Professional Learning and Work Culture in a Thai University Context: the Case of English as a Foreign Language Lecturers

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Abstract

This study explores the perceptions of a group of EFL lecturers in a Thai University towards professional learning and the types of learning activities they are engaged in. It also investigates the nature of their work culture. The data presented in this study are drawn from a semester-long period of qualitative field study. In essence, the data suggest that participants engaged in several types of learning activities, both inside and outside the workplace. The participants relied more on formal than on informal professional learning activities. The inequality of access to professional learning opportunities for different groups (full-time, part-time, and non-Thai lecturers) was highly noticeable. The part-time lecturers' constraints to access learning opportunities appeared to result from the institution's workplace policy. With regard to work culture the data suggest that the lecturers worked and learned together with their colleagues in small sub-group form. The nature of this sub-grouping behaviour has not been identified in the work culture literature to date and was termed 'workplace-kinship'. The data further expose that participants worked in isolation (individualism) most of the time as part of their adaptive strategy. Given the findings, this study contributes to more understanding of the teacher professional learning situation in a particular Thai Higher Education institution and calls for more awareness of teacher workplace interactions, job embedded professional learning activities, and the equality of teacher professional development opportunities, particularly the visibility of part-time lecturers in the Higher Education system.

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own, except where otherwise referenced, and it is the result of study that has been conducted since the official commencement date of the degree. This work has not, in whole or in part, previously been published and never been submitted for any other degrees for the University of York or otherwise.

1. Introduction

Much has been studied about teacher professional development through the formal paths of professional learning such as the quality of teacher preparation programs and in-service teacher training and the impact these have on teachers' practices. However, much less is known about how teachers informally develop their profession through everyday practices and workplace interactions with colleagues. Therefore, teacher informal professional learning options and work culture are taken together as the key topic of this study. Accordingly, the present study investigates a particular group of EFL lecturers in a Thai University and their perceptions towards professional learning, types of learning activities engaged in within the workplace context, and the nature of their work culture. Furthermore, the study subsequently provides a theoretical contribution regarding teacher work culture and the implications for the implementation of development programs relevant to teacher professional development policy.

1.1 Significance of the Study

This researcher chose to focus on teachers rather than other stakeholders in the educational system because of the tremendous impact they have on the system and society as a whole. For example, Hargreaves and Lo (2000) argued the significance of teachers to the development of society:

> [T]eaching is […] charged with the formidable task of creating the human skills and capacities that will enable societies to survive and succeed in the age of information. Even---and especially---in developing countries, it is teachers, more than anybody, who are expected to build learning communities, create the knowledge society and develop the capacities of innovation, flexibility and commitment…(p.167-168)

In addition, Schleicher (2011) specified the significance of teachers in that "[t]he quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers and their work" (p. 202). These highlights from the aforementioned authors support that teachers are a vital factor and essential to the development of society. Furthermore, according to Hargreaves and Lo (2000), this topic is also timely for the development of the learning community in Thailand, as it is a developing country. In line with calls from several researchers to focus attention on teacher development, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Thailand has strived to better the quality of teaching and learning through revisiting teacher development

policies at the school and university levels (Suwanwela, 2005; Samakoses, 2009). The government's recognition of the tremendous impact of teachers and its subsequent strong emphasis on teacher development can be seen from the following speech excerpt from the Ministry:

> [O]ur teachers and their well-being are central to the achievement of national, regional and international development goals. Certainly, the quality of our teachers will have a major impact on efforts to position the region in the global knowledge economy […] Yet despite the substantial investments that have already been made, we have not necessarily achieved the desired results. This raises a number of questions concerning how we should approach teacher professional development […] What then can we do to make the professional development of teachers more effective at all levels? (Samakoses, 2009, p.126-127)

This speech not only conveys the government's concern for the quality of teachers, but also suggests an inclination to revisit the national policy on teacher professional development. The recent changes in these policies and how they affect the participant lecturers in the context of this study are further discussed in Section 2.3, Chapter 2.

Given the necessity of the development of teachers, this study focuses on the teacher work culture as it has been proven related to teacher professional development and teacher teaching practices through several studies over the past 20 years as several educators and researchers have begun to insightfully examine this relationship (e.g., Atwal, 2013; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014; Gore & Bowe, 2015; Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015; Kleinsasser, 1993). Many empirical studies, books, and articles have also contended that teacher work culture significantly influences teaching performance. For example, Hargreaves (1994) elaborated upon the relationship and the significance of the work culture on the teacher development and teaching practices in this way:

> [T]eacher cultures, the relationship between teachers and their colleagues, are among the most educationally significant aspects of teachers' lives and works. They provide a vital content for teacher development and for the way that teachers teach. What goes on inside the teacher's classroom cannot be divorced from the relations that are forged outside it (p.165).

According to the author, it could be deduced that the results of teachers' interactions with their colleagues could be later used as content for the development of teachers' teaching practices. Additionally, the relationship

between the workplace context and how the teachers have constructed their knowledge was also indicated in Timperley's (2008) findings that "teachers' daily experiences in their practice context shape their understandings, and their understandings shape their experiences" (p. 6). In alignment with Hargreaves (1994) and Timperley (2008), Darling-Hammond (2005) contended that teacher workplace relationships affect professional development.

In addition to directly benefiting the teachers themselves, collaborative working between teachers subsequently benefits student learning (e.g., Inger, 1993; Timperly et al., 2007; Timperly, 2008; Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008). For example, Inger (1993) stated that such a collaborative work culture contributes to substantial improvements in students' motivation and participation in the classroom. In addition, Inger suggested that "[i]n schools where teachers work collaboratively, students can sense the program coherence and a consistency of expectations, which may explain the improved behavior and achievement" (1993, p. 1).

Despite the significance of teacher work culture, several researchers in the realm of education (e.g., Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Hongboontri & Keawkhong, 2014; Velez-Rendon, 2002) have indicated that there have not been a significant number of studies on the topic. For example, Velez-Rendon (2002) called for more research on teacher work culture with regard to language teacher professional development. In her own words:

> [N]eeded is further research into contextual factors influencing second language teachers' ongoing professional development, such as school culture, cooperating teachers. (p. 465)

In Thailand, the issue of teacher work culture has begun to draw attention from researchers. However, research in this context is still in its beginning stage (Hongboontri 2006; 2008). In response to the significant influences of the work culture on teacher professional development and the lack of research in the field, the researcher in this study is aware of the necessity to conduct research on this issue in Thai educational context, particularly in the language education field.

1.2 Scope of the Study

Mindful of the relationship between teacher work culture and teacher professional development, the present study explored 16 EFL lecturers'

engagement in professional learning activities, their perceptions towards the learning, and the nature of their work culture, all in the context of one Thai University. To understand such a culture, the researcher entered the participants' workplace context using an ethnographic approach (see more about the approach in Section 4.1, Chapter 4) for collecting data. Several researchers in the field of Teacher Education have highlighted the significance of engagement in the actual context (e.g., Angrosino, 2007; Gobo, 2008; Hargreaves, 1996; Kleinsasser & Sato, 2007; Riemer, 2008; Timperley, 2008). For example, Hargreaves (1996) emphasised the impact of the work context to promote the need for researchers to investigate what actually happens in each context from the field. Citing McLaughlin and Talbert (1993), he wrote "[o]ne's teaching, what one knows about teaching, and what one believes is possible and desirable in one's teaching all vary according to the context in which the teaching is done" (p. 15). In addition, an emphasis on the importance of the context to the understanding of teacher professional learning was also highlighted by Timperley (2008) who said, "[p]rofessional learning is strongly shaped by the context in which the teacher practices" (p. 6). To identify the professional learning situation and the nature of the work culture within this Thai University context, the researcher set three research questions, which are as follows:

1. What types of learning activities does a particular group of Thai University EFL lecturers engage in?
2. What are the lecturers' perceptions towards professional learning in general, and towards specific learning activities in particular?
3. What is the nature of the lecturers' participation in professional learning activities in terms of their work culture?

In addition to the three research questions, to systematically portray an understanding of the complexity of the workplace culture and to conceptualise the professional learning situation in this particular educational context, the researcher employed Knapp (2003) and Nagamine (2007)'s classifications of teacher learning activities as well as Hargreaves's (1994) notions of teacher work culture to frame the analysis of this study.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

Teacher professional learning has been studied and presented in the literature on the field of Teacher Education and professional development in different ways. When conceptualizing the learning, most of the literature "focus[es] on specific activities, processes, or programs in isolation from the complex teaching and learning environments in which teachers live" (Opfer & Pedder, 2011, p. 377). For example, Birman et al., (2000), Garet et al., (2001), Wayne et al., (2008), and Yoon et al., (2007) similarly conceptualised learning with the greatest focus on the pedagogical features of the learning activities, the specific period of time the teacher training is offered, the types of materials used for the training, and measurement of teachers' learning outcomes. The following is how Wayne et al., (2008) discussed the development of teacher professional learning:

> [S]ome PD [professional development] programs are designed to improve teacher practice and student achievement over the course of an entire year. But in principle, PD could focus on shorter increments of instruction. Regardless of the PD being studied, careful attention is needed to the timing of outcome measurement. (p. 476)

Given Wayne's discussion, the reader will see that much attention was given to the specific design and structure of the training (i.e., course length and assessment) in isolation from teachers' actual practices and contexts. However, many researchers in the field have contended that the learning actually takes many forms and occurs on various occasions which leads to difficulties for researchers in the field to clarify what, exactly, teacher professional learning is to be able to offer a conclusive definition (e.g., Hoban, 2002; Kwakman, 2003; McCulloch et al., 2000). The indecisiveness in conceptualizing such learning could be seen, for example, from Mayer and Lloyd's (2011) work in that "professional development [is] conceived of as something that one 'does', or that is 'provided', or is 'done to' teachers" (p. 3). However, many authors have attempted to summarise and conceptualise the learning (e.g., AITSL, 2014; Armour & Balboa, 2000; Gravani, 2007; Knapp, 2003; McCulloch et al., 2000; Nagamine, 2007; Watson & Fox, 2015). Amongst those researchers, Nagamine (2007) and Knapp's (2003) analyses of teacher professional learning have had a considerable degree of influence on how the researcher in the present study has

conceptualised learning activities and on how they were analysed (Chapters 6 and 7).

In Nagamine's (2007) work on reconceptualising teacher knowledge, he classified teacher learning approaches in two broad senses: (1) traditional training-based approaches and (2) social constructivist approaches. Teacher learning according to the traditional training-based approaches occurs through formal forms of teacher interaction. The approaches are usually referred to as teacher preparation programs and in-service teacher training. Conversely, according to the social constructivist view, teacher learning is embedded in informal activities and naturally occurs through collaborative practices within a teacher's workplace and in the learning situated in the teacher's teaching practice.

In addition, Knapp's (2003) review of professional learning further provides an exhaustive classification of the wide range of opportunities in which professional learning can occur. The learning was classified in four main forms, as follows: (1) as part of the practice itself (e.g., teaching, and planning a lesson); (2) in settings outside of practice; (e.g., department or school meetings); (3) in formalised structures (e.g., workshops, courses, and training) and; (4) in informal settings (e.g., reading journals, and conversations with colleagues).

Aligning Knapp's (2003) and Nagamine's (2007) classifications of teacher learning with patterns of participants' professional learning emerging from the data, the researcher henceforth classifies the learning of this particular group of EFL lecturers in two main categories: (1) formal (traditional) professional development activities, and (2) informal professional development activities. Furthermore, each of these two broad categories consists of two sub-categories. The formal activities are sub-categorised into those occurring "within the workplace" and those occurring "outside the workplace". For informal professional development activities, there were those occurring "as part of teaching practices" and those occurring "outside teaching practices". A detailed explanation of each category can be found in Chapter 7.

Furthermore, teacher professional learning has also been considered a complex process that requires both the individual and collective engagement of teachers

(Avalos, 2011). In order to better understand this complicated phenomenon, it is necessary to explore the workplace relationship of the participant lecturers with their colleagues and their work culture. Therefore, the present study employs Hargreaves' (1994) notion of teacher work culture in the analysis. According to his notion, the characteristics of teacher work culture were classified into in four patterns: individualism, balkanization, contrived collegiality, and collaboration. In brief, each of these four patterns represents teachers' preferences for working alone; in small sub-groups; in a group according to workplace regulations; and in a group as a whole organization according to teachers' own initiative, respectively. Full details and discussions of the theoretical conception of the distinctive characteristics of each type of work culture can be found in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.1). This typology of the teacher work culture has been employed as a guideline in identifying the nature of the participants' interactions with their colleagues, as discussed in Chapter 8. However, a particular form of workplace interaction found in the study context is different from those identified in Hargreaves' explanation and has not been mentioned in any other literature identified in the area of work culture and professional learning. Therefore, the researcher introduced *workplace-kinship* as a related category of balkanization (Hargreaves, 1994) to fully describe the specific nature of teachers' interaction in this Thai educational context (for a full description of the term, see Chapter 8).

1.4 Thesis Structure

The setting of the aforementioned research questions, the research methodology, as well as the answers and the discussions of the questions have been distributed in the following nine chapters. In particular, these nine chapters detailed the study context, theoretical conceptions of the study, empirical studies in the field, the research methodology, results, discussion and findings, and the conclusion. In brief, the context chapter (Chapter 2) outlines the Thai educational system and its current situation concerning teacher professional development in Higher Education. Aside from that, it also explores the background of the University and the institution in this investigation. Moreover, the chapter provides background information on the participant lecturers' duties in the institution and the physical conditions of the study context.

The literature chapter (Chapter 3) reviews theoretical conceptions of teacher professional learning and other literature discussing the characteristics of the teacher professional learning community and workplace culture. The chapter also contains a review of previous empirical studies of teacher professional development and teacher work culture conducted in the area of Language Education, general Education, and other fields.

The methodology chapter (Chapter 4) explores an overview of the ethnographic research approach, a detailed clarification of mixed-methods data collection tools, the nature of the participants, the data collection procedure, and data analysis. The ethical issues concerning data collection are also covered.

Additionally, the results chapter (Chapter 5) provides the reader with an overview of the key findings of this particular study and explores trends of the findings emerging from the quantitative and qualitative data. Following this are three findings and discussion chapters (6, 7, and 8). Each discussion chapter presents and discusses the research findings in relation to the results of the first, the second, and the third research question, respectively.

Chapter 6 discusses the 21 types of learning activities that this particular group of Thai EFL teachers engaged in. Chapter 7 deals with the participants' definitions of teacher professional learning, their perspectives towards the learning, and their perceived obstacles to professional learning. Following is Chapter 8, presenting and discussing the nature of the teachers' participation in professional learning activities in terms of their work culture. Subsequently, all of the overarching points from the three findings and discussion chapters are bridged and discussed together in Chapter 9. Furthermore, this chapter ends with a discussion of implications for the field, reflections on the strengths and limitations of the study, and suggestions for areas for future research.

In the following chapter, the reader will be given background information about the Thai educational system, the current situation of professional development in Higher Education, and information about the University and institution under investigation in this study. Moreover, information concerning the physical conditions of the field is also provided. The chapter further details the participant lecturers' characteristics and their duties in the study context.

2. Context

This chapter aims to set the scene for this study regarding lecturers' professional learning and their work culture in a Thai university context. Firstly, it outlines the Thai educational system and the local status of professional development in higher education. The chapter then explores background information on the University and the institution under investigation in this research. Furthermore, it provides background information on participant lecturers' duties in the institution and the physical condition of the study context.

2.1 Thai Educational System

Across Thailand, education is divided into four stages: Pre-school, Primary school, Secondary school, and University (see Table 2.1, adapted from structural policy country notes from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD, 2013]). Pre-school education serves a student aged (approximately) three to five and is compulsory for all children. When a student reaches the age of six,

Table 2.1: Thai education system

Student Age (Approximately)	Level of Education	
3 4 5	Pre-School	
6 7 8 9 10 11	Primary School (Mandatory by law)	
12 13 14	Lower-Secondary School (Mandatory by law)	
15 16 17	Upper-Secondary School	Lower Vocational and Technical
18 19 20 21	University	Tertiary Vocational

he or she is offered a place in a Primary school. After completing six years in Primary school, a student is then enrolled in the Secondary level of education. In addition, a Secondary school consists of two phases: three years at the Lower-Secondary level and another three at the Upper-Secondary level. At the end of Lower-Secondary, each student is required to take an examination for either a place in an Upper-Secondary school or a vocational stream at the Lower-Vocational/Technical level. Thailand's constitution guarantees its citizens the right to 12 years of free education. This means that Thai children can study from the primary level to the secondary level for free. A minimum of nine years of school (six years in a Primary school and three years in a Lower-Secondary school) attendance is mandatory, according to constitutional law. After this, Thai students can choose whether or not to further their study at a Tertiary Vocational Institution or a University (Bureau of International Cooperation, 2008).

2.2 Higher Education in Thailand

This study was conducted in a Thai public University that is a part of the Thai higher education system. All public Thai universities are administered by the Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC) under the direction of the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The role of HEC is to issue higher education policies corresponding with the National Economic and Social Development Plan and the National Education Plan (OHEC, 2009). The Commission's job also entails the design of the monitoring and evaluation system to maintain a standard and quality of higher education institutions throughout the country. In the Thai context, higher education is provided by Universities, Colleges, Technical Institutions, Vocational Institutions and Teacher Colleges, both public and private. These institutions are also divided into two main streams: diploma level and degree level. The programs can be classified into academic, professional and technology programs.

According to an official update from OHEC (2009) there were more than 2.2 million students enrolling in the higher education institutions in the academic year of 2008 (Please note that as of October 2015 was the latest publicly available OHEC official number and figures). Furthermore, the participation rate

of University age students has increased drastically during 1990 to 2008 from approximately 26% to an average of 40% (OHEC, 2009; Suwanwela, 2005). Additionally, higher education institutions can be found throughout the country and only three out of 77 provinces in Thailand have no higher education institutions. Apart from the tremendous growth in numbers of these institutions, the Government also detected an increase in problems related to the quality of teaching and learning at this level of education (Kanjananiyot, 2002). These situations have, accordingly, challenged Thai educators to develop policies that can reflect the immense increase in demand and still maintain quality in education.

2.3 Recent Changes in Professional Development Policies for Teachers in Higher Education

In response to the increasing demand for places in higher education institutions (OHEC, 2009), several complications have arisen, such as limited staff and resources, the quality of teaching and learning, and the declining performance of students. In addition, this large growth in student numbers in higher education has directly impacted university and institutional demand to deploy more lecturers and increasing the number of part-time teaching staff positions (part-time lecturer staff later became a critical issue in the professional learning situation in the context of this study; see Section 7.3.1.2, Chapter 7). This change in higher education also led to the revision of several national policies on education development (e.g., a resources allocation plan, an education assessment scheme, and a university staff development plan).

One of the changed aspects (as indicated in the University Personnel Act of 2004 and the second revision in 2008) relevent to the area of interest in the present study is the university staff development plan. After the revision of the University Personnel Act in 2008, the Ministry of Education initiated new paradigms for university lecturer professional development such as mentoring in teaching, development of leadership, strengthening the research capacity, and the rewarding of successful academics. According to plans, formal teacher training and development projects have been increasingly arranged by government-supported institutions (Suwanwela, 2005). Those projects were, for example, to instil in lecturers change management skills for the transformation of

professional development policies and to upgrade qualifications by providing masters, doctoral and research scholarships (The Bureau of International Cooperation, 2005). Additionally, the aforementioned formal teacher training offered by the government was implemented as professional development policy. It most strongly influenced how the workplace assigned full-time lecturers to professional learning options. Furthermore, the government's attention to the academic qualifications of lecturers (e.g., PhD degree) and their research scholarship was later found to significantly impact the professional learning situation in the context of this study.

In addition to the teacher training and development projects, the Internal Quality Assurance process (guided by Chapter 6 of the National Education Act of B.E. 2542 [1999]) was also imposed as a crucial part to sustaining the quality of Thai university lecturers' teaching practices (NEA, 1999; SaeLoa, 2013; Thaima, 2012). The quality assurance process indicated in the act justified the roles and responsibilities of lecturers in colleges, universities and other higher educational institutions in the four following aspects: (1) teaching, (2) research, (3) academic service (to the community inhabitants) and (4) preservation of art and culture (to promote, conserve and maintain values of Thai culture and other national heritages). These four aspects were specified in the job descriptions of all full-time Thai lecturers, including those teaching in the present study context. Subsequently, these aspects of responsibilities were employed as the main criteria to justify lecturers' promotions and salaries (OECD, 2013). The reader will further notice that the criteria specified in the quality assurance plan influenced how the study workplace assigned its teaching staff responsibilities for teaching and how they supported professional development (see Section 6.1.1.5, Chapter 6 and Section 7.3.1.1, 7.3.1.2, Chapter 7).

2.4 Agora University

Agora University has been chosen as the pseudonym by the researcher to replace the actual name of the university in the present study to ensure participants remain anonymous and to ensure that their identities are concealed. Agora is one of the oldest and best-known public higher education institutions in Thailand. Twenty six years after foundation the University ended its free-entry status (i.e. no entry requirements) and converted into a close-University status requiring

national entrance examinations for admission with competitive entry requirements. Nearly 80 years since its establishment, the University has developed in a respected international university offering all levels of academic degrees in various disciplines. The University offers undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programs in various fields (e.g., medical, sciences, engineering, management, social sciences, education, humanities, and arts). At the time this study was conducted there were more than 30,000 students (25,000 undergraduates) studying in 23 faculties, colleges and institutes across six campuses.

In addition, the three main campuses: Urban campus, Exurbia campus, and Polar campus (pseudonyms), are respectively located in the Bangkok city centre, the suburbs of the capital city, and in the northern part of the country. Three other regional campuses are located in the West, South, and Northeast of Thailand, respectively. The workplace under investigation (the Language Institution) has branches in all of the main campuses. In particular, the Exurbia campus is the study site for the present research. This is because most of the undergraduate courses are conducted at this campus and all of the participants work here.

Since Agora University is a public university, all regulations and development plans proposed by the Higher Education Commission have also been directly applied to its full-time teaching staff on every campus. In particular, the quality assurance plan and the development of staff academic qualifications and research ability schemes were strongly implemented in every faculty and institution at this particular University, including the Language Institution where the present study was conducted.

2.5 The Language Institute, Agora University

Officially founded in the late 1990s, the Language Institute of Agora University caters to students from 23 faculties in the University with the main aim of improving their skills in the English language. This institution offers English courses at three of the university's academic campuses, as well as providing language services to the general population, the private sector and governmental organisations throughout the country. The main task of the institution each semester is to provide English language instruction (English Foundation courses

I, II, and III) for students first entering university. Additionally, the institute offers English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for undergraduate students throughout their four years (or more for some faculties such as Medicine and Architecture) of academic study. Moreover, for postgraduate students, this workplace has offered international graduate degree programs in English Language Teaching (PhD in ELT); Teaching English as a Foreign Language (MA in TEFL); English for Careers (MEC); and a graduate diploma program in English for Careers.

Amongst the aforementioned courses, all of the participant lecturers in this study (*N*=16) were commonly responsible for one specific course type, English Foundation. The three foundation courses were offered at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. Generally, each course's lessons focus on the four language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, which provide the foundation for students to further develop their language skills in English for Academic Purposes (ESP) courses and other elective English courses in their upper years. Typically, speaking and listening skills are taught by English-native speaking lecturers, and reading and writing skills are taught by Thai lecturers. Moreover, each year, approximately 4,000 undergraduate students enrol in these three foundation courses with approximately 45 students in each class.

2.6 Background Information about Participants

The distinctions between the 16 participant lecturers were defined by their contractual statuses in the workplace. Approximately halfway through data collection, the researcher identified the relationship between participants' contractual status and their responsibilities as well as the influences of such relationships on their work culture and their professional learning activities. These distinctions were not originally a focus of this study, but they were cited many times in participant responses (Chapters 6-8) and subsequently became extremely relevant through empirical data analysis. Accordingly, the researcher categorised the participants into three groups; the groups are full-time Thai lecturer (*N*=7), full-time non-Thai lecturer (*N*=4), and part-time lecturer (*N*=5).

The full-time Thai lecturers had four main responsibilities including teaching, research, academic services and preservation of art and culture, according to the Thai National Education Act (1999). This group of lecturers had the most

responsibilities when compared to the other two groups. In detail, the seven full-time Thai lecturers were responsible for all of the graduate courses, most of the undergraduate ESP courses, and some of the undergraduate English foundation courses. On average, each lecturer had nine hours of teaching per week. Specifically, the number of hours varied from person to person depending on their academic obligations other than teaching, such as thesis advising and research responsibilities. Additionally, each of them was assigned (or elected) for additional administrative roles, i.e., the Course Coordinator, the Exam-paper Supervisor, the Director of the Foundation Courses, the Director of the ESP Courses, the Assistant Director, the Vice Director, and the Director of the institute.

As the non-Thai lecturers and part-time lecturers were not entitled as government officers like their full-time Thai lecturer colleagues, they were almost unaffected by the National Education Act and other government policies. Therefore, they had different responsibilities in this workplace. For the non-Thai lecturers, main responsibilities included preparing teaching material, teaching, developing assessment tools, and marking for undergraduate English courses. Some with doctoral degrees were also assigned to teach on the graduate courses. Conducting research was non-compulsory for them, as it was not indicated as part of their job descriptions. In addition, part-time lecturers had the fewest responsibilities compared to the two aforementioned groups. In this study context, the term "part-time lecturer" refers to hourly paid lecturers (usually on termly contracts) who are either retired lecturers or novice practitioners with a Master degree or a higher qualification. Their main responsibilities were the teaching and marking of one or two undergraduate foundation courses. This group of lecturers was neither involved in the designing of the course nor the test construction process. Instead, at the beginning of the semester they were provided with the course syllabus, guidelines for weekly lesson plans, and were informed of the assessment options.

Furthermore, the three groups were different in terms of the lengths of their contracts. For the full-time Thai lecturer, after passing a probation year, they would be respectively given a three year contract or five year contract renewable every five years until their retirement at 60 years of age. Full-time non-Thai

lecturers would be given a six month probation period, another year of contract, and then a three year renewable contract. Part-time lecturer employment would be considered for renewal academic semester by academic semester. According to their differences in contractual statuses, the three groups of lecturers were expected to have different staff research and academic qualifications (i.e., PhD degree) to fit the workplace policy. The full-time Thai lecturer group was affected by the aforementioned policy to the highest degree. The reader will notice from following chapters that the different levels of pressures from the workplace played a vital part in the underlying motivations for each group of participants to pursue certain kinds of professional training. Despite the aforementioned differences of the three groups of participants, they were all commonly assigned the teaching role in the course English Foundation I. Accordingly, the researcher of this study decided to ask for research participation from lecturers teaching on this course to get the greatest rate of participation and the most varied characteristics of participants.

2.7 Physical Condition of the Study Context

The institution in this study was located in a seven-floor building. The ground floor was arranged mainly for a reception office, administrator offices, a computer room for lecturers, and a canteen. The first floor provided a lecturer library, offices for non-teaching staff and another canteen. In addition, all offices of the teaching staff were located between the second and the seventh floors of the building. During fieldwork study at the Language Institute of Agora University, the researcher noticed that interactions between the participants were distinctive from location to location. The reader will later notice from the discussion chapters that four different locations in this workplace were referred to several times during discussions about participants' work culture and their learning activities. The four locations were the lecturers' lounge (common room), the ground floor canteen, the first floor canteen, and the full-time lecturers' private offices.

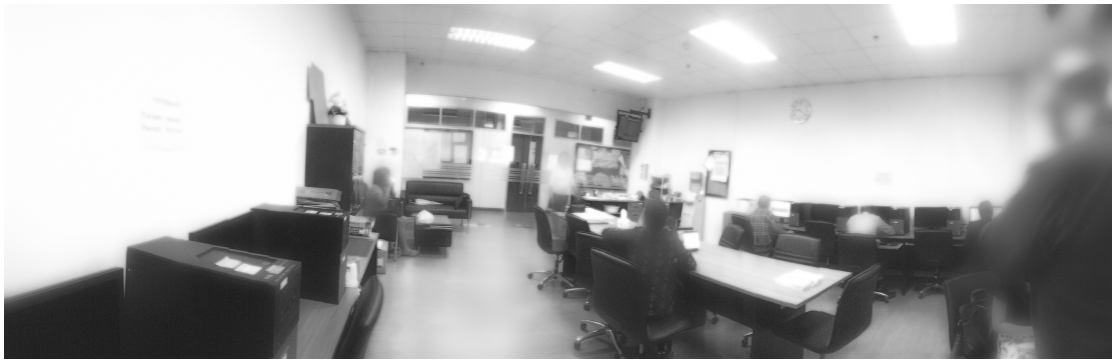


Figure 2.1: Lecturers' Lounge

The first common space where every participant had engagement with colleagues on each occasion that they came to the workplace was the lecturers' lounge or the common room; see Figure 2.1. This room was significant because it was the richest source of observational data concerning lecturers' interaction with their colleagues. This room had the most frequent opportunity to accommodate the teaching staff because all of them were obliged to be there to sign in as a record of their attendance (part of the workplace attendance policy). Moreover, for the accessibility and convenience of the staff, the workplace set the largest room on the ground floor to be the teacher's lounge. In addition, the room contained several shared facilities to accommodate each member of the teaching staff (i.e., at least 10 desktop computers, printers, a sign in-desk, meeting table with 10 chairs, a coffee table and five-seater couches, and a coffee station). Due to the room's popularity (resulting from the accessible location, available facilities and the workplace regulation for the recording of staff attendance), the researcher spent more observation time here than in other locations in this workplace allowing her to observe participant interactions with colleagues.

In addition to the common room, the participants and their colleagues also frequently occupied the ground floor and first floor canteens (see Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.2: Ground floor canteen

The two rooms were situated in the deepest end of the corridor and each of them had large dinning tables and utensils for at least 24 people. In addition, opposite to the ground floor canteen there was a pigeonhole for all members of the teaching staff.

Figure 2.3: First floor canteen

Furthermore, the 1st floor canteen was slightly larger and contained at least 10 more seats than the ground floor canteen. Nonetheless, the reader will see from the discussion chapters that most of the time, in the ground floor canteen, there were more lecturers and participant interactions with colleagues when compared to the first floor canteen. In addition to the three rooms, full-time lecturer's private offices were another physical setting often mentioned in this study. The private offices were located on the third to the seventh floors of the building. The information concerning the physical condition of the study site will be often mentioned in findings and discussion (chapters 6-8) as it had influence on workplace interaction.

In the next chapter, literature on teacher professional learning, teacher work culture and the impact of such a culture on teacher professional development, and student development will be examined. Correspondingly, the chapter provides a review of previous studies on professional learning and the work

culture in Language Education, general Education, and other fields. This review not only substantiates the significance of the issue under investigation, but also illustrates the gaps in the field.

3. Literature Review

Mindful of the scope of this study, which is teacher professional learning occurring within an EFL lecturers' workplace, this chapter reviews theoretical conceptions and published research related to teacher learning and teacher work culture. The chapter is divided into three main sections. They contain a review of theoretical conceptions on teacher professional learning, a discussion of the characteristics of the teacher professional learning community, and a review of empirical studies conducted outside and in the area of Education, as well as in the field of Language Education.

3.1 Teacher Professional Learning

The term teacher professional learning has been used loosely and interchangeably with professional learning, teacher learning, teacher professional development, and continuing professional development (Armour & Balboa, 2000; Gravani, 2007; Kwakman, 2003; McCulloch et al., 2000). In addition, AITSL (2014) specifies the definition of teacher professional learning as that which:

> …refers to the formal or informal learning experiences undertaken by teachers and school leaders that improve their individual professional practice, and a school's collective effectiveness, as measured by improved student learning, engagement with learning and wellbeing. (p. 5)

A detailed description of what teacher professional learning consists of can be found in Day and Sachs's (2004) explanation:

> … all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which […] teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues throughout each phase of their teaching lives. (p. 34)

Given the aforementioned definitions, the researcher has deduced that teacher professional learning happens through each phase of the profession and embraces a teacher's planned learning activities and spontaneous workplace interactions

that aim to influence the quality of teaching and learning, as well as the teacher's commitment to their career. Moreover, it is necessary to highlight that these learning activities often naturally occur in teachers' day-to-day routines through the interaction of teachers and colleagues, as summarised by the Department of Education and Training of Australia (2012), in that "[i]n reality, professional learning is something most teachers and educators do everyday, as we reflect on our professional practice, work together and share ideas, and strive to improve student outcomes" (p. 1). In addition, like all forms of learning, teacher learning is not only an individual, but also a social activity (Lieberman & Pointer-Mace, 2010; Mayer & Lloyd, 2011). Teacher learning takes multiple forms, such as formal coursework, in both face-to-face and online modes, activities organised by professional associations, and self-initiated action research. In addition, some learning occurs during a teacher's workday, through conversations with colleagues, glimpses into others' classrooms, small talk in the hallway, or the sharing of teaching tips during coffee breaks (Mayer & Lloyd, 2011;Wilson & Berne, 1999). Additionally, Knapp (2003) analytically summarises those learning opportunities for teachers into four main forms, as follows:

- As part of the practice itself (e.g., teaching, and planning lesson);
- In settings outside practice; (e.g., department or school meeting);
- In formalized structures (e.g., workshops, courses, and trainings) and;
- In informal settings (e.g., reading journals, and conversations with colleagues).

In a broader sense, Nagamine (2007) systematically classifies teacher learning into two main themes. The first theme is teacher learning in traditional training-based approaches through formal forms of learning activities. These approaches are usually referred to as teacher preparation programs and in-service teacher training. The second theme is teacher learning according to social constructivist approaches that include informal learning activities naturally occurring in collaborative practices within the workplace and the learning situated in actual teaching practices. Influenced by Knapp (2003) and Nagamine's (2007) systematic, concise, and easy to follow descriptions of teacher learning, in the following section, the researcher further defines the learning according to two forms: (3.1.1) traditional training and (3.1.2) collaborative learning.

3.1.1 Teacher Learning as Traditional Training

Teacher traditional learning approaches are often interchangeably referred to as formal or prescribed professional development (Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010). Learning activities in these approaches normally occur in two phases: a teacher preparation programme and in-service teacher training. The first phase of formal professional learning occurs when a student-teacher (also called a prospective teacher or a pre-service teacher) enters the teacher preparation programme. A student-teacher in this case refers to "a person who is teaching in a school for a limited period of time under supervision as part of a course to qualify as a teacher" ("student-teacher", 2015). Wilson and Berne (1999) explain that, generally, a student in a teacher preparation programme is required to take teaching method and foundation courses through an Education Department and other subject matter courses through the departments of the individual disciplines during the first two or three years of their study. Moreover, during the final period of study, a student-teacher is normally required to complete field-based experience in either a school or a university (Please note that the structure and content of initial teacher training programmes differ significantly across countries). This experience is believed to provide opportunities for a prospective teacher to develop his or her teaching, as well as opportunities to learn about the school system and what teachers actually do in their day-to-day work. After a student-teacher graduates and obtains a teaching job, he or she then moves into the second phase of professional learning which is that of in-service teacher training or the in-service education of the teacher. In-service education is sometimes referred to as teacher continuing professional development, and it is this learning that is the focus of this study. According to the Dictionary of Education,

> in-service education of teachers is the provision of professional education, training, and updating for teachers already employed in schools or colleges. It takes a wide range of forms, from formal provision such as part-time study for a postgraduate degree in education, to development days in school run by the teachers themselves […] Professional development is also provided by advanced skills teachers, by local authority advisory services, through attendance at conferences, and at short courses ("In-service education of teachers", 2014).

Similar to the aforementioned definition, Fullan (2001) and Wilson and Berne (1999) view in-service teacher training as an on-going process of learning extending from the initial training until a teacher's retirement. Through this process, a teacher acquires and develops knowledge, skills and values, which will help them better meet the needs of their students. Learning activities in this phase involve, for example, a teacher's participation in compulsory "part-day or day-long workshops…enrolling in master's courses, signing up for summer and weekend workshops, joining professional organizations" (Wilson & Berne, 1999, p. 174). Jurasaite-Harbison and Rex (2010) provide examples of these learning activities in that "formal, or prescribed professional development occurs when educational innovations are introduced to teachers through systems of workshops, presentations, or projects" (p. 267).

According to traditional approaches, teacher learning is founded on the premise that all teachers are deficient, but trainable (Richards, 1989). Knowledge or skills to be mastered by the end of training are more or less discrete and decontextualised. Given this kind of learning, the teacher is instructed and expected to accomplish some predetermined skills or knowledge through "imitation, recitation, and assimilation" (Britzman, 2003, p. 46). After training, teacher learning is evaluated by teacher trainers in accordance with externally observable and measurable changes. Such measurable changes are normally a one-time occurrence. When the learning activities end, such changes typically end as well (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1977; Fullan, 2001; Johnson, 1989; Lovitt & Clarke, 1988; Nagamine, 2007). Darling-Hammond (1997) provides the following criticism of traditional training through formal learning activities as follows:

> [U]ntil recently many teacher education and on-going professional development programs separated theory and application almost completely [For in-service training] large groups of teachers amassed in auditoriums after school had brief encounters with packaged prescriptions offered by outside consultants. Divorced from daily concerns and practice, these hit-and- run events were generally forgotten when the next day's press of events set in. Difficult problems of teaching and learning were never raised in these training contexts, much less explored and discussed. (p. 320)

Aligning with the aforementioned criticism, Hargreaves (2000) explains why the implication of such learning typically does not last long. In his own words "the

benefits of in-service education seldom became integrated into classroom practice, as individual course-goers returned to schools of unenthusiastic and uncomprehending colleagues who had not shared the learning with them. Pedagogy stagnated as teachers were reluctant or unable to stand out from their colleagues " (p. 162). Moreover, numerous limitations of traditional training through formal learning activities have been noted in the literature concerning teacher learning and development (e.g., Eurydice, 2001; Gravani & John, 2005; Hauge, 2000; Ingvarson & Coulter 1987; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Sprinthall, Reiman & Theis-Sprinthall, 1996). Furthermore, there are criticisms that large in number of in-service trainings are rather inadequate for a sustainable development of teachers' profession (e.g., Britzman, 2003; Dalin, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Gravani & John, 2005; Robertson, 1992; Sawyer, 2001).

For example, Bailey et al., (2001) and OECD (2011) argue that after training, a teacher cannot successfully implement the discrete and decontextualised skills or knowledge that he or she was trained to practice, especially when spontaneous action is needed in a context-specific problem-solving situation. In addition, "[t]here is little or no follow-up that might enable teachers to incorporate what they've just learned into their own classroom settings — to continue learning and, in the process, transform their new skills and knowledge into deep understanding and more effective teaching" (McRobbie, 2000, p. 6). Additionally, Britzman (2003) asserts that traditional training undermines teachers' ability to construct knowledge. Given the limitations of formal teacher learning activities, Kwakman (2003) states that to effectively develop a teacher professionally, it is questionable whether educating the teacher using mainly traditional learning activities is sufficient.

3.1.2 Teacher Learning as Collaborative Learning

Mindful of the shortcoming of the traditional approaches, to help teachers successfully and sustainably develop their profession, Armour and Makopoulu (2012) and Darling-Hammond (2000) have suggested that teacher development should be recognised as a lifelong journey of learning rather than a final destination of knowing how to teach. Besides, the focus on teacher professional learning is no longer on an individual teacher as the sole learner, but on group(s)

of teachers interacting together as a whole community of learners (Stoll et al., 2006). Moreover, Darling-Hammond (2005) notes that teachers working together in their daily routine should be considered an alternative method for teacher professional development. This is because "teachers could learn from each other's practice, that there could be many, many ways to teach something, and that there's a need for advice and counsel when you're confronting the different learning needs of students" (p. 18). Furthermore, Mayer and Lloyd (2011) similarly highlight that the collaborative aspect of learning and the impact of learning communities on teacher professional development have received increasing acknowledgements of effectiveness by teacher educators and educational researchers.

Additionally, Sawyer (2001) notes that the focus for teacher professional development programmes has already shifted from focusing on content knowledge (use of workshops or external experts) to collaborative practices in teachers' workplaces by encouraging them to initiate learning activities base on individual needs. Given the aforementioned researchers' explanations, it is reasonable to argue that teachers could sustainably develop their profession through informal interactions with colleagues in their daily routine, based on their actual problems or interests. Researchers' claims are distinctive from the premise of traditional training (see Section 3.1.1). Interestingly, their views on how a teacher learns are consistent with the social constructivist's view of teacher learning.

Drawing upon the social constructivist perspective of learning, Richardson (1977) states that "knowledge is constructed by a person in transaction with the environment; that is, both the individual and environment change as a result of this learning process" (p. 7). Similarly, Schwandt (2001) explains that a learner's interpretation of phenomena does not rely solely on his or her personal experiences, but that he or she makes an interpretation through comparing and contrasting them with those of other people. This means that a teacher, as a learner, interprets phenomena by not only comparing and contrasting them with his or her own previously constructed knowledge, but with reference to those of other colleagues in a work milieu. Keiny (1994) clarified the idea of how knowledge is constructed and how a teacher learns. The author explained that a

teacher does not automatically apply theory into their teaching but, instead, construct it from his or her practice through an active interaction with teaching materials, students, and colleagues. In addition, Jurasaite-Harbison and Rex (2010) contend that teacher knowledge is constructed through discourse or the ways in which he or she communicates through both speech and writing. They further specify "[t]eacher discourses create and sustain their learning as well as describe it" (p. 268). Additionally, Tillema and Orland-Barak's (2006) study on teacher conversation and teacher knowledge construction confirmed that, for a teacher, knowledge is constructed within the workplace context through conversations and activities with colleagues, and from experience in professional practice. Moreover, the two authors point out that communication occurring in the workplace has more influence on the construction of teacher's knowledge than their underlying professional beliefs. Nagamine (2007) asserts that the spontaneous communication and interaction occurring within the work context also helps teachers "discover who they are as persons and who they are as professionals" (p. 2). Underlining the influence of teachers' social interaction with colleagues, Jurasaite-Harbison and Rex (2010) and Haar (2003) surmise that knowledge is laid in day-to-day experiences of teachers and is best understood through analytical discussion with others who share the same experiences. Given this, a teacher could not possibly be able to construct teaching knowledge without having communication with the people around him or her, which, in this case, refers to colleagues and students (Please note that, as the focus of the present research places more emphasis on teachers, the students' dimension is, at this point in time, excluded). In other words, it could be said that teacher learning cannot separated from their participation in the workplace context.

A similar conception of the learning and significant influence of the workplace context on knowledge construction is consistently highlighted in the notion of Communities of Practice (Wenger, 1998a). Wenger states that learning refers to a process of active participation and of constructing ways of learning in relation to particular communities to which a given person belongs. The communities in his definition, are, "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (p. 1). He adds, "[k]nowledge is created, shared, organized, revised, and passed on within and

amongst these communities" (Wenger, 1998b, p.5). The author further suggests that continuously participating in this learning community benefits individual teachers in the workplace and the workplace as a whole in many ways. For example, it helps individual teachers in the community to develop and sustain good relationships with colleagues, which consequently brings about an increasing degree of confidence in performing the challenging tasks. Such collaborative learning activities also increase the synergy across different sections of the workplace, effective problem solving techniques, and the efficient use of workplace recourses. In accordance with the aforementioned benefits, Li et al. (2009) consistently suggest that school administrators should take part in raising awareness of the role of a teacher as a learner, teacher understanding of collaborative learning, and the significant contributions of collaborative practices in a teacher community to teaching and learning.

In brief, teacher learning as collaborative learning is based on the presumption that teacher knowledge is a socially constructed experience. Through informal negotiation process with colleagues, a teacher can reveal interpretations about teaching and learning, and later construct (and reconstruct) new ideas or solutions for teaching practice. By informally collaborating and learning from each other through reflection on teaching experiences, understanding of knowledge and any teaching innovations will be constructed. Accordingly, this social interaction process between a teacher and colleagues is viewed as a vital factor in encouraging and supporting teacher learning. Given the literature previously mentioned, it could be deduced that teacher collaborative learning centres on the social interaction naturally occurring in a teacher's workplace that requires the participation of a teacher and other actors in the workplace community. Since the focus of teacher professional learning, according to the social constructivist perspective, is not an individual teacher as a learner, but teachers as a community of learners, what the individual teacher does within the community more or less influences the professional learning. Accordingly, the concept of the teacher professional learning community is often, in many of the latest studies, discussed as a key concept of teacher collaborative learning (Kelchtermans, 2006). Therefore, to fully understand teacher learning, literature on teacher professional learning community is also taken into account.

3.2 Teacher Professional Learning Communities

Teacher professional learning is strongly shaped by the context and the community in which a teacher works (Timperley, 2008). In her words "participation in a professional community with one's colleagues is an integral part of professional learning" (p. 19). The community in this case refers to a school context (Selemani-Meke, 2012). The researcher further describes the school as a community of learning in that:

> [S]chools are potential communities of practice both for teachers and learners, where opportunities for collaboration with colleagues exist and where interpreting information and making meaning can result in mediation of new knowledge within the community. (p. 37)

Additionally, Astuto et al. (1993) describe the professional learning community as a school's staff members who are continuously engaged in finding answers through inquiry and acting on their learning to improve student learning. In accordance with Astuto et al., Seashore et al. (2003) describe the term, professional learning community as follows:

> By using the term professional learning community we signify our interest not only in discrete acts of teacher sharing, but in the establishment of a school wide culture that makes collaboration expected, inclusive, genuine, on-going, and focused on critically examining practice to improve student outcomes… The hypothesis is that what teachers do together outside of the classroom can be as important as what they do inside in affecting school restructuring, teachers' professional development, and student learning. (p. 3)

According to the author, the concept of the teacher professional learning community centres on the collaborative practices of teachers occurring outside of the classroom, which subsequently impacts teacher, student and school development. Lieberman and Miller (1999), in agreement with the aforementioned authors, indicate that the teacher professional learning community refers to a place in which groups of teachers engage in collaborative activities to achieve their purposes and take collective responsibility for students' learning.

However, Wenger (2006) and DuFour (2004) express concern about a complication in implementing the idea of a teacher learning community into practice. The complication results from confusion in the actual meaning of the term. Wenger notes that not every gathering could be referred to as a Community

of Practice (CoP) (This concept is discussed in detailed in the next-to-last paragraph of Section 3.1.2). Accordingly, he clarifies three crucial elements key to constituting a CoP. The three elements are comprised of: (1) domain, (2) community, and (3) practice. The domain refers to the topic or the issue to be discussed. The community is a gathering of people who place similar importance on such a domain. The practice refers to the contribution(s) from the community's discussion or (a) piece(s) of work generated from the discussion (e.g., lesson plan, solution to a problem, new teaching technique). In Wenger's (2006) description:

> [C]ommunity of practice is not merely a community of interest--people who like certain kinds of movies, for instance. Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short a shared practice. This takes time and sustained interaction. A good conversation with a stranger on an airplane may give you all sorts of interesting insights, but it does not in itself make for a community of practice. (p. 2)

This description of the community of practice can be related to teacher professional learning as in the following example. When "teachers" (community) come together to have a discussion on "how to stimulate students' classroom participation" (domain), they may come up with the "practice", which could be interesting games, teaching materials, or lesson plans.

Furthermore, these concerns about the contribution of teachers' gathering are similar to those of DuFour (2004) who reports that some confusion and struggle has been found in schools and other educational institutions trying to implement the idea of a teacher professional learning community. This author states that gatherings of teachers with any interest in schools most often, without proper understanding of the appropriate terminology, call themselves teacher learning communities or teacher collaborations. However, using these terms may not indicate that such a learning community exists or the value of it. In his own words, the author warns:

> People use this term to describe every imaginable combination of individuals with an interest in education—a grade-level teaching team, a school committee, a high school department, an entire school district, a state department of education, a national professional organization, and so on. In fact, the term has been used so ubiquitously that it is in danger of losing all meaning. (p.1)

DuFour provides a further example of the typical situation in a community that is sometimes, through misinterpretation, called a learning community. Teachers join together to the best of their abilities but, at the conclusion of their gathering, there is nothing to contribute to their students' learning. In this case, the teachers' gathering is not viewed as a teacher professional learning community. Therefore, it could be deduced that what differentiates a teacher professional learning community or teacher CoP from a community in general is the practice or outcome generated from the interaction.

Moreover, several researchers in the field broaden the description of the learning community, no longer limiting it to only those that occur in schools or teacher common rooms. The on-line forum is another venue supporting continuous teacher professional development (e.g., Bond, 2004; Duncan-Howell, 2007; Flagg & Ayling, 2011; Galland, 2002). They further explain that, in addition to the interactions occurring in the teacher workplace, on-line communities offer teachers a forum to discuss, obtain new skills, and update their knowledge. For example, Flagg and Ayling (2011) indicate that "online communities serve (…) as places where new knowledge and skills are developed (…) they can provide space for ideas to be shared, considered, developed, and then used by all members" (p. 386). These researchers also provide examples of on-line learning communities such as conversations through teacher blog posts and comments, real-time chat groups and themed chat sessions. Regarding these descriptions of learning communities, it is clear that teacher learning is situated in both the physical workplace and on-line forums. Nevertheless, considering time constraints, the accessibility of data, and the fact that this study was conducted by a single researcher, the focus of this study could be best directed toward one aspect of professional learning communities. Accordingly, the present study focuses solely on the learning community of a group of EFL lecturers embedded in the workplace.

DuFour (2004) further describes the characteristic of an effective teacher professional learning community, particularly the learning community situated in the teacher workplace, as:

> The powerful collaboration that characterizes professional learning communities is a systematic process in which teachers work together to

> analyze and improve their classroom practice. Teachers work in teams, engaging in an on-going cycle of questions that promote deep team learning. This process, in turn, leads to higher levels of student achievement. (p. 3)

Furthermore, to generate a meaningful teacher professional learning community, DuFour suggests that authorities in the workplace (those responsible for workplace policy and curriculum) should stop believing that simply providing teachers course outlines or curriculum guides will guarantee that all students have access to a standardised and quality lesson. Instead, teachers must be provided enough time to analyse, discuss, and develop what they have to teach, together. Moreover, Darling-Hammond and Post (2000) similarly underline the need to allow teachers enough time to socialise:

> A final critical area for recruiting and retaining excellent teachers is the restructuring of school organizations and of teaching work, including a reallocation of personnel and resources so that teachers have time to work intensively with students and collaboratively with one another. Teaching in large, bureaucratic settings that do not enable teachers to come to know their students well or to work and plan with other teachers is exhausting work with few rewards. (p. 163)

Given the aforementioned criteria, the authorities in the workplace need to restructure teaching-related work and properly assign teachers' job responsibilities to allow them more time to interact with both students and their colleagues. Such reallocation and restructuring would serve to improve the quality of teaching. Consistently, the significance of workplace policy in the establishment of an effective learning community has been articulated in studies in the area of education (e.g., Atwal, 2013; Evans & Rainbird, 2002; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2003). In particular, Atwal (2013) asserts that the quality of the professional learning community depends upon the influence of the policy makers at any level. In his words:

> Where government policy has allowed local authorities to focus on giving opportunities for schools and individuals to increase and extend the professionalism and learning of their teachers [...], it appears that the impact on teacher and pupil learning is evident [...] Where a school creates a learning environment that provides formal and informal learning opportunities for its staff, teacher learning is promoted at all levels […] (p. 26)

In addition to the influence of the policy, DuFour (2004) remarks that the quality of the teachers' workplace interaction or the work culture is another crucial factor in the effectiveness of teacher professional learning. Moreover, this culture has different facets; each one serves different purposes and plays different roles in the workplace. Therefore, to maximise the contributions of the workplace interactions, he suggests educators and authorities should critically examine teacher work culture, particularly to investigate the nature of teacher gathering in the specific context of the teacher learning community. In response to his call for attention to teacher work culture, the researcher of this study further reviewed literature concerning work culture.

3.2.1 Teacher Work Culture (Hargreaves, 1994)

In addition, to help the researcher of this study clarify the nature of teacher professional learning community in a specific Language Educational context, Hargreaves' (1994) notion of work culture is adopted. His notion has been referenced in most studies on the relationship between teachers' professional learning and their workplace conditions (e.g., Bolam et al., 2005; Bryk, 1999; Clement & Vandenberghe; 2000; Clemente & Vandenberghe, 2001; Datnow, 2011; Fullan, 2001; Gore & Bowe, 2015; Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015; Hongboontri, 2006; 2008; Hopkins, 2014; Ng, 2009; Sachs, 2001; Samuelsson & Lindblad, 2015; Sawyer, 2001; Spillane, 2012; Stoll et al., 2006; Windschitl, 2002). Hargreaves describes characteristics of teachers gathering in the workplace community known as the culture of teaching (also used interchangeably, in his text, with the term teacher work culture) as follows:

> Cultures of teaching comprise beliefs, values, habits and assumed ways of doing things among communities of teachers who have had to deal with similar demands and constraints over many years. Cultures of teaching help give meaning, support and identity to teachers and their work. (p. 165)

This author further categorises the nature of teacher gathering in the professional learning community in four difference patterns: (3.2.1.1) individualism, (3.2.1.2) balkanization, (3.2.1.3) collaboration, and (3.2.1.4) contrived collegiality.

3.2.1.1 Individualism

Individualism generally refers to the working condition in which it is a norm that a teacher regularly works alone, with less interaction with colleagues. This type of teacher work culture can be described in two senses: the traditional interpretation and the revised interpretation. Traditionally, individualism is related to hesitance and uneasiness in work that can possibly generate failure in teaching. These psychological attributes of a teacher are both naturally inherited by an individual teacher and caused by a teacher's work. In Hargreaves' words:

> In the first, more traditional interpretation, individualism is associated with diffidence, defensiveness and anxiety; with flaws and failures in teachers that are partly "natural" and partly a result of the uncertainties of their work. (1994, p. 167).

Moreover, individualism is viewed as a phenomenon to be limited and eliminated from a school. However, it is important to note here that the idea that individualism is entirely inappropriate and unproductive is rather unproven. In fact, according to Hargreaves' interpretation, individualism actually provides a certain degree of positive potential to a school system. In essence, individualism not only signifies an individual teacher's hesitation and anxiety, but also provides an option to remain autonomous in their teaching practice. Moreover, Hargreaves articulates that individualism has many facets and can both negatively and positively influence a teacher's work. In his view, a teacher working alone is driven by three major factors: psychological deficits, ecological conditions, and an adaptive strategy.

According to the *psychological factors*, a teacher usually shut themselves off from others in the workplace in relation to anxieties caused by, for example, evaluation by the workplace and criticism from colleagues. This kind of individual teacher culture is also referred to as teacher uncertainty. Additionally, the psychological stage of a teacher hiding him or herself from the uneasiness caused by dealing with others in their workplace is compared to an oyster in that:

> Like the oyster that neutralizes an irritating grain of sand by coating it with layers of pearl, isolated teachers seem to coat their irritating self-doubts and inadequacies with comforting layers of self-deception. (p. 168)

He further explains that contributing factors to a teacher avoidance of sharing materials with and being observed by colleagues mainly arise from the individual

teacher's natural fear of being exposed to observation and feelings of incompetence in their teaching abilities. Hargreaves also specifies that these psychological deficits have no link to the workplace context. In particular, the deficits are rooted in the individual teacher's natural qualities. Such individualism, although it shields the teacher from evaluation and criticism, also blocks them from possible praise and support from colleagues.

Furthermore, individualism can also emerge from *ecological conditions* that refer to the architectural structures of the educational workplace. This particular type of teacher individualism is also referred to as physical isolation, and results from aspects such as separated teacher rooms and segregated classrooms. Such isolation is referred to as an egg crate-like structure, as mentioned in Lortie's (1975) analysis of schoolteacher work conditions. Being separated in egg crates, according to the architectural structures of the workplace, limits the chance for a teacher to see colleagues, so he or she has almost no knowledge of others practices. In accordance with Lorite, Stoll and Fink (1996) address this point in stating that the egg crate-like compartmentalised school design tends to limit teachers' interaction, whereas a more flexible architectural design is more supportive of collaborative cultures. According to Hargreaves' (1994) analysis, individualism caused by the physical conditions of the context is the most simple and obviously noticed factor. However, these physical conditions are not considered a crucial element in fostering teacher isolation. Therefore, removing such barriers in the workplace is not usually a successful solution to promoting teacher collaboration. This is because there is another factor that has a greater impact on teacher isolation.

This factor with higher impact in Hargreaves' view is the conscious selection of individualism as an *adaptive strategy*. The adaptive strategy is to conserve limited work-related resources (e.g., time and energy) to spend on instruction and their own students. In addition to the limited recourses, instructional demands, assessment demands, constraints of large classes, and digressions involved in working with colleagues are given as examples of the main reasons driving teachers to work in isolation as an adaptive strategy. Given that adaptive strategy is the major cause of individualism, Hargreaves suggests that to shatter the wall of teacher isolation, the abovementioned causes should be uppermost in

workplace authorities and educational policy makers' consideration when planning professional development policies.

According to the three factors of individualism, psychological deficits, ecological conditions, and an adaptive strategy, it could be deduced that individualism is not completely destructive to teachers' working conditions. It is rather a complex social phenomenon with both pros and cons for the workplace. Therefore, administrators should be cautious when attempting to abolish individualism from the workplace that they do not disrupt any teachers' working strategies or discourage any of their psychological wellbeing.

3.2.1.2 Balkanization

Balkanization refers to the division of a formerly committed and united group of people into small subgroups, typically on the basis of cultural or other personal differences ("Balkanization," 2015). According to Day's (1999) description of the term (based on Hargreaves' work), balkanization is described as collection(s) of teachers who are more engaged with a particular group than the whole unit of the workplace, which is likely to inhibit collaborative learning amongst the group members. A teacher displaying balkanization works "neither in isolation, nor with most of the colleagues as a whole school" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 213). Teachers are often separated into small subgroups depending on their academic interests, professional beliefs, contractual status, and educational backgrounds. Whilst strong insulation between subgroups is at a high level, cross-membership rarely occurs. Common cases of balkanization in educational contexts are, for example, subgroups of teachers working with different groups of students (junior and senior class groups at primary school level; subject groups at secondary school and university level).

Such a workplace culture leads to poor communication between teachers, poor integration of lessons, and discontinuity in monitoring student progress. Apart from that, this particular culture also threatens teacher professional development opportunities, workplace resources, and working conditions. Hargreaves recaps and highlights the shortcomings of balkanization, which he found through his intensive review of research conducted in the secondary school context:

> In postmodern world which is fast, compressed, uncertain, diverse and complex, balkanized secondary structures are poorly equipped to harness the human resources necessary to create flexible learning for students, continuous professional growth for staff and responsiveness to changing client needs in the community (p. 235)

He further underlines the distinctive consequences of such a teacher work culture as follows. Balkanization inevitably generates winners and losers, complaints, and greed inflated by promotion, distribution of resources, and hierarchies of status between subgroups. Accordingly, he also refers to this particular work culture as an imbalance of power.

3.2.1.3 Contrived Collegiality

In contrast to balkanization, in the work culture of contrive collegiality teachers work together in a larger group on an institution basis. However, teachers' interactions in the contrived collegiality culture are not voluntary and spontaneous, but administratively regulated. In other words, under circumstances of contrived collegiality teachers are required to work together and to implement instructions given by others, rather than to initiate their own tasks and purposes. For example, teachers are required to share teaching materials, co-teach, design tests together, or plan lessons as a group. As a consequence, teachers' gathering schedules are fixed according to workplace regulations. In doing this, workplace administrators are able to control the process of teachers' learning. Hence, outcomes are, most often, relatively predictable. Additionally, this kind of work culture is considered useful in moving all teachers in the community towards a more committed collaborative relationship. However, this effect cannot be assured as collaboration, by its nature, cannot be imposed. Consistent with Hargreaves' conclusions, Daniels and Walker (2001) note that "[c]ollaboration cannot be forced, scheduled, or required; it must be nurtured, permitted, and promoted" (p. 57). Furthermore, Hargreaves emphasises factors that potentially have negative impact on teachers' interaction in cultures of contrived collegiality. The factors are, for example, personality problems with their peers, mismatches between administrative regulation and teachers' interests or expertise. Teachers' work and life circumstances vary and cannot be standardised in the way administrators may require them to work together. Therefore, whilst serving administrative demands, the intermixing of work and life circumstances

of teachers in the community may lessen the efforts and energy they devote to their regular work.

3.2.1.4 Collaboration

The fourth kind of work culture in teacher learning communities is collaboration, a culture related to contrived collegiality. This type of work culture is sometimes referred to in Hargreaves' (1994) analysis as "collegiality". Based on their review on Hargreaves' work, Daniels and Walker (2001) highlight the distinctions of this work culture as follows. Collaboration involves "interdependent parties identifying issues of mutual interest, pooling their energy and resources, addressing their differences, charting a course for the future, and allocating implementation responsibility among the group" (p. 10). Additionally, according to Hargreaves' analysis, collaborative activities are voluntarily initiated by the teachers themselves with their perceived values of work, rather than implemented by others. Moreover, collaborative activity schedules are often informal and flexible. Accordingly, the outcome of teacher collaboration is unpredictable, to a degree as it depends on the particular tasks that teachers initiate.

Furthermore, Hargreaves highlighted the following benefits of collaboration in teacher professional learning communities:

> Collaboration and collegiality, it is argued, take teacher development beyond personal, idiosyncratic reflection, or dependence on outside experts, to a point where teacher can learn from each other, sharing and developing their expertise together (p. 186)

In accordance with Hargreaves, Darling-Hammond (2005), and Kleinsasser and Sato (2007), amongst others, have reported the benefits of teacher collaboration for their professional development. They include, for example, (1) an increase in teachers' confidence to adopt introduced innovation, (2) an increase in teachers' readiness to take risks, (3) an increase in teachers' opportunities to learn from each other, (4) a lesser degree of dependence on external experts, and (5) a reduction of teachers' burdens and pressures from intensified work. Many educational researchers correspondingly echo the benefits of teachers participating in collaborative professional learning communities. Such benefits are, for example, creating positive professional belief (Darling-Hammond, 1996),

reducing teacher isolation (Lieberman, 2000), and increasing commitment to the profession (Grossman, Wineburg & Woolworth, 2001). Moreover, Little and McLaughlin (1993), and McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) add that teachers planning and working collaboratively over time builds commitment, not only to each other, but also to the furthering of their own learning. In addition, Andrews and Lewis (2002) claim that teacher collaboration has made various positive changes to teaching practice, and provide direct quotes from their participants to support this claim. For example, "I find that my teaching has improved, I find that I understand more about what I'm doing, why I'm doing things, and I find that's been an improvement" (p. 246). Additionally, Cochran-Smith (1991) highlights the significance of collaboration on teacher's profession in that:

> The only way for beginners to learn to be both educators and activists is to struggle over time in the company of experienced teachers who are themselves committed to collaboration and reform in their own classrooms. (p. 307)

Furthermore, Shulman (1989), quoted by Hargreaves (1991) states that teachers working collaboratively in the learning community is worth practicing in every educational institution as:

> Teacher collegiality and collaboration are not merely important for the improvement of morale and teacher satisfaction […] But are absolutely necessary if we wish teaching to be of the highest order […] Collegiality and collaboration are also needed to ensure that teachers benefit from their experience and continue to grow during their careers. (p. 35)

In addition to the benefits for the teacher, collaboration is considered a vital factor for the success of school improvement and curriculum reform (Craig, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 1993, 2000; Lieberman & Miller 1990; Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2006; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; USAID, 2006). Research also confirms that teachers working together is a powerful tool for school improvement through providing "opportunities for adults across a school system to learn and think together about how to improve their practice in ways that lead to improved student achievement" (Annenberg Institute for School Reform, 2004, p. 2).

Although collaboration brings many positive outcomes for a teacher, a student, and a school's development, it is the target of criticism from educational researchers and practitioners. The most common critique of collaboration is the

difficulties inherent in implementation, particularly due to teacher unfamiliarity of the concept and the availability of time when teachers are able to work together. Moreover, collaboration both yields positive outcomes, and presents some difficulties due to its unpredictable outcomes and potentially negative impacts. Teacher collaboration has various facets, such as team teaching, collaborative planning, peer coaching, mentor relationships, professional dialogue, collaborative action research, teachers' assistance of one another, staffroom talk, or even teachers' protection of their own benefits. These facets serve different purposes and yield different results. Additionally, the different facets of collaboration could bring about potentially negative impacts on a learning community. Fullan (2001) warns about the downward impact of teacher collaboration in this way. "Collaboration is powerful, which means it can be powerfully bad as well as powerfully good"(p. 132). Fullan goes on to elaborate on his warning with this example, "When teachers collaborate to reinforce each others' bad or ineffective practices, they end up making matters worse" (p. 133).

To help the particular researcher understands the professional learning situation within a specific Language Education context and systemically clarify the nature of the work culture. The four concepts of work culture have been adapted to frame the data analysis in Chapter 8.

3.3 Empirical Studies on Teacher Work Culture and Teacher Professional Development

The significance of staff collaborative learning, their work culture and their workplace conditions has been the focus of attention of many empirical studies. Remarkably, a large number of studies on how members of an organisation develop their professional knowledge through everyday practices and interaction with others in their workplace context are available in the business and medical fields (e.g., Norman & Henriksen, 2012; Sense & Fernando, 2011; Stewart et al., 2008; Warhurst, 2013; Whitty, 2010; Van den Eertwegh et al., 2013). Furthermore, such an interest has also led to a flurry of publication of books, research articles, and essays in Education (e.g., Baert & Govaerts, 2012; Beaton & Gilbert, 2013; Beaton & Sims, 2016; Coughlan, 2015; Cochran-Smith, 1991; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Post, 2000; DuFour, 2004; Van den Eertwegh et al., 2013; Filstad, 2011; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth,

2001; Kwakman, 2003; Lieberman, 2000; Little, 2002; Shulman, 1989; Stoll et al., 2006; Warhurst, 2013). However, quite a few researchers in language education, the context of this study, have placed their attention on EFL teachers' interaction with their colleagues and the development that could occur from that interaction.

3.3.1 Empirical Studies Outside the Area of Education

Drawing upon a similar perspective (social constructivist perspective, Section 3.1.2) to how a teacher constructs knowledge, a person in an organisation is believed to learn through interaction with other people in a work milieu. Accordingly, the workplace-learning process, collaborative learning, workplace social interaction, work culture, and work conditions have been the topics of many studies in the business and management field (e.g., Andrews & Delahaye, 2000; Baert & Govaerts, 2012; Billett, 2000; Billett, 2004; Brown & Duguid, 1991; Filstad, 2011; Hildreth, Kimble &Wright, 2000; Kyndt et al., 2015; Leybourne, 2007; Sense & Fernando, 2011; Soderlund, 2004; Whitty, 2010; Warhurst, 2013). For example, the relationship between the extent that new employees participate in work activities, social interaction with colleagues, and have organisational commitment, and their learning processes have been explored in business organisations (Filstad, 2011). Moreover, the learning patterns (learning opportunities used by employees as part of their professional development) and the strategic relevance of the learning patterns have been studied in public employment services in Belgium (Baert & Govaerts, 2012). Comparable to the studies in the education field, administrators' influences and attitudes toward how an individual organisation member and group develop professional knowledge have also been investigated (Warhurst, 2013).

In addition to those studies conducted in the business and management fields, there has also been an increase in this kind of research in the *medical* fields (e.g., Anderson, Lennox & Petersen, 2004; Ansted et al., 2011; Beaudin, 2011; Begley, 2009; Boyd, 2010; French & Dowds, 2008; Giles, 2010; Hegenbarth et al., 2015; Ma, 2012; Munro & Peacock, 2005; Rees & Monrouxe, 2010; Richardson, 1999; Sim, Zadnik & Radloff, 2003; Skaalvik, Norman & Henriksen, 2012; Stewart et al., 2008; Van den Eertwegh et al., 2013). As many researchers in educational organisations believe that learning is situated in actual teaching practices and

embedded in teachers' conversations with their colleagues, those in investigating the medical arena have also paid attention to how individual doctors learn through their employment and their social interaction occurring within the workplace. For example, there have been studies on how doctors learn in the authentic medical practice; the dynamics behind their professional learning in a workplace setting (Ma, 2012); how they use conversational humour (including teasing and laughter) with their colleagues (Rees & Monrouxe, 2010); and the role of workplace culture on the professional development of doctors (Eertwegh et al., 2013). Related to studies in the educational context (Section 3.3.2), results from those studies suggest that the acquisition of (medical) knowledge and skills should be considered an on-going process of learning between the doctors and their environment. Furthermore, medical researchers, in correspondence to those in the educational field, have highlighted that this should be a centre of attention of professional development researchers in the field.

3.3.2 Empirical Studies in the Area of Education

In the field of general education, studies regarding the significance of teachers working and learning together have received substantially researcher attention (Stoll et al., 2006). Studies have been conducted in various contexts to explore teachers' perceptions and behaviours with regard to work culture, workplace conditions, and the influences of workplace context on teacher professional development or vice versa. For example, Little's (2002) two-year qualitative study of mathematics and English teachers in two American urban high schools reported a parallel relationship between school development, teacher development, and teacher work culture. The data collected from written documents, observations and interviews led the author to conclude that teacher development and school development were possible when teachers collectively questioned ineffective teaching routines, examined new conceptions of teaching and learning, and engaged actively in supporting each other's professional growth.

In response to the necessity of teachers working together highlighted in Little's (2002) study, Wood (2007) conducted a longitudinal qualitative study to trace and analyse the implementation of teacher professional learning communities in an urban school district in a mid-Atlantic city. The research involved 250

participants, including the district superintendent, district administrators, principals, instructional coaches, and teachers. The participants were interviewed and observed during their training, meetings and teaching. Copies of e-mail contact between participants were also collected. The data from this study showed that when teachers participated actively in their work context, they reported more collegial conversations, more feedback on professional performance from colleagues, and more useful suggestions to improve their practices. They were also more willing to participate in discussions focusing on student work, lesson plans, and difficulty caused by instructional practices. The participants who regularly engaged in their professional learning community reported an increased trust amongst professional colleagues, and a better understanding of how to meet student needs. Finally, they reported a greater sense of professional efficacy in being able to improve students' learning.

Findings of Snow-Gerono's (2005) case study in the US of six Professional Development School (PDS) teachers' perceptions of the benefits of professional learning communities highlighted the relationship between teacher collaboration and teacher professional development. Qualitative data obtained from interviews and a series of classroom observations allowed Snow-Gerono to conclude that teacher professional development only occurred if teacher collaboration within the workplace existed. Similarly, Levine and Marcus's findings of their 2007 comparative case study conducted in a suburban California community echoed Snow-Gerono's (2005) findings. These researchers' analysis of qualitative data generated through interviews and classroom observations allowed them to emphasise the reciprocal effects of teacher collaboration on teacher professional development. Levine and Marcus concluded that teacher collaboration creates powerfully positive impact on both teaching and learning.

Mawhinney (2009) conducted a two-year study to explore teachers' interactions within teachers' lounges and other shared-spaces. Data were collected through 312 hours of observations over the teachers' lunch hour. Also, the researcher interviewed thirteen teachers, one principal, and two student teachers. Formerly, the context studied had previously had a proper lounge for teachers. However, a problem arose when the school needed to change the lounge into an office for a new counsellor. Since it was mandated by law that schools must provide a

teachers' lounge, the school relocated them to the Home and School Room where parents usually had activities. Teachers in the studied context were frustrated and felt that it was not appropriate to gather in that space and relax whilst the parents were around. In consequence, the teachers decided to arrange their own lounges in classrooms and library spaces. For this group of teachers, lounges were important places, as they spent most of their time surrounded by students and hardly met other adults throughout the day. It was found that being provided with shared spaces, such as lounges, offices and libraries, served two purposes for teachers: (1) combating teacher isolation in the workplace and (2) sharing professional knowledge. Through observations Mawhinney (2009) described that further ways for participant teachers to combat isolation were humour, food, encouragement and support through sharing similar stories. The researcher believed that these activities provided the participants with options to cope with stress they encountered throughout their work. The researcher also found that the topics of the participant's lunchtime conversations typically involved informal issues concerning their profession. She also uncovered that experienced teachers were often willing to share their wisdom with beginner teachers. For example, one student teacher, through her time spent with an experienced teacher in school lounges, gained new and effective techniques for carrying out lunch detentions and dealing with student behaviour. The researcher contended that the lunchtime conversations increased teachers' opportunities to collaborate and learn from each other's practice. Teachers' sharing of professional knowledge allowed them to understand the practice of teaching and to spontaneously collaborate on new projects. She also recommended that school administrators should not only provide teachers formal professional development, but also ensure that there are congregational spaces for teachers to speak, work together, learn from colleagues and relieve their stresses. The researcher highlighted the importance of informal professional knowledge sharing in the school staffroom in stating;

> informal teacher interactions provide the necessary support needed for teachers in an isolating profession. Teachers use the time in congregational spaces to learn from each other with professional knowledge sharing. These interactions serve as moments of professional development, which benefit the teacher, his/her students, and the school. (Mawhinney, 2009, p. 6)

Moreover, Rigelman and Ruben (2012) examined the impact of professional collaboration on candidate teachers. In total, 18 elementary and five middle schoolteacher candidates enrolled in a one-year pre-service teacher education programme in one large U.S. urban public university participated. Written reflections, focus group interviews, and classroom observations were conducted during the participants' time in the field. The researchers reported that findings from this study resembled similar studies conducted on in-service teachers. Additionally, the two researchers found that once teachers were supported by colleagues, they continuously developed their skills and commitment in their practice. Moreover, the researchers argued that to build an effective professional learning community, collaboration from teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and university faculty are all highly desirable.

Several researchers in Europe also recognised the correlation between teacher workplace culture and teacher professional development. For example, in Belgium, Clement and Vandenberghe (2000) analysed the impact of two workplace conditions (autonomy and collegiality) on 94 Belgian schoolteachers' professional development. In so doing, the researchers collected several types of data, including interview transcripts, descriptions of observations, written documents, and a questionnaire. In so doing, researchers found that the two workplace conditions (autonomy and collegiality) were in fact interrelated, meaning that the way in which team members work alone (autonomy) in schools was strongly associated to the way they worked together (collegiality). In some schools the team members managed to collaborate without losing respect for each one's autonomy. Collegial interactions can be viewed as a source for autonomous work and teachers' autonomous initiatives typically led to meaningful collegial interactions. Finally, the researchers concluded that the two workplace conditions had more positive influence on teachers' professional development than others types of workplace conditions (i.e., contrived collegiality and balkanization).

In England, Poulson and Avramidis (2003) conducted a study to examine how 296 English primary schools teachers attained professional development. To do so, a questionnaire, classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and a test of teacher literacy knowledge were employed. This empirical research

project revealed that teaching and working experiences gained within a range of professional communities (e.g., classroom, teachers within the school, educational authority) supported professional learning and development. In addition, Bolam et al., (2005) were funded by the UK Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) and the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) to explore the characteristics of effective professional learning communities in schools. Their study included questionnaire responses (one questionnaire per school) from 393 schools (nursery, primary, and secondary level) across England, case studies in 16 schools, and three workshops for representatives from the 16 schools. Their statistical findings suggested that the schoolteachers developed professionally through various means. In particular they relied considerably more on informal professional development activities (e.g., learning together with colleagues [$\bar{X}$= 3.73], are collectively responsible for pupil learning [$\bar{X}$= 3.64] and are members of professional team [$\bar{X}$= 3.80]) than formal (e.g., carry out classroom based research [$\bar{X}$= 1.81], receive financial support from the school for award-bearing courses [$\bar{X}$= 1.42], and experience job rotation [$\bar{X}$= 1.13]). In addition, based on case studies and workshops, they identified eight key characteristics contributing to effective professional learning communities. The eight characteristics were teachers' "shared values and vision; collective responsibility for pupils' learning; collaboration focused on learning; individual and collective professional learning; reflective professional enquiry; openness, networks and partnerships; inclusive membership; mutual trust, respect and support" (Bolam et al., 2005, p. i).

Armour and Makopoulu (2012) also conducted a study addressing teacher professional learning in England. The researchers examined and evaluated a national continuing professional development (CPD) programme for teachers. It was found that teachers' opportunities for interactive learning and for interacting with colleagues were considered to be constructive factors supporting their professional development. However, from the perspectives of the teachers, head teachers and CPD providers, there were some difficulties in passing their knowledge to colleagues and in sustaining and developing their learning. It was found that these limitations were influenced by an inconsistent theory of learning

underpinning the programme. The researchers suggested that the theory should view a teacher as a learner and professional learning as an on-going process of learning rather than a short-term event. Accordingly, the researchers further suggested that with government's support, British schools could initiate professional development activities within teachers' workplace context and that teachers should be encouraged to learn with colleagues as part of their day-to-day teaching activities.

Studies concerning teacher work culture can also be found focused on the Australia-Pacific continent; Johnson (2003) examined the outcomes of four Australian schools' efforts to promote teacher collaboration. Participants of the study were 115 teachers and school leaders, as well as 126 other staff from the four schools. Data were collected through questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire consisted of both closed and open-ended questions related to the nature of the schoolwork culture and the nature and outcome of collaborative work. Twenty-four teachers (six from each school) were interviewed. Most teachers noted that working together not only helped them feel better about themselves and their work, but also gave them opportunities to learn from each other. However, a few teachers felt uncomfortable with collaborative work as they thought that working together increased their workload, and resulted in the loss of professional autonomy and in competition between teams for resources, recognition and power.

Additionally, Erickson et al. (2005) published their analysis of two collaborative teacher projects. The projects were conducted in Melbourne and Vancouver, and both were longitudinal studies; one ran for 5 years and the other was still going after 20 years during which they conducted this particular analysis. The projects intended to enhance the opportunities for professional development of the participants through collaboration between classroom teachers and teacher educators. The empirical data from the two projects illustrated that working together successfully helped teachers improve the learning environment in classrooms for students and teachers, created models of professional development for school and teacher educators, and provided knowledge about learning and teaching issues in a classroom setting.

Furthermore, several Asian researchers have also shown interest in the relationship between teachers working together and their professional development. In Hong Kong, Ng (2009) published an article based on his study, which ran from 2001-2006 explaining how each stakeholder understood and rated curriculum reform differently. To depict this, Ng recruited 138 primary schoolteachers and 114 secondary teachers to participate. They were asked to complete a questionnaire and participate in focus group interviews. Ng's findings were similar to those in other continents; teacher cultures of collegiality and collaboration contributed to the successful implementation of school curriculum reform. Correspondingly, he conducted another study (Ng, 2011) to explain how teacher's workplace culture was affected by educational changes. Through in-depth interviews with 12 teachers in two different schools and their principals, the researcher found that in coping with changes in school, the participant teachers spontaneously subdivided into different groups. Particularly, teachers in each school formed at least three balkanized groups: (1) teachers who welcomed the innovation, (2) teachers who disbelieved in innovation and demonstrated resistance to the change, and (3) teachers who might or might not take part in implementing change. However, once the authorities of each particular workplace provided these teachers with incentives, they tended to be more assimilated. Accordingly, to avoid the fractions of school members (balkanization), the researcher suggested that before implementing any innovation or change in school, the administration should provide specific training to its member regarding the changing area.

A year later, Lee, Zhang, and Yin (2011), explored the relationships between a professional learning community (PLC), faculty trust in colleagues, teachers' collective efficacy, and commitment to students. Based on an online survey on 480 primary and secondary schoolteachers from 33 schools in Hong Kong, the researchers found that two PLC factors ([1] collective learning and application and [2] supportive conditions-structures), the faculty trust in colleagues, and collective teacher efficacy significantly and positively affected teachers' commitment to students and teachers' efficacy in instructional strategies. In particular, the study suggested that mutual trust amongst colleagues in a school effectively improved teachers' collective efficacy in both instructional strategies

and student discipline management. The researchers further recommended that to help teachers increase their commitment to students, the school should build mutual trust amongst colleagues, enhance teachers' collective efficacy, and promote teacher's organisational learning.

Research concerning teacher work culture has also begun to attract attention in Mainland China. Zhao (2010) explored the problems of teacher professional development in China, and the relationship between teacher learning and teacher professional development. The participants were teachers from colleges, secondary and primary schools in different provinces of China. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed via e-mail in order to acquire information and data about Chinese teachers' professional development. Ninety-three questionnaires were returned; however, only 71 were completed and used in the statistical analysis. The study offered strategies to strengthen teacher professional development, including teachers working as a team (i.e. team learning and knowledge sharing), teacher knowledge management systems, an organisational learning culture, and encouragement from school leaders.

In addition, research on teacher professional learning was also conducted in multi-national education contexts. The first international survey on teachers' working conditions and their learning environment was conducted throughout 23 countries (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey) between 2007-2008 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009). The survey focused on secondary schoolteachers' attitudes towards their participation in two types of professional learning activities, which they had completed during the 18 months prior to the study. The two types of learning activities were structured (i.e., courses/workshops, educational conferences/ seminars, qualification programme, visiting other schools, participation in professional network of teachers, individual or collaborative research, mentoring/peer observation and coaching) and less formal (reading professional literature and engaging in informal dialogue with peers). The results of the survey can be summarised as follows. About 11% of teachers in the participating countries had no engagement in any professional

development activities and those who had engagement participated in the development activities for less than one day per month. Moreover, a significant proportion of participating teachers reported that the development activities did not meet their needs and most often the activities conflicted with their teaching schedules. These results led to OECD's suggestion to policy makers and school leaders that apart from providing better support for teachers to engage in professional development opportunities, they needed to also ensure that the opportunities available are effective and meet teachers' needs.

Furthermore, it is noticeable after an extensive review of the literature concerning teacher work culture, workplace condition, and teacher professional development that most of the studies in these areas focus on the development of pre-service teachers and full-time in-service teachers. Apparently, professional development of part-time teaching staff is invisible for the majority of researchers in the field of Education. Moreover, few of the studies are on Higher Education, particularly in the Language Education field. A part-time lecturer is recognised through different terms in different contexts including "sessional, casual/non-career teacher, graduate assistant, graduate teaching assistant, contract or contract-limited faculty, tutor, visiting/associate lecturer, adjunct/ contingent faculty, non-standard academics" (Beaton & Sims, 2016, p.104). For example, they are usually called 'sessional teacher', in the Australian context, 'adjunct faculty' in North America, 'part-time teacher', 'contingent teacher' and 'tutor' in the UK (Anderson, 2007; Bryson, 2013). The following paragraphs report the findings from some of the few studies conducted in the Higher Education context. These studies have confirmed the absence of attention on part-time teaching staff and their professional development in Higher Education.

The first example is from Anderson's (2007) study using semi-structured interviews. This study suggested that, during 2003-5, part-time lecturers in four academic departments in a particular UK business school experienced "poor communication about events, lack of payment for attendance, and conflicts with other work or research priorities" (p. 115). Two years later, larger-scale case studies (Woodall & Geissler, 2010) were conducted in wider UK educational contexts. This study was considered the first national-scale study supported by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). The studies were conducted in six UK

higher Education institutions. Results from semi-structured interviews of 117 lecturers, heads of department, course leaders, and the senior managers of business and health schools reported a rising dependence of universities on part-time lecturers and the lacking state of their working conditions. Part-time teaching staff members received considerably less support from their workplace when compared to their full-time counterparts and often encountered difficulty in receiving induction training and were barely provided with access to mentoring or formal professional development courses. They also received offices and facilities in poorer condition and were normally excluded from the academic community.

A similar situation of the low visibility of part-time teaching staff in the UK was recognised by Beaton and Gilbert (2013). Citing the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (2009/10), they indicated that part-time lecturers accounted for a substantial proportion (35%) of academic staff in Higher Education. Nonetheless, this significant proportion of teaching staff was not recognised in staff professional development scheme. In addition to the UK higher education sector, based on their collection of action research, the two authors also highlighted the expansion of part-time lecturers in Australia and New Zealand. Similarly to the UK, the level of support and recognition that part-time lecturers received in the two countries was not equivalent to that offered to their full-time counterparts. The evidence from the multinational action research in Beaton and Gilbert (2013) calls for policy makers' attention to developing sustainable support interventions that meet the actual needs of different types of part-time teaching staff in different contexts. Additionally, the lack of support for the part-time lecturers' professional development and lack of attention from the policy to this group's working conditions were similarly articulated in Bryson's (2013) analysis of the HEA's policies and official website content (part-time teaching staff, in this case, is referred to as sessional teachers in the author's word):

> In general, the strategic support of sessional staff has been rather weak. Between 2006 and 2007, there was a brief period of focussed activity, and some resources given to a national project led by the HEA. Some studies were commissioned, events held and material disseminated. However, that work is no longer readily accessible from the HEA archives […] The HEA website has constantly been restructured, and previous resources just disappear with the next iteration. Even so, it is

> surprising that a search of the current HEA (2013) provision yields not one mention about sessional teachers or related issues other than a reference to graduate teaching assistants and a few references in the resources archive to studies from several years ago. (p. 7)

Drawing on a review of empirical studies in this area, Bryson listed several difficulties that part-time teaching staff encountered along six themes. These difficulties summarise the situation of part-time teaching staff in UK Higher Education, as discussed in the aforementioned studies. These difficulties were: (1) condition of work, (2) access to promotion and an academic career, (3) professional development, (4) inequality of opportunity, (5) insecurity, uncertainty and precariousness and (6) underemployment.

Comparable situations have been depicted in Higher Education institutions in other countries. For example, Charlier's (2009) study showed a similar situation in that Swiss part-time teaching staff (specifically, referred to as teaching assistants in this study) were normally provided with different types of professional development activities, separately from the full-time staff. Additionally, the part-time teachers' opinions were often not considered in quality teaching management systems and the professional development plan of the workplace. In addition, a lack of teaching preparation support for part-time lecturers, particularly an appropriate teaching orientation session was evidenced by Halcomb et al.'s (2010) case study on 12 members of Australian sessional teaching staff in Nursing Education. Moreover, another large-scale study (Percy et al., 2008) conducted in 16 Australian universities echoed similar circumstances for part-time teaching staff's working conditions. The study suggested that:

> [S]essional teachers make a significant but largely invisible contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in higher education. Both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of this contribution need to be investigated and accounted for at an institutional level if risk management and quality enhancement policy and practice are to be effective. (p. 5)

Another study conducted in the Australia context (Australian Universities Teaching Committee, 2003) came to a similar conclusion as those in the UK and Switzerland, in that teaching organisations overlooked the contributions of this group of teaching staff for students and did not provide adequate support for them. This contradiction between an increase in part-time lecturers in higher

education and their limited access to professional development was similarly depicted in Coughlan (2015) who writes on higher education in Ireland. Moreover, Coughlan, in line with those aforementioned researchers (e.g., Bryson, 2013; Beaton & Gilbert, 2013; Charlier, 2009) argued for further investigation on the role and impact of part-time lecturers on the quality of education as well as the need of attention from policy makers to the quality of their professional learning.

3.3.3 Empirical Studies in the Area of Language Education

In the field of language education, a few studies (Kleinsasser, 1993; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Hongboontri, 2006; 2008) have been conducted on teacher work culture and its relationship with teacher professional development. For example, Kleinsasser (1993) examined the role of the workplace cultures of 37 high school foreign language teachers in 11 schools in the US. Kleinsasser believed that workplace culture determined and was determined by teachers, their relationships with each other, their teaching materials, and the pupils. Accordingly, such a culture can be used as a reflection of how the teaching organisation was and how teachers perceived their work. His study of schools' culture was conducted to capture the core of teachers' thoughts, beliefs, and actions in their working environment. Kleinsasser (1993) employed eight social organisational variables suggested in Rosenholtz' (1989) study of 1,213 elementary schoolteachers to serve as indicators for teachers' perceptions of the technical culture of their school. These variables were (1) teacher certainty about instructional practice, (2) teacher cohesiveness, (3) teacher collaboration, (4) teacher evaluation, (5) faculty goal setting, (6) management of student behaviour, (7) parent involvement, and (8) teachers' learning opportunities. Participants of Kleinsasser's study were 37 foreign language teachers: 13 French, 4 German, 4 Latin, and 16 Spanish. They were recruited from district schools in rural areas in the Midwest of the US. All teachers held undergraduate degrees in their respective languages, 13 held a master's degree, and one a Doctor of Education degree. They had 15 years of teaching experience on average. All participants were required to complete a survey of 124 items (consisting of eight social organisation variables) concerning their perceptions of working conditions. Moreover, Kleinsasser interviewed each participant with open-ended questions

about their work. Later, observations (five per teacher) were conducted to help the researcher describe interactions of the participants with other teachers in the school building throughout the day.

The results from the survey, interviews and observations indicated that the eight social organisational variables both directly and indirectly influenced teachers' practices and two patterns of school's technical cultures were found in the contexts investigated. There were "uncertain/routine" and "certain/non-routine" (Kleinsasser, 1993, p. 377). The uncertain/routine culture is characterised by a view of teaching as an unsociable individual task, a focus on accuracy and correctness, a teacher's belief that some students have no ability to learn the subject, teacher's lack of communication with other teachers and students in or out of class, small opportunities for the teacher to obtain new strategies, and an exclusive use of the textbook which "appeared to be these teachers' best colleagues" (p. 382). Additionally, teachers in this group were uncertain about their teaching, but still engaged in the day-to-day routine. They had few conversations concerning instruction and demonstrated overreliance on traditional teaching approaches.

On the contrary, the certain/non-routine teachers regularly worked with their colleagues, were satisfied with their work, had high levels of certainty about what to teach and were confident about their instruction. However, their daily practices were flexible and unpredictable. Teachers tended to collaborate both within and across their department(s) and they also incorporated more communicative activities with each other. These teachers believed that every student could learn the subject and provided learning experiences accordingly. They recognised language as a dynamic process, and language learning as a combination of grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies. Learning activities were more flexible and adjustable depending on the students, and teachers did not strictly follow textbooks. There was more teacher collaboration and more teacher learning opportunities in certain/non-routine cultures.

In short, the results of Kleinsasser's study pointed out that social organisational factors created patterns for teacher behaviours as participants in a workplace on the basis of who they were, where they were, what they could do, and what they

could give meaning to. Essentially, his findings affirmed that the social organisation like teachers' workplace had an impact on teachers' beliefs and behaviours and vice versa. Five years later, Kleinsasser together with Sato (2004) depicted the school culture and the teachers' professional development activities in one high school in Japan. They interviewed, observed and collected written documents from 19 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers (15 native Japanese speakers, four native English speakers). This yearlong study indicated a lack of communication amongst the participating teachers regarding instructional issues. As a consequence, these teachers had fewer opportunities to learn from one another. This, in turn, decreased teachers' opportunities to obtain professional development.

Recognising the shortage of the research on this issue in the language education field, a Thai researcher, Hongboontri (2006; 2008), conducted studies to examine it in the Thai context. In his 2006 study, he identified types of teacher collaborative cultures in the context of a Thai university. His literature pointed out that teacher was in a stage of isolation. This problem led to teacher uncertainty in teaching, low commitment to their job, and shortcomings in education. He further noted that to counter teacher isolation, teacher collaboration was a significant trigger. Mindful of the significance of collaboration, Hongboontri studied the nature of teacher collaboration in the Thai university context and the two following research questions helped frame his study; (1) How do English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in the Thai university context perceive collaboration within their workplace?; and (2) What kind of collaboration, if any, do they take part in? To answer these questions, data were collected over the course of one academic semester (approximately four months). His questionnaire was administered to 25 EFL teachers to identify their background and perceptions concerning workplace culture. The items consisted of nine social organisational valuables (eight of them adapted from Kleinsasser, 1993): (1) teacher certainty (how teachers were certain with their instruction), (2) teacher cohesiveness (teachers' feeling of unity within their workplace), (3) teacher collaboration (how teachers perceive collaboration in their workplace), (4) teacher complaints (the extent to which teachers complain about their instructional activities), (5) teacher evaluation (frequency, objectives,

and duration when the teachers were evaluated), (6) faculty goal setting (teachers' contribution to goal setting), (7) management of student behaviour (how consistent participant teachers were in applying the university's rules of student conduct), (8) community involvement (the extent to which teachers and communities were involved in students' learning), (9) teachers' learning opportunities (teachers' opportunities for learning new teaching strategies). Later, Hongboontri interviewed the teachers to depict the nature of their work through semi-structured interviews where the questions were also adapted from Kleinsasser (1993). Answering these questions, participants were allowed to share their perceptions toward teacher collaboration and to clarify the types of collaborative culture that they engaged in. Additionally, participants were required to record their reflections of teacher collaboration, for example their interactions with colleagues and the activities they did together. At the end of semester, 130 journal entries were collected from the 25 participant teachers. Finally, several written documents, for example course outlines and teaching materials were collected to help the researcher understand the nature of the workplace.

It was found that the nine social organisational variables contained in the questionnaire influences teachers' certainty toward their instructional practices. This shows that the more this particular group of teachers worked collaboratively, the more certain they felt about their instructional practice; the more they noticed goal setting as a joint effort amongst teachers and the administrators; the more they were aware of their instructional development opportunities; and the less they complained about their workplace and their evaluation. Hongboontri further explored how participants viewed teacher collaboration within their workplace by asking the following questions: When do you work with your colleagues? What do you do together? What do you typically talk about with your colleagues? To what extent do you collaborate with other teachers in your department? Data from interviews and 130 journal entries indicated that teachers in this workplace worked fairly collaboratively with colleagues. In particular, the participants reported that they shared teaching materials, discussed students' progress, compared class progression, and kept pace with other teachers. The teachers, however, reported that they rarely

discussed instructional problems and usually worked alone to solve them. Hongboontri concluded that in this Thai university, participating teachers preferred working collaboratively, to a fair degree, depending on their personal relationships, cultural differences, the hierarchical culture, and teaching experience.

Hongboontri (2008) subsequently investigated the relationship between workplace organisational factors and the professional development of 25 EFL teachers at another Thai university. He collected journal entries, other written documents, and conducted interviews and classroom observations. These different sources of data revealed the dissatisfaction of his participants with the available learning opportunities, both within and outside of the workplace. Consistent with his previous study and research spanning in the previous two decades, Hongboontri's (2008) findings highlighted the need for workplace support for learning opportunities to augment the confidence of EFL lecturers in developing their teaching practices. The study further confirmed that workplace organisational factors and teacher professional development were interrelated and that factors were crucial for the development of teachers' professions.

Despite the few available studies on teacher work culture and teacher professional learning in Language Education, the findings parallel those in general education. That is, teachers working in collaboration yields reciprocal effects for teacher professional development in numerous ways (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Erickson et al., 2005; Hongboontri 2006; 2008; Johnson, 2003; Levine & Marcus, 2007; Ng, 2009; Poulson & Avramidis, 2003; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004, and Snow-Gerono, 2005) such as increasing trust amongst colleagues, developing an understanding of how to meet students' needs, and growing teachers' sense of professional efficacy. Furthermore, the positive impacts of teachers working together on students' learning has been confirmed (e.g., Erickson et al., 2005; Little, 2002; Mawhinney, 2009; and Wood, 2007).

3.4. Conclusion

The literature regarding theoretical conceptions of teacher learning concludes that teacher professional learning embraces a teacher's planned learning activities (e.g., seminars, trainings, degrees) and spontaneous workplace

interactions intended to affect the quality of teaching and learning, improves work circumstances, and enhances their commitment to their career. Moreover, the learning could spontaneously occur in everyday of practice and be sustainable throughout every phrase of their profession through collaborative interaction between a teacher and their colleagues. Accordingly, several researchers in the field have emphasised that collaborative practices in teachers' workplace and the workplace culture are worth considerable efforts that support both teacher learning and student learning. However, a large proportion of researchers in the Language Education field have not yet shifted their attention from the traditional training paths to the learning that is situated in teaching practices and interactions with colleagues. Furthermore, most studies that likely to value the collaborative approaches of teacher learning do not centre their attention on the nature of teacher work culture.

In addition to the understanding of the current situation of teacher professional development in different contexts, this literature review indicates the gaps in the research on this area. Given this extensive review, the addressed empirical studies' main focus was to identify factors influencing professional development (i.e., workplace policy, workplace physical setting, teacher collaborative activities, and teachers' learning opportunities), rather than to clarify the nature of the work culture of a particular educational context. Another research gap noticed through the review of the empirical studies is the research design of the aforementioned studies. In exploring teachers' interactions, teachers learning activities, and teacher work culture, these studies mainly relied on a qualitative, a quantitative, or a mixed-method design. None of them has yet employed an ethnographic approach (see Chapter 4) in the design of their data collection methods, which may potentially provide richer data on participants' interactions with their environment and the culture of the contexts of study.

Accordingly, the researcher of this study attempts to fill these research gaps by not only revealing the characteristics of a group of Thai university EFL lecturers' learning activities and their perceptions towards professional learning, but also by clarifying the nature of their work culture. To do so, the researcher has adapted Hargreaves (1994) typology of work culture to help frame the analysis of participant lecturers' interactions with their colleagues. Hargreaves' ideas are

adapted in this study because his insightful clarification of the patterns of teachers' work (see Section 3.2.1) portrays the most comprehensive view of the complicated nature of teachers' workplace interactions and highlights the necessity of understanding this culture to help improve student learning. To gain a full understanding of this particular group of EFL lecturers' professional learning within their workplace, the researcher of this study employs an ethnographic approach in designing the data collection process. Further details regarding the ethnography as a research method, the implementation of multiple data collection tools and how the fieldwork was conducted are discussed in Chapter 4.

4. Methodology

This chapter details the data collection strategies and analytical instruments employed in collecting data about the workplace culture and the professional learning of 16 EFL lecturers in a Thai university. The chapter begins with the overall methodological approach followed by information regarding the subjects participating in this study. Then, it includes a description of mixed-methods data collection instruments, the implementation of each instrument in relation to this study, and the data collection procedure. Subsequently, a detailed clarification of the data analysis is presented. This chapter ends with the ethical issues arising from the data collection and storage.

4.1 Methodological Approach

The researcher of the present study employed an ethnographic approach for data collection. This approach for conducting research originates in social and cultural anthropology. What the approach does in terms of data collection can be described as follows:

> ethnography usually involves the researcher participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions – in fact, gathering whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p.3)

Given the aforementioned description of the approach, the researcher of this study was required to spend a significant amount of time in the field studied participating in the participants' (*N*=16) daily routine, observing their behaviours, interviewing them for the reasons contributing to such behaviours, as well as collecting any other available forms of data (e.g., written documents, photos) which can help in explaining a particular phenomenon. The research activities that the ethnographer conducts in the field are called fieldwork. The distinctive characteristic of fieldwork is the requirement of continuous attendance by the researcher in the studied context. Gobo (2008) emphasised such continuity by informally comparing fieldwork with another type of data collection tool: "the term 'fieldwork' stresses the continuous presence of the researcher in the field, as opposed to 'grab-it-and- run' methodologies like the survey" (p. 11). In addition, the ethnographer's job when conducting fieldwork is to explore a group, such as people in organisations, communities or societies, and

their distinctive way of life. Moreover, the ethnographer always describes how people naturally behave to meet their daily demands in an everyday setting (Angrosino, 2007; Riemer, 2008). Riemer further highlighted that "whether the culture under study is a village, classroom, or shop floor, the ethnographer's aim is cultural interpretation" (p. 205). The culture under study in the present research was teacher work culture and professional learning occurring through workplace interactions.

Attempts by educational researchers to incorporate ethnographic approaches into their studies have been acknowledged since the 1970s. With collaboration from anthropologists, particularly in terms of how to conduct fieldwork observations, a number of researchers conducted qualitative studies in school contexts, borrowing the ethnographic approach, to explore school community interactions (e.g., Angus, 2102; Baquedano-López, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013; Bogdan et al., 1982; Casey et al., 2014; Cassell, 1978; Erickson, 1977; Erickson, 1984; Gioia, 2014; Gravlee et al., 2015; Khalifa, 2012; Shannon, 2014; Stinger et al., 2014; White, 2015). Accordingly, the usefulness of ethnography for a teacher, as a researcher or an ethnographer, has been made explicit. Every teacher has had considerable experience as a participant observer and interviewer in his or her work context and these qualities could enable a teacher to successfully engage in effective ethnographic work (Woods, 1986). Linking Woods' explanation with this study, the researcher, as an ethnographer who has already been a member of the culture studied, naturally observed and interviewed her colleagues on matters such as teacher interactions, activities they normally did together, and the patterned behaviour occurring when colleagues sought and provided professional advice. Data sourced and analysed from these observations, interviews and other techniques eventually contributed to an in-depth understanding of the nature of teacher professional learning activities. Another advantage of employing the ethnographic approach suggested by Woods (1986) is that teachers require no expensive or sophisticated equipment, or training in statistical methods to conduct such research. Accordingly, he indicated that such a methodological approach was applicable and practical for all teachers. In his own words, "[m]uch of a teacher's time is spent in doing ethnographic work, observing, listening, seeking to understand pupils and colleagues, and it is a small step to

orient some of these activities a little more systematically toward research" (p. 20). It was in the spirit of this call for teacher-led ethnography that the researcher, a teacher, planned and conducted this field study with a particular group of her colleagues in order to answer the three following research questions:

1. What types of learning activities does a particular group of Thai EFL teachers engage in?
2. What are their perceptions towards professional learning in general, and towards specific learning activities in particular?
3. What is the nature of their participations in professional learning activities in terms of work culture?

Following the approach for exploring teacher work culture and teacher professional learning in one EFL workplace context in Thailand, four mixed methods research instruments (Section 4.3) and both quantitative and qualitative data analysis have been employed (Section 4.4).

4.2 The Participants

The participant lecturers worked in a language institution, which was a part of Agora University (Pseudonym; See Section 2.4, Chapter 2 for full detail). The teaching staff of this institution varied in terms of contractual status, ethnic background, teaching experience, and academic title. The data suggested that 17 Thai lecturers (out of 67 total teaching staff) were appointed as part-time lecturers. Moreover, the lecturers in this workplace were of various nationalities; 15 lecturers were non-Thai. The non-Thai lecturers were from countries where English is spoken as a native language by the majority (i.e., United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand). Fifty-one lecturers held master's degrees. In addition, 16 of all the teaching staff held doctoral degrees. Amongst all the teaching staff, more than half (N=40) had no academic title. Most of those with academic titles were Assistant Professors (N=18) while the remainder were Associate Professors (N=9). In particular, a group of 16 EFL lecturers teaching the same subject (English Foundation II) at a language institution in a Thai university were invited to participate in the study. The participants included the Director of the institution and 15 lecturers teaching a particular subject to different groups of students: seven full-time Thai lecturers, four full-time non-Thai lecturers, and five part-time lecturers.

At the initial stage of this study, the researcher did not expect influences of the varieties of the participants' backgrounds on the data. Accordingly, the researcher first viewed the participants as one group of 16 lecturers teaching the same course with no plan to categorise them into subgroups according to the aforementioned characteristics. However, approximately half way through data collection, distinctive patterns in terms of their learning opportunities and interaction between them and their colleagues were repeatedly noticed. Therefore, the 16 participants lecturers were categorised into three groups: Full-time Thai lecturers (*N*=7), Full-time non-Thai lecturers (*N*=4), and part-time lecturers (*N*=5). The description of how the three categories were imposed and further details towards the characteristic of each group of the participant were provided in Section 2.6, Chapter 2. In addition to that, differences in participants' roles, responsibilities, contractual statuses (full-time/part-time), and their native languages (Thai/English) are discussed in terms of how they related to their work culture, their attitudes towards professional learning, and their engagement in learning activities within the workplace in the following findings and discussion chapters (see Chapter 6, 7, 8).

4.3 The Four Research Instruments

Wolcott (1988), one of the pioneers in using the ethnographic method in education, specifically discussed the use of research instruments in that:

> Ethnographic significance is derived socially, not statistically, from discerning how ordinary people in a particular setting make sense of the experience of their everyday lives… The ethnographer would never for a minute rely solely on a single observation, a single instrument, a single approach. The strength of fieldwork lies in its "triangulation," obtaining information in many ways rather than relying solely on one. (p. 158)

Wolcott's description underlines that data obtained from fieldwork are more socially descriptive than statistic. Additionally, to obtain an understanding of a particular culture, the ethnographer requires multiple sources of data. Moreover, the significance of seeking the data from varied perspectives has been echoed in many other studies (e.g., Angrosino, 2007; Bresler, 2006; Gobo, 2008; Jick, 1979; Maxwell, 2012; Patton, 2005). For example, Angrosino suggested that ethnographic data collection techniques should be "conducted through the use of two or more data collection techniques- which may be qualitative or quantitative

in nature- in order to triangulate on a conclusion, which may be said to be strengthened by multiple ways in which it was reached" (p. 15). Accordingly, to gain a more complete picture of the nature of teacher professional learning within this particular workplace context, the researcher of the present work also employed the concept of triangulation in developing multiple data collection instruments. Combining information from various perspectives not only helps capture the complexities of the issue investigated, but also augments the validity of the research findings (Angrosino, 2007; Hyldegård, Hertzum & Hansen, 2015; Sandretto, & Heath, 2002; Kleinsasser & Savignon, 1991; Mathison, 1988; Metz, 2000; Mok & Clarke, 2015). Following the ethnographic approach, multiple sources of data from both quantitative ([1] a questionnaire), and qualitative ([2] observations, [3] semi-structured interviews, and [4] analysis of written documents) instruments were developed to obtain the nature of the teachers' work culture. These four different data collection instruments are presented in the following sections, and the relevant ethical issues are subsequently discussed.

4.3.1 Questionnaires

The first data-gathering tool used in the present study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was chosen because "the inflow of the data is quick" (Gray, 2009, p. 338). The tool helped the researcher see the broad picture of the issue under investigation within a limited time and at relatively little cost. The questionnaire (see Appendix D) was divided into two parts. The first consisted of seven fill-in-the-blank items. The researcher aimed to use the first part of the questionnaire to obtain participants' background information, including their educational background, teaching experience, age, and gender. The second part contained 24 items dealing with teacher work culture (items 1-16 and 19-24) and teachers' learning opportunities (items 17-18), which allowed participants to reflect on their own attitudes regarding the frequency of their gathering with others in the workplace, the types of activities they did together, and the number of teachers involved in any type of gathering, for instance.

In order to help identify the types of work cultures of the participants, the researcher designed questions in alignment with Hargreaves' (1994) four patterns of teacher work culture: (1) individualism, (2) balkanization, (3) collaboration, and (4) contrived collegiality (full details on Section 3.2.1, Chapter 3). These

four types of work culture influenced the construction of the first 16 items of the questionnaire. In particular, items 1-6, 7-10, 11-13, and 14-16 in the second part of the questionnaire represent collaboration, contrived collegiality, balkanization, and individualism forms of work culture, respectively. The following are sample questions with the focus of each on each type of work culture:

- I feel more confident professionally with support from colleagues. (Item 6, Collaboration).
- I design or evaluate teaching/ assessment materials, and other teaching activities with other teachers because it is part of the institute's regulations (Item 10, Contrived Collegiality).
- I prefer not to work with other teachers, unless it helps me finish my work faster or improve the quality of my work (Item 11, Balkanization).
- I feel constrained as an individual and pressured to conform to varying opinions when working in a team (Item 15, Individualism).

Furthermore, another eight items in this questionnaire were adapted from studies by Hongboontri (2006) and Kleinsasser (1993). Hongboontri (2006) studied types of teacher collaborative cultures in a Thai university. His questionnaire was administered to 25 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers to examine the teachers' perceptions of their workplace context. Hongboontri's questionnaire contained 102 items dealing with nine social organisation variables. Eight of nine variables in his questionnaire were adapted from Kleinsasser's (1993) study examining how high school foreign language (FL) teachers perceived their work environment. The nine social organisation variables indicated in his questionnaire were:

1. Teacher certainty: how teachers were certain with their instruction,

2. Teacher cohesiveness: teachers' feeling of unity within their workplace,

3. Teacher collaboration: how teacher perceive collaboration in their workplace,

4. Teacher complaints: the extent to which teachers complain about their instructional activities,

5. Teacher evaluation: frequency, objectives, and duration when the teachers are evaluated,

6. Faculty goal setting: teachers' contribution in goal setting,

7. Management of student behaviour: how consistent participant teachers applying the University's rules of student conduct,

8. Community involvement: the extent to which teachers and communities involving in students' learning,

9. Teachers' learning opportunities: teachers' opportunities for learning new teaching strategies.

According to the focus of this research (see research questions in Section 4.1), the researcher adapted questions from the third (teacher collaboration) and the ninth (teachers' learning opportunities) variables in this study. The following are samples of Hongboontri's (2006) questions concerning teacher collaboration and learning opportunities:

- I work with other teachers in my Institute/Faculty in designing or evaluating materials, curriculum units, and other teaching activities (teacher collaboration).
- I give help and support to other teachers in my University when they are having problems in their teaching (teacher collaboration).
- I regularly share teaching problems in my *Institute/Faculty* with (teachers' learning opportunities):
- I regularly share teaching problems in my *University* with (teachers' learning opportunities):

Please note, 5-point Likert scale-response options (answer choices) of the first two items were different from the rest. The first two items contained *frequency* scale choices (Always, Frequently, Sometimes, Seldom, and Never), whilst the others were *numerical* choices (Four or more, three, two, one, no-one). Hongboontri's (2006) questions indicating the two variables (teacher collaboration and teacher learning opportunities) were adapted into the formulation of the questionnaire items 17-24.

4.3.1.1 Questionnaire Piloting

The pilot-version of the questionnaires was distributed to six Thai EFL lecturers. The respondents had three to ten years of teaching experience at university level. All of them worked at a Thai Government University and they had both teaching and research responsibilities. The nature of their workplaces was similar to those of the participants in the actual study context. All respondents were asked to answer all questions and comment on any aspects in the questionnaire that they felt uncertain about and felt needed more clarification.

This was done to detect any flaws in the questionnaire and to make sure that all words and instructions were clear enough to understand, that all response choices would be appropriate, and that respondents would interpret the question in the same way. After considering responses from the six respondents, some instructions, questions and choices were revised and simplified. For example,

when responding to item 2: “I am happy to provide moral support to my colleagues”, one respondent shared, “Well, this is actually okay, but different people might define ‘moral’ differently. What exactly is moral support? It will be great if you can give some examples.” Regarding this comment, the researcher was aware that Thai people (the majority of the participants) might not be familiar with the term “moral support” and this could cause difficulty for many participants when answering the question. The researcher, together with her supervisor, thus changed “moral support” to “encouragement” (see Appendix D) to sound more familiar to Thai participants. In addition, when the participants in the pilot group responded to item 6: “I feel more confident with group support”, two of them asked a similar question of “confident about what?” Consequently, the researcher modified the question to “I feel more confident professionally with the support from colleagues”. Doing so meant that all questions were clear and all participants interpreted the questions in the intended manner. Accordingly, the data obtained from the questionnaire could be used as an indication of the EFL teachers’ perspectives toward certain aspects of teacher professional learning activities within their workplace.

4.3.2 Observations

Observation is an approach allowing a researcher to depict the everyday interaction of participants, and has contributed to insightful descriptions of social interaction within natural settings (Smith, 1978). Through observation, “it is possible to describe what goes on, who or what is involved, when and where things happen, how they occur, and why- at least from the standpoint of participants- things happen as they do in particular situations” (Jorgensen, 1989, p. 12). Merriam (2009) further described its benefits:

> [o]bservations are conducted to triangulate emerging findings; that is, they are used in conjunction with interviewing and document analysis to substantiate the finding. (p. 119)

Furthermore, Merriam (1988) specified that observation could be classified into four types, namely (1) complete participant, (2) participant-as-observer, (3) observer-as-participant, and (4) complete observer. Under the notion of “complete participant”, a researcher was a member of a particular study group. The identity of a researcher was not revealed to the people being observed. This

particular form of observation is comparable to Bryman's (2012) description of an observer in "the covert role". Under the second type of observation techniques, "participant-as-observer", a researcher is part of the group being studied and observed activities of the researcher are revealed to the group. The third type of the observation, "observer as participant", allows an observer to have minimal involvement in the social setting being studied. Finally, performing the "complete observer" role, the researcher is, most of the time, hidden from the subjects and had no contact with them. To do this, observation should be done through a glass wall or by video recording.

Bryman (2012) also identified the roles of a researcher in ethnography into four types: (1) open field site and covert role, (2) open field site and overt role, (3) closed field site and covert role, (4) closed field site and overt role. In particular, "an open field site" refers to any spaces open to public access such as public parks, the city centre, streets, and Sunday markets. In contrast, the spaces in which people ask for permission to gain access such as school, office, sport club, and restaurant are identified as "a closed field site". Furthermore, entering the field without notifying anyone in the study the researcher's identity is identified as " a covert role" which was opposes "an overt role".

In order to gain direct access to the present context, during observations, the researcher participated as a member of the group being observed as the researcher had, for over two years, taught in the same institute as her participants. Due to ethical issues, the researcher ensured that all of the 16 participants and others involved in the setting received an opportunity for informed consent. Given Merriam's (1988) categories, the researcher performed the role of "participant as observer". In addition, according to the nature of the study context and the ethical concerns, the researcher also entered the context following Bryman's (2012) concept of "closed field site and overt role". With consent from participants, the researcher was able to naturally observe her participant colleagues' day-to-day routines and the nature of their professional learning activities within this particular educational arena. Furthermore, while participating in meetings as a group member, the researcher was also conducting observation activities for which permission had been granted and the other lecturers in the group were aware of the observations. In addition to ensuring the

participants' informed consent, the researcher was also strictly aware of the confidentiality of all participants and ensured that their identities remain concealed.

In addition, observation field notes are considered one of the most crucial aspects of observation. This is because human memory is unreliable, and the longer the researcher waits to record observations, the more information will be lost (Wolcott, 1988). The form and content of the notes may vary, depending on the specific study and researcher's preference: they may be handwritten, typewritten, recorded by photography, and recorded via audio equipment (Jorgensen, 1989). Accordingly, during observation, the researcher of this study systematically noted and sometimes photographed what happened in the context under investigation. Furthermore, while the fieldwork was conducted, the researcher attempted to write what she understood (e.g., the initial themes and categories of the participants' repeated patterns of behaviour) to become most accurately recognise gaps in the data according to the research questions.

4.3.2.1 Development of the Observation Schedule

To help the researcher effectively note participants' interaction with one another, an initial version of an observation schedule was developed before the observation period. In constructing the schedule, three crucial elements constituting an effective professional learning community and mentioned in the notion of Community of Practice (Wenger, 1998a) were applied. The three elements that helped structure the observation comprised: (1) domain, (2) community, and (3) practice (a detailed description of the notion may be found in Section 3.2, Chapter 3). In the schedule, there were both checklists and spaces provided for either short or long descriptions to help the researcher simply, quickly, and systematically record the phenomenon. The following categories were used in the original construction of the observation schedule.

- The "physical condition" of where the interaction is taking place
- The "domain" (Wenger, 1998a) of the participants' interaction
- The people engaging in each interaction (Wenger [1998a]'s 'Community')
- The outcome of the interaction (Wenger [1998a]'s 'Practice')

This original version of the schedule was piloted during the first few weeks of fieldwork (observation piloting period). During this piloting period, the

researcher also took “mental notes” (Gray, 2009) which allowed her to remember as much detail as possible; for example, who was in the setting, what they said, what were they doing, etc. The mental notes were recalled later to aid in the development of a semi-structured observation schedule. The recurrent patterns of participants’ behaviours recorded in the mental notes, during the piloting period, helped the researcher redesign the categories and checklists in the observation schedule. Accordingly, in the final version of semi-structured observation field notes (see Appendix F) the researcher prepared blank spaces and a checklist for noting (see Figure 4.1):

- The “physical condition” of where the interaction is taking place,
- The “domain” (Wenger, 1998a) of the participants’ interaction (in a checklist form),
- The “detail” of a particular domain of the participants’ interaction,
- The “background information” (if any) of the particular interaction,
- Number of people participating in each social interaction (Wenger’s ‘Community’)
- Details of the people participating in each interaction
- The initiator of a particular interaction
- The outcome of each interaction (Wenger’s ‘Practice’)
- Any relevant information or the researcher’s initial analysis of each interaction as a “remarks”

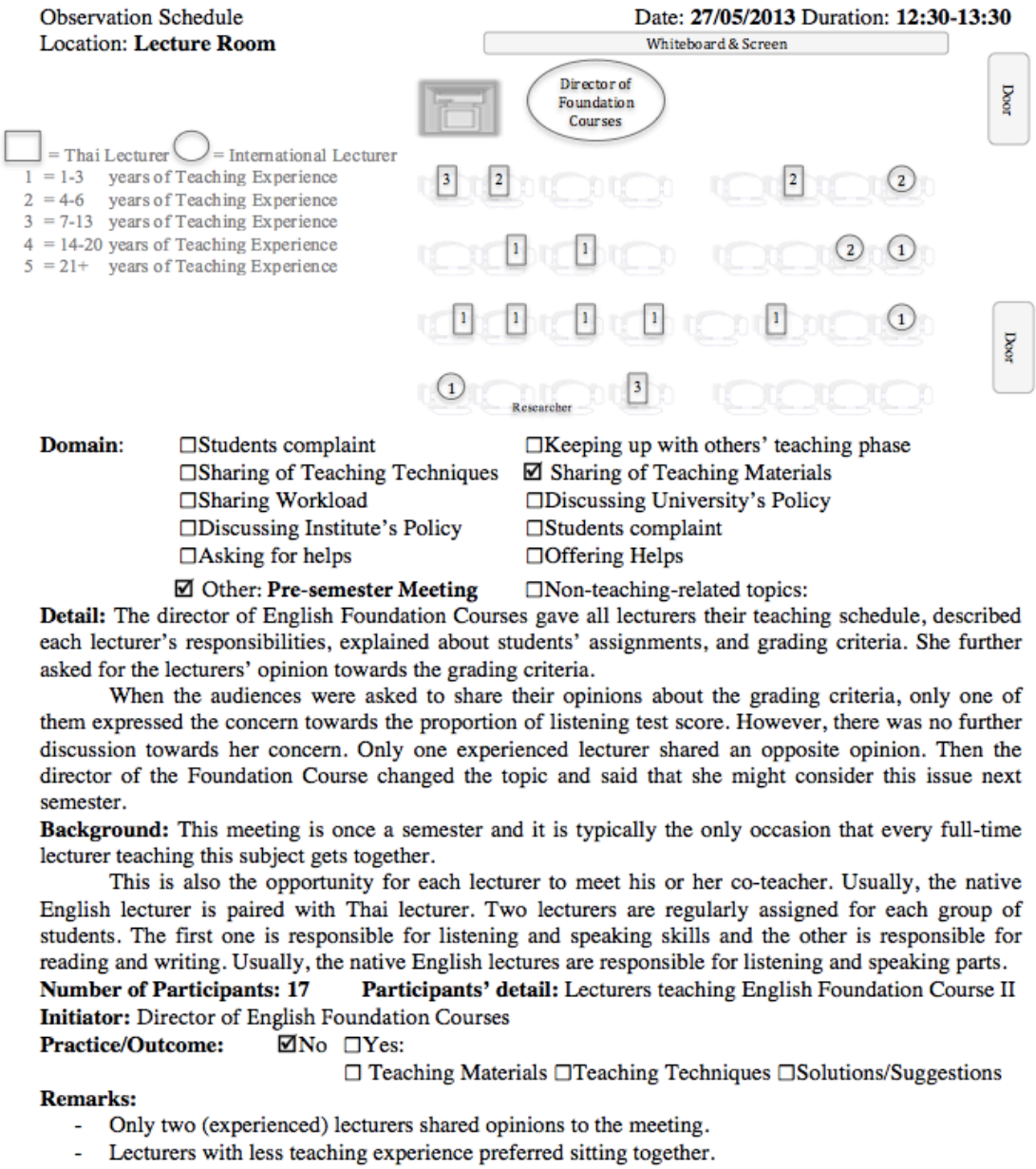


***Figure 4.1*: Sample of observation field note**

These categories in the field notes helped the researcher to conveniently, systematically, and precisely record what happened in the field. In addition, following Bogdan and Biklen's (1992) suggestion, the researcher provided spaces for two kinds of observation note taking, which were descriptive (e.g., descriptions of the physical setting, domain, detail, background) and reflective (i.e., remarks). The descriptive notes constituted the longest part of most inquiry journals. These were detailed, concrete and vividly specific descriptions of what the researcher saw, heard, and experienced. The reflective field notes included

the researcher's opinions, feelings, problems, analysis, plans for future inquiry, clarifications, synthesis, connections, or other ideas about the setting. Reflective notes were taken in a separate section from the descriptive notes for more extensive analysis.

With permission obtained from the 16 participants, the researcher was able to observe the nature of their interaction with one another in different social activities. For example, in the meeting room, the researcher paid attention to where each participant sat, who preferred sitting with whom, how participants exchanged information in the meeting, the topic of each talk, participants' feelings towards the subject, their facial expressions or gestures, the initiator of each instance of speech, how each conversation ended, and so on. In the lecturer common room, coffee corner, and canteen, the researcher observed participants' interactions with colleagues, the subject of each conversation, the length of each conversation, and gestures, as well as who each participant preferred to speak with. During each period of observation, field notes were systematically taken and later carefully transcribed for further analysis.

Thereby, the researcher used such data (together with those obtained from questionnaires and interviews) to clarify the nature of teachers' gatherings in a particular professional learning community according to the four different patterns as proposed by Hargreaves (1994): (1) individualism, (2) collaboration, (3) contrived collegiality, and (4) balkanization. Apart from that, the data were also used for an assessment of the quality of the participants' professional learning community based on Wenger's (1998a) elements (domain, community, and practice) (see Chapter 3 for more detail).

4.3.3 Semi-structured Interviews

The interview has been considered a primary source for gathering data (Merriam, 1988). Through the interview method, a researcher can obtain first-hand subjective information (e.g., perception and thoughts) that cannot be gained through observation. As a result, a researcher can unveil participants' perceptions of a particular phenomenon and the reasons behind it. Not only that, "interviewing is a powerful way of helping people to make explicit things that have hitherto been implicit – to articulate their tacit perceptions, feelings and

understandings" (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p.32). The interview also provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on events without having to commit themselves in writing (Gray, 2009). Gray went further in explaining that the method has been especially useful when people may enjoy talking more than filling in a questionnaire. Additionally, the technique is believed to "allow the voices of the teachers themselves to be heard and to explore in some detail their own perceptions of their working, lives, something that is difficult to do in survey-based research." (Johnston, 1997, p. 689)

Due to the benefits mentioned above, the interview method was employed as a method in this study. Following the notion of semi-structured interviews, the researcher, as an interviewer, outlined and developed a set of interview questions in advance. The set of interview questions served as a guideline to ensure that all relevant topics were covered. In practice, the order and wordings of the questions varied from participant to participant. The semi-structured interview could provide a clear set of instructions for interviewers and offer reliable and comparable qualitative data (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Cohen and Crabtree further stated that such an interview is often preceded by participant observation in order to allow the researcher to develop an acute understanding of the topic of interest. In addition, many researchers prefer using semi-structured interviews as the questions can be prepared in advance, allowing the interviewer to appear competent during the interview. Furthermore, it also offered participants the freedom to express their views on their own terms. Equally important to note is that this method leads to a smooth flow of conversation between the researcher and participant, especially "where it needs to in order to deal with issues as opposed to cutting someone off because they stray from the topic" ("Scottish Health On the Web," 2012).

4.3.3.1 Interview Piloting

Before conducting fieldwork, the researcher first developed approximately 16 items for the open-ended interview schedule. This set of questions was piloted with five EFL university lectures. These interviewees had a degree of similar background to the actual participants of the study. All were Thai lecturers with at least six years experience teaching experience in the Thai university context.

In response to the findings of the pilot, the questions were simplified and reorganised to help the participants understand them as clearly as possible. In addition, one question was added after the pilot to seek a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives toward their professional learning that occurs informally in their daily teaching routine. The question is whether they change their teaching techniques or develop their lesson plan according to informal discussions with their colleagues.

In order to fully ascertain their opinion towards professional learning and their work culture, the participants were given the following questions (see Appendix C). To ensure flexibility in the sequence the questions were given, and in how a particular area of research interest may be followed, the following list was used as a guide of areas to be covered, rather than a strict sequence of questions.

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. Why did you become an English teacher?
3. What kind of activities you do to improve your teaching?
4. What do you usually do when you have a teaching problem?
5. What is teacher professional learning in your own understanding?
6. What activities do you think (other teachers do to) help teachers develop their profession?
7. Which do you think is more beneficial for your professional development: attending seminars/ training courses or working together with your colleagues? Why?
8. Do you prefer working in a team, or individually? Why?
9. Have you ever changed your teaching techniques/ developed your lesson plan according to informal discussions with your colleagues?
10. Please describe the interaction between you and your colleagues. What do you usually do together in a day?
11. What do you usually do together with other teachers teaching *the same subject*? What aspects of teaching do you normally discuss with them? How often do you work with them?
12. What do you usually do together with other teachers teaching *different subjects*? What aspects of teaching do you normally discuss with them? How often do you work with them?
13. Does your workplace provide any administrative regulation to encourage teachers to work together? What is it? How do you feel about it?
14. With whom do you regularly share teaching ideas or materials in this institute? What makes you feel comfortable to do so with that/those person(s)?
15. What factors do you think help teachers in this workplace effectively work together?
16. What do you think obstructs teachers in this workplace from working together?

The first two interview questions were designed to help the interviewees become familiar with the interview process and prepared for the following questions. Questions three to sixteen were intended to encourage all lecturers to describe their professional learning activities and to voice and share their perceptions towards their work culture within their particular educational context. More importantly, the questions provided the participants opportunities to clarify reasons behind their interaction with colleagues that the researcher witnessed during her observations. Each interview lasted approximately 25 minutes, depending on each participant's responses. All interviews were recorded with permission from participants. Please note that most of the participant lecturers (*N*=12) were non-native English speakers, whilst the rest (*N*=4) of them were British, American, and Australian. Accordingly, the language varieties that the participants spoke were often non-standard varieties. Therefore, the reader will see some non-standard English sentences and phrases in quotations cited in the following findings and discussion chapters (Chapter 6, 7, 8). Equally important to note is that in the transcriptions, all names were anonymised to cover the participants' identities. Furthermore, every participant had the right to see his or her own transcript at any time.

4.3.4 Written Documents

Another source of data employed in the analysis of the present study was written documents and other artefacts found in the context under investigation. The researcher incorporated such data sources into the study because these sources helped to understand the context by representing naturally occurring phenomena without any influence of the researcher (Jorgensen, 1989).

> [D]ocumentary data are particularly good sources for *qualitative* case studies because they can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated. Analysis of this data source lends contextual richness and helps to ground an inquiry in the milieu of the writer. (Merriam, 1988, p. 109)

Furthermore, written documents have been especially valuable when the research topic is considered too inconsistent to observe or too sensitive to ask about directly, as in the case of participants being asked to describe their interaction with administrators (Angrosino, 2007). Heeding to all benefits mentioned above, several pieces of written documents, for example, teaching timetables, minutes of

meetings, planning papers, lesson plans and notes, teacher e-mails, and notice boards were collected throughout the process of data collection and used (together with other sources of data) to provide further details towards the nature of teacher professional learning within the investigated context (see for example, Figure 4.2). The photos displays leaflets advertising the professional development events posted on the doors of the lecturers' lounge (common room)

***Figure 4.2*: Photos of leaflets advertising the professional development events**

and the notice board in front of the lounge. The photos were intentionally blurred to ensure the participants' anonymity. Please note that all objects were collected with the expressed consent of the participants involved in the study.

4.3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Before conducting this fieldwork a consent letter was sent to the Director of the institute to which potential participants belonged to obtain permission for the study. This letter briefly described the aims of the study and the data collection methodologies employed in it. When the Director granted permission, individual consent letters were sent to each EFL lecturer teaching on the English Foundations II course. The consent letters sent to those lecturers detailed the

objectives of the study and the methodologies it employed (See Appendix A for consent letter). In addition, the consent letters informed the potential participants about their right to withdraw from the study at anytime. Afterwards, questionnaires were distributed to the lecturers who agreed to participate and were collected within two weeks of being sent. Following the questionnaires, semi-structured interviews were completed with participants who had given consent (all of them agreed to participate) and were audio recorded.

Table 4.1: Duration of the study

Procedure	Duration
Piloting data collection instruments	March, 2013 – April, 2013 (8 weeks)
Sending consent letters	May, 2013 – June, 2013 (4 weeks)
Questionnaire	May, 2013 – September, 2013 (16 weeks)
Observation	May, 2013 – September, 2013 (16 weeks)
Written document	May, 2013 – September, 2013 (16 weeks)
Interview	June, 2013 – September, 2013 (12 weeks)

During the period of data collection, the researcher also performed "closed field site and overt role" (Bryman, 2012) and the "participant-as-observer" approach (Merriam, 1988) in exploring participants' social interactions in the common spaces of the study site, during which time observation field notes were taken. Furthermore, written documents concerning aspects of teacher professional learning and work culture (e.g., memoranda, course syllabi, and e-mails) were also collected throughout the duration of the data collection process. Altogether, the fieldwork process lasted one academic semester (from May, 2013 to September, 2013). Table 4.1 demonstrates the duration of each data collection method employed in the present study.

4.4 Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis were use with the data gathered for this research. First, the questionnaire responses were tallied, tabulated, and calculated with SPSS 11.4 software to identify the extent to which the participating lecturers reported interacting with one another in their workplace context. Second, all audio records of the interviews were transcribed and analysed with Strauss and Corbin's (1998) open and axial coding techniques. This analytical approach was also applied to an analysis of the field observation and written document data.

Noting Strauss and Corbin's analytical approach, open coding was firstly performed to dissect the large amount of textual data into manageable groupings. To open code the data, the researcher initially used two categories of teacher learning activities (Section 3.1, Chapter 3) adapted from Knapp (2003) and Nagamine's (2007) classifications of teacher learning, as well as from Hargreaves' (1994) four categories of teacher work culture (Section 3.2.1, Chapter 3) as primary labels for the data. Additionally, the researcher carefully read and reread the entire set of data to assign more specific categories and subcategories, which emerged from the data. The process of revising the data and assigning codes generated more categories and subcategories than the six initial categories (all the categories are discussed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8). In addition to that, the researcher constantly scrutinised and compared the category labels across interview transcripts, observational field notes, questionnaire responses, and data from written documents in order to, as precisely as possible, classify participants' opinions and pinpoint concepts that seemed to cluster together. By doing so, the researcher recognised similarities, differences, and general patterns of the data from the different sources. When new categories emerged during the process, the researcher then reanalysed all data sources to further cement the presence of the newly emerged categories.

Subsequently, the axial coding process was performed in order to put what Strauss and Corbin called "fractured data" (data under each category) back together in meaningful ways. In so doing, the researcher revisited all categories to consider the connections amongst categories and connections between a particular category and its subcategory. Accordingly, the categories were rearranged and presented with respect to how they helped answer the research questions. At the later stage, findings from qualitative data (interviews and observations) were converged and diverged to depict the nature of teacher professional learning and work culture within the context to an in depth degree.

Furthermore, the researcher was also aware of the fact that this work contained "self-report" data sources (questionnaire and interview) that could possibly be affected by the participants' bias towards the situation or their failures to recall the situation, to a certain degree (Crockett, Schulenberg & Petersen 1987; Del Boca & Noll, 2000). Therefore, in the report of the findings and discussions of

the participants' professional learning situation, these data were carefully treated as "perceptions" not fact. In addition, the synopsis of the findings on (1) participants' professional learning activities, (2) their attitudes towards such learning, and (3) their work culture can be found in Chapter 5. Subsequently, detailed analyses of those findings are respectively presented in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

4.5 Ethical Concerns

The present study was conducted in the recognition of two main ethical concerns revolving around participants' right to know (informed consent) and their right to privacy (anonymity and confidentiality). The informed consent in this case refers to the process in which participants agreed to take part in the research on the basis of their knowledge of what it is about. Following the principal of informed consent, before collecting data, consent letters (see Appendix A) indicating the objectives of the study and data collection procedures were sent to the Director of the institution, and all employed lecturers at that site. The consent letters requested permission to observe, take notes, photograph activities, record interviews, and to use documents owned by participants or the institute under investigation. In addition, the anonymity of all participants was strictly assured as they were instructed that their contribution to the research would remain confidential. Their real names and personal identities would be carefully protected in the dissemination of the research through the use of pseudonyms for names and places (e.g., their names, their colleagues' names and the name of their workplace).

Moreover, they were informed of the period of time required for each interview and for completing the questionnaire, as well as the times at which the observations were to be conducted. These activities were done with exceptional care to cause neither disruption to participants' normal routines, nor anxiety. Participants were told that if at any point they felt uncomfortable, they had the right to withdraw. Furthermore, all participants had the right to see and comment on any kind of written or otherwise documented records used in the study, for example, interview transcripts, photos, and observation field notes. In addition, they were informed of what happens to their data once it was collected; that is,

that it would be stored for five years after the study and that only two people (the researcher and the researcher's supervisor) would have access to it.

The research data were carefully and securely stored following the University of York's Education Ethics Committee Guidance on Data Protection, Storage and Management (2015). In particular, the identifying features of the participants' personal identities were removed from the stored data as much and soon as possible. The identifiable data (i.e., sound files of interviews, participant databases, photographs, informed consent forms) were stored only on the University of York server in a password-protected folder accessible only to the researcher. The hard copies of the questionnaires were securely kept in a locked cabinet in a locked room. Whilst in the field and the analysis process, the data were stored on the researcher's personal laptop with strong password protection. Furthermore, back-up versions of the data on the researcher's external hard drive were also securely encrypted and they would not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose of this present research.

4.6 Summary

In essence, for exploring teacher work culture and the professional learning situation in the study context, an ethnographic approach was employed for data collection. The participants of this study were EFL lecturers (*N*=16) teaching the same English Foundation course. They were of various nationalities, teaching experiences, and contractual statuses. According to their distinctive characteristics, they were categorised into three groups: full-time Thai lecturers (*N*=7), full-time non-Thai lecturers (*N*=4), and part-time lecturers (*N*=5). Throughout the period of 12 weeks, the work culture and professional learning situation of these participant lecturers were studied through questionnaires, interviews, observations, and analyses of written document. In addition, all of the participants voluntarily allowed the researcher to collect the data through the four aforementioned mixed methods research instruments based on the principle of informed consent. The data from the questionnaire were systematically analysed with SPSS 11.4 software to identify the extent to which the participating lecturers interacted with one another. The rest of the qualitative data were transcribed and analysed with Strauss and Corbin's (1998) open and axial coding techniques to explore the nature of their learning situation and their work culture.

In addition to that, the participants were assured that their identities would be carefully protected in the dissemination of the research through the use of pseudonyms for names and places.

5. Results

This chapter displays an overview of the results of the study (prior to a more in-depth analysis in Chapters 6, 7, and 8) with respect to the three research foci: (1) the types of learning activities that the group of Thai university EFL lecturers engage in (2) the participant lecturers' perceptions towards professional learning, and (3) the nature of their work culture. Since more than one data source has been employed to depict each aspect of the 16 participants' professional development, the researcher is aware that the combination of findings from multiple sources of data and discussion in one chapter could possibly, to a degree, lead to some difficulty for the reader in thoroughly comprehending the chapters. Accordingly, this overview of the following in-depth discussion chapters is introduced here. By doing so, the researcher believes that the reader will develop an initial understanding towards the study as a whole and, subsequently, will be able to clearly follow the more detailed analysis of the professional learning situation in this Thai university context. According to the use of multiple data collection sources in answering the questions, this chapter is divided into two main parts: (5.1) an overview of results from quantitative data analysis and (5.2) an overview of results from qualitative data analysis.

5.1 Quantitative Data

As the reader has understood from the methodology chapter and Appendix D, the questionnaire consists of 31 items and is divided into two parts. The first part (7 items) examines background information of the respondents while the second part (24 items) presents data on the participants' work cultures and their learning opportunities. The information obtained from these two parts is used as participants' background information and as content to a further analysis of participants' work cultures and their learning opportunities.

5.1.1 Participants' Background Information

The researcher used the first part of the questionnaire to obtain all of the 16 participants' teaching experiences, ages, genders, and number of professional training programmes they had attended. The obtained information is summarised and displayed in Table 5.1. Given the table, it is visible that the volunteer participants vary in terms of age, length of work experience (in this workplace),

and learning opportunities. Noticeably, there are differences in their spoken languages (Thai and English) with Thai native speakers constituting the dominant group.

Table 5.1: ***Participants' background information***

	Pseudonym	Native Language	Age	Teaching Experience in this Workplace (Year)	Teaching load (hour/week)
Full-Time Thai Lecturers	The Director	Thai	50-54	21-23	4-6
	Sood	Thai	25-29	1-3	>8
	Kim	Thai	30-34	1-3	>8
	Nim	Thai	30-34	4-6	4-6
	Nong	Thai	55-60	>24	>8
	Phai	Thai	50-54	14-16	4-6
	Wan	Thai	25-29	1-3	>8
Full-Time non-Thai Lecturers	Walton	English	35-39	1-3	>8
	Ervin	English	55-60	4-6	>8
	Abra	English	55-60	1-3	>8
	Zara	English	30-34	4-6	>8
Part-Time Thai Lecturers	Dang	Thai	30-34	4-6	4-6
	Karn	Thai	>60	24	>8
	Som	Thai	35-39	4-6	>8
	Phor	Thai	40-44	1-3	>8
	Sai	Thai	30-34	1-3	6-8

Apart from the native languages, the participants could be distinctly classified into three groups according to their contractual statuses: full-time Thai lecturer, full-time non-Thai lecturers, and part-time Thai lecturers.

Aside from biographical data of the participants, the first part of the questionnaire also provides insight into their professional learning opportunities. Interestingly, the number of recent professional training and conferences (Table 5.2) of the full-time Thai lecturers ($\bar{X}$=4.57 and $\bar{X}$=4.57) is distinctly higher than that of the other two groups, particularly the part-time lecturers ($\bar{X}$=1.20 and $\bar{X}$=1.80). Such a distinction shows clearly that there is a difference in learning opportunities amongst the three groups of participants. Additionally, it offers a glimpse into the relationship between the participants' contractual statuses and their development opportunities. Subsequently, the relationship between the

differences in participants' backgrounds and their professional development is explored in greater depth based on multiple sources of data in the following three

Table 5.2: ***Participants' professional learning opportunities***

	Pseudonym	Numbers of Recent Professional Training (Time/3Year)	Numbers of Recent Professional Conference (Time/3Year)
Full-Time Thai Lecturers	The Director	4-6	7-9
	Sood	1-3	1-3
	Kim	4-6	1-3
	Nim	1-3	1-3
	Nong	10-12	10-12
	Phai	4-6	4-6
	Wan	1-3	1-3
		$\bar{X}$= **4.57**	$\bar{X}$= **4.57**
Full-Time non-Thai Lecturers	Walton	1-3	1-3
	Ervin	1-3	4-6
	Abra	1-3	1-3
	Zara	4-6	4-6
		$\bar{X}$= **2.75**	$\bar{X}$= **3.50**
Part-Time Thai Lecturers	Dang	1-3	4-6
	Karn	0	0
	Som	1-3	1-3
	Phor	0	0
	Sai	1-3	1-3
		$\bar{X}$= **1.20**	$\bar{X}$= **1.80**

chapters (6, 7, 8). Participants' genders are found to have no effect on any of the areas focused upon in the present study.

5.1.2 Participants' Work Cultures and Their Learning Opportunities

The second part of the questionnaire (see Table 5.3) contains 24 items dealing with types of teacher work cultures (items 1-16), types of teachers' learning opportunities (items 17-18), and the extent of teachers' interactions with their colleagues (items 19-24). The statistical data from the 24 items are shown in Chapter 6 and 8 in order to provide the reader with a broad-spectrum view of participants' professional development. As noted in the right hand column of the questionnaire, items 1-6, 7-10, 11-13, and 14-16 represent the four types of work

Table 5.3: ***Participants' work culture and learning opportunities from questionnaires***

Item	$\bar{X}$	Description	
1.	3.68	I work collaboratively in teams with others.	Collaboration
2.	4.37	I provide encouragement to my colleagues.	
3.	4.62	I receive encouragement from my colleagues.	
4.	4.00	I feel safe to share successes with team members.	
5.	3.81	I feel safe to share failures with team members.	
6.	3.87	I feel more confident professionally with the support from colleagues.	
Item 1-6		**Mean** ($\bar{X}$) **= 4.05** (Frequently)	
7.	3.56	There seems to be an expectation in my workplace that lecturers will teach more effectively by having more collaboration in the institute.	Contrived Collegiality
8.	3.43	Opportunity for collaboration seems to be used as an administrative strategy in my workplace.	
9.	3.56	There seems to be an expectation that I will teach more effectively by having more collaboration with other lecturers.	
10.	3.18	I design or evaluate teaching/ assessment materials, and other teaching activities with other lecturers because it is part of the institute's regulations	
Item 7-10		**Mean** ($\bar{X}$) **= 3.43** (Slightly more than sometimes)	
11.	2.81	I prefer not to work with other lecturers, unless it helps me finish my work faster or improve the quality of my work.	Balkanization
12.	2.68	I find that working collaboratively with other lecturers and sharing teaching materials with them reduces my workload.	
13.	2.18	I find that working collaboratively with others increases my workload.	
Item 11-13		**Mean** ($\bar{X}$) **= 2.55** (Between seldom to sometimes)	
14.	3.50	I do not offer help or advice to others about their teaching unless I am asked for it.	Individualism
15.	2.37	I feel constrained as an individual and pressured to conform with varying opinions when working in a team.	
16.	3.31	I design or evaluate materials, and other teaching activities for my class by myself without collaboration with others.	
Item 14-16		**Mean** ($\bar{X}$) **= 3.06** (Sometimes)	
17.	2.18	I develop my teaching practice by learning from my colleagues.	Formal/Informal Professional learning
18.	3.25	I develop my teaching practice from trainings, workshops, or seminars.	
19.	3.12	I work with other lecturers (teaching the same subject) designing or evaluating materials, curriculum units, and other teaching activities.	Extent of teachers' interaction
20.	3.31	I work with other lecturers (teaching any subjects) designing or evaluating materials, curriculum units, and other teaching activities.	
21.	2.75*	Among lecturers teaching the same course, I regularly share teaching ideas or materials with:	
22.	2.50*	Among lecturers in this institute, but not teaching on the same course, I regularly share teaching ideas or materials with:	
23.	2.75*	Among lecturers teaching the same course, I regularly try to solve instructional problems with:	
24.	2.43*	Among lecturers in this institute, but not teaching on the same course, I regularly try to solve instructional problems with:	

Note. $\bar{X}$ = Mean MO=Mode Always =5 Frequently =4 Sometimes =3 Seldom =2 Never =1
Four or more lecturers =5* Three lecturers =4* Two lecturers =3* One lecturer =2* No one =1*

culture suggested by Hargreaves (1994): collaboration, contrived collegiality, balkanization, and individualism.

Please note that the statistical numbers presented for items 1-20 are obtained from participants' responses to 5-point Likert scale questions indicating the frequency of their engagement in a particular professional learning situation. The following is how each number corresponds:

5 = Always
4 = Frequently
3 = Sometimes
2 = Seldom
1 = Never

Further, the statistical numbers indicating participants' Likert scale responses represent the number of people they interact with during their engagement in a particular professional learning situation. These numbers correspond to:

5 = Four or more lecturers
4 = Three lecturers
3 = Two lecturers
2 = One lecturer
1 = No one

In brief, the highlighted rows and columns suggest that the 16 EFL lecturers engaged in different types of work cultures to varying degrees. In essence, the questionnaire reflects the participants' perceptions that they had more engagement in *collaboration* ($\bar{X}$=4.05) than other types of work culture. Given items 1-6, the 16 EFL lecturers perceived that they work collaboratively with colleagues by their own initiative. For example, most of them indicated that they "frequently" provided ($\bar{X}$=4.62) and received ($\bar{X}$=4) encouragement to/from their colleagues. On the other hand, the participant lecturers felt that they had less engagement in *contrived collegiality* ($\bar{X}$=3.43), *individualism* ($\bar{X}$=3.06), and *balkanization* ($\bar{X}$=2.55).

In addition, the next two items (items 17-18) further showed that this group of lecturers engaged in formal professional learning activities (item 18, $\bar{X}$=3.25) such as trainings, workshops, or seminars more than the informal activities (item 17, $\bar{X}$=2.18). Furthermore, the questionnaire provided the reader with an overview of the extent of participants' interaction with colleagues (items 19-24). In particular, items 19 and 20 suggested that professional learning activities of

the EFL lecturers "sometimes" ($\bar{X}$=3.12, 3.21) happened with both colleagues teaching the same and teaching different subjects. Additionally, items 21-24 showed that the numbers of people involved in the activity is rather limited to between "one to two people" ($\bar{X}$=2.43*-2.75*). The previously mentioned statistical data, together with multiple qualitative data, are further analysed and discussed in the findings and discussion chapters (Chapter 6 and 8). Further details concerning the use of statistical data from the questionnaire (i.e., mode, mean) can be found in Section 8.1, Chapter 8.

5.2. Qualitative Data

In addition to the questionnaire data, to fully obtain an understanding of the participant lecturers' professional learning, semi-structured interviews, observations and written documents were employed in this study. In total, the researcher conducted 16 interviews, with 15 EFL lecturers teaching the same subject and the Director of this institution. Furthermore, the researcher spent eight weeks observing participants' day-to-day interactions with colleagues occurring within the workplace. During the observation period, 66 field notes were taken. Additionally, written documents evidencing participants' learning opportunities were also collected. Due to obvious constraints in terms of word limit the researcher could not provide all of the participants' interview transcriptions, observation field notes, and written documents. Accordingly, some of the relevant data are presented in this chapter as the reader's synopsis to the findings to be discussed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. Since all the data will be subsequently discussed in greater depth according to the research questions, this synopsis of the qualitative findings is presented under the following three subsections with regard to the three research questions' themes; (5.2.1) types of learning activities; (5.2.2) perceptions towards professional learning; and (5.2.3) work culture.

5.2.1 Types of Learning Activities

Data from semi-structured interviews, observations, and written documents are employed to outline the qualitative findings from the first research question: "What types of learning activities does a group of Thai university EFL teachers engage in?" The data suggests 21 professional learning activities that are

subsequently found to have six distinctive characteristics in common. These distinctions (Table 5.4) that emerged from the participants' responses could be categorised into two broad types of learning activities (formal and informal) and another four subcategories (inside the workplace; outside the workplace; as part of teachers' practices; outside teachers' practices). Please note that due to the language varieties of the participants, some non-standard English sentences occasionally appear in the transcription.

Table 5.4: ***Examples of interview results regarding the 1st research question***

Formal Professional Learning Activities		**Informal Professional Learning Activities**	
Inside **workplace**	***Outside*** **workplace**	***As Part of*** **Teachers' Practices**	***Outside*** **Teachers' Practices**
I believe they have many workshops, seminars, or that kind of meetings, but there's a schedule conflict. Most of the time the activities are held on Tuesday morning. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013).	There are some drives now, to encourage people to do some higher education, to do research, and other kinds of project because the Institute is stressing it out. (Ervin, interview, July 5, 2013).	From the students, themselves, is very helpful to learn if you are being effective, you know? In the classroom, you can keep getting feedback from the students. (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013).	I mainly try to solve the problems myself, first. If it's not possible, then I ask someone. They are my close-knitted colleagues who became my best friends. (Noi, interview, September 5, 2013).
Actually, the Director of the Foundation Courses, if I can say, she set a meeting between teachers teaching the Foundation courses… She told us to do many things together like designing exam papers, setting regulations for grade submitting, and setting the date and time (Wan, interview, September 20, 2013).	Yes, I think the development and the support is there…I know from the other full-time lecturers… I can see the progress that other lecturers are making. They are studying a Master program and the PhD program (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013).	I look for the evaluation forms from my students. What they thought should be improved, I try to incorporate their comments into my lesson plan. Especially, for undergrad students, I usually look at the evaluation form and see whether there are problems that I can resolve (Phai, interview, August 7, 2013).	I'm browsing the YouTube of the famous language institutes. Maybe some of them are posting the clips, so I look and then I try to see what they did in their teaching to see whether there are any strategies that I can adapt into my own teaching (Som, interview, July 16, 2013).

With regard to the table, the reader will see that the two left hand columns contain examples of participant responses describing their engagement in formal professional learning activities (occurring both inside and outside of the workplace) such as workshops, seminars, meetings, and postgraduate level education. Furthermore, examples of participants' responses provided in the other two columns indicated that some of them developed their profession through more informal paths such as their students' feedback, conversations with colleagues, and online learning resources. The data also suggested that the participants could access these informal paths of professional development

directly through their teaching practices and other sources outside of their practice.

In addition, these learning activities were similarly depicted through the observations. Throughout the eight weeks of fieldwork, 66 field notes were taken, each following a similar structure (as shown in Figure 4.1, Chapter 4). According to the constraints of the researcher's ability to observe participants' behaviour occurring outside of the participants' office hours, there were no observational data identifying types of professional learning activities occurring outside of the workplace. Such learning opportunities were qualitatively depicted through interview and written documents. In short, the 66 field notes indicated both formal and informal professional learning activities. For example, the EFL lecturers typically learnt formally through: orientation meetings, teacher evaluation meetings, and knowledge management seminars. Additionally, they sometimes informally helped each other in preparing teaching material before class time and through discussion about teaching problems during their lunch period. The field notes evidenced formal professional learning related activities more than the informal. Moreover, each group of participants engaged in the two types of learning activities to different degrees. For example, full-time Thai lecturers noticeably had the greatest degree of engagement in formal learning activities. These pieces of data were subsequently bridged together with other data sources in order to provide rigid information regarding participants' professional learning situations, which will be discussed at a deeper level of analysis in Chapter 6.

Furthermore, written documents also helped the researcher identify types of professional learning experienced by the 16 EFL lecturers. The reader can see, for example, in Figure 4.2 (Chapter 4) sample of leaflets advertising professional development events posted in particular areas in the study site. Information provided in the leaflets is, for example:

> Dear Colleagues, On behalf of the Research and Teaching Development Committee, we extend a warm and cordial invitation to you a seminar of "Research in ELT" by Prof Dr *Theodor Hermann* from *Agora Valley State University*. The seminar will be held at our 2nd floor meeting room on Tuesday, the 30th of July from 9:30-12:30. We encourage you to take this opportunity to explore the many facets of research in ELT and seeking for Dr *Hermann*'s professional suggestions on how to improve

your current research in the area (Written document collected on June 2013, italic texts are pseudonyms).

It can be seen from this example that aside from the types of professional learning occurring in this particular workplace, the written document also helps to identify the support of the workplace for each type of learning activity. Detailed analysis and further discussion of the aforementioned data sources are provided in Chapter 6.

The researcher is aware that sub-categorising the data (into two main categories and another four sub-categories) could lead to a certain degree of complexity and difficulty for the reader in following the presentation of the research findings. Therefore, the researcher developed a three layered circular graphic (Figure 5.1) to help the reader more easily understand the findings and more clearly picture the distinctions between each group of participants' engagement in the different kinds of professional development activities. This type of graphic organisation appears repeatedly in this chapter and the following one to help the researcher compare and contrast an overall picture of the three groups of participants' engagement in each learning activity (Figure 6.4-6.10, Chapter 6).

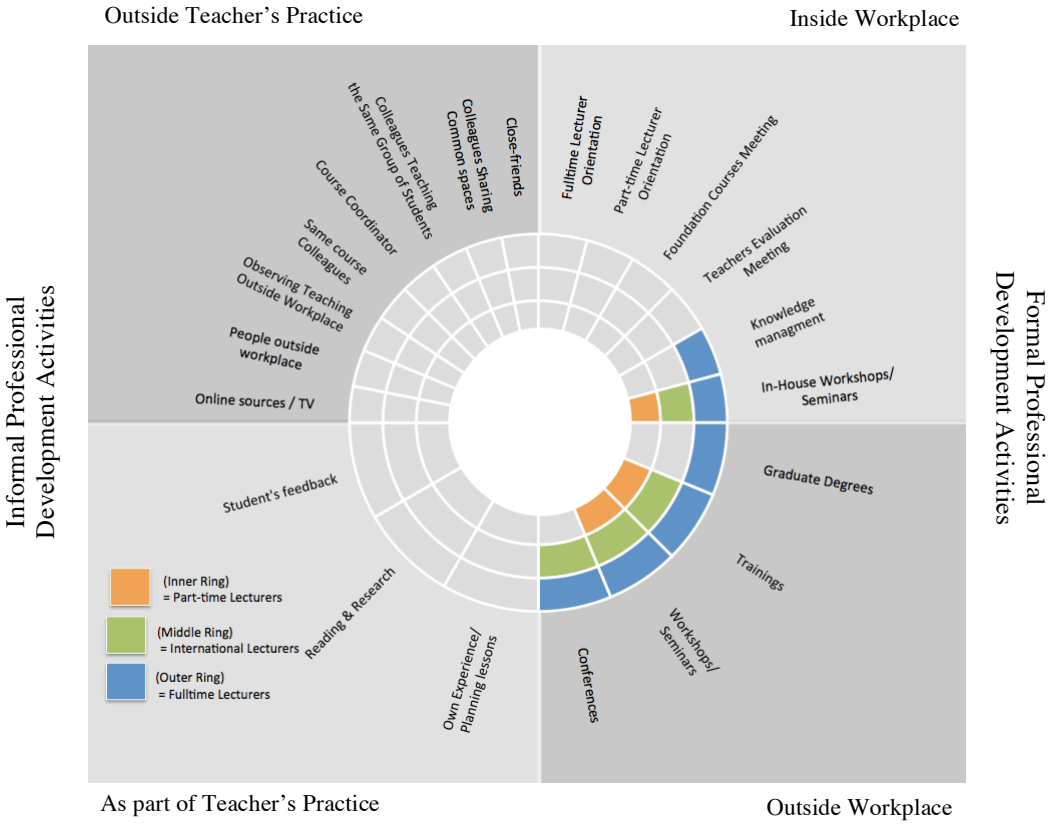


***Figure* 5.1: Sample of circular figure**

With regard to the three circular layers, the blue outer ring, the green middle ring, and the orange inner ring represent full-time Thai lecturers (*N*=7), non-Thai lecturers (*N*=4), and part-time lecturers (*N*=5), respectively. The right half of the circular figure demonstrates formal professional development activities. The upper right represents formal professional development activities occurring within the workplace, whilst the lower sections indicate learning activities occurring outside of the workplace. The left half of the circular figure indicates informal professional development activities. In terms of the upper left and lower left, the reader can identify informal professional development activities occurring outside teaching practice and as part of teaching practice, respectively. When research evidence indicates a particular professional learning activity, the grid in each ring will be filled with a particular colour according to the group in which the participant belongs. For example, when the data indicates full-time lecturers' engagement in a knowledge management (KM) activity, the outer-ring grid demonstrating KM is filled with the colour blue. In contrast, when there is no data indicating such learning activity, the grid remains grey. For example, as the data suggests no engagement of non-Thai lecturers and part-time lecturers in KM activities, the grids indicating KM in the middle and the inner rings remain grey.

Please note that the size of each grid justifies neither the degree of engagement of the participants in each learning activity nor the number of occurrences of a particular learning activity. Each grid with orange, green, or blue only represents the existence of the particular learning activity in the study context. If any grids appear grey, this means that those particular kinds of learning activities are not found through interviews, observations, written documents, or questionnaire data. Furthermore, due to the nature of the fieldwork data (obtained from multiple qualitative data collection tools: semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and written document collection), the findings on this social phenomenon are too complex to be precisely counted and numerically presented. In addition, the relationship between the nature of the fieldwork data and its findings has been highlighted in Wolcott (1988) in that the data obtained from fieldwork are socially descriptive rather than statistical. Accordingly, there is no

systematic numeric data showing any frequency counts or percentages attached to this kind of graphic organisation.

5.2.2 Perceptions towards Professional Learning

Whilst the professional learning activities of the participants were explored through multiple data sources, their perceptions towards the learning were unveiled through semi-structured interviews with the use of the following questions:

- What is teacher professional learning in your own understanding?
- What does professional learning mean to you?
- How do you think these activities benefit your professional development: attending seminars, training courses, working together with your colleagues?

An initial analysis of the participants' responses indicated that most of the participants (11 out of 16) indicated their uncertain understanding about what teacher professional learning is. Moreover, a further analysis showed that the participants' answers to the questions were distinctly various in their foci. The reader can take the following interview excerpts as examples:

> For my professional learning, I think I try to come up with the idea on how to improve my teaching on my own. (Director, August 6, 2013)
>
> From my understanding, professional learning is the way that teacher learns from various things to develop their teachings. They can learn from their own experience, their colleagues, even from their students. (Dang, September 13, 2013)
>
> The first impression of this word is something far away from me. On the contrary, this is something I'm doing. I am doing a PhD degree as a part of my professional development. (Nim, August 30, 2013)

It can be noticed from the examples that teacher professional learning in the participants' perspectives ranges from individual teaching experiences; discussion with colleagues; student comments; to individual study through formal education. In addition, further analysis suggests that such varieties of the participants' descriptions of professional learning share two common distinctions: teacher learning as *individual learning* and teacher learning as *collaborative learning*. In particular, most of participants' definitions were found to predominantly focus on *individual* participation in *formal learning activities*. Figure 5.2 presents the trend of participants' perspectives towards the learning.

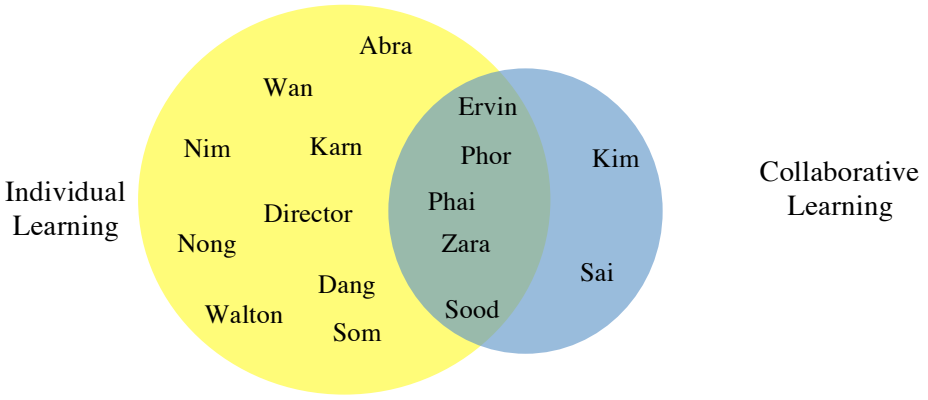


Figure 5.2: Participants' perceptions towards teacher professional learning

Given Figure 5.2, the reader will notice that few participant lecturers (*N*=2) distinctly described their learning as collaborative learning experiences with their colleagues (see the smaller circle), whilst five viewed the learning in both senses (see the intersected area of the circles). It could be deduced from the data that individual learning is a trend of this particular group of lecturers' professional development. Additionally, most of the learning activities that the participants mentioned whilst describing individual learning were the formal learning activities (e.g., training, workshops, and graduate degrees). Of significance to note is that this particular set of findings is consistent with the statistical findings from the questionnaire and the main findings discussed in Chapter 6 regarding the first research question. The consistency in the findings is that the participant lecturers have greater engagement in formal professional learning activities than the informal. In particular, the data also suggested a slight difference in how different groups of participants (full-time Thai, non-Thai, and part-time lecturers) described the learning. For instance, full-time Thai lecturers described professional learning in the individual sense with the highest percentage (86%) when compared to the other two groups. The following interview responses are examples of how most of the full-time Thai lecturers described professional learning in the individual sense:

> We should improve ourselves and develop our profession by going to workshop, and conducting research. It's my self-development strategy. (Nong, interview, August 6, 2013)

> I think professional learning is the way teachers try to do some research, present the research all over the world and to further their study in PhD degree. (Karn, interview, July 26, 2013)

Even the two full-time Thai lecturers articulated different learning activities, their descriptions of how teachers learn similarly focused on *individual* participation in the learning activities. They correspondingly mentioned neither interaction with their colleagues nor the engagement of their colleagues in each of their learning activities. A detailed analysis and further discussion of how each group of participants viewed their learning and the obstacles blocking them from engaging in each type of learning activities can be found in the Findings and Discussion of Chapter 7.

5.2.3 Work Culture

The third research question focuses on the nature of the teachers' participation in professional learning activities in terms of their work culture. In addition, to help the researcher clarify the participants' types of work culture, she employed Hargreaves' (1994) four types of teachers work culture (individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality, and balkanization). The work culture was investigated through three data collection tools: questionnaires, interviews, and observations. At the beginning of this chapter, the overview of the questionnaires' findings about the participant lecturers' types of work culture were displayed (see Section 5.1.2). In essence, the questionnaire suggested the participants' perceptions of their work culture that showed more engagement in collaboration ($\bar{X}$=4.05) than contrived collegiality ($\bar{X}$=3.43), individualism ($\bar{X}$=3.06), or balkanization ($\bar{X}$=2.55). In contrast, through the interviews and observations, the four types of work culture were depicted to different degrees. Remarkably, the two qualitative data sources suggested a lower tendency for collaboration relative to the questionnaire results.

The qualitative data sources suggested two types of work culture with the most distinctive being found for the first time in this workplace context. The two main types of work culture of this university level institution were workplace-kinship, (a newly discovered type) and individualism. Workplace-kinship was originally coined by the researcher of this study and first introduced in this research according to the discovery of a particular form of lecturers' subgrouping that

could not be aligned with Hargreaves' (1994) balkanization. In brief, workplace-kinship refers to lecturers fracturing into small subgroups according to their similarities. This additional type of work culture is in-depth defined and discussed (as a category related to balkanization) in Section 8.2.1, Chapter 8. Additionally, the reader can find examples of participant interview responses indicating workplace-kinship and other types of work culture in the Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: *Examples of participants' interview responses indicating their work culture*

Workplace Kinship & Balkanization **(14 times mentioned through interviews)**	It might be a culture. Like people tend to like to be with the people from their own culture, so they can speak the same language, they watch the same programs on TV, they got the same concerns and they do the same courses, so they got more in common. Whereas, if they have to be with other groups, they have to be more careful about what they have to say. They might offend someone or they might not understand. (Zara, July 16, 2013) I have people in my office floor. I work with them more. It's nothing formal and planed. It's just because we see each other more. (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013)
Individualism **(12 times mentioned through interviews)**	I'd rather work individually. I guess it's because I just used to it. It's the way I am. I think, I like to interact with other people, but feel like the responsibility of the classroom and the students' success is on me. (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013) I haven't talk with many people, especially, my co-lecturers. I do know who they are. I have two co-lecturers, but they teach speaking and listening using different textbooks. So maybe that's why we don't need to talk that much and I most of the time work alone. (Kim, July 19, 2013)
Contrived Collegiality **(7 times mentioned through interviews)**	We still offer… still keep organizing workshop or session. I mean the KM workshop in which the colleagues would have opportunity to share what they do or what they have learnt from outside the institute or from their research so that they can let other colleagues know what they have done or what they think would be useful for the development of us of the faculty members. (Director, August 6, 2013)
Collaboration **(2 times mentioned through interviews)**	Mostly, I would ask for advice from other teachers usually people I came across in the common room. When I came across some problems something that I wasn't sure about I just asked around… I also asked about their experience and how did they handle the situation and their suggestions. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

The types of work culture displayed in the table 5.5 were arranged according to the frequency of their occurrences. Meaning that workplace-kinship (and balkanization) and individualism were mentioned more often (14 and 12 times) through the participants' interview responses than contrived collegiality (7 times) and collaboration (2 times). This means observation field notes regarding participants' interactions with colleagues taken in the meeting room and common

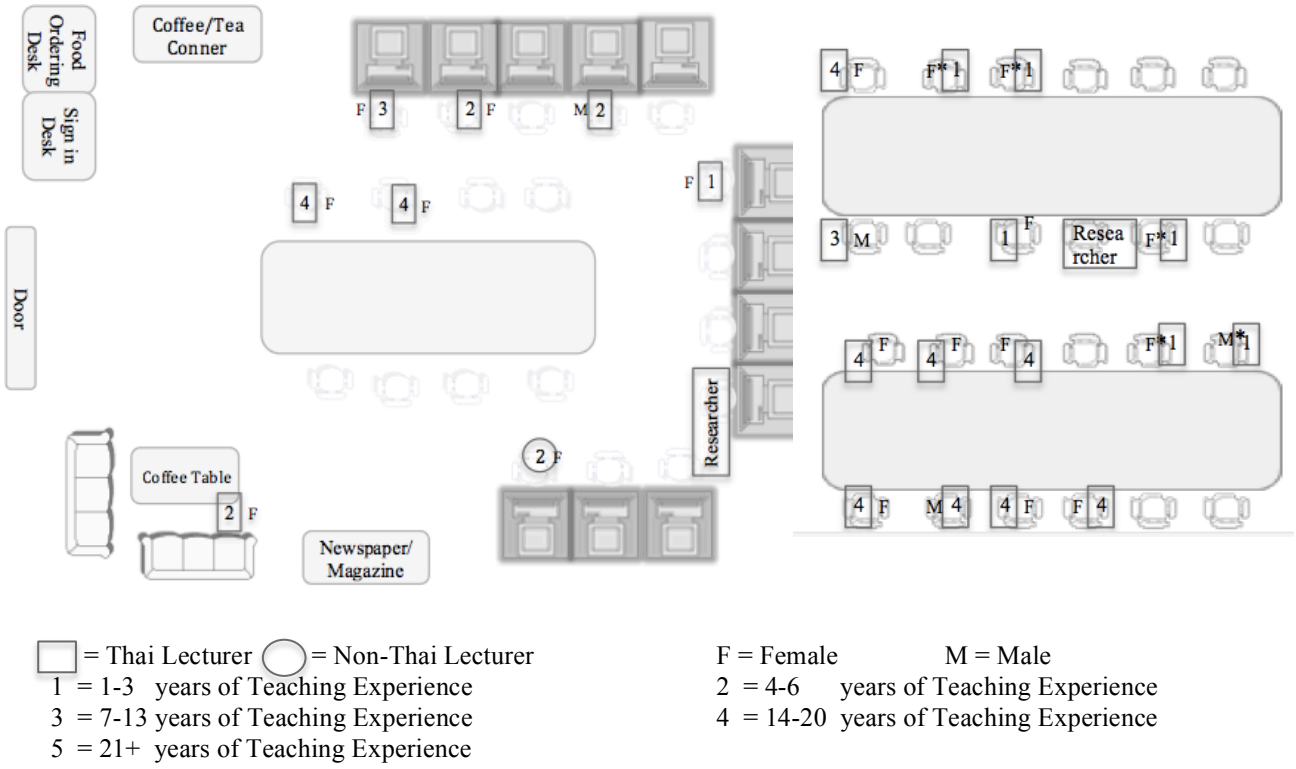


***Figure 5.3*: Lecturers' common room and pantry from observation field notes**

areas in the workplace revealed relatively a similar situation. For example, participants' engagement in workplace-kinship can be see in Figure 5.3. The figure is an example from observation field notes taken during observations in the lecturers' common room (left) and their pantries (right).

Considering all rectangular and circular shapes (containing the numbers 1 to 4) in the field notes, it is clear that the participants preferred interacting with colleagues who shared a similar amount of teaching experience. Moreover, most of the observations recurrently unveiled similar situations, as shown in the figure. Accordingly, it could be inferred that similarities influenced the social interactions of the lecturers in this particular workplace. The way in which such similarities connect each workplace member together is, originally for this study, referred to as the work culture of workplace-kinship. In particular, similarities in terms of teaching experience significantly influenced how this particular group of lecturers socialised. Apart from the factor of teaching experience, observations further suggested teaching status, native languages, and the physical setting were reasons contributing to the participants having more interactions with some

particular groups of colleagues than others. The various factors influencing the participants' work culture are categorised and discussed in Chapter 8.

5.3. Overall Results from Quantitative and Qualitative data

In essence, the statistical data showed that participants perceived that they had more engagement in collaboration than other forms of work culture (based on Hargreaves' [1994] four types of teacher work culture). The quantitative data also suggested an overview that the professional learning activities of the EFL lecturers were rather limited amongst a small number of colleagues. In addition, the 16 participants had a tendency to engage in formal professional learning activities such as trainings, workshops, or seminars more than the informal activities.

In addition to the statistical data, two themes of participants' perceptions towards their professional learning immerged from interviews: teacher professional learning as *individual learning* and teacher professional learning as *collaborative learning*. The data showed that the majority of participants tended to perceive their learning as individual learning experience. Most of them shared that they treated learning as an individual responsibility that required less involvement from colleagues.

Additionally, the qualitative data suggested that the participants tended to engage with their colleagues in small sub-group(s) form rather than in collaborative forms of work culture. Furthermore, this set of data indicated a type of work culture that is unique and not applicable with any types of work culture previously defined in the literature of the field. The present study revealed this unique pattern of workplace interactions and originally introduced it as "workplace-kinship".

Taking together quantitative and qualitative findings, this study found that different groups of participants (full-time Thai lecturers, non-Thai lecturers, and part-time lecturers) had diverse degrees of engagement and levels of opportunity to engage in professional learning activities, particularly those offered by the workplace (formal professional learning activities). The part-time lecturers, considerably, received the lowest degree of support and experienced several obstacles in accessing such learning opportunities. This set of findings

highlighted the significant influence of the contractual status (e.g., full-time and part-time) on the inequality of teacher learning opportunities and the quality of teacher professional development in this context. Furthermore, the combination of quantitative and qualitative findings also stressed the difference between the participants' self-reported focus on collaboration and the individualism and workplace-kinship observed by the researcher. Comprehensive analysis and detailed discussions regarding these key findings are provided in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

6. Findings and Discussion I

This chapter presents and discusses the findings in relation to the first research question, which explores "types of learning activities that this particular group of Thai EFL lecturers engaged in". In addition to the types of learning activities, which were an original focus of this question, the data suggested an inequality of learning opportunities for the teaching staff at this study site as one of the major influences on this research question. Accordingly, types of professional learning activities and opportunities for participant lecturers to access those learning activities are the main themes of this discussion chapter. The data presented here were drawn from the following: semi-structured interviews with 16 EFL lecturers teaching the same subject; 66 observation field notes on participants' day-to-day interactions with colleagues; participant responses to questionnaires; and written documents evidencing their learning opportunities, e.g., posters on the notice boards, course memoranda, and circulated e-mails. Since there was no register taken at meetings, observation field notes were also used to identify the number of participants involved in each meeting. In addition, it is also important to note that data from the questionnaire have only been included minimally, because most of the questionnaire items were designed to indicate the nature of the participation in professional learning activities in terms of their work culture (see Chapter 7) and only two out of the 24 items were specifically constructed to elicit an initial indication of the types of professional learning activities that the participants were engaging in, along with a descriptive overview of the extent of their engagement in each type of learning activity.

Through the fieldwork, 21 types of lecturers' learning opportunities were identified and they were categorised into two main categories: (1) formal professional development opportunities, and (2) informal professional development opportunities. Furthermore, each of these two broad categories consists of two sub-categories which are influenced by Knapp (2003) and Nagamine's (2007) views on teacher professional development and professional learning activities (see Section 3.1, Chapter 3 for detail). Over the course of an academic semester, fieldwork observations indicated the variety of participants' learning opportunities. Different participant groups (full-time Thai, non-Thai, and part-time lecturers) were offered different (and in some cases, fewer)

opportunities. In particular, this study found that participants had different levels of opportunities to access various types of *formal* learning opportunities offered by the workplace, for example, conferences, seminars, graduate degrees, and meetings. In addition, participants engaged in *informal* types of professional development opportunities to different degrees through activities such as learning from student feedback, conversations with colleagues, or solving instructional problems by searching for more information online.

Compared to formal opportunities, informal opportunities were more related to teachers' everyday practices, such as learning from student feedback in order to adjust their teaching methods or materials. Moreover, the main difference between these two types of learning opportunities was noticeable in that formal professional development was officially organised by the workplace or specialised organisations outside of the workplace, whilst the individual teacher initiated his or her own informal development opportunities. As part of the data analysis, each of the two types of development opportunities were further subdivided into two different sub-categories based on where the learning opportunities took place.

Formal development opportunities were differentiated into two types: those taking place (6.1.1) within the workplace and those taking place (6.1.2) outside of the workplace. The opportunities were sub-categorised in this way as the present research placed a greater emphasis on learning occurring within the teachers' workplace rather than outside. Additionally, this is because previous literature clearly suggests that learning opportunities within a job-embedded context have significant influence on teachers' learning and are critical in sustaining teachers' development (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1991; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Hargreaves, 1994; Kleinsasser & Sato, 2007; Shulman, 1989). This perspective also reflects a social constructivist view of teachers' learning in context and conditions that promote learning (see Section 3.1.2, Chapter 3 for further detail). Formal learning opportunities situated *within the workplace* include participation in different kinds of meetings and in-house workshops or seminars. Formal learning opportunities taking place *outside the workplace* include the participants' engagement in academic conferences, workshops, seminars, training, and postgraduate courses.

Similarly, informal learning opportunities were also divided into two types: those occurring as part of teachers' practice (6.2.1) and those taking place outside of teachers' practice (6.2.2). Informal learning opportunities occurring as part of their practice include learning from any activities that the participants were responsible for as part of their job, for example, lesson planning, conducting research for their teaching, and assessing student work. Teachers also informally learn from other activities outside of their teaching practice such as, for example, learning from their colleagues, from experts outside of the workplace, and from online sources.

Linking all the categories and sub-categories together, the researcher developed a circular figure to illustrate the overall picture of learning opportunities found in this workplace (an explanation of the construction of the figure was introduced in Section 5.2.1, Chapter 5). Figures 6.4-6.10 help demonstrate each kind of learning opportunity and the relationship of each group of participants with each type of professional learning opportunity. Particularly in Figures 6.4, 6.5, 6.7, and 6.8, the researcher specifically focuses on one quadrant at a time to explain the phenomenon to avoid complexity and an overload of information. In this discussion chapter, seven circular figures are presented to offer a clear picture of each group of participants' degrees of engagement in each particular learning opportunity. Following the aforementioned structure, the following sections further discuss each type of the learning opportunity found in this workplace and the level of the participants' engagement in each.

6.1. Formal Professional Development Opportunities

It was initially evident from the questionnaire (item 17 and 18) that the group of EFL lecturers engaged in formal learning opportunities to a higher degree than in informal ones. When participants were asked to respond to a five-point Likert scale question indicating the frequency of how they develop their teaching practice from formal learning activities, most of them selected sometimes ($\overline{X}$= 3.25) or more frequently. (Further statistical information can be found in column B18, Appendix E). Furthermore, data from observations, interviews and written documentation suggested that participants had different levels of opportunity to engage in the 10 types of formal professional learning activities. The 10 formal learning activities were categorised into two sub-categories, based on where each

of them took place: (6.1.1) within the workplace and (6.1.2) outside the workplace. Moreover, the study showed that part-time lecturers had the most limited access to such activities. Details of each learning activity and each group of participants' distinctive degrees of engagement in them are presented as follows.

6.1.1Within the Workplace

Throughout the fieldwork, the researcher found that six of the ten formal learning opportunities that the participants engaged in were offered by the workplace. All were found to be offered unequally to the different groups of teaching staff. The first two formal learning opportunities available within the workplace were the pre-semester orientation meetings for EFL lecturers. However, the researcher had to divide these orientations into two separate sections because each occurred on different days and involved different audiences, i.e., full-time lecturers or part-time lecturers. In addition to the orientation meetings, the participants also formally learnt from an English foundation courses meeting, teacher evaluation meetings, knowledge management seminars, and other in-house workshops and seminars. The learning opportunities and the degrees of participants' access to each of them are described in the six sub-sections below.

6.1.1.1 Orientation for Full-Time Lecturers

The first formal professional learning opportunity offered in this workplace was orientation for full-time lecturers. Distinctly, this learning opportunity was unequally available to all teaching staff at this site. The data suggested that it was compulsory and designed particularly specifically for participation of full-time lecturers. None of the part-time lecturers had access to this meeting as the institute arranged a separate orientation meeting for them at a different time.

This meeting was intended to report all important events and changes concerning the workplace and courses from the previous semester, and to prepare the teaching staff for changes in the curriculum, as well as to inform them of the new policies and activities for the coming semester. In addition, the afternoon session of the pre-semester meeting had teaching related workshops, providing the lecturers with the opportunity to share both their successes and failures in

teaching. The meeting lasted for approximately two hours in the morning and two additional hours in the afternoon.

According to observation (see Figure 6.1), there were 50 attendees (out of 67 members of teaching staff in total) participating in this meeting. Whilst acting as

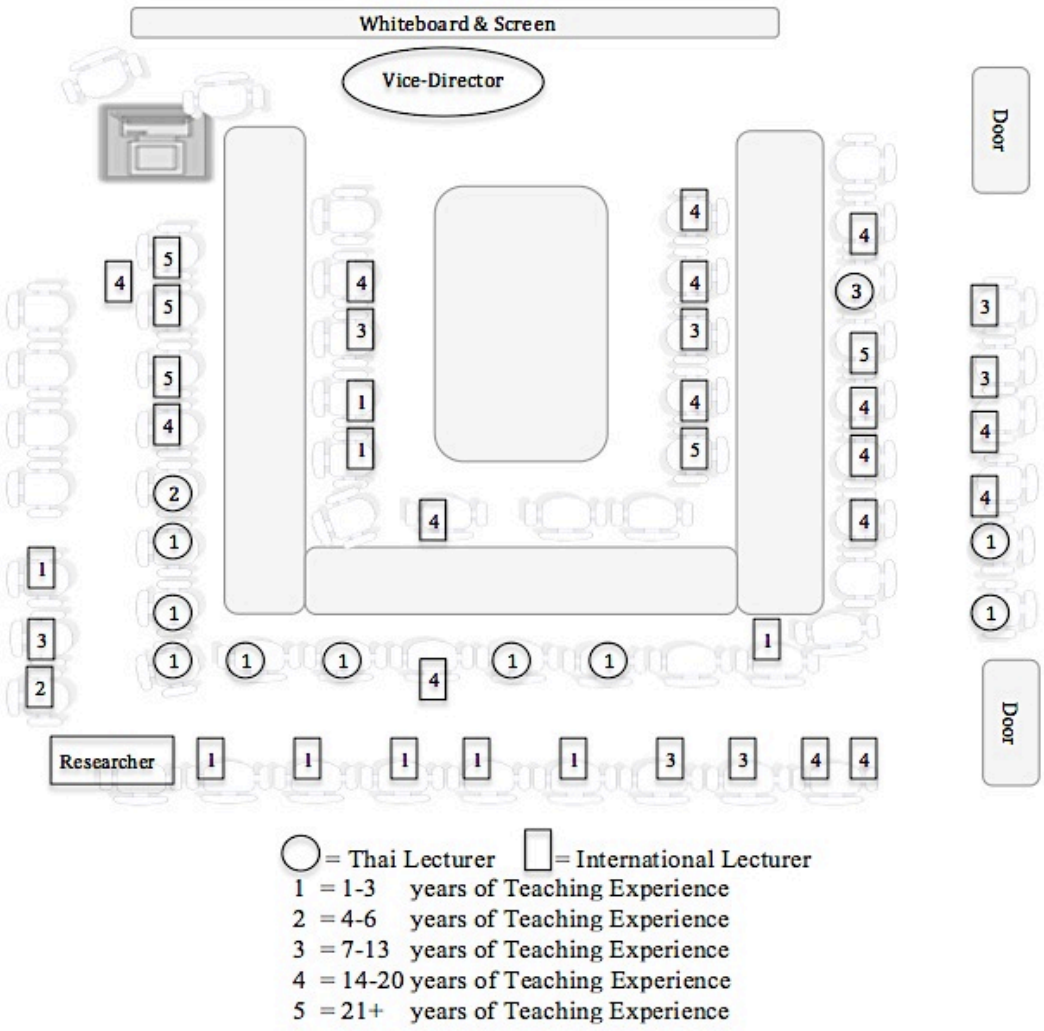


***Figure 6.1*: An observation field note of the participants' seating in the meeting**

a participant observer, with the consent of participants, the researcher witnessed the Director of the Institute and the Vice-Directors of the Institute leading all discussions throughout the meetings (see observation field notes in Appendix F). The researcher further observed that the Thai and non-Thai lecturers shared similar degrees of engagement in the meeting. Observation also revealed that the lecturers rarely expressed their opinions, unless they were directly asked.

Additionally, the two groups of participants had another common preference; most of them spontaneously sat next to colleagues who shared a similar amount of teaching experience (see the number inside each square and circular shape in Figure 6.1). Further discussion of this issue can be found in Chapter 7, where the third research question which explores the work culture and the nature of the teachers' participation in professional learning activities will be discussed. This kind of gathering possibly implies that if there were any kind of learning through the exchange of opinions with colleagues during the meeting, that particular learning would be limited to remain within the particular sub-groups of participants. During the semester-long observation, the researcher also found that this meeting was one of the only two points at which each lecturer could see all of his or her colleagues at the same time.

For the foundation subjects, two lecturers were responsible for each group of students. One was responsible for speaking and listening skills, and the other was responsible for reading and writing. Typically, non-Thai lecturers were responsible for the speaking and listening parts, whilst the Thai lecturers covered the reading and writing parts. However, as mentioned above, the interaction between lecturers was mostly limited to their shared cultural groups (Thai with Thai; non-Thai with non-Thai) and with lecturers sharing similar amounts of teaching experience. As a result, the researcher did not observe interaction between Thai and non-Thai lecturers in this particular meeting, which meant there was also almost no interaction between co-lecturers during the morning of the meeting. Additionally, the part-time lecturers were not invited to join this orientation meeting, so they also missed the opportunity to meet other full-time lecturers and their co-lecturers. Furthermore, the part-time lecturers also missed the chance to learn from the teaching related workshop in the afternoon.

6.1.1.2 Orientation for Part-time Lecturers

Whilst all full-time lecturers were invited to the pre-semester meeting, the occasion where the largest number of lecturers gathered, part-time lecturers were made to meet on a different date (a day or two after the full-time lecturer orientation). The researcher noticed some similarities between the two meetings in that both meetings aimed to prepare lecturers for teaching the English foundation classes in the coming semester. Similarly, both were held once a

semester and the same type and amount of teaching related documents were delivered to participant lecturers attending these meetings.

However, the part-time lecturer meeting was considerably shorter and the number of lecturers in this meeting was significantly lower than in the full-time meeting. Observation showed that there were two full-time lecturers in this meeting due to their responsibilities as coordinators of the course. Another noticeable difference between the two was the physical location. Whilst the full-time lecturer orientation was held in a meeting room (see Figure 6.1), the part-time lecturers' orientation was held in a lecturers' lounge (Figure 2.1, Chapter 2) where other social interactions were occurring in parallel. The researcher witnessed more than seven faculty members walking in and out of the room, two full-time lecturers holding a conversation at the coffee table, as well as a full-time lecturer using a computer in the lounge during the course of the part-time lecturer orientation.

The two course coordinators of English Foundation II called seven part-time lecturers to an orientation meeting in the lecturer's lounge to collect various teaching materials such as textbooks, worksheets, and course syllabi. Six of the seven part-time lecturers had been employed in this location for a couple of years and had some experience in teaching this particular subject. During the meeting, the researcher observed that the coordinators briefly informed all lecturers of the course content, grading system, particular working system of the Institute, and what to do if they had problems. During the two hours of meeting observations, a small number of conversations amongst the part-time lecturers and the two course coordinators were witnessed, as evidenced by the observation field note below:

> The part-time lecturers barely asked anything. They, most of the time, were reading the course syllabus and listening to the coordinators. Only one of them asked about how to contact her co- lecturer. Then the others shared the same concern. The meeting ended within two hours with answers from one of the coordinators on how to contact their co-lecturers. (Observation, May 25, 2013)

The researcher also noted that whilst this meeting took place in the lounge where other full-time lecturers were using the computers, reading the newspaper, and drinking coffee, there was no interaction between the part-time lecturers in the

meeting and the full-time lecturers around the room. It was later discovered that this situation was rather common for this workplace, in that the researcher observed that most often the full-time and part-time lecturers had almost no interaction when they shared the same spaces.

6.1.1.3 English Foundation II Courses Meeting

The other type of formal learning opportunity offered by this workplace was the English Foundation Courses meeting. This meeting was held once a semester and was one of only two occasions (the other was the orientation) that every full-time lecturer teaching the same subject gathered together. The meeting was also another opportunity for lecturers to meet their co-lecturers. Since this was held the same day as the orientation meeting, 16 full-time English Foundation II lecturers from the morning meeting also attended this course meeting. Once again, throughout the observation period the researcher did not observe any part-time lecturers at this meeting.

In the two hours of meeting observations the researcher observed one full-time lecturer, the Director of the Foundation Courses, leading the meeting. The Director stated in the meeting that she wanted the meeting to be a place where all lecturers could share their teaching experiences and express their concerns regarding any aspect of teaching. However, the researcher witnessed very few responses from just a couple of participants. During the meeting the Director provided all lecturers with their teaching schedules, described each lecturer's responsibilities, explained student assignments, and grading criteria. She further asked lecturers their opinions of the grading criteria. Throughout the meeting, the researcher found that when the participants were asked to reflect on their understanding or share comments, most often the Thai lecturers with more than six years of teaching experience responded to the questions.

For example, when this group of lecturers was asked for their opinion of the grading criteria, one experienced lecturer responded to the question by sharing her concerns. However, the researcher observed that no answer was given and no further discussion of her concerns was made. The only response from the Director to the question was an explanation that the Institute administrative team would possibly consider this issue in the following semester. Aside from this

experienced lecturer, no one asked any questions, shared any opinions, or expressed any concerns about this particular issue in the meeting. The situation observed correlated with participants' interview responses regarding this type of meeting. See the following interview transcript as an example.

> Actually, the Director of the Foundation Courses, if I can say, she set a meeting between teachers teaching the Foundation courses, but I don't think it helps. Because some persons take them just for granted. I don't think it helps. She told us to do many things together like designing exam papers, setting regulations for grade submitting, and setting the date and time. (Wan, interview, September 20, 2013)

It was apparent from both the interviews about and observations of the Foundation Courses meeting that participant lecturers were less engaged in the meeting and scarcely contributed either knowledge or their general opinion of this kind of social gathering. (Participants' perspectives on this type of learning activity are further discussed in Chapter 6). In terms of each group's participation in this particular meeting, most of the time the researcher perceived that the Thai lecturers preferred to sit next to each other and speak within their groups, not to the entire meeting group. Meanwhile, the non-Thai lecturers sat independently and also did not share their opinions with the whole group. Additionally, no interaction between the two groups of lecturers, Thai and non-Thai lecturers, was witnessed.

6.1.1.4 Teacher Evaluation Meeting

Another kind of formal learning opportunity the researcher found in this workplace was the teacher evaluation meeting. This meeting was held once during the academic semester long-fieldwork (around the middle of the semester). As with the teacher orientation and the English Foundation Course meetings, this learning opportunity was unequally provided to the teaching staff as it was arranged specifically for the full-time lecturers. Twice every academic semester, all lecturers were evaluated by their students based on the criteria approved in this meeting. Specifically for the full-time lecturers scores from the evaluation, together with scores from their other work, would be considered and rated as their performance score for that particular academic year. This kind of meeting happened when there were changes to the teacher evaluation criteria.

Topics covered in this meeting mainly related to the differences between the current and new teacher evaluation criteria and the lecturers' opinions of the new regulations. The researcher viewed this teacher evaluation meeting as a potential venue for professional learning because all lecturers were asked to share their difficulties in teaching resulting from the current evaluation criteria, along with the way each of them handled these difficulties discovered during their teaching. In addition to their opinions of the new regulations, the participant lecturers were asked to predict any problems that could occur due to the new policy and were asked to brainstorm possible preventative measures for these expected problems. For the semester during the study period, the Vice Director of the Institute arranged a meeting to ask for full-time Thai lecturers' opinions and approval of a minor change in the new evaluation criteria. The change would later result in a

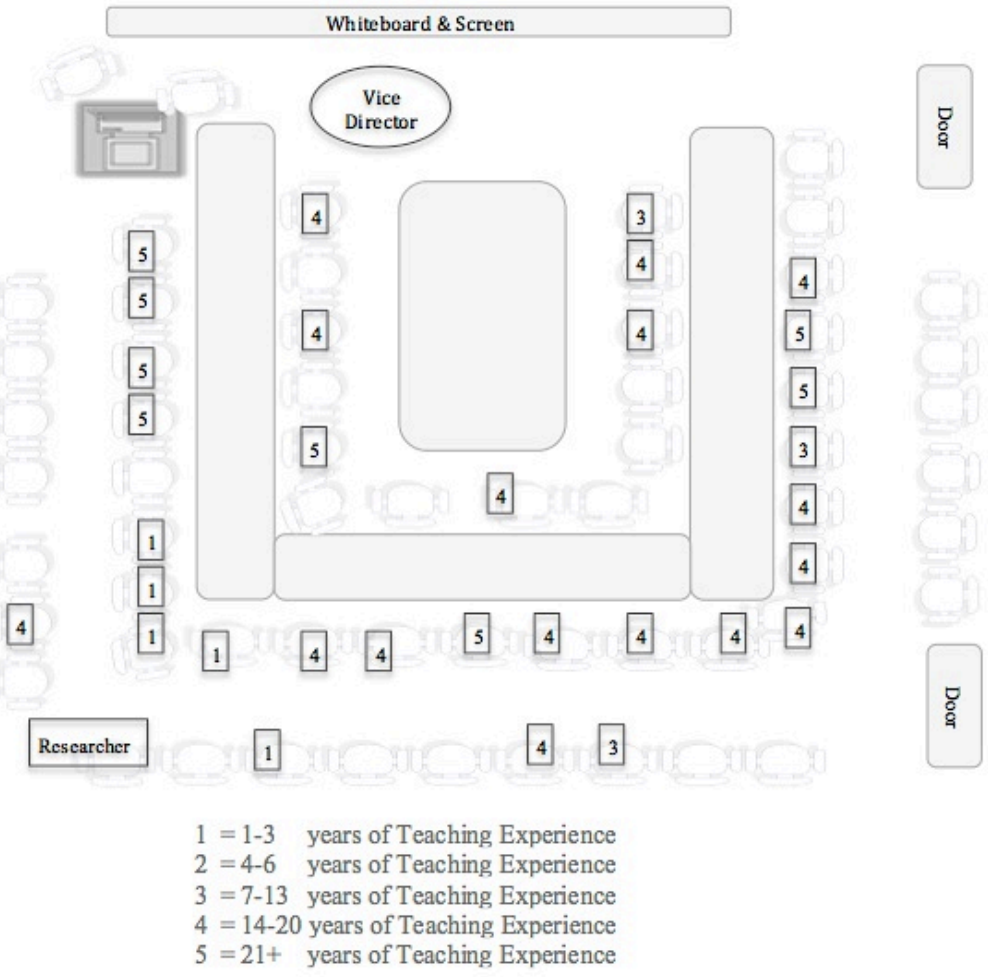


***Figure* 6.2: How full-time Thai lecturers sit in the teacher evaluation meeting**

higher priority for research and an increase in the research responsibility of the lecturers. Research related work was increased in value from 120 to 150 points for the teaching staff's yearly promotion and evaluation criteria (300 points in total).

Through observation the researcher witnessed 33 full-time lecturers attending this meeting. Compared to previously mentioned meetings, it was further observed that the lecturers participating in this meeting were more engaged in the discussion and shared considerably more opinions with the group. Furthermore, the researcher noted that this group of EFL lecturers preferred sitting together based on their teaching experience, as they had done in other full-time lecturer meetings (see Figure 6.2).

In addition, the researcher also noticed that the difference in their teaching experience was not only related to how they sat, but also had some relationship with how they shared their opinion in the meeting. Furthermore, it was apparent that all lecturers attending the meeting were provided with an equal opportunity to engage in the meeting, but the less experienced Thai lecturers were much less likely to do so and actually shared almost no opinions with the group. They shared their opinions with each other in a small group, but not with the group as a whole. Conversely, the researcher witnessed a couple of lecturers with more than six years of teaching experience expressing their opinions. The nature of the different extent of each group of participants' engagement in the learning opportunities is further discussed in Chapter 8 with relation to work culture.

6.1.1.5 Knowledge Management Seminar

One of the most repeatedly mentioned formal learning opportunities for participant lecturers was the knowledge management (KM) seminar. This learning opportunity, similarly to the previously mentioned meetings (see 6.1.1.1, 6.1.1.3, and 6.1.1.4), was not offered to all teaching staff. Observation and interviews showed that the KM seminar originated from the administrators' attempt to increase the quality assurance (QA) scores of the Institute. Once a year this workplace was assessed by the university and outside auditors to ensure its effectiveness in providing education in according to several elements, e.g., job management, knowledge management, and infrastructure. The number of KM

seminars in each academic semester varied depending on the Institute's policy regarding quality assurance. This kind of seminar was a place where any lecturer at the Institute could officially share their experiences with his or her colleagues. The lecturers could share their knowledge from their research findings, their experiences of attending training or conferences, and their experiences from their own teaching practice. Moreover, the lecturers could invite any guest speaker who they thought would be able to help them and their colleagues develop their teaching to lead a KM session.

At the beginning of the semester, the lecturers were asked to complete a form regarding their areas of interest. As a result, the Institute arranged a seminar that suited the majority's interests. Additionally, observation and interview responses showed that the Institute usually arranged the KM seminars and other meetings on Tuesday mornings because all full-time lecturers were normally free at that time. Throughout the data collection period, one KM seminar was witnessed. For this KM session, the Institute invited a professor from the US, specialising in Applied Linguistics, to lead the seminar regarding current trends in ELT. Around two weeks before the seminar, the researcher noticed leaflets advertising the event posted on the doors of the lecturer lounge and the notice board in front of

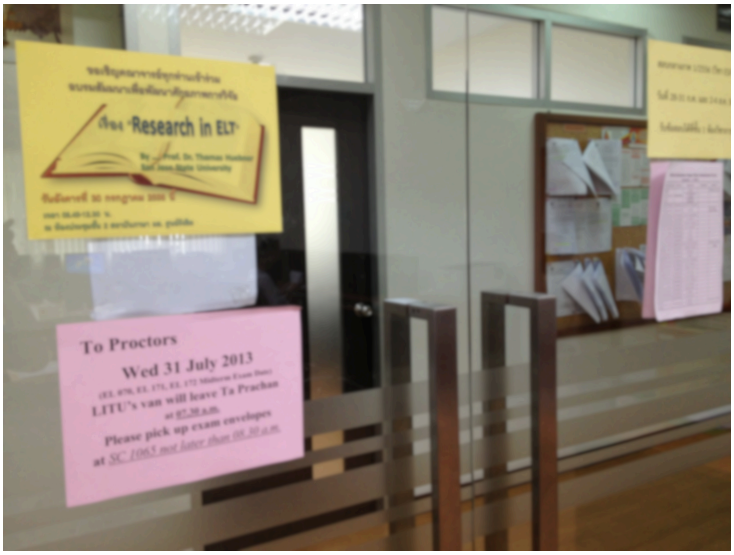


***Figure 6.3*: Photos of leaflets advertising the professional development events**

the room, inviting all the lecturers both full-time and part-time to attend this three-hour long seminar (see Figure 6.3). Please note that this photograph was intentionally blurred to ensure the participants' anonymity.

On the day of the seminar 11 full-time lecturers attended, three of whom were non-Thai lecturers. No part-time lecturers were in attendance. The researcher later found that they did not attend the seminar because all part-time lecturers had classes on Tuesday mornings. In the words of a part-time lecturer;

> I believe they have many workshops, seminars, or that kind of meetings, but there's a schedule conflict. Most of the time the activities are held on Tuesday morning. And all the part-time lecturers and I usually have Tuesday morning class, so I don't get the chance to attend those seminars or meeting. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

From this response it is clear that any lecturers with a Tuesday class would likely miss opportunities to attend most of the workshops or meetings arranged by the Institute. As in other meetings, the researcher detected that the lecturers attending this seminar preferred sitting with colleagues who shared a similar background (either Thai, or non-Thai) and who had similar years of teaching experience. This preference was possibly the reason why the interaction between lecturers attending the meeting was rather limited. Mostly, they preferred exchanging opinions within their sub-groups.

6.1.1.6 In-house-Workshops/ Seminars

The last type of formal learning opportunity offered by the Institute was the in-house workshops and seminars. According to observations, the researcher found that the learning activities typically lasted approximately two to three hours. The topics of the workshops ranged from learning theories, assessment theories, and technology-assisted language teaching tools, to classroom management techniques. All sources of data indicated that different groups of participants were encouraged to learn from the learning opportunities to different degrees.

Initially, it was found through observations and from written documentation that this type of learning opportunity was open to each group of participants: full-time Thai, non-Thai, and part-time lecturers. However, over one academic semester of fieldwork (from May, 2013 to September, 2013), observations suggested no participation of part-time lecturers in this learning opportunity.

Furthermore, throughout the fieldwork the researcher collected five invitation emails circulated by the workplace to its staff. One of the invitation emails is given as an example below; please note that all lecturers' names indicated in the example are pseudonyms.

> You are cordially invited to a seminar/workshop by two of our distinguished lecturers, Associate Professor Dr. Simon Timmer and Assistant Professor Edkins Gilly. The topic is Alternative Assessment and Innovative Classroom Management. Venue: XXX Date: Monday May 27, 2013 at 13.30 - 15.30 (Vice Director for Academic Affairs, email, May 21, 2013).

Analysis of the invitation emails indicated that none of the part-time lecturers were included on the mailing list. Additionally, through observation the researcher found that this group of lecturers could have received invitations through two informal channels. The first was when they casually met their full-time lecturer colleagues in the lecturer lounge. The second is they could have gathered information on the workshops through the leaflets posted on the doors of the lounge (see Figure 6.3). Thus it seems that there was almost no serious consideration from the workplace to promote such a learning opportunity to part-time lecturers. It therefore appears that inequality of the learning opportunities existed in this workplace for lecturers of different contractual statuses.

6.1.1.7 Summary of Formal Professional Learning Opportunities Available within the Workplace

In brief, the data showed substantial differences in the degrees of participation in the six types of formal learning opportunities available for the full-time lecturers and the part-time lecturers. These six opportunities were full-time lecturer orientation, part-time lecturer orientation, the English Foundation II course meeting, the teacher evaluation meeting, the KM seminar, and other in-house-workshops/ seminars. Through review of the participants' interview responses, observation field notes and written documentation, the researcher found that part-time lecturers had significantly fewer opportunities to benefit from the formal professional learning activities arranged by institution. Out of the six types of formal development opportunities captured, the part-time lecturers could easily participate in only one. This distinction can be seen more clearly when all formal

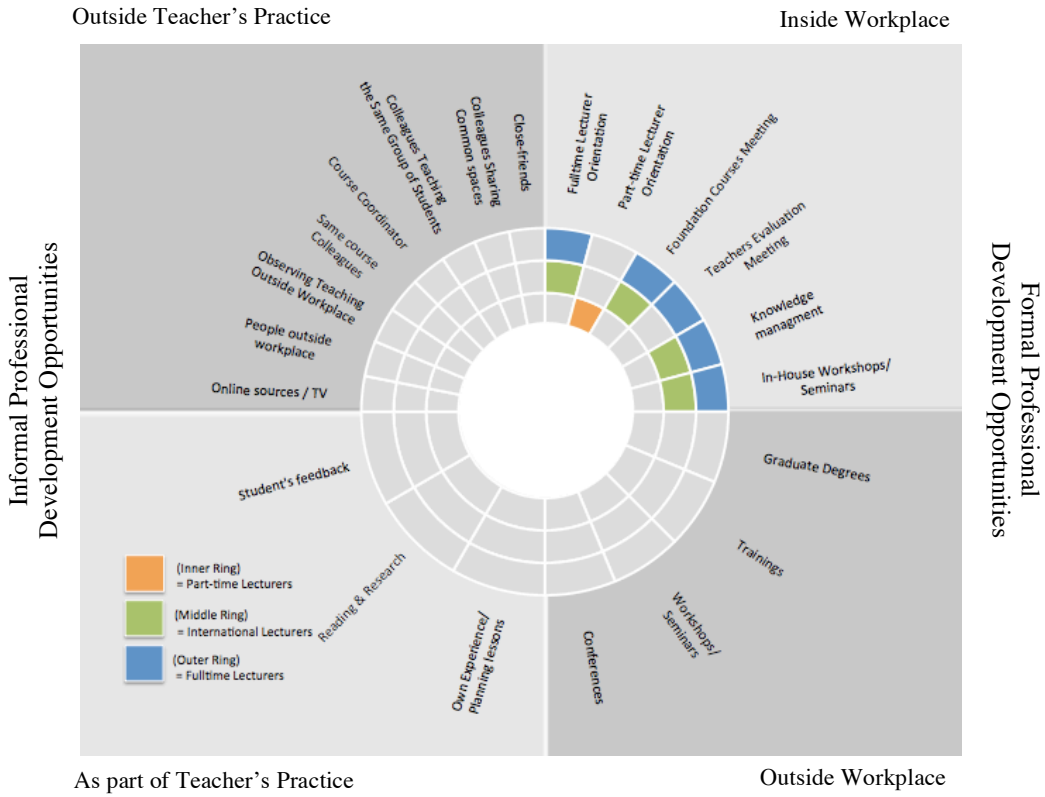


***Figure* 6.4 : Formal Professional Development Opportunities within the Workplace**

learning opportunities are plotted in a circular graph, as shown in Figure 6.4. Whilst the part-time lecturers had limited access to formal learning opportunities in the workplace, full-time Thai lecturers and full-time non-Thai lecturers could attend most of them, if they chose to do so.

6.1.2 Outside the Workplace

The four other formal professional development opportunities traced in this study were offered by academic organisations outside of the workplace, e.g., graduate degrees, training, workshops, seminars, and conferences. Since these learning opportunities occurred outside of the context of the workplace, the researcher had no opportunity to observe the participation of any subjects in the activities. The main sources of information for this type of formal learning opportunity were interview responses and written documents. In the following sections, the learning opportunities are discussed and sub-categorised into two sections: (6.1.2.1) graduate study and (6.1.2.2) training, workshop, seminars, and conferences. The latter are discussed in the same section as they were typically mentioned together in the participants' responses.

6.1.2.1 Graduate Degree

When participants were interviewed about activities they did to develop their profession, one of the most common answers from the full-time Thai lecturers was furthering their knowledge through higher education, particularly at the doctoral level. This professional development was also offered unequally to all teaching staff. The researcher gathered that the popularity of this learning path amongst the full-time Thai lecturers was partly because one of the university's policies encouraged its lecturers to attain the doctoral level of education (University's Employment Agreement, 2012). This conclusion is supported by the following interview response from a full-time Thai lecturer who had just changed her workplace from a secondary school to this university. She shared in the interview that,

> I want to pursue my PhD and I think the scenario here is okay. The setting at a secondary school might not be beneficial. That's why I change to a university level to pursue my PhD. (Kim, interview, July 19, 2013)

The data further suggested that this university has a regulation that its lecturers, in all disciplinary areas, should obtain the doctoral level of education within at least the first five years of their working contract. If any lecturers cannot meet this requirement there may be complications when they sign their next contract with the university.

In addition, the university also encouraged its teaching staff to obtain this level of education by offering full scholarships for approximately 30 lecturers in almost every year (15 national scholarships and 15 international scholarships). The scholarship was offered with the condition that after graduation lecturers who received a scholarship work for the university for at least the same amount of time as that spent on completing the degree. At the beginning of the academic year, every Faculty/ Institute in Agora University received an announcement regarding the scholarships (at the time of this study there were 35 faculties/institutes). After that, each Faculty organised its own selection process (based on the minimum requirements specified by the university) to find up to three qualified lecturers, and nominated them as finalists to the university board members. Later, all finalists (together with their research proposals, IELTS or TOEFL scores, and offer letters from their prospective universities) were

interviewed by university board members. A full-time Thai lecturer expressed her intention to develop her profession through studying for a PhD and indirectly mentioned one of these scholarship application processes in her interview:

> Well, the workplace has the policy about further education. Therefore, I am preparing for my PhD as well. Actually, I'm kind of behind the schedule because I'm pretty busy with being coordinator and teaching new courses. I really plan to take the TOEFL test and apply for a scholarship within August. (Sood, interview, July 10, 2013)

In addition to mentioning the professional development path and process, this lecturer also referred to the relationship between her workload and her learning opportunities (this issue is further discussed in the following chapter on participants' perspectives toward professional learning). Even obtaining a scholarship required a long process and extended commitment to working for the university as a large number of full-time Thai lecturers were interested in applying for a scholarship every year. According to the written documents collected, this scholarship was not available to either full-time non-Thai lecturers or part-time lecturers. Equally important is the fact that the researcher also noted that the two groups rarely cited pursuing doctoral level education when asked to describe the activities that they took part in to develop their profession. The following quotation is from one of the non-Thai lecturers' interview responses indicating their awareness of the workplace's support for full-time lecturers' professional development through postgraduate education:

> Yes, I think the development and the support is there. Perhaps I haven't had a chance to take it. But I know from the other full-time lecturers… I can see the progress that other lecturers are making. They are studying a Master program and the PhD program. (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013)

Furthermore, the researcher also noted other participants' awareness of the different degrees of workplace support for formal professional learning for the different groups of lecturers. Another full-time non-Thai lecturer shared in interview that:

> There are some drive now, to encourage people to do some higher education, to do research, and other kinds of project because the Institute is stressing it out, but it has less effect on myself on people in a low position…in my position. (Ervin, interview, July 5, 2013)

The two above quotations from non-Thai lecturers indicate that the lecturers acknowledged that there was some support for professional development from

their workplace that they could not benefit from. Consequently, the non-Thai and part-time lecturer participants rarely mentioned postgraduate education as one of their professional learning options. This leads to the conclusion that the different degrees of workplace support had a relative influence on each group of participants' degrees of engagement in a particular learning opportunity.

6.1.2.2 Training, Workshops, Seminars, and Conferences

The learning opportunities that each group of participants mentioned in interviews as professional development options were training, workshops, seminars, and conferences taking place outside of the workplace. However, both the interviews and observations indicated that there were differences in each group's access to each activity due to support from their workplace. The observations showed the varying extent of workplace support for the full-time and part-time lecturers. For all full-time lecturers, both Thai and non-Thai, the Institute assigned a couple of members of support staff to be responsible for the circulation of any announcements related to teaching-related trainings and conferences. Another one of their responsibilities was updating others on ESL/ EFL teaching-related training and conferences and posting details of them on the notice board. If there were other significant events that the Institute wanted to encourage lecturers to attend, the support staff had to circulate the news to the full-time lecturers in person. Observation further indicated that they also had to approach lecturers and ask them to sign their names, indicating whether they would participate in the event or not. Whilst all full-time lecturers could effortlessly access information concerning all training, workshops, and conferences outside of the workplace, the sole sources of information for part-time lecturers about these events were the leaflets posted on the notice board in front of the lecturer lounge.

All sources of data indicated that to develop in their profession full-time Thai lecturers greatly relied on attending training, workshops, and conferences outside of the workplace. When interviewed about how they usually develop their teaching skills all Thai full-time lecturers preferred attending both training and academic conferences offered outside of their workplace. The following interview response from a full-time Thai lecturer who had been working at this institute for decades is an example:

> In the past when I was novice, I went to workshop in the country and outside the country. Then I have more experience; I attended the seminar and conference. Every year I attend at least one conference in Thailand or international…I can find funds or the budgets from the Institute and also from the university as well. (Nong, interview, August 6, 2013

From Nong's response, it can be seen that to develop their profession through training, workshops, and conferences, full-time lecturers could also ask for support from their workplace. If they want to attend training abroad, full-time Thai lecturers with over two years of experience in this workplace could ask for registration fee and a travel allowances from the Institute once every four years. The researcher noted that this group of lecturers was also sponsored to attend an international conference abroad as a presenter annually. In addition, they could also ask for Institute support to attend as many training sessions and conferences organised in the country as they wanted, as long as these events did not conflict with their teaching schedule.

When full-time non-Thai lecturers were asked to describe activities they engaged in to develop their teaching, most also mentioned training and conferences. The data suggested that they were also allowed to request Institute funding; however this was for attending conferences and training inside the country only with no funding from the Institute for conferences abroad though they were allowed to request teaching leave to attend.

Conversely, when the researcher interviewed part-time lecturers about how they developed their teaching, their engagement in the formal development opportunities was much less when compared to the other groups. Usually, this group of participants shared that they gained more knowledge and developed their teaching skills through online sources and through interaction with their colleagues. Additionally, some part-time lecturers revealed that they occasionally had opportunities to participate in training as research students at this site and as lecturers at other workplaces. A part-time lecturer who was also a PhD student at this institute during the data collection period indicated doubts about her right to access training in that:

> I can attend the workshop held by the Institute. But I'm not sure if that is because I'm a part-time lecturer or I'm a PhD student or the alumni (Dang, interview. (September 13, 2013)

Another part-time lecturer also indicated a shortage of workplace support for these kinds of learning activities in that:

> I have had a few workshops since I also teach at *Corinth* [a pseudonym of another Thai government university]. *Corinth* usually has workshops for part-time teachers to attend, so I had a few workshops on teaching techniques as well. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

The interview excerpts indicated that part-time lecturers also had opportunities to develop their teaching through professional learning activities, but that they were clearly not offered by their workplace. According to part-time lecturers' interview responses, it was also noticeable that for this institution, supporting part-time lecturers to attend training or conferences outside of the workplace was not a priority. This study found no evidence of either policy or budget from the Institute to support such learning activities for part-time lecturers. The data implied that if this group of lecturers wants to attend any interesting training sessions or conferences, they must sponsor themselves.

Consequently, it can be assumed that the absence of institutional support was one of the main reasons why the part-time lecturers mentioned learning from workshops, seminars and conferences less frequently, and indicated fewer opportunities to attend such activities when compared to the other two groups. The researcher further perceived that another factor leading to this shortage of opportunities was a possible disruption in the circulation of information concerning training and conferences. Seemingly, this information reached part-time lecturers mainly through leaflets posted in front of the lecturer lounge and, occasionally, through informal personal communication with a full-time lecturer. Similar to the first types of learning opportunities available outside the institution, part-time lecturers had significantly less support from the workplace when compared to the full-time lecturers. The part-time lecturers' attitude towards this situation is discussed in Chapter 7.

6.1.2.3 Summary of Formal Professional Learning Opportunities outside of the Workplace

The data presented in Section 6.1.2 showed four formal professional learning opportunities available outside this particular institution. The opportunities were graduate degrees, training, workshops, as well as seminars and conferences. When considering all of the formal learning opportunities, it was noticeable that

the full-time Thai lecturers had more opportunities to develop their profession through these options. This distinction can be seen more clearly when each group of participants' engagement in different learning opportunities is plotted in a

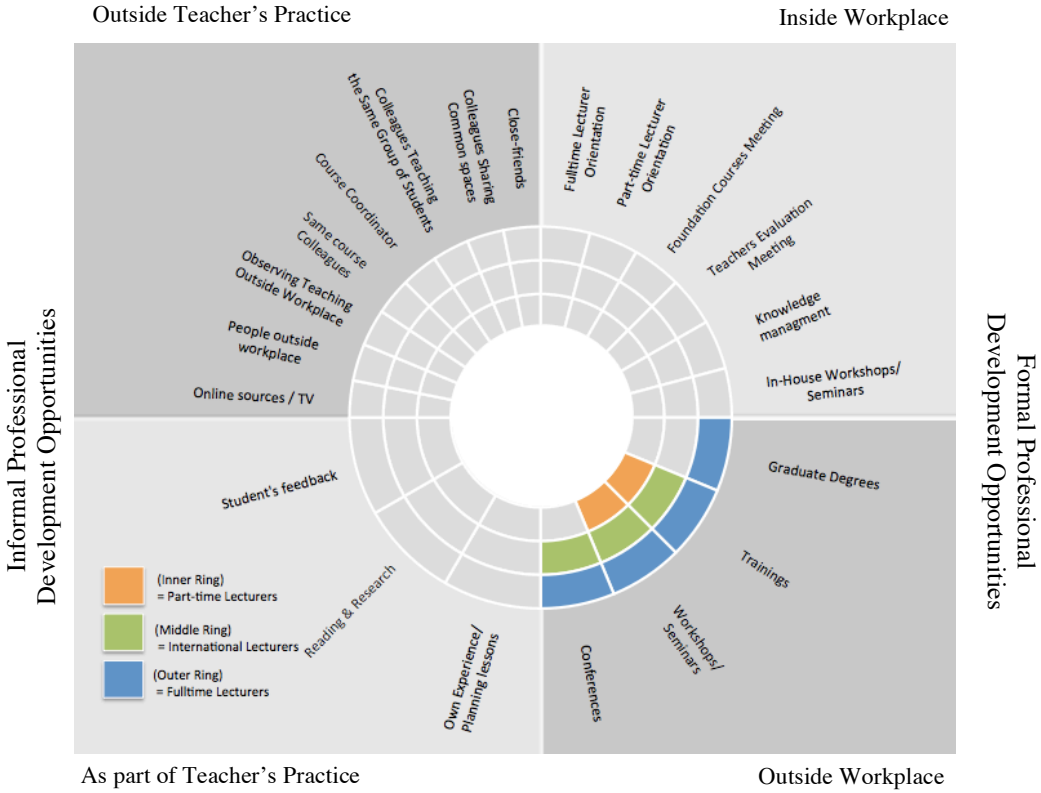


***Figure* 6.5: Formal Professional Development Opportunities Outside the Workplace**

graph, as shown in Figure 6.5. Base on the figure, full-time Thai lecturers have access to four kinds of learning opportunities, namely graduate degrees, training, workshops and conferences. Non-Thai lecturers have slightly less variety in their professional learning opportunities. When interviewed about their learning opportunities, most of the non-Thai lecturers did not mention furthering their education at the doctoral level, as there was no support from the workplace for this. Additionally, the most common learning opportunity for full-time lecturers, both Thai and non-Thai, were training, workshops and conferences. However, for part-time lecturers, opportunities for attending training and workshops were comparatively limited. From their interview responses it could be seen that there was little evidence of support for them from this workplace for opportunities to

develop their teaching through attending conferences and furthering their study at the doctoral level.

6.1.3 Summary of Formal Professional Learning Opportunities

Synthesising all data on participant engagement in the two types (inside and outside of the workplace) of formal professional learning opportunities (see Figure 6.6), suggested that there were some differences between the full-time Thai, full-time non-Thai, and part-time lecturers in terms of opportunities to benefit from professional learning activities. Whilst non-Thai lecturers had slightly fewer opportunities than the full-time Thai lecturers, part-time lecturers had the fewest opportunities. Figure 6.6 shows that part-time lecturers engaged in significantly less varied learning opportunities when compared to the other two groups. Considering the number of learning opportunities, it was clear that they had only engaged in three of the ten, which was three times less than the

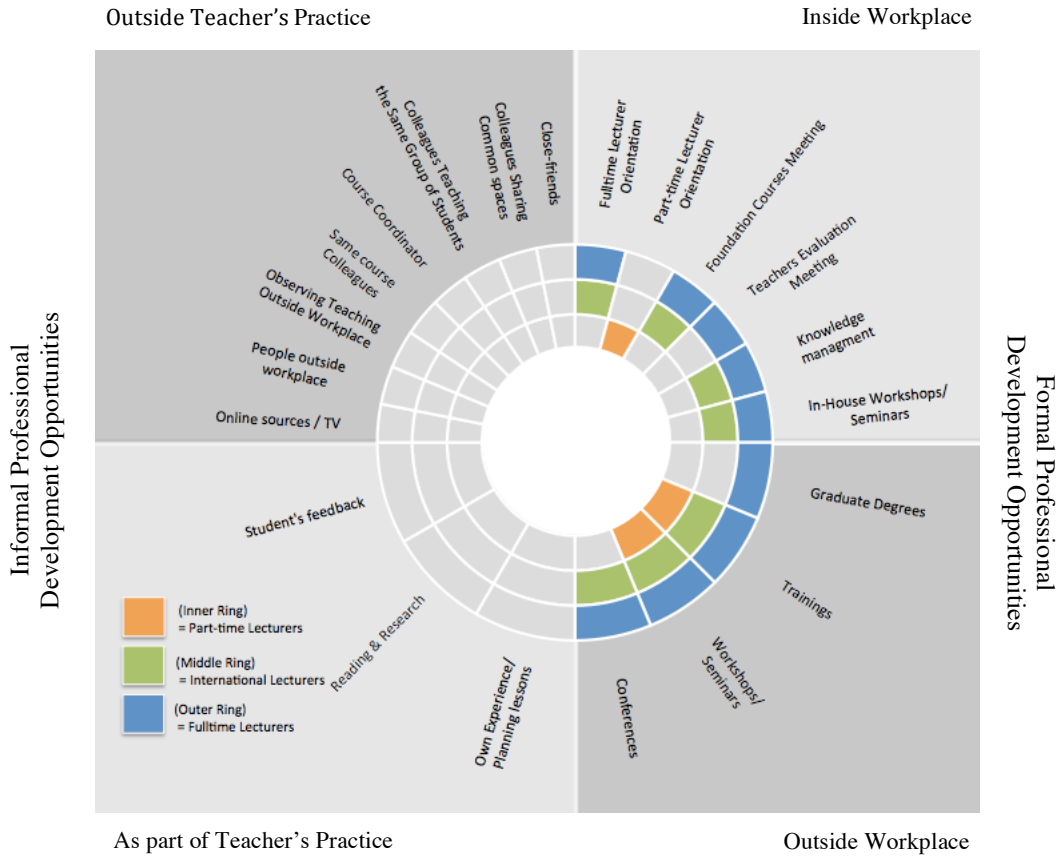


***Figure* 6.6: Formal Professional Development Opportunities**

full-time Thai lecturers. When looking into the degrees of engagement of the part-time lecturers in the three learning opportunities: part-time lecturer

orientation, training, and seminars, the quality of their professional learning was also a concern. Such limited access for part-time lecturers to learning activities was similarly noticed in Coughlan's (2015) study in that:

> There may be a lack of opportunity for appropriate professional development for their teaching roles. Because they may be invisible to human resources and/or central staff development departments, part-time staff may not have opportunities to engage in professional development activities such as induction, mentoring, feedback on performance or attendance at courses, seminars and conferences on teaching and learning (p. 22010).

Furthermore, according to the statistics, the part-time Thai lecturers made up one-third of the EFL lecturers teaching the Foundation Course, meaning that a large number of students were exposed to their teaching. The interview responses indicated a tendency by the workplace to require more part-time lecturers to teach the English Foundation Courses for undergraduate students to allow the full-time lecturers more time to engage in research (an example interview response can be found in Section 6.2.1.2). This rising dependence on part-time lecturers for research related reasons was also evidenced in Coughlan (2015) and Woodall and Geissler (2010). However, Woodall and Geissler reported a different situation for UK part-time lecturers in the Business, Management, Accountancy, Finance, and Health Sciences who actually were supported. In most of their studies, part-time lecturers were offered more learning opportunities than those in the present study. They were invited to research seminars, coffee mornings, departmental meetings, and social events (i.e., barbecue and Christmas and end of year parties) more often.

Nonetheless, relating the support that UK part-time staff received to those of the UK full-time teaching staff, an inequality in the opportunities of the two groups is rather notable. The majority of the part-time staff was often employed without systematic access to training and other development options. Furthermore, the lack of support for Thai part-time lecturers' opportunities is even more noticeable in comparison. Due to the deficiency of professional development support for part-time lecturers and the rising dependence of the Institute on their contribution, more support from the workplace for professional learning should be made formally available to part-time lecturers working in this particular Thai university.

6.2. Informal Professional Development Opportunities

In addition to the formal learning opportunities, informal learning opportunities were also found for participant EFL lecturers. As can be seen from the literature (Section 3.1.2), formal learning opportunities are not the only way to help lecturers develop in the profession. Teacher professional learning can take many forms and occur in various situations as Bolam et al., (2005) suggest:

> opportunities for learning are plentiful, either through formal programs or courses (e.g., induction program, professional development days) or more informally through day to day work with students and peers, for example joint planning or teamwork at both group and whole-school level. (p. 13)

Furthermore, many studies (e.g., Armour & Makopoulu, 2012; Bailey et al., 2001; Britzman, 2003; Kwakman, 2003; Daring-Hammond, 1997; OECD, 2011) have echoed that relying solely on formal professional learning activities is not enough to help lecturers improve in their profession. In order to sustainably and continually improve, both formal and informal forms of teacher learning opportunities should be implemented. Corresponding to previous studies, these two forms of learning were evidenced in this study context. Please note that in the analysis of informal learning opportunities, the researcher relied slightly more on interview as the source of information as some of the informal learning, by its very nature, was unobservable, such as the learning occurring within each lecturer's teaching practice and the informal learning occurring outside of the workplace.

The analysis suggested that as the participants went through their normal day-to-day routines, they found several opportunities to develop. For example, they could learn from their own teaching practice and from other teachers, both inside and outside of the workplace. Nevertheless, statistical data from the questionnaire (see column B17, Appendix E) provided information that this group of lecturers was not aware of their engagement in this type of learning opportunity. When they were asked to rate the extent of their professional development through informal learning, most answered "seldom" ($\bar{X}$= 2.18).

In addition, an academic semester of observation and interviews provided more information showing that each group of participants engaged in different types of informal learning opportunities and to different degrees. Eleven types of teacher

informal learning opportunities were found in this workplace. The researcher later found that three of the 10 opportunities were available within the participants' teaching practice itself, whilst the remainder usually occurred outside of their teaching practice.

6.2.1 As part of Teacher Practices

The first kind of informal learning opportunity found in this workplace was the learning that spontaneously occurred as part of the participants' teaching practices. As such, they were unobservable most of the time so information on this type of informal learning was mainly gained through interviews. From interview responses and observations the researcher uncovered three learning opportunities available within the participants' teaching practice. The three spontaneous learning opportunities were learning from student feedback, from participants' own teaching experiences, and from their reading and research during teaching preparation. Since the learning from student feedback and the learning from participants' own teaching experiences were often mentioned together, the researcher grouped and analysed them together.

6.2.1.1 Student Feedback and Teaching Experience

It can be seen from interview responses that each group of participants shared that student feedback helped them a great deal in the development of their teaching. According to four months of observation and interviews, the researcher found that there were two possible ways for this group of EFL lecturers to gain student feedback. The first happens spontaneously in each of the participants' classes through the process of their teaching, in that every teacher, no matter whether they were full-time or part-time lecturers, had equal chance to respond to their students' questions and to adjust their lessons based on their students' behaviour. All of them also had a fair chance to generate meaningful adjustment of their teaching according to the situation in their respective classes. The longer the lecturers taught, the more experience they gained from the process of adjusting and developing their teaching based on student feedback.

According to the interviews, it was apparent that participants with many years of teaching experience spoke more of the learning they gained from their own teaching practice when compared to the less experienced lecturers. When this

participant was asked about how he learnt to develop his teaching, he expressed that:

> I think I have met so many students in my life that actually they do not behave strangely anymore to me. After decades of teaching, I have noticed that students are the same in nature…If they don't seem to be interested in my class in my lecturer, if they lost interest in my explanation, I try to get them to do something or to get them to response to my questions... I'm try not to have some kind of penalty, try not to single out this students, so that they might not feel like they've done something wrong like they are being punished… so that they will participate more. (Director, interview, August 6, 2013)

It seemed as though this participant gained confidence in teaching through the belief that the longer he taught, the more variety of student behaviour he was exposed to. For him this would later lead to a better understanding of students and more effective classroom management techniques. From the above quotation, the reader can note that this particular lecturer values accumulated years of teaching experience for his professional development. Correspondingly, other full-time lecturers in this workplace also reflected on the significance of their students' feedback for their professional learning:

> From the students, themselves, is very helpful to learn if you are being effective, you know? In the classroom, you can keep getting feedback from the students. And you know it's so rewarding when figure out ohh! This works really well and then it also good to know when you do something that did not work, right? (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013)

With regard to the interview responses, it was noticeable that these experienced lecturers (both of them had over 12 years of teaching experience) did not solely develop their teaching through learning from their own experiences earned from years of teaching, but also from paying thorough attention to their classroom feedback. However, considering all interview responses, the researcher found that there were two groups of participants, the full-time Thai and the full-time non-Thai lecturers, who mentioned their own teaching experiences as professional learning opportunities. Conversely, part-time lecturers shared the learning they gained from student comments and questions in class while none of them indicated that they relied on their own teaching experience in order to develop.

Another path allowing participants to learn from their students was through the teacher evaluation system. This teacher evaluation tool was conducted in the

form of a questionnaire consisting of 5-point Likert scale questions and one open-ended question. This questionnaire was given twice a semester (a week before the mid-term exam and two weeks before the final exam) and delivered to students in each EFL class for them to rate their teachers' teaching performance and to share comments and concerns in terms of the teaching and the subject. According to observations of the meeting on teacher evaluation, as mentioned earlier in Section 6.1.1.4, the researcher noted that the Institute and most of the full-time lecturers did not view this evaluation as a teaching development tool. The evaluation was officially perceived as an indicator of a teacher's performance for part of the evaluation for promotion. Since the scores from the teacher evaluation forms were calculated and later affect each full-time lecturer's chances of promotion, most of them paid more attention to the scores that they obtained and their ranking when compared to other lecturers teaching the same subject, rather than to the students' comments. In addition, part-time lecturers were required to be evaluated by their students through this system in the same way as their full-time colleagues, even though they did not require the scores for the Institute's consideration of their salary. Whilst there was no trace of formal learning from this activity during observation of the teacher evaluation meeting, the interview responses provided some evidence that some participants also benefited from this evaluation system. From the interview responses, the researcher found that four of the sixteen lecturers expressed the view that they could learn to develop their teaching via the students' open-ended comments from the evaluation form. The following interview response represents how some participants benefited from this kind of learning opportunity:

> I look for the evaluation forms from my students. What they thought should be improved, I try to incorporate their comments into my lesson plan. Especially, for undergrad students, I usually look at the evaluation form and see whether there are problems that I can resolve. (Phai, interview, August 7, 2013)

It can be seen from this response that she realised the significance of the evaluation form and valued students' feedback from the form, as a tool to indicate room for improvement of her lessons.

6.2.1.2 Reading and Researching

Apart from learning through their own teaching experience and from student feedback, all the three groups of participants claimed that they could equally benefit from doing their own reading, which was part of their teaching preparation process. Some of them shared at interview that their teaching skills improved and they gained more confidence because of the preparation they did. Some participants also conducted additional research and read more articles to answer their students' questions. The researcher further discovered that some of the participants not only read textbooks and research articles, but were also conducting their own research to help them better understand students and find more effective teaching methods.

However, this did not apply to the majority of the participants. Based on the interviews, part-time and non-Thai lecturers rarely mentioned conducting research or reading research articles. There was only one non-Thai lecturer and one other part-time lecturer who cited conducting research as a form of professional development. Moreover, the one part-time lecturer participant who mentioned learning from conducting research was doing so for her PhD. The research results showed that the majority of the participants who mentioned learning from conducting research were full-time Thai lecturers. For example, one full-time Thai lecturer with more than 20 years of teaching experience stated in the interview her preference for developing her profession through conducting research:

> I think that the way I do, like conducting research every year and attending conference every year may help me improve my profession. I mean that we should learn how to teach students better, from research findings. As I said, we should go to workshop, and also do research. It's my self-development strategy. (Nong, interview, August 6, 2013)

The same participant further mentioned that there was workplace support for this type of learning opportunity:

> This workplace gives us a lot of opportunities. They provide everything for us even hiring part-time teachers to help us teach, so we have more time to spend for research. The Institute also finds more funds for us to do research and sponsor us if we want to present our research findings at the conference. (Nong, interview, August 6, 2013)

Information from fieldwork further suggested that the Institute's policy in supporting its lecturers' research might cause differences in the amount of research conducted by the three groups of participants.

The Institute strongly encourages full-time Thai lecturers to conduct research by initiating the research track option. If any of them prefer to work on this track, their teaching workload is significantly lessened, so that they can spend more of their working hours on research. If working on this track, they must finish their research and publish an article on it within a year after the research is completed. Given the time constraints for finishing research and securing publication, most Thai lecturers preferred not to join the research track. In addition, there was also support for the full-time Thai lecturers from the Institute, together with the University, in the form of a research reward, as much as approximately 1900 GBP for each completed research project.

In addition, for lecturers who signed a contract with the University after 2009, research and publication were indicated as part of their responsibilities in their job description. It was evident that encouragement from the Institute and the requirement of the job description could be why full-time Thai lecturers conducted considerably more research and mentioned the benefit of conducting research in their profession more often, when compared with the full-time non-Thai and part-time lecturers.

6.2.1.3 Summary of Informal Professional Learning Opportunities as Part of Teaching Practice

When combining all data concerning informal professional learning opportunities that occurred as part of teacher practices, the researcher noticed that there were a variety of teacher learning opportunities amongst the three groups of participants. As can be seen in Figure 6.7, the two groups of full-time

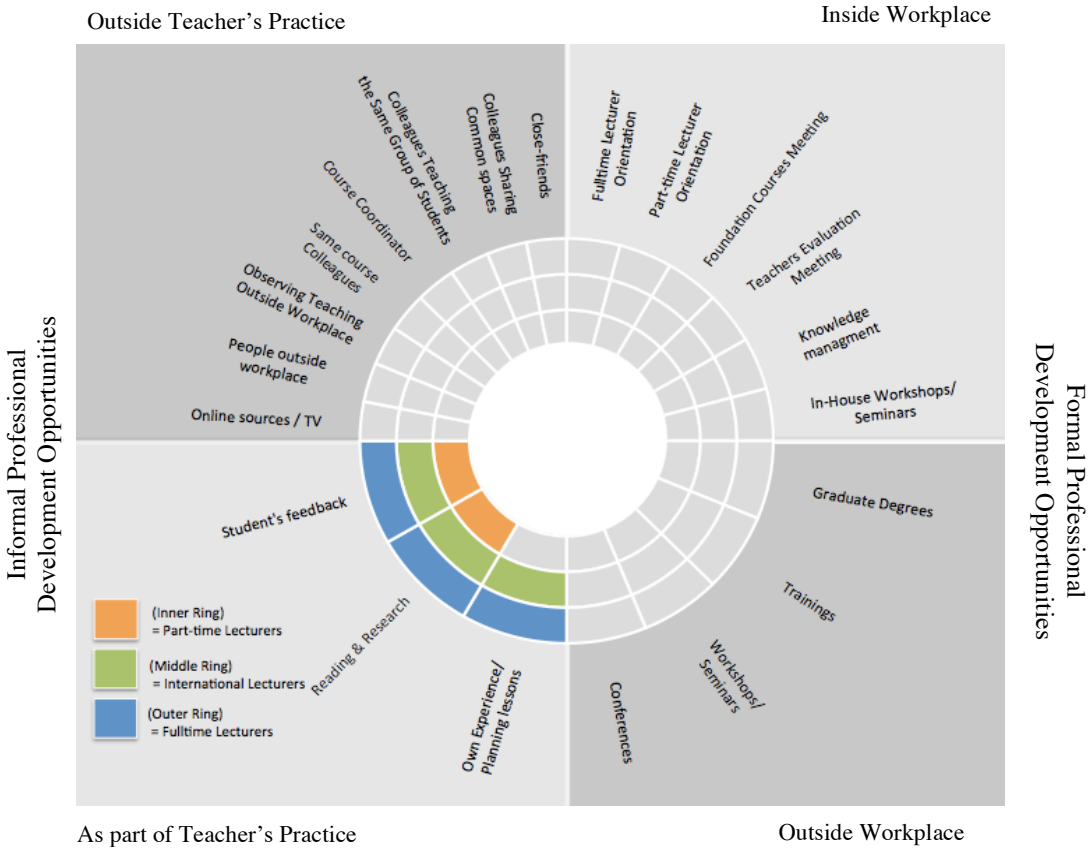


***Figure* 6.7: Informal Professional Development Opportunities as Part of Teacher's Practices**

lecturers participated in the same types of informal learning opportunities available within teaching practice. Conversely, it was clear that part-time lecturers engaged less in this type of learning opportunity. The learning opportunity that the part-time lecturers did not mention at interview was learning from their own teaching experience. In this case, the researcher assumed that it was likely because most of the part-time lecturers were rather new to this profession compared to the majority of the full-time lecturer participants. The data indicated that most had, on average, three years of teaching experience, whilst full-time non-Thai lecturers and full-time Thai lecturers had approximately five and eight years of teaching experience, respectively.

6.2.2 Outside Teaching Practices

In addition to their teaching practice (Section 6.2.1), the EFL lecturers also informally developed through other informal learning opportunities. The data indicated that these opportunities were available both inside and outside the

workplace, such as through communicating with colleagues, engaging in discussions with experts outside the workplace, and learning from online resources. Due to the constraints of the researcher and the subsequent inability to retrieve data from outside the study site, the main focus of this study is the informal learning opportunities accessible within the workplace (Section 6.2.2.1-6.2.2.4). The learning opportunities available outside the workplace (Section 6.2.2.5) are, to a smaller degree, presented in this section (compared to those taking place inside the workplace) to show the reader as complete a picture as possible of this phenomenon.

Through the interviews and observations, eight types of informal learning opportunities were identified. Since some of the opportunities were mostly referred to in the participants' interview responses and shared relatively similar characteristics, the eight opportunities are grouped together into five sub-categories. The first four categories all deal with the participants' involvement with different types of colleagues, namely (6.2.2.1) the course coordinators, (6.2.2.2) colleagues teaching the same courses and colleagues sharing common spaces, (6.2.2.3) colleagues teaching the same group of students, and (6.2.2.4) close-knitted groups of colleagues. The last two types of this particular kind of informal learning opportunity, (6.2.2.5) online sources and teaching sessions outside the workplace, were grouped together as the last sub-group of this section.

6.2.2.1 Course Coordinators

Beginning with learning from participants' interactions with course coordinators, through the observations and written documents collected, the researcher found that this particular workplace identified two full-time lecturers as course coordinators for this group of EFL lecturers. Every semester, for each subject, the Institute usually allocated one or two lecturer(s) who had a few years of experience in teaching that particular subject, to be the course coordinator(s). The researcher found that the course coordinators' responsibilities ranged from arranging the orientation meeting for part-time lecturers, contacting all part-time and full-time lecturers, delivering all teaching material and course syllabi to every lecturer, to making sure that every lecturer knows everything about the course. Part of the responsibilities of the course coordinators included being easy

to contact for each lecturer teaching the subject. Consequently, the researcher found the course coordinators' names and contact information provided on the first page of the course syllabus, which all lecturers were provided on teacher orientation day. Furthermore, the observations and interviews showed slightly different degrees of interaction between the course coordinators and the three groups of participants.

Observations and interviews suggested that the full-time non-Thai lecturers had the least contact with the course coordinators compared with the full-time Thai lecturers and the part-time lecturers. The single occasion where the researcher witnessed face-to-face interaction between the course coordinators and the non-Thai lecturers was during the English Foundation II Course meeting when the course coordinators introduced themselves and distributed some teaching materials to the lecturers. Aside from that, throughout the semester (four months), communication between the two groups occurred only via email. Conversely, full-time Thai lecturers, based on the observation of their day-to-day routines in the lecturer lounge (common room) and the canteen, were observed having only a few interactions with the two coordinators. Each of their 'in-person' communications normally took a couple of minutes (see the following observation field note for example).

> A course coordinator for the English Foundation II course came into the common room at 8:30 and then sat alone at the coffee table. Once a full-time Thai lecturer teaching the same subject saw the coordinator, she greeted her and asked for some information concerning the mid-term exam. The course coordinator then moved seats to sit near the particular lecturer at a computer desk. They had a conversation about some content of the mid-term exam, when the completed copy of the exam was circulated to all lecturers. About five minutes later, the conversation ended and the coordinator moved to sit alone to prepare some material for her morning class. (Observation, July 7, 2013)

Apart from the occasional in-person communication, the full-time Thai lecturers shared in the interviews that when they had problems, they usually contacted the coordinators through email and phone.

Compared to the full-time Thai lecturers, the researcher noticed that part-time lecturers had slightly more face-to-face interaction with the coordinators. The researcher suspected that this group had quite a few more opportunities to see the

coordinators since they did not have a private office and, consequently, spent more time gathered together in the lecturer lounge than the other groups of participants. Most of the time, in the morning before their classes, the researcher observed that part-time lecturers sat together, willingly sharing teaching materials, and lesson plans, and discussing their teaching problems. It seemed that they did these activities together within their own group even though there were other more experienced lecturers or course coordinators in the room. However, when they had problems and they saw their course coordinator in the room, they would ask for suggestions or comments. This kind of interaction was also evidenced in interviews. When asked how they learnt from their colleagues and from whom they usually learnt, many part-time lecturers answered that they preferred discussing their instructional problems with the course coordinators. The following example comes from one of the part-time lecturer's responses, indicating her preference for interacting with the course coordinators. When asked about what she usually did with her full-time lecturer colleagues she replied, "we just say hi and that's it". She further explained that the only person she would discuss her instructional problems with was the course coordinator:

> I don't usually ask unless that lecturer is a coordinator, but as far as the teaching goes, I don't have any interaction with the co-teacher at all. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

It can be seen that this part-time lecturer did not mention interaction with other groups of lecturers, with those who taught the same group of students (sometimes called co-teacher or pair-teacher), nor with those whom she shared common spaces. Apart from the colleagues within the sub-group of part-time lecturers, this part-time lecturer would only ask for instructional suggestions from the coordinator.

6.2.2.2 Colleagues Teaching the Same Courses and Colleagues Sharing Common Spaces

In addition to interaction with the course coordinators, observations and interviews further indicated that each of the three groups of participants also had distinctive degrees of engagement in informal learning opportunities with their colleagues. Through four months of observation, the researcher found that the characteristics of the colleagues with whom the participants had contact varied

while the extent of the participants' interaction with each group of colleagues also differed.

Characteristics of the colleagues could be differentiated into four sub-groups. The first two groups were colleagues teaching the same courses and colleagues sharing the common spaces. The other two groups were colleagues teaching the same group of students and the participants' close-knit colleagues, which will be discussed in the following sections.

Beginning with colleagues teaching the same courses and colleagues sharing common spaces, normally, each participant came to this workplace to teach English Foundation II classes, two days a week. Based on this, there were more opportunities for those who teach the same subject to see each other frequently. Moreover, there was a greater chance that colleagues teaching the same subject would also be those sharing common spaces. Therefore, discussions of participants' interactions with these two groups of colleagues are both included in this section. A semester-long observation (from May, 2013 to September, 2013) showed that participants had almost the same degree of interaction with colleagues teaching the same courses and colleagues sharing common spaces. Every morning, after signing in, the participants tended to sit together in small sub-groups. The part-time lecturers would sit together with their part-time lecturer colleagues, and full-time lecturers tended to group with their full-time colleagues. Before they went to their classes, within each sub-group of lecturers, most of the time there was conversation concerning what each participant had prepared for his or her class. Depending on the conversation, the researcher noticed that there was some adaptation and changing of some of the lecturers' lesson plans. In addition to improving their lessons based on colleagues' teaching ideas, the researcher also witnessed that within the sub-groups of participants, there was some sharing of teaching materials.

Moreover, the researcher witnessed that participants' interaction with colleagues sharing common spaces also expanded across their sub-groups (full-time Thai, full-time non-Thai, and part-time lecturers). However, interaction across each sub-group of participants was not the same type of spontaneous learning and sharing as the participants engaged in within their own sub-groups. The interaction across the groups was typically when the part-time and the non-Thai

lecturers found problems related to the Institute's regulations. They tended to ask for suggestions from the full-time Thai lecturers sitting in that lecturer lounge. Such learning opportunities were witnessed in the morning, at lunchtime and in the evening. Additionally, after finishing morning classes, most of the part-time and full-time Thai lecturers tended to return to their sub-groups. The researcher noticed that part-time lecturers had more teaching related conversations during lunch when compared with full-time lecturers. Furthermore, the researcher rarely observed non-Thai lecturers use the same canteen as Thai lecturers.

In addition, the researcher found that part-time, full-time Thai lecturers, and full-time non-Thai lecturers had slightly different degrees of involvement in this kind of informal learning. This kind of opportunity was most observable within the group of part-time lecturers. Conversely, the full-time non-Thai lecturers showed the lowest frequency of interacting and learning from colleagues teaching the same subjects or sharing common spaces. Additionally, it was found that all non-Thai lecturers preferred having lunch together in the first floor canteen, whilst all Thai lecturers shared the ground floor canteen. Consequently, it could be said that non-Thai lecturers met a smaller number of colleagues and learnt informally from fewer of them when compared with the Thai lecturers, both full-time and part-time.

6.2.2.3 Colleagues Teaching the Same Group of Students

From observation of the pre-semester meeting the researcher noted that two lecturers were responsible for each group of English Foundation II students. The Thai lecturers taught reading and writing skills whilst the non-Thai lecturers taught the listening and speaking skills. Due to the fact that the non-Thai lecturers preferred to be grouped together in a separate common space, away from other Thai lecturers, interaction between the lecturers teaching the same group of students was rarely evidenced. Furthermore, the two groups of lecturers not only gathered in different common spaces, but when they occasionally did share the same space, they rarely had any contact, as can be seen from the three observation field notes taken over three different months.

> At 9:20, before the morning class started, two non-Thai lecturers came into the lecturer lounge at almost the same time. One signed in, ordered his lunch, and left the room. The other sat at the computer desk after

> ordering lunch. He had no conversation with the five part-time lecturers (two of them teaching the same groups of students as the non-Thai lecturers) in the room. Approximately 20 minutes later he then left the room. (Observation, September 4, 2013)
>
> Throughout the two hours of morning observation in the lecturer lounge, there were four non-Thai lecturers and at least five Thai lecturers (three of them teaching the same groups of students as the non-Thai lecturers) walking in and out for just signing in, ordering lunch, and leaving their belongings in the room, without any interaction with each other. (Observation, July 9, 2013)
>
> In the lecturer lounge around 9:20, before the morning class started, whilst there were at least six Thai lecturers in the room, a non-Thai lecturer came in. He then sat at the same table with two full-time experienced lecturers (one of them teaching the same groups of students as the non-Thai lecturer). The only interaction between him and the others in the room was some smiling and eye contact. (Observation, June 26, 2013)

This kind of interaction was evident from observations, but also from the interviews. When the researcher asked participants about their interactions with their co-lecturers, most of them said they had almost no contact with them, as can be seen from the following response.

> The interaction with the pair-teacher is oh oh…zero! I don't interact with them at all. I know them by names and I recognise them, but we don't actually discuss anything in order to integrate what I teach, what they teach into the lesson. They are pretty much like nonexistence. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

When carefully considering observation field notes and interview responses, it was found that Thai and non-Thai lecturers teaching this English foundation course had almost no interaction with each other. This absence of interaction was not only evident with Thai and non-Thai lecturers teaching the same groups of students, but also between all Thai and non-Thai lecturers teaching other subjects in this workplace context. The situation regarding cultural differences in the workplace will be further discussed in Chapter 8, Section 8.2.1.

6.2.2.4 Close-knit Groups of Colleagues

It was evident that some groups of participants had not only more learning opportunities with lecturers sharing a similar background (Thai and Non-Thai), but also significantly more interaction with a particular group of lecturers called close-knit colleagues. Close-knit colleagues in this case refers to lecturers who had a very close relationship with each other due to, for example, the number of

years they had spent in this workplace together, the time they started in this workplace, and activities that they did together outside of working hours. Lecturers in the close-knit groups of colleagues always expressed their care for each other in both teaching and personal matters.

It was observable that Thai lecturers socialised more with Thai lecturers and English native speaker lecturers had more interaction with their native speaker colleagues. Additionally, part-time lecturers had significantly more engagement with their part-time lecturer colleagues. The lecturers always spent time with the same group of colleagues in the lecturer lounge, the canteens, and even in most of the meetings and workshops. This phenomenon was not only captured from observations, but from many interview responses. Full-time Thai lecturers expressed that they preferred discussing instructional problems, exchanging teaching materials and ideas with this group of colleagues, regardless of whether they were teaching the same subject or not. The following is an example from one of the participants' responses indicating her preference for learning and solving instructional problems with her colleagues from her close-knit group. The full-time Thai lecturers indicated that when they could not solve instructional problems by themselves or when they needed some new teaching ideas, they would ask for their close-knit colleagues' opinions:

> I mainly try to solve the problems myself, first. If it's not possible, then I ask someone. They are my close-knitted colleagues who became my best friends first. If they cannot address the issue, then, the course coordinator or any teacher in the same course. (Noi, interview, September 5, 2013)

> Wan and I are pretty close. We are kind of close friend, so when I talk to her I always get some new ideas about cooperative learning. I would say that I changed the lesson according to her at least three times per one semester to add more activity in class… I talked to her more than anyone in the workplace. We talked to each other everyday and we use social network as well. We have both Facebook and Line. Well we talked to each other almost everyday, but not always about work. (Sood, interview, July 10, 2013)

From the interview responses, it can be seen that the EFL lecturers preferred learning from their close-knit group of colleagues than from course coordinators and other colleagues teaching the same course. The reader will find a further discussion regarding this form of workplace relationship under the 'workplace-kinship' Section in Chapter 8.

6.2.2.5 Online Sources and Teaching Sessions Outside of the Workplace

Whilst full-time Thai lecturers were the only group of participants who mentioned learning from their close friends in the workplace, the part-time Thai lecturers were the only group favouring informal learning opportunities outside their teaching practice. During the interviews, this group was the only group of lecturers who mentioned online sources as one of their sources of professional development. As these occurred outside of the study site the only evidence of this learning was from interview transcripts where participants mentioned participation in online teacher training courses, browsing for teaching tips through EFL/ESL teaching websites, observation of other teachers conducting online courses, and adapting online teaching materials and games. In the part-time lecturers own words:

> I'm browsing the YouTube for the famous language institutes. Maybe some of them are posting the clips, so I look and then I try to see what they did in their teaching to see whether there are any strategies that I can adapt into my own teaching. (Som, interview, July 16, 2013)
>
> Well I think there are a lot of online courses like YouTube, iTunes U, there are a lot of courses not particularly the English course. I think I learn a lot from those iTunes U where I can learn from those experience teachers. They are experienced in term of teaching and in term of expertise. I think I learn a lot. I use their techniques as well in my class. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

Some of the part-time lecturers shared that they also developed their teaching by watching international television broadcasts from English speaking countries to improve their English communicative skills and learn the culture (see the following interview response, for example).

> When I'm at home I spend most of my time watching cable TV because I think it's the way to improve my English listening skill. When my listening is better, my speaking is better too. And when I have free time, I also watch the YouTube English program and then I'll recommend them to my students. (Karn, interview, July 26, 2013)

In addition to the online opportunities, part-time lecturers also learnt from attending free language classes outside of the workplace. One of the part-time lecturers said he could take the opportunities to observe other teachers' techniques and to see how they develop their teaching material:

> If I got some brochure advertising about the free class or trial lessons, I always go and try them to see if they're any good points or bad points in their teachings. Then I adapt their good ideas and think more about some ways to better explain the grammar point. If I've heard some good ideas, I'll make use of it. (Som, interview, July 16, 2013)

It was evident that part-time lecturers relied on this kind of informal learning more than other groups of participants. When reviewing their limited degree of engagement in many kinds of learning opportunities discussed in the above sections (see Sections 6.1.1.7, 6.1.2.3, and 6.2.1.3, for example) the researcher concluded that part-time lecturers had more engagement in the learning opportunities because they were more accessible than some of the other learning opportunities, as described in sections above (6.1.1, 6.1.2, and 6.2.2).

6.2.2.6 Summary of Informal Professional Learning Opportunities outside the Teaching Practices

Given Figure 6.8, part-time lecturers engaged in considerably more kinds of informal learning opportunities when compared to the other groups of

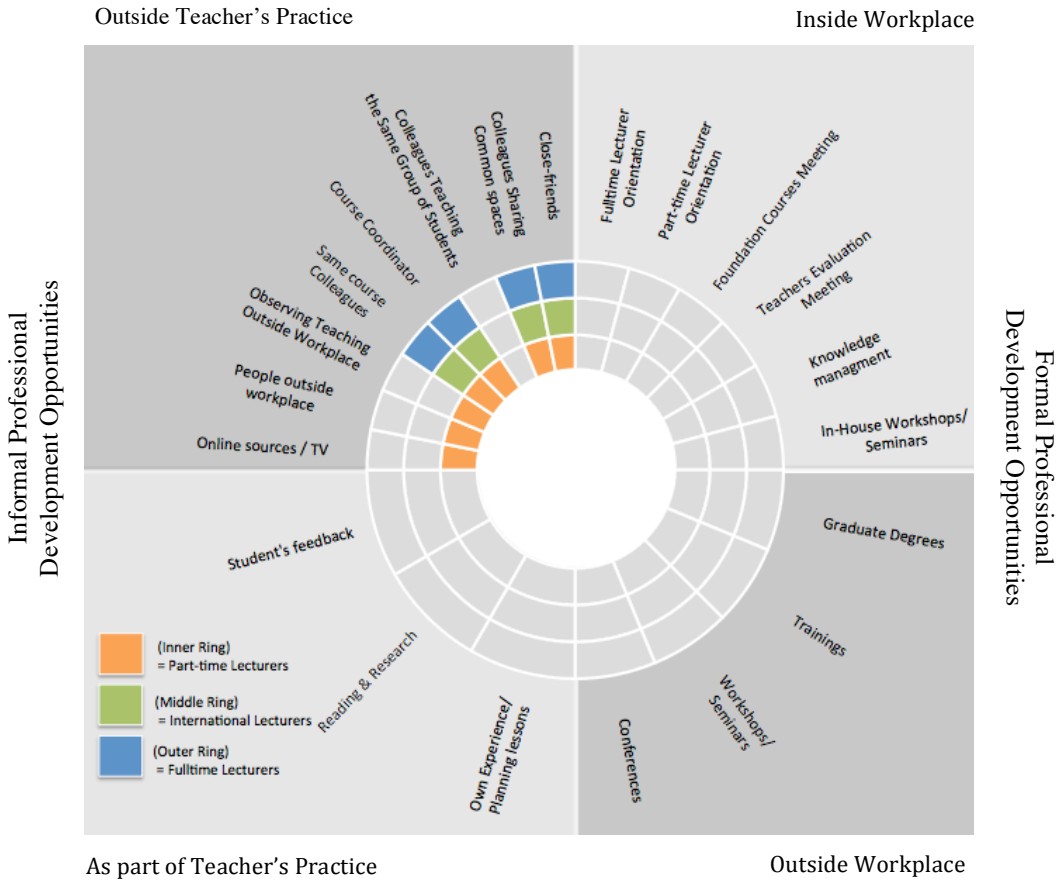


***Figure* 6.8: Informal Professional Development Opportunities outside Teacher Practices**

participants. The data indicated that both the full-time Thai and non-Thai lecturers learnt informally through their course coordinators, colleagues teaching the same course, and colleagues sharing common spaces. According to interviews, the two groups of participants never mentioned informal learning opportunities through online media as part-time lecturers did. However, all three groups had in common that none of them had much opportunity either to work with or learn from their colleagues teaching the same group of students. The interview responses and observation field notes suggested that the absence of interaction amongst lecturers teaching the same group of students could be a result of the differences in how the non-Thai and Thai lecturers spent their time in the workplace (This issue is further discussed in Chapter 8 on teacher work culture).

6.2.3 Summary of Informal Professional Learning Opportunities

With all data on engagement in informal professional learning opportunities gathered together (see Figure 6.9), it can be seen that full-time lecturers, both non-Thai and Thai, engaged in more diverse kinds of development as part of

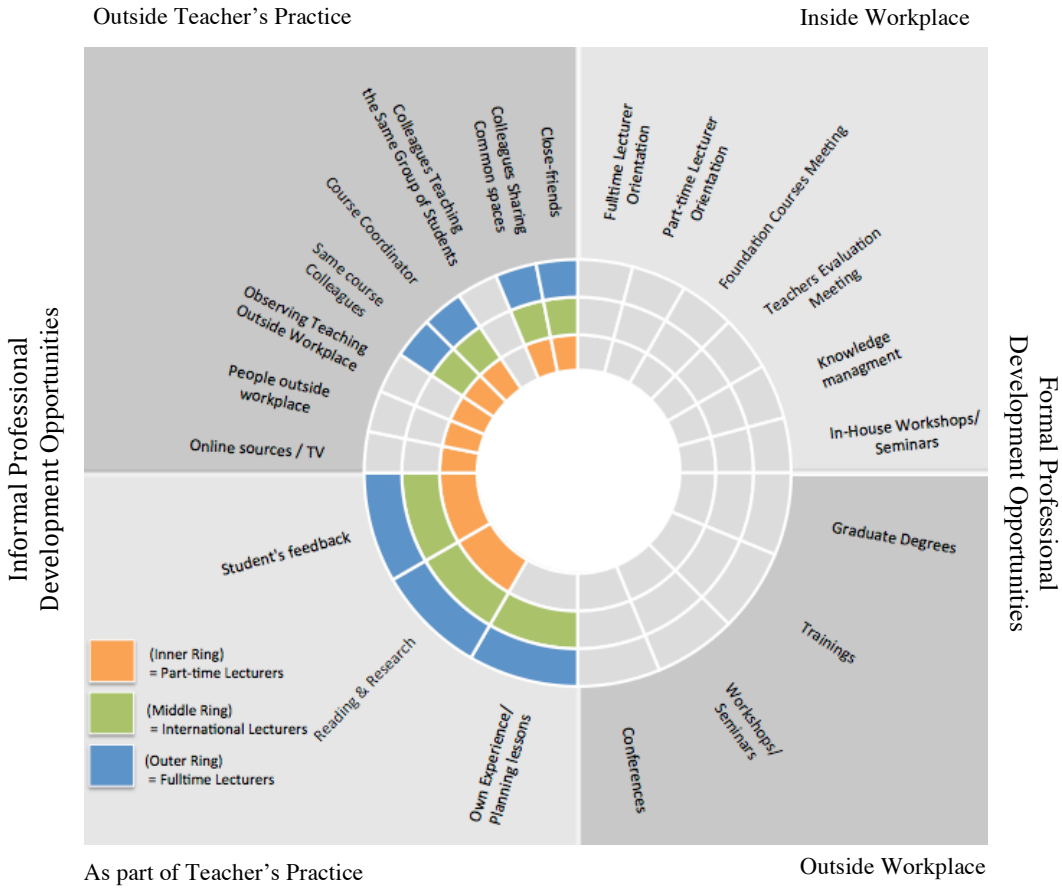


***Figure* 6.9: Informal Professional Development Opportunities**

their teaching practices. Whilst the full-time lecturers in this workplace learnt more from their own teaching practice, the interviews further indicated that part-time lecturers learnt considerably more from informal learning opportunities outside their teaching practice, particularly from those outside the workplace and online. Charlier (2009) conducted a similar study on university level lecturers in Switzerland by dividing his participants into two groups, professors and teaching assistants. His study showed a similarity with this study in that each group of lecturers also engaged in different type of informal learning opportunities (e.g., student feedback and colleague discussion groups) to different degrees. Whilst full-time lecturers working in the Thai university engaged in more informal learning opportunities within their workplace than part-time lecturers, Swiss university professors participated less observably than the teaching assistants. The diverse degrees of the development opportunities between full-time and part-time lecturers were also evidenced in other educational contexts, for example, Anderson (2007), Armour and Makopoulou (2012), and more in Chapter 3.

6.3. Summary of all the Professional Learning Opportunities

In response to the first research question regarding types of learning opportunities that this particular group of Thai EFL university lecturers engaged in, the different sources of data suggested that they relied on more than one type of opportunity. Twenty-one types of formal and informal professional learning opportunities were identified in this context of study. This findings are in line with what Timanson (2013) depicted in a qualitative study on Canadian schoolteachers and OECD's (2009) study on secondary schoolteachers in 23 countries in that the teachers developed through both formal and informal paths of learning (e.g., collaboration with colleagues, inter and intra schools classroom observation, workshops, conferences, seminars, staff meeting, coaching/mentoring, degree program, research).

An overall impression of the phenomenon in this particular Thai university context given by the questionnaire responses was that this group of participants appeared to rely more on *formal* professional learning ($\bar{X}$= 3.25) than informal professional learning ($\bar{X}$= 2.18). (More statistical information can be found in

column B17 and B18, Appendix E). However, the statistical findings tell a different story from what was found in OECD's study where 93% of their teachers from all the countries (Korea, Spain, Mexico, Italy, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Brazil, Lithuania, Australia, Portugal, Malaysia, Australia, Slovenia, Iceland, Turkey, Norway, Malta, Slovak Republic, Denmark, Ireland, and Belgium) mentioned informal dialogue with colleagues as a development opportunity, whilst formal professional development through courses and workshops came at 81%. Statistical data obtained from this group of Thai university lecturers also contrasts with Bolam et al.'s (2005) questionnaire findings on 393 primary and secondary schoolteachers in the UK who relied

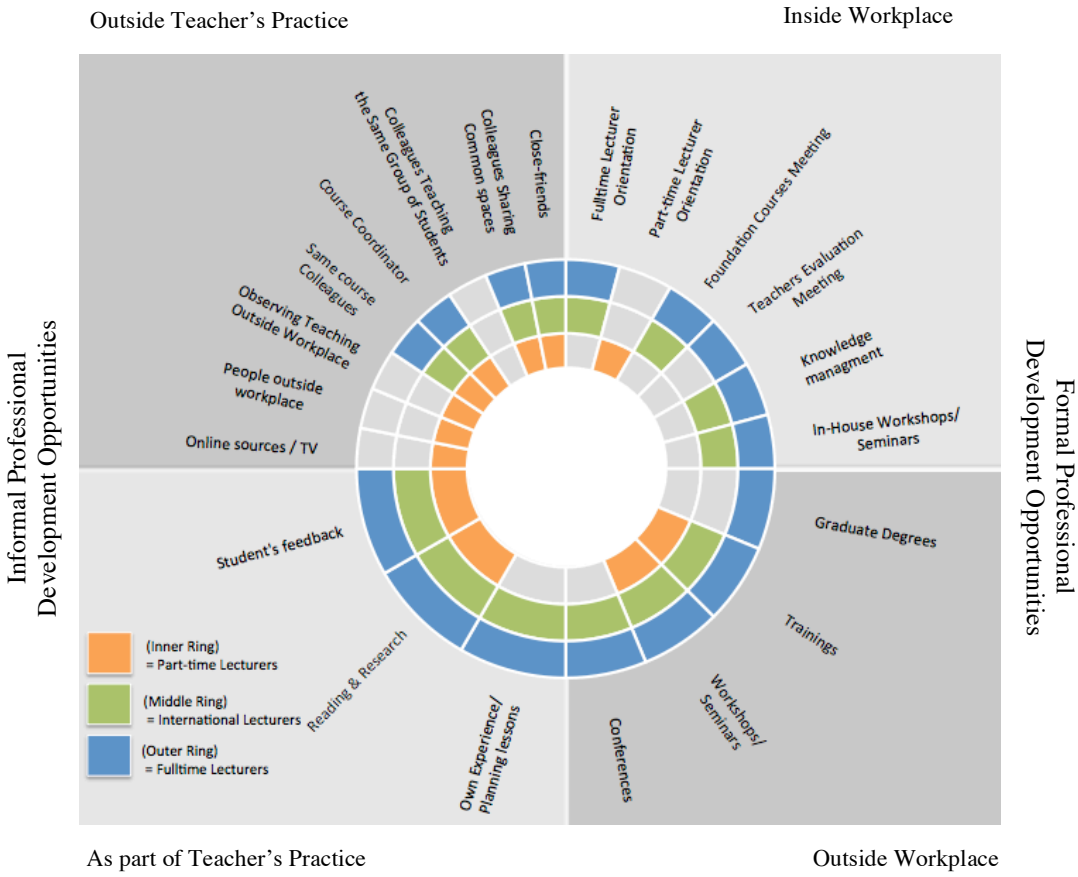


***Figure* 6.10: Four Types of Professional Development Opportunities**

considerably more on informal development opportunities (e.g., learning with colleagues [$\bar{X}$= 3.73] and being members of professional teams [$\bar{X}$= 3.80]) than the formal (e.g., carry out classroom based research [$\bar{X}$= 1.81] and receive financial support from the school for award-bearing courses [$\bar{X}$= 1.42]). This difference between Thai university lecturers and schoolteachers in other

countries reminds the researcher of the contextually different factors (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Harbison & Rex, 2010; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004) in such studies.

When all findings from observations, interviews, and written documents are collated, as shown in Figure 6.10, in this workplace, each group of participants engaged in each type of formal and informal development opportunities to slightly different degrees. There was a clear differentiation between part-time lecturers and full-time Thai and non-Thai lecturers in the extent of their engagement in each type of learning opportunity. Overall, part-time lecturers were less engaged in most of the learning opportunities, especially the formal ones. Constraints on their formal learning opportunities (i.e., knowledge management meetings, Foundation Course meetings, teacher evaluation meetings, in-house workshops, and conferences) were evident and observation and interview data suggested that they missed the learning opportunities because of difficulties concerning their teaching schedule and employment status. The researcher thus hypothesised that this situation was a drive for the part-time lecturer participants to find alternative ways to develop in their profession, e.g., through online media, people outside the workplace, and their part-time lecturer colleagues. Hence, informal development opportunities available outside of their practice were the most popular informal learning activities for the part-time lecturers. Additionally, Anderson (2007) described a similar situation of non-permanent contract teaching staff working in a UK university business school and suggested that:

> Although formal academic development opportunities may not always be appropriate for contingent staff, other face-to-face events, such as occasional conferences, arranged at times to suit both contingent and permanent academics, would address academic development priorities and increase the chances that effective practices, and the relevant skills and expertise of contingent staff, could indeed be shared…Contingent academics may be unable to attend all routine departmental meetings and development events, so other provision, requiring the commitment and action of academic managers at local levels, may be worth considering, for instance, an online "virtual staff-room". (p. 118)

The researcher agrees that occasional conferences, on dates that part-time lecturers are available, and an online staffroom should be implemented in the Thai university as alternative ways of providing development opportunities and

support to part-time teaching staff who may not be available for other formal opportunities.

All sources of data further suggested that full-time lecturers had considerably more opportunity to learn through formal means than part-time lecturers (see Figure 6.10). As they received more support from the Institute, they could learn more from meetings, seminars, and workshops both inside and outside the workplace. Not only that, the Institute also supported them in attending conferences, taking short courses and furthering their education at the higher education level. Additionally, the Institute and University also encouraged them to develop their teaching through conducting research. The researcher further discovered that the more support for formal professional learning the full-time lecturers received, the less engaged they were with the informal learning *outside their teaching practice*. This situation was even more noticeable when compared with support for the particular types of learning opportunities part-time lecturers received.

Equally important, information in Figure 6.10 shows the distinctions within the full-time non-Thai lecturers' engagement in various types of professional learning. Since every non-Thai lecturer was full-time, the same as the full-time Thai group, they were similarly engaged in formal learning opportunities, such as attending the orientation meetings, Foundation Course meetings, knowledge management meetings, in-house training, and outside workshops. In addition, the two groups were also engaged in similar kinds of informal learning opportunities, such as learning from colleagues, student feedback, conducting research, and their own teaching experience. However, the interviews suggested that non-Thai lecturers did not consider higher education as a professional development option. This could be a result of the fact that the lecturers did not receive an equal degree of support from the Institute or University when compared with the full-time Thai lecturers.

The researcher deduced, when combining all pieces of analysis, that the degree of workplace support was consistent with the extent of participant engagement in development opportunities. This relationship was also evidence in Atwal (2013), Evans et al. (2006) and Hodkinson & Hodkinson's (2003) studies on workplace learning. Emphasised in those three studies was that institutional support

influence teachers' access to both formal and informal learning opportunities. The more support the participants received, the more engaged they were in

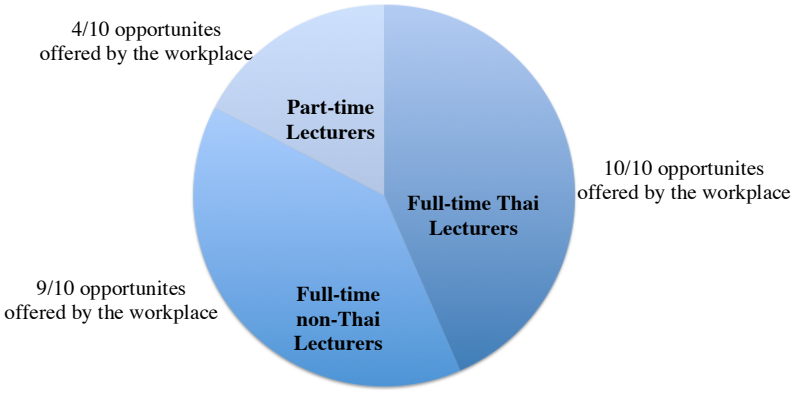


***Figure* 6.11: Degrees of Workplace's Support on Teacher Professional Development**

development opportunities. As can be seen from the above analysis, this workplace provided different degrees of support to different groups of participants, as summarised in Figure 6.11. The proportion of the workplace support indicated in the figure are derived from the number of learning opportunities offered and encouraged by the institute as evidenced through multiple qualitative data sources (i.e., orientation meeting, foundation courses meeting, teacher evaluation meeting, knowledge management seminar, course-coordinator scheme, other in-house trainings, workshops outside the workplace, post graduate degree, conferences, research). The figure shows that full-time lecturers received the largest degree of support. However, most learning opportunities offered by the workplace were formal. Since full-time lecturers (the majority of the research participants) received the most support, it was not surprising that the statistical data showed that formal professional learning was more popular ($\bar{X}$= 3.25) than informal ($\bar{X}$= 2.1875).

In essence, these findings led the researcher to raise two concerns. The first was how administrators valued each type of learning opportunity. Given the workplace support provided to participants discussed throughout this chapter, it was clear that university administrators valued formal learning considerably higher than informal. It was noticeable that the institution in this investigation has given formal learning opportunities (e.g., training, seminars, and

conferences) to its teaching staff considerably more than it has encouraged informal learning opportunities (e.g., solving instructional problems with colleagues, developing teaching materials with colleagues). Such a high degree of reliance on this type of formal professional learning, in this researcher and many others' view, was inefficient to bring sustainable improvement to the teaching profession. For example, Bailey et al. (2001) and OECD (2011) highlighted the limitation of formal professional learning, in that after training most often teachers cannot successfully implement the discrete and decontextualised skills or knowledge which they were taught in the training in their actual teaching practice, especially when spontaneous action is required in a context-specific problem solving situation (see also Britzman, 2003; Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Fullan, 2001; Gravani & John, 2005; Johnson, 1989; Lovitt & Clarke, 1988; Nagamine, 2007; Robertson, 1992; Sawyer, 2001, Wenger, 1998[a]). The same concern was also raised by Mawhinney's (2009) work on professional knowledge sharing as school administrators should not only provide teachers with formal professional development, but also ensure congregational spaces for them to voice themselves, work together, learn from each other and relieve their stresses.

Of equal importance is that the findings also highlight a concern for the quality of teaching and learning in this particular EFL course. It was evident that a significant proportion (one third) of the teaching staff in this particular EFL subject was part-time lecturers. The data also indicated a tendency of the workplace to employ more part-time lecturers to teach the English Foundation Courses to enable full-time lecturers to engage in more research (see more in Section 6.2.1.2). This, in turn, means that more students are under the instruction of the part-time lecturers who receive the *lowest* level of support from the workplace to access customary professional learning opportunities (e.g., English Foundation Courses seminar and teaching preparation workshop). This data implied that the professional learning of part-time EFL lecturers has received less consideration from administrators in this Thai university. Considering this paradox, the researcher has some doubts regarding the ability of this institution to maintain the standards and quality of teaching and learning in this particular EFL subject. To gain a more complete picture of the situation, the attitudes of the

part-time lecturers and the other groups of participants towards the apparent gap between the learning opportunities provided by the workplace, and the learning opportunities they actually require is further discussed in the following chapter.

7. Findings and Discussion II

This chapter discusses the Thai EFL university lecturers' perceptions towards professional learning, in relation to the second research question: What are lecturers' perceptions towards professional learning. The difference with the previous chapters results from the fact that this chapter primarily draws on interview data with the 16 EFL lecturers whilst the previous employed multiple data sources to triangulate answers to the research question. When considering all interview responses on professional learning, different aspects of participant views on the learning were found. The researcher, subsequently, found that this variety of perspectives shared three distinct characteristics. Accordingly, participants' answers were categorised and discussed, in relation to these three distinctions, in the following sections: (7.1) definitions of teacher professional learning, (7.2) perspectives towards teacher professional learning, and (7.3) perceived obstacles for professional learning.

7.1. Definitions of Teacher Professional Learning

During interviews, when participants mentioned their teaching responsibilities in this particular workplace and how they went about improving their teaching practice, the researcher asked them to further describe their understanding of teacher professional learning. Definitions of the term were found to be various in their foci and some of their descriptions were more specific than others. Additionally, the researcher found that the participants' responses shared some distinct characteristics that can be divided into three broad themes. The first sub-section reflects a group of participants who showed their unfamiliarity with the term. The following two sub-sections discuss participants' interview responses indicating 'what' they think professional learning is, and 'how' they think the learning actually happens.

The group of participants (N=4) showing unfamiliarity towards the term experienced difficulties in answering the question and took a longer time to formulate their responses (relative to the time they spent answering other questions). These difficulties led to the modification of the interview question. The original interview question "What is teacher professional learning in your perspective" was reformulated into different versions according to the

participants' responses (e.g. What does professional learning mean to you? What do you think about when you hear the word 'teacher professional learning? and What do you think teachers should do to develop their teaching?). The following excerpts from experienced lecturers' interview transcripts provide an example of participants' unfamiliarity with the term:

> Researcher: What is professional learning in your perception?
> Karn: Learning or teaching?
> Researcher: Learning… I mean the learning of teachers; the concept of teacher professional learning in your own understanding. What does teacher professional learning mean to you?
> Karn: You mean how they improve themselves? (Interview, July 26, 2013)

> Researcher: I'm wondering what professional learning is, in your view? What do you think teacher professional learning is?
> Som: Professional learning? Learning or teaching.
> Researcher: I mean the learning of teachers (Interview, July 16, 2013).

Given that these two part-time lecturers asked the researcher to clarify whether they were talking about teaching or learning suggested that they were not aware of the terminology, and possibly equally not aware that a teacher also performs the role of learner whilst he or she is doing their teaching work. During the interview stage the researcher found four participants who required some modification of the question on professional development. It is important to note that three of them are part-time lecturers.

Consequently, the researcher hypothesised that their unfamiliarity resulted from the fact that most part-time lecturers were new to the profession and this may have been the first time they heard the term. However, for some part-time lecturers who had been in the profession for a longer period of time, the lack of familiarity may be due to the negligible support they received in accessing professional development from their workplace. Lower levels of support for part-time lecturers' professional development (discussed in Section 6.1.2.2, Chapter 6) inevitably led to lower levels of exposure to professional development activities. This can be a reason why the participants did not know the term, and possibly not consider learning to be part of their profession.

Whilst some participants' responses indicated their unfamiliarity and lack of experience with teacher professional learning, almost half of this group of EFL

lecturers (seven out of sixteen) did have some background in 'what' teacher professional learning is. However, the researcher found that their descriptions of the term were slightly lacking in focus, for example:

> Well, professional learning should focus on the teaching techniques. I think it's something to do with the teaching techniques. I think it's teachers' responsibility to develop themselves and make sure that they have the skills and the solid knowledge to teach students. That's the individual teacher's part. Professional development can also mean our ability to transfer the knowledge to the students, so I think professional learning should be more focused on teaching techniques as far as I'm concerned. (Phor, August 6, 2013)

It is noticeable from Phor's interview response that her description of teacher professional learning is loosely centred on a few teaching related aspects (i.e., the acquisition of new teaching techniques, content knowledge, and the contribution of the learning to her students). There were also other participants who defined teacher professional learning by roughly mentioning the improvement of teaching techniques, teaching material, the acquisition of content knowledge, and teacher training, for example:

> Teacher professional learning…Basically, I think it's how teachers can convey the message. You should already know the content, like I told you, like what is a noun, what is a verb, and how to use it. For the teacher, professional development is how they get those kinds of knowledge out effectively, how to make materials more interactive or maybe attractive so that students will have fun using them. Maybe it's about the training that they can just go beyond this is a noun, this is a verb thing. (Sai, August 13, 2013)

The interview extract from Sai showed a similar description to Phor's in terms of how they roughly defined the term by generally mentioning teaching related matters. Considering responses from Phor, Sai, and other lecturers, the researcher deduced that the participants possibly felt uncertain about what exactly teacher professional learning is. Consequently, when describing the term, they brought up any teaching related matter (e.g., teaching techniques, teaching materials, teacher trainings) in their definitions.

On the other hand, five out of sixteen participants' definitions when describing 'what' teacher professional learning is were more specific in relation to 'how' teacher professional learning occurs; their focus centred on *the variety of*

learning sources. For example, instead of explaining what teacher professional learning is, Dang and Sood articulated how the learning happens:

> From my understanding, it is the way that teacher learns from various things to develop their teaching. They can learn from their own experience, their colleagues, even from their students. (Dang, 13 September, 2013)
>
> I think doing research is one of the best ways. Because when you have to write a research paper, it seems like you read a lot. You can also talk to the expert in that way you can gain more knowledge. (Sood, July 10, 2013)

As shown in these two transcripts, these lecturers described the professional learning paths differently; however, they both perceived that learning could happen through more than a single circumstance.

In addition to referring to the variety of professional learning sources, some of the participants further highlighted that various learning sources were in both formal and informal forms. For example:

> Professional learning for me is a systematic way of learning and sharing. It doesn't have to be in a formal setting. It can be at lunchtime, in our subject group meeting, or faculty meeting. It can happen anytime, anywhere. It can happen in an email when you exchange information, sharing ideas with your colleague about problems that you found. (Kim, 19 July 2013)

As exemplified through Kim's response, the reader can see that this definition was more centred on the form of teacher professional learning. This particular lecturer's perception of professional learning corresponded with many educational researchers' ideas, which constituted the grounded definition for this study (See Section 3.1, Chapter 3). In addition to Kim's definition, those from the other four participants were related to the literature in that they stated that teacher learning takes multiple forms, *formal* and *informal*, such as formal coursework in both face-to-face and on-line modes, activities organised by professional associations, and self-initiated or faculty-supported research. And some learning occurs during the teachers' workday, as in conversations with colleagues, glimpses into colleagues' classrooms, or sharing of teaching tips during coffee time (Day, 1999; Mayer & Lloyd, 2011; Wilson & Berne, 1999). The result of both formal and informal professional learning practiced by the

teacher is defined as 'teacher professional development' (Fullan, 2001). A more specific description of the term can be found with Day (1999):

> Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which constitute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues throughout each phase of their teaching lives. (p. 4)

Whilst the literature and some participants provided a fuller picture of teacher professional learning, most (eleven out of sixteen) considered only some aspects of the learning. Given these findings, it was too soon at this stage to portray an exact picture of the EFL lecturers' perceptions of professional learning, notwithstanding the general view that some were possibly unaware of their learner roles and tended to have minimal exposure to professional learning activities. Therefore, further analyses of the lecturers' perceptions of professional learning were undertaken and it was found that this group of EFL lecturers viewed their professional learning in two other distinctive ways. These two distinct characteristics are whether the participants viewed their professional learning as an individual or collaborative learning experience.

7.2. Participants' Perspectives of Teacher Professional Learning

Carefully reconsidering all participant interview responses, the researcher further found that aside from those different degrees with which participants were familiar with the term, the varieties of the participants' descriptions of professional learning also shared two other distinctions. Specifically these were that the 16 EFL lecturers viewed teacher professional learning in *individual* and *collaborative* ways. Accordingly, these perspectives towards teacher professional learning were categorised and are discussed in the two following sub-sections: (7.2.1) teacher professional learning as individual learning and (7.2.2) teacher professional learning as collaborative learning.

7.2.1 Teacher Professional Learning as Individual Learning

After the researcher carefully reviewed all participant definitions of professional learning (some were given as examples in the earlier sections), 14 (out of sixteen) participants' definitions were found to focus on individual participation in a formal learning activity. As the reader may notice from examples given in previous sections, participants mentioned professional learning as arising through reading, conducting research, teaching practice, and individually attending training courses. When describing their learning through those activities, participants mentioned neither the interaction with their colleagues nor the engagement of their colleagues in each of their learning activities. One participant indicated a strong sense of teacher professional learning as individual development, as seen from the following response from the Director:

> For my professional learning, I think I try to come up with the idea on how to improve my teaching on my own. (Director, August 6, 2013)

The Director clearly treated professional learning as a personal responsibility requiring neither interaction nor support from others. In addition to the Director's opinion, 13 other lecturers shared more or less the same perception. The three following examples show how each participant defined professional learning as individual learning through different activities. Although each of the three interview extracts indicated different professional learning paths (e.g. reading, furthering education, and pursuing an academic title), the participants shared similar ideas of how they viewed the learning as an individual experience.

> So for me the professional learning for teachers is to adapt themselves. They have to not just read books; they have to go and experience teaching in the real classroom. (Som, July 16, 2013)
>
> The first impression of this word is something far away from me. On the contrary, this is something I'm doing. I am doing a PhD degree as a part of my professional development. (Nim, August 30, 2013)
>
> I'm new to this term. I'm not familiar with education. I would concentrate more on gaining an academic title. When teacher get promoted they have a higher rank higher academic title then become more professional in their career path and they have encouragement to move on. If they stay in the same position, there is no professional development, for me. (Phai, August 7, 2013)

According to the interview responses, the researcher noticed that all three descriptions similarly centred on an individual teacher's engagement in learning

activities. In addition to explicitly describing their individual engagement in learning activities, the participants also indicated their engagement with social media learning sources in the individual sense as they showed through interview that they also learnt from on-line professional learning communities. For example, a non-Thai lecturer shared that:

> You may also find the new material when you looked for something on the Internet and got a new idea... I think the updated version of materials and new techniques are easy to find via Internet. It's convenient and you can build up a lot that way I think. (Zara, July 16, 2013)

As seen from this interview excerpt, this participant had a good impression of on-line learning sources because of their accessibility and the fact that the information was up to date. In addition, similar impressions about how the participant individually learnt through the on-line paths can be seen as follows:

> Well I think there are a lot of online options like YouTube, iTunes U, there are a lot of courses not particularly English courses. I think I learn a lot from those iTunes U where I can learn from those experience teachers. They are experienced in terms of teaching and in terms of expertise. I think I learn a lot. I use their techniques as well in my class. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

It can be implied from this interview response that the quality of on-line learning sources, particularly the teachers sharing their knowledge and skills through the virtual learning communities, was one of the reasons that participants chose to develop their teaching in this way. The interview data are once again consistent with the literature on teacher learning in that it can take multiple forms in both face-to-face and online modes (Mayer & Lloyd, 2011; Wilson & Berne, 1999). These on-line learning sites contained opportunities for learners to interact with a wider group of people, however no interview responses indicated the participants' interest in this aspect. They treated these on-line paths of learning (e.g. YouTube, iTunes U, other e-learning sites) as venues to individually attain various teaching materials or techniques, rather than to interact with other learners.

It is also pertinent that none of the collaborative knowledge construction activities (i.e., lecturers working in this workplace or in different contexts) were the focus of their descriptions of teacher professional learning. To understand a more complete picture of teacher professional learning in this workplace, the

Director of the institution (as an influential policy maker) was asked to share his opinion of teacher professional learning. The Director shared that:

> Talking about teacher professional learning of the lecturers here, I think we should encourage each of our lecturers to attend workshops or any academic sessions, which will enable them to improve or develop their teaching skills. Apart from that they are also encouraged to join any sessions that would be helpful for their research skills and can promote their research skills. We also sometimes invite some guest speakers from other institutes in Thailand and overseas to give lectures to our staff and share their experience and ideas about academic things or research skills. (Director, August 6, 2013)

Given this response, whilst the learning activities mentioned by the Director (e.g. workshops) can be generally viewed as collaborative, he was rather clear that it was the individual lecturer's responsibility to attend them, and that the learning was individual for each. Furthermore, after analysing the whole set of interview responses, it was quite remarkable that there were almost no traces of evidence indicating either the institution's or the university's attempt to promote lecturers' engagement in social interaction with colleagues and collaborative knowledge construction activities within the workplace (e.g. the exchange of teaching techniques and other academic experience between colleagues, or collaborative research). The one possible support revealed through both interview and observation was the arrangement of physical spaces provided for the teaching staff (i.e., lecturer lounge, canteens, meeting rooms).

In essence, it can be deduced that learning, according to both the Director and the participant lecturers' perspectives, did not focus on job embedded collaborative practice with colleagues. The interview extract from the Director as well as those of the 13 participants indicated that teacher professional learning was treated more as personal development through each lecturer's individual engagement, extensively, in formal learning activities such as training, workshops, and postgraduate study. More than half of the participants (nine out of fourteen) described their professional learning by expressing a significant level of reliance on formal learning activities (without mentioning any informal activities), the data further indicated several obstacles blocking them from the formal learning activities as will be later discussed in section 7.3.1.

Additionally, this phenomenon where individual teachers rely on formal learning activities to a large degree is not a new discovery. It has been found in other educational contexts and discussed by many educational researchers (e.g. Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010; Nagamine, 2007; see also in Chapter 3). These authors called the phenomenon a 'traditional training-based approach' or 'prescribed professional development'. Many researchers have claimed that depending on the traditional approach to such an extent is not sufficient to help lecturers sustainably develop their profession. Thus, several have suggested an alternative way for teachers to develop themselves through learning from one another during their daily routine (Darling-Hammond, 2005; 2000). They further proposed that collaborative practice in a teacher's workplace (by encouraging teachers to initiate their learning activities based on their own individual needs) should equally receive individual teacher and educational researchers' attention, as the traditional approach did (e.g. Britzman, 2003; Gravani & John, 2005; Hargreaves, 2000; Sawyer, 2001).

7.2.2 Teacher Professional Learning as Collaborative Learning

Whilst most participants considered professional learning an individual learning experience, seven out of sixteen viewed professional learning from different perspectives (five out of seven lecturers viewed their professional learning as both individual and collaborative). For example, Kim expressed her view of teacher professional learning in the following way:

> Professional learning for me is a systematic way of learning and sharing. It doesn't have to be in a formal setting. It can be at lunchtime in our subject group meeting or faculty meeting. It can happen anytime anywhere. It can happen in an email when you exchange information, sharing ideas with your colleague about problems that you have found. And then you ask for solutions or some kind of suggestion. I think that is professional learning for me. (Kim, July 19, 2013)

It was apparent that this participant viewed her professional learning as a process of co-construction of knowledge that required more than individual participation in the learning activity. Professional learning for this participant requires interaction with colleagues in the sharing of problems or teaching ideas. This lecturer was also aware that such professional learning can take many forms and occur in any number of places; in formal settings (meetings or workshops), less formal settings (email communication), and spontaneous learning settings

(canteens). Zara also viewed professional learning form a different perspective to the majority. In her own words:

> Talking to people: it gives you the ideas and things that you might not have heard or thought before. Sometimes you will get ideas and resources if you talk to someone one who teaches the same courses. Sometimes when you teach the new course, you have to look around to see what you gonna do. You may also find the new material when you looked for something on the Internet and got a new idea, you can share with somebody else. I think the latest version of materials and new techniques are easy to find via Internet. It's convenient and you can build up a lot that way I think. (Zara, July 16, 2013)

According to this, professional learning was not only concerned with what she took from conversation with colleagues but with what she shared with others. Kim and Zara's descriptions of professional learning were rather similar in that they both agreed that they could learn from spontaneous social interactions with their colleagues and other educators in the virtual community. Correspondingly, Walt stated his impression of this social interaction with colleagues in the following way:

> Honestly, I would say I can learn informally through informal talk with people. Informally talking to colleagues and hearing other people talking about class, I would say, is by far the most valuable learning source to me. (Walt, July 19, 2013)

The reader can see that this particular lecturer also valued collaborative knowledge construction activities like colleagues such as Kim, Zara, and some of the others did. Furthermore, interviews also suggested that such collaborative ways of learning not only took many forms and arose in many places, but also occurred over a continuous period of time, as the reader can see from Ervin's interview response:

> I think you have to continue to educate yourself. We can learn from colleagues, we learn from doing different things, trying to learn more, trying to develop the lessons, using new techniques in classrooms, trying to keep up to date. (Ervin, July 5, 2013)

Ervin's perspective (as well as six other participants') towards teacher professional learning was also in accordance with Wenger's (1998a) notion of Community of Practice (see more in Section 3.2, Chapter 3). Learning in this notion refers to a process of active participation and constructive ways of

learning in relation to particular communities to which a person belongs. Furthermore, many educational researchers have cited the benefits of teachers participating in an effective CoP. For example, teachers become more focused on student learning, develop and sustain good relationships with colleagues, have positive professional beliefs, as well as a commitment to continuous learning and to the profession (e.g., Brownell et al., 2006; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; Lieberman, 2000; Johnson, 2003; Wenger, 2006; Wood, 2007).

Associating Wenger's description of CoP with participants' perspectives towards their professional learning (as a collaborative knowledge construction process with their colleagues) brings about an interesting idea concerning the sustainability of the lecturers' learning activities. Wenger suggested that such collective learning activities have to last longer and continue over a period of time. However, after re-considering all participants' responses it was found that almost all failed to mention the continuity or sustainability of their social interaction with their colleagues. From the seven lecturers who perceived professional learning as a collaborative learning experience only one (Ervin, interview, July 5, 2013) mentioned the continuity of professional learning.

Furthermore, revisiting the interview responses of the seven participants who perceived professional learning as a collaborative learning experience it was found that spontaneous conversation with colleagues was the main source of their collaborative learning. For example, a full-time Thai lecturer shared that she found her conversation with colleagues beneficial and implemented those discussions with colleagues into her teaching:

> I use more cooperative learning or jigsaw reading that I got from my colleague. I think talking to her is helpful. It gives me ideas and it makes my class more lively and more interactive…I love to exchange opinions. I love to share experience with people in the team. I think we can develop ourselves or we can change our ways of teaching a little bit according to our peers. (Sood, interview, July 10, 2013)

According to Sood's description of her positive attitude towards exchanging opinions with colleagues, the reader will see that such a collaborative knowledge construction process did not only involve one-to-one interaction but also included interaction with other colleagues whom she referred to as the "team". In

addition to positive attitudes towards conversations with colleagues, the interview data provided details on in which occasions such learning occurred. Phai, another full-time lecturer, described:

> I think, I prefer having lunch with colleagues rather than having lunch alone cause I also get to update news within the institute and other news as well. (Phai, interview, August 7, 2013)

This shows that the collaborative learning experience amongst teachers working in the same context can spontaneously occur at anytime during a lecturer's daily routine.

The spontaneous learning between participants and their colleagues as viewed by the seven participant lecturers is related to the social constructivist perspective of knowledge construction as reviewed in the literature chapter (e.g., Haar, 2003; Keiny, 1994; Nagamine, 2007; Richardson, 1977; Schwandt, 2001). That is, knowledge grows through day-to-day experiences and is constructed by the person's interaction with their environment. The lecturers believe that their learning involves the processes of negotiation with their colleagues that naturally occur in many forms and places during the workaday (e.g. planning lessons together, collaboratively solving teaching problems, and voluntarily sharing teaching tips or materials). It can be said that participants' conversations and workplace interactions with colleagues during their day-to-day practice were the significant agents for their informal learning.

Additionally, it can also be seen from the above interview excerpt that the informal conversations between colleagues was not only directly beneficial to their teaching, but also helped the participants keep up to date with changes in the workplace. Another part-time lecturer added additional benefits of collaborative learning activities. In her own words:

> Yes, I think the conversation helps a lot. Even though it's very casual, it's useful. It's a way to share your experience and there's no stress involved. If I had a bad morning or session that I've blown off my steam and I hear that some teachers had a good morning, I will feel that okay this is what they do. They are successful, so maybe I can borrow that technique and use it with my class as well. I think that's kind of productive. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

According to Phor's interview, conversations with colleagues after teaching benefited the lecturers in at least three ways: they helped the lecturer recall what

he or she had done during the lesson, helped them cope with stress caused by teaching, and inspired the lecturer to use new teaching techniques. Additional details about this type of stress-releasing conversation were also revealed through another interview with a part-time lecturer:

> It's almost like a very short brief of what happened in the past two or three hours that we are separated in the morning. Then we just go and talk non-sense at lunchtime. These five minutes is mostly about the problems that happened or maybe some administrative work. I think people might benefit from them…This is the culture that I notice around here. I think it's a helping hands environment. It's kind of helping community, not patronizing or intruding. (Sai, August 13, 2013)

This interview extract indicates that beneficial conversations between lecturers happened after they finished their classes. When the lecturers reunited after the morning classes they were able to relax by speaking with colleagues during lunch. This participant expressed that this stress-relieving conversation also covered teaching related things such as experiences from morning classes and some of their administrative work. Additionally, Sai reflected a positive attitude towards this spontaneous conversation in much the same way as her other part-time lecturer colleagues did. She also treated this conversation as a reflection of what she did in her morning classes and during the first half of each working day. This experience in turn helped her develop a positive opinion towards the working environment in general. Particularly, the last sentence of her interview extract highlights that this spontaneous conversation helped lecturers gain trust with each other and feel more secure in their work. According to the benefits outlined above, it can be said that the spontaneous conversation amongst lecturers, in the participants' perspectives, had considerably significant influences on their knowledge construction.

The benefits of collegial conversation and the relationship it has with teacher learning were highlighted in Tillema and Orland-Barak (2006), Nagamine (2007), Mawhinney (2009), and Jurasaite-Harbison and Rex's (2010) studies, as mentioned in Chapter 3. In particular, the informal learning situations described in the above interview excerpts were relatively close to the findings from Mawhinney's (2009) qualitative study (through 312 hours of observations on teachers' lunch and thirteen interviews) in that spending time in common spaces socialising with colleagues served the teachers in at least two purposes:

combating teacher isolation in the workplace and sharing professional knowledge.

Furthermore, it is also necessary to note that, the aforementioned interview findings are consistent with observation data (Chapter 6) concerning the spontaneous learning situations in this workplace's common spaces in two main ways. The first consistency between the observations and interviews was a higher frequency of part-time lecturers gathering in the common spaces and their more positive attitudes towards this spontaneous learning activity. Secondly, part-time lecturers were observed to have more teaching related conversations during their lunchtime whilst the full-time lecturers' spontaneous conversation mostly related to updates on changes in the workplace and personal matters. This set of findings was consistent with the interview in that the part-time lecturer group shared more positive attitudes towards having spontaneous lunchtime conversations.

However, it is necessary to remind the reader that there was a small number of participants (seven out of sixteen) who perceived teacher professional learning as a collaborative learning experience and who realised the benefits of this learning. Given these findings, the researcher revisited all participant interview responses to see whether there was further clarification for this phenomenon. Accordingly, four obstacles that the participants thought limited their chances to collaboratively engage in the informal learning opportunities were found and will be discussed in Section 7.3.2.

7.2.3 Individual Learning versus Collaborative Learning

The variety of participant perceptions of their professional learning is summarised in Figure 7.1, which clearly demonstrates the trends of this group. The larger circle, on the left, displays pseudonyms of participants who perceived professional learning as an individual learning experience. The smaller circle, on the right, indicates the participants who viewed professional learning as a collaborative learning experience. In addition, there is some slight overlap indicating that some participants' perceptions clearly belong to both categories.

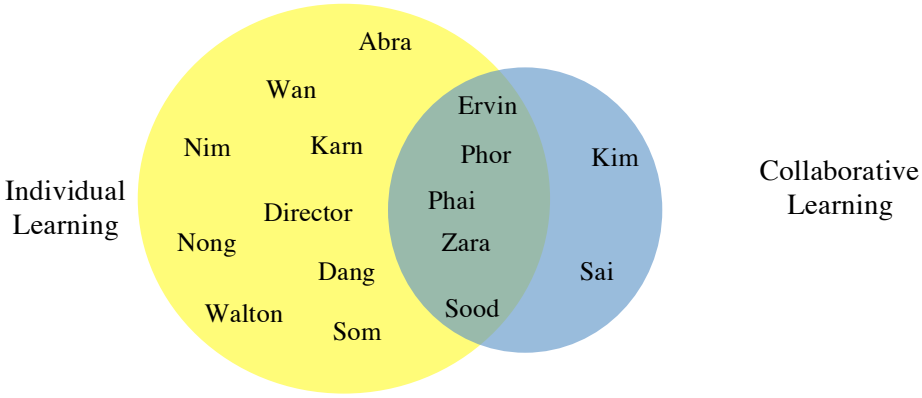


***Figure* 7.1: Participants' perceptions towards teacher professional learning**

Most participants viewed their professional learning as an individual learning experience and considered formal professional learning a path to their personal development (*N*=14). Few of them (*N*=2) described teacher professional learning as collaborative learning experiences to be undertaken with their colleagues. The researcher also found some participants (*N*=5) who described their professional learning in both senses: individual and collective. Additionally, there was a slight difference in degree between the groups of participants (full-time Thai, non-Thai, and part-time lecturers) with a greater percentage of full-time Thai lecturers (86%) describing professional learning in the individual sense (80% of part-time lecturers and 50% of non-Thai lecturers).

Equally important is that most of the learning activities that the participants mentioned whilst describing individual learning were the formal (training, workshops, and graduate degrees). This particular set of findings was consistent with a finding from Chapter 6 that showed that participant lecturers had greater engagement in formal professional learning activities (e.g. attending training, taking other degrees, and conducting research) than informal. In particular, full-time Thai faculty had more engagement with formal activities and more support from the workplace to do so. It is equally important to note that interview data from the Director of this institution expressed a similar perspective toward professional learning as he considered teacher professional learning as primarily an individual experience.

Associating these findings with the literature, attitudes towards professional learning of the majority of participants, including the Director and 86% of fulltime lecturers, were comparable with the traditional training-based approaches (Britzman, 2003; Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010; Wilson & Berne, 1999). Consequently, the professional learning support provided in this workplace leaned towards the individual learning experience, mostly through formal learning activities. Even though the Director mentioned a few collaborative learning activities (e.g. workshops) as types of support that were provided, he was clear that it was the individual lecturer's responsibility to attend them. Additionally, this unequal support for formal and informal learning opportunities from the institution was found to obstruct some participants' professional development. The obstacles impeding the professional learning are discussed in the following sections.

7.3. Participants' Perceptions of Obstacles to Professional Learning

During interviews when asked about what professional learning meant many factors obstructing lecturers from engaging in such activities were found. Specifically, several obstacles were highlighted when participants expressed their impression of each learning activity and the support they received from the workplace. The researcher further found that these obstacles affected the participants' individual and collaborative professional learning activities both formally and informally. Accordingly, the factors are discussed in the following two sub-sections on (7.3.1) perceived obstacles for formal professional learning and (7.3.2) perceived obstacles for informal professional learning.

7.3.1 Perceived Obstacles to Formal Professional Learning

When the majority of the participants described their understanding of professional learning and what they did for their development as an individual most cited the influences of workplace policy on support for their learning. The workplace support-factors can be identified as follows: institutional priorities and inequalities in access to opportunities.

7.3.1.1 Institutional Priorities

The interview data on participants' perceptions of their professional learning showed that the workplace prioritised learning activities outside of the institution over those organised within the workplace. In addition, lecturers' professional development through research and publication was encouraged to a greater degree than other professional learning opportunities.

The influences of institutional priorities on participants' formal professional learning was initially noticeable when full-time lecturers described their opportunities and the support they received from their workplace. The interview data showed that support for formal professional learning was mainly given in the form of funding (e.g. travel allowance, application fees for attending conferences and training) and the advertising of learning opportunities outside of the workplace. The following interview excerpt is an example interview response indicating funding support:

> Yes, they are happy to support. They are always willing to support whenever I apply for a grant to present my paper abroad. I always get a grant. (Phai, August 7, 2013)

In addition, participants also mentioned workplace support that indicates institutional priority on formal professional learning outside of the workplace through the institution's attempt to circulate news about professional learning activities offered by external experts to full-time teaching staff. For example, one full-time Thai lecturer shared that the institution facilitated her access to information about training:

> I've seen advertised posters and letters from other institutions about training. And our institution asked if I was interested in joining…I see that opportunity. (Kim, July 19, 2013)

It is clear from the interview excerpts that the perceived support from the workplace (i.e., funding and the advertising of professional development opportunities) benefited individual full-time Thai lecturers outside of the workplace. The aforementioned perceptions not only implied extensive support for learning outside of the workplace (e.g. conferences and training), but also suggested negligence regarding learning inside the workplace. Additionally, prioritisation of individual lecturer's professional learning outside of the workplace, once again, reflected the administrators' "traditional belief of teacher

professional learning" (e.g. Britzman, 2003; Nagamine, 2007; Richards, 1989), as the reader may recall from Chapter 3.

In addition to learning opportunities outside of the workplace, another issue that affected the professional learning of lecturers was the higher degree of workplace encouragement for research and publication for lecturing staff. It was revealed through interviews that full-time lecturer participants, particularly Thai lecturers, were increasingly expected to produce more research and to publish their work. Such expectations, in turn, affected the number of professional learning activities, as the reader can see from Zara's interview:

> I have not seen anything about KM for a long time. There used to be workshops like KM workshops on this on that. I used to go to those, but I haven't seen any recently. I think, a lot of people now are on research track. I think they concentrate more on research now. I think I heard the Vice Director said that the institution needed to get more research. (Zara, July 16, 2013)

Zara's interview response suggested that the workplace policy on staff research was a significant agent contributing to the dearth of KM seminars. In addition to Zara, most full-time lecturers indicated that the workplace policy could contribute to the lack of support for their individual engagement in formal learning opportunities within the workplace.

Furthermore, Phai, an experienced full-time Thai lecturer, who was once an institution and University board member, shared more details on the effect of workplace policies, particularly QA scores, on an individual lecturer's learning activities (More detail about this Quality Assurance can be found in Section 6.1.1.5). The following is a description of the relationship between QA and the rise and fall of the number of professional learning activities in this particular workplace:

> Does the KM thing still happen, this semester, I'm not sure, but it's related to the institution's QA. It's consistence with whether the administrator team want to emphasise KM or not. If we have reached a certain level of QA score, KM is not the major aspect we have to concentrate on. You have to check with the administrator team about what the priority is. I guess this semester's priority is the number of our staff's research. (Phai, August 7, 2013)

This means that while this study was conducted, this institution emphasised the pursuit of research that would be beneficial to its QA score. Phai's perceptions of

the factors leading to the deficiency of formal learning support represent the majority of the full-time lecturers' interview responses about this issue. That is, institutional priorities, particularly research and quality assurance (QA) policies, had an impact on the number of in-house formal learning opportunities, such as KM seminars and staff research.

The emphasis on staff research and publication was not directly initiated from the institution itself but instead from university-wide policy. As the number of research studies and publications influences the university ranking, there is potential that the pressure on the teaching staff was equally influenced by university policy. According to the participants' perceptions of their professional learning, such a strong emphasis on staff research from the university was evidenced by the funding support available for the full-time lecturers. This source of data suggested that the institution's QA scores and university ranking were priorities of the administration team rather than its lecturers' demands for professional learning.

7.3.1.2 Inequalities in Access to Opportunities

The interview data also depicted inequalities for part-time lecturers' to access learning activities due to workplace policy. When the part-time lecturers described their individual engagement in professional learning activities, most shared that they were aware of inequalities, particularly, the different degrees of workplace support for them and the full-time lecturers. Each mentioned the difficulties they faced in accessing the learning activities provided by the workplace. For example, Karn responded in the following manner:

> Most of the part-time lecturers are from outside, so they are lost. The institute cannot provide them with support. (Karn, interview, July 26, 2013)

Some of them further expressed that they also need similar kinds of support to the other groups of lecturers:

> Maybe they have to… maybe the institute have to arrange one day for the lecturers to share the ideas. If the institute wants to arrange some seminars, they have to ask for the availability of the lecturers. So that some part-time lecturers can join and can set up their schedule. (Som, Interview, July 16, 2013)

The fact that part-time lecturers had never been asked about their availability to participate in in-house professional development activities reflected the lack of attention to the quality of their professional development.

In addition to a lack of concern for their professional learning, part-time lecturers also experienced inequality through the arrangement of their teaching schedules. For example, Phor explained:

> I believe that they have many workshops, seminars, and those kinds of meetings, but they are not provided for us. And there's a schedule conflict. Most of the time the activities are held on Tuesday morning and all the part-time lecturers and I usually have Tuesday morning class, so I don't get the chance to attend those seminars or meetings. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

In light of the above interview excerpt, the reader can see that this institution typically arranged for formal professional learning activities to occur on Tuesday mornings when all part-time lecturers had classes, meaning they were unable to access the opportunities. Through this scheduling it can be inferred that professional development of part-time lecturers was not considered by administrators (a similar issue was raised in Section, 6.1.1.5).

The lack of support not only obstructed individual part-time lecturers' formal professional development opportunities, but also brought about negative attitudes as expressed by Dang:

> They usually have the meeting about the course on Tuesday mornings and I wasn't able to attend. I kind of felt left out. (Dang, interview, September 13, 2013)

This response shows that the inequality in this workplace also diminished the part-time lecturers' sense of belonging to this institution. According to the participants' perceptions and previous literature on teacher professional development (e.g. Inalhan & Finch 2004; Rioux & Mokounkolo 2013; Rioux & Pignault, 2013), this absence of a sense of belonging may create many problems in an organisation, such as an increase in work errors, reduction in productivity, low morale and negative attitudes towards the organisation, as well as the loss of experienced and hardworking staff.

Aside from the mismatch between their teaching and learning activities schedule, an unequal level of workplace support was also found in part-time lecturers'

difficulty in retrieving news about professional learning activities as circulated by the institution:

> I think not enough flow of information is what obstructs me to do my job well. I don't mind coming to the meeting to get the clear idea about what to teach, if they invited me. So that I know what to expect and my students will know what to expect and I can give the right assignment for my students. I prefer more training and meetings from the institution. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

In addition to the disruption to the circulation of information concerning professional learning activities, part-time lecturers' interview responses revealed other negative consequences. According to Phor, the disruption reduced her individual engagement in formal learning activities and subsequently made a negative impact on her teaching. Another part-time lecturer participant further added:

> I'm not sure whether they have it, but personally I've never had any kind of outlook into some kind of professional development. Whereas another place where I work, in the lift, they have the signs to say something like there is a special lecture at lunchtime here and there. There'll be a talk on assessment and others how to for teachers…. some brief talk or half an hour workshop. I don't see that around here. I'm not sure if they actually have it, but I haven't seen it. (Sai, August 13, 2013)

The researcher highlighted two initial ideas from the above interview excerpt. The first was the disruption of the information flow to part-time lecturers, similar to Phor's comment and the issue discussed in Section 6.1.1.6. That section indicated that after considering all emails inviting participants to training, workshops, conferences, and meetings, the researcher found that no part-time lecturer was invited. The part-time lecturers would occasionally receive information about professional learning activities casually through an in-person invitation from full-time lecturers in conversations or through leaflets posted sporadically in the common room. Another message evident in the interview with Sai was that such professional learning support was more prevalent in other workplaces. Other part-time lecturers appeared to echo this feeling, viewing other institutions more favourably in this regard. For example:

> I have had a few workshops since I also teach at *Corinth* [a pseudonym of another Thai government university]. *Corinth* usually has workshops for part-time teachers to attend, so I had a few workshops on teaching techniques as well. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

It is also necessary to note that each part-time lecturer also worked for other university level institutions/departments in a part-time capacity, which meant that they had experiences in alternative workplaces to make comparisons. Thus, it would appear that the learning opportunities of EFL part-time lecturers in Thai universities varied. Seemingly, when compared to other work contexts, the part-time lecturers received more professional development support from the other universities they worked for. This means that the inequality in accessing formal learning opportunities might not be solely rooted in their status in the workplace. It is plausible that other factors contribute to this inequality. For example, factors such as the administrators' attitudes towards hiring part-time lecturers, the budget available for teacher professional development, and factors stemming from the part-time lecturers themselves.

To gain a clearer picture of the phenomena, the researcher revisited the entire set of data to determine whether the factors were evident. However, it emerged that there was not enough information to be used for further discussion of this particular issue, mainly because the aim of this study was to reveal professional learning activities that participants engaged in, their attitudes towards professional learning, and their work culture (see also the research questions). There were no prior expectations that inequality in learning opportunities for part-time lecturers would arise as a major finding. Therefore, no interview questions or questionnaire items were generated to address this. Nevertheless, given the increase in part-time lecturers' contribution to students' academic performance (see also, the final paragraph, Chapter 6), the researcher strongly believes that understanding the root of this inequality in accessing formal professional learning activities by part-time lecturers is worthy of further study.

7.3.1.3 Summary of Perceived Obstacles to Formal Professional Learning

In light of the above obstacles, it can be deduced that the dearth of the formal professional learning opportunities and the inequality of learning opportunities for the 16 EFL lecturers mainly resulted from institutional policies. According to the participants' perceptions, the policies affected the groups of participants in different ways. The full-time lecturers, both Thai and non-Thai, perceived the

deficiency of support for in-house learning opportunities and the institutional priority for staff research and publication as obstacles. In addition, the part-time lecturers felt that the teaching schedule and ineffective information flow that resulted from workplace policies blocked them from participating in formal learning activities. Not only did these obstacles limit individual participant's engagement in formal professional learning, they also diminished the part-time lecturers' sense of belonging to this particular workplace and their confidence in teaching.

7.3.2 Perceived Obstacles to Informal Professional Learning

The interview data signified other factors blocking the participants from collaboratively learning together. These obstacles were found to influence participants' informal learning opportunities, both inside and outside of the workplace. When participants defined their professional learning in the collaborative sense the researcher noticed that they mainly cited the workplace's support in terms of physical spaces (i.e. lecturer lounge, canteens, and meeting rooms) as the single channel of support. Moreover, several factors limiting their chances to collaboratively learn through social interaction with their colleagues were clearly detected. The obstacles were, for example, the course structure, institutional priorities, and the physical conditions of the context.

7.3.2.1 The Course Structure

To begin with the course structure, for this particular English foundation course a group of students would be taught by two lecturers. Thai lecturers were responsible for the reading and writing components whilst English native lecturers taught the speaking and listening components. Most participants shared that they felt they taught different classes from their co-lecturers and that there was no necessity for them to communicate. See Walton's interview response for example:

> This might sound a bit bad, but the way that class is organised, this is almost like two separate classes running at the same time. They have separate books, separate tests, and separate everything, so there's nothing comparing either me or other lecturers really to interact. (Walton, interview, July 19, 2013)

This lecturer and his colleagues agreed that the structure of the course did not require much communication between the lecturers. Additionally, Sood and Ervin provided further details on why they felt this to be so:

> In the course syllabus, the total score is one hundred, right? So the first fifty is for listening/speaking and another fifty is for reading and writing. The scoring is separated. It's clearly separated. Therefore, we don't have to talk to each other that much because of the nature of the course. It's really separated. (Sood, July 10, 2013)
>
> We also use different books, so there's no need to coordinate anything unless you are the course coordinators or the exam writers. It's the way that the course was designed. There are not many reasons for any interaction between the two lecturers. (Ervin, July 5, 2013)

The two extracts illustrate why participants did not feel the need to communicate with each of their co-lecturers. Their main reasons were the scoring systems and the textbooks used in this subject. The participants did not see the use of different textbooks and the independence of co-lecturers' scoring decision as the flexibility of their class management. Additionally, it could be inferred that the lecturers overlooked the fact that they shared the same group of students, which could provide a huge connection between co-lecturers. Analysing all participant interview responses, the researcher found that none of the participants mentioned a need for exchanging student-related information to know more about the group of students that they shared.

When describing the relationships between co-lecturers, it seemed participants focused more on the differences in the scoring system and textbooks rather than the similarities in the students they had. The only two occasions that participants saw the need to communicate were when the workplace assigned them to be course coordinators or exam writers. It can be implied from this set of findings that the system (e.g. how the workplace structured the course as two separate subjects running at the same time) strongly influenced participant lecturers' attitudes towards professional learning. Associating this assumption with one of the previous chapter's findings, the lack of observed interaction between co-lecturers, it was noticeable that the workplace's system not only shaped participants' perceptions but also their actual engagement in professional learning activities—particularly their interaction with colleagues.

Furthermore, the course structure (i.e. the difference between textbooks and scoring systems) may not have been the only factor obstructing interaction between co-lecturers, as prior knowledge on how co-teaching works would clearly be needed. A co-teaching system is complicated as well as "time-consuming and requires strong interpersonal and collaborative skills by teachers" (Pancsofar & Petroff, 2013, p. 84). Friend et al.'s (2010) study suggested that some specific training sessions concerning co-teaching principles and techniques should be provided to lecturers before they actually begin teaching.

7.3.2.2 Institutional Priorities

Participants perceived the institutional priorities for staff research and publication as an obstacle to their learning. According to interviews, the two groups of participants (full-time Thai and non-Thai lecturers) indicated that the only support for informal learning was the support for conducting research (research, in this case, refers to 'self-initiated workplace supported research'). The reader should note that research was categorised as an informal professional learning activity within the workplace as many full-time lecturer participants shared that they initiated their own reading and research to improve their teaching (full details can be found in 6.2.1.2). The following interview extract is an example of how the workplace supports staff in conducting their research:

> They provide everything for us even hiring part-time teachers to help us teach, so we have more time to spend for research. It was the problem in the past; we taught a lot. We taught many sessions and we cannot find time to do research to improve our professional development. There were problems in the past, but now the institute solved those problems by hiring more part-time teachers to teach for us. (Nong, interview, August 6, 2013)

This shows that this workplace hired a number of part-time lecturers to reduce the full-time lecturers' teaching load. In so doing, full-time staff were to have more time to conduct research that would enable them to solve their instructional problems and develop their teaching. At first glance, the institutional priority was to benefit the informal learning of the lecturers, however, the interview data further suggested that the priority later became a pressure on the lecturers, as the reader can see from the following interview excerpt:

> I was forced to publish the research paper…so I have to read a lot of journals… (Sood, interview, July 10, 2013)

The manner that the participant used the words 'force' and 'have to' in expressing the requirement to publish research implies her anxiety and a certain degree of negative attitude towards the situation. This excerpt also indicates that there was a strong focus on publication, rather than on applying research findings to actual teaching practice.

Although this policy encouraged a greater number of research publications it also yielded some negative consequences. Participants' interview responses suggested that the workplace's research publication policy not only obstructed formal learning activities but that it also hindered the lecturers' social interaction with colleagues and collaborative engagement in informal learning activities. One full-time lecturer mentioned the downside of this extensive support as seen below:

> A teacher who is in the research track can teach only one section in a semester. According to this schedule, teachers do not have to come to the campus every day. They can just come and leave when they have class…Research is the obstacle that prevents teachers from getting together. So the culture here is now changing. Previously, we had a closer relationship, sometimes we went out, we had lunch together outside. At that time we didn't have to do the research to fulfil the requirements of our job. At that time we had more teaching sessions, fewer hours of research, but more getting together time. (Phai, interview, August 7, 2013)

This particular lecturer had more than 14 years of teaching experience in this context, which meant that she had previous experience to draw upon. Her interview clearly indicated that the pressure to publish reduced opportunities for colleagues to see each other and to build workplace relationships. As a consequence there were fewer opportunities for colleagues to learn informally from each other.

In addition, the solution to this situation was indicated in the above interview response, particularly when the participant described the change in her work culture as such, "previously, we had a closer relationship […] we had more teaching sessions, fewer hours of research, but more getting together time". This highlighted the significance of the workplace policy balancing the value placed on research with that placed on teaching. Presumably an equal focus on staff research publications and the application of research findings to actual teaching practice could raise the lecturers' professional learning conditions.

It is also necessary to note that aside from the provision of physical spaces and support for research and publication, the researcher could not find any other workplace support for informal learning. No attempts to facilitate collaborative learning amongst lecturers or encouragement to stimulate exchanges of teaching experience through informal social interactions were mentioned in any interviews. The following is an example from an interview with a full-time lecturer that overtly indicates a lack of support for informal learning:

> Researcher: Do you feel any encouragement from the institute to help the teachers to learn from one another or to work together?
>
> Nim: I don't really feel that. Everybody seems to be busy with their own stuff. I don't really feel that I have been encouraged. I feel that I reach out to other teachers for my own reasons. (Nim, September 5, 2013)

This absence of workplace support was perceived not only by full-time Thai lecturers but also non-Thai and part-time lecturers. When the researcher asked whether Dang perceived any attempt from the workplace to encourage staff to meet and learn from one another, she promptly replied without hesitation:

> No, we will contact with only the coordinators. (Dang, interview, September 13, 2013)

This means that this participant felt she received no encouragement from her workplace to socialise with other lecturers other than teaching-specific interaction with course coordinators. Additionally, another part-time lecturer, who used to work in the same workplace as a full-time lecturer, answered the same question as follows:

> I don’t think so. Since I worked here before, I may get some information about some informal meetings. But most of the part-time lecturers are from outside, so they are lost. (Karn, interview, July 26, 2013)

This interview showed that the participant felt a lack of support for informal learning opportunities within the workplace and, particularly, that the deficiency was stronger for part-time lecturers.

All above participant responses regarding workplace policies on staff research publication and the lack of attention to other areas of informal learning strongly suggested that staff perspectives towards this workplace were noticeably different from those in the literature on sustainable teacher professional development. This literature suggests that by helping teachers regularly engage

in informal interaction with their colleagues their learning and understanding of knowledge are created and sustained (e.g. Keiny, 1994; Nagamine, 2007; Richardson, 1997; Tillema & Orland-Barak, 2006). It was further highlighted in Jurasaite-Harbison and Rex's (2010) study that workplace tradition and policy play crucial roles in creating opportunities for informal teacher learning. Placing this set of findings within the context of the literature it can be argued that this group of EFL lecturers would have a better chance of developing their profession sustainably if workplace administrators attributed greater importance to staff social interaction than to the number of research publications. Accordingly, a shift in the workplace culture and policy from valuing staff research publications to nurturing social interaction amongst the staff and encouraging their collaborative learning activities might be worth considering for this educational institution.

7.3.2.3 The Teaching Schedule

Both full-time and part-time lecturers disclosed that they had fewer opportunities to meet their colleagues due to the differences in their teaching schedules, suggesting that this was an obstacle for professional learning. Below is an interview excerpt of an answer to the question about factors obstructing social interaction with colleagues:

> I come here only Wednesday to Friday. So it might not be possible for me to see all of them. If we don't teach on the same days, we don't come to the institute on the day that we don't have class. That's why we don't see each other that often. (Sood, July 10, 2013)

It is evident that Sood viewed the variety in each lecturer's teaching schedule as one of the reasons that contributed to the reduction in contact with her colleagues. In addition to Sood, other participants also quoted the variety of teaching schedules in this workplace as an obstacle to informal learning, for example:

> We have different timetables and this workplace also gives us some kind of freedom to set our own schedule, when to come and when to work from somewhere else. It's not compulsory that we have to come to the workplace. We have different timetables…The lecturers can come when it's their teaching time. They don't need to come the whole day. If they have class in the afternoon, they can come in the afternoon. They just have to make sure that they prepare their class well. It can be at home; it can be outside the workplace that they can prepare their teaching. So the

> timetable is the first factor that makes teachers here meet each other not that much. (Kim, July 19, 2013)

Revealed through Kim's interview is that participants also viewed the flexibility of when to come to the workplace as a factor limiting their social interaction with colleagues. Another lecturer added:

> Maybe because of the teaching schedule itself. If some lecturers have to teach three hours in the morning, and then lunch break and then the afternoon classes, so they don't have enough time to visit the common room to see other people. (Som, July 16, 2013)

According to Som's interview, the rigidity of the teaching schedule for some lecturers contributed to the infrequent social interaction that occurred amongst colleagues. Seemingly, both full-time and part-time lecturers agreed that the two factors discussed above limited their chances to interact with their colleagues in person. A similar situation regarding the impact of teaching conditions on lecturers' opportunities to learn from one another within the workplace was depicted in U.S. educational institutions where, as cited from U.S. Department of Education in 1996, teachers had minimal time to interact as most of them had very tight teaching schedules and limited time to prepare their lessons. The working conditions, in turn, isolated them from social interaction with colleagues, subsequently obstructing the improvement of their curriculum to meet student needs (Darling-Hammond & Post, 2000). This research highlighted the interrelationship between working conditions, teachers' collaborative work and effective teaching in that:

> A final critical area for recruiting and retaining excellent teachers is the restructuring of school organizations and of teaching work, including a reallocation of personnel and resources so that teachers have time to work intensively with students and collaboratively with one another. Teaching in large, bureaucratic settings that do not enable teachers to come to know their students well or to work and plan with other teachers is exhausting work with few rewards. (Darling-Hammond & Post, 2000, p. 163)

Given the two authors' suggestion, the workplace must restructure teaching-related work and reallocate teachers' job responsibilities to allow lecturers more time to interact with both students and their colleagues, which would serve to improve the quality of teaching.

7.3.2.4 The Physical Conditions of the Context

Some participant interview responses indicated that the physical condition of the workplace was one of the factors obstructing them from socially interacting with colleagues. Walton, for example, explained his interactions with colleagues at the study site in comparison to his previous workplace in relation to the physical structure of the workplace:

> It's just the way that this building's structured, the offices are, the way the class is. Each of us has our private office on different floors. *[The offices are located on the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th floors.]* And so I've just found that when compared to my previous job, here I see my colleagues much much less. It can be months between times that I see colleagues…I think it's just the physical layout of the institute that is bad for that. (Walton, July 19, 2013)

Walton was clearly making the point that he was allocated a personal office on a different floor from his colleagues and this limited his social interaction. The researcher further found that the physical setting was equally detrimental to other participants' social interaction with colleagues. For example, Nong a full-time lecturer with decades of teaching experience in this workplace, shared her opinion of this and further suggested a solution:

> The way we do the office separately like this, we don't have relationship. But if we design the office area to be a shared space like the common room adding some particleboards, we will have more relationship. But now everyone goes to their private room and has no relationship with others. We have to plan the office, if we want the lecturers to have more interaction. Lecturers should be in the same room. (Nong, interview, August 6, 2013)

Nong's interview response clearly indicates how the physical setting impacts the lecturers' social interaction. She suggested that to stimulate more social interaction in the workplace a move towards a shared working space would be beneficial. The physical aspects of this particular EFL workplace were rather close to Lortie's (1975) definition of teacher isolation in a teacher "egg-crate" office. Lortie likened how teachers work in isolation within their separate rooms to how eggs are placed in separate sections of an egg carton. Lortie suggests that to increase social interaction amongst teachers, particularly their professional dialogue, educational reformers or school administrators should recognise the impact of the workplace's physical environment.

7.3.2.5 Summary of Perceived Obstacles to Informal Professional Learning

Considering all interview responses on informal professional learning, it can be said that this group of EFL lecturers experienced at least four obstacles that limited their chances to learn collaboratively through social interaction with their colleagues (i.e. course structure, teaching schedule, institutional priorities on research and publication, and the physical conditions of the workplace). The course structure, particularly the separated scoring systems and the different textbooks used by each pair of co-lecturers, limited the participants' need to communicate with their co-lecturers. The differences and the tightness of the teaching schedules, in a similar way to the course structure, led to participants' having fewer chances to interact with their colleagues. Aside from having minimal opportunities to interact with colleagues due to teaching responsibilities, the participants also had to spend more time away from social activities in order to work on their research publications, as strongly influenced by institutional priorities. Additionally, the workplace's physical structure, particularly the private office layout, was one of the factors limiting social interaction.

7.3.3 Summary of Perceived Obstacles to Professional Learning

Connecting the obstacles to informal professional learning (i.e. course structure, teaching schedule, research and publication priority, physical conditions of the workplace) with the other factors that constituted limited formal learning opportunities (i.e. inequalities in access to opportunities and institutional priorities), it was noticeable that these obstacles were beyond lecturer control. In particular, the obstacles were clearly related to institutional policies. The vast impact of workplace policies on staff development opportunities was discovered in many professional development studies cited in the literature chapter (e.g. Armour & Makopoulu, 2012; Gray, 2005; Kwakman, 2003; Selemani-Meke & Rembe, 2014; Wood, 2007). The previous studies similarly indicated that teachers' learning opportunities and their engagement in learning activities were tempered by the workplace's administrative policy.

Specifically, in this context, the professional learning of the part-time lecturer group was the most negatively influenced by policy. Their experience of non-constructive treatment from the workplace led to a decrease in their sense of

belonging to the workplace. Similarly to one of Rioux and Pignault's (2013) findings, the absence of support was found to diminish lecturers' sense of belonging within this workplace. The significant impact of policy in building a sense of belonging in the workplace was also addressed by Duchon and Plowman (2005). In their words: "when leaders value meaning at work and value connections with others, it is likely then that the workplace will be characterised by meaningful work and a sense of community." (p. 824). In line with Duchon and Plowman, the researcher believes that valuing collegial interactions would successfully enhance the working conditions and foster learning opportunities for both full-time and part-time lecturers.

Problems concerning part-time lecturers' professional development have been evidenced in other educational contexts as well. For example, in a study on contingent teaching staff (non-permanent academics or part-time lecturers) in UK business schools it was found that this particular group of lecturers experienced "poor communication about events, lack of payment for attendance, and conflicts with other work or research priorities" (Anderson, 2007, p. 115). In other UK university level institutions the invisibility of this group of lecturers to the development systems led to the "absence of support and development opportunities, such as induction, evaluation, mentoring, development courses and training" (Bryson, 2013, p. 4). This shows that university level contingent teachers in the UK receive scant attention from their workplace and have difficulty accessing professional development events in a similar manner to the EFL part-time lecturers in the current study. Additionally, it was found that the inadequacy of administrative support obstructed the professional learning of sessional lecturers (part-time lecturers) in many Australian institutions (Australian Universities Teaching Committee, 2003; Percy et al., 2008). Percy et al.'s (2008) analysis of the policies and practice of sixteen Australian universities regarding their sessional teaching staff found a clear lack of policy concerning the levels of administrative support that should be provided to sessional staff. They also found a scarcity of funding support for compulsory professional development sessions and the absence of any form of reward system for sessional staff who achieved a high quality of teaching. In another study on Australian sessional teaching staff, Andrew et al. (2010) found that there was a

lack of teaching preparation support for sessional lecturers, particularly an appropriate teaching orientation session. The researchers' recommendations regarding the characteristics of an effective teaching orientation for sessional staff are evident in the quotation below:

> Such orientation needs to clearly articulate their role within the academic team to ensure that they perceive themselves as valued team members, have information about the overall curriculum so that they can conceptualise where the subjects in which they are teaching fit within the whole, and are provided with mechanisms for seeking support or providing feedback (Andrew et al., 2010, p. 14).

This suggestion also relates to the hopes part-time lecturers in the current study had for what the institution would provide them (as the reader should see, for example, from Som, July 16, 2013; Phor, August 6, 2013). To meet Andrew et al.'s (2010) recommendation and the participant lecturers' needs, the researcher of this study highlights that the administrator of this workplace is the significant agent. Considering the negative consequences of the inequality of workplace support as warned by previous studies (e.g. an increase in work errors, a reduction in productivity, negative attitudes towards the organisation, a loss of experienced and hardworking staff), it is rational to caution the study site to revisit their policy for each group of their teaching staff's professional development.

7.4 Summary of the Perceptions of the Participant Lecturers of Professional Learning

In sum, what was learnt about the professional learning situation in this particular Thai University workplace was that the majority of this group of EFL lecturers (eleven out of sixteen) had a small amount of background knowledge on what teacher professional learning actually is. This limited understanding was revealed through both the participants' unfamiliarity and uncertainty in defining the term teacher professional learning. Additionally, according to interviews the majority of EFL lecturer participants, including the Director of the workplace, viewed professional learning as an individual learning experience rather than a collaborative one. According to their descriptions of teacher professional learning, the participants' engagement in formal professional learning activities (e.g. attending training, studying for a further or higher degree, and conducting research) were more frequently mentioned than informal learning activities.

The findings concerning participants' perceptions were consistent with those in Chapter 6 (Figure 6.10) in that the participants individually participated in more formal learning activities. The majority of participants (*N*=13) perceptibly and practically treated professional learning more as personal development through engagement in formal learning, which was related to the traditional training-based approach (e.g. Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010; Nagamine, 2007; see also Chapter 3). Accordingly, it can be inferred that both of the EFL lecturers' actual behaviours and their perceptions leaned towards the *traditional approach* of teacher professional learning. The tendency to depend on this approach has been criticised by many researchers in that it is not sufficient to help the lecturer sustainably develop their profession. Thus, several have suggested an alternative way for teachers to develop themselves through having them learn from one another during their daily routine (Darling-Hammond, 2005; 2000). They further proposed that collaborative practice in a workplace, by encouraging teachers to initiate learning activities based on their own individual needs, should receive individual teacher and educational researchers' attention, as the traditional approach did previously (e.g. Britzman, 2003; Gravani & John, 2005; Hargreaves, 2000; Sawyer, 2001).

In addition, it was also noticeable that seven of sixteen participant lecturers were aware that professional learning involved the processes of negotiation amongst themselves and their colleagues and that this process of knowledge construction required more than individual participation in learning activities. However, when the seven lecturers' descriptions of teacher learning were compared with Wenger's (2006) factors constituting an effective collaborative learning community, what was found was that crucial elements were missing from most of the participants' attention. The missing elements were the continuity and the sustainability of their collaborative learning activities (only one alluded to these two factors, see Section 7.2.2). Furthermore, during this study, there was no evidence that the workplace was attempting to raise awareness of its lecturing staff of the benefits of collaborative practice with their colleagues (e.g. collaboratively solving instructional problems and exchanging teaching ideas with colleagues) and the knowledge of how effective collaborative learning community can be, particularly concerning the significance of the continuity and

sustainability of collaborative practice. Accordingly, it is clear to conclude that collaborative learning is not a trend for professional development in either the participant lecturers' or the administrators' perspectives.

Given the criticisms of the low degree of collaborative practice within the workplace by the educational researchers as mentioned in the two previous paragraphs and in the literature chapter, the researcher once again draws the reader's, particularly those lecturers and administrators working in this study context, attentions to workplace support. To optimise collaborative learning amongst the lecturers and to help them effectively learn, the researcher, in line with Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (2011) and Li, Conle, & Elbaz-Luwisch, (2009), suggests that the administrators should raise awareness of what teacher collaborative learning is and its benefits in facilitating relationship building and professional learning amongst lecturers.

Moreover, the interview data also reflected the participants' perceived obstacles to professional learning (e.g. institutional priorities, inequalities in access to opportunities course structure, teaching schedules, and the physical conditions of the workplace). The obstacles correspondingly highlighted that the benefits of social interaction and collaborative learning amongst lecturers were not at the forefront of administrators' consideration. It was also notable that the current workplace policy led to significantly unequal levels of engagement in professional learning activities for full-time and part-time teaching staff and, subsequently, impacted the sense of belonging the part-time lecturers felt to the workplace. Considering the negative consequences found by previous studies (e.g. Inalhan & Finch 2004; Rioux & Mokounkolo 2013; Rioux & Pignault, 2013), it is essential to once again highlight the need of the study workplace to revisit its policy on teaching staff's professional development.

Finally, consolidating the findings and developing the full picture of teacher professional learning as described in the literature, it can be concluded that the majority of participants and institutional policy considered only of parts of the picture of professional learning (formal learning) as their mean to develop their profession. This institution's focus on learning was significantly different from the emphasis given by a cadre of scholars such as Hargreaves (1994), Darling-Hammond (2005), Annenberg Institute for School Reform (2004), Craig (2009)

Darling-Hammond (2005), Hargreaves, (1994), Kleinsasser and Sato (2007), Sergiovanni (2004), Wenger (2006). The emphasis here was that teachers' collaborative learning activities within the workplace should be promoted. When planning for effective professional learning opportunities for teaching staff, a recent study on professional learning in the UK has suggested that, both teachers' work culture and workplace policy need to be considered (Atwal, 2013). In response to this, the patterns of 'teacher work culture' of this particular group of EFL lecturers were investigated and will be discussed in the following chapter.

8. Findings and Discussion III

This chapter presents and discusses the quantitative and qualitative findings in relation to the third research question on the nature of teachers' participation in professional learning activities in terms of their work culture. In this discussion chapter, Hargreaves's (1994) four types (individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality, and balkanization) of teachers work culture are employed to help clarify the nature of work culture of the 16 EFL participants in this university level institution in Thailand (see more about the four forms of work culture in section 3.2.1).

In brief, *individualism* refers to teachers' preferences of working alone as associated with their hesitation, defensiveness, and anxiety. Such work culture can also be viewed as teachers' protection of their own autonomy, as it protects them from criticism or evaluation by other teachers. According to Hargreaves' interpretation, individualism is not always perceived as negative, but as a complex cultural phenomenon with many meanings. In addition, it has many facets and can both negatively and positively influence a teacher's work. In his view, this work culture is driven by three major factors: psychological deficits, ecological conditions, and an adaptive strategy (further details see Section 3.2.1.1). According to its various factors, individualism not only stimulates teachers' hesitation, defensiveness, and anxiety, it also protects their time and energy expenditure on discussions with colleagues to allow teachers to focus on their instruction.

On the other hand, *collaboration* refers to teachers' collaborative activities that are voluntarily initiated with their perceived values of work, rather than to implement purposes decided by others, such as the institution and university regulations. In a collaborative culture, teacher work schedules are often informal and flexible. The outcome of their collaboration depends on particular tasks that teachers initiate themselves. Accordingly, the end result of teacher interaction in this pattern of culture is not easily predicted. However, Hargreaves claimed that by collaboratively working with colleagues, teachers benefit from each experience and continuously grow in the profession.

Given the benefits of collaboration, many organisations encourage their staff to work collaboratively. Such a workplace enforced collaborative culture is termed *contrived collegiality*. For this type of work culture, teachers engage in collaborative work with their colleagues; however, the work is administratively regulated and teachers are required to implement the mandates of the workplace rather than to initiate their own tasks and purposes. The workplace initiated collaborative activities are, for example, team teaching, peer coaching, mentor relationships, and collaborative action research. Since collaborative activities are enforced by the workplace, teachers gathering schedules are fixed according to their regulations and the administrators are able to control the process of teacher collaboration. Accordingly, outcomes, most often, are predictable. However, Hargreaves notes the negatives of contrived collegiality: personality clashes with peers and mismatches between administrative regulations and teacher interests or expertise. These circumstances vary and cannot always be standardised in the way administrators require. Therefore, it can eventually decrease teacher effort and energy to do their typical duties.

Additionally, the last form of work culture discussed in Hargreaves' work is *balkanization* in which teachers are separated into small sub-groups depending on their academic interests, professional belief, work status, and educational backgrounds, for instance. For this kind of work culture, teachers usually have more engagement with a particular group rather than the school as a whole unit. It was highlighted in his work that this particular engagement is driven by teachers' sense of competition as inflated by promotion, distribution of resources, and hierarchies of status between sub-groups. Hargreaves warns that balkanization tends to generate winners and losers, grievances, and hierarchies of status between sub-groups of lecturers. He called this work culture *an imbalance of power*. This culture not only threatens teachers' career opportunities, resources, and working conditions, but also brings discontinuity in monitoring student progress.

Hargreaves' (1994) notion of teacher work culture had been referred to in most studies concerning the relationship between teacher professional development and workplace conditions (e.g., Bolam et al., 2005; Bryk, 1999; Clement & Vandenberghe; 2000; Clemente & Vandenberghe, 2001; Datnow, 2011; Fullan,

2001; Gore & Bowe, 2015; Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015; Hongboontri, 2006; 2008; Hopkins, 2014; Ng, 2009; Sachs, 2001; Samuelsson & Lindblad, 2015; Sawyer, 2001; Spillane, 2012; Stoll et al., 2006; Windschitl, 2002). Accordingly, at the beginning of this analysis, the researcher hypothesised that all four categories (individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality, and balkanization) suggested by Hargreaves would be fully applicable in describing the nature of the participants' interactions with their colleagues in this Thai educational context. However, the data suggested that the workplace interactions of this particular group of EFL lecturers are more complicated than described through Hargreaves' four types of work culture. Therefore, a fifth category termed *workplace-kinship* is introduced in this chapter. This newly defined category is identified as a related category of balkanization.

The term, workplace-kinship, which will be hereinafter used, is influenced by social anthropologists' explanations of connections of people in a community, particularly the tendency of individuals with similarities to link with one another. *Kinship*, in a social anthropologist perspective, is a study of networks that connect individuals in society, also referred to as social ties. In Holy's (1996) and Watson's (1983) explanations, factors driving people to mutually relate to each other vary from society to society. For example, people in some societies consider themselves related because they share the same blood. Nonetheless, in some societies people are considered related through marriages, genders, and the geographical location of their dwellings. Holy further explained that "the difference between those who see themselves as related to one another and those who are not so related underlies differentially distributed right, duties, roles, and statuses" (p. 9). The social anthropologists' description of kinship is relatively similar to how this researcher views the sub-group situation of the participants. Whilst social anthropologists focus on role of blood and family line relationships (e.g., father-daughter, brother-sister, husband-wife, father-in-law), this particular study specifically focuses on collegial relationship in the educational workplace context. Therefore, this study defines the collegial relationship as stemming from different types of social ties that link the workplace members. According to this definition, workplace-kinship is potentially constructed from contractual statuses (i.e., full-time and part-time lecturers), team membership (i.e., lecturers teaching

certain subjects together, or teaching the same kind of courses or group of students), as well as language and culture (i.e., Thai lecturers and native-speaking English lecturers). Given the aforementioned foci and the intention to avoid a misleading term, the researcher decided not to borrow the term "kinship", but instead develops a more specific term of "workplace-kinship".

After developing the term, the researcher went further to see whether the concept of *kinship* had been formerly applied in the area of workplace relationships. Accordingly, it was found that the term kinship was once roughly cited in a commercial website (http://thiederman.com) and a non-research based commercial book (Thiederman, 2003) providing consultant services on bias reduction in multicultural organisations. A professional consultant, Thiederman (2003) alluded to the concept of kinship in her think pieces as a clue to reduce bias and create common ground in her clients' organisations. However, there was no evidence referring to any studies or academic research on kinship in workplace contexts cited. Moreover, after an intensive search of the literature, the researcher found that kinship has not been applied in studies related to teacher workplaces, teacher learning, or teacher professional development.

In general, the first half of the questionnaire showed that participants perceived themselves as having more engagement in *collaboration* and *contrived collegiality* than *individualism* and *balkanization*. Conversely, the second half of the questionnaire suggested that their collaborative activities were limited to very few colleagues. Additionally, the semi-structured interviews and eight weeks of observation uncovered substantially different phenomena from the first half of the questionnaire. The difference was in the teachers' divisions into sub-groups (*workplace-kinship* and *balkanization*) and individualism were captured more often through the qualitative data collection tools. Since different types of data sources unveil different aspects of the phenomenon, the discussion is divided into two main parts based on the types of data analysed. The first main section of this chapter covers the quantitative findings from the questionnaire detailing the frequency of teachers' engagement with each other and the extent of their interactions with colleagues. The second main section discusses qualitative findings concerning the participants' work culture as retrieved from semi-structured interviews with the 16 participants and eight weeks of observations on

their day-to-day interactions with one another. The final section summarises and discuses the main findings of this chapter.

8.1 Quantitative Findings of Teacher Work Culture

To understand the work culture of this EFL workplace context, 16 lecturers participating in the present study were initially asked to rate the frequency of their social interactions with their colleagues through 19 questionnaire items. This data set aims to provide the researcher broad-spectrum information of the participants' interaction with colleagues in ways such as dealing with offering assistance, sharing and exchanging information and teaching materials, for example. This questionnaire was piloted with six Thai EFL university lecturers to test for its alpha reliability coefficient and it has reliability of .773 (Bryman and Cramer [1990] suggested the alpha coefficient should be over 0.70). By this means the data obtained from this questionnaire can be treated as indicative of the EFL lecturers' perspectives toward certain aspects of the teacher work culture within their workplace. Please note that full details of statistical data derived from SPSS are presented in Appendix E.

Table 8.1: ***Quantitative findings excluding item 17 and 18***

Questions	MO	$\bar{X}$	
1. I work collaboratively in teams with others.	4	3.68	Collaboration ($\bar{X}$ = 4.05)
2. I provide encouragement to my colleagues.	5	4.37	
3. I receive encouragement from my colleagues.	5	4.62	
4. I feel safe to share successes with team members.	4	4.00	
5. I feel safe to share failures with team members.	3	3.81	
6. I feel more confident professionally with the support from colleagues.	3	3.87	
7. There seems to be an expectation in my workplace that lecturers will teach more effectively by having more collaboration in the institute.	4	3.56	Contrived Collegiality ($\bar{X}$ = 3.43)
8. Opportunity for collaboration seems to be used as an administrative strategy in my workplace.	3	3.43	
9. There seems to be an expectation that I will teach more effectively by having more collaboration with other teachers.	4	3.56	
10. I design or evaluate teaching/ assessment materials, and other teaching activities with other lecturers because it is part of the institute's regulations.	3	3.18	
11. I prefer not to work with other lecturers, unless it helps me finish my work faster or improve the quality of my work.	3	2.81	Balkanization ($\bar{X}$ = 2.55)
12. I find that working collaboratively with other lecturers and sharing teaching materials with them reduces my workload.	3	2.68	
13. I find that working collaboratively with others increases my workload.	2	2.18	
14. I do not offer help or advice to others about their teaching unless I am asked for it.	4	3.50	Individualism ($\bar{X}$ = 3.06)
15. I feel constrained as an individual and pressured to conform with varying opinions when working in a team.	2	2.37	
16. I design or evaluate materials, and other teaching activities for my class by myself without collaboration with others.	2	3.31	
19. I work with other lecturers (teaching the same subject) designing or evaluating materials, curriculum units, and other teaching activities.	3	3.12	Extent of teachers' interaction
20. I work with other lecturers (teaching any subjects) designing or evaluating materials, curriculum units, and other teaching activities.	3	3.31	
21. Among lecturers teaching the same course, I regularly share teaching ideas or materials with:	3*	2.75*	
22. Among lecturers in this institute, but not teaching on the same course, I regularly share teaching ideas or materials with:	3*	2.50*	
23. Among lecturers teaching the same course, I regularly try to solve instructional problems with:	3*	2.75*	
24. Among lecturers in this institute, but not teaching on the same course, I regularly try to solve instructional problems with:	3*	2.43*	

$\bar{X}$ = Mean MO= Mode Always = 5 Frequently = 4 Sometimes = 3 Seldom = 2 Never = 1
Four or more teachers = 5* Three teachers = 4* Two teachers = 3* One teacher = 2* No one = 1*

According to Table 8.1, the first 16 questions were asked to identify whether the four types of teacher work culture suggested by Hargreaves were present. As indicated in the right columns, items 1-6, 7-10, 11-13, and 14-16 represent *collaboration*, *contrived collegiality*, *balkanization*, and *individualism*, respectively. (Please note that items 17 and 18 were not included in this table because they were specifically constructed to help the researcher answer the first

research question by eliciting types of learning activities that the participants engaged in, as discussed in Chapter 6). In addition, the last six columns include items 19 to 24, which help the researcher depict the extent of the participants' interaction with their colleagues.

With regard to questions 1-20, the reader can see that *mode (MO)* and *mean* ($\bar{X}$) values are respectively displayed on the second and third columns of the table. In particular, the mode values are mentioned when the researcher aims to present the most popular answer for each question and the mean values are referred to when the tendency of each phenomenon is discussed. For example, item one's mean value ($\bar{X}$= 3.68) together with those of item 2-6 (4.37, 4.62,4.00, 3.81, 3.87) in the same category (collaboration) was calculated to find the *tendency* of participants' engagement in this the particular type of work culture. In so doing, the researcher found that the mean value ($\bar{X}$) of this set of questions was 4.62, meaning that the participants tended to more than "*frequently*" work in a collaborative manner with their colleagues. The mean values of participants' engagement in each form of work culture (1-6: Collaboration, 7-10: Contrived Collegiality, 11-13: Balkanization, and 14-16: Individualism) are presented in the fourth column of the table.

Please note that there is no mean ($\bar{X}$) value in the fourth column for items numbered 19 to 24. This is because each individual question independently clarifies different phenomena. Items 19 and 20 indicated whether the social interactions were limited to the lecturers teaching the same subject (item 19) or expanded across different subjects (item 20). Additionally, the reader will see that an asterisk symbol was added after each mode value for items 21 to 24 as the statistical values in the four items do not tell the *frequency* of the phenomena, as with the rest of the items. In particular, they represent *the number of people* involved in the interactions. For example, value "3" in item number six indicates "sometimes", whilst value 3* in item number 24 refers to "two teachers" (see the note attached at the end of Table 8.1).

As represented in Table 8.1, this group of lecturers perceived that they engaged in a *collaboration* work culture ($\bar{X}$ =4.05) slightly more than *contrived collegiality* ($\bar{X}$=3.43) while *individualism* ($\bar{X}$=3.06) and *balkanization* ($\bar{X}$=2.55)

were perceived as relevant the least often. With reference to the first six questionnaire items (identifying teacher collaboration), the EFL lecturers appeared to work collaboratively with colleagues with their own initiative. For example, the majority of participants indicated that they "frequently" worked collaboratively in teams with others (*MO*=4) as well as "always" provided (*MO*=5) and received (*MO*=5) encouragement to/from their colleagues, as the reader can see from items 1, 2, 3, respectively. Given items 4 and 5 they showed that they "frequently" felt safe to share successes (*MO*=4) and "sometime" felt safe to share failures (*MO*=3) with team members. Subsequently, they perceived that they "sometime" felt confident professionally with support from colleagues (*MO*=3). Considering the first six items together, it is noticeable that participants perceived that they "frequently" interacted with each other in collaboration.

The next four questions provide the reader with the participants' perceptions of the frequency of their engagement in workplace regulated collaborative work (contrived collegiality). According to items 7 and 9, the majority were "frequently" aware that there was an expectation of lecturers in general and on him or herself in particular to have more collaboration so that their teaching would be more effective (*MO*=4). Furthermore, they "sometimes" felt that the opportunity for collaboration was used as an administrative strategy (*MO*=4, item 8). Additionally, the majority of the participants answered item 10 that they "sometimes" (*MO*=3) designed or evaluated teaching materials, and other teaching activities with other lecturers because of the institute's regulations. In general, these four items altogether indicated that the participants viewed themselves to "sometimes" work together under a contrived collegiality work culture ($\bar{X}$=3.43).

The fact that the participants thought they "frequently" (item 1-6) and more than "sometimes" (item 7-10) engaged in collaboration and contrived collegiality (items 1-10) was consistent with results from questionnaire items 11 to 16. The data from the six questions suggested that participants believed they "seldom" ($\bar{X}$= 2.55) worked together in small sub-groups associated with competition and self-benefit (balkanization) and "sometimes" ($\bar{X}$=3.06) chose to work alone (individualism). In particular, the majority of the participants answered that they "seldom" (*MO*=2) developed their teaching materials alone (item 16) and

"seldom" (*MO*=2) felt pressure to conform to others (item 15). Correspondingly, results from questionnaire items 11 to13 unveiled that working with colleagues on the basis of their advantages (e.g. reducing time spent on work and lessening their workloads) was not what the majority believed they did.

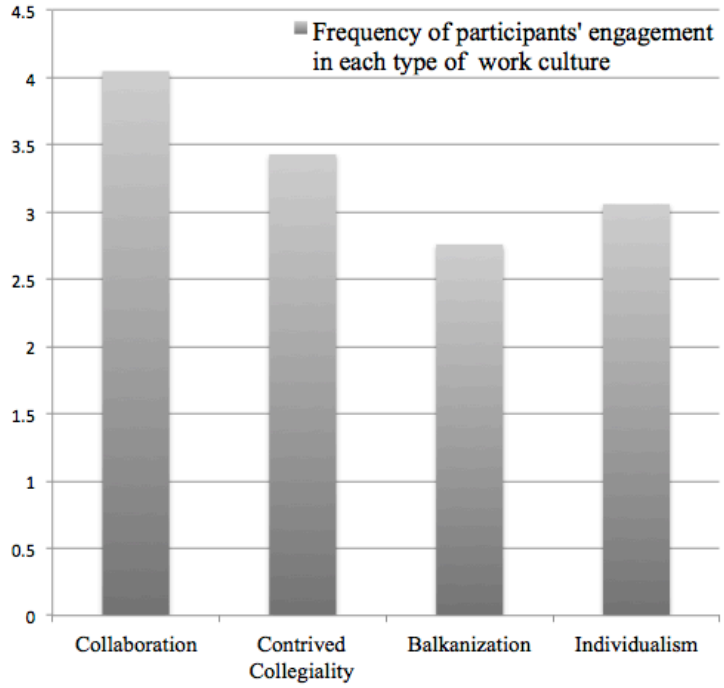


***Figure* 8.1: Questionnaire findings on the extend of participants' engagement in each type of work culture from items 1-16**

In essence, results from items 1-16 showed that the lecturers perceived that they tended to work in groups according to their own initiative (collaboration) and workplace policies (contrived collegiality) rather than the intention to protect themselves (balkanization). An overall picture of the work culture of this EFL workplace as reflected through the first 16 items of the questionnaire is summarised in Figure 8.1. This set of statistical data distinctively suggested that the 16 EFL lecturers generally viewed themselves as working collaboratively with others (collaboration and contrived collegiality) more than alone and separately in groups according to their benefits.

However, revisiting the qualitative findings according to the previous two research questions, two distinctive findings were noticed. The first distinction was that participants tended to, in small *sub-groups* and *individually*, engage in

each professional learning activity (see Chapter 6). Apart from that, most of them viewed their professional learning in the *individual* sense more than the collaborative (Chapter 7). Nonetheless, the researcher was aware that the differences in findings were unsettled at this stage of analysis. As there were other six question items left unanalysed, it was too early to draw any judgment on the mismatches amongst the findings from the first 16 questionnaire items and the findings from first second research questions.

Accordingly, the researcher went further to consider the participants' answers to questions 19 to 24. This second-half of the questionnaire focused on the extent of participants' interactions with colleagues. It was found was that the six questions suggested results relatively consistent to those of Chapters 6 and 7. Statistical data from items 19-20 indicated that collaborative work connected to participants' teaching related matters "sometimes" happened. Additionally, the social interactions of this particular group of lecturers (items 21-24) were rather limited to *a small number of colleagues*. When the participants were asked to rate the *frequency* of their collaborative work with colleagues, particularly with those who teach *the same subject*, the majority chose "sometimes" (*MO*=3) as their most common answer (item 19). Moreover, their social interactions with colleagues teaching the same subject (items 21 and 23) were rather limited to *"few colleagues"* (two lecturers).

These findings contrast those from items one to six where the participants "frequently" engaged in collaboration culture. An initial interpretation of this phenomenon was that this group of lecturers might see themselves as enjoying working collaboratively with colleagues in general rather than with those teaching the same subject. However, after considering the rest of the quantitative data gathered through items 20, 22, and 24, the researcher found that such collaborative work for the participants with *broader groups* of colleagues occurred at the same frequency (sometimes) and with the same number of colleagues (two teachers) as interactions with colleagues teaching the same subject. The findings lead to a reinterpretation that the similarity in terms of *the teaching subject* was not associated with the degree of the participants' interactions with colleagues. It is clear that the participants collaboratively shared teaching ideas and solved instructional problems with approximately "two

colleagues", no matter whether they taught the same or different subjects. Furthermore, this set of findings also confirmed one of the observation findings discussed in Chapter 6 (Section 6.2.2.3) in that the interaction between lecturers teaching the same groups of students was not evidenced. Additionally, reasons contributing to the participants' engagement more with particular group(s) of colleagues than others were further explored and subsequently revealed through qualitative sources of data (see section 8.2.1).

In brief, it can be said that the overall findings of the questionnaire were relatively consistent with the qualitative findings discussed in the previous two chapters. Whilst the first part of quantitative data suggested some glimpse of the perception of a collaborative work culture, the second half provided further details that the participants tended to collaboratively work together in small sub-groups. Equally important is that the questionnaire, by its nature, can show respondents' perceptions but may or may not reflect their actual behaviour. This social phenomenon of work culture is too complex to be explored by one single data collection tool, as the reader can see from 3.3.1 in the literature chapter where studies on teacher culture in various contexts that were conducted through the use of multiple data sources were discussed (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Mawhinney, 2009; Poulson & Avramidis, 2003; Rigelman & Ruben, 2012; Snow-Gerono, 2005; Wood, 2007, for example). Accordingly, the researcher sought to understand the nature of the EFL lecturers' work culture through the use of other data collection tools: namely, interviews and observations.

8.2 Qualitative Findings of Teacher Work Culture

The qualitative data were retrieved from the 16 participants' responses to semi-structured interviews and observation field notes on their interactions with colleagues taken from meeting rooms and common areas in the workplace. It was found that findings from interviews and observations were relatively similar. However, the findings from the two sources were substantially different from those of the first half of the questionnaire. Whilst the first 16 questionnaire items on teacher work culture reported more tendencies for collaboration ($\bar{X}$=4.05) the qualitative sources of data showed more of the subdivision (workplace-kinship and balkanization) and individualism culture (a discussion on the differences

between quantitative and qualitative findings is provided in Section 8.3). In the following subsections, each type of teacher work culture evidenced in this workplace is displayed and discussed respectively, according to their frequency of occurrence. Through the interviews, when participants described their routines in the workplace, interaction with colleagues, and professional learning activities, the researcher captured teachers' subdivisions (workplace-kinship and/or balkanization), individualism, contrived collegiality, and collaboration, respectively ordered by their frequencies of occurrence. Similarly, observations suggested a higher frequency of teachers' subdivision and individualism.

8.2.1 Workplace-kinship

Results from both interviews and observations similarly suggested fractions of participant lecturers in small sub-groups. Such interaction was the most frequently captured form of teachers' work culture in this workplace. Fourteen of sixteen participants indicated some division between their colleagues and themselves into different groups according to certain factors. Such divisions of the lecturers into sub-groups can be seen, for example, from the following interview responses:

> In general, I had some chances to meet the part-time teachers. But I know only some teachers who greet me. If they don't greet me and I don't talk to them, I don't know them…I know them, just half of them. Reason? I think it's because of our identity. We have some sense of belonging; we need to belong to those who share similar identity. Another case is the different identity between Thai and the English native teachers. If we are Thai, we prefer to speak Thai, prefer to stay with Thai colleagues. If they are westerners, it's common for them to belong to people with the same identity. That's my idea. (Nong, interview, August 6, 2013)
>
> I don't usually meet many non-Thai staff here that much. I think they have different floors for them to have lunch, I guess. I haven't joined them much. (Kim, July 19, 2013)

The interviews imply that there were at least three sub-groups of lecturers in this workplace. It can also be noticed that the individual members of the three groups were tied to his or her group members by several factors such as contractual status (full-time/part-time) and native language (Thai/English). Particularly, their interview responses identified an absence of interaction between the sub-groups (More interview examples of participant sub-grouping behaviour can be found in the following subsections [8.2.1.1-8.2.1.4]).

Additionally, the work culture described by Nong and Kim (as well as the majority of participants) was close to several characteristics of balkanization as suggested by Hargreaves (1994). However, in contrast to Hargreaves' description, the participant lecturers did not show any sense of competition (e.g., a disagreement, a protection of interests or a clash in beliefs and values amongst groups). Their sub-grouping behaviour rather stemmed from the sense of belonging and the shared cultural identities (*social ties*) of individuals in particular sub-groups, which is more related to Holy's (1996) definition of kinship. In addition, it is necessary to highlight here that the distinctions between *balkanization* and *workplace-kinship*, in the researcher's view, are factors generating the sub-groupings which are the social ties and the consequences of those ties on people's roles and rights in the social context.

The social ties of each workplace-kinship sub-group in this particular educational context, in the same way as kinship in other social organisations, justified the actions of the people in the society. The qualitative data from this study indicated that different social ties differently influenced each sub-group of participants' right and roles in the workplace. For example, each full-time lecturer had his/her right to vote for any changes in regulation in this workplace while the part-time lecturers had none. Thai lecturers had the right to claim funding support for their academic training abroad, whilst the non-Thai lecturers did not (Section 6.1.2.2). In addition to the differences in rights, each sub-group also performed different roles. For example, experienced lecturers were usually assigned the role of mentor, exam paper editor, and other administrative positions. Full-time lecturers were assigned the role of researcher, whilst the part-time lecturers were asked to perform the teaching role solely. Based on their similar social ties in the workplace, the lecturers tended to group together in order to share their experiences, help each other solve instructional problems, and develop their teaching related work. Therefore, balkanization is clearly not applicable in categorising this work culture. This is why the researcher suggests that the subdivisions of the participants should be described with the more neutral term of *workplace-kinship*.

In essence, both interview and observation findings showed that participant lecturers were tied with each other in four ways, namely contractual status

(8.2.1.1), language and culture (8.2.1.2), teaching experience (8.2.1.3), and the physical setting of the context (8.2.1.4). The four social ties will be thoroughly explored in the following sections. Furthermore, it is equally important to note that the reader may sense an overlap in some of these aspects (i.e. contractual status, physical setting) with findings discussed in previous chapters. In Chapter 6, a glimpse of the sub-grouping culture of the participants was noticeable when their *engagement* in each type of professional learning activity was discussed. In section 6.2.2, the reader should see that when engaging in a learning activity the EFL lecturers had different levels of interactions with different groups of colleagues (e.g. part-time lecturers, Thai-lecturers, non-Thai lecturers). The discovery of the social ties (in the workplace-kinship culture) and the connection of the ties to both the lecturers' participations in the learning activities (Chapter 6) and interactions with their colleagues (Chapter 8) are beyond the researcher's expectations. Therefore, it is difficult to avoid a certain degree of repetition when demonstrating such findings.

8.2.1.1 Workplace-kinship Ties according to Contractual Status (Full-time/Part-time Lecturers Groups)

It was clear through observations that full-time and part-time lecturers had less social interaction with each other. The full-time lecturers tended to work and socialise with their other full-time lecturer colleagues. The part-time lecturers' interactions were also limited to their part-time group. Over the three months of observation, the researcher witnessed these two groups of lecturers sharing the same spaces but having almost no interaction across groups. Such lecturer division according to contractual status was also mentioned in many of the participants' interviews. When asked to describe their interaction with colleagues many expressed that they had more contact with colleagues sharing a similar contractual status. Most part-time lecturers indicated that they had more contact with part-time lecturer colleagues and rarely interacted with full-time lecturers. For example:

> The interaction's mostly between part-time lecturers. I mostly contact with Jim [pseudonym], the part-time lecturer. For the full-time lecturers, the communication's usually when they have some urgent news to tell, so I contact them. But I don't share any materials or any idea with them. Sometimes I look at the board displaying pictures of all faculty staff,

> *some of them I haven't seen in person in real person*. (Som, July 16, 2013, emphasis added)

It can be seen from the above excerpt that there was generally less interaction between the two groups of lecturers; they barely interacted unless it was an emergency. Moreover, the fact that photos displayed around the hallway were the only way several part-time lecturers knew some full-time lecturers exist (see the emphasis quotation) indicated the lack of time spent in common spaces or work done in isolation in private offices (see also Section 8.2.2). Additionally, this reminded one of the previous findings (Section 6.1.1.1 and 6.1.1.2, Chapter 6) in that part-time lecturers were always invited to a separate orientation meeting, missing the opportunity to see most of the full-time lecturers in this institute.

Moreover, the fact that this part-time lecturer had been employed by this workplace for over three years without seeing some full-time lecturers in person implied that such division of lecturers according to their contractual status occurred beyond the period of data collection. Given this set of data, it was conceivable that the two sub-groups had existed for at least three years. Furthermore, the persistence of the sub-grouping of the faculty member is in line with the literature in that, once established, sub-groups and their members tended to have strong permanence over time (Hargreaves, 1994).

Furthermore, the difference between the two workplace-kinship groups is also highlighted in the following interview response. When asked to describe why she had more contact with a particular group of lecturers Sai shared that:

> On the first day that I was here, I met them first. They were part time lecturers as well, so it's like they welcome me in a way. Some of them were newbies as well. Like a full-time lecturer, I think they also have some bounding between their people. If I go talk to them they will talk to me, but personally I don't go talk to them to break to their group. (Sai, August 13, 2013)

In relation to this interview, the researcher noticed that such a strong sense of division also constituted this participant's hesitation to interact with the other group. Moreover, the same participant further highlighted the uniqueness in terms of the work culture of her kinship group in that:

> I noticed that it's some kind of culture around here or maybe just this group of people. Right after class we meet in the common room. We just put down all the bags and the materials, and then we have five minutes

> talk. It's almost like a very short brief of what happen in the past two or three hours that we are separated in the morning. Then we just go and talk non-sense at lunchtime while we are having lunch together. (Sai, August 13, 2013)

In addition to confirming the existence of part-time and full-time lecturer sub-groups, this interview response is in line with the observation findings in that the part-time lecturers normally spent their lunchtime with almost no interaction with full-time lecturers.

Additionally, observational data suggested the distinctions in the work culture of the two workplace-kinship groups in two ways. The first distinction was where they spent time in the workplace. More than 60 of 66 observation field notes evidenced that the full-time lecturers spent noticeably less time in the institution's common spaces. Their appearances in these spaces were also less frequent when compared with those of the part-time lecturers as they spent most of their pre and post teaching time in their private offices. In particular, the data suggested that the full-time lecturers were given private offices and therefore did not feel the necessity to spend time in the public spaces. Another distinction was how they spent their time in the common spaces; whilst part-time lecturers' interactions in the common spaces were related to work (e.g. discussing instructional problems, exchanging teaching idea, preparing lessons and materials), full-time lecturers normally used the common spaces for the less teaching related matters (i.e. signing in, ordering food, dropping off belongings, and printing documents).

In brief, all observation and interview data suggested that different contractual statuses (whether the lecturer was hired as a full-time or part-time lecturer) drove the participants to divide into groups. Additionally, the differences between the two groups were clearer when associating the aforementioned findings with those from Chapter 6 in that the two groups separately engaged in different kinds of professional learning activities (see Figure 6.11). Considering how the lecturers interacted with group members and with other groups, their professional learning occurred mainly within their own sub-groups.

However, studies regarding the professional learning occurring in school common spaces (e.g. Ben-Peretz & Schonmann, 2000; Mawhiney, 2009; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001) provided a different picture of the phenomenon. It

was found through those studies that teachers working in the same school, no matter whether full-time, part-time, or student teachers, professionally benefited from social interaction occurring in their schools' common spaces to more or less the same degree. The distinction between the findings of the previous studies conducted in different educational contexts and this current study confirms that workplace culture is a complicated issue and its influences on teacher interaction vary from context to context. In addition, this distinction also highlights the necessity to conduct more research on the issue in much wider contexts.

8.2.1.2 Workplace-kinship Ties according to Language and Culture (Thai/non-Thai Lecturers Groups)

Whilst the majority of participants preferred working with colleagues with a similar contractual status (full-time/part-time), many of them frequently interacted with colleagues speaking with whom they had a common native languages. When asked to share whether they worked with any particular group of colleagues more than the others, Abra and Walton shared that:

> Well most of them are the non-Thai lecturers. I don't speak Thai and so I don't feel like I communicate well with Thai teachers. (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013)
>
> I think it's honestly just Thai people wanna speak Thai. Foreign lecturers wanna speak English and it's just easier. You know that I don't think that there is any biases or anything behind that. I don't think it's intentional. It's just one of the things that happen. (Walton, interview, July 19, 2013)

When participants were further asked whether they had any other reasons, apart from language, they described:

> It might be a culture. Like people tend to like to be with the people from their own culture, so they can speak the same language, they watch the same programs on TV, they got the same concerns and they do the same courses, so they got more in common. Whereas, if they have to be with other groups, they have to be more careful about what they have to say. They might offend someone or they might not understand. (Zara, July 16, 2013)

Given Zara's interview response, it was a perception that personal background and culture also influenced the lecturers' interaction with their colleagues. However, when Thai lecturers were asked about this, most of their answers did not show awareness of cultural differences. The following examples are interview responses from Thai participant lecturers.

> I don't meet many non-Thai staff here that much. I think they have different floors for them to have lunch, I guess. I haven't joined them much. (Kim, July 19, 2013)
>
> Some non-Thai colleagues might prefer their own privacy, so they do not mix with us much. (Director, August 6, 2013)

In relation to Kim's response (as well as those from other Thai lecturers), the main concern was the physical factor. In addition, interview data from the Director expressed that he was also aware of the existence of the two sub-groups. In particular, he assumed that such the division resulted from issues of privacy. Moreover, he further described the interaction between the non-Thai lecturers and Thai lecturers, particularly the administrators, in that:

> So far since I've become the director of this institute, I have noticed less and less *hostility* from non-Thai colleagues. They used to be more hostile; I mean the former non-Thai colleagues. They complained a lot and didn't understand what we were doing. Now, at least, for the past few years, they have been very understanding and there have been very very few complaints from the non-Thai colleagues… And sometimes there was some kind of *discrimination* between Thai and non-Thai colleagues. But now I try to treat everyone as equal as possible. So far it's been really peaceful here. (Director, August 6, 2013, emphasis added)

It can be assumed from the above quotation, particularly the two emphasised words, that the situation between the groups of Thai and non-Thai lecturers used to be more critical than what was observed during the data collection period. Formerly, the sub-grouping of non-Thai lecturers was likely not based on their similarities in language and cultural identities, but on their sense of inequality and the clash in beliefs and values between groups, which resembled *balkanization* work culture. Furthermore, given the fact that the Director had been in the position for over eight years, it can also be deduced that such a balkanization culture between Thai and non-Thai lecturers was problematic in this workplace for almost a decade. The above interview response fits with Hargreaves' (1994) description of one of the distinctive characteristics of balkanization (also called political complexion). In balkanization culture, lecturers tend to group together with mutual benefits and protection of their group's interest as motivations. Similar problems due to teachers' balkanization were highlighted by Hargreaves in that:

> In balkanized cultures, there are winner and losers. There is grievance and there is greed. Whether they are manifest or muted, the dynamics of

> power and self-interest within such cultures are major determinants of how teachers behave as a community. (p. 215)

He further warned that this work culture would later generate competition, poor communication and hierarchies of status between sub-groups, which can later threaten professional development opportunities and working conditions. However, there seemed to be attempts from the workplace to remedy these problems, as described in the Director's interview response. Correspondingly, as evidenced in the non-Thai lecturers' interview responses (e.g. Abra, Walton and Zara, page 14), the situation was becoming less detrimental. Moreover, those examples further outlined that without awareness from the workplace, especially authorities such as the Director, cultural differences in the workplace can grow *balkanization* that eventually leads to hostility and discrimination amongst colleagues.

Furthermore, the above interview responses in line with the observation data. For example, over the period of data collection, non-Thai lecturers were found having lunch privately in their offices or with their non-Thai colleagues at a separate venue from most Thai lecturers. Additionally, meeting observations depicted that non-Thai lecturers preferred siting next to each other and while the Thai lecturers did the same; see Figure 8.2, drawn based on an observation of the meeting, as an example. According to the figure, all Thai and non-Thai lecturers in the meeting are represented by two different shapes. The squares refer to Thai lecturers and the circles indicate non-Thai lecturers. When considering the figure, it is rather obvious that all circle shapes tended to group together around the middle of the meeting room.

During the meeting the researcher found that this group of non-Thai lecturers exchanged opinions within their group considerably more often than with Thai lecturers (see more about this particular meeting in Section 6.1.1.1, Chapter 6). A similar situation with Thai and non-Thai lecturers' interactions were also discussed in Chapter 6 (sections 6.1.1.3 and 6.1.1.5). Accordingly, the researcher

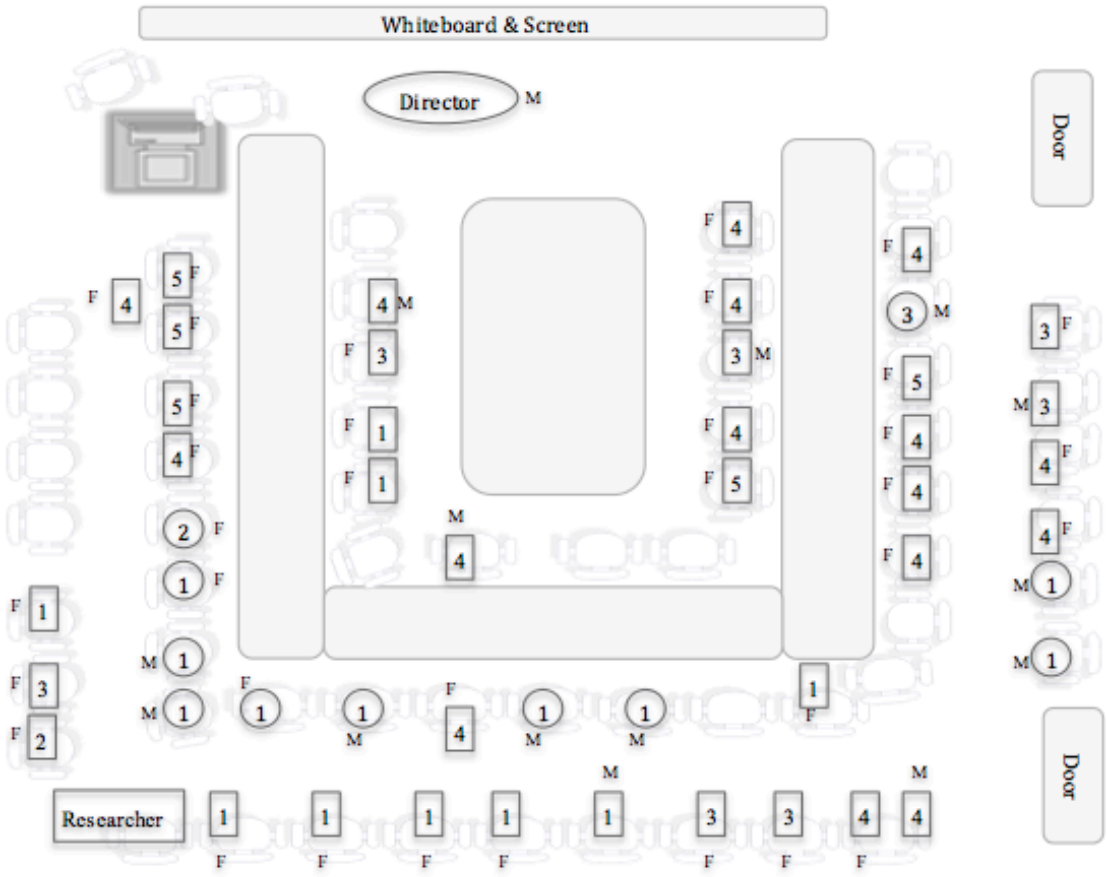


***Figure* 8.2: Meeting observation field note**

assumes that the non-Thai lecturers wanted to sit together because they expected to have more conversation with their sub-group, as they usually did in their work and day routine. In addition, the two workplace-kinship groups (Thai and non-Thai lecturers groups) were observable everyday (when the researcher was in the field) in this workplace context, particularly in the common room and the lecturers' canteens.

In essence, participants' similarities in language and culture distinctively influenced the division of the lecturers into different sub-groups. For the non-Thai lecturers it was clear that they felt more comfortable spending more time interacting with colleagues speaking English as a native language than those with Thai. It was apparent that such division in faculty members was similarly evident through the discussion of the second research question (see Chapter 7, Sections 7.1.1.1, 7.1.1.3, and 7.1.1.5). However, the data further suggested that this division seemed to be gradually pared down in degree, drawing upon what

happened in the previous decades through attempts of the administrators. These findings highlighted the awareness of the workplace significant influence on the culture.

8.2.1.3 Workplace-kinship Ties According to Teaching Experience (Novice/Experienced Lecturers Groups)

Furthermore, the data also indicated that many of this group of EFL lecturers used their teaching experiences as their identity in order to form their sub-groups. Through semi-structured interviews, more than half of the Thai lecturer participants articulated that working experiences were a factor contributing to more interactions with particular colleagues, for example:

> We talked to each other everyday, through the social network as well. Well we talked to each other almost everyday, but not always about work. Maybe because we are in the similar age, same generation, and we started working here on the same day. Therefore, I feel like we were equally new teacher back then. We have the same amount of experience. We went to the conference together. You know we did a lot of things in common, so we are kind of close. (Sood, interview, July 10, 2013)

According to Sood's response, the researcher noticed that the participants considered teaching experiences and the time they started working in this context to share their identities. These shared identities similarly fostered the sub-grouping behaviour of some of the non-Thai participant lecturers. Zara, a native English-speaking lecturer explained the relationships between lecturers in similar work experience groups in that:

> Lecturers here tend to stick with people that they have been with for long time. Especially, the older teachers tend to stick with people from their generation. It's not because they don't like the others. They just preferred to be with their friends because they have a lot more in common. They got more to talk about than has to start again with someone else. (Zara, July 16, 2013)

The existence of the two sub-groups (novice and experienced lecturers) was depicted through observation as well. In particular, the two workplace-kinship groups were noticeable everyday during the data collection period, as the reader can see from Figure 8.2. Referring to the figure, numbers one to five represented lecturers with different years of teaching experience. The reader can see that same numbers and those with adjacent values are close to each other, meaning that the lecturers with similar teaching experiences tended to group together. The

participants also interacted in small sub-groups according to teaching experiences when they were in the lecturers' common room and pantries. Figure 8.3 is an example from observation field notes from the lecturers' common room (left) and their pantries (right). According to the figure, it is obvious that teaching experience significantly influenced how this particular group of lecturers socialised. Apart from the common room and the pantries, different cultures of

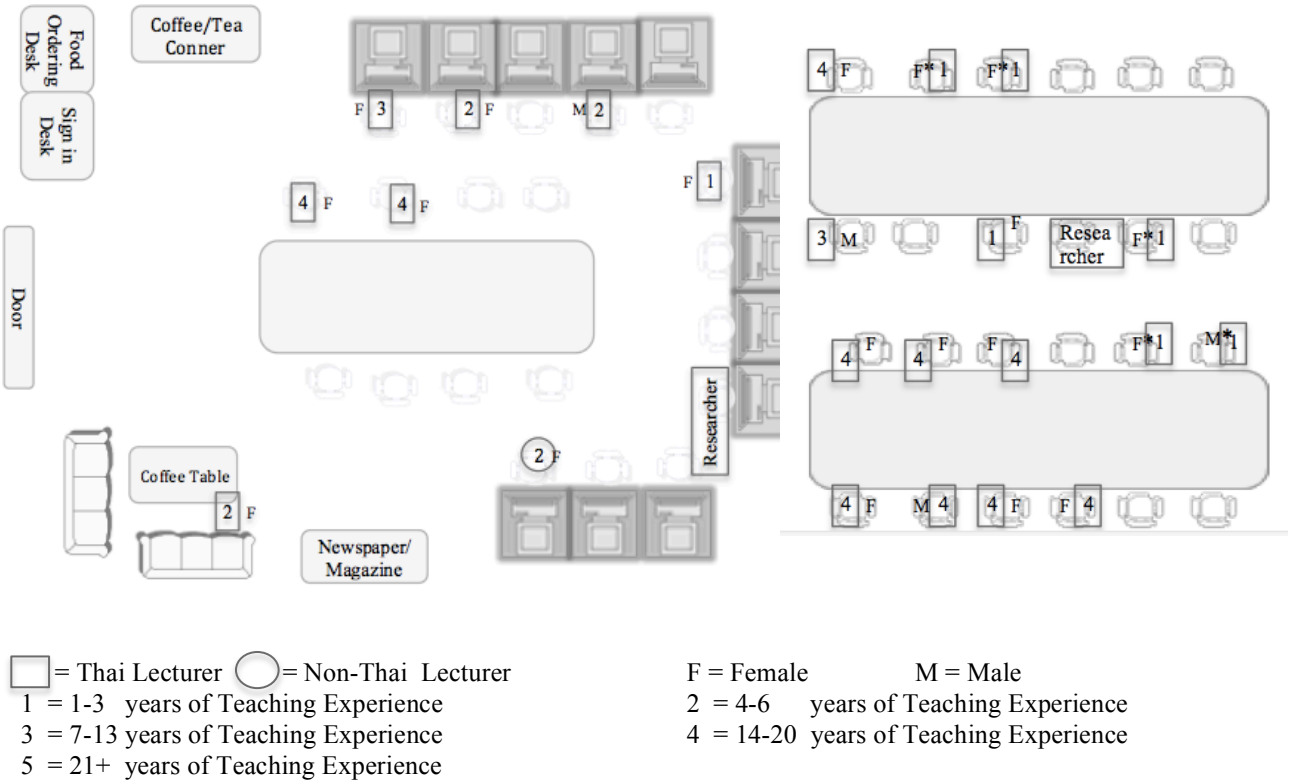


***Figure 8.3*: Lecturers' common room and canteen from observation field notes**

each experience group of participants was evidenced when the lecturers engaged in professional learning activities, as discussed in Chapter 6. For example, observations of the teacher evaluation meeting offered that the participants preferred sitting together based on their teaching experience.

The differences in their teaching experiences not only influenced how they sat, but also how they shared their opinions in the meeting. The observation showed that the lecturers with more than six years of teaching experiences shared significantly more opinions in the meeting than those with less experience. Particularly, novice lecturers rarely expressed their comments in the meeting (more information see Chapter 6, section 6.1.1.4). Associating the above

interview responses and observation data discussed this chapter with some of Chapter 6's findings (section 6.1.1.4), it was noticeable that the subdivision of the lecturers into small groups according to their teaching experiences was a usual situation in this particular workplace.

Moreover, the researcher further detected that lecturers' subdivisions, according to participants' responses, were generated from their sense of belonging (workplace-kinship) rather than the competition (balkanization). Whilst factors contributing to the subdivisions of lecturers in this particular Thai educational context were mainly the shared identities of the lecturers in languages, culture, and teaching experiences, previous studies associating teacher work culture in other educational contexts indicated different factors. In particular, factors contributing to teachers' fractions into different sub-groups reported in those studies were mainly teachers' mismatch in instructional beliefs, differences in areas of expertise, or hierarchy in the workplace according to the levels of students they taught (e.g., Clement &Vandenberghe, 2000; Hargreaves, 1994; NG, 2010). In those studies, teachers' shared identities through languages, culture, and teaching experiences (Language & culture in 8.2.1.2 and Experience in 8.2.1.3) were not been mentioned.

8.2.1.4 Workplace-kinship Ties According to the Physical Setting of the Workplace

Aside from the above factors, qualitative sources of data further unveiled that physical setting was one of the reasons that tied participants together into small sub-groups. The observations suggested that this particular workplace assigned each full-time lecturer a private office on one of the four different floors (the 4th to 7th floors). Since each of them could freely choose to work in both their private space of the common areas, there was no surprise that not many lecturers were found to work together in the common areas in this workplace. Interviews and observations suggested that the physical setting of the workplace partly limited the participant lecturers' interaction and divided them into sub-groups. When participants were asked to describe their interaction with colleagues, some of them shared that they spontaneously worked together more often with the lecturers sharing spaces with them, for example:

> You know… I have people in my office floor. I work with them more. It's nothing formal and planed. It's just because we see each other more. (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013)
>
> I haven't met event the new Thai lecturers, the new full-time teachers. I haven't met a lot of them because I'm very very busy. I've got lots of thing to do. I think they tend to be on the ground floor eating and I tend to be on the second floor. (Zara, July 16, 2013)

The two lecturers may interact with different groups of colleagues, those sharing the same office floor or having lunch at the same venue, but their responses similarly indicated that the physical setting influenced their interaction with colleagues. Moreover, the impact of the physical setting on participants' interactions was realized through other participants' interview responses and observation data. In addition, a similar impact of the school physical setting on teacher professional learning activities was also evidenced in the United States and Israel (see e.g., Ben-Peretz & Schonmann, 2000; Mawhiney, 2009; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). Additionally, this set of findings is consistent with what was discussed in Chapter 6 on colleagues sharing common spaces (Section 6.2.2.2) and Chapter 7 on the obstructed of the physical setting in social interactions in the workplace (Section 7.3.2.4). The discussions of those two chapters similarly suggested that the physical condition of this EFL workplace justified the lecturers' interaction with one another. In particular, the setting not only limited opportunities for the lecturers to interact in a group as the whole institution, but also stimulated tendencies for subdivisions into small groups according to where the participants usually spent their time. Nevertheless, no sense of competition between sub-groups of lecturers was evidenced.

8.2.1.5 Overall Justification of Workplace-kinship

As discussed in the previous four subsections (8.2.1.1-8.2.1.4), it was evident that lecturers tended to socialise with each other and their colleagues in a workplace-kinship manner. The researcher classifies workplace relationships through the participants' descriptions of the factors driving them to relate to their colleagues. All of the factors are connected to participants' similar identities and their sense of belonging with the other group members (without any traces of a competition as commonly found in balkanization). Moreover, the data suggested that some of them belonged to more than one sub-group at a time since many of them have more than one identity in the workplace. For example, those who

belonged to the international lecturers group were at the same time the member of the experienced lecturers group. The data also suggested that participants felt more comfortable having both teaching and non-teaching related interactions with colleagues because of their similarities (e.g. contractual status, teaching experience, as well as language and culture).

In essence, this newly established workplace culture (workplace-kinship) based on shared identity was a key factor in workplace relationships as it massively influenced lecturers to connect with one another and consequently determined their right and roles. Additionally, the overlapping of the shared cultural identity could also increase the flexibility and the connection of the sub-groups in the context. In relation to this understanding of the nature of workplace-kinship, it is plausible that collaboration on a whole institution basis can be fostered by creating mutual interests and shared identity amongst the lecturers' sub-groups. Further discussion of the implementation of workplace-kinship can be found in Chapter 9.

8.2.2 Individualism

The second most frequently captured work culture through both observations and interviews was individualism. Twelve out of sixteen participant lecturers explicitly mentioned in interviews that apart from working in small sub-groups they also spent most of their working hours in isolation. This set of finding was in line with one of the main findings of Chapter 7 in that a large number of participants (*N*=13) perceived their professional learning as an individual responsibility. The interview data presented in the chapter articulate that the majority of participants were rather certain that they did not require collaboration from their colleagues to facilitate their professional learning and everyday practices. However, the findings from questionnaire items 1-16 (Section 8.1) contrarily suggested more tendencies for the participants to collaboratively work with colleagues rather than individually solve their instruction problems and develop their teaching practices. Such distinction in participants' perceptions and actual practice will be fully discussed in Section 8.3.

The participants' individual culture, evidenced through observation data, was usually restricted to greetings and involved around some small talk, which had

little, or almost no, connection with their teaching. They rarely shared opinions on teaching with others unless they were asked for help. Observations of how participant lecturers spent time in their common areas showed that each of the lecturers tended to individually prepare their lessons in the staff common room, using the computers and printers provided without any contact with others in the room. The observations further suggested that participants went to this shared space to sign in/out, order lunch, and drop off/collect their belonging, not to socialise with colleagues. After they finished their business in the common room, some of them headed to private offices and many went straight to the classrooms. The participants spent time in isolation in the common areas and had limited connection with colleagues as evidenced through 17 out of 24 days of observation. In addition to the observation evidence, 12 of 16 participants mentioned that they often worked in isolation and had limited interaction in the staff common room. A strong sense of individualism can be found in the following interview response, for example:

> I very rarely rarely see other lecturers. I think it's just because the way that this building's structured, the offices are, the way the class schedule is, and you know just everything. Partly, it's me too. I don't eat lunch down stair at canteen. And I've just found that, when compared to my previous job, here I see my colleagues much much less. It can be months between times that I see the colleagues. (Walton, interview, July 19, 2013)

This response suggests that this lecturer spent most of his time in the office alone and rarely had collaborative work with colleagues. Additionally, the same participant went further in describing what contributed him to work in isolation:

> I do have experience of working in team, but I guess that I don't like it as much. This is because there can be some disagreement. You know what I mean? And I haven't had… well I shouldn't say. I don't wanna worry about thing that I can't control. For instance, I told you before that I have to grade the papers with the Thai lecturers. And there's a time that I disagreed with the scores they gave. For me, I don't want to ague, so I just said I'll do it your way. There's this kind of issue there. (Walton, interview, July 19, 2013)

The reader can see that this lecturer had negative experience with collaborative work previously where it was difficult for him and his colleagues to deal with different opinions during such work. Consequently, to avoid having arguments, he chose to work individually. The researcher found that personal preferences

played an important role in many other participants' decisions to work separately from their colleagues as well. The individualism work culture, which resulted from personal preferences, can also be identified in the following interview excerpt:

> I'd rather work individually. I guess it's because I just used to it. It's the way I am. I think, I like to interact with other people, but feel like the responsibility of the classroom and the students' success is on me. My other team members not gonna be in the classroom with my students, so the responsibility is mine…I think I am alright about it because I think I am a sort of self-motivated learner and I appreciate the autonomy of this position where I don't have someone walking over my shoulders and say what are you doing now. (Abra, interview, July 4, 2013)

Whilst Walton and Abra decided to work more individually to avoid arguments and to protect their autonomy in their work, some participants decided to work alone because some of their teaching tasks were better done alone (e.g. lesson planning and exam marking). The following interview excerpt is provided as an example:

> I'd like to spend more time at the common room in order to learn from colleagues. Some people, they are comfortable to work in a group situation. For me it's very distracting. People is coming, going, and talking, so it's quite difficult to get my teaching preparation done. But I have something to do there, like printing. I have some beneficial conversation with the people who are there. But I work much more efficiently in silent, so I don't have much time in the common room. (Ervin, July 5, 2013)

This interview indicated that this lecturer did not want to work alone for the sake of isolation; he had a positive attitude towards social interaction with colleagues. However, his personal preference for his *work strategy* drove him to work alone. In Hargreaves' (1994) terms, this kind of personal preference was called an 'adaptive strategy'. In his view, this kind of isolation is a sensible working strategy that helps teachers preserve their time and energy otherwise spent on digressions and diversions involved in working with colleagues to focus on their instruction.

Aside from personal preferences, the data further suggested that course structure, teaching schedules, and the physical setting of the workplace were also associated with a culture of individualism in this group of EFL lecturers. Of equal importance is that these factors correspond with Chapter 7's findings as

presented in sections 7.3.2.1, 7.3.2.3, and 7.3.2.4 on factors limiting participants' professional learning opportunities. The following are examples of participants' responses indicating individualism as influenced by the course structure and teaching schedule:

> I haven't talk with many people, especially, my co-lecturers. I do know who they are. I have two co-lecturers, but they teach speaking and listening using different textbooks. So maybe that's why we don't need to talk that much and I most of the time work alone. (Kim, July 19, 2013)
>
> May be because of the teaching schedule itself. If some lecturers have to teach three hours in the morning, and then lunch break and then the afternoon classes, so they don't have enough time to visit the common room to see other people. And these things also happen to me in this semester and the previous two semesters. That's why I don't have chance to work with others and always do things alone. (Som, July 16, 2013)

With regard to the two interview extracts above, it is shown that the two participants similarly spent more time working alone. However, the factors that drove them to do so were different. It was rather clear that course structure limited Kim's engagement with colleagues while the intensity of the workload and teaching schedule obstructed Som from collaboratively working with others.

However, when reconsidering all participants' responses indicating individualism, it was found that personal preference was the strongest factor leading them to workplace isolation, particularly their intention to avoid arguments and to protect their own autonomy. Hargreaves (1994) suggested that this particular culture, though it helps teachers guard their autonomy and protects them from criticism or evaluation by other teachers, leads to hesitation, defensiveness, and anxiety. He further warned about the effects of too much of individualism in the workplace; individualism "shuts out possible sources of praise and support. Isolated teachers get little adult feedback on teacher value, worth and competence" (p. 167). Nonetheless, not every kind of individualism was recommended to be eliminated. As the reader can see from Ervin's interview excerpt suggesting that teachers' solitude can also help them work more effectively. Correspondingly, individualism is found to be relatively beneficial to the profession of teacher when it occurs to a balanced degree as Clement & Vandenberghe (2000) highlighted that teacher individualism and collaboration were interrelated. With a well-balanced degree of individualism within the

workplace, teachers will have more respect for each other's sense of autonomy. Consequently, teachers can collaboratively work together more effectively.

8.2.3 Contrived Collegiality

Whilst the majority of this particular group of EFL lecturers preferred socialising in small sub-groups (workplace-kinship) and most of the time worked in isolation (individualism), contrived collegiality was depicted less in this EFL workplace context. According to Hargreaves' (1994) definition, contrived collegiality means a gathering of lecturers, which is administratively regulated. In other words, lecturers are required to work together rather than allowed to initiate their own collaborative work. Since the data indicated that this kind of work culture was most often practiced in the group of full-time lecturers, it can be said that contrived collegiality was not a work culture of the whole group of participants. Interviews and observations indicated that all the full-time Thai lecturer participants were sometimes required to attend seminars and meetings, to conduct group research, to engage in co-teaching schemes, to design tests together, to plan lessons in groups, and to coordinate with other lecturers teaching the same subject. Five out of 24 days of observations and seven interview responses (from Thai lecturers) similarly depict contrived collegiality. The followings are examples from interview and observation data:

> Nine lecturers were siting nearing each other in the common room. Seven of them were the part-time lecturers and two of them were full-time lecturers who were assigned to be the course coordinators. It seemed like the course coordinators appointed seven part-time lecturers to be here to get some teaching materials such as textbook, worksheets, and course outline. Throughout about half an hour of their interaction, the seven lecturers most of the time listened to the coordinators and barely asked questions. The coordinators briefed all the lecturers about the course content, grading system, working process, and what to do when they had problems. (Observation 2905, morning)

The assigned collaborative work, captured through the observation, was the course coordinator scheme. The field note suggested that those nine lecturers did not gather together by their own initiation. It was rather clear that the two full-time lecturers shared their knowledge about teaching with the part-time lecturers because they were the course coordinators. According to their role, at the beginning of every academic semester they were required to do so by workplace

regulation. The following interview transcripts provide a picture of the course coordinator culture.

> If it is the material or something that I was not really sure, I checked with the Internet first and then *I sent the email to the coordinator*. (Sai, August 13, 2013, emphasis added).
>
> I am a course coordinator for two subjects, which is a fundamental course and another which is ESP… I most of the time used the email to contact the lecturers… It's difficult for me to see them in person…It's pretty difficult because I come here only Wednesday to Friday. So it might not be possible for me to see all of them. Some of them teach on Tuesday, so I didn't see them that much. *Mainly, I contacted them about the exam paper, when I wanted them to see the exam paper, so that they could see and make comments on that exam paper*. Other than that, when I saw them, I sometimes talked about the course and asked them like do they have any problems with their students. Mostly, there were just small talks. (Sood, July 10, 2013, emphasis added)

The interview excerpts provide information on what actually happened through the course coordinator scheme in that, after this first gathering, according to the workplace regulation the course coordinator rarely interacted with teachers teaching the same subject in person. They preferred using email to exchanging information regarding the course. Additionally, this set of data was related to findings discussed in chapter 6 (see Section 6.2.2.1) regarding the first research question. Particularly, that the part-time lecturer group had the most frequent in-person interaction with the coordinators, whilst full-time lecturers usually contacted the coordinators through email and phone. However, a disruption in the coordinator's email communication was once mentioned by a full-time lecturer:

> Well, I barely meet the coordinator. I feel a bit like I've been left out. My email address was missing from the mailing list so I missed all the updates. No matter how many times I reminded the course coordinator about adding my address. It's still not on the list. (Nim, August 30, 2013)

It is perceptible from Nim's interview response in that the coordinator had scarce interaction with the lecturers whom they were responsible. Seemingly, the coordinator dominantly communicated through telecommunication channels, particularly email. Given the aforementioned interview response, a downside of over reliance on email communication (and possibly a lack of face to face

communication) was depicted. In addition, throughout the data collection period the researcher could not find any participants mentioning an attempt from the coordinator to arrange any meetings (either formal or informal), apart from the orientation meeting, which was compulsory. In keeping with all the data concerning the interaction between the coordinator and lecturers teaching the same subject, the researcher deduced that this faculty regulated course coordinator scheme was not properly designed for assisting the lecturers to have more interactions, to learn from one another, or to help them solve each other's instructional problems. Deceptively, the scheme actually served to facilitate receiving updates on changes regarding teaching and assessment and to seek instructional advise from the coordinator (see the two aforementioned interview responses in italic, as examples).

Such contrived collegiality interaction amongst the full-time lecturers was not only evidenced through the course coordinator scheme but the lecturers were also asked to exchange knowledge through participation in KM (knowledge management) seminars and the use of Dropbox technology to share teaching materials. The researcher detected the institution's attempt to implement knowledge-sharing activities at the beginning of the semester through observation of the full-time lecturers' orientation meeting. The following interview response from the Director is an example indicating the workplace's encouragement for staff to share knowledge:

> We still offer… still keep organizing workshop or session. I mean the KM workshop in which the colleagues would have opportunity to share what they do or what they have learnt from outside the institute or from their research so that they can let other colleagues know what they have done or what they think would be useful for the development of us of the faculty members. (Director, August 6, 2013)

As stated in the above interview response, the Director viewed the KM seminar as a valuable learning opportunity. However, throughout an academic semester of data collection (four months), just one KM seminar was evidenced. Moreover, the observation suggested that a rather small number (11 out of over 70) of full-time lecturers from the institution attended the particular seminar (a detailed discussion of the KM seminar can be found in section 6.1.1.5) meaning that the majority of the teaching staff in this workplace had no engagement in the

meeting. Nonetheless, such an attempt to encourage the teaching staff to share knowledge and experiences with each other through seminars and other opportunities were limited to the full-time lecturers staff. Consequently, it can be said that this contrived collegiality was not a work culture of the whole group of EFL lecturers.

8.2.4 Collaboration

Whilst contrived collegiality was limited to the full-time lecturers, qualitative data rarely evidenced collaboration in this context. This set of qualitative findings (similar to sections 8.2.1, 8.2.2, and 8.2.3) once again distinctively portrayed a different story from the first part of the questionnaire (see sections 8.1 and 8.3). Collaboration, according to Hargreaves, refers to teachers' voluntary and spontaneous gathering, particularly by the teachers' own initiation, to continuously work together exchange teaching experiences or discussing instructional problems. As a collaborative culture, teachers often informally work together and their working nature is flexible across time and space, not fixed to any specific group(s) of colleagues. The data suggested that participants rarely worked together on a whole institution basis but that their collaborative work was always limited to particular colleagues. This set of findings corresponds with the main finding of this chapter (see section 8.2.1) in that the collaborative knowledge sharing and other teaching development related interactions of the participant lecturers and their colleagues were limited to remain within their sub-groups (workplace-kinship). Comparing the characteristics of teacher collaboration with the qualitative data in this chapter, the researcher deduced that collaboration was not a main culture of this context.

However, traces of such work culture can be found in a few participants' interview responses. See the following interview excerpt for example:

> Mostly, I would ask for advice from other teachers usually people I came across in the common room. When I came across some problems something that I wasn't sure about I just asked around if they had the same situation or the same problem. How would they behave and handle the situation? How would they answer questions? I then applied those information to my teaching. Mostly, I asked around… I also asked about their experience and how did they handle the situation and their suggestions on what kind of practice or exercise I should give the students. (Phor, interview, August 6, 2013)

Her collaborative knowledge sharing interaction happened spontaneously with any colleagues she met, not any group(s) of them in particular. In addition, the collaborative behaviour that she described was notably different form the work culture of the majority of this particular group of EFL lecturers. Whilst most of them had significantly more engagement with particular sub-group(s) of colleagues (see section 8.2.1), she could work and learn with any of them. Apart from the above interview data, observations captured quite a few lectures working together in a collaborative manner; the following observation field note is an example:

> The first lecturer entering the room was a part-time lecturer teaching English Foundation II. She sat at the table in the middle of the room. Later, another lecturer teaching the same subject walked in and she sat in front of the computer in the middle of the room. The lecturer who came later asked her colleague (having more experience teaching in this workplace) whether she taught the same subject with her. When her colleague replied yes, she stared asking some questions related to the subject. She consulted her colleague about the evaluation criteria of students' written work. After that, the one with less teaching experience asked whether her colleague successfully covered all the exercises within two hours of teaching. This was because she most of the time ran out of time and had to assign the remaining exercises as students' homework. In consequence, the more experienced one shared her teaching techniques, particularly on the time management aspect. Not only that, the more experienced lecturer also shared her tips on how to encourage students to participate in class activities. (Observation 2506, morning)

This description is an excerpt from approximately an hour of observation. This interaction occurred in the lecturers' common room where all the teaching staff in this workplace came to sign in as well as to prepare their lessons and teaching materials whilst waiting for their morning classes. The observation of this interaction showed that the exchange of teaching knowledge between the two lecturers happened spontaneously; such interaction is similar to Hargreaves' description of teacher collaboration. Nevertheless, when taking a further in-depth consideration of every aspect of participants' collaborative activities, the researcher found that such practices were lacking of "continuity", which is one of the crucial elements constituting teacher collaboration (Hargreaves, 1994; see section 3.2.1.3). Moreover, the continuity of the teacher learning activity is not only essential for teacher collaboration, but is also highlighted as one of the elements forming a professional learning community or a Community of Practice

(Wenger, 2006; section 3.2). Given Hargreaves' view of work culture and Wenger's view on learning community, it can be settled that collaboration was practiced occasionally in this workplace and the teacher professional learning community was still in its infancy.

Additionally, this set of findings once again highlighted the difference in participants' *perceptions* of their collaborative work culture (depicted through the first half of the questionnaire) and their *actual practices* (retrieved from interviews, observations, and written documents); see further discussion in section 8.3. Comparing this set of findings with those of Chapter 7 it can also be settled that there were some distinctive mismatches between some of the participants' *preferences* and their actual collaborative *behaviour*. One of the main findings of Chapter 7 suggested that seven of sixteen participants perceived teacher professional learning in a collaborative sense and preferred working in teams with their colleagues (section 7.2.2). However, only three of those seven lecturers were found actually engaged in a process of co-construction of knowledge that required collaboration with colleagues. Furthermore, it was also indicated in the discussion that traces of the institution and the university's attempts to encourage workplace collaboration were rarely found.

Equally important to note is a reason contributing to the noticeable shortage of data provided in this section. This section contains significantly less information (compared to the other three subsections [workplace-kinship, individualism, and contrived collegiality]) because collaboration is the work culture least evidenced in this EFL workplace.

8.2.5 A Summary of Qualitative Findings

When associating all qualitative findings with Hargreaves' definitions of types of work culture, it can be inferred that *workplace-kinship* and *individualism* were the two main types of work culture in this university level institution. The majority of EFL lecturer participants worked together, exchanged their teaching experiences, and solved their instructional problems in small sub-group(s) of colleagues rather than with all colleagues, in general. For example, non-Thai lecturers were found to interact and help each other develop their teaching significantly more often than they interacted and helped their Thai colleagues.

Correspondingly, part-time lecturers solved their instructional problems in their group rather than with the full-time lecturers (either Thai and non-Thai). Apart from having more interaction with colleagues in their workplace-kinship group(s), the majority of full-time lecturers preferred spending their time in this workplace in isolation in their own private office spaces. Additionally, the data reported that many felt more comfortable and efficient planning lessons and grading student work alone. Respectively, collaboration and contrived collegiality were depicted considerably less often through either interviews or observations. It can be deduced from the qualitative findings that this particular group of EFL lecturers rarely did any teaching or professional learning related activities in large groups or as a whole institution; they performed such activities either within their workplace-kinship groups or alone.

The findings are also consistent with the majority of the participants' perspectives of teacher professional learning as discussed in Chapter 7 where it was found that the participant lecturers viewed their professional learning as an "individual experience". Participants mentioned their professional learning through reading, conducting research, teaching practice, and *individually* attending training. When describing their learning through those activities, they mentioned neither interaction with their colleagues nor engagement of their colleagues in each of their learning activities. Linking this set of findings with the qualitative findings discussed in this chapter, it was not surprising that collaboration was rarely evidenced through either observations or interviews. Moreover, the other set of findings from the previous chapter on obstacles to professional learning (e.g. workplace support, course structure, and physical settings as mentioned in sections 8.3.1.1 and 8.3.1.2) helped to explain why the lecturers did not often work or learn together as a group.

Whilst the findings from interviews, observations and written documents are consistent with several aspects discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, the qualitative findings are relatively different from the above quantitative data (see Section 8.1). Whilst the whole set of qualitative data suggested a lesser degree of collaboration and contrived collegiality, the first half of the questionnaire suggested considerably more of each. This distinction in quantitative and qualitative findings is discussed in the following section.

8.3 Summary based on the Association of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings of Teacher Work Culture

When comparing the distinctive findings of the questionnaire, particularly the items concerning types of work culture (items 1-16), with data obtained from qualitative sources, it was notable that the two different sources of data yielded different results. However, once the second half of the questionnaire data were considered this difference seemed inconclusive. Whilst the first half of the questionnaire reported more *collaboration* and *contrived collegiality*, the second half (items 19-24) showed more tendencies for participants' divisions into small sub-groups (workplace-kinship/balkanization). Subsequently, it can be inferred that the entire quantitative data set was not substantially different from the qualitative findings. The revelation of more collaboration through the first half and tendency for subdivision through the second half might result from the difference in the nature of the two sets of questions. Whilst the first half of the questions intentionally asked for participants' *overview* of their professional learning, the second half further depicted specific *details* of their interactions. In any respect, by considering any of the two sets of quantitative data separately, the completed picture of this social phenomenon would not be realised. For example, if the results of the second and the third questionnaire items (most of the participants "always" provided ($\bar{X}$ = 4.37) and received ($\bar{X}$ = 4.62) encouragement to/from their colleagues) were superficially analysed without considering the results from items 19-24 the researcher would simply find the tendency of participants to work collaboratively with any colleagues in their workplace (*collaboration*) and this result would contrast with the qualitative data. However, when analysing this social phenomenon in relation to the complete questionnaire data it was noticeable that such collaborative social interactions were rather limited between each of the participants to approximately "two specific colleagues". This limited social interaction within a specific group of colleagues, not on a whole institution basis, was classified as workplace-kinship. Therefore, it can be said that the entire set of quantitative and qualitative data indicated workplace-kinship (lecturers' divisions into small sub-groups) as a distinct characteristic of the teacher work culture in this workplace. It is equally important to note that aside from workplace-kinship, the data remarkably illustrated *individualism* as the second most practiced social

interaction for this group of lecturers. In addition to working with sub-group members, many of the participants rarely had interaction with others unless they were asked for help. They often spent time in the common areas with almost no interaction with others in the room and spent most of their time in their private offices.

The revelation of workplace-kinship and individualism as the main cultures of this institution highlighted that interactions amongst the teaching staff in this workplace were rather limited. Even though the limited workplace interaction has some positive influences on their jobs (e.g. guarding teachers' autonomy, protecting teachers from criticism, diminishing hesitation, and releasing anxiety), it is viewed as a social phenomenon that needs to be controlled (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Hargreaves, 1994; Thiederman, 2003). If the degree of workplace isolation is out of balance, it will lessen the sense of unity in the workplace and can possibly generate failures in teaching. Accordingly, the research should address how to expand workplace interaction from individual lecturers working in isolation or with small sub-group(s) to wider groups of lecturers or to working on a whole institution basis. This issue and the implementation of the research findings to better the situation of professional development will be discussed to a deeper degree in Chapter 9.

9. Conclusion

This chapter discusses the overall picture of the professional learning situation of the group of EFL lecturers studied here. Overall, the majority of participant lecturers relied on traditional approaches of professional learning. In addition, they tended to work and learn together with their colleagues in small sub-groups (workplace-kinship) and regularly worked in isolation (individualism). Moreover, the data suggested the inequality in degrees of learning opportunities and constraints in accessing the professional learning of the different groups of participant lecturers. With respect to these key findings, this chapter also provides contributions and recommendations for implementation for the field, particularly to shift teacher professional development policy toward the importance of teacher workplace interactions, job embedded professional learning activities, and the equality of teacher development opportunities, especially the visibility of part-time lecturers in the overall development plans. This chapter ends with the strengths and limitations of the study, followed by suggestions for further study.

9.1 Key Findings

The present research describes EFL lecturers' professional learning in the Thai university context in three ways: (1) types of EFL lecturers' professional learning activities, (2) their perceptions towards professional learning, and (3) the characteristics of their work culture. This study has portrayed the description of these three particular aspects of the participants' professional learning from the triangulation of multiple data sources and a summary is provided in the following sections.

9.1.1 Key Findings from Research Question One: What Types of Learning Activities Do Thai University EFL Lecturers Engage in?

The findings from the first research question initially suggested that the 16 EFL lecturers engaged in 21 types of formal and informal professional learning activities (see Table 6.10, Chapter 6). The learning activities captured through fieldwork observations, semi-structured interviews, and written documents were, for example, lecturers' orientations, meetings, in-house seminars, degrees,

conferences, student feedback, his/her own teaching experiences, colleagues, external experts, and online media. Additionally, the data suggested a higher tendency for participant to be involved in formal (e.g., meetings, trainings, conferences) learning activities than informal learning activities.

9.1.1.1 Formal Professional Learning

Initially, statistical data from the questionnaires (Table 6.3, Chapter 6) indicated that the EFL lecturers appeared to rely more on *formal* professional learning ($\bar{X}$= 3.25) than *informal* ($\bar{X}$ = 2.18). Correspondingly, taken together with the observations, interviews, and written documents, the researcher also found that participants had more frequent engagement in formal options. In addition, multiple data sources also indicated clear differentiations between the *part-time* lecturers, *full-time Thai* lecturers and *non-Thai* lecturers in the extent of their engagement in each type of formal and informal professional development activity (full details of the three groups may be found in section 2.6, Chapter 2 and section 4.1, Chapter 4). Moreover, the data distinctively suggested that part-time lecturers in this Thai institution had the smallest degree of engagement in most of the learning activities, especially in the formal activities.

9.1.1.2 Workplace Support

The study further showed that full-time lecturers, both Thai and non-Thai, received more support to access formal professional development from their workplace, so they learned more from all kinds of meetings, seminars, and workshops, both inside and outside their workplace. In addition, this language institution together with the university supported the full-time lecturers to attend conferences, take short courses, conduct research, and to further their education at the higher education level. Furthermore, the research suggested the relationship of the workplace support with the extent of participants' engagement in professional development activities, indicating that the more support for formal professional learning the lecturers received, the less engaged they were with informal activities. This relationship was even more noticeable when compared with support for learning activities received by part-time lecturers. Whilst the part-time lecturers had the lowest support for formal professional learning opportunities inside the workplace, they tended to engage in more

collaborative learning activities that spontaneously occurred in the workplace and informal learning opportunities outside of it.

In addition, this research also showed constraints for participants' engagement in professional learning activities resulting from the workplace's support. These constraints were captured through three months of observations and the part-time lecturers' interview responses. It was found that part-time lecturers were neglected in several learning opportunities (i.e. knowledge management meetings, Foundation Course meetings, lecturer evaluation meetings, in-house workshops, and conferences) because of their *teaching schedule* and their *contractual status* (part-time). These constrains on participants' learning opportunities were more distinctly evidenced through the findings of research question two (Chapter 7).

9.1.2 Key Findings from Research Question Two: What Are the Lecturers' Perceptions towards Professional Learning in General, and towards Specific Learning Activities in Particular?

Through interviews, the majority of the participants (11 out of 16) showed their limited understanding and their small amount of background knowledge of what teacher professional learning actually is. This lack of understanding was highlighted through their unfamiliarity and uncertainty in defining the term teacher professional learning. Furthermore, the interview data indicated that most of the participants (*N*=14) perceived their professional learning more as an *individual* learning experience and as personal development through engagement in *formal* learning options.

9.1.2.1 Traditional Approaches of Professional Learning

The finding that the majority of participant lecturers considered their professional learning an *individual* and *formal* learning experience combined with the finding of no evidence indicating workplace attempts to raise its staff's awareness of the benefits of *informal* learning and collaborative practices (e.g. collaboratively solving instructional problems and exchanging teaching ideas with colleagues) could lead one to deduce that the trend of professional learning activities in this workplace leaned towards individual learning experiences, in the form of formal learning activities. These data also suggested that the overall

perceptions of the Director and participant lecturers on the professional learning were more comparable with the traditional approach to professional learning, formal or prescribed professional development (see more about the approach in section 3.1.1, Chapter 3). Noticeably, collaborative learning (section 3.1.2) was not a trend for the professional development of either the participant lecturers or the administrators in this particular Thai educational institution.

9.1.2.2 Constraints in Accessing Professional Learning Activities

In addition to the above findings, the second research question also suggested the participants' perceived constraints in accessing each type of professional learning activity. The study found several factors that the participants thought limited their learning opportunities. They believed that these factors obstructed both their formal and informal learning opportunities. Their perceived constraints to informal professional learning were: course structure, teaching schedule, research and publication policy, as well as the architectural conditions of the workplace. In addition, they perceived that their formal learning activities were limited by the research and publication policy, the advertising of the learning opportunities, and the lack of awareness of the part-time lecturers' needs by the policy makers.

9.1.2.3 Part-time Lecturers' Lack of Professional Learning Opportunities

Moreover, the data indicated that the part-time lecturers group was most negatively affected by the aforementioned constraints. Interviews suggested that this group of lecturers experienced poor communication about events, a lack of funding for attendance, as well as conflicts between their teaching responsibilities and the professional development priorities of the workplace. The research also found that their experience of unconstructive treatment from the workplace diminished part-time lecturers' sense of belonging and lessened their interaction with full-time lecturer colleagues.

9.1.2.4 The Workplace's Impact on Constraints to Professional Learning

Furthermore, the detection of the professional learning constraints led to another key finding of the workplace's policy and its influences on staff development

opportunities. These constraints were noticeably beyond the participant lecturers' control and were clearly related to institutional policy. This set of findings showed that the lecturers' learning opportunities and their engagement in learning activities were significantly tempered by the workplace's administrative policy.

9.1.3 Key Findings from Research Question Three: What is the Nature of the Lecturers' Participation in Professional Learning Activities in Terms of the Work Culture?

An overall impression of the nature of the 16 EFL lecturers' interactions within their workplace community as obtained from multiple qualitative and quantitative sources of data were that they typically interacted with each other in small groups. Aside from having limited interaction with colleagues, participants were found to regularly spend most of their office hours in their private office spaces. These distinctive characteristics of work culture could be described as workplace-kinship and individualism.

9.1.3.1 Workplace-kinship: the Division of Workplace Members into Sub-groups

Within their small sub-groups, they tended to work collaboratively with others. Beyond that, collaborative practice and other workplace interactions were limited between each of the participants to approximately "two specific colleagues" (Questionnaire items 20-24, Table 8.1, Chapter 8). Furthermore, 14 out of 16 participant lecturers highlighted through interviews the sub-grouping behaviour of either their colleagues or themselves. Additionally, this particular characteristic of participants' workplace interaction was also persistently evidenced throughout the period of fieldwork observations.

The data analysis further suggested that factors driving the participants to mutually relate to their colleagues were associated with their sense of belonging and shared cultural identities (social ties) with group members, rather than a sense of competition (as specified as the main characteristic of the sub-grouping behaviour called "balkanization" [Hargreaves, 1994]). When this nature of participants' workplace interactions was considered with the four types of teacher work culture identified by Hargreaves (1994), the researcher learnt that none of the four types (collaboration, contrived collegiality, balkanization, and

individualism) were comparable. Accordingly, the researcher coined the term "workplace-kinship" to specifically identify this work culture. The establishment of the term was influenced by the anthropological definition of kinship (Holy, 1996); for full details please see section 8.2.1, Chapter 8. The distinctive characteristics of the participants' interactions that related to workplace-kinship are the fact that their sub-grouping behaviour stemmed from their shared cultural identities or social ties.

In this particular Thai educational context, the participant lecturers were tied to their colleagues through four ways: (1) contractual status (full-time with full-time /part-time with part-time), (2) language and culture (Thai with Thai /Non-Thai with Non-Thai), (3) teaching experience (Experienced with Experienced /Novice with Novice), and (4) physical setting of the context (common spaces/private offices). This study has also found that the social ties created a sense of belonging and, at the same time, justified the rights and roles of each member of this workplace. For example, each full-time lecturer had his/her right to vote for any changes in regulation while the part-time lecturers had none. The experienced lecturers were usually assigned the role of mentor, exam paper editor, and other administrative positions, whilst the novice lecturers were normally assigned teaching roles. The data clearly indicated that the majority of the participant lecturers tended to group together, according to their common rights and roles, in order to share their experiences, help each other solve instructional problems, and develop their teaching related work.

9.1.3.2 Individualism: Workplace isolation

In addition to workplace-kinship, individualism was the second most distinctive work culture of this institution (section 8.2.2, Chapter 8). Twelve of sixteen participant lecturers explicitly mentioned, through the interviews, that aside from working in small sub-groups (workplace-kinship), they had limited interaction with other colleagues. This study found that their workplace interaction was usually restricted to greetings and small talk, which had little (or almost no) connection with their teaching. The participants rarely communicated with others unless they were asked for help. Moreover, the study has discovered that many, particularly the full-time lecturers, spent most of their time in their private offices

and often spent time in isolation in the common areas with almost no interaction with others in the room.

Furthermore, this study has also suggested that of some the lecturers preferred working alone as their adaptive strategy (Hargreaves, 1994), not simply isolation for the sake of isolation. They had positive attitudes towards collaborative interaction with colleagues but wanted to preserve time and energy that would otherwise be spent on digressions and diversions inherent in working with others. In addition, many preferred individualism as they felt it helped them guard their autonomy and protected them from criticism or evaluations made by their colleagues. Overall, the intention to avoid criticism was the most influential factor leading them to their workplace isolation.

In brief, the lecturers' engagement in learning activities and other social interactions with their colleagues can be described as workplace-kinship and individualism. The study has shown that most of the lecturers' collaborative learning activities, teaching development related activities, and other non-academic social interactions occurring within this educational context were limited to small sub-groups of lecturers who shared similar cultural identities. Moreover, when the participants perceived anxiety from their job, particularly tension from being evaluated and criticised, they tended to work in isolation.

9.2 Implementation of Policy and Contributions to Knowledge

The three research questions were not originally designed to explore the same aspects of professional learning, however, each of the findings conveys similar messages and without contradicting each other. Taken together, the key findings of the three research questions show three major aspects, they are:

- The imbalance between formal and informal professional learning,
- The division of participants and their colleagues into sub-groups (workplace-kinship), and
- The inequality of access to professional learning opportunities.

Please note that these consistent aspects of the key findings emerged from adhering to the notion of triangulation: the combination of fieldwork observations, statistical data, interviews, and written documents. Together they

not only provide insights into the teacher professional learning situation in this particular Thai educational context, but also call for the educational policy makers' attention towards the importance of teacher learning and, more particularly, how teachers work and learn together through their everyday practice, including the status of teachers in development opportunities.

9.2.1 Imbalance between Formal and Informal Professional Learning

The first overarching point is the consistency in the participant lecturers' perceptions of their professional learning and how they actually engaged in learning activities. The participants clearly expressed through interviews (Chapter 7) that they perceived *formal* learning activities (e.g. training, workshops, or seminars) as their main options for professional development. Correspondingly, the popularity of formal learning options was noticeable through observations and questionnaires (Chapter 6). Taken together, the consistency in the participants' perceptions and behaviours means it was possible to draw the conclusion that formal professional learning activities were the current trend for professional development in this institution in Thailand.

These perceptions and behaviours of participant lecturers (traditional learning) were distinctively different from what various educational researchers (e.g. Armour & Makopoulu, 2012; Atwal, 2013; Bailey et al., 2001; Bolam et al., 2005; Britzman, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010; Kwakman, 2003; Mayer, 2011; OECD, 2011; Rigelman & Ruben, 2012; Timperley, 2008) recommend as a sustainable path of professional development (collaborative learning). In particular, the high degree of reliance on formal professional learning has long been criticised for its limitations to sustainably improving the lecturers' teaching practice (e.g. Bailey et al., 2001; Clarkea & Hollingsworth, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1977; Fullan, 2001; McRobbie, 2000; Wilson & Berne, 1999; OECD, 2011). For example, it has been criticised that professional learning experiences provided through traditional training approaches tend to separate theory and application, decontextualise the work context of the participants, and disregard participants' daily concerns (Bailey et al., 2001; Darling-Hammond, 1977; OECD, 2011). Moreover, the minimal link with participants' actual needs and experiences with the learning content, the

ignoring of knowledge sharing processes after the training, and the shortage of follow-up processes that are regularly found in the traditional training approach could also lead to a lack of retention of knowledge and skills (Hargreaves, 2000; McRobbie, 2000). Considering the downsides of over reliance on formal professional learning, the researcher noticed that the professional learning situation in this particular EFL workplace was not in an effective condition but in need of improvement. Subsequently, the researcher will discuss the workplace's responsibility for establishing an effective professional learning situation in the following sub-section.

9.2.1.1 Imbalance between Formal and Informal Professional Learning: Implications for Policy

The downsides of the unbalanced staff professional development policies (i.e. more support for formal learning activities than informal and emphasis on individual learning rather than collaborative) for teaching practice evidenced in this workplace suggests the need to revisit the quality assurance and staff development policy in many areas. The significance of revisiting workplace policy to establish effective professional learning is articulated in several studies in the area of education (e.g. Atwal, 2013; Evans et al., 2006; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2003). Many suggested that the workplace could elevate the quality of the staff's practice by facilitating lecturers to collaboratively learn from each other through their job embed activities. Rosenholtz (1991) suggested collaborative activities amongst colleagues could offer more avenues for teacher professional development in that when lecturers collaboratively work together "they bring in new ideas, fresh ways of looking at things, and a stock of collective knowledge that is more fruitful than any one person's working alone" (p. 41). Furthermore, several researchers (e.g. Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010; Li et al., 2009; Nagamine, 2007; Richardson, 1997; Schwandt, 2001; Tillema & Orland-Barak, 2006; Wenger, 1998[a]) have suggested that collaborative learning activities that spontaneously occur within the workplace context are key factors in helping lecturers effectively learn. Accordingly, the researcher wants to underline the need for policy makers or other authorities in this Thai educational context to promote more collaborative workplace interactions.

The practical recommendations are, for example, properly reassigning teachers' job responsibilities to allow lecturers more time to interact with both students and colleagues. The workplace could also provide well-equipped common spaces to encourage lecturers to spend more time there with colleagues, rather than in the private offices. Furthermore, to foster collaborative interactions in the workplace, it is the job of the policy makers to raise awareness in lecturers that they are not automatically applying theories to their teaching, but must do so through active interaction with teaching, materials, students, and colleagues. The workplace should also make the lecturers aware that they can sustainably develop through informal interactions with colleagues based on problems or interests in their daily routines.

9.2.2 Workplace-kinship

In addition to the imbalance between formal and informal professional learning, the researcher also detected the occurrence of *sub-grouping* behaviours (workplace-kinship) of the participants (full-time Thai, non-Thai, part-time Thai lecturer) through the findings for two research questions (Chapter 6 and Chapter 8). The two chapters indicated the distinctions of each sub-group in several ways, for example, how each group were treated by the workplace, the extent of each group's engagement in learning activities, and their rights and roles in the workplace. Moreover, multiple sources of data from the two chapters consistently indicated that there was no negative outcome of this kind of workplace division (workplace-kinship). It was found that lecturers sharing similarities (e.g. native language, contractual-status, and level of teaching experience) worked together, exchanged teaching experiences, and solved instructional problems with no sign of hostility to other groups. The consistent finding of no hostility between sub-groups and the positive outcomes of this sub-grouping behaviour confirm that the sub-grouping behaviours found in this Thai educational context are unique. Particularly, it is different from the characteristic of the sub-grouping behaviour (balkanization) commonly defined in the literature (Hargreaves, 1994).

9.2.2.1 Workplace-kinship: Theoretical Contribution to the Typology of Teacher Work Culture

This newly proposed conceptualisation moves the theoretical understanding of the sub-grouping behaviour in the workplace beyond a focus on the imbalance of power and competition amongst different sub-groups (balkanization) to the social ties of each sub-group member that bound them and make them feel safe to share experiences and to effectively learn from one another. Furthermore, this particular type of work culture potentially helps future research with a deeper understanding of the nature of teacher workplace interactions and raises awareness that not all sub-grouping behaviour is unhealthy to the profession. Both balkanization and workplace-kinship look similar at first glance, as they both are characterised by the division of the staff into small sub-groups; however, the factors that bind the teachers in each sub-group and the outcomes of the behaviour are different. Without this new conceptualisation of workplace division, all sub-grouping behaviour in the workplace could be at risk of being misleadingly categorised as balkanization and, subsequently, be vanished from the workplace. The organisation members who work together due to the sense of belonging and the common social ties could receive more support from their workplace in facilitating their collaborative learning activities. Furthermore, with this new conceptualisation of the workplace division, fellow researchers, policy makers, and workplace administrators could manage sub-grouping behaviour within their workplaces more effectively; a practical suggestion for the implementation of this idea is presented in the following sub-section.

9.2.2.2 Workplace-kinship: Implications for Professional Development Policy

The understanding of how the social ties bond people together under the culture of kinship is believed to benefit workplace relationships and possibly to foster collaborative learning in the workplace, as Thiederman (2003) says:

> The virtue in the concept of a kinship group is that it allows each of us to belong to many groups at once, depending on the characteristic on which we focus. It also—and this is the best part—enables us to broaden our group to include many populations that we previously thought of as different from ourselves. (p. 1)

Since a person could naturally be a part of more than one kinship-group at once, each kinship group could grow without limitation. If workplace administrators were made aware of this nature of workplace-kinship, particularly how the social ties link people, they might be able to successfully foster mutual interests and shared identities amongst lecturer sub-groups. Practically, an institution could connect different sub-groups together or expand workplace interactions into a larger group by organising social or academic clubs and events to create more shared values and identities (e.g. charity groups, film clubs, book clubs, or a summer school outing for lecturers). Potentially, with effort from administrators, implementing staff club(s) and outing(s) alongside other traditional development activities (e.g. research and publication, higher education, and academic training) in workplace professional development policy could not only reinforce the quality of professional learning, but also broaden the learning that spontaneously emerges through work interactions to exist at an institutional level. With more opportunities to interact with colleagues, the teaching staff will begin to know and understand each other better. This could also build a sense of camaraderie amongst different groups (e.g. non-Thai lecturers/Thai lecturers, full-time lecturers/ part-time lecturers, and lecturers teaching different courses) and create a more productive working and learning environment.

9.2.3 Inequality of Access to the Learning Opportunities

The inequality in accessing learning opportunities of the different sub-groups of participants was consistently evidenced in the findings for the three research questions. A first glimpse of inequality was that the number of formal professional learning activities for part-time lecturers was significantly lower than those for the full-time Thai and non-Thai lecturers (Part-time [3], non-Thai [7], Full-time Thai [9]) (see, Chapter 6). The second clue to the inequality was perceptible when each part-time lecturer indicated receiving scant attention from their workplace and their difficulties in accessing professional development events (Chapter 7). Moreover, the analysis of the work culture (Chapter 8) also suggested that the lecturers tended to learn informally from colleagues within their same sub-group (part-time lecturers), as all of them had no opportunity to formally develop their profession in other ways.

Despite the fact that part-time lecturers made up one-third of the EFL lecturers teaching the Foundation Course and that a large number of students were exposed to their teaching, they were often not integrated into the development plan of this workplace. In addition, this study also discovered that the invisibility of the part-time lecturers in the workplace development plan lessened their sense of belonging to the workplace, subsequently limiting their interactions with full-time lecturer colleagues. More negative consequences from overlooking part-time lecturers' quality of professional development were reported by Woodall et al., (2009) in that the invisibility of part-time lecturers in the workplace increased their "isolation, lack of confidence, lack of clarity about their role, problems with educational management and administration, and lack of resources" (p. 4). Given that part-time lecturers accounted for a significant proportion of teaching staff in this workplace, these consequences implied a high risk to the quality of teaching and learning for a large number of students. Moreover, it was clear, in this context that this risk was directly caused by the workplace's treatment of this group of lecturers.

9.2.3.1 Inequality of Learning Opportunities: Implications to Policy

This study, in line with previous studies on non-permanent teaching staff, such as Anderson (2007), Andrew et al., (2010), Beaton & Gilbert (2013), Beaton & Sims (2016), Bryson (2013), Coughlan (2015), and Percy et al. (2008), calls for the visibility of part-time lecturers in workplace policies on staff professional development. As this group of lecturers contributes equally to full-time lecturers to student learning, they must be equally supported by the workplace. See the emphasis made by Percy et al. (2008), for example:

> [S]essional [part-time] teachers make a significant but largely invisible contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in higher education. Both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of this contribution need to be investigated and accounted for at an institutional level if risk management and quality enhancement policy and practice are to be effective. (p. 5)

Furthermore, the findings of the negative consequences on teaching practice and other destructive working conditions resulting from the inequality in part-time lecturers learning opportunities signal a serious need for revisiting workplace policies in several ways, as suggested by Woodal and Geissler (2010). These

authors suggested that the workplace should implement a systematic approach to managing the general working conditions and supporting the learning of this group of lecturers. In accordance, this study suggests that this EFL workplace should consider providing specific job descriptions for part-time lecturers, implementing a systematic recruiting process and induction, considering the training needs of individual part-time lecturers, and offering learning activities to meet their needs. In addition, the workplace should provide specific criteria to ensure that they are fully visible in the workplace development plan. Moreover, in order to develop systematic support for part-time lecturers, the workplace should assign specific full-time staff or administrators to be responsible for the work conditions of this group of lecturers.

This study also agrees with Woodal and Geissler (2010) on implementing the following practical supports for this group of lecturers: including them on all relevant email lists, inviting them to all meetings and social events, and providing them with adequate working spaces and induction on essential systems in the workplace (e.g. to photocopiers, printers, computer rooms, access to buildings, a library card, and information on administrative support). The workplace should also consider assigning part-time lecturers a trained and accessible mentor. To effectively establish systematic support system for this group of lecturers, these recommendations involve implementation at both the institution and the university levels. Moreover, the findings on the marginalisation and inequality of part-time lecturers in this institution suggest the cautious consideration of this group of lecturers' work conditions and development opportunities in other educational contexts. The suggestions provided in this study are likely able to be implemented in other education institutions with similar contexts (e.g. public university institutions and university level-language institution).

9.2.3.2 Influence of Contractual-Status: Implications to the Field

The revelation of the workplace inequality in this Thai university is different from that commonly discussed in the research on inequality and social justice in education. A large portion of the literature in this field has centred attention on the gender, race, and socioeconomic statuses that bring inequality in student learning opportunities, rather than those of teachers (e.g. Hinojosa, 2008; Jo,

1997; Newcomb et al., 2002; Lingard et al., 2014; Losen & Skiba, 2010; Petras, 2011; Sadker & Sadker, 1986; Skiba et al., 2014; Wentzel, 2002). Furthermore, most of the studies in inequality amongst teachers (e.g. Chetty et al., 2011; Goldhaber, Lesley, and Theobald, 2015; Lankford et al., 2002; Rivkin et al., 2005) have predominantly focused on inequality caused by teachers' qualifications (teaching experience, degrees, certifications), gender and ethnic background, rather than their contractual-statuses, which was distinctively evidenced in this study. Moreover, when considering research in the field of education in Thailand and other Asian contexts, the researcher found almost no study on reciprocal relationships between teachers' contractual statuses, their equality in accessing professional learning opportunities and its impact on teachers' quality of practice and sense of belonging in the workplace, as highlighted as one of the key findings of this study.

Accordingly, it could be said that another primary contribution to the knowledge by this study is the awareness of the inequality in teacher learning and the roles of teachers' contractual-statuses on teachers' professional development and students' learning. Additionally, another contribution of this study to the field is the suggestion of the need for more research in educational contexts (particularly, Thai and other Asian countries) to either verify or falsify the assumption that teachers' contractual-statuses have an impact on teachers' professional development and reciprocally affect teachers' teaching practice.

9.3 Strengths and Limitations of this Study

Following an ethnographic approach for data collection helped to strengthen this study in that the researcher was able to obtain insight to allow interpretation and an in-depth understanding of this group of EFL lecturers' behaviours and perceptions on professional learning. Furthermore, as one of the organisation's members, the researcher successfully engaged the field with a limited period of preparation time (compared to those with no familiarity with the study context). This advantage allowed the researcher to enter the field without disrupting and interrupting the natural behaviour of the participants. In addition, the researcher's familiarity with the context allowed her to interpret the data as close to their actual meaning as possible. The advantages have been similarly revealed in several educational studies (e.g., Angrosino, 2007; Hammersley & Atkinson

2007; Bryman, 1990; Gobo, 2008; Riemer, 2008; Wilson, 1977; Wolcott, 1988; Woods, 1986). Accordingly, the findings obtained from this fieldwork can provide an insight to the actual professional learning situation and voice the participants' actual needs, perceived obstacles, and other experiences regarding professional learning.

Nonetheless, there is a limitation due to the nature of this research that constrains the generalisation of the findings. Since the context where participants work or live is believed to powerfully impact the participants' beliefs and behaviours, the implementation of these findings should be done cautiously with awareness of the contextual influences. A similar issue was noted in Wilson's (1977) chapter on *The Use of Ethnographic Techniques in Educational Research* in that "if one wants ultimately to generalise research findings to schools, then the research is best conducted within school settings where all these forces are intact" (p. 248). In addition to the issue of generalisation, time constraints were also a limitation. Since this study was conducted by one individual in fulfilment of the degree of PhD in Education, the researcher had a limited time available to stay in the field, subsequently unable to recruit a larger group of participants. However, the interpretation of the data, particularly the coding and analysis process, was done under the supervision of and with analytical guidance from two members of a Thesis Advisory Panel. In addition, analysis of the participants' work culture was done with a systematic analytical tool and techniques (i.e. SPSS 11.4; Strauss and Corbin's [1998] open and axial coding techniques) and according to multiple pieces of research evidences as well as a theoretical framework (Hargreaves, 1994; Knapp, 2003; Nagamine, 2007). Moreover, the triangulation of the findings with the employment of various data sources (i.e. observation fieldwork, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and written documents) brings about the reliability of these findings. Thus, the involvement of more than one researcher, the support of related theory and studies, and the triangulation of the data sources, together, strengthen the consistency of this research.

9.4 Suggestions for Further Study

In addition to taking forward the findings, suggestions, and cautions contained in this study, to effectively better the teacher professional development situation at the university (or the national) level, the researcher recommends that further

studies should be extended to larger group(s) of lecturers. Specifically, this kind of research is worth conducting in educational workplace(s) where more diversity in lecturers' statuses, cultural backgrounds, and levels of teaching experiences exist. Given the impact of workplace culture to the quality of teaching practice evidenced in this research, the researcher urges fellow educational researchers to explore social interactions in their workplace contexts to further understand factors connecting the workplace members to support (workplace-kinship) or to struggle with other groups (balkanization). As highlighted earlier, workplace-kinship was found originally in this workplace though it was not the original focus of this research. The researcher, thus, could not explore this specific type of lecturer sub-grouping behaviour in-depth. Therefore, it would be valuable to return to the workplace to further study this newly conceptualised pattern of work culture. Moreover, further studies by the researchers in the field to verify or falsify workplace-kinship are encouraged. Likewise, another possibility worth exploring is the role of lecturers' contractual-statuses on sub-grouping behaviours and inequality in the workplace. Furthermore, given the powerful impact of context on teachers' teaching and learning, as highlighted by Velez-Rendon (2002) and Knowles, Squire, and Cole (2006), the researcher recommends that further studies on any aspects of teacher professional learning opportunities and work culture are worth pursuing in wider workplace contexts. The two studies respectively suggested that:

> Also needed is further research into contextual factors influencing second language teachers' ongoing professional development, such as school culture, cooperating teachers, university supervisors, parents, and students. (Velez-Rendon, 2002, p. 465)

> Understanding the contexts within which we [teachers] work – the norms and implicit rule systems, the values that guide activities and actions, patterns of behaviour and interpersonal relationships, as well as socio-economic, cultural, racial and political influences, for example – can provide insights into how we experience our work. (Knowles, Squire, & Cole, 2006, p. 376)

Ultimately, the researcher is positive that further studies on the aforementioned issues could not only provide better insights into the understanding of teacher professional development, but also eventually contribute to better conditions for teaching and learning.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Consent Letter 1

Language Institute Building,
Agora University,
XXX Road, XXX District
XXX, 1XXXX, Thailand.

Dear Director,

I am conducting a PhD thesis in Education that attempts to document and reveal *EFL teachers' perceptions of teacher professional learning, and the work culture within their workplace context* (e.g., types of work culture, activities concerning teacher professional learning, and teachers' interactions with one another).

To do so, I will require various pieces of information in order to reveal and examine EFL lecturers' perceptions of their professional learning. The subjects to be recruited in the study are a group of approximately 15 EFL lecturers of a foundation English subject. To collect this information, I will employ four different data collections: (1) a questionnaire, (2) observations, (3) semi-structure interviews, and (4) written documents. For the observations, with the permission of the EFL lecturers, I will observe participants' nature of interaction with their colleagues and their performance in the meetings. Please be aware that there might be some photograph taken to record the atmosphere of the context. Some of them might appear on the thesis, but participants can rest assured that their identity will be carefully covered. For the semi-structured interviews, it will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes depending on the informants' responses. The last data collections, written documents, documents to collect are, for example, teacher-memorandum, course syllabi, and e-mails. The duration of this study is approximately one semester (from May, 2013 to September, 2013).

If you are willing to allow me to collect data from your lecturers, please complete the consent form attached and put it in my mailbox at the institute at your earliest convenience. Please rest assured that all the data collection activities will be done with exceptional care to cause disruption to participants' normal routine. At any point of concern, you had the right to see and comment on any kind of written or otherwise documented records used in the study. It is also important to note that participation in this study is completely voluntary and anonymous, and the participants are free to withdraw from the study at anytime.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding to this study, please do not hesitate to contact me at 0X9-8102XXX or at preechaxxx@uuuil.com.

I thank you in advance for your contribution to this research. I am looking forward to meeting you throughout the process of data collection.

Yours faithfully,

Preechaya Mongkolhutthi
PhD Student, Department of Education
The University of York, UK

Appendix B

Consent Letter 2

Dear English Foundation Lecturers,

I am conducting a PhD thesis in Education that attempts to document and reveal EFL lecturers' perceptions of teacher professional learning, and the work culture within their workplace context (e.g., types of work culture, activities concerning professional learning, and lecturer interaction with one another).

To do so, I require data from as many lecturers as possible. Would you kindly be willing to complete the questionnaire attached to this letter? I will be collecting the questionnaire within the next two weeks. Additionally, I would be extremely grateful if you would allow me to conduct an interview with you. (Approximately 20-30 minutes long). Please be aware that, during the observation period, there might be some photograph taken to record the atmosphere of the context. Some of them might appear on the thesis, but you can rest assured that your identity will be carefully covered.

Participant identities and the confidentially are surely protected. Please also rest assured that all the data collection activities would be done with exceptional care to cause disruption to your normal routine. At any point of concern, you had the right to see and comment on any kind of written or otherwise documented records used in the study. It is also important to note that participation in this study is completely voluntary and anonymous, and you are free to withdraw from the study at anytime.

If you would be willing, could you please fill in your time and date at the bottom of this letter for the interview section. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me at 089-8102xxx or at preechaxxx@uuuil.com.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation. I am looking forward to meeting you throughout the process of data collection.

Yours faithfully,

Preechaya Mongkolhutthi
PhD Student,
Department of Education,
The University of York

Appointment for Interview Section
Please tick the boxes where they are your available day/days for the interview.
(You can select more than one day.)
June ☐ July ☐ August ☐

Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐
Time_____

Contact: Phone_____ Mobile Phone_____

Office Location: Room No._____ Building_____

Appendix C

Interview Questions

The researcher seeks to understand and clarify EFL lecturers' perspectives toward certain aspect of professional learning and work culture within the particular educational arena. Please answer the questions, giving explanations and examples. The researcher really wants to know what you think about certain aspects of your professional learning.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to ask them. However, please remember that the researcher wants to understand your perspective towards the work culture within your workplace, so the researcher will be unable to direct your responses or lead your answer. At times, you may feel uncomfortable with the researcher's silence. Although, rest assured that the researcher interested in what you want to say and giving you a bit more time than usual to formulate your thoughts, and share them with the researcher.

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. Why did you become an English teacher?

The first two questions are to have the interviewees familiar with the interview process and have them ready for the other questions.

3. What is teacher professional learning in your own understanding?
4. What is teacher professional development in your own understanding?
5. In what way do you think teachers could develop their profession?
6. Which do you think is more important in EFL teacher professional development: language methodology training or teachers learning to working together?
7. What is the nature of teachers' work culture in this workplace?
8. Does your workplace provide any administrative regulation to encourage teachers to work together? What is it about?
9. What are the relationships between you and other teachers teaching the same subject?
10. How often do you work with your colleagues? What do you do together?
11. What aspects of teaching do you normally discuss with your colleagues?
12. Do you prefer working in a team, or individually? Why?
13. What do you feel when you have to share your opinion with other teachers?
14. What do you usually do when you have a teaching problem?
15. With whom do you regularly share teaching ideas or materials in this institute?
16. Is there anything else you would like to add to your comments?

Appendix D

Questionnaire

This questionnaire has been designed to give an indication of foreign language (EFL) teachers' perspectives toward certain aspect of teacher professional learning and teacher work culture within their workplace. There are two parts of this questionnaire.
Please respond to both parts. ---The questionnaire was adapted from the studies of Hongboontri (2006).

Part A: Background Information

Please tick the boxes where they are applied.

1. Gender

[ ] Male [ ] Female

2. Age

[ ] 25-29 [ ] 30-34 [ ] 35-39 [ ] 40-44
[ ] 45-49 [ ] 50-54 [ ] 55-60 [ ] >60

3. How many years have you been teaching in this workplace?

[ ] 1-3 [ ] 4-6 [ ] 7-10 [ ] 11-13
[ ] 14-16 [ ] 17-20 [ ] 21-23 [ ] >24

4. How many hours do you teach per week?

[ ] 1-2 [ ] 2-4 [ ] 4-6 [ ] 6-8 [ ] >8

5. Are you a native speaker or non-native speaker of English?

[ ] Native [ ] Non-native

6. Have you attended any training courses or conferences as part of your professional development in the last 3 years?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If your answer is Yes, how many times (in the last 3 years) have you attended the following?

Training courses/workshops/seminars

[ ] 1-3 [ ] 4-6 [ ] 7-9 [ ] 10-12 [ ] >12

Conferences

[ ] 1-3 [ ] 4-6 [ ] 7-9 [ ] 10-12 [ ] >12

7. Where was the training carried out?

a[ ] Thailand b[ ] Other

If you answer to 7(b) was other, in which country was it undertaken? ……

Part B: This second part of the questionnaire contains items that aim to help EFL lecturers discover their own understanding and attitudes regarding teachers' work culture. I would like you to think about each item below and tick the appropriate box. For each of the following items, decide what you feel towards these questions and check the appropriate box.

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
(A)	(F)	(S)	(SD)	(N)
5	4	3	2	1

	A	F	S	SD	N
1. I work collaboratively in teams with others.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I provide encouragement to my colleagues.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I receive encouragement from my colleagues.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I feel safe to share successes with team members.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I feel safe to share failures with team members.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I feel more confident professionally with the support from colleagues.	5	4	3	2	1
7. There seems to be an expectation in my workplace that lecturers will teach more effectively by having more collaboration in the institute.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Opportunity for collaboration seems to be used as an administrative strategy in my workplace.	5	4	3	2	1
9. There seems to be an expectation that I will teach more effectively by having more collaboration with other lecturers.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I design or evaluate teaching/ assessment materials, and other teaching activities with other lecturers because it is part of the institute's regulations.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I prefer not to work with other lecturers, unless it helps me finish my work faster or improve the quality of my work.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I find that working collaboratively with other lecturers and sharing teaching materials with them reduces my workload.	5	4	3	2	1
13. I find that working collaboratively with others increases my workload.	5	4	3	2	1

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
(A)	(F)	(S)	(SD)	(N)
5	4	3	2	1

A	F	S	SD	N

14. I do not offer help or advice to others about their teaching unless I am asked for it. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

15. I feel constrained as an individual and pressured to conform with varying opinions when working in a team. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

16. I design or evaluate materials, and other teaching activities for my class by myself without collaboration with others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

17. I develop my teaching practice by learning from my colleagues. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

18. I develop my teaching practice from trainings, workshops, or seminars. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

19. I work with other lecturers (teaching the same subject) designing or evaluating materials, curriculum units, and other teaching activities. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

20. I work with other lecturers (teaching any subjects) designing or evaluating materials, curriculum units, and other teaching activities. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

21. Among lecturers teaching **the same course**, I regularly share teaching ideas or materials with:
a) no other teachers
b) one other teacher
c) two other teachers
d) three other teachers
e) four or more other teachers

22. Among lecturers **in this institute, but not teaching on the same course**,
I regularly share teaching ideas or materials with:
a) no other teachers
b) one other teacher
c) two other teachers
d) three other teachers
e) four or more other teachers

23. Among lecturers teaching **the same course**, I regularly try to solve instructional problems with:
a) no other teachers
b) one other teacher
c) two other teachers
d) three other teachers
e) four or more other teachers

24. Among lecturers **in this institute, but not teaching on the same course**,
I regularly try to solve instructional problems with:
a) no other teachers
b) one other teacher
c) two other teachers
d) three other teachers
e) four or more other teachers

Appendix E

Statistical Data from SPSS

A1-A7: Part A item 1-7, Participants' background information

B1-B24: Part B item 1-24, Participants' work cultures and their learning opportunities

		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A6.1
N	Valid	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.7500	3.9375	2.8125	4.3125	1.7500	1.1250	1.3125
Median		2.0000	3.0000	2.0000	5.0000	2.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Mode		2.00	2.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	1.00	1.00
Std. Deviation		.44721	2.46221	2.61327	1.01448	.44721	.34157	1.13835
Minimum		1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	.00
Maximum		2.00	8.00	8.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	5.00

Statistics

		A6.2	A7	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
N	Valid	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.3125	1.0625	3.6875	4.3750	4.6250	4.0000	3.8125
Median		1.0000	1.0000	4.0000	5.0000	5.0000	4.0000	4.0000
Mode		1.00	1.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		1.19548	.57373	.87321	.88506	.50000	.73030	.83417
Minimum		.00	.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	3.00
Maximum		5.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Statistics

		B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12
N	Valid	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.8750	3.5625	3.4375	3.5625	3.1875	2.8125	2.6875
Median		4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	3.0000	3.0000	3.0000
Mode		3.00[a]	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		.80623	.89209	.89209	1.15289	.98107	.83417	1.07819
Minimum		3.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00

		B13	B14	B15	B16	B17	B18	B19
N	Valid	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.1875	3.5000	2.3750	3.3125	2.1875	3.2500	3.1250
Median		2.0000	4.0000	2.0000	3.0000	2.0000	3.0000	3.0000
Mode		2.00	4.00	2.00	2.00[a]	2.00	3.00[a]	3.00[a]
Std. Deviation		.75000	1.03280	1.02470	1.30224	.75000	1.12546	.80623
Minimum		1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
Maximum		4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	4.00

Statistics

		B20	B21	B22	B23	B24
N	Valid	16	16	16	16	16
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.3125	2.7500	2.5000	2.7500	2.4375
Median		3.0000	3.0000	3.0000	3.0000	2.5000
Mode		3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		.94648	.44721	.89443	.77460	.81394
Minimum		2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Frequency Table

A1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	4	25.0	25.0	25.0
	2.00	12	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

A2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	2.00	5	31.3	31.3	43.8
	3.00	2	12.5	12.5	56.3
	4.00	1	6.3	6.3	62.5
	6.00	2	12.5	12.5	75.0
	7.00	3	18.8	18.8	93.8
	8.00	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

A3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	7	43.8	43.8	43.8
	2.00	5	31.3	31.3	75.0
	5.00	1	6.3	6.3	81.3
	7.00	1	6.3	6.3	87.5
	8.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

A4

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
	3.00	3	18.8	18.8	25.0
	4.00	2	12.5	12.5	37.5
	5.00	10	62.5	62.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

A5

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	4	25.0	25.0	25.0
	2.00	12	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

A6

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	14	87.5	87.5	87.5
	2.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

A6.1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	1.00	10	62.5	62.5	75.0
	2.00	3	18.8	18.8	93.8
	5.00	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

A6.2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	.00	3	18.8	18.8	18.8
	1.00	8	50.0	50.0	68.8
	2.00	4	25.0	25.0	93.8
	5.00	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

A7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	1.00	11	68.8	68.8	81.3
	2.00	3	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	3.00	3	18.8	18.8	31.3
	4.00	9	56.3	56.3	87.5
	5.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
	3.00	1	6.3	6.3	12.5
	4.00	5	31.3	31.3	43.8
	5.00	9	56.3	56.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4.00	6	37.5	37.5	37.5
	5.00	10	62.5	62.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B4

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3.00	4	25.0	25.0	25.0
	4.00	8	50.0	50.0	75.0
	5.00	4	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B5

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3.00	7	43.8	43.8	43.8
	4.00	5	31.3	31.3	75.0
	5.00	4	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B6

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3.00	6	37.5	37.5	37.5
	4.00	6	37.5	37.5	75.0
	5.00	4	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	3.00	5	31.3	31.3	43.8
	4.00	7	43.8	43.8	87.5
	5.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B8

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	3.00	7	43.8	43.8	56.3
	4.00	5	31.3	31.3	87.5
	5.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B9

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
	2.00	2	12.5	12.5	18.8
	3.00	3	18.8	18.8	37.5
	4.00	7	43.8	43.8	81.3
	5.00	3	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B10

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	4	25.0	25.0	25.0
	3.00	7	43.8	43.8	68.8
	4.00	3	18.8	18.8	87.5
	5.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B11

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
	2.00	4	25.0	25.0	31.3
	3.00	8	50.0	50.0	81.3
	4.00	3	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B12

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	2.00	5	31.3	31.3	43.8
	3.00	6	37.5	37.5	81.3
	4.00	2	12.5	12.5	93.8
	5.00	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B13

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	2.00	10	62.5	62.5	75.0
	3.00	3	18.8	18.8	93.8
	4.00	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B14

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	4	25.0	25.0	25.0
	3.00	2	12.5	12.5	37.5
	4.00	8	50.0	50.0	87.5
	5.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B15

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	2.00	9	56.3	56.3	68.8
	3.00	3	18.8	18.8	87.5
	4.00	1	6.3	6.3	93.8
	5.00	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B16

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
	2.00	4	25.0	25.0	31.3
	3.00	4	25.0	25.0	56.3
	4.00	3	18.8	18.8	75.0
	5.00	4	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B17

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	3	18.8	18.8	18.8
	2.00	7	43.8	43.8	62.5
	3.00	6	37.5	37.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B18

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
	2.00	3	18.8	18.8	25.0
	3.00	5	31.3	31.3	56.3
	4.00	5	31.3	31.3	87.5
	5.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B19

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	4	25.0	25.0	25.0
	3.00	6	37.5	37.5	62.5
	4.00	6	37.5	37.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B20

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	3	18.8	18.8	18.8
	3.00	7	43.8	43.8	62.5
	4.00	4	25.0	25.0	87.5
	5.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B21

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	4	25.0	25.0	25.0
	3.00	12	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B22

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	3	18.8	18.8	18.8
	2.00	3	18.8	18.8	37.5
	3.00	9	56.3	56.3	93.8
	4.00	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B23

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
	2.00	4	25.0	25.0	31.3
	3.00	9	56.3	56.3	87.5
	4.00	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

B24

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	2.00	6	37.5	37.5	50.0
	3.00	7	43.8	43.8	93.8
	4.00	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 A6 A6.1 A6.2 A7 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10 B1
1 B12 B13 B14 B15 B16 B17 B18 B19 B20 B21 B22 B23 B24
  /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA
  /SUMMARY=MEANS VARIANCE.
```

Reliability

```
[DataSet0] D:\KOONG descriptive data.sav
```

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	16	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	16	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.773	.758	33

Summary Item Statistics

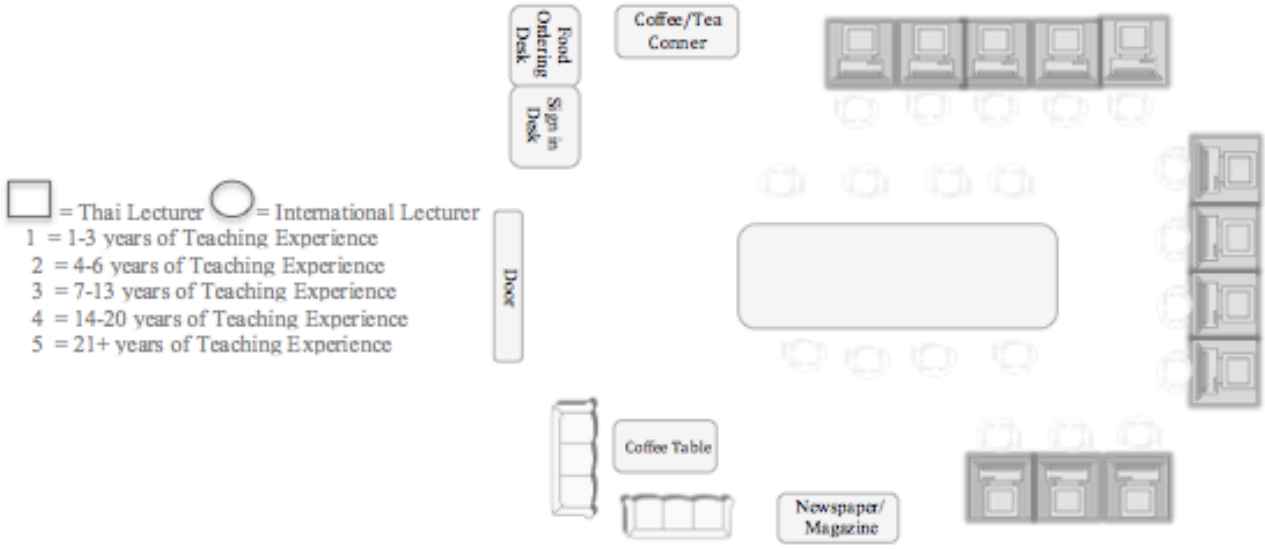
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	2.930	1.063	4.625	3.563	4.353	.935	33
Item Variances	1.119	.117	6.829	6.713	58.536	2.043	33

Appendix F

Observation Sheet

Observation Schedule
Location: ☐ **Lecturer Lounge**
Physical Description of the location:

Date: _____ Time: _____
Etc. _____



Duration: _____

Domain:
☐Students complaint
☐Sharing of Teaching Techniques
☐Sharing Workload
☐Discussing Institute's Policy
☐Asking for helps
☐Other: _____
☐Keeping up with others' teaching phase
☐ Sharing of Teaching Materials
☐Discussing University's Policy
☐Students complaint
☐Offering Helps
☐Non-teaching-related topics: _____

Detail: _____

_____

_____

Community: Number of Active Participants: _____ Participants detail: _____

Initiator: _____ Detail of interaction: _____

_____

_____

Practice/Outcome: ☐No ☐Yes: _____

☐ Teaching Materials ☐Teaching Techniques ☐Solutions/Suggestions

Background of interaction: _____

_____

_____

_____

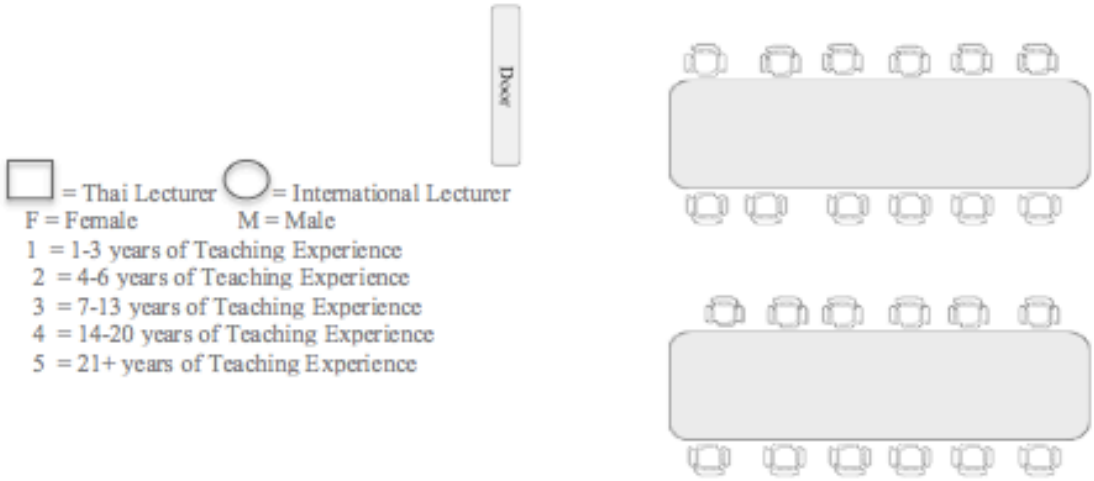
_____

Additional information: _____

_____

Observation Schedule
Location: ☐ **Canteen (Ground floor)**
Physical Description of the location:

Date: _____ Time: _____
Etc. _____



Duration: _____

Domain:
☐Students complaint
☐Sharing of Teaching Techniques
☐Sharing Workload
☐Discussing Institute's Policy
☐Asking for helps
☐Other: _____
☐Keeping up with others' teaching phase
☐ Sharing of Teaching Materials
☐Discussing University's Policy
☐Students complaint
☐Offering Helps
☐Non-teaching-related topics: _____

Detail: _____

Community: Number of Active Participants: _____ Participants detail: _____

Initiator: _____ Detail of interaction: _____

Practice/Outcome: ☐No ☐Yes: _____

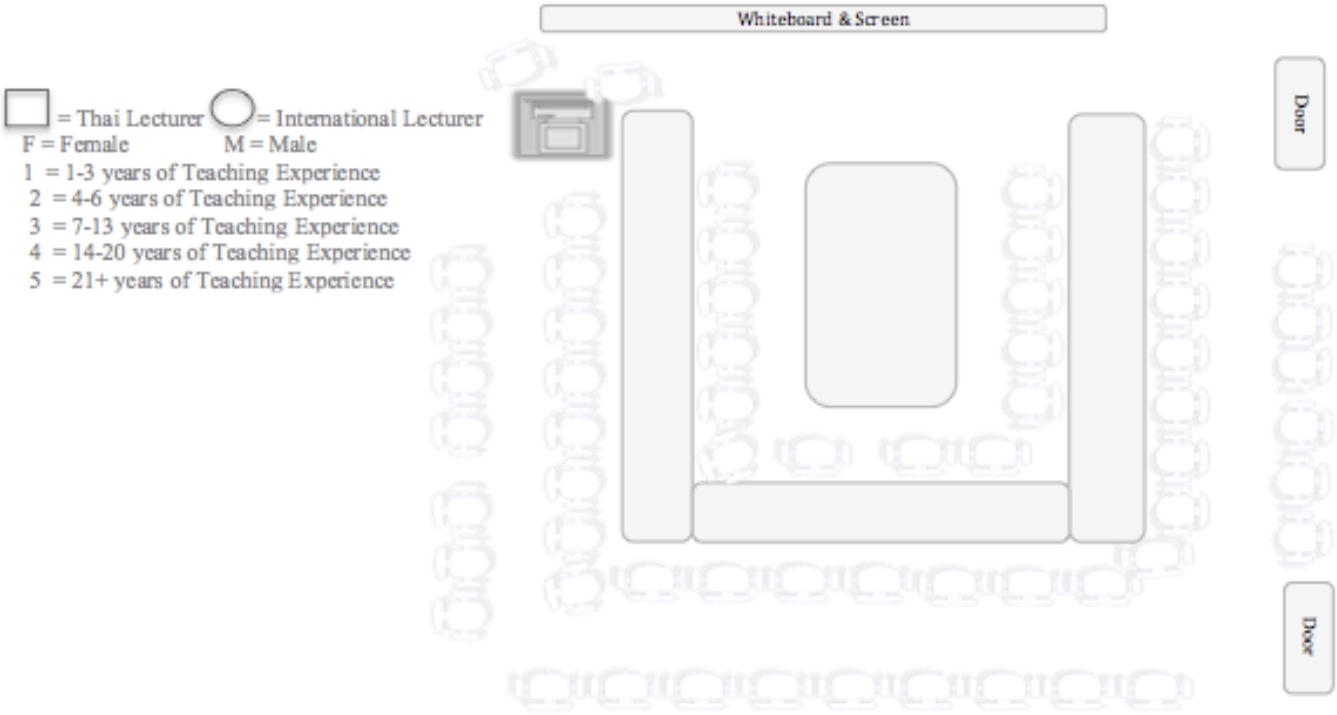
☐ Teaching Materials ☐Teaching Techniques ☐Solutions/Suggestions

Background of interaction: _____

Additional information: _____

Observation Schedule
Location: ☐ **Meeting Room**
Physical Description of the location:

Date: _____ Time: _____
Etc. _____



□ = Thai Lecturer ○ = International Lecturer
F = Female M = Male
1 = 1-3 years of Teaching Experience
2 = 4-6 years of Teaching Experience
3 = 7-13 years of Teaching Experience
4 = 14-20 years of Teaching Experience
5 = 21+ years of Teaching Experience

Duration: _____

Domain:
☐Students complaint
☐Sharing of Teaching Techniques
☐Sharing Workload
☐Discussing Institute's Policy
☐Asking for helps
☐Other: _____
☐Keeping up with others' teaching phase
☐ Sharing of Teaching Materials
☐Discussing University's Policy
☐Students complaint
☐Offering Helps
☐Non-teaching-related topics: _____

Detail: _____

_____

_____

Community: Number of Active Participants: _____ Participants detail: _____

Initiator: _____ Detail of interaction: _____

_____

_____

Practice/Outcome: ☐No ☐Yes: _____

☐ Teaching Materials ☐Teaching Techniques ☐Solutions/Suggestions

Background of interaction: _____

_____

_____

Additional information: _____

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