คุณให้ข้อมูลว่า พ่อ/แม่/ผู้ปกครองของคุณไม่ได้ช่วยกำหนดทิศทางการเรียนของคุณ เช่นนั้น คุณกำหนดทิศทางการเรียนของคุณเองใช่ไหม หรือมีคนอื่นช่วยคุณกำหนด
4. งานในฝันของคุณคืออะไร ภาพของงานนั้นชัดเจนในความคิดของคุณหรือไม่
5. แล้วคุณทำอะไรบ้าง เพื่อช่วยให้ตัวเองได้ทำงานในฝันนั้น
6. คุณคิดว่า ภาษาอังกฤษมีส่วนช่วยให้คุณได้งานในฝันนั้นไหม ช่วยได้อย่างไร

ส่วนที่ 2: ประวัติการศึกษา

7. คุณเริ่มเรียนภาษาอังกฤษตั้งแต่เรียนชั้นไหน
8. จากการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษที่ผ่านมา คุณชอบหรือไม่ชอบอะไรบ้าง กรุณายกตัวอย่าง
9. ในฐานะนักศึกษาในระดับ ปวส. คุณคิดว่าอะไรคือสิ่งที่ยากหรือท้าทายในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ
10. แล้วคุณเอาชนะความยากหรือความท้าทายนั้นได้อย่างไร
11. ถ้าให้คุณมองตัวเอง คิดว่าตัวเองเป็นผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษแบบไหน (ทั้งในฐานะนักศึกษาวิทยาลัย MP และ ในฐานะคน ๆ หนึ่งในสังคม / ก่อนและหลังการฝึกงาน) (ตัวอย่างเช่น ชี้แจง ตรงต่อเวลา ขยัน ประสบ/ไม่ประสบความสำเร็จ เหนือกว่า/ด้อยกว่านักศึกษาในมหาวิทยาลัยชั้นปี 1-2)
12. ณ เวลานี้ คุณอยากให้คนอื่นมองคุณว่าเป็นผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษแบบไหน
13. ปัจจุบัน คุณทุ่มเทในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษขนาดไหน (เช่น ทำงานที่ได้รับมอบหมายเสร็จตามเวลาที่กำหนด ตั้งใจฟังเมื่อครูสอน เป็นผู้นำกลุ่มเวลาทำกิจกรรม เป็นต้น) ความทุ่มเทในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณเปลี่ยนไปไหม หลังจากคุณได้เข้าไปฝึกงานในสถานประกอบการแล้ว

ส่วนที่ 3: ประสบการณ์การฝึกงาน

14. ในระหว่างที่ฝึกงานในสถานประกอบการในระดับ ปวช. ส่วนใหญ่คุณใช้เวลาทำอะไร
15. คุณได้เรียนรู้อะไรบ้างจากการฝึกงาน

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16. คุณมีโอกาสได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการฝึกงานในระดับ ปวช. หรือไม่ กรุณายกตัวอย่าง (เช่น อ่านเอกสาร พูดคุยกับลูกค้า เป็นต้น) ถ้าคุณได้ใช้ คุณประสบปัญหาอะไรหรือไม่
17. พนักงานคนอื่น ๆ ในบริษัท ได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการทำงานหรือไม่
18. ระหว่างที่ฝึกงานในระดับ ปวส. คุณคิดว่าคุณคือพนักงานคนหนึ่ง หรือคิดว่าตนเองเป็นแค่นักศึกษาฝึกงานเท่านั้น
19. คุณคิดว่าสิ่งที่คุณได้ประสบระหว่างการฝึกงานในระดับ ปวส. เป็นเหตุการณ์ที่คุณจะได้พบในชีวิตการทำงานจริง ๆ หรือไม่
20. คุณมีโอกาสได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการฝึกงานในระดับ ปวส. หรือไม่ (เช่น อ่านเอกสาร พูดคุยกับลูกค้า เป็นต้น)
21. พนักงานคนอื่น ๆ ในบริษัท ได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการทำงานหรือไม่
22. คุณคิดว่าถ้าหากมีความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษดีกว่าคนอื่น จะช่วยให้คุณได้รับโอกาสที่ดีกว่าคนอื่นในการฝึกงานในระดับ ปวส. หรือไม่ (เช่น โอกาสในการได้เข้ารับการฝึกอบรมเพิ่มเติม หรือ การได้ย้ายไปทำงานในตำแหน่งที่ดีกว่า
23. ภาษาอังกฤษที่คุณเรียนที่วิทยาลัย MP เพียงพอสำหรับใช้ในการฝึกงานของคุณหรือไม่
24. เมื่อฝึกงานในระดับ ปวส. จบ และกลับมาเรียนที่วิทยาลัยแล้ว คุณตั้งใจเรียนภาษาอังกฤษมากขึ้นหรือไม่ เพราะเหตุใด

Appendix I

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 2

(Thai Version)

ส่วนที่ 1: คำถามเกี่ยวกับความทุ่มเททางการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ

1. คุณคิดว่าการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษที่วิทยาลัย MP เป็นอย่างไร คุณชอบ หรือไม่ชอบอะไร
2. คุณคิดว่าการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในปัจจุบันของคุณเป็นอย่างไร
3. อะไรที่ทำให้คุณอยาก หรือ ไม่อยาก เข้าเรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ
4. คุณมีส่วนร่วมในชั้นเรียนอย่างไรบ้าง (ทั้งในห้องเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ และ รายวิชาอื่น ๆ) ทำไมคุณถึง กระตือรือร้น/เฉื่อยชาในชั้นเรียน
5. คุณทำกิจกรรมนอกห้องเรียนอะไรบ้าง ที่ช่วยให้ภาษาอังกฤษของคุณพัฒนาขึ้น
6. คุณคิดว่าการร่วมกิจกรรมในชั้นเรียนกับเพื่อน (เช่น ทำงานกลุ่ม หรือ งานคู่) และครู ช่วยให้ คุณเรียนภาษาอังกฤษได้ดีขึ้นหรือไม่ อย่างไร
7. คุณประสบปัญหาอะไรในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษบ้าง
8. คุณคิดว่าวิทยาลัย MP ช่วยสนับสนุนการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนอย่างเพียงพอหรือไม่

ส่วนที่ 2: คำถามเกี่ยวกับอัตลักษณ์

1. มีบางคนพูดว่า นักศึกษาอาชีพจะมักจะขาดแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ และมักจะอ่อน ภาษาอังกฤษ คุณคิดอย่างไร
2. คุณรู้สึกชื่นชมนักศึกษาอาชีพที่มีทักษะภาษาอังกฤษดีอย่างไรบ้าง
3. คุณคิดว่าตนเองเป็นผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศแบบไหน
4. คุณคิดว่าตนเองเป็นนักเรียนแบบไหน เวลาเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ
5. คุณคิดว่าตนเองเป็นนักเรียนแบบไหน เวลาที่เรียนวิชาอื่น ๆ
6. หลายคนคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษสำคัญสำหรับอนาคตของพวกเขา แล้วคุณละ ภาษาอังกฤษ สำคัญสำหรับคุณอย่างไร

ส่วนที่ 3: คำถามเกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์การฝึกงาน

1. จากประสบการณ์ของคุณ คุณคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษที่คุณได้เรียนไป มีประโยชน์กับการฝึกงาน ของคุณหรือไม่ และมีประโยชน์กับอนาคตของคุณหรือไม่
2. คุณพอจะจำได้ไหม ว่าระหว่างที่ฝึกงาน มีสถานการณ์อะไรบ้างที่คุณต้องใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ
3. การได้ไปฝึกงาน ทำให้คุณเห็นความสำคัญของภาษาอังกฤษเพิ่มมากขึ้นหรือไม่
4. พี่เลี้ยงฝึกงาน หรือพนักงานคนอื่น ๆ ในบริษัทได้พูดคุย (หรือทำให้คุณตระหนัก) เกี่ยวกับ ความสำคัญของภาษาอังกฤษในการฝึกงาน หรือในอนาคตการทำงานหรือไม่

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Appendix J

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students : Session 3

(Thai Version)

1. จากการสัมภาษณ์ครั้งก่อน คุณให้ข้อมูลว่า..... คุณช่วยอธิบายเพิ่มเติมได้ไหม
2. ในความคิดของคุณ คุณคิดว่าการมีทักษะภาษาอังกฤษที่ดีมีบทบาทสำคัญกับงานในฝันของคุณ หรือการศึกษาต่อของคุณหรือไม่
3. กรุณาเล่าเกี่ยวกับความพยายามของคุณ หรือกิจกรรมที่คุณทำ เกี่ยวกับการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ ทั้งในและนอกห้องเรียน
4. คุณมีข้อเสนอแนะอะไรหรือไม่ เพื่อให้วิทยาลัย MP และสถานประกอบการได้ช่วยยกระดับความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาให้สูงขึ้น



Appendix K

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Supervisors

(Thai Version)

1. คุณเป็นที่เลื่องในสถานประกอบการให้กับนักศึกษาฝึกงานที่บริษัทนี้มานานแค่ไหนแล้ว
2. คุณคิดว่านักศึกษาฝึกงานที่คุณดูแลอยู่ มีภาพที่ชัดเจนเกี่ยวกับงานที่เขาจะทำในอนาคตหลังจากจบการศึกษาหรือไม่
3. จากประสบการณ์ของคุณ ภาษาอังกฤษมีความสำคัญสำหรับการฝึกงานของนักศึกษาฝึกงานของคุณอย่างไร
4. ภาษาอังกฤษมีความสำคัญสำหรับงานในอนาคต หรือ ความก้าวหน้าในตำแหน่งงานของนักศึกษาอย่างไร
5. จากประสบการณ์ที่ได้ดูแลนักศึกษาฝึกงาน คุณคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาจากวิทยาลัย MP เป็นอย่างไร
6. บริษัทของคุณ มีข้อกำหนดเกี่ยวกับความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษของพนักงานหรือไม่
7. คุณมีข้อเสนอแนะอะไรหรือไม่ เกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาวិทยาลัย MP

Appendix L

Teacher Logs (Thai Version)

วันที่: กลุ่มเรียน:

ชื่อนักเรียน: อาจารย์:

คำแนะนำ: กรุณابันทึกการสอนของท่าน เกี่ยวกับพฤติกรรมการณ์เรียนของนักศึกษาที่เข้าร่วมการวิจัย
หัวข้อในการบันทึก มีรายละเอียดดังตารางด้านล่างนี้ โดยท่านสามารถเพิ่มรายละเอียดได้
ตามต้องการ

การถามคำถาม	
การมีส่วนร่วมในการพูดคุย/อภิปราย ในชั้นเรียน	
การทำงานกับเพื่อนร่วมชั้นเรียน	
การมีปฏิสัมพันธ์กับครูผู้สอน	
การทำงานที่ได้รับมอบหมาย	
การอาสาสมัครอย่างเหมาะสม (เช่น อาสาตอบคำถาม อาสาแนะนำ ปากเปล่าหน้าชั้นเรียน)	
สนใจและตั้งใจเรียนอยู่เสมอ	
อื่น ๆ	

ครูผู้บันทึกลงนาม:

วันที่:

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Appendix M

Item Objective Congruence Form (IOC Form) for a Student Background Questionnaire

Description: This form is used for validating questionnaire items. Please indicate your agreement according to the following scales by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate box. Please also give additional suggestions or comments on the items in the space provided.

Scoring +1 = The expert agrees that the question/statement is appropriate.

Scoring 0 = The expert neither agrees nor disagrees that the question/statement is appropriate.

Scoring -1 = The expert agrees that the question/statement is not appropriate and requires revision.

Student Background Questionnaire

Research Topic: A Study of Vocational Students' Identities and Investments in English as A Foreign Language Classrooms in Relation to Their Imagined Communities

This questionnaire consists of four parts as follows:

- 1) Personal information
- 2) Family Background
- 3) Educational Background and English learning experience
- 4) Internship Background

Instructions: Please provide your background information by placing a tick (✓) in the box and filling in the blank provided. Note that your name will not be disclosed in reporting the results of this study.

Student Background Questionnaire	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1) Personal information				
1.1) Age years				
1.2) Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male				
2) Family Background				
2.1) Who do you live with?				
<input type="checkbox"/> Both father and mother				
Father's occupation.....				
Mother's occupation.....				
<input type="checkbox"/> Only father/mother (Please specify.....)				
Father's or Mother's occupation.....				
<input type="checkbox"/> Other caregiver(s) (Please specify.....)				
Caregiver's occupation.....				
2.2) Does your father/mother/caregiver help direct your learning trajectory? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
2.3) Does your father/mother/caregiver help direct your future career? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
2.4) Is your father/mother/caregiver based in Rayong province? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
3) Educational Background and English learning experience				
3.1) Your previous college (Vocational certificate level)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Public college				
<input type="checkbox"/> Private college				
Province				
GPA				
Number of English courses taken				
GPA of the English courses				
3.2) Current study				

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Student Background Questionnaire	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions																														
	+1	0	-1																															
GPA																																		
Grade received from each English courses 1. English for Social and Business Communication Grade received																																		
2. English for Project Work Grade received																																		
3. English On-the-Job Grade received																																		
3.3) Did you take any private English tutorial before starting your study at MP College? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes The latest tutorial was about																																		
<input type="checkbox"/> No																																		
3.4) Please self-assess your current level of the following English skills.																																		
(5) = Excellent (4) = Good (3) = Fair (2) = Poor (1) = Very Poor																																		
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>5</th> <th>4</th> <th>3</th> <th>2</th> <th>1</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Speaking</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Listening</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Writing</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reading</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		5	4	3	2	1	Speaking						Listening						Writing						Reading									
	5	4	3	2	1																													
Speaking																																		
Listening																																		
Writing																																		
Reading																																		
3.5) Are you confident in doing learning activities (e.g. asking your class teacher questions, volunteering to answer questions, doing role play, sharing your ideas with others in class) in your English classes? Please give reasons to support your answer.																																		
3.6) What is your dream job? In your opinion, is English important for your dream job (future career) and your further education? Please give reasons to support your answer.																																		
4) Internship Background																																		
4.1) Internship at the Certificate level Company name..... District..... Province..... Position..... Duration.....																																		

Student Background Questionnaire	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
4.2) Internship at the diploma level Company name..... District..... Province..... Position..... Duration.....				
4.3) From your experience, did English play an important role during your internship? Please give reasons to support your answer.				

The expert's additional comments

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The expert's opinion about the English-Thai translation

Quality of Translation	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1. The questionnaire questions/items are correctly and appropriately translated from English into Thai.				

Thank you for your cooperation.

.....

Appendix N

**Item Objective Congruence Form (IOC Form) for a Semi-Structured Interview
(Students)**

Description: This form is used for validating semi-structured interview questions. Please indicate your agreement according to the following scales by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate box. Please also give additional suggestions or comments on the question in the space provided.

Scoring +1 = The expert agrees that the question is appropriate.

Scoring 0 = The expert neither agrees nor disagrees that the question is appropriate.

Scoring -1 = The expert agrees that the question is not appropriate and requires revision.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Student Participants

The following questions will be used for a semi-structured interview with student participants.

I. Content of the interview

Interview Session 1: Personal information and learning history

Part 1: Personal information and family background

Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1. Why did you decide to study... (field) ...at this college?				
2. As you mentioned in the questionnaire that your parents/caregiver helped direct your learning trajectory, could you please describe how they did that?				
3. As you mentioned in the questionnaire that your parents/caregiver did not help direct your learning				

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Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
trajectory, then, did you direct your learning trajectory yourself or was there someone else who helped you? In what way?				
4. What is your dream job? Do you have a clear picture of it?				
5. What have you done so far to help you reach your dream job?				
6. In your opinion, would English skills take part in helping you to get such a job? How?				

Part 2: Learning History

Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
7. When did you start studying English in school?				
8. From your experience, what did you like and dislike about studying English? Give some examples.				
9. As a diploma student, what challenges have you encountered in learning English?				
10. What have you done to overcome those challenges?				
11. How would you see yourself as an English language learner (as a student at MP College and as an individual in society at large/before and after having internship experiences)? (For example, lazy, punctual, diligent, successful/unsuccessful learners, inferior to 1st and 2nd year university students etc.)				
12. How would you want others to see you as an English language learner now?				
13. At present, how do you invest in your English language classroom? (For example, finish all assignments in time, pay attention to the teacher, be a leader in group activities, etc.) Has your investment in learning English been affected by your internship experience?				

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Part 3: Internship Experiences

Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
14. What did you usually do during your vocational certificate level internship time at the company?				
15. What did you learn from the internship?				
16. Did you have an opportunity to use English in your vocational certificate level internship? Give examples. (For example, reading documents, talking to customers, etc.) If so, did you have any problems?				
17. Did other staff members in the company use English in their work?				
18. During your vocational diploma level internship, did you think you were the company's employee or just an intern?				
19. Did you think your internship during vocational diploma level was an experience that you would face in your real working life?				
20. Did you have an opportunity to use English in your vocational diploma level internship? (For example, reading documents, talking to customers, etc.)				
21. Did other staff members in the company use the English language in their work?				
22. Did you think better English language skills would bring better opportunities during the vocational diploma level internship? (For example, opportunities to join training courses or to be moved to a better position)				
23. Did the English courses taken at MP College equip you well for the internship?				
24. When you returned to the college after the vocational diploma level internship, did you pay more attention to your English class? Why?				

Interview Session 2: In-depth data on investment, identities and imagined communities

Part 1: Investment in learning English

Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1. What are your opinions about the English classes you have taken at MP College? What do you like or dislike about them?				
2. What are your opinions about your current English class?				
3. What makes you want or not want to go to your English class?				
4. What is your participation in classroom activities like (in your English classes and other subject classes)? Why are you active/passive in the class?				
5. What kinds of out-of-class activities did you do to improve your English?				
6. Do you think that your interactions with other classmates (e.g. doing pair or group work) and your class teacher help you learn English? How?				
7. What challenges have you encountered in learning English?				
8. In your opinion, does MP College provide students with enough support for learning English?				

Part 2: Identity

Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
9. Some people say that vocational students lack motivation in learning English and have a low English language proficiency. What do you think about it?				
10. What are your impressions of vocational students who have good English skills?				
11. How do you see yourself as a student who studies English as a foreign language?				

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Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
12. How do you see yourself as a student in your English class?				
13. How do you see yourself as a student in other subject classes?				
14. Many people English is important for their future. Do you have a clear picture of how English is important for you?				

Part 3: Internship experiences

Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
15. From your experience, do you think what you have learned in your English classes is useful for your internship? And for your future job?				
16. Can you recall any situations during your internship where you needed to use English?				
17. Have your internship experiences made you more aware of the importance of English? How?				
18. Did your internship supervisor or other staff members in the company discuss with you (or make you aware of) the importance of English for your internship or future job?				

Interview Session 3: Clarification and conclusion

Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1. From our previous interview, you said that Could you elaborate on it?				
2. In your opinion, do you think good English skills have a role to play in helping you reach your dream job and further your higher education?				

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Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
3. Can you reflect on your overall efforts, or activities you have engaged, in learning English both inside and outside the English classrooms?				
4. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve MP College students' English, for MP College and internship companies?				

II: English-Thai translation

Quality of Translation	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1. The interview questions are correctly and appropriately translated from English into Thai.				

III: The expert's additional comments:

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Name: _____

Signature: _____

Affiliation: _____

Date: _____

Appendix O

Item Objective Congruence Form (IOC Form) for a Semi-Structured Interview (Supervisors)

Description: This form is used for validating semi-structured interview questions. Please indicate your agreement according to the following scales by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate box. Please also give additional suggestions or comments on the question in the space provided.

Scoring +1 = The expert agrees that the question is appropriate.

Scoring 0 = The expert neither agrees nor disagrees that the question is appropriate.

Scoring -1 = The expert agrees that the question is not appropriate and requires revision.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Supervisor Participants

The following questions will be used for a semi-structured interview with supervisor participants.

I. Content of the interview

Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1. How long have you served as a supervisor for the internship program in this company?				
2. Do you think the student under your supervision has a clear picture of what they want to do after graduation?				
3. From your experience, how is English important for students under your supervision during an internship program?				

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Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
4. How is English important for the student's future job and their job promotion?				
5. From your supervision experiences, what do you think about MP College students' English proficiency?				
6. Does your company have any policy on staff' English language proficiency requirements?				
7. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve MP College students' English proficiency?				

II: English-Thai translation

Quality of Translation	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1. The interview questions are correctly and appropriately translated from English into Thai.				

III: The expert's additional comments:

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Name: _____

Signature: _____

Affiliation: _____

Date: _____

Appendix P

Item Objective Congruence Form (IOC Form) for a Teacher Log

Description: This form is used for validating semi-structured interview questions. Please indicate your agreement according to the following scales by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate box. Please also give additional suggestions or comments on the question in the space provided.

Scoring +1 = The expert agrees that the question is appropriate.

Scoring 0 = The expert neither agrees nor disagrees that the question is appropriate.

Scoring -1 = The expert agrees that the question is not appropriate and requires revision.

Teacher Log

Research Topic: A Study of Vocational Students' Identities and Investments in English as A Foreign Language Classrooms in Relation to Their Imagined Communities

I. Content of the Teacher Log

Instructions: Please write down your reflections on the student's participation in your classroom. Your reflections may include, but not limited to, the following aspects:

Teacher Log	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
Asking questions				
Contributing to class discussion				
Working with peers				
Interacting with the class teacher				
Working on an assigned task				

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Teacher Log	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
Volunteering appropriately (e.g., volunteering to answer questions in class or to give an oral presentation in front of the class)				
Maintaining interest and attention				
Others				

II: English-Thai translation

Quality of Translation	Expert's opinion			Comments / Suggestions
	+1	0	-1	
1. The teacher log is correctly and appropriately translated from English into Thai.				

III: The expert's additional comments:

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Name: _____

Signature: _____

Affiliation: _____

Date: _____

Appendix Q

List of Experts Validating Instruments

1. Assistant Professor Dr. Paweena Chatsungnoen
(Ph.D. in Language Education, Massey University, New Zealand)
Faculty of Liberal Arts, Maejo University, Thailand
2. Dr. Juthamas Thongsongsee
(Ed.D. in TESOL, Bristol University, United Kingdom)
Chulalongkorn University Language Institute, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
3. Dr. Richavee Chatviriyawong (Rayong Technical College)
(Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, Silpakorn University, Thailand)
Department of General Studies, Rayong Technical College, Thailand

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Name : Mrs. Krongrat Chaiwichitta
Date of Birth : July 9, 1975
Place of Birth : Nakhonpathom
Address : 101/204 Moo 3 Banchang, Rayong 21130

Educational Background :

2022 Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Linguistics
 Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
 Regional Language Centre, Singapore
 (SEAMEO-RELC)

1997 Bachelor of Arts (English) (2nd class-honors),
 Silpakorn University

Work Experience :

2014 to present **English Teacher**
 Maptaphut Technical College
 Office of the Vocational Education Commission

2008 **English Teacher**
 Office of the Basic Education Commission

2000 **Logistics Officer**
 Zeon Chemicals (Thailand) Co., Ltd.
 Rayong

1997 **Secretary**
 Thai Baroda Industries Ltd.
 Rayong