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**An Investigation into English Language Motivation of Thai University  
Students: Understanding Students' Motivation over Time, and Their  
Visions of Future L2 Selves, through Narrative Inquiry**

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores 16 Thai university students' motivation to learn the English language over time through narrative inquiry. The students' general attitude and orientation towards the English language, their motivational trajectories during their past English learning experiences, and their visions of their future second language (L2) selves were investigated. This study adopted a holistic approach to explore student motivation, with research methods dedicated to exploring the students' past experiences (through Language Learning Histories), and the students' concepts of their present and possible future selves (through semi-structured interviews). Adopting non-linear and socio-dynamic perspectives in understanding motivation, this study employed various theoretical frameworks, including self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985), the person-in-context relational view (Ushioda, 2009), the complex dynamic systems perspective (Dörnyei, 2009b), and the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a), to help conceptualise students' motivation.

The findings reveal that the instrumentality or utilitarian value of the English language played a significant role in fostering Thai students' positive attitudes towards English. International posture (Yashima, 2009), personal interests, and a combination of different motivations were also found to associate with the students' positive attitudes towards English. The results also show that the students' motivation was complex and dynamic. Three broad patterns of motivational trajectories were identified among the students. The findings indicate that motivational changes across time was strongly related to their situated or immediate learning environment, critical incidents, and their cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The data suggest that while the students' sense of 'ought-to L2 self' was associated with a fear of being unemployed and the pressure of Thailand's integration into the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, their sense of 'ideal L2 self' was strongly triggered by their imagined future careers, desires to go abroad, and international posture. Through examining dynamic changes in the students' motivation, as well as exploring the ways in which the students identified themselves with the language in the future, this study adds to the knowledge base, aiding both L2 students and practitioners to understand and be aware of students' different dispositions in language learning. This study also suggests pedagogical improvements in English language teaching in the context of Thailand.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AEC	-	ASEAN Economic Community
ASEAN	-	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
A.D.	-	Anno Domini
B.E.	-	Buddhist Era
CLT	-	Communicative Language Teaching
CT	-	Complex Theory
DST	-	Dynamic Systems Theory
EBE	-	English Bilingual Education
EIS	-	English for Integrated Studies
EP	-	English Programme
GAT	-	General Aptitude Test
ID	-	Individual differences
L2	-	Second/Foreign Language
MEP	-	Mini English Programme
OHEC	-	Office of Higher Education Commission
O-NET	-	Ordinary National Educational Test
PAT	-	Professional and Academic Aptitude Test
SLA	-	Second Language Acquisition
TESOL	-	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

This qualitative research investigates English language motivation of Thai students at a university in Thailand. It has examined English language learning attitudes, motivational trajectories, and the visions of L2 selves, of 16 Thai university students, through narrative inquiry. This study incorporated language learning history (LLH) and interview as the main methods in collecting data and employed thematic analysis as the approach to analyse the information. With its research methods dedicated to uncovering temporal dimension of L2 motivation, this study contributes the unique findings, particularly on Thai university learners' different and changing motivational trajectories over time. It is hoped that this study can shed light on L2 motivation from a non-linear perspective in the context of Thailand. This chapter begins by providing the background and problem statement of this study, followed by the research aims and research questions. The significance of the study and my positionality are then presented. The last section gives an overview of this study's organisation.

### 1.2 Background and problem statement

For many decades, English has been a compulsory foreign language at various levels of Thai education (Minister of Education, 2008, 2014). English has been considered as the most important foreign language and has recently received more attention as it is being used as an official language in business communication, since Thailand joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community, or the AEC, in 2015. There is a high attentiveness of the Thai government and business sectors in preparing Thai people to be ready to use English for communication with the other 9 ASEAN countries (Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Cambodia, and Brunei). The Ministry of Education in Thailand

has also put a lot of effort into promoting higher English proficiency to Thai learners by emphasizing increasing communication skills and expanding more English programmes, such as the English Programme (EP), Mini English Programme (MEP), English Bilingual Education (EBE), or English for Integrated Studies (EIS) in various schools across the country (Patcharachanon and Rohitsatiern, 2013). However, a survey of the world's English proficiency reveals that Thai learners still have very low command of English compared to other Asian countries, as it is ranked number 15 out of 19 surveyed countries in Asia (Education First, 2017). Without a good command of English, Thai people may not be able to compete in jobs, especially in international organisations, compared to people from other Asian countries like Singapore (1/19), Malaysia (2/19), Vietnam (7/19), Taiwan (9/19) or South Korea (5/19), that have much better proficiency in English.

The report of such very low command in English of Thai learners has been one of the great concerns of the country and has led to tremendous attempts of many researchers to understand the causes of it and to improve the situations (e.g. Khamkhien, 2011, Khruathong 2015, Kitjaroonchai 2013, Pawapatcharaudom, 2007). According to Dörnyei (2005), one of the significant individual differences variables that significantly influence language learning success of a person has been found to be related to the person's motivation.

In Thailand, there has been an increasing interest in examining learners' English language motivation or the reasons why they learn English language. Those previous studies mostly employed quantitative methods (e.g. Choosri and Intharaksa, 2011; Kitjaroonchai, 2013; Phetongkam, 2009), tended to explore types of motivation that learners have in L2 learning (e.g. Degang, 2010; Oranpattanachai, 2013), and often attempted to predict learners' L2 achievement from those types of motivation (e.g. Kitjaroonchai, 2013). However, such quantitative studies usually lack capability to capture detailed information about how particular learners feel about their language learning, why they feel that way, and what happened during their language learning journey. As Ushioda (2009) also emphasises that, language learners should be understood as

“people who are necessarily located in particular cultural and historical contexts”, rather than just being grouped into certain characteristics (p.216). Therefore, a more qualitative approach is needed to fulfil the gap between a large body of quantitative work and the qualitative studies of L2 motivation which are very scarce in Thailand.

Recent studies have explored the relationship between the aspects of identity and L2 motivation (e.g. Lamb and Budiyo, 2013; Lamb, T. E., 2011). Therefore, the view and study of motivation as a more complex and dynamic concept that concerns many sociocultural and psychosocial factors should also be promoted more in L2 motivational studies in Thailand. This study thus links together the concept of L2 motivation and the internal domain of identity of the learners in higher education. By exploring learners’ motivation and their self-identity concepts especially those related to their possible L2 selves in the future, this study hopes to provide new insights and perspectives of motivation to L2 educators in a unique context like Thailand, where motivation in L2 learning is still problematic at university level (e.g. Hayikaleng, Nair, and Krishnasamy, 2016). It also hopes to bring about some pedagogical changes and awareness of all stakeholders in the context, which may help to enhance the L2 motivation of Thai learners and their achievement in L2 learning.

### **1.3 Aims of the study**

The broad aim of this study is to investigate Thai university students’ motivation in learning English. It also aims to examine Thai students’ general attitudes towards English language and their motivation in learning English over time. It, particularly, aims to explore students’ motivational trajectory patterns during their past language learning experiences, and factors that are relevant to those motivational trajectories. This study also aims to examine how Thai university students visualize their English-related selves in the future. The research questions and sub-research questions are presented in the next section.

## **1.4 Research questions**

The above aims have led to the following research questions:

**Research Question 1: What are Thai university students' general attitude orientations towards the English language?**

**Research Question 2: What motivational trajectory patterns did Thai students have over time?**

2.1 Are there any identifiable critical incidents involved in Thai students' English learning experience? If so, how do those critical incidents play a role in students' motivation

2.2 What kind of factors are associated with changes of motivational dispositions of the students across time?

**Research Question 3: How do Thai university students visualize their possible future selves in relation to using the English language?**

3.1 How do Thai students form their senses of self in English language learning?

3.2 To what extent do the students' imagined possible selves help to explain or predict their motivation to learn English?

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

This qualitative study of the relationship between Thai learners' motivation to learn English and their identity in English language learning may offer several significant contributions. First, this study provides a better understanding of Thai learners' motivation to learn English from a new realm of L2 motivation research, which is associated with a more complex, dynamic, and situated approach (Dörnyei, 2009), which has scarcely been applied in Thailand. The findings emerging



from this study may shed light on researching L2 motivation in relation to concepts of identity and can also be used as a guide or background information in developing future related studies in the Thai and similar contexts. Second, valuable and deeper insights of this study can enable English teachers, educators and curriculum developers in Thailand to understand how the sense of identity of the Thai learners relate to their motivation to learn English. This may lead to an improvement of L2 pedagogy and curriculum that could nurture and enhance learners' motivation, as well as focus more on learners as unique individual people that bring different histories, identities, and motives to the classroom. Finally, this study may display the potential importance of contexts, such as family and community contexts, in shaping Thai learners' identity and L2 identity which may affect their motivation to learn English. This may raise awareness amongst parents and society to have a shared responsibility in creating an environment that can help to develop the English-speaking self and identity of the learners, which may help them to be more motivated to be successful in English. Implications for stakeholders in the context will be provided in the last chapter.

## **1.6 Positionality**

I am a Thai person who was born and raised in a small town in the North-east of Thailand. After finishing high school in my hometown, I had an opportunity to study my bachelor's degree in Education, majoring in English and counselling psychology, in a public university in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand. Coming from a middle-class family, with parents holding masters' degrees, I was always encouraged to attain higher education. As I was passionate in English language, after graduating my first degree, my parents supported me to further my studies in the master's degree level in the UK. That was the beginning of my serious interest to conduct the research in L2 motivation.

The topic of motivation was initially introduced to me in my psychology class when I was an undergraduate, majoring in English and counselling psychology. However, motivation has

become my serious interest since I took an MA in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Studies at University of Leeds. At that time, I had an opportunity to study motivation in language learning as part of a module. The discussion on motivation in that class has greatly attracted me and encouraged me to look back at my own language learning experience. Then, I realised that motivation has been a powerful influence that has helped me to improve my English language (see Appendix 1. for a story about my English learning experience). Therefore, in my MA dissertation, I decided to undertake a small-scale study into English language learning experience of 10 Thai graduate students at University of Leeds, in order to explore their motivation to develop English proficiency and their use of metacognitive strategies.

After finishing my MA from the UK, in 2011, I started working as a full-time English lecturer at a branch campus of a public university back in my hometown, Thailand. Having done research on motivation has inspired me to further investigate how my students feel about their English language learning and why they feel that way. I am interested in finding out what causes my students to be or not to be motivated in English learning and how I can help them to be more motivated and proficient in English learning. As mentioned earlier, research on L2 motivation, especially the one that adopt qualitative approach, is still scarce in the context of Thailand. Thus, due to my personal experience and the need to expand qualitative studies on L2 motivation in Thailand, I have decided to focus on motivation for my doctoral research. I have also become interested in the concept of L2 selves and identity after reviewing some literature related to motivation (e.g. Dörnyei, 2009a; Markus and Nurius, 1986; Ushioda, 2009).

Through the above experiences, I am aware that, my personal backgrounds, history, and experiences can impact the processes of this research which inevitably influence how the knowledge is constructed. Therefore, there is the need to make my positionality explicitly here. According to Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane, and Muhamad (2001), positionality is “determined by where one stands in relation to ‘the other’” (p.411). When conducting a research, we need to understand the role of ourselves and consider how our positionality, for

example, class, nationality, age, language, cultural background, experience, and value, may affect the processes of our research. As Madge (1993) stated that, our identities, or who we are, will inevitably have an impact on the data we collect and the knowledge we construct. Considering the status of the researcher, as an insider/outsider, may also facilitate a better understanding of “the dynamics of researching within and across one’s culture” (Merriam et al., 2001, p.405). In this research, my positionality is as an insider who shares similar culture and backgrounds with the participants. My positionality is also based on my cultural backgrounds as a Thai person and my experiences in English language as a learner and as a teacher in this research context.

### **1.7 Organisation of this thesis**

In this chapter, I have provided some background and problem statement of this study. Research aims, research questions, significance of this study, as well as my positionality are already illustrated in this chapter. Chapter 2 provides detailed background of the context of Thailand which is the context of this study. In Chapter 3, literature reviews regarding the concept of L2 motivation, researching L2 motivation and its development, together with other important self-related theories will be presented. Research methodology and my justification in selecting the approach and methods used in this study are discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5, 6, and 7 present this study’s findings and discussions with reference to the literature. In the last chapter, brief summaries of the findings, answering each research question, are provided. Limitations of this study, as well as implications for stakeholders in the context of Thailand are also presented in the last chapter.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

For a better understanding of this research study, in this chapter, I will briefly describe the context of Thailand, where this study took place. Firstly, an explanation of Thailand's geographical details, educational system backgrounds, as well as the place of English language generally in Thai society and in Thai education will be illustrated. Then, the local socio-cultural background of the study context, together with details of institutional context and its English language policy will be presented. The information provided was based on official documents, press and other academic sources as well as my own experience as an English language learner and teacher in the context. Let me firstly begin by giving a general background of Thailand context.

#### **2.2 Thailand context**

##### **2.2.1 The overview of Thailand**

The Kingdom of Thailand, also known as Siam, is a country situated in the south-east of Asia. Thailand shares its boundaries with Myanmar to the west and northwest, with Laos to the northeast, with Cambodia to the southeast, and with Malaysia to the south (Kuneepong, n.d.) (see. Figure 2.1). Based on the United Nations Population Division database for 2017, Thailand has its population of about 68.3 million, making it number 20 of the world population ranking (Worldometers, 2017). The capital of Thailand is Bangkok, which is the most populated city located in the centre of the country.



**Figure 2.1 Map of Thailand and neighbouring countries (Adapted from South East Asia Maps: Thailand maps, n.d., Retrieved from <http://www.thailand-maps.com/south-east-asia-map.htm>)**

Thailand is made up of 77 provinces and is divided into 6 regions which are Central Thailand, Northern Thailand, Northeast Thailand, Eastern Thailand, Western Thailand, and Southern Thailand (see. Figure 2.2). Each region has its particular geographical features, for example, the northern part is mountainous, the northeast is plateau, while the southern part is surrounded by the seas on both sides (Hays, 2008). The differences in natural features and resources make each region distinct from each other in terms of social and economic development (Hays, 2008). The northeastern region has the largest population, followed by the Central region, the northern region, the Southern region, respectively (National Statistical Office, 2016). The northeast, however, is considered the most concerning region for poverty reduction, as most of the poor people are living in this regional area (Jitsuchon and Richter, 2007). Regarding Thailand's labour force, Thai employees mainly work in agriculture and fishery (33.93%), manufacturing (16.61%), and retail trades (15.94%) sectors (National Statistical Office, 2016).



**Figure 2.2 Six Regions of Thailand. (Adapted from HVGIQ: Thailand by Malloy. J., 2014. Retrieved from <http://humanvarieties.org/2014/07/16/hvgiq-thailand>)**

As Thailand has never been colonized, the only official and spoken language is ‘Thai’. The Thai language is used in formal communication and in education throughout the country. Various Thai dialects can be found in many regional areas across the country (e.g. Northeastern Thai, North Thai, and Southern Thai).

### **2.2.2 The educational system of Thailand**

Thailand’s educational system is under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. The current education policy is directed by the National Education Act of B.E. 2542 (A.D.1999) and amendments of B.E. 2545 (A.D.2002) and B.E. 2553 (A.D.2010). Under the National Education Act of B.E. 2542 (A.D.1999), the first nine years of education, comprising six years of primary education and three years of lower secondary education, are compulsory and a basic education of twelve years is provided free of charge to all Thai citizens (Office of the National Education

Commission, 2003). The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D.2008) is implemented to provide a framework and direction for provision of all national education at the basic level (Ministry of Education, 2008).

In the final year of senior high school, the learners who wish to continue their studies to higher education level can do so in two ways: by applying directly to a university, or by applying through the central university admissions system. For the first option (known in Thailand as a Quota system), the students need to apply to the universities that are open for the direct application; normally this happens before the main admission. In this case, the universities set their own rules and limit their own numbers of acceptance. However, they normally employ the scores from the GAT (General Aptitude Test) and the PAT (Professional and Academic Aptitude Test) which is organised, monitored, and evaluated by a public organisation, called the National Institute of Educational Testing Service. The latter, which is the main admission system, involves an acceptance to the university based on an accumulation of multiple sources of scores including the GAT, the PAT, the O-NET (Ordinary National Educational Test) and the GPAX (overall grade point average). This national examination system plays a big role in determining the English curriculum in the high school level.

Higher educational institutions are subordinated to the Office of Higher Education Commission (OHEC), a department of the Ministry of Education, to ensure quality standards of higher education in line with the needs indicated in the National Economic and Social Development Plan and the National Scheme of Education (Office of the National Education Commission, 2003). However, curriculum policy for each university may vary from one another based on the university's strength, main missions and goals.

## **2.3 English language in Thailand**

### **2.3.1 The role and status of English language in Thai society**

As Thailand has never been a colony of any western country, the development of English language as an “implanted language by a colonial power” does not occur (Bennui and Hashim, 2014, p.209). The place of English language is, thus, as a foreign language in Thailand (Hayes, 2008). Given that English plays a very important role in the globalised world nowadays, the status of English is considered to be more prestigious than other foreign languages in Thailand (Bennui and Hashim, 2014). In Thai society, English language is also linked to social elite, as being proficient in English is often seen as an indicator of high social status (Hayes, 2008; Pitchayapa, 2015). In addition, when Thailand joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community, or the AEC, in 2015, English became an official and a medium language used in business communication between other 9 countries (Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Cambodia, and Brunei). With this important role of English as a medium language, and a hope that good command of English of Thai people will enhance the country’s competitiveness of economies, the Thai government has announced an urgent need to improve English language competency among Thais (Minister of Education, 2014).

Other functional use of the English language in Thailand is also found in various domains such as in education, tourism industry, international trading, finance, transportation, and diplomacy. However, English usage can be (very) limited to certain areas of the country, such as the major urban areas where business people usually visit, or in the main tourist places (Hayes, 2016). This makes English of little relevance to the lives of most Thai people in general (Hayes, 2008). Nevertheless, for Thai students, English acts as a gatekeeper at many important educational levels (e.g. secondary school or university access) and sometimes in the access into specific careers.



### **2.3.2 English language educational policy in Thailand**

As mentioned earlier, the English language is considered the most dominant foreign language in Thailand. Based on the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2552 (A.D.2008), which contains the revised version of the foreign languages curriculum in Thailand, English is established as a compulsory foreign language subject at basic education level. In Thai schools, if their conditions allow (e.g. sufficient teachers and essential resources), English can be introduced from grade 1 (age range 6-7 years) (Hayes, 2008). The learners at basic education level are expected to be able to use English for communication in various situations (both in the classroom, in the outside community and in the global society), seeking knowledge and widening their world views, and pursuing education at higher levels (Ministry of Education, 2008). To avoid problems regarding misinterpretation and implementation of the curriculum at the school levels, a framework and direction for educational provision is also provided as guidelines for classroom teachers to adopt in their teaching (Ministry of Education, 2008). The quality of instruction for English language at school levels should meet the standards and learning indicators as prescribed in the national curriculum. The learning standards are established to support the four main aims or strands, or known as the “four Cs”, which include “communication, culture, connection, and community” (Fitzpatrick, 2011, p. 25).

In terms of learning hours, English is taught in varying numbers of hours for each grade level in basic education. At early primary level, grade 1-3, children learn English only one hour per week. This is “to ensure mastery of the Thai language and mathematics in the early years of education” (Keyuravong, 2010, p.70). Students at lower secondary level, grade 7-9, have the most hours of English learning at 3 hours per week; while the upper secondary level, grade 10-12, students have fewer hours of learning English as a compulsory subject. However, extra hours of English can also be added as elective subjects at upper secondary level, depending on the interests and requirement of the study stream (e.g. Science, Arts) of the students (Keyuravong, 2010). Table

2.1 below shows numbers of hours of English teaching and learning in Thai basic education divided by educational levels.

Level	Hours of teaching/year	Languages
Primary 1-3	40 hours/year (1 hour per week)	English only
Primary 4-6	80 hours/year (2 hours per week)	
Lower secondary	120 hours/year (3 hours per week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English first foreign language</li> <li>• Other foreign languages such as Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Arabic</li> </ul>
Upper secondary	80 hours/year + extra hours of electives (2 hours per week + electives)	

**Table 2.1 Number of hours of foreign language teaching and learning in Thai basic education (adapted from Keyuravong, 2010, p.70)**

Regarding English language teaching methods in Thailand, although the government has pushed for the use of a communicative approach in language class, teachers' teaching styles still tend to be "expository" (Hayes, 2008) and seem to rely heavily on grammar-translation. The common conception of teacher-student relationship in Thailand is usually as "transmissive" and "authoritarian" (Hayes, 2008, p.477). Fitzpatrick (2011) also found that some teachers were not convinced that the communicative language approach would be useful for their teaching contexts. One reason behind this may be due to a very limited opportunity to communicate through the language of the students in their geographical areas and a negative backwash of the national examination, which has no communicative component attached to it (Fitzpatrick, 2011). As English language plays a critical role in examinations, a lot of Thai teachers tend to emphasize on the use of grammar rules and the memorisation of academic vocabulary that may be present in the national exams. This is to help maximise the chances of gaining access to the top universities of their students. In the same vein, many students also favour "the presentation of grammar rules" in the language class (Choomthong, 2014, p.46) as they think that understanding all important grammar rules would be key to master the national examination, which is the significant gatekeeper in gaining entry to many good universities.

Due to this high demand for the intensive grammar and vocabulary training, private language tutoring businesses have widely been established across the country to fulfil the need to succeed

in national exams of Thai students. This may imply a lack of faith in educational quality and system of Thai normal schools (Maxwell, 2014). Many Thai parents do not believe that learning in Thai normal schools alone would be enough to help their children to compete with others and succeed in national exams, leading them to send their kids to cram schools at very young age (Napompech, 2011). A lot of Thai students, whose family's financial status is good, normally take private English class outside normal school hours, as they wish for tutors to summarise essential topics and content, as well as to provide them some special techniques in mastering national exams as well. Tanapakit (2010) simply compared private tutoring phenomenon in Thailand to supplementary vitamins, in so far as that, people sometimes need to take them to avoid nutrition deficiency, although they may not be necessary. Such scenarios may be explained as a negative backwash of Thai national testing that does not seem to be congruent with the goals of the language policy.

Despite tremendous effort of the government to improve Thais' competence in English, recent reports have revealed that English proficiency of Thai students is still inferior to many other ASEAN countries (e.g. Education First, 2017; Khaopa, 2013). Such evidence in regard to the low proficiency of Thai students brought about the latest reform of English language instruction policy for basic education in 2014 with the attempt to improve English proficiency of Thai people. In this new policy, the Ministry of Education has enacted the implementation of "The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages", or CEFR, to be used as the standard principles for planning, instructing, evaluating, and developing English language teaching at basic educational level (Ministry of Education, 2014). Other issues in this policy also include an emphasis on the adoption of communicative language teaching (CLT) in all English classes, a promotion of the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance English language skills of the learners and teachers, an expansion of special learning programmes that concentrate on the English language, such as the International Programme (IP), English

programme (EP), English Bilingual Education (EBE), in various schools across the country (Ministry of Education, 2014).

In tertiary level, English language is also compulsory for all students in Thai universities (Baker and Jarunthawatchai, 2017; Darasawang, 2007). A higher proficiency of English is usually required for entering an English major than non-English major programmes. The English language learning and teaching policy of each university differs from one another, depending on the university development plans and missions. However, generally, students in tertiary education are required to take at least 12 credits for English language courses (Kantavong, 2015): 6 credits for foundation English and the other 6 credits for English for academic purposes (EAP) or English for specific purposes (ESP) courses (Foley, 2005). More extra-curricular activities and independent work that facilitates autonomous language learning are now an emphasis in this higher educational level (Commission of Higher Education, 2016). For many Thai university students, English language is perceived as a form of “social and economic capital” (Hayes, 2016, p. 89). They believe that having good competency in English will help to boost up the opportunities to secure “well-paid employment” (Hayes, 2016, p.87).

## **2.4 The study context**

### **2.4.1 A brief socio-economic and cultural background**

This study took place in a university campus which is my place of work as an English lecturer. The university campus is situated in a small province in the Northeast of Thailand (see. Figure 2.2). As mentioned earlier, the northeast is the most populous region of the country and is also the area that has the highest average poverty rate (Draper, 2012). The livelihood of north-eastern people is more directly based on agriculture than other urban areas (World Bank, 2005). The major crops are paddy rice, which dominates the main sector of economy, cassava (tapioca), and sugar cane (Gebhardt, 2005). However, the region is usually faced with weak natural resources and difficult natural conditions, such as water shortage, drought, poor soils, loss of forest, and

flood. These difficult conditions have forced the northeasterners to seek alternative incomes, in the form of off-farm employment in other urbanised areas and regions (Ekasingh, Sungkapitux, Kitchaicharoen and Suebpongsang, 2007). Many of them work in the industrial, construction or service segments in Bangkok and return home for a few weeks each year to help in the “labour-intensive rice-planting and harvesting” (McCargo and Hongladarom, 2004, p.221). This lack of economic capital and the seasonal residence patterns create the self-image of the northeast people as a “marginalised and disadvantaged” group of Thai people (McCargo and Hongladarom, 2004, p.221).

With regard to educational attainments, although the majority of the northeast people completed the minimum of formal education level or lower secondary school, they have the least enrolment rate for upper secondary and higher education, compared to other regions (Ekasingh et al., 2007; Kantachote, 2013). Due to poverty problem in this region, many of the children stop schooling after they finish formal education, in order to work to support their family.

#### **2.4.2 Institutional context**

The university campus of this study context is a branch campus of a public Thai university in the northeast of Thailand and has been established for about 20 years. There are currently about two thousand undergraduates and postgraduates across four faculties, namely the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, the Faculty of Integrated Social Science, the Faculty of Business Administration, and the Faculty of Liberal Arts. The majority of students studying in this campus are Thai students who live in the northeast of Thailand. Some of them are first-generation students whose parents have not attained any college degree and have work background in agriculture. The participants of this study were drawn from volunteer first year undergraduates across only three faculties, the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, the Faculty of Integrated Social Science, and the Faculty of Business Administration, as the Faculty of Liberal Arts had not been established at the time of data collection of this study. More details about the selection of the

study site and sampling, as well as the participants of this study will be further outlined in the methodology chapter, Section 4.5 and 4.6.

Regarding the English language policy of this institution, like other public universities, all students are required to take at least 12 credits of the mandatory English courses, which 6 credits need to be taken in their first year. The aims of these compulsory English courses are to improve English knowledge and communicative skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) of the students and to raise the students' awareness of the value of English in everyday life and in education. Other 6 credits of the ESP courses are required to be taken variously when they are in their second or third year depending on the requirement of their majors. The curriculum for the mandatory English courses is designed by the Language Institute, which is an organisation within the university, situated in the main campus. This English curriculum acts as the main framework for English teachers to adopt in their compulsory courses. The same criteria and methods for grading and evaluation apply to all campuses of the university.

## **2.5 Summary of the chapter**

In this chapter, I have provided some background information about Thailand, which was the context of this study. The overview of Thailand and its educational system were firstly described to serve a better understanding of the general picture of the country context. The details of the English language in Thailand, in terms of its role and status in Thai society, as well as its educational policy were then explained to provide informative background on how the English language has interacted with Thai people's lives and is taught in the Thai educational system. Some relevant issues regarding the national English language policy, its implementation, and problems have also been discussed, as they may facilitate a clearer understanding on English language motivation of the learners in this study. In the final part, more specific information about the socio-economic and cultural background of this study context was illustrated, together with detailed description about the tertiary institution and its English language policy where this study

took place. The next chapter illustrates a review of relevant literature regarding motivation in second and foreign language learning and other related concepts.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to provide a review of literature that helps to form the theoretical framework of this study. The concept of motivation in English as a second/foreign language (L2) learning has been the main focus in this study. Thus, a discussion of individual differences in L2 learning is firstly presented, followed by an explanation of the concept of motivation in general. Challenges in studying and understanding motivation concept are also addressed afterwards. The notion of L2 motivation and investment in L2 learning are then presented, followed by an illustration of theoretical developments of motivation research in the field of L2 learning in the past decades. Reviews of trends and recent L2 motivation research in Asian countries, particularly in the Thai context, are also illustrated. Additionally, relevant self and identity concepts in relation to L2 learning are also elaborated.

#### **3.2 Concept of motivation**

The term ‘motivation’ has been used across disciplines, such as in business and management (e.g. Frey and Osterloh, 2002; Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman, 1993), psychology (e.g. Humphreys and Revelle, 1984; Maslow, 1970), and education (e.g. Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, and Ryan, 1991; Wigfield, Cambria, and Eccles, 2012; Stipek, 2002) to explain why people behave the way they do. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p.3), the word motivation comes from the verb “movere” in Latin which means “to move”. Thus, motivation may simply explain “what moves a person to make certain choices, to engage in action, to expend effort and persist in action” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.3). Ryan and Deci (2000) also describe that, “a person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated” (p54). In general, motivational



theories are associated with the energisation and direction of behaviour (Pintrich, 2003). Nevertheless, to give a clear definition of motivation can be difficult, because motivation is seen as a multifaceted construct, and it may therefore be “almost impossible to articulate a definition which covers all facets satisfactorily and with any conciseness” (Chambers, 2001, p.2).

In the field of education, motivation has long been one of the central topics for research. Pintrich (2003) states that, the role of motivation must also be considered if we would like to understand how and why some students seem to thrive or struggle in learning. Dörnyei (1998, p.117), also points out that, without adequate motivation, “even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals”. According to Pintrich (2003), researchers and educators interested in the dealing with the problems of learner motivation have concentrated on inventing new and innovative teaching and learning instructions, projects, technological tools, and developing curricula. However, the concept of motivation still appears to be diffused and is understood differently, especially among those who are not the members of motivation community, and therefore, motivation requires a “greater conceptual clarity” (Murphey and Alexander, 2000, p.4). Although the concrete meaning of motivation may be hard to define, Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) provide a definition of motivation, which seems to reflect well on its dynamic and multidimensional nature, as follows,

In a general sense, motivation can be defined as the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised, and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out (p.65).

The sense of motivation, which is considered as a dynamic construct, involving various processes of the person is adopted in this study. As mentioned earlier in previous chapter, the role of motivation is crucial in the context of Thailand and needs further investigation, especially in the L2 learning and teaching settings. The issue of motivation is placed within the area of individual differences and has been regarded as one of the key aspects in the individual’s affective factors (Dörnyei and Skehan, 2003). The next sections will briefly discuss the concept of individual

differences and how the concept of motivation is placed in it, following by a discussion on possible challenges that L2 motivation researchers may encounter when studying the concept of motivation.

### **3.2.1 Individual differences: motivation**

The concept of individual difference was originally used in the field of psychology, with an initial aim to understand the “uniqueness of the individual mind” (Dörnyei, 2005, p.1). The term individual differences (IDs) refers to “characteristics or traits in respect of which individuals may be shown to differ from each other” (Dörnyei, 2005, p.1). In the field of education, individual differences have also received considerable attention, as they are considered to be important factors that can influence the ways learners learn and the outcomes they get. Cassidy (2012) gives a definition of the term individual differences, in the specific context of learning and teaching as, “the array of characteristics, attributes, aptitudes, preferences and propensities present in any group of students which have the potential to influence either the learner experience or the learning outcomes” (p.793-794). Learners can be different in terms of their diverse cognitive and affective components. Familiar examples of learners’ individual differences also concern the aspect of gender, culture, age, learning aptitude, learning styles, learning strategies (Ehrman, Leaver, and Oxford, 2003), ethnicity, previous experience, goal orientation, motivation, and metacognition (Cassidy, 2012).

In the field of L2 learning, individual differences in terms of affective variables, such as motivation, attitudes, anxiety, and self-efficacy, seem to attract a lot of attention amongst L2 researchers (e.g. Bandura, 2012; Brown, 2000; Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993; Graham, Courtney, Tonkyn, and Marinis, 2016; Henter, 2014; Skehan, 1989; Ushioda 2009). Language learning motivation has been one of the most prominent areas of ID research since the 1990s (Dörnyei and Skehan, 2003). Motivation research within the field of L2 learning has evolved in the past two decades. However, before detailing the development of motivation

research in the field, I would like to address some of the challenges in researching the concept of motivation in the next section.

### **3.2.2 Challenges of studying motivation**

There are several challenges that researchers may encounter when researching motivation. According to Dörnyei (2000, p.520), four principal challenges that seem to prevent a consensus amongst L2 motivation researchers lie in the perspectives of (a) “consciousness vs. unconsciousness”, (b) “cognition vs. affect”, (c) “context”, and (d) “time”. The first challenge involves the understanding of conscious influences (e.g. human cognitive processes, goals, self-concepts), and unconscious influences (life instinct, drive, emotion) on human behaviours. The second involves the challenges in explaining human behaviours under a unified framework that integrates both cognitive and affective or emotional influences. The next challenge concerns the factor of context which accounts for the role of context on human motivation, that is, viewing motivation as dynamically constructed within the interrelationship of individual and sociocultural context. (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011).

Time is also considered as another challenge when studying motivation. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) point out that researchers may have paid attention on different phases of motivation process and that may induce contradictions. However, as motivation does not “remain constant” and is a temporal construct, the aspect of time should not be neglected (p.6). They also mention that very little studies on motivation have addressed “the process of motivational development over time, either at the micro-level of moment-by-moment experience or the macro-level of long-term experience or life history” (p.6). Therefore, thinking about temporal dimension of motivation may help to understand motivation better in terms of its complexities and dynamism.

With regard to the aforementioned challenges, this study seems to involve all of them as the main focus of it is to understand the temporal dimension of the student motivation. Therefore, time is a crucial aspect in this study as it helps to understand motivation better in terms of its complexities

and dynamism across time. Additionally, with its particular sociocultural context, like the northeast of Thailand, the contextual challenge cannot be avoided. However, the other challenges can be managed by having background theoretical frameworks to conceptualise learner motivation, which I will discuss later in this chapter. The details of how this study was designed and interpreted will also be illustrated in the next chapter, methodology.

### **3.3 Motivation in L2 learning**

As mentioned previously, motivation has been an attractive area of studying across disciplines. In the field of L2 learning, motivation is also considered as a significant factor that influences success in second or foreign language learning of a person and “is perhaps one of the key variables that distinguishes first language acquisition from second language acquisition” (Ushioda, 2013, p.1). Studies have shown that motivation of the learners can influence their academic achievement (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003; Wigfield and Wentzel, 2007). Therefore, an attempt to increase learner motivation has become one of the main tasks that many English language teachers around the world try to achieve, in order to help their language learners to become the successful users of English, the main lingua franca nowadays (Lasagabaster, 2011). In this study, motivation to learn English language is the main focus. The next section will present a review of L2 motivational concepts and other related terms that would facilitate a better understanding of motivation in regard to L2 learning.

#### **3.3.1 L2 motivation**

In the field of L2 studies, motivation has been considered as one of the key factors that enables a person to accomplish the tasks he or she wants and can influence a person’s success in L2 and FL learning (e.g. Dörnyei, 2005; Ushioda, 2013a). Motivation has been described as a complex and “multi-faceted construct” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.117). Vibulphol (2016) elaborates on an interesting concept of motivation in L2 learning, namely that “motivation ‘kick starts’ the process, ‘lubricates’ the parts, and ‘fuels’ the engine to keep it running” (p.64). With regard to Gardner’s

(1985a) definition of motivation, it involves “the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language” (p.10).

In the early work of Gardner and Lambert (1959), L2 motivation was developed from the notions of integrative and instrumental orientations, or people’s reasons in their L2 learning. Their concept of L2 motivation concerns “the desire to attain the goal, positive attitudes toward learning the language, and effortful behaviour” (Oxford and Shearin, 1994, p.14). Following that, the term integrative motivation has been used to reflect a desire or willingness of an individual to learn L2 in order to identify with the target language community (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 2001). The term instrumental motivation has been used to describe the individual’s desire to learn an L2 for practical or utilitarian purposes (Gardner, 2005). The concept of motivation in the early work of Gardner (1985a) tended to focus on the role of attitudinal characteristics on language learning of the learners. The aspects of integrativeness, or an interest in studying another second language in order to get closer to the community of that target language (Gardner, 2001), attitudes towards the learning situation, motivation, language achievement, and other variables are key components in Gardner’s socio-educational model of L2 acquisition (Gardner, 1985a, 2000). Although the socio-education model is still influential in the field of language learning motivation, the model has been much criticised on its relevance in different EFL contexts (Mori and Gobel, 2006). This period of the pioneering research on L2 motivation is identified by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) as the social psychological period, which I will revisit again in more details, in Section 3.4.1.

In Skehan’s (1989) point of view, motivation can come from various sources. The first source concerns the learning activity itself, which means, motivation in learners can be triggered or stimulated by the attraction of the classroom or learning situations. Motivation can also be influenced by learners’ experience of success in learning. In other words, those learners who do well in class and experience success tend to have motivation in learning. That means, motivation would rather be “a consequence” of success than “a cause” of it (Skehan, 1989, p.49). Another

source of motivation may come from an internal cause brought to the learning situation by a learner, that is, goal-setting (Locke and Latham, 1990). The last source of motivation, as stated by Skehan, involves external factors, such as giving rewards and incentives in learning, or using tests and exams to stimulate learners' performance. The dimensions of motivational sources of Skehan (1989) are presented below.

	<b>Within the learning context</b>	<b>The results of learning</b>
Outside the individual	Materials Teaching	Constraints, Reward
Inside the individual	Success	Goals

**Table 3.1 The dimensions of motivational sources of Skehan (1989)**

The above table matrix illustrates the four sources of motivation that Skehan (1989) states involving in an individual's learning. Regarding the external influences, learners' motivation may be influenced by the materials and teaching methods used by the teachers within the learning context, or by the incentives or constraints given. For internal factors, Skehan (1989) claims that success and goals seem to manipulate motivation to learn of the learners.

The notions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, stemmed from the self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) in the field of psychology, are also adopted to explain L2 motivation of the language learners as well. According to Ryan and Deci (2000, p.55), the intrinsic motivation refers to, "doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable". An example of students who have intrinsic motivational orientation includes the students who learn and develop their L2 knowledge and competent to satisfy their own pleasure, interest or curiosity (Noels, 2001). On the contrary, the extrinsic motivation refers to, "doing something because it leads to a separable outcome" (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p.55). The people who have extrinsic motivation engage in the activity, in order to get positive results or to avoid negative consequences once the activity ends, rather than to engage in the activity for the sake of their own pleasure (Vallerand, 1997, p.279). Noels (2001) also states that, intrinsic motivated people are likely to feel positive

about the task and exert greater effort for a longer period of time, than those who are extrinsic motivated. This concept of motivation is categorised in the cognitive-situated period of L2 motivation research (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011), which will be detailed later in this chapter.

Speaking of desire and effort, Dörnyei (1998) also explains that motivation gives “the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process” (p.117). These above roles of motivation concern the “direction” and “magnitude” of a person’s behaviours (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.4), which can imply that having desire alone is not enough to explain motivation, but this needs to be combined with the sense of persistence or effort on the tasks as well. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) explain that motivation requires the “choice” of a particular behaviour (why a person choose to do something), the “persistence with it” (how long he or she is willing to continue the task), and the “effort expended on it” (how hard he or she is going to make effort to achieve it) (p.4). Motivation therefore is a complex construct that involves multiple processes within a person’s cognition and affection.

In the same vein as in educational psychology, L2 motivation is a topic of interest that many language researchers and educators around the world are trying to work on. L2 motivation is believed to play a vital role in learners’ persistence in the language, as Dörnyei (1998, 2005) also states that without the sufficient level of motivation, even the highest-ability learners may not achieve their long-term goals in L2 learning. Some important L2 motivation theories relevant to this study will be discussed later in this chapter.

### **3.3.2 Investment in L2**

To start with, another important term in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) that should be noted here, is the term ‘investment’. In social identity research, motivation to learn L2 is reconceptualised as an investment. Norton (2000) develops the notion of “investment” with an attempt to understand the “socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the

target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it” (p. 10). She points out that the notion of motivation as a fixed personality and unidimensional trait, like instrumental motivation, which I have discussed in Section 3.3.1, can be problematic when trying to understand the learners’ investment and willingness to speak the target language. This is because there may be other social factors such as relations of power and social distance between the speakers, that can influence their investment in the target language (Peirce, 1995). The concept of motivation should be understood “with reference to social relations of power that create the possibilities for language learners to speak” in the target language (Peirce, 1995, p.26). She takes the view that, what leads the language learners to speak the target language, or motivation in her perspective, must also be conceptualized in connection to language learners’ identities that are numerous, dynamic, and contradictory (Peirce, 1995). This is because when language learners speak to the target language speakers, they are not just exchanging information, but they are also “constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are” or in other word, reconstructing their own identity (Peirce, 1995, p.18). Therefore, in this view, an “investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner’s own identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space” (p.18).

To sum up, investment in the target language of Norton’s (2010, p.354) view should aim “to make a meaningful connection between a learner’s desire and commitment to learn a language, and their changing identity” (see. Section 3.12.1 for the concept of identity). The study of Norton focuses on the immigrant language learner in Canada in which the target language was mainly and widely used in the context. However, the contexts of her work and of this thesis study are different, as this study particularly focuses on L2 learners of English who were not immigrants. The next section will discuss the development of L2 motivation research in the field of L2 studies.



### **3.4 A historical development of L2 motivation theories**

This section gives an overview of the theoretical evolution of motivation research within the field of L2 learning. Research of L2 motivation has a long history and originated around a concentration on “what makes L2 learning distinctive from other forms of learning” (Ushioda, 2012). L2 motivation research has evolved significantly, since the 1960s, and has been largely dominated by the work of two social psychologists in Canada, Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert (1959). Until now, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p.39-40) have identified four phases of L2 motivation research development as follows.

Phase 1: The social psychology period (1959-1990)

Phase 2: The cognitive-situated period (during the 1990s)

Phase 3: The process-oriented period (the turn of the century)

Phase 4: The socio-dynamic period (current period)

Before discussing the current phase of socio-dynamic perspectives, which greatly helped in explaining findings of this study, a brief overview of each phase of L2 motivation research will be firstly discussed in the next sections.

#### **3.4.1 The social psychological phase (1959-1990)**

The early work on L2 motivation was dominated by goal-directed learning orientations of two Canadian social psychologists, Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert (1959). The central concept of L2 motivation within Gardner and Lambert’s (1959) work concerns social and psychological dimensions, which made the motivation to learn a second language of an individual different from other types of learning motivation (Ushioda, 2012). According to Dörnyei (2005), second languages from the view of these social psychologists were placed as mediating factors between different ethnolinguistic communities in a multicultural environment. Therefore, motivation to

learn the language of the other community was considered to be a primary force that could enhance or hinder the communication and affiliation of a person in that intercultural context (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). Accordingly, the view of L2 motivation in this period mainly focused on affective factors, like attitudes, which Gardner (1985a) supported that, “students’ attitudes toward the specific language group are bound to influence how successful they will be in incorporating aspects of that language” (p.6), making the attitudinal dimensions of a student the most salient aspect when gauging L2 motivation from 1959 for the next three decades.

The three major concepts involved in research on L2 motivation, as proposed by Gardner (1985a), concern the attitudes towards the target language community, orientations toward language learning, and motivation of the language learners. However, the most well-known concepts in Gardner’s theory seem to be the integrative and instrumental orientations, which Gardner (1985a, p.11) referred to as, the “ultimate goals for achieving the more immediate goal of learning the second language”. The notion of integrative orientation explains the “individual’s willingness and interest in social interaction with members of other groups” (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993, p.159). Or in other words, it concerns “a positive disposition” toward the target language group and “the desire to interact with and even become similar to valued members of that community” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.41). Another term which is the instrumental orientation, however, concerns the “utilitarian value of linguistic achievement”, that is, a desire to learn a second language for pragmatic reason, such as, in order to get a better job, earn higher salary, or pass an exam (Gardner and Lambert, 1959, p.267).

In this social psychological period, the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was also developed by Gardner (1985b). The AMTB is a psychometric questionnaire, consisting of over 130 items, and was initially used to investigate the integrative and instrumental motives, as well as the language anxiety and parental encouragement of learners who studied French. After that, it has been adapted and widely used in various learning contexts all over the world to evaluate L2

motivation of EFL learners. However, the test has been criticised for its lack of modification and development over time, making it in an opposite direction to the later mainstream L2 motivation theories (Dörnyei, 2005) which have evolved dramatically. In addition, the notion of integrativeness itself has also found to be problematic in explaining learners' motivation in this globalised era, especially with regard to the concept of integrativeness. This has led to much debate in the field at the moment which I am going to discuss later in Section 3.4.4.2 in this chapter.

### **3.4.2 The cognitive-situated phase (during the 1990s)**

After three decades of the social psychological perspectives being dominant in the early L2 motivation theory, the trend of research then shifted its focus on cognitive-related variables of an individual learner as well as his or her immediate learning situations. Dörnyei (2005) called this phase the cognitive-situated period of L2 motivation research. In this cognitive-situated phase, the attention on L2 motivation research turned to the influence of learners' cognitive factors on their behaviours and engagement in the situated classrooms. Ushioda (2012) explains these motivational cognitions as,

the kinds of beliefs, self-perceptions, and thinking patterns that affect students' engagement in (or disengagement from) learning, such as the goals they bring to the classroom (e.g., develop skills and knowledge, please the teacher, outperform others), or their internal explanations for poor performance outcomes (e.g., low ability, insufficient effort, task difficulty) (p.61-62).

According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p.46), this cognitive-situated period of L2 motivation study was characterised by the attempt to put L2 motivation research in alignment with the “cognitive revolution” in mainstream motivational psychology, and the willing to move beyond the perspectives of learners' general attitudes towards different language communities and to direct the attention to “a more situated analysis of motivation” in classroom learning contexts. However, this shift in focus of this period does not mean the social-psychological tradition was totally abandoned (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011; Ushioda, 2012). In connection to this, Dörnyei

(1994) still maintained the concepts of integrative and instrumental orientations in the language level within his three-level framework of L2 motivation, which will be further explained later within this section.

The most well-known concepts and theories within this cognitive-situated period include, for example, self-determination, self-efficacy, attribution, and autonomy theories, as well as other learning situations (e.g. task motivation) (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). In light of Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, L2 motivation can also be divided, based on the different reasons or goals that cause an action, into three broad categories which are intrinsic orientations, extrinsic orientations, and amotivation. Intrinsic orientations refer to reasons for doing something which come from one's inherent interest or enjoyment in the tasks. Extrinsic orientations refer to reasons of doing something for its instrumental value or other separable outcomes, rather than for one's enjoyment of the task (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Lastly, amotivation refers to the states in which people have no reason, neither intrinsic nor extrinsic, to perform the task because they see no link between their actions and the consequences of them (Noels, Pelletier, Clément, and Vallerand, 2000).

With an attempt to move beyond the social-psychological perspectives, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) also broadened the L2 motivation theoretical framework by proposing four different levels of L2 motivation, consisting of the micro, classroom, syllabus/curriculum, and extracurricular levels. Drawing on this concept, Dörnyei (1994) then developed three distinct levels of L2 motivation: the language level, the learner level, and the learning situation level. The language level focuses on orientations and motives associated with many aspects of the L2, such as its culture and community (Dörnyei, 1994). In this level, the integrative and instrumental orientations were still incorporated to describe L2 motivation of the language learners.

The second level of L2 motivation is called the learner level. The learner level involves a complex of affective and cognitive variables that form personality traits. Two motivational elements,

involved in this level of motivational processes, concern one's need for achievement and self-confidence, in which the latter comprises multiple aspects, like language use anxiety, perceived L2 competence, causal attributions, and self-efficacy (Dörnyei, 1994).

The last level of L2 motivation in this model is the learning situation level. This level consists of intrinsic and extrinsic motives, as well as other situation-specific motives, encompassing the course-specific motivational components (e.g. syllabus, teaching materials and approaches, learning tasks), the teacher-specific motivational components (e.g. affiliative drive to please the teachers, authority type, modelling task and feedback), and the group-specific motivational components (e.g. goal-orientedness, norm and reward system) (Dörnyei, 1994).

In response to calls for the “adoption of a wider vision of motivation”, Tremblay and Gardner (1995, p.505), whose work predominantly relied on the social-psychological tradition, also developed the new model of L2 motivation by integrating cognitive theories of motivation, such as expectancy-value, self-efficacy, goal setting, and causal attributions, as variables mediating the relationship between language attitudes and motivational behaviour.

To sum up, this cognitive-situated phase showed a shift in focus from a general macro perspective of social-psychological variables to a more situated analysis of motivation, particularly in the learning situations (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). However, from the late 1990s to the turn of the century, attention was focused on the temporal dimension of motivation as well as its non-static nature, leading to the next phase of process-oriented perspectives which I am going to discuss in the next section.

### **3.4.3 The process-oriented phase (turn of new century)**

In this period of L2 motivation research, the focus shifted to the dynamic character and temporal dimension of motivation (Dörnyei, 2005; 2001), conceptualising L2 motivation as an ongoing process that can evolve over time. Some significant work within this temporal perspective

included the work of Williams and Burden (1997), on their three stages of motivational process, for example. They separated the stages of motivation into three processes along a continuum, consisting of “reasons for doing something”, “deciding to do something”, and “sustaining the effort, or persisting” (p.121). They also argued that the first two processes of motivation related to initiating motivation whereas the last one involved sustaining motivation.

Inspired by Heckhausen and Kuhl’s (1985) Action Control Theory, Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) also developed the process model of L2 motivation, dividing the motivated behavioural process into three main stages with several discrete segments in each stage, as presented in Figure 3.1. The first phase is called “preactional phase”, describing choices of motivation and three subprocesses which are goal setting, intention formation and the initiation of intention enactment (Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998, p.47). In this stage, it explains how learners’ initial wishes, hopes and desires are converted into goals, and translated into intentions or concrete steps they need to take, which will then lead to the initiation of intention enactment (Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998; Dörnyei, 2005). The motivational influences involved in this phase include various goal properties, values related to the learning processes, attitudes towards the L2 and speakers of that language, expectancy of success, learner beliefs and strategies, and environmental support or constraints (Dörnyei, 2005).

The second phase is called “actional phase” (Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998, p.50). This phase corresponds to “executive motivation” which involves maintaining and protecting motivation during the L2 activities. The subprocesses engaged in this phase included generating and implementing subtask, ongoing appraisal, and the application of action control strategies or self-regulation in order “to enhance, protect and sustain motivation and learning progress” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.66). The executive motivational influences are likely to involve quality of learning experience, sense of autonomy or self-determination, social influences (teachers, parents, peers, school environment), self-regulation knowledge and skills (Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998, p.57).

The last phase is called “postactional phase” (Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998, p.51). This proactional phase concerns “critical retrospection” after the action has ended, involving evaluating outcomes and considering internal standards and strategies to be used for future learning (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.66). According to Dörnyei (2005), the motivational retrospection influences are likely to involve attributional factors, self-concept/self-perception beliefs (e.g. self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-competence), received feedback, praise, and grades.

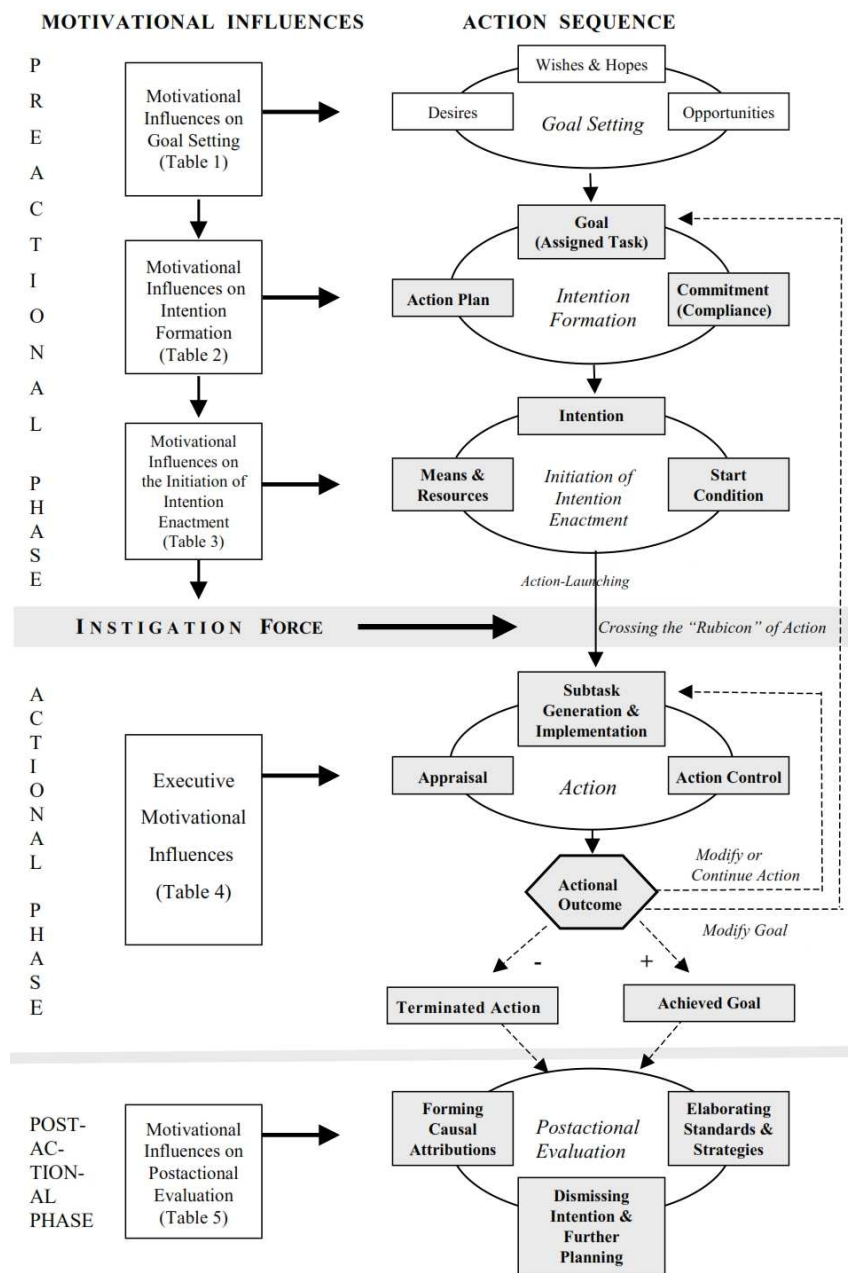
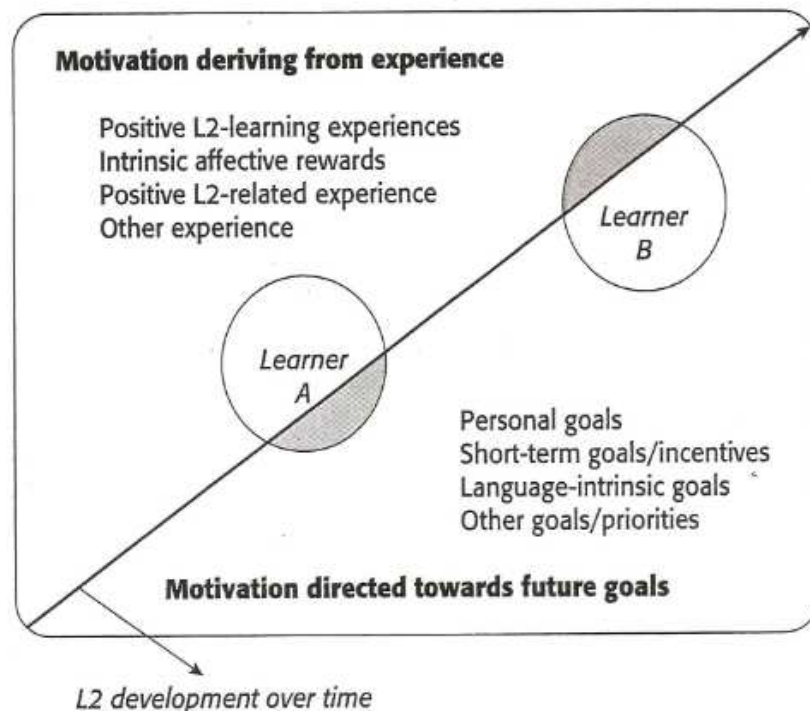


Figure 3.1 Dörnyei and Ottó's (1998, p.48) process model of L2 motivation

This process model of L2 motivation facilitates a greater understanding of the various motivational components that may contribute to each stage of the learners' motivational process in learning an L2. Although this model has recently been criticized for its weak power to clearly explain the dynamicity and complexity of motivational variables (see. Section 3.4.4.1), the model is important as it has introduced motivation from a temporal perspective, which is the focus in this study.

Ushioda (1996) also voiced the need to welcome new research approaches, especially under the qualitative paradigm, to explore the dynamically changing L2 motivation, as well as other contextual factors that may influence motivation. She proposed the theoretical framework of L2 motivation from a temporal perspective (Ushioda, 1998, p.82) to display an evolving perspective of motivation in language learning, as shown in Figure 3.2.



**Figure 3.2 Ushioda's (1998, p.82) conception of L2 motivation from a temporal perspective**



Based on Ushioda's (1998) framework above, the learners' positive L2 learning and L2-related experience seemed to play a vital role in maintaining their engagement in language learning, as represented by learner A, as she stated,

they may feel motivated to pursue language study because they perceive that this is what they are good at or what they enjoy the most, and where therefore their future potential must lie (Ushioda, 1998, p.82).

Future and other related goals seemed to have more significant role for learner B, which represents the potential later stage of learner A's development of motivational thinking. Ushioda (1998) has incorporated the aspects of L2 experiences of the learners, and the relevant goals that language learners are developing over time, into this model to conceptualise motivation in relation to time. This conception of L2 motivation from a temporal perspective is relevant to this study, in the way that, L2 learning and L2-related experiences are also the emphasis and are integrated with various goals to understand the fluid nature of motivation over time. This process-oriented phase, however, has evolved into a new phased called "the socio-dynamic period" (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.69), which I am going to discuss in the next section.

#### **3.4.4 The socio-dynamic phase (current period)**

The most recent phase of L2 motivation theory is identified as the socio-dynamic period. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), due to some delimitations of the previous process model of L2 motivation, this new phase of L2 motivation theory has been developed to facilitate an understanding of motivation in relation to the notion of self and identity, as well as socio-cultural contexts of the language learners. Before reviewing the influential conceptual frameworks within this socio-dynamic period, I am going to discuss briefly some critical issues that have influenced and characterised this period.

#### **3.4.4.1 The complexity of the interactions between motivational factors and the incorporation of social contexts into language motivation**

This socio-dynamic phase of L2 motivation research has been developed partly due to the criticism of the previous process model of L2 motivation of Dörnyei and Ottó (1998). There are a few key issues that Dörnyei (2005) has admitted that they have reflected the weak points of his process model of L2 motivation. First, the process model has limited power to explain the actional process of the task, especially in a real classroom context, since the learning processes may run overlapping or concurrently, making it difficult to judge when exactly the learning process initiates and finishes (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). Second, the model implies an ignorance of other personal and social goals of the learners that may also have influenced or interfered in the engagement of the learners' learning process. In other word, this process model is unable to “do justice to the dynamic and situated complexity of the learning process or the multiple goals and agendas shaping learner behaviour” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.70). Moreover, due to the linear cause-effect nature of the process model of L2 motivation, it might be problematic when explaining the complexity of interrelationships of various motivational elements and other related factors.

In addition, based on Norton's (2000, p.10) recent concept of motivation or what she called the “investment”, as mentioned earlier in Section 3.3.2, as well as the notion of identity, the attention of L2 motivation has turned to be associated with the socio-culturally contexts. L2 motivation has been viewed to be socially and historically constructed. Social contexts have become important factors to be considered when conceptualising motivation. In this regard, the focus of L2 motivation research then has shifted in relation to self and context in a dynamic approach. There has been a call for more investigations adopting the non-linear, “relational and dynamic systems perspectives” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.71), rather than the traditional linear perspective within this socio-dynamic phase. The viewing of L2 motivation in this study followed the non-linear perspectives within this phase of L2 motivation research. Various motivational models

within this socio-dynamic phase were integrated and adopted to facilitate a greater understanding of the learners' motivation over time, namely, the person-in-context relational view of L2 motivation, the complex dynamic systems perspective, and the L2 motivational self system, which I am going to discuss later in this chapter.

#### **3.4.4.2 The rise of global English and a new realm of L2 motivation research**

Furthermore, the English language has become an international language of communication and in some contexts (e.g. where English is a second language), English is learned and used for functional purposes. With the growth of this global English, it is more difficult to explain motivation for learning English in terms of a desire to become part of the English using community or to be integrated into it (Ushioda, 2013a). The notion of integrative motivation seems to be ambiguous and problematic in explaining who the L2 owner actually is and which specific target L2 community people would like to get closer to (Dörnyei, 2009a). Ushioda (2011a, p.201) also states that the L2 motivation of a person may be better explained in terms of the “internal processes of identification within the self-concept”, rather than in terms of the “identification with external reference groups”.

Due to this untenable concept of integrativeness and the growth of global English varieties, L2 motivation has also been reconceptualised and re-theorised in relation to the notions of self and identity (Dörnyei, 2005; Ushioda, 2011b; Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2009). Ushioda (2013a) points out that, instead of a desire to integrate into the English using community, people may be motivated to learn English “to enhance their sense of cosmopolitan identity and connectedness as part of this imagined English-using global community” (p.9). This new realm of L2 motivation has now become dominant in L2 motivation research (e.g. Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009; Murray, Gao and Lamb, 2011).

In addition, influenced by integrativeness, Yashima (2002) has proposed the notion of ‘international posture’ with an attempt to explain language learners’ attitudes towards a global

community. He states that the international posture was introduced in order to “capture a tendency to relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group” (Yashima, 2009, p.2). According to Yashima (2002, p.57), international posture can be described as an “interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and, one hopes, openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude towards different culture”. International posture also corresponds to the concept of ‘imagined community’ proposed by Norton (2001, p.164) which concerns “the imagined world outside the classroom” of language learners. It is believed that learners’ visions of themselves participating in those imagined international communities, using the English language, may influence the learners’ motivation and their investment in language learning (Yashima, 2009; Norton, 2001). The concept of imagined community is also found to have some links to the concept of ‘ideal selves’ which is important for my study and will be discussed later in this chapter.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p.74) also point out three new frameworks and perspectives which conceptualise L2 motivation within this current socio-dynamic period. Those three new approaches include, ‘A person-in-context relational view of language motivation’ (Ushioda, 2009), ‘Motivation from a complex dynamic systems perspective’ (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011), and ‘The L2 Motivational Self System’ (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a), which I am going to discuss in the next sections.

### **3.5 A person-in-context relational view of language motivation**

A ‘person-in-context relational view of motivation’ was proposed by Ushioda (2009) to accommodate the view of L2 motivation that primarily concerns individuals as “real persons”, rather than just as language learners in the educational contexts (p.220). Ushioda (2009) points out that much of the research on individual differences is likely to focus on “averages and aggregates that group together people who share certain characteristics” (e.g. high or low intrinsic motivation or self-efficacy), rather than focusing on “differences between individuals” (p.215).

Such mainstream individual differences research allows us to understand very little about how particular learners feel about their language learning, whether they are motivated or not motivated to learn the language and why they feel that way (Ushioda, 2009). Due to this reason, Ushioda (2009) has proposed the person-in-context relational framework of motivation, to focus on the aspects of selves and identities of the learners that may influence their motivation to learn L2, as well as the impact of the contexts they live in

When researching L2 motivation, Ushioda (2009) stresses that participants should not only be perceived as language learners, which are just one facet of their identity. Instead, their self and identity as real people who are “necessarily located in particular cultural and historical contexts” (Ushioda, 2009, p.216) and as people who “bring uniquely individual identities, histories, goals and intentions and who inhabit complex dynamic social realities” (Ushioda, 2011b, p.18) should also be highlighted.

The above-mentioned concept of identity as real people can refer to ‘transportable identities’ (e.g. a brother, a son, a daughter, a football player, a waiter, a pianist) as introduced by Zimmerman (1998), which concerns “identities that are usually visible, that is, assignable or claimable on the basis of physical or culturally based insignia which furnish the intersubjective basis for categorization” (p.91). In connection with motivation, Ushioda (2011b) also pointed out that by engaging the learners’ transportable identities in the language classroom and encouraging them to “speak as themselves” through the target language, the learners will be more likely to “feel involved and motivated to communicate and thus to engage themselves in the process of learning and using the language” (p.17). Richards (2006) also supports that any interactional work arising from an integration of transportable identities into the language classroom will involve “an investment of self, with all the emotional, relational, and moral considerations” (p.72) that it evokes. Ushioda (2011b) also states that by giving the students opportunities to select which aspects of their transportable identities that they would like to present and talk about, the students

are more likely to feel engaged with the process of learning and be motivated to communicate in the target language.

Furthermore, not only focusing on learners as real people, Ushioda's (2009) framework also supports the view of contexts as variables that cannot be distinct or be independent from the learners, as she put it:

I argue here for a focus on 'person-in-context', rather than on context as independent variable, to capture the mutually constitutive relationship between persons and the contexts in which they act – a relationship that is dynamic, complex, and non-linear (Ushioda, 2009, p.218).

Ushioda (2009) argues that previous traditional research of L2 motivation, such as the social-psychological model, seemed to focus only on the individual and tended to ignore the influence socio-cultural environment could have on learners' motivation, making it difficult for us to understand the individuals' inner mental world or how they construe their surrounding socio-cultural environment. Incorporating Ushioda's (2009) framework into this study, the aspects of socio-cultural contexts and transportable identities of the Thai learners were focused, in order to gain a better understanding of their motivation to learn English language within the cultural context of Thailand.

In terms of the methodology, Ushioda's (2009) framework is in sharp contrast to the linear cause-effect approach which dominates the L2 motivation research field. She believes that such traditional linear models are not likely to capture the "complexity and idiosyncrasy of a person's motivational response to particular events and experiences in their life" (p.219). Instead, those linear models tend to categorise learning behaviours to general commonalities, rather than trying to understand the uniqueness of an individual's personal meaning-making in his or her socio-cultural settings (Ushioda, 2009). What she proposes is to adopt the relational and non-linear views of various motivational variables and see motivation as "an organic process" (p.220) that appears from the complex interactions between humans and their social environment. This framework is particularly important to this study as it helped to capture the impact of the other

transportable identities of the learners, that may have on their motivation in language learning within their actual socio-cultural contexts. Ushioda (2009) has also summarised her person-in-context relational view of motivation as follows:

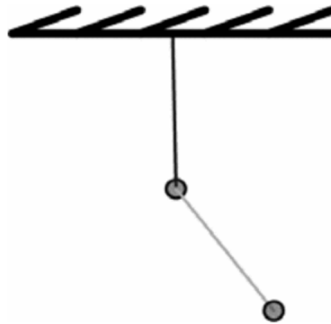
I mean a focus on real persons, rather than on learners as theoretical abstractions; a focus on the agency of the individual person as a thinking, feeling human being, with an identity, a personality, a unique history and background, a person with goals, motives and intentions; a focus on the interaction between this self-reflective intentional agent, and the fluid and complex system of social relations, activities, experiences and multiple micro- and macro-contexts in which the person is embedded, moves, and is inherently part of (p.220).

Lastly, she also pointed out that this person-in-context relational view of motivation may usefully be integrated with other different theoretical frameworks under appropriate and careful consideration (Ushioda, 2009). It may also yield valuable insights when incorporated into and analysis of “critical incidents” during an English lesson as it would help us to understand “why the persons involved behave in particular ways during the event under focus, and how their motivations contribute to shaping the way the event unfolds” (Ushioda, 2016, p.52). This person-in-context relational view of motivation, thus, was also integrated in this study to assist in understanding how motivation of the participants in this study has evolved during their language learning journey.

### **3.6 Motivation from a complex dynamic systems perspective**

Another conceptual approach recently adopted in conceiving L2 motivation within the current socio-dynamic phase of L2 motivation research is known as the ‘motivation from a complex dynamic systems perspective’ which was proposed by Dörnyei (2009b). The terms complex and dynamic in this approach are used in a specific sense, representing the “complex theory” (CT) and the “dynamic systems theory” (DST), which are closely related to each other (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.88). The key aim of this approach is to explain development in the complex and dynamic systems. Dörnyei (2014) pointed out that a system would be considered as being complex or dynamic when, “(a) it has at least two or more elements that are (b) interlinked with

each other but which also (c) change independently over time” (p.81). The graphic illustration he uses to describe this dynamic system is the bizarre movement of the double pendulum (see. Figure 3.3 below) which initiates from only two elements (the upper arm and lower arm of the pendulum) but once moving one arm, it can cause “havoc in the whole system” and can create a very complex and unpredictable movement (Dörnyei, 2009b, p.101).



**Figure 3.3 The double pendulum (adapted from Dörnyei, 2009b, p.101)**

From this perspective, it can be explained that, in the dynamic systems, the ongoing multiple interferences between the various system components’ own trajectories can make the system’s operation complex and erratic, or in other words, it can result in “non-linear, emergent changes in the overall system behaviour” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.89).

Although the CT may have originated from the field of natural sciences, many scholars (e.g. Dörnyei, 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2012; Mercer, 2011) have agreed that it also has potential value to unfold developments of dynamic systems, particularly in the field of social sciences, where the objects of inquiry tend to be very complex. This is because in social science, most of the units of analysis (e.g. people, social phenomena) are nested into each other in manifold patterns (Dörnyei, 2014; Dörnyei, MacIntyre and Henry, 2015). The interactions between such elements and subsystems can cause the “complexity” in the complex systems (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008a, p.201). Those elements and subsystems are intertwined and their “boundaries” seem to be “rather blurry” (Mercer, 2013, p.37), making it difficult to examine each component within it clearly in isolation.



Larsen-Freeman (2012) states that apart from its potential value in researching L2 development, the CT also illuminates ways to view language and language development differently, especially in terms of the complexity and dynamism which “have received short shrift” (p.203). In the same vein, Mercer (2011) also points out that complexity perspectives can offer “ways of understanding the world that tend to favour organic, complex, holistic models composed of complex dynamic systems, rather than cause-and-effect, linear models” (p.63). In connection to the study of motivation, Dörnyei (2009b) also noted that the DST, which is one important strand within the CT, would provide a more realistic perspective to study mental variables of humans as he put it,

Indeed, higher-order human mental functions such as motivation inevitably involve a combination of diverse factors, and therefore a dynamic systems approach offers a useful way of examining their combined affect and changing relationship (p.218).

De Bot, Lowie, and Verspoor (2007) also note that among different theories within the non-linear approaches, there is still a lack of “overarching theory that allows to account for these ever interacting variables, non-linear behaviour, and sometimes unpredictable outcomes” (p.7). They suggested that such theory should not treat “real-life messy facts” of humans as “noise”, instead, it should regard them as “part of the ‘sound’” that we get in real life (p.7). With its value and capability to capture the messy accounts of individuals’ lives, the DST is considered a useful perspective to examine such complex systems as de Bot et al. (2007) summarise:

What DST provides is a set of ideas and a wide range of tools to study complex systems. We can no longer work with simple cause-and-effect models in which the outcome can be predicted, but we must use case studies to discover relevant sub-systems and simulate the processes (p.19).

The unpredictable changing nature of the systems is normally referred to as “nonlinear change” in the DST (Dörnyei, 2014, p.82). The nonlinear systems can sometimes be very sensitive, meaning that even very little or small input can result in considerable changes, while a significant act can sometimes lead to very tiny impact (Dörnyei, 2014; Mercer, 2013). This phenomenon is known as the “butterfly effect”, drawing on the concept that even a small activity like “a butterfly flapping its wings in one part of the world”, can provide “a large influence on meteorological

conditions somewhere else” (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008a, p.201). The butterfly effect of DST is typically linked to the Chaos/Complexity Theory (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2007) in the field of SLA, which also aims to explain the dynamic, complex, and nonlinear characteristics of the systems. There has also been a growing interest to apply this concept in the area of language teaching (e.g. Davatgari Asl, Farjami, Makhdoumi, 2014; Harshbarger, 2007; Kozden, 2005).

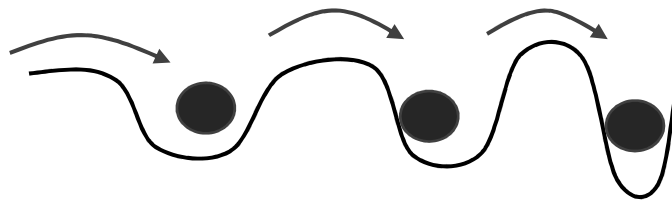
This butterfly effect phenomenon, which is the fundamental concept of the DST and CT/Chaos theories, has provided several implications for the educators to apply in the language classroom. For example, in terms of planning lessons, the language teachers may have to consider alternative plans, in the case that reactions or behaviours of the students are not as expected. A small change in language activities or in how the teachers deliver their knowledge may help to create a great change in the class. In terms of managing the class, teachers may need to be sensitive and have to observe students’ behaviours, as some behaviours may influence the systems of the class. Akmansoy and Kartal (2014) found in their study that certain behaviours of a particular student may affect other classmates in the same class. For example, one student’s laughing at the other student’s performance in front of the class may provoke other classmates to laugh as well. This may create an unconstructive learning environment, demotivating the rest of students to perform in front of the class. In terms of giving feedback, if it is done appropriately, it may also yield a great impact on students’ learning behaviours. This complex dynamic systems perspective was also helpful to this study, as it helped to explain the complex interactions of interconnected factors that may have shaped students’ motivation to learn English over time.

### **3.6.1 Attractor states**

According to Dörnyei (2009c), although continuous fluctuation is seen to be a general characteristic of the dynamic systems, there are moments that stable states can take place, making the system behaviour predictable. These states of steady equilibrium are conceptualised as “attractor states” (Dörnyei, 2014, p.84) or what Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008b, p.32)

called “stability in motion”. An attractor state can be both positive and negative. Examples of the attractor states, that often occur in the language classroom, may include, a tendency for the learners to refuse to participate voluntarily in the language task, be reluctant to speak the L2, or be silent when asked to perform in the target L2 language (Gillies, 2014; Hiver, 2015). Another example also includes a phenomenon in which the language learners start a task using only the L2, and then gradually switch the language to their L1, until it becomes the main language used in that task, before the learners eventually revert back to the L2 again once reminded by the teacher (Hiver, 2015). Fossilization, or “the stagnation in development of L2 learners who acquire a part of the language system and do not seem to develop it further”, could also be described as the attractor state as well (de Bot and Larsen-Freeman, 2011, p15). The notion of L2 self system, proposed by Dörnyei (2009a), which I will discuss in Section 3.7.3, could also be considered as attractor states, as they can exert an influence on the learners’ system behaviours, functioning as the motivational forces enhancing the learners’ motivation and persistence to learn the L2 (Hiver, 2015). These attractor states can be influenced dynamically by the powerful attractors.

While the stable or preferred states are referred to as attractor states, the dispreferred states are called “repeller states” (Dörnyei, 2009b, p.106), referring to unstable states. A good metaphor representing how the attractors and repellers work in the complex system, offered by de Bot, Lowie, and Verspoor (2005), is a ball rolling on a surface that has holes and bumps. The trajectory of the ball represents the development, while the holes and bumps are analogous to the attractor states and the repeller states, respectively. When a ball enters this landscape, the movement of the ball will be influenced by the environment and may, at some points, become fossilized when the ball rolls down into the holes or the attractor states. However, attractor states are “temporary” and “not fixed”, but are reliant on “the strength of the attraction” (de Bot, et al., 2007, p.8). Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008b, p.51) illustrate a depiction of a ball rolling over the uneven landscape, to describe the idea of attractor states in the state space or phase of a complex system, as shown in Figure 3.4 below.



**Figure 3.4 The trajectory of a complex system across attractors in the various phases (Adapted from Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008b, p.51))**

According to Kim (2017), the ball, shown in the above figure, may be regarded as the L2 learner's level of motivation. He explains that, changes in the motivational system of the learner involve two states, which are an attractor and a repeller states (Kim, 2017). When the ball falls into the bottom of the hole, the system may be at a stable state for a while or it is at the state of attractor (or attractor state). The area in which the system is attracted into such stable state is known as, the attractor basin, or region of attraction that can force all trajectories to fall into any point in the basin towards the attractors (Carver and Scheier, 1999, cited in Dörnyei, 2009b). Kim (2017, p.32) describes that, this attractor basin would function as “the force increasing the learner's L2 learning motivation”. The repeller state, however, would diminish the learner's motivation (Kim, 2017). When the attractor state loses its stability; for instance, the learner's motivation may decrease due to internal or external influences, such as a lack of willingness to participate in the L2 or a negative influence from peers, the system would leave the attractor basin and move toward the repeller state, which is located at the top of the hill (see. Figure 3.4) (Kim, 2017), and continue on a trajectory to other attractors in the landscape.

Dörnyei (2009c) also explains that, when powerful attractors play a role, they will act like stabilizing forces, creating the state of stability which then can make the system behaviour predictable. Illustration of a higher-order individual difference variables considered as strong attractors may include a person's motivation (Dörnyei, 2009c) and abilities (Dörnyei, 2009b). Sometimes, strong attractors can form attractor basins, or also known as the basins of attractors. Individual difference attributes often have “wide basins” and are usually made up of the

conglomerates of motivational, cognitive and affective factors (Dörnyei, 2009b, p.199). An example of a conglomerate from motivation studies can also be seen from the notion of “interest”, as Dörnyei (2014, p.84) explains that it is made up of motivation, emotion, and cognition, for instance,

the motivational pull of the subject of interest, the emotional enjoyment experienced when engaging with the subject as well as the cognitive curiosity in and engagement with a specific domain.

These different strong elements will form “a powerful amalgam that acts as a whole” within the complex dynamic systems and only be called by one single word, “interest” (Dörnyei, 2014, p.84). Other motivational conglomerates may also include “motivational flow”, “motivational task processing”, and “future self-guides” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.92). Additionally, according to Dörnyei (2009b, p.200), the attractors can be more predictable if,

...they have a wide basin associated with diverse components and values – a highly optimistic person, for example, might react to neutral or even moderately bad news positively, or a person with strong self-efficacy will not lose his/her motivation in the face of failure.

Nowak, Vallacher, and Zochowski (2005) state that attractors of personal dynamics come from two main sources which are “the synchronization of individuals’ internal states in social interaction” and “the self-organization of thoughts and feelings with respect to a higher-order property (e.g., goal, self-concept)” (p.351). To conclude this concept, Dörnyei (2009b) states that human behaviour can be analogous to an uneven landscape with many different basins of attractors. Our movement may seem unstable at the micro-level, the long-term trajectory can be anticipated to some extent if the dominant attractors are known (Carver and Scheier, 1999, cited in Dörnyei, 2009b). Although the concept of the complex dynamic systems may offer a useful and alternative approach in understanding a flux nature of motivation, fully operationalising this perspective in researching L2 motivation may be found problematic and challenging due to multiple reasons, which will be discussed in the following section. This study, however, integrated

this complex dynamic systems framework, together with others, to help explain the complex and fluid nature of the Thai learners' L2 motivation.

### **3.6.2 Difficulty in operationalising the complex dynamic systems perspective**

Despite its remarkable usefulness in providing insights into the complex nature of motivation, fully operationalising the complex dynamic system perspective has been found to be difficult, since there are no concrete “tools” or “paradigms” to be adopted yet when researching it (Dörnyei et al., 2015, p.4). According to Dörnyei (2014), this approach is “such a new and uncharted territory that there are simply no tried and tested research methodological templates available” (p.83-84). Dörnyei (2014) further explains, the reason that complex dynamic systems in the field of social sciences or specifically in SLA is not easy to be operationalised because interrelated variables and issues, such as learner differences, classroom and linguistic factors, are traditionally examined in isolation. Those studies of human psyche have widely followed the believed “superior” and “ultimate” research approach, the scientific research method, in which linear cause-effect relationships are typically oriented (Dörnyei, 2014, p.83). Such traditional practice seems to be at odds with the holistic view of a dynamic systems framework.

Nevertheless, some scholars have recently tried to propose possible guidelines or models to be adopted in examining the complexity and dynamism of the subject. Here, I would like to illustrate two useful models in relation to this perspective which are the “complex thought modelling” (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008) and the “Retrodictive Qualitative Modelling” (RQM) (Dörnyei, 2014).

Regarding the “complex thought modelling”, Larsen-Freeman and Cameron propose five procedures as a guideline to researching the complexity and dynamism of the systems, as presented below:

- *Identifying the different components of the system, including agents, processes and subsystems*
- *For each component, identifying the timescales and levels of social and human organization on which the system operates*
- *Describing the relations between and among components*
- *Describing how the system and context adapt to each other*
- *Describing the dynamics of the system*
  - *how the components change over time, and*
  - *how the relations among components change over time* (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008b, p.41).

Dörnyei (2014, p.80) also offers a research template called “retrodictive qualitative modelling” (RQM) to be applied in examining SLA. His proposed RQM comprises of three steps which involve (a) identifying major student types in the classroom (b) a creation of each prototype plus an identification of students who are typical of the established prototypes, and having interviews with them (c) an identification of the most salient system components and find the signature dynamic patterns of each system, which can be done by identifying the system’s main components and considering the main underlying dynamic patterns (Dörnyei, 2014, p.86-87).

Recently, many studies have incorporated the complex dynamic systems perspective to understand the dynamism, non-linearity and unpredictability of phenomena in the field of language learning. For example, Mulvaney (2016) adopted the complex dynamic systems theory to understand Thai university students’ willingness to communicate in English language. Xiao and Wray (2016) also investigated perceptions as well as affective experiences and classroom learning of a student of English in a university in China through the dynamic systems theory lens. Mahmoodzadeh and Gkonou (2015) also suggested that complex dynamic systems perspective can greatly facilitate our understandings on foreign language classroom anxiety, just as it can do in explaining other individual affective variables, like willingness to communicate and

motivation. Additionally, Lasagabaster (2015) employed the complex dynamic systems perspective to help understand motivational fluctuations of secondary education students of English language in Spain. In his study, Lasagabaster (2015) found that parents play an influential role within the people factor, which was found to be a significant attractor state and be closely linked to the development of learners' motivation. He also found that critical incidents often have a repeller effect, causing perturbations in the motivational system of the Spanish learners (Lasagabaster, 2015). Gillies (2014) successfully implemented a research design based on the complex dynamic systems in his research on motivation of the Japanese EFL classroom. Lastly, Chan (2014) also explored motivational trajectories of secondary school students and Christian Language Professionals through the dynamic systems lens, employing Dörnyei's (2014) retrodictive qualitative modelling.

This study, however, did not fully employ the complex dynamic systems perspective as the single main framework. Instead, this study incorporated the concept of the complex dynamic systems to assist in understanding certain issues of L2 motivation the Thai learners, together with other model frameworks within the socio-dynamic perspectives. The next section discusses another approach, called the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a), which has recently been used to conceptualise individual L2 motivation, and which was another significant framework adopted in this study.

### **3.7 The L2 Motivational Self System**

According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), the L2 Motivation Self system is one of the more recent conceptual approaches within a socio-dynamic period of L2 motivation research. This model was proposed by Dörnyei (2005, 2009a). In connection to the complex dynamic systems perspective stated in the previous section, Dörnyei (2009b) also stated that,

The L2 Motivational Self System outlines a motivational landscape with three possible attractor basins, one centred around the internal desires of the learner, the second around the motivational regulations of social pressure exercised by significant or authoritative



people in the learner's environment, and the third around the actual experience of being engaged in the learning process (p.218).

However, before discussing more details of this approach, some background theories related to this framework should be provided.

### **3.7.1 Drawing on the concept of possible selves**

One of the antecedent origins of the L2 Motivational Self System came from the notion of "possible selves" proposed by Markus and Nurius (1986). Possible selves can be described as "visions of the self in a future state" (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.80). They provide a conceptual relationship between cognition and motivation of the individuals, as possible selves represent the ideas of what people might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming (Markus and Nurius, 1986). According to Markus and Nurius (1986) possible selves are important in the way that they act as "incentives for future behaviour" (p.954) of the individuals, for instance, they may be selves to be directed to, or to be avoided. They also provide "an evaluative and interpretive context for the current view of self" (p.954), helping to address some persistent problems, such as the relationship between individuals' self-concepts and behaviours.

In general, the notion of possible selves explains, how people imagine themselves in the future can affect the ways they act at the present. Possible selves, thus, involves many cognitive factors, such as hopes, wishes, fears, goals, fantasies and threats (Markus and Nurius, 1986). With regard to this, possible selves then function as "future self-guides", mirroring "a dynamic, forward-pointing conception that can explain how someone is moved from the present toward the future" (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.80). Regarding the desire to drive towards the future self-state of a person, Higgins (1987) proposed the self-discrepancy theory, explaining the discrepancies between one's self-state representations, namely, the actual self, ideal self and ought self, in which Dörnyei (2009a) has incorporated into his L2 Motivational Self System model. The concept of self-discrepancy will be briefly discussed in the following section.

### **3.7.2 The self-discrepancy concept**

Dörnyei (2009a) also drew on the notion of ideal self and ought self from Higgins's (1987) self-discrepancy theory to elaborate the framework of L2 Motivational Self System. Three basic domains of self-state in Higgins's (1987) theory consist of, first, the "actual self" which refers to "the kind of person an individual believes he or she actually is" (i.e. the self-concept) and "the kind of person an individual believes that others think he or she actually is" (p.320). To put it simply, the actual self is a person's concept about his or her own self. Second, the "ideal self" refers to the representation of the attributes that a person would ideally like to possess (i.e. a representation of hopes, wishes, aspirations) (p.320). Last one, the "ought self" refers to the representation of the attributes that a person think he or she should or ought to possess (i.e. a representation of an individual's sense of obligations, duties, or responsibilities) (p.321). Overall, the self-discrepancy theory tries to postulate that humans are motivated to approach a state where their self-concept "matches" their "personally relevant self-guides" (Higgins, 1987, p.321). Put differently, motivation can be described by a desire to decrease the discrepancy between a person's ideal or ought-to selves and his/her current self (Dörnyei (2009a). Thus, the concepts of ideal and ought selves have been integrated in the L2 Motivational Self System in order to understand motivation to learn L2 of the individuals.

### **3.7.3 The key concept of L2 Motivational Self System**

This section explains the notions of ideal and ought-to selves, particularly in terms of L2 learning. The following section outlines the key components within the L2 Motivational Self System model (Dörnyei, 2009a), which is one of the significant frameworks adopted in this study.

#### **3.7.3.1 Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to L2 selves, and L2 Learning Experience**

Dörnyei and Chan (2013) state that, three primary sources of a person's L2 motivation involve, "the learners' internal desire to become an effective L2 user", "social pressures coming from the

learner's environment to master the L2", and "the actual experience of being engaged in the L2 learning process" (p.439). Drawing on the notions of possible selves and self-discrepancy as mentioned previously, Dörnyei (2005, 2009a) elaborates the framework of the L2 Motivational Self System to conceptualise a person's motivation to learn the L2. The model consists of three components which are the 'Ideal L2 Self', 'Ought-to L2 Self', and 'L2 Learning Experience'.

With regard to the first component, the ideal L2 self, it represents "the L2-specific facet of one's 'ideal self'" (Dörnyei, 2009a, p.29) which refers to the attributes that one would ideally like to possess in L2 learning (Dörnyei, 2005). Dörnyei explains that if the person we ideally want to become speaks the L2, that ideal L2 self would function as a powerful motivator that drives us to learn the L2, because of the desire to decrease the gap or discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves (2005, 2009a). This is aligned with William James's (1950, cited in Oyserman, 2008, p.269) belief that, "the selves we strive to become focus motivational attention, guide behaviour, and are an important source of positive self-regard". Or in other words, as Lamb, M. (2011) puts it, "the self-identity we wish for in the future can be a source of motivation to engage in self-regulated, or autonomous, learning, which will help us achieve that identity" (p.177).

The second component is known as the ought-to L2 self, corresponding to the ought self in Higgins's (1987) work, which refers to the "attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes" (i.e., various duties, obligations, or responsibilities) (Dörnyei, 2009a, p.29). This facet of the ought-to self is specifically related to L2 learning. An example of this could be seen from a person who would like to speak an L2 because he or she is afraid of not getting a good grade or good job, or does not want to disappoint his or her parents, etc. The ought-to L2 selves are closely related to the more extrinsic type of instrumentality (Dörnyei, 2009a, p.29).

The third component of the L2 Motivational Self System is called the L2 learning experience which concerns the "situation-specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and

experience” (Dörnyei, 2005, p.106). For example, it could be related to the impact of the lessons, the teachers, the peers, the experience of failure or success. These factors seem to take part in forming the negative and positive L2 learning experience of a person which may have an influence on the self aspects of that person. In this study, the L2 learning experience of the learners played a major role in helping me to understand how the learners’ L2-related selves were formed and how those selves and L2 experiences relate to their motivation to learn the language. Detailed research inquiry and how to learn about their L2 learning experience will be presented in chapter 4.

### **3.7.3.2 Promotion focus vs. Prevention focus**

Considering the ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self in connection to the instrumentality perspective, Higgins (1998) points out that the ideal self-guides have a “promotion focus” (p.15). This promotion focus concerns a desired end-state and involves hopes, accomplishments, and aspirations. Dörnyei (2009a) also states that this can be one type of instrumental motive; for example, a person might study English very hard in order to gain professional or career advancement. On the other hand, the ought self-guides have a “prevention focus” which involves the responsibilities, safety, and obligations (Higgins, 1998, p.15); for example, a person learning English in order to avoid failing an exam or disappointing one’s parents. Higgins (1998) also adds that people normally direct to the desired end-state (to approach pleasure or to avoid pain). However, their regulatory focus (promotion or prevention) may vary across people and situations.

### **3.7.3.3 Goals, Future self-guides, and Imagination**

Although the notion of goals and the concept of ideal or ought-to selves in future self-guides seem to be very closely related and all concern desired future end-states, some scholars (e.g. Dörnyei, 2009a; Pizzolato, 2006) argue that they are distinct from each other. Dörnyei (2009a) clarifies that while goals may serve as “future-oriented motives” (i.e. a person wants to get a good job and be rich), the ideal and ought-to selves seem to involve “image and sense, approximating what

people actually experience when they are engaged in motivated or goal-directed behaviour” (p.15). To put it simply, the possible selves are concerned with self-relevant thinking (Markus and Nurius, 1986). In relation to L2 learning, Ushioda (2011a) also points out that these future self-representations are considered to have a “strong psychological reality in the current imaginative experience of language learners as they visualize themselves projected into the future as competent L2 users” (p.203). Imagination seems to play a very important role in forming the possible selves within this L2 motivational self system perspective. Thus, this research also focused on exploring learners’ imaginations, thoughts and aspirations, in relation to the L2.

Murray (2011) also states that, a person’s ideal or possible self is manifested as a “mental image or composite of mental images” (p.76). In addition, Wenger (2000, p. 227) also terms imagination, not in a sense of fantasy but, as “constructing an image of ourselves, of our communities, and of the world, in order to orient ourselves, to reflect on our situation, and to explore possibilities”. Wenger (1998) also emphasises his particular use of the imagination concept as he put it,

My use of the concept of imagination refers to a process of expanding our self by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves. Imagination in this sense is looking at an apple seed and seeing a tree. It is playing scales on a piano, and envisioning a concert hall (p.176).

Thus, imagination, in this sense, seems to involve envisioning our future self-images, however, it should also be based on an evaluation of possibilities and our current selves as well. Imagination from this perspective is a helpful process that can help a person understand one’s sense of self in the social world and specifically in L2 learning for this study.

### **3.8 Demotivation in L2 learning**

As mentioned earlier, motivation plays a key role in sustaining learners’ persistence in L2 learning. However, when demotivation is activated and influences learners, they may lose their desire or interest to pursue in the L2 activities and learning. The term ‘demotivation’ is used to describe when learners of L2 lose their motivation to learn the language. According to Dörnyei

and Ushioda (2011), demotivation concerns “specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioural intention or an ongoing action” (p.139). In other words, demotivation can be stimulated by “an external locus” or “a demotivating trigger” which then can become an “internalized process” (Falout, Elwood, and Hood, 2009, p.404). However, some studies have suggested that demotivation is not influenced only by external forces but it can also be caused by a person’s internal forces as well (e.g. attitudes, reduced self-confidence, self-esteem, disinterest in learning) (Falout et al., 2009; Ji and Wei, 2014; Trang and Baldauf, 2007).

Demotivating influence can affect the existing motivation and decrease it. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), a demotivated learner was once a motivated learner but his or her motivation has decreased for some reasons (p.138). In the L2 classroom, demotivated learners may behave differently and ignoring them may result in poor performance in L2 learning. However, Chambers (1993) explored and gathered some behaviours that a demotivated learner may display from the teachers’ view, as follows:

poor concentration; lack of belief in own capabilities; no effort made to learn; ‘What’s the use?’ syndrome; negative or nil response to praise; lethargy; lack of cooperation; disruptive; distracted; distracts other pupils; throws things; shouts out; produces little or no homework; fails to bring materials to lessons; claims to have lost materials (p.13).

In Chambers’s (1993) study, a ‘demotivated’ student is viewed as being different from a ‘less able’ student, especially in terms of a desire to learn and engagement in learning. His study reveals that less able students seemed to display more desire and a higher enthusiasm to take part in learning activities than demotivated students. His result also suggests that despite the less able students’ limited capabilities in learning, teaching less able students seemed to be more productive than demotivated students, as the latter do not response well to extra help. In language learning, learner motivation can be fluctuated due to various factors. If a learner displays the sign of demotivation, there is a need for the language teachers to understand what might cause it and how they can help to prevent or avoid the possible influences that may demotivate learners. The next

sections will discuss the differences between the terms demotivation and amotivation. Following that, the discussion of demotivating factors in the field of L2 learning will be presented.

### **3.8.1 Demotivation vs. Amotivation**

Demotivation is not the same thing as the term amotivation as defined by Deci and Ryan (1985) in their self-determination theory. Amotivation refers to “the state of lacking an intention to act” (p.61). Amotivated person beliefs and feels that the environmental forces or the forces inside himself are “neither predictable nor controllable”, or beyond his control, which then can lead to amotivated behaviours (Deci and Ryan, 1985, p.241). Amotivation can result from a lack of valuing an activity, a lack of feeling in control of it, or a lack of beliefs that the activity will give a desired outcome (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

Vallerand (1997) also points out four major sources of amotivation: “capacity-ability beliefs”, “strategy beliefs”, “capacity-effort beliefs”, and “helplessness beliefs” (p.282). The first one concerns a person’s lack of beliefs about his/her own capacity-ability to perform in the activity, which can lead to amotivation. The second involves the belief that the strategy proposed does not lead to the desired outcomes. This source of amotivation is known as strategy beliefs. The third source refers to capacity-effort beliefs, which explains the amotivation resulting from the feeling that “the behavior is too demanding” for him or her to put effort in performing it (Vallerand, 1997, p.282). Lastly, amotivation can result from helplessness beliefs. This type of amotivational sources explains that a person can be amotivated because of a perception that his or her efforts are “inconsequential considering the enormity of the task to be accomplished” (Vallerand, 1997, p.282). Understanding different beliefs that students have in their language learning may help to explain why some students lose their motivation to perform or continue in the language class, which is an important issue that this study also seeks to explore.

### 3.8.2 Demotivating factors in L2 learning

In the field of instructional communication, Gorham and Christophel (1992) investigate demotivating factors as perceived by learners in college classes. In their study, demotivating influence, as reported by the students, came from various sources, including the factors of context, structure/format, and teacher behaviours. However, according to their results, teacher behaviours accounted for the main source of students' motivation. Negative behaviours of the teachers were found to have more impact on students' demotivation than the teachers' positive behaviours have on students' motivation (Gorham and Christophel, 1992, p.239). Regarding the most frequently reported demotivating factors in Gorham and Christophel's (1992) study, the seven ranked categories included, the teacher is boring or students are confused, "dissatisfaction with grading and assignments", "negative responses to the organization of the course and material", "the teacher's attitude toward students", "dislike and perceived lack of relevance of the subject area", "time of day, length of class, and personal factors", and "the teacher's physical appearance" (p.246). Demotivation was found to be attributed to a "teacher-owned" problem, while motivation was attributed to a "student-owned" state (Gorham and Christophel, 1992, p.239).

In the field of L2 learning, research around demotivation or demotivating influence has also extensively been conducted across wide contexts; in America and Europe, such as in USA (Oxford, 1998), UK (Chamber, 1993), Ireland (Ushioda, 1998), Hungary (Dörnyei, 1998b); in Asia, such as in Saudi Arabia (Yadav and Baniata, 2013; Al-Khairi, 2013), Iran (Meshkat and Hassani, 2012), Pakistan (Krishnan and Pathan, 2013), Vietnam (Trang and Baldauf, 2007), Philippines (Aquino, Cabarrubias, Park, Rabang, Rafael, Yogaratnam, and Oringo, 2016), Malaysia (Dinius, 2013), China (Ji and Wei, 2014), Taiwan (Hu, 2011), Korea (Kim and Seo, 2012), and the prominent one, Japan (Falout et al., 2009; Falout 2012; Murphey, Falout, Elwood, and Hood, 2009; Sakai and Kikuchi, 2009). However, in the context of Thailand, research on the notion of demotivation has been found to be relatively rare compared to other nearby Asian countries. Having said that, demotivating factors of Thai EFL learners are frequently reflected by



studies on problems, difficulties, or needs of learners in their English language learning (e.g. Pawapatcharandom, 2007; Khamkhien, 2010)

With regard to the sources of ESL/EFL learners' demotivation, many studies have revealed that demotivational sources many involve both internal and external forces of the learners (Falout et al., 2009; Ji and Wei, 2014; Sakai and Kikuchi, 2009; Trang and Baldauf, 2007). Some of the external demotivating factors are associated with, for example, the learners' learning environment, teachers and their teaching style, learning content and its difficulties, and low-test scores; while the internal demotivating factors may concern learners' self-esteem, self-confidence, attitudes, and personal experience. According to the study of Falout et al. (2009), the learning environment factors of demotivation include the negative perceptions or experiences that the language learners have for their past language teachers, the use of grammar-translation teaching methods in classroom, and the use of inappropriate level of course, materials and pace of the course. Other sources of demotivation also involve factors like learners' self-denigration, reduced self-confidence, and the value they place on the subject (Falout et al., 2009). Sakai and Kikuchi (2009)'s investigation also found that learning contents and materials, especially the lessons contained long and difficult passages and hugely focusing on grammar, as well as obtaining low test scores were strong demotives for many Japanese students, particularly those who were less motivated. Apart from these, a lack of competence of the teacher, poor teaching styles, inadequate school facilities, and lack of intrinsic motivation were also the sources of students' demotivation (Sakai and Kikuchi, 2009).

Dörnyei (1998b) also investigated demotivating factors, particularly of learners who were identified as demotivated, and found that the top-ranking causes of learners' demotivation concerned the teachers (e.g their personalities, commitment, teaching methods and styles, competence in teaching), inadequate school facilities (e.g. inappropriate learning group sizes or levels, frequent change of teachers), reduced self-confidence of the learners (which is indirectly influenced by the teachers; e.g. learners' perception of too strict grading of teachers), and negative

attitude towards the L2 (e.g. dislike the sound or other features of the language). Other demotivating factors identified by Dörnyei (1998b) can also be presented in the Table 3.2 below.

<b>Demotivating factors</b>	
1.	The teacher (personality, commitment, competence, teaching method)
2.	Inadequate school facilities (group is too big or not the right level; frequent change of teachers)
3.	Reduced self-confidence (experience of failure or lack of success)
4.	Negative attitude towards the L2
5.	Compulsory nature of L2 study
6.	Interference of another foreign language being studied
7.	Negative attitude towards L2 community
8.	Attitudes of group members
9.	Coursebook

**Table 3.2 Demotivation factors (adapted from Dörnyei's (1998b) investigation of demotivating factors)**

Similar to the studies of Gorham and Christophel (1992) and Dörnyei (1998b), Trang and Baldauf (2007) also found that teacher-related factors were the main cause of the students' demotivation in English language learning. In their work, the ineffective and improper teaching methods played the most significant role in impeding the students' motivation. Uncreative ways of conveying knowledge of the teachers were found to be the most demotivating trigger in their study. Other teacher-related factors of demotivation also included particular teacher behaviours, teacher's lack of competence, as well as the grading and assessment of the teachers (Trang and Baldauf, 2007). Chamber (1993) also found that behaviours of teachers that can lessen the students' motivation to learn concerned going on and on without knowing they have already lost the students, not giving clear instructions, criticising and shouting at students when they do not understand, and using out of date textbooks and materials. In Oxford's (1998) investigation, four broad categories related to teacher-related demotivating factors consisted of the personal relationship between the teacher and their students (e.g. a lack of caring, hypercriticism and favouritism), the attitude of teacher towards the course or the material (e.g. lack of enthusiasm in teaching, lack of good management, close-mindedness), style conflicts between teachers and their students (e.g. conflicts

about the amount of structure or detail, or other various conflicts), and the classroom activities' nature (e.g. repetitive, irrelevant, or overloaded activities).

However, a number of studies reported that although teacher-related factors play a key role in learners' demotivation, they were not the most demotivating factors in some particular contexts, such as, in Japan (Sakai and Kikuchi, 2009), in Saudi Arabia (Yadav and Baniata, 2013), or in Iran (Meshkat and Hassani, 2012). In Japan, Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) found that teacher-related factors were not as strongly demotivating as the influence of learning contents and materials or test scores for high school students. While in Yadav and Baniata's (2013) study, the subject-related difficulties (e.g. spelling, loading of vocabulary, listening and structure complexity) were found to be the most demotivating factors for university students. Meshkat and Hassani (2012) also revealed that inadequate school facilities and learning contents and materials were strong demotivating sources for Iranian high school students. Nevertheless, test scores did not seem to be a powerful cause of demotivation in their study in Iran context (Meshkat and Hassani, 2012). Krishnan and Pathan (2013) found similar results as Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), namely that, grammar-based teaching was one of the salient demotivating factors for Pakistani undergraduates. Moreover, they also discovered that negative attitude of society towards the English language was also another demotivating factor which was not included in Sakai and Kikuchi's (2009) work.

Given that motivation plays a key role in driving a learner to accomplish the tasks or to be successful in foreign language learning, there is the need to examine what can potentially influence motivation to learn the language of the learners. By doing this, we may understand better how the learners' motivation can be enhanced, as well as, be more cautious about aspects that may demotivate students. The next section presents a brief summary of L2 motivation research in the field of L2 learning.

### **3.9 A recap of L2 motivation research**

As mentioned earlier, many empirical studies on motivation of individual L2 learners have been conducted with an interest in motivational orientations or categories of reasons for learning the L2 (e.g. Gardner, 1985a; Gardner and Lambert, 1959; Michael, 1984; Muftah and Rafik-Galea, 2013; Samad, Etemadzadeh and Far, 2012). Quantitative approaches have played a prominent part in those L2 motivation studies. Such studies may help us to understand the big picture of motivation, as well as different motivational orientations or certain characteristics of individuals. However, they usually focus on “averages and aggregates that group together people who share certain characteristics” (e.g. low or high intrinsic motivation), rather than on the “differences between individuals” (Ushioda, 2009, p.215).

There have been criticisms of the reliance on static and traditional linear approaches in understanding motivation of L2 learners. Some scholars have suggested that research on L2 motivation should be expanded beyond these static parameters (e.g. Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2009). Ushioda (2009) also points out that such statistical procedures in L2 motivation research can provide us with very little information on how a particular L2 learner is motivated or not motivated and why. She further supports that, “linear models of motivation which reduce learning behaviour to general commonalities cannot do justice to the idiosyncrasies of personal meaning-making in social context” (p.219). All these concerns have moved the L2 motivation research interest to go beyond linear models and towards a new phase, the socio-dynamic period.

Until recently, as discussed previously in the socio-dynamic period section, there has been a growing interest in taking social, cultural, and contextual factors into consideration when explaining the L2 motivation of learners. Ushioda (2009) suggests that, if we are trying to understand particular learners, how they are or they are not motivated to learn the L2 and why, we should also try to understand them as “people”, and as “people who are necessarily located in

particular cultural and historical contexts” (p.216). The contexts in this view, thus, are not seen as independent variables over which the learners have no control; instead, the contexts are seen as having mutually constitutive relationship, “that is dynamic, complex and non-linear” (p.216) with the learners. Thus, motivation, in this sense, should be conceptualized through a “relational” (rather than linear) perspective and should be viewed as “an organic process that emerges through the complex system of interrelations” (p.216).

In addition, according to Syed (2001), motivation of a person is a result of “their cultural understanding of that situation and their culturally-based choice of action”. An interpretation of motivation, thus, should incorporate the influence that contextual factors have on the person. He also suggests that, “motivation needs to be examined from the point of view of those involved rather than from pre-conceived domains” (p.128). Therefore, to understand motivation behind this perspective, studies which are qualitative, contextually grounded and identity-oriented should be called for. This study, thus, integrated the recent approaches within the socio-dynamic period of L2 motivation research, consisting of the person-in-context relational view, the L2 motivational self system, and motivation from the complex dynamic systems perspective, to help examine and understand the complex and dynamic nature of learners’ motivation in this study.

### **3.10 Motivation research in Asia and South-East Asia**

L2 motivation research has received a lot of attention across many Asian countries in the past decade. There has been a considerable amount of L2 motivation research in East Asian countries, such as China (e.g. Gu, 2009; Peng, 2015), Japan (e.g. Carreira, 2011; Gobel and Mori, 2006), Hong Kong (e.g. Humphreys and Spratt, 2008), Taiwan (e.g. Lai and Ting, 2013), and Korea (e.g. Lee, 2014). Recently, many studies of L2 motivation have also been conducted in several parts of South-East Asia: Vietnam (e.g. Hoa, 2013), Laos (e.g. Souriyawongsa, Raob and Abidin, 2012), Thailand (e.g. Choosri and Intharaksa, 2011), Malaysia (e.g. Ming, Ling and Jaafar, 2011; Muftah and Rafik-Galea, 2013; Zubairi and Sarudin, 2009), Indonesia (e.g. Lamb, 2007a; Lamb,

2012), and Singapore (e.g. Chan and Chi, 2010). However, in the same vein as Western countries, many L2 motivation studies in South-East Asia have been dominated by the goal-directed learning orientations, and have usually relied much on quantitative approaches. Additionally, there has been a relatively limited amount of qualitative research on L2 motivation, especially in relation to the notion of identity and self, in different sociocultural settings in South-East Asia.

### **3.11 Motivation research in Thailand**

In Thailand, there has been a growing interest in researching L2 motivation in recent years. Choosri and Intharaksa (2011), for example, investigated the relationship between motivation and English learning achievement of 140 Thai students in vocational schools. Questionnaires and interviews were used in their study. The findings indicated that there were no significant differences in motivation between the high and low achievement group of students. However, the study revealed that instrumental motivation seems to have more impact on Thai students than integrative motivation. Oranpattanachai (2013) also studied the use of integrative and instrumental motivation in predicting students' desires to continue studying English after finishing their English language requirement at the university, using questionnaires as a data collection tool. Her study included 420 first year Thai students of a government university. She found that instrumental reasons for learning English were reported by the students as being more important than integrative reasons. Both instrumental motivation and integrative motivation were found as significant predictors of the students' desires to further study English beyond the requirement.

Other studies have also been conducted to investigate Thai students' types of motivation (Degang, 2010), and the relationship between students' motivation and their English proficiency (Kitjaroonchai and Kitjaroonchai, 2012; Kitjaroonchai, 2013; Phettongkam, 2009). However, most of these L2 motivation studies have not, yet, gone beyond the concept of integrative motivation, which is regarded as ambiguous and problematic in explaining L2 motivation

nowadays. Little research has been conducted on L2 motivation and its relationship with the aspects of self and identity of Thai students (e.g. Bornmann, 2010; Teer, 2013; Siridetkoon and Dewaele, 2017). Qualitative studies on L2 motivation, especially through narrative approaches, - is scarce in the context of Thailand. Therefore, it is hoped that this research can shed light on the new realm of L2 motivation research in Thailand and the use of narratives in researching motivation. Also, insights into these areas may expand the current knowledge of L2 motivation in the Thai context which would be an important contribution to L2 motivation theory and future research.

### **3.12 The concepts of identity and self**

Recently, the aspects of self and identity have been linked to the notion of motivation, especially in relation to L2 learning. As mentioned earlier in Section 3.7, the concepts of selves (ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self) have been incorporated into the L2 Motivational Self System framework (Dörnyei, 2009), in order to help explain L2 motivation of the learners. However, the general concepts of self and identity are relatively broad and multi-faceted. Therefore, it may be useful to have a good understanding about the terminologies, and how these concepts are related to each other, especially in the field of L2 learning.

#### **3.12.1 Identity**

The concept of identity has a long history in various academic disciplines. In this past decade, the notion of identity has become increasingly prominent in second language acquisition (SLA) and second language (L2) learning research. However, the term ‘identity’ has often been conceptualized in many different ways, according to numerous theories that researchers have constructed in order to apply to their contexts of study. Norton (2000), for example, defines identity as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p.5). Wenger (2000, p.241-2) also provides the definition of identity as “an experience of

multimembership, an intersection of many relationships that you hold into the experience of being a person, at once one and multiple”. According to Lamb (2013, p.37), identity involves both “how we view ourselves and how others view us; but also, significantly, something that we live day-to-day”. Hall (1996) prefers to use the term “identification” instead of “identity” as he considers that identity represents a fix and stable state, while identification is seen as a construction which is always changing and in process. The terms “subject positions” and “identity” are sometimes also used interchangeably in much research on identity (Block, 2007b, p. 866).

As can be seen, identity is viewed as a fluid and complex concept (Norton, 2000), as it can develop over time and may differ from one social context to another. It is also regarded as socially and culturally constructed. This is because a person’s identity can be shaped and influenced by their local contexts and social networks within the community they associate in. This social network can be a group such as family, friends, classmates, social class, tribes or school. Different economic family backgrounds, social classes, and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) seem to influence differently on their academic achievement and their identity. Therefore, identity is a difficult area to work with since it involves many aspects and is contextually varied which makes it hard to generalise.

### **3.12.2 Identity and self**

After reviewing some relevant literatures on the concepts of identity and self, I found that the relationship between these two concepts is often unclear. Regarding the differences between these two notions, White and Ding (2009, p.336) state that identity is often understood as outer, “negotiated during social intercourse”, while self is viewed as inner, or “a set of beliefs about who we are”. Similarly, in Taylor’s conclusive view of self, which followed Baumeister’s definition of ‘self’ (1997, as cited in Taylor 2013, p.9), she explains that:

the self comprises cognitive, affective and physical aspects, being regarded as a collection of thoughts about what the individual can and cannot do- both with their mind and with



their body, what is important and what is not, as well as what they like or dislike (Taylor, 2013, p.10).

However, this understanding of the self as an internal aspect is considered to be over-simplified as the self is also shaped by our social association (White and Ding, 2009). Van Lier (2007) states that the self and identity are sometimes considered as synonyms and occasionally used together as “self-identity” (Giddens, 1991). However, he provides a clear link between these two concepts by concluding that “identities are ways of relating the self to the world” (Van Lier, 2007a, p.58). That means, in my interpretation, identity involves ways of representing oneself, both from the person’s internal individual perspective (who they think they are) and the external and interpersonal one (who they represent to others), to the social world or it can also be simply called a person’s self-representation. In this study, identities of the learners in terms of the actual people, not just the language learners, were the main interest. Moreover, the learners’ senses of selves, or their internal thoughts and perspectives about themselves, both at the present time and projecting to the future, were also the main focus of this study.

The next section discusses the link between identity, self, and motivation in L2 learning.

### **3.12.3 Identity and self in L2 learning**

In recent years, there have been many attempts from L2 researchers and educators, in various contexts around the world, to develop the understanding of identity or self notions in the field of second language acquisition and in the L2/FL learning (e.g. Block 2007a; Lamb, T.E. 2011; Lamb, M. 2011; Gu 2013; White and Ding 2009). However, as the concept of identity is complex and has many facets, there are various perspectives on researching identity in the L2 learning area. Block (2007a), for example, provides a detailed presentation of L2 identities in different L2 learning contexts; nevertheless, he does not give a clear definition of L2 identity. Instead, he explains the term “language identity” as “the assumed and/or attributed relationship between one’s sense of self and a means of communication which might be known as a language (e.g. English)” (p.40). Benson, Barkhuizen, Bodycott and Brown (2013) develop a clearer concept of

L2 identity as to “any aspect of a person’s identity that is connected to their knowledge or use of a second language” (p.28). This definition differs from Block’s (2007a) term of language identity which implies a person’s relationship with a particular language that they use to correspond as membership of those language communities. Instead, Benson et al.’s (2013) definition of L2 identity relates more broadly to the identities of bilingual or multilingual people. To explain, this sense of L2 identities involves:

The kinds of identity issues that surround different levels of second language competence and performance; the sense of being a ‘learner’ or ‘user’ of a second language; the various identity terms that are used to describe multilingual individuals in various contexts (first, second and foreign language speaker, language learner and user, native and non-native speaker, etc.); and the identity resources that are associated with specific languages and the cultures associated with them (Benson et al. 2013, p.29).

The development of L2 identity includes a person’s second language learning experiences and “an ongoing sense” of who they are (Benson et al. 2013, p.2). Most of the studies on language and L2 identity have been done in migrant or study abroad contexts (e.g. Norton 2000; Block 2007a; Benson et al. 2013). The above concept of L2 identity, proposed by Benson et al. (2013), yields helpful insights into the L2 dimension of the identity aspect. However, as mentioned in the previous section, this study aimed to adopt a wider concept of identity, which is the identity as the real persons, the core concept of the person-in-context framework (Ushioda, 2009a), rather than just the identity as an L2 learner or user.

#### **3.12.4 Identity, self and motivation**

The relationships between identity and L2 motivation have been studied for many years. The focus of current perspectives on identity in L2 motivation has expanded beyond the concepts of ethnolinguistic identity (Ushioda, 2011a), which understood a person’s identity as “a stable trait, one shaped largely by birth and the structuring experiences of early life” (Lamb, M. 2011, p.178). The emphasis of this previous identity work was on “what a person had become, rather than on what they might become” (p.178), or in other words, it only focused on identities from an individual’s past histories. Nevertheless, identity is seen as an ongoing process, as van Lier (2007,

p.58) explains, that when our lives change significantly, as in the situation when we learn a new language, we need to forge new ways of linking the self to new worlds and words (or we need to construct new identities). In addition, Block (2007a, p.27) also state that identities “are about negotiating new subject positions at the crossroads of the past, present and future”. The extent to which we feel comfortable with the new identity construction may connect greatly with our motivation in language learning (Ushioda, 2013a). As can be seen, identity is an evolving process. Thus, when studying L2 motivation in relation to identity, it is important to consider the identity aspects across time, covering the past, present, and projecting to the future.

According to Benson et al. (2013, p.18), the concept of identity has multifacets involving both the “inner” and “outer” self, “the self and other”, and “the individual and the social” (e.g. embodied identity, reflective identity, projected identity, recognized identity, imagined identity). However, to understand the identity concept in relation to L2 motivation, this study was particularly interested in two ways of viewing identity of a person, reflexive identity and imagined identity.

The reflexive identity refers to “the self’s view of the self” or the perception of who we think we are (Benson et al., 2013, p.19). This can be closely related to the notion of self-concept which Baumeister (2005, p.247), defines as the ideas about ourselves or “the individual’s beliefs about himself or herself, including the person’s attributes and who and what the self is”. However, he also argues that not every aspect within the self-concept would be part of a person’s identity, such as personality attributes like being talkative or friendly. This is because the sense of identity normally answers the question of “who are you?”, while self-concept may also answer questions like “what kind of person are you?” or “how good are you?” (Baumeister, 2005, p.247). Other dimensions of self which include self-esteem (or how much value is attached to the self-possession), self-image (how you view yourself), or ideal self, are regarded as the components of self-concept (Rogers, 1959).

Imagined identity, however, refers to “the self’s view of its future possibilities”, or the conception of who we think we may become in the future (Benson et al., 2013, p.19). This term corresponds to the possible future self of a person. Dörnyei (2009a) explains that, “the more elaborate the possible self in terms of imaginative, visual and other content elements, the more motivational power it is expected to have” (p.19). This conception that people’s envisioning of their future possible identities and communities to participate in could have an impact on their motivation also aligns with what Canagarajah (2004, p.117) posits, namely “what motivates the learning of a language is the construction of the identities we desire and the communities we want to join in order to engage in communication and social life”. Therefore, the imagined identity can be one of the good predictors of the learners’ motivation to learn L2 which was one aspect that this study aimed to explore. To explain why the notions of identity, self, and L2 learning experience of the learners should be considered when examining motivation of the L2 learners, Ushioda (2009, p.225) has summarised that,

By integrating a range of relevant theoretical frameworks to inform our analysis of interaction processes and relational contextual phenomena, we may enrich and diversify our understanding of how motivation shapes and is shaped through engagement in L2-related activity and the engagement of identities and engagement with possible selves.

### **3.13 Other related self-theories**

There are other related self-theories that are linked to the motivation of an individual to learn the L2. I would like to illustrate here three self-theories, that have furthered my understanding on L2 motivation of the participants in this study, which include the self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-regulation theories. Understanding these self-theoretical concepts greatly helped me to develop richer insights into the self-related dimensions of L2 motivation, especially during the data analysis, which will be presented later in chapters 6 and 7.

### 3.13.1 Self-efficacy

Another self-related concept that seems to be closely related to motivation of an individual is self-efficacy belief. The notion of self-efficacy was proposed by Bandura (1977) and has been widely used in various field such as psychology, sociology, and education. According to Bandura (1993), perceived self-efficacy can be defined as “people’s beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their own level of functioning and over events that affect their lives” (p.118). Schunk (1991) defines self-efficacy as “an individual’s judgments of his or her capabilities to perform given actions” (p.207). Bandura (1994) explains that the self-efficacy beliefs of people influence how they feel, think, motivate themselves and act. Efficacy expectations of people determine the degree of effort they will make and also determine the continuation of their persistence when faced with obstacles and unpleasant experience (Bandura, 1977). In the same vein, Zimmerman (2000a, p.86) addresses that, self-efficacy beliefs have an impact on motivation in academic learning of a person, in the way that, they can influence the person’s “choice of activities, level of effort, persistence, and emotional reactions”. In terms of emotion, Pajares (1996) explains that low self-efficacious people are likely to believe that things are more difficult than they actually are, which may induce negative emotions (e.g. depress, stress, or anxiety), while high self-efficacious people may have more positive emotional reactions to difficult tasks.

The concept of self-efficacy has been widely studied within the field of L2 learning and teaching. For example, Graham et al. (2016) found that self-efficacy and optimism about future progress plays an important role in language learners’ motivational trajectory. Hsieh and Kang (2010) also found that students with higher levels of self-efficacy provided stronger personal control attributions than those with lower levels of self-efficacy. In the work of Mills, Pajares, and Herron (2007), positive correlation between students’ sense of efficacy for self-regulation and their perceived value of the French language was also discovered. Their study also indicated that students who perceived themselves as being able to use their self-regulatory strategies in doing academic work effectively were more likely to experience success in learning the French

language. In their reviewing of 32 empirical studies on self-efficacy between 2003-2012, Raoofi, Tan, and Chan (2012) found that students' self-efficacy is an influential predictor of students' language performance. It is also shown in Graham's (2004) study that low self-efficacy and perceived task difficulty were also the key aspects of students' giving up in language learning. With regard to L2 motivation, Schunk (2003) also supports that perceived self-efficacy of students plays an important role in their motivation and learning as the students have sense of self-efficacy to reach their goals at the beginning of the learning task.

Regarding the sources of self-efficacy, Bandura (2012, p.13) describes that people's beliefs in their capabilities can be formed by four main sources. The first one is by "mastery experience". He explains that people seem to expect quick results and become easily discouraged by failure if they master only easy successes. To develop a resilient sense of efficacy, people need to have experience in overcoming difficulties "through perseverant effort" (p.13). Once people are convinced that they have the capabilities to master obstacles and to succeed, they would emerge stronger from adversity (Bandura, 1994). Thus, resilience can be developed by "learning how to manage failure" (Bandura, 2012, p.13).

The second way of building self-efficacy is through "social modeling" (Bandura, 2012, p.13). By seeing others who are similar to them succeed by sustained effort, Bandura (2012) states that people may develop beliefs that they also can have capabilities to accomplish in comparable tasks as well. The influence of models' behaviours on people's perceived self-efficacy depends on perceived similarity the people have for the models (Bandura, 1994).

The third way to create self-efficacy is through "social persuasion" (Bandura, 2012). According to Bandura (1994), people tend to put greater effort if they are persuaded, verbally, to believe in their own efficacy. In addition, persuading people that they lack capabilities would make them give up easily when faced difficulties. By doing that people are also likely to avoid challenging tasks. Effective efficacy builders do not only give positive appraisals; instead, they would create

situations where people can be able to reach success and would avoid putting people in places where they tend to fail frequently (Bandura, 1994). Therefore, success of people should be judged from their self-improvement, rather than from winning against others (Bandura, 1994).

The last way to strengthen self-efficacy can also be done by “reducing anxiety and depression” (Bandura, 2012, p.13). Generally, people seem to judge their own capabilities somewhat based on their physical and emotional states (Bandura, 1994); for instance, they interpret their physical fatigue, pains, and aches from tasks involving strength and stamina, as signs of physical incapacity. Personal efficacy of people can also be influenced by their emotions, such as mood or stress. Bandura (1994) explains that positive emotional states, like good mood, can enhance people’s perceived self-capabilities, whereas negative emotional states, like despondent mood, can weaken their self-beliefs of efficacy. Thus, Bandura (1994, 2012) states that one way to enhance self-efficacy beliefs of people can be achieved by reducing people’s stress and correcting the misinterpretations of their physical and emotional states.

Individuals’ self-beliefs of their efficacy can influence whether they think in “self-enabling” or “self-debilitating” directions, pessimistically or optimistically (Bandura, 2012, p.13). They also have an impact on motivation of people in sustaining their effort in the face of threatening situations or failure as well (Bandura, 2012; Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). In this study, the self-efficacy concept provides a useful foundation for understanding L2 motivation of the learners, particularly in terms of how their beliefs about their own abilities in L2 could influence their persistence and motivation to learn the L2. Another self-related concept that is closely related to self-efficacy belief and motivation of people is the notion of self-worth which will be discussed in the following section.

### **3.13.2 Self-esteem and Self-worth**

Self-esteem is another notion that has been mentioned for a long time in the field of social psychology and education. With regard to the definition of it, self-esteem can generally be

described as a totality of positive or negative attitude that a person has for oneself which usually involves a person's self-acceptance or self-respect (Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach and Rosenberg, 1995). Self-esteem has been discussed often in relation to other self-related topics (e.g. self-worth, self-efficacy, and self-regulation). Stets and Burke (2014) state that research on self-esteem generally focuses on the global self-esteem which describes an individual's feelings of self-worth. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) also states that self-worth theory is concerned with an attempt to maintain the self-esteem of a person.

According to Stets and Burke (2014), self-worth can be described as “the degree to which individuals feel positive about themselves, that is, they feel that they are good and valuable” (p.410). They further explain that the individuals would behave in a way so that their positive-self-views are protected and enhanced. As Covington (1984) explains in his article on the self-worth theory of achievement motivation, the desire of students to defend their sense of worth and personal value is a key element of all classroom achievement. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p.17) also point out that the need to maintain a sense of value and worth of a person may generate many “unique patterns of motivational beliefs and face-saving behaviours” in school contexts, especially when the student's self-esteem is threatened by poor performance. In such circumstances, the student may react by “not trying” or intentionally “withholding effort” in order to maintain his or her self-worth and let the failure to be attributed to the lack of effort instead of the lack of ability (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.17). With regard to this, self-worth theory clearly features the importance of an individual's perceived competence or capabilities, which is a central concept of self-efficacy beliefs as mentioned previously in Section 3.13.1. As Covington (1984) also states, “perceptions of ability are critical to this self-protective process, since for many students the mere possession of high ability signifies worthiness” (p.4). Thus, self-esteem, self-worth and self-efficacy are interrelated to one another. Another self-related concept that seems to be interconnected to the self-theories mentioned above is the self-regulation, which I am going to discuss next.



### 3.13.3 Self-regulation and Learner Autonomy

In social cognitive theory, Bandura (2001) describes self-regulation as concerned with individuals' "deliberative ability to make choices and action plans" as well as "to give shape to appropriate courses of action and to motivate and regulate their execution" (p.8). In the field of language learning, Chamot (2014) generally defines self-regulation as the "learners' efforts to direct their own learning by setting goals, planning how to achieve them, monitoring the learning task, using learning strategies to solve problems, and evaluating their own performance" (p.78). Self-regulatory mechanisms involve a number of cognitive processes of a person (e.g. personal forethought, self-monitoring, self-appraisal, self-evaluation) which can then be translated into incentives (cognitive motivator), linking to action (Bandura, 1991). This self-regulatory capability is regarded as a key component in personal agency.

Another term emerged from self-regulation research within academic settings is also known as "self-regulated learning" (Dinsmore, Alexander and Loughlin, 2008). The terms self-regulation and self-regulated learning are sometimes found to be used interchangeably in the educational literature (Dinsmore et al, 2008). McDonough (2001) also points out that the concept of self-regulated learning is more active in terms like "self-direction", "self-instruction", and "autonomous learning" (p.323). According to Pintrich (2000, p.453), self-regulated learning can be described as,

an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behaviour, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment.

Zimmerman (1990) also points out that self-regulated learners can be distinguished from other learners by, first, their awareness of strategic relations between regulatory processes and learning outcomes and, second, their application of those strategies to accomplish their achievement goals. Nevertheless, the focus is on the use of those self-regulatory strategies as Zimmerman (2000b) emphasises that self-regulatory skills can yield little value if one "cannot motivate themselves to

use them” (p.17). In addition, the regulatory processes as learning strategies can be influenced by a person’s self-regulatory efficacy belief which refers to beliefs about one’s ability “to plan and manage specific areas of functioning” (Zimmerman, 2000b, p.18).

According to Pintrich (2000, p.454), self-regulation is made up of four different phases, consisting of, Phase 1: Forethought, planning, and activation, Phase 2: Monitoring, Phase 3: Control, and Phase 4: Reaction and reflection. However, Schunk (2005) points out that these phases of regulation may occur at any time of the task engagement and learners may only apply some of them, not all, depending on learning situations and individuals. From the model, it appears that motivational processes are involved in all phases of self-regulation. Pintrich (2000) explains that motivational aspects in Phase 1 (forethought, planning, and activation) involve an adoption of goal orientation, self-efficacy beliefs, ease of learning judgements, perceptions of difficulty of task, task value and interest activation. The motivational processes involved in Phase 2 (monitoring) is concerned with one’s awareness of motivation and monitoring of it. Schunk (2005) explains that having awareness and monitoring of motivation means to be “aware of one’s self-efficacy, values, attributions (perceived causes of outcomes), interests, and anxieties” (p.86). Motivational control, activated in phase 3 (control), refers to the selection and adaptation of strategies for maintaining one’s motivation (Pintrich, 2000, p.454). This includes the use of strategies for individuals to control their motivation and effect; for example, the use of positive self-talk (e.g. “I can do this”) to regulate self-efficacy; or promising oneself extrinsic rewards (e.g. watching movies, taking a nap) to enhance their extrinsic motivation (Pintrich, 2000, p.464).

Motivational processes involved in the last phase (reaction and reflection) are concerned with emotional reactions that individuals have about their outcomes (e.g. sad, happy, proud) and their reflection on reasons for those outcomes. Pintrich (2000) further explains that how individuals reflect or make attributions for their success and failure will influence their motivation to achieve in new tasks; for example, some people may attribute their failure towards bad luck or lack of sufficient efforts, rather than their inabilities, to protect their self-worth and motivation for future

tasks. The concepts of self-regulation and its relationship with motivational processes are particularly helpful for this study in understanding what motivational aspects may involve in each stage of self-regulation, making the data interpretation more insightful.

Another concept that is often mentioned in the literature around the self-regulation and self-regulation learning is 'learner autonomy'. The term 'autonomy' has been regarded in language learning as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981, p.3). Holec (1981) explains that to take charge of one's own learning, a person has to take responsibility for all the decisions related to these following aspects of learning: setting their own objectives, planning contents and methods to be used, monitoring their learning processes, as well as assessing their own performance. From the above definitions, it seems that learner autonomy and self-regulated learning shares some similar key aspects (e.g. setting goals, planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's own learning). However, Murray (2014) argues that there are some differences between these two concepts when considering the dimension of social environment. For example, in the learner autonomy area, learners are expected to take responsibility in designing their own learning tasks; while in the area of self-regulated learning, teachers tend to set learning tasks for learners and give them "varying degrees of freedom to select learning strategies" (Murray, 2014, p.323). Benson (2011a, p.44) also supports that, "the concept of self-regulation is somewhat narrower than the concept of autonomy". He further asserts that studies on self-regulated learning can potentially yield rich insights into the area of cognitive aspects of control over learning which may serve a better understanding to the researchers in learner autonomy area (Benson, 2011a). With regard to motivation, Vibulphol (2016, p.64) found that applying "autonomy-support strategies" in language classroom can potentially enhance students' internal motivation and can also nurture their sustainable learning of English both inside and outside the language classroom. The aforementioned concepts provide a good basis for understanding L2 motivation in reference to the sense of autonomy of the learners, which is helpful in analysing the data of this study.

### **3.14 Cultural capital and language education**

Given that there is a growing interest in understanding L2 motivation through the concepts of self and context recently, aspects related to the contextual environment of the learners, such as socio-cultural and economic background, or family situations, should be taken into account. Another important social aspect that may also have a significant impact on language learning of individuals lies in the concept of ‘cultural capital’, developed by Pierre Bourdieu in the early 1960s. Bourdieu and Passeron’s (1977) term of cultural capital can refer to “the knowledge, credentials and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups in relation to specific sets of social forms” (as cited in, Norton, 2013, p.6). According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital can be distinguished into three forms: the embodied state, the objectified state, and the institutionalized state. The embodied state refers to the form of capital that is fundamentally linked to long-lasting dispositions of the body and mind of a person (Bourdieu, 1986). This type of cultural capital cannot be separated from the person who holds it, for example, the competence or skills of the person (Weininger and Lareau, 2007). Another important embodied capital also includes the knowledge that a person seeks by oneself or through formal education, such as being able to read and write a language. Bourdieu (1986) also explains that the accumulation of this embodied cultural capital presupposes the investment of time which must be devoted by the investor. Also, the embodied cultural capital cannot be immediately transmitted, like money or property rights (Bourdieu, 1986).

The objectified state of cultural capital refers to material objects or cultural goods, such as pictures, books, instruments, and machines (Bourdieu, 1986). Unlike the embodied cultural capital, the objectified cultural capital can be instantaneously transmitted as economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The last type of cultural capital is called the institutionalized state which means it can exist in institutionalized form such as academic qualifications or educational credentials. In other word, this cultural capital is perceived as a certificate of cultural competence which is officially recognized and value-guaranteed (Bourdieu, 1986). For example, a person who holds a

doctorate or a master's degree are likely to be viewed as having more capital than the one who has no degree or only holds an undergraduate degree.

According to Bourdieu (1986), the academic qualification (institutionalized state) makes it possible to compare the holders of qualification and those who do not hold them. This form of cultural capital can also have potential to “establish conversion rates between cultural capital and economic capital by guaranteeing the monetary value of a given academic capital” (Bourdieu, 1986, p.248). That means, a person can convert his or her cultural capital into economic capital through guaranteed academic qualification which can then lead to a successful career (Sablan and Tierney, 2014). Therefore, this institutionalized cultural capital can help the person to promote economic capital (financial capital) as well as social capital or which Bourdieu (1986) terms it as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (p.249). Reay (2000) also summarises that social capital is formed “through social processes between the family and wider society and is made up of social networks” (p.569). One form of capital can be converted into another form of capital; for example, the economic capital can be transformed into cultural capital, or the cultural capital can be transformed into social capital (Reay, 2000).

In the field of education, Kraaykamp and van Eijck (2010) also found that institutionalized capital (educational levels) of parents can have positive impacts on educational attainment of their children; that is, parents with high education tend to support their kids with good resources to do well in school. The aspects of cultural capital are very important in this study as it helped to develop a better understanding on how the learners' cultural capital and personal background could relate or influence their motivation to learn English language.

Therefore, cultural capital is believed to be one source of social inequality as Tzanakis (2011, p.76) states that, “inequalities in cultural capital reflect inequalities in social class”. These

inequalities in social class of parents are also found to influence their involvement in shaping education for their children (Papapolydorou, 2016). Papapolydorou (2016) explains that parents from different class tend to maximize educational opportunities for their children in different ways. From her studies, she found that the middle-class parents seem to make use of their social capital or networks to negotiate better educational provision for their children more often than the working-class parents. This might reflect “barriers” that the working-class parents have due to their social class background and might limit them from maximizing the educational opportunities for their children (e.g. they may not feel as confident as the middle/upper class parents when negotiating educational advantage for their kids) (Papapolydorou, 2016). Reay (2001) also found that working-class students sometimes find it difficult to become themselves within the context of higher education, as working-class education is made to favour middle-class interests, making the working-class students struggle to find a sense of belonging. Social and cultural capital inequalities, thus, can be important factors in educational inequalities.

With regard to the area of language learning, Norton (2013) notes that cultural capital may also influence language learners’ investment in the language as the learners would reevaluate their sense of identities and desire for the future based on the value of their cultural capital. She also clarifies that,

If learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. Learners expect or hope to have a good return on that investment – a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources (Norton, 2013, p.50).

Investment in language learning of the learners, thus, should be perceived within the sociological dimension as well and should aim to make “a meaningful connection between a learner’s desire and commitment to learn a language, and their complex and changing identity” (Norton, 2013, p.6). To conclude, cultural capital possessed by the learners and their family may have an impact on their language learning in different ways. The concept of cultural capital provides rich insights into how the learners’ personal or family background, in terms of competence, knowledge, or

economic status, may influence their motivation to learn the L2, which is the main focus in this study.

### **3.16 Summary of the chapter**

This chapter provided a concise overview of theoretical concepts and key literature related to the notion of motivation in L2 learning, self and identity, as well as some sociocultural aspects associated with L2 motivation. Reviewing these relevant literatures was a significant process that helped me to formulate my understanding on development of the main subject areas of this study. It helped me to identify gaps in theories, then set out the platform for which this study is based. Reviewing the literature also gave me valuable opportunities and sources to compare my findings with the existing and previous work which was a very important process in introducing new insights and knowledge to the field.

This literature review chapter focuses on L2 motivation. It started out by introducing the concept of individual differences in L2 learning, followed by a brief explanation of the motivation concept as well as some challenges in researching motivation. Next, the concept of L2 motivation and investment in language learning were discussed. In order to cover the opposite aspect of motivation, the term ‘demotivation’ was also explained together with some demotivating factors in L2 learning. As L2 motivation research has been developed constantly since the late 1950s, an evolution of L2 motivation theories was also discussed so it gave a whole picture of L2 motivation theory development. The main focus of this study, however, went for the latest phase of L2 motivation research which is the socio-dynamic period, particularly concentrating on viewing motivation in a more complex perspective that is non-linear and dynamic. In regard to this, some relevant concepts like self, identity, as well as sociocultural contexts were also included in the literature chapter in order to enhance my understanding of L2 motivation based on those perspectives. In the next chapter, the methodological approach of this study will be provided, with

detailed information about research aim and research questions, as well as some important issues of ethical considerations.



# CHAPTER 4

## METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodological approach and design adopted in this research study. It begins by presenting the research aims and questions. Then, research paradigm and rationale of the use of qualitative strategy are detailed afterwards. The next sections then describe participants and discuss methods that were employed in this study. The chapter also explains how the data were collected and analysed, respectively. Finally, limitations of this study and ethical considerations are also presented in the last section.

### 4.2 Research aims

As mentioned earlier, the main aim of this study is to investigate motivation of Thai university students in English language learning across time, as well as to explore how Thai learners visualize their possible L2-related selves. It was expected that this study would give a better understanding of how Thai learners' motivation was shaped throughout the time-span and what kind of factors or influence might have been involved in such formations or trajectories of motivation. Thus, the hope is that, an improvement of L2 pedagogy, curriculum, or classroom environment related to those factors might be offered and implemented, in order to enhance and maintain Thai learners' positive feelings and attitudes towards English language learning, which may help them to sustain their investment to acquire L2 knowledge autonomously and continually in the long term. Following on from the aim of this study, three main research questions, as well as sub-research questions are addressed below:

**Aim of this study:** To investigate Thai university students' motivation in English language learning across time

**Research Question 1:** What are Thai students' general attitude orientations towards the English language?

**Research Question 2:** What motivational trajectory patterns did Thai students have over time?

**Sub-question 2.1:** Are there any identifiable critical incidents involved in Thai students' English learning experience? If so, how do those critical incidents play a role in students' motivation?

**Sub-question 2.2:** What kind of factors are associated with changes in motivational disposition of the students across time?

**Research Question 3:** How do Thai university students visualize their possible future selves in relation to using English?

**Sub-question 3.1:** How do Thai students form their senses of self in English language learning?

**Sub-question 3.2:** To what extent do the students' imagined possible selves help to explain or predict their motivation to learn English?

Another thing that should also be addressed here is that the initial intention of this study was to present different points of view in interpreting a person's motivation to learn a foreign language. This supported what Syed (2001) emphasizes, namely that "motivation needs to be examined from the point of view of those involved rather than from pre-conceived domains" (p.128). This describes a gap in most of the previous L2 motivation studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (e.g. Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993; Clément, Dörnyei and Noels, 1994), which have predominantly adopted these pre-conceived domains and a quantitative approach. Thus, to understand motivation behind this new perspective, the study was carefully designed within the application of a qualitative approach. The next sections discuss research paradigm, strategy, and methods employed by this study.

### **4.3 Research paradigm and methodological considerations**

#### **4.3.1 Philosophical background, epistemology and ontology**

Before detailing how this study was framed and designed, it may be helpful that the fundamental worldview adopted by this study is stated. *Philosophical worldview* or *paradigm* is defined by Creswell (2014, p.6), as “a general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher brings to a study”. Guba (1990, p.17) defines paradigm as “a basic set of beliefs that guide action”. In addition, Bryman (2016) also uses the term paradigm to refer to “a cluster of beliefs and dictates that for scientists in a particular discipline influence what should be studied, how research should be done, [and] how results should be interpreted” (p.637). In any research, types of worldviews or beliefs that researchers hold will often lead to embracing a particular approach in their study (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, it is important for the researchers to think about “how they are paradigmatically and philosophically positioned” as their positioning might “influence their research related thinking and practice” (Sikes, 2004, p.19). Next, I am going to discuss the paradigm and philosophical perspectives adopted in this research study.

In social science, two important paradigms that are widely used to study social phenomena include the doctrines of positivism and interpretivism. The positivist epistemology maintains that the study of social reality should apply the same principles and methodical procedures as in the natural sciences (Bryman, 2016). Positivism affirms the belief in total objectivity (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2011), that is what is known as the knowledge or reality are independent or totally separated from the inquirer or researcher. The positivist ontology asserts a belief in “a single identifiable reality” or “a single truth” (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2011, p.102) that can be observed and measured by scientific methods. Interpretivism, however, offers the opposite assumptions to the positivists. It shares a perspective that the study of human beings and social action is different from the subject matter of those studied in natural sciences. The ‘knowledge’ within this paradigm greatly relies on the interpretation and perceptions of people in the situations.

The 'truth' then can be multiple and subjective. Furthermore, Walter (2010, p.21) also explains that the world we live is "the world of meaning" in which "shared understandings" can influence a human's actions. Therefore, to understand social phenomena, it is essential that we understand the motives and interpretation of the world of people in society. Interpretivism, thus, requires "a different logic of research procedure" (Bryman, 2016, p.26) from the positivist framework.

With regard to the philosophical assumptions of any research, two core issues that should be carefully considered involve the positioning of 'epistemology' and 'ontology'. The epistemology and ontology are central concepts in the domain of philosophy which concern the understanding of the scope and nature of the knowledge. Epistemology, or what may also be known as the theory of knowledge, concerns the question of what should be regarded as "acceptable knowledge in a discipline" (Bryman, 2016, p.24). It involves an understanding of "how knowledge is defined, valued and prioritized" (Walter, 2010, p.14). Also, epistemological issues are particularly concerned with the question of the relationship between the researcher and what is being researched (Creswell, 2007; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Regarding the ontology concept, it concerns the question of the nature of reality (Creswell, Hanson, Clark, and Morales, 2007). According to Walter (2010), when talking about ontological framework, the term usually refers to an understanding of "what constitutes reality" and "how we perceive the world around us" (p.16). It particularly focuses on how the world is seen and understood.

In the field of L2 motivation research, the quantitative approaches were widely adopted and have been dominant in the past decades (e.g. Bernaus, 1995; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993; Glikzman, Gardner and Smythe, 1982; Ismail, 1988). However, such linear cause-effect models, corresponding to the positivist psychometric tradition, have recently been viewed as not helpful enough to understand the complexity of thoughts and feelings of a particular student about his or her language learning (Ushioda, 2009). Thus, to understand the learners' complex, dynamic and socially constructed aspects like motivation and identity, philosophical assumptions that concern

seeking explanations and understanding from an individual's perspectives should be proposed. Therefore, the interpretivism is adopted as the paradigm framing this study.

Following the interpretivist worldview, this study takes the epistemological position that the researcher and those being researched cannot be totally separated from each other. The knowledge, or what generally refers to "the way in which persons can be said to have access to correct information" (Rescher, 2003, p.xiv), requires "the creation of the process of interaction between the two" (Guba, 1990, p.195) which means we can only understand the social phenomena and human action by interpreting the subjective meanings of those social actions. The major belief in this view also asserts that people are shaped by their own lived experiences, and these will always be revealed in the knowledge they generated as researchers and in the data generated by their participants (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2011).

Regarding an ontological position, this study adopts the view of constructivism. The constructivism asserts that "social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors" (Bryman, 2016, p.29). Social constructivist researchers believe that people try to interpret the world in which they live in and "develop subjective meanings of their experiences" (Creswell, 2014, p.8). These meanings can be varied and diverse, "leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas" (p.8). The specific contexts in which the participants live and work are also focused on by constructivist researchers, as they help the researchers to understand the "historical and cultural settings" of the participants (p.8). Constructivist researchers are also aware that their own backgrounds shape their interpretation of the data. Taking the constructivist position as an ontological assumption, the approaches or strategies used in this study aimed to explore "subjective accounts and perceptions that explain how the world is experienced and constructed by the people who live in it" (Sikes, 2004, p.20), which I will further detail in the next sections.

### 4.3.2 Selecting an appropriate research strategy

A research strategy can be simply defined as “a general orientation to the conduct of social research” (Bryman 2004, p.19). Three types of research strategies that are often employed in social research are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. The first type of strategy involves collecting data that is numerical, which is then analysed by the statistical methods and often associated with hypothesis testing (Walliman, 2006). A qualitative strategy, however, is usually based more on language and interpretation; thus, the data collection procedures are likely to involve the generation of theories rather than testing (Walliman, 2006). The last one, the mixed methods strategy, involves a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

According to Bryman (2004), the main differences between quantitative and qualitative research strategies can be illustrated in Table 4.1 below.

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Principal orientation to the role of theory in relation to research	Deductive; testing theory	Inductive; generation of theory
Epistemological orientation	Natural science model, in particular positivism	Interpretivism
Ontological orientation	Objectivism	Constructivism

**Table 4.1 Fundamental differences between quantitative and qualitative research strategies, adapted from Bryman (2004, p.20)**

To make the decision whether to take a quantitative or qualitative approach, Matthews and Ross (2010, p.113) state that it should be based upon the research questions we have, and on the nature of the data we want to collect and analyse in order to answer the question.

In this study, the major aim was set out to investigate motivation to learn English as a foreign language of the Thai university learners, specifically to uncover possible factors involved in changes of the learners’ feelings and motivation towards learning English. It also aimed at exploring how the learners view their possible L2-related selves. These kinds of interests concern the attempt to seek for meanings of the phenomenon that the participants have experienced. In

order to understand the complexity and diversity of “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam, 2009, p. 5), especially in a natural setting, a qualitative strategy was called for.

In addition, as described in the literature review chapter, the nature of the individual’s motivation is considered as a complex and dynamic construct. With these characteristics of motivation, using traditional quantitative approaches to research L2 motivation may not be adequate to capture its complexity and dynamics (Campbell and Storch, 2011). Instead, the benefits of using qualitative approaches are that they offer a great opportunity for the individual learner to “self-identify” significant aspects of their motivation and to “articulate the subtle differences” that cannot be found in the quantitative approaches (Campbell and Storch, 2011). Similar to L2 motivation, the concept of identity, which by its nature is unique, complex and fluid, also requires the same flexibility and strategy when being researched. Therefore, qualitative strategy was chosen in this study as it is believed to effectively generate in-depth and rich data when researching complex and dynamic areas like motivation and identity.

#### **4.3.3 The researcher’s role in this study**

Unlike the quantitative approach, the qualitative study requires careful considerations of how researchers locate themselves in the research. Conducting research under the interpretivist paradigm, it may be impossible for the researcher to be completely separated from the knowledge studied. As this research was conducted in the setting where I have a direct connection to, it is considered as an insider research.

The term “insider research” is used to describe projects in which researchers “conduct studies with populations and communities and identity groups of which they are also members” (Kanuha, 2000, p.439). To acquire the knowledge within the insider research, the researcher needs to become an “insider” which means they need to collaborate and spend time in field with the participants (Creswell, 2007, p.17). Although conducting insider research may provide many

advantages for the researcher (e.g. obtaining entry to the research site more quickly, having previous knowledge of the processes within the research setting) (Asselin, 2003), there are various issues that the insider researcher need to be aware of.

The first issue concerns the assumption about the phenomenon being studied (Asselin, 2003). The insider researchers need to be aware that the preunderstanding and beliefs they have about the culture can limit the deeper understanding of the phenomena they are studying (Asselin, 2003). Being too familiar with the cultures and situations, the insider researchers are more likely to “take things for granted, develop myopia, and assume their own perspective is far more widespread than it actually is” (Mercer, 2007, p.6). Unluer (2012) also supports that having greater familiarity to the culture under study can lead to “a loss of objectivity” (p.1), as the researchers may unconsciously make wrong assumptions about the research process because of the prior knowledge they have about the setting.

The second challenge when conducting an insider research involves role duality (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007; Unluer, 2012). Brannick and Coghlan (2007) state that when the insider researchers conduct the research projects in their own organization, they may often be confronted with “role conflict” (p.70). Role conflict, or what Asselin (2003) called “role confusion”, occurs “when the researcher perceives or responds to events or analyzes data from a perspective other than researcher” (p.102). The organizational membership roles of the researchers in the research settings (e.g. instructor, educator, manager, etc.) may influence the way they see and perceive the phenomena (Asselin, 2003). This role confusion may result in “inappropriate responses”, “inaccurate interpretations”, and “premature conclusion” (Asselin, 2003, p.102). To resolve this problem regarding role duality, Asselin (2003) suggests that the researchers need to step back from the data collection process and observe themselves as a researcher. Through reflexivity process, the insider researchers should also be aware of the “strengths and limits” of their pre-knowledge about the phenomena and “reframe their understanding of situations to which they are close” based on their theoretical and experiential knowledge (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007, p.72).



In addition, it may also be helpful for the insider researchers to discuss thoughts with other researchers or their colleagues to ensure that their role as a researcher, rather than an organizational membership role, is maintained (Asselin, 2003).

Another issue to be concerned when conducting an insider research also involves perceptions and expectations that the participants have about the researchers (Asselin, 2003). Relationships between the researcher and the participants in that organisational context can often determine how the information is generated and shared, varying from “openness to restrictiveness” (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007, p.70). This may be because, “people’s willingness to talk to you, and what people say to you, is influenced by who they think you are” (Drever, 1995, as cited in Mercer, 2007, p.7). For example, the participants may not feel as open to share their true feelings or thoughts to the researcher if they perceive that the researcher may have a hidden agenda for asking them to participate in the research (Asselin, 2003). However, Asselin (2003) suggests that, there are certain actions that can be done to prevent misperceptions of participants: giving a stress on one’s role as a researcher, rather than as organisational member; addressing ethical issues regarding anonymity and assuring confidentiality of participants’ information; making explicit plans of using participants’ information; and confirming that participation in the research would not cause harm or affect participants’ status in the organisation. To enhance credibility of insider research, such issues are recommended to be considered and addressed at every stage of the research process (Smyth and Holian, 2008).

As can be seen, the status and roles of the insider researcher in the data collection process, therefore, cannot be invisible. When analysing data, the qualitative insider researchers also need to be aware that their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences, can shape their own interpretation on how people make sense about their world (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative researchers cannot be totally “neutral, or objective, or detached, from the knowledge and evidence they are generating” (Mason, 1996, p.6). Sensitivity and reflexivity of the researcher are then essential to this type of research. Thus, the researcher should constantly recognize their own roles

in these processes. Flick (2006) also gives an explanation of how the nature of data in qualitative research is likely to be as follows:

Qualitative research becomes a continuous process of constructing versions of reality. The version people present in an interview does not necessarily correspond to the version they would have formulated at the moment when they reported event happened. It does not necessarily correspond to the version they would have given to a different researcher with a different research question. Researchers, who interpret the interview and present it as part of their findings, produce a new version of the whole (p.19).

From the above extract, qualitative research greatly relies on an interpretation from the researcher who study the phenomena. Subjectivity is normally considered the starting viewpoints in this approach (Flick, 2006). In this study, it was unfeasible that I, as a researcher, could be independent from the research process. The role status I took in the interview was not to be an ‘outsider’, but to be an ‘insider’, who also had personal experience in that context. Being an insider also means collaboration needed to occur between me and my participants. The relationships that develop between me and my participants are important aspect that can bring about “more complete acceptance” from my participants, which may help them to be “more open” and could provide the data in greater depth (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009, p.58). Rooney (2005) also states that “insider research has the potential to increase validity due to the added rich richness, honesty, fidelity and authenticity of the information acquired” (p.7). However, as mention earlier in this section, various important issues need to be aware when conducting an insider research.

Mason (1996, p.6), also points out that the researchers should “take stock of their actions and their role in the research process, and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their ‘data’”. Thus, it is important that reflexivity was constantly applied throughout the research process. In the data analysing process, the role I adopted was as an ‘interpreter’ which means the knowledge claimed in this study would be based on the subjective viewpoint, that could inevitably be influenced by my historical and cultural background. However, to reduce the potential bias, as well as to enhance credibility of the data, the member checking technique, or also known as “participant or respondent validation”, which is a method of returning an interview data or results

back to participants “to check for accuracy and resonance with their experiences” (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, and Walter, 2016, p.1802), was also applied in this study.

#### **4.3.4 Theoretical framework of this study**

This study aims at seeking to understand Thai university students’ motivation to learn English across time, applying an inductive approach to explore the students’ attitudes, motivational trajectories, and senses of selves and identities in relation to English language learning. Adopting non-linear and socio-dynamic perspectives in understanding motivation, this study employed various theoretical frameworks, including self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985), the person-in-context relational view (Ushioda, 2009), the complex dynamic systems perspective (Dörnyei, 2009b), and the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a), to help conceptualise students’ motivation.

As this study focused on motivation over time of the students, I felt that incorporating various motivational theories could help capture the complex and fluid nature of motivation. I, therefore, decided to combine several theories in order to help me capture the best meaning of the phenomena, from various angles, which I thought would also help to fill the gap of each theory when it came to an analysis. Having the theoretical background framework beforehand helped me to understand the data in greater depth, especially when it came to the process of interpreting and discussing data. The next sections explain the design of this study, the main approach chosen, and the research methods adopted in this study.

#### **4.4 Research design**

Before beginning any research, a plan or design of how to proceed with the research should be carefully considered to avoid misleading outcomes. A research design helps to provide specific direction for the research procedures (Creswell, 2014) and the researcher. A research design gives

a framework for data collection and analysis (Bryman, 2004) which will assist the researcher to run their research efficiently and to reach their research objectives.

Creswell (2014) provides an overview of alternative research designs that are frequently employed in the social science research, as presented in the table below.

Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experimental designs</li> <li>▪ Non-experimental designs (e.g. surveys)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Narrative research</li> <li>▪ Phenomenology</li> <li>▪ Grounded theory</li> <li>▪ Ethnographies</li> <li>▪ Case study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Convergent</li> <li>▪ Explanatory</li> <li>▪ Exploratory sequential</li> <li>▪ Transformative, embedded, or multiphase</li> </ul>

**Table 4.2 Alternative Research Design (adapted from Creswell 2014)**

Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p.379) use the term “*strategies of inquiry*” to describe specific approaches and methods which the researchers use when collecting and analyzing empirical data. As mentioned earlier, the qualitative strategy was selected to be employed in this study. Therefore, the next sections present brief description of two viable strategies of inquiry that are of potential relevance to this study.

*Narrative inquiry* – Narrative inquiry or narrative research is a design of inquiry that brings research and storytelling together by using people’s individual life stories as research data, a tool for data analysis, or presentation of results (Barkhuizen, Benson and Chik, 2014). The central focus in this inquiry is stories from the individuals (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). In addition, a great deal of sensitivity between the storyteller and the researcher is required in narrative inquiry (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). For this study, narrative inquiry was considered as a useful and appropriate approach to understand a person’s accounts of lived experience in relation to time,

social condition and context. Therefore, it was selected as a main approach in this study. More details about narrative inquiry are provided later in this chapter.

*Phenomenology* – The purpose of phenomenological inquiry is to describe and understand the lived experiences of individuals who have experienced a certain phenomenon (Lichtman, 2010). Phenomenologists attempt to understand how and what meaning the individuals construct around a particular event or situation that they have been involved (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). A particular experience or situation to focus on is frequently chosen by the researchers in phenomenological mode. In this study, a phenomenological approach was helpful to understand a certain phenomenon arisen from my data collection, such as a high or low degree of motivation to learn English language of the students, certain feelings towards language learning and critical incidents, and particular attitudes towards English language.

#### **4.4.1 Narrative inquiry as a main approach**

Before detailing how the narrative approach was chosen in this study, the meaning of a narrative should be clarified. According to Hermanns (1995, cited in Flick, 2014), the characteristics of a narrative can be described as follows,

First the initial situation is outlined (“how everything started”), then the events relevant to the narrative are selected from the whole host of experiences and presented as a coherent progression of events (“how things developed”), and finally the situation at the end of the development is presented (“what became”) (p.265).

The narrative inquiry first attracted my interest when I started my PhD course in 2013 and was asked by my supervisors to write stories about myself, my English language learning experience, my dreams and why I chose to study my PhD in the area of motivation (see Appendix 1). I found it very helpful when I gave myself time to retrospect back on my own lived and learning experiences and reflected on what I did, how I felt, and why I did and felt that way. This opportunity helped me to understand myself more and even better when I had to externalise my

feelings and narrate my own story to others. This was one reason why I have become interested in narrative inquiry.

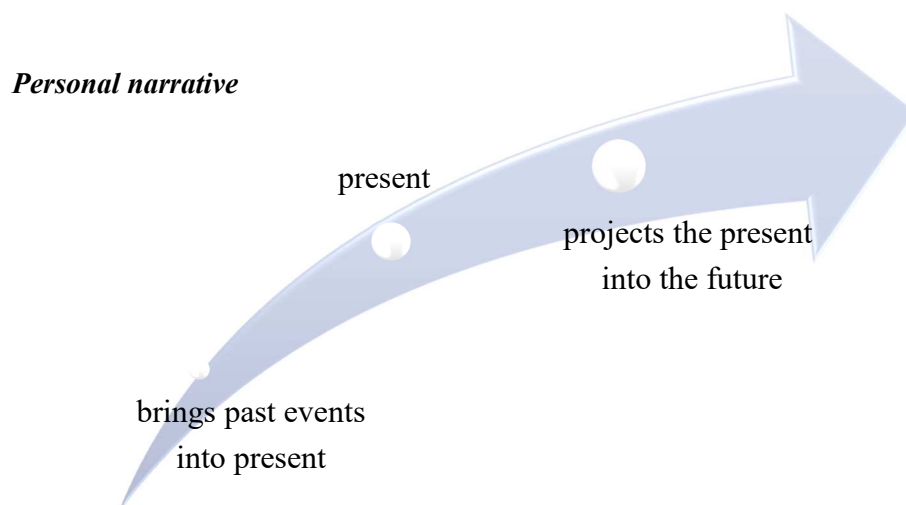
Another reason why I selected narrative inquiry as the main approach of data collection was also because it seemed to be an efficient way that could elicit the experienced reality of a person. The person can make explicit how they make sense of their lived experiences through stories. Those stories enable the researchers to understand “phenomena from the perspectives of those who experienced them” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p.2), which I believe is one of the best ways to learn more about the person’s inner worlds in a naturalistic way.

I was also influenced by the work of Benson et al. (2013) on second language identities and study abroad. In their research project, narrative inquiry is a dominant focus. Benson et al. (2013) use narrative inquiry as their methodology, and also as the way they report research findings. Due to the relevance of their research project to my inquiry into second language motivation and identities, I decided to apply similar methods to my data collection as well as my presentation of findings.

As mentioned earlier, narrative inquiry incorporates storytelling and research together, either by using stories as the means of generating data, means of analyzing data, or means of presenting the findings (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). In social science, there is a growing interest and awareness of the importance of narrative from qualitative researchers in a wide range of different fields (Elliott, 2005). For instance, in the field of psychology, Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber (1998) point out that one of the best ways to explore and understand “the inner world of individual” is through “verbal accounts and stories presented by individual narrators about their lives and their experienced reality” (p.7). They believe that, through narratives, we are allowed access to individuals’ identity and personality. In education, Clough (2002, p. 8), states that narrative is useful in a way that it offers its audiences “a deeper view of life in familiar contexts” and can also be used as a means to uncover those truths which cannot be told.

In the field of language learning and teaching, narrative methods have been used to capture the “subjective meanings (including attitudes and beliefs)” and “emotions invoked” in the contexts of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning and teaching (Kalaja, Menezes and Barcelos, 2008, p.4). Benson et al. (2013) also point out that narrative methods are “especially valuable when we want to capture the nature and meaning of experiences that are difficult to observe directly and are best understood from the perspectives of those who experience them” (p.8). For example, Murray (2008) employed a narrative inquiry, using life history research, to explore the experiences and beliefs of Japanese adults who have learned to speak English in their country. Block (2008) also used narratives as ways to explore the kinds of English-mediated identity work that can take place in adult EFL classrooms.

Narrative inquiry is considered a helpful method in this field as it can help us to understand “the inner mental world of language teachers and learners” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p.2). In a dynamic way, through constituting past experience narrative, a person can also understand the past (Riessman, 2008). Therefore, personal narrative helps individuals to make sense of their experiences and of who they are, as it can bring past events into the present and project the present into the future (Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000, p. 171). The summary of personal narrative function is shown in Figure 4.1.



**Figure 4.1 Personal narrative function (adapted from Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000, p.171)**

Some of the common themes that usually appear in research where narrative has been employed are presented as follows:

- *An interest in people's lived experiences and an appreciation of the temporal nature of that experience*
- *A desire to empower research participants and allow them to contribute to determining what are the most salient themes in an area of research*
- *An interest in process and change over time*
- *An interest in the self and representations of the self*
- *An awareness that the researcher him- or herself is also a narrator* (Elliott, 2005, p.6)

Narrative has been used across disciplines in social science research for various reasons. However, it should be noted that different ways of using narrative can provide different ways of understanding the phenomena, which each of them can lead to “unique insight” (Riessman, 2008, p.12). Riessman (2008) also further explains that,

In narrative study, however, attention shifts to the details – how and why a particular event is storied, perhaps, or what a narrator accomplishes by developing the story that way, and effects on the reader or listener. Who elicits the story, for what purpose, how does the audience affect what is told, and what cannot be spoken? In narrative study, particularities and context come to the fore. Human agency and the imagination of storytellers (and listeners and readers) can be interrogated, allowing research to include many voices and subjectivities. (p.13)

When it comes to the analysis, however, two closely related terms, that were often used in narrative inquiry, “narrative analysis” and “analysis of narrative”, should be understood. Regarding the first term, Polkinghorne (1995, p.5) states that “narrative analysis” refers to a study in which narrative writing is used as a way of interpreting and presenting the data (e.g. biographies, histories, case studies). This way, researchers use storytelling as a way to display the findings of their research. With regard to another term, which is “analysis of narratives”, it refers to a study in which narratives or stories are used as data (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.5). Under this term, various methods of analysis can be applied to understand texts of those narrative data. This study, however, adopted the analysis of narratives as ways to understand phenomena of the



participants. Thematic analysis was employed as the content of the text, which will be discussed later in Section 4.8.

In designing this study, I chose narrative inquiry as the main approach to understand the complexity of the learners' motivation and their motivational trajectories across time, utilising it in the first phase of my data collection. Written narratives were used as the major data to understand how the participants make sense of their past learning experience and how their motivational trajectories developed over time since the beginning of their learning English until the time that the data was collected, demonstrating the temporal dimensions of the learners' motivation. However, to learn about the learners' future perspectives, interview method was incorporated in the second phase of the data collection.

#### **4.4.1.1 Semi-structured interview as an additional approach**

To answer all the research questions, the narrative inquiry was integrated with another approach which was a semi-structured interview, to elicit important data in the second phase of this study. Although the narrative inquiry approach has offered ways to capture and understand the complex unique inner world of the participants, to access to specific information in greater depth that could help to reach the rest of the aims in this study, there was a need to bring the interview as an additional method in the second phase of the data collection. With the aims to elicit data regarding the learners' future visions, as well as to get a more clarified data receiving from the written narratives in the first phase, the interviews were incorporated to fulfil such aims, rather than to mainly elicit the whole personal life history data of the participants. The data revealed by the participants in their utterances from the interviews, thus, were treated and analysed in a conventionally qualitative manner. The semi-structured interview was chosen to adopt in this study, which will be discussed in more details in Section 4.4.2.2.

Adopting the narrative approach as the main approach not only allows me to learn about the students' lived experiences in general, but it also helps me to know more about the 'critical

incidents' of the students, which might have occurred during their English learning journey, and to understand how the students make sense, feel about those critical events, and are affected by them. The next section outlines the concept of critical incidents and how they can be adopted in the research study to enhance our understanding, especially in the area L2 motivation and L2 learning.

#### **4.4.1.2 Critical incidents**

Critical incidents have been used widely across all disciplines to learn about an individual's interpretation or perspectives on particular events or situations. According to Brookfield (1990), critical incidents are "brief descriptions written by learners of significant events in their lives" (p.179). Tripp (1993) also describes that "incidents happen, but critical incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of an event" (p.8). Tripp further states that critical incidents are not totally separate from an observer and just "awaiting discovery like gold nuggets or desert islands" (p.8). Instead, they are created like all data through the "value judgement we make" based on "the significance we attach to the meaning of the incident" (p.8). Critical incidents are thus "not only an occurrence that has significant potential for influencing major change, but it is also perceived as such by the observer/participant" (Finch, 2010, p.423).

In the field of educational research, the critical incident technique has been used widely to investigate behaviours, particularly for the educational services purposes (Corbally, 1956; Brookfield, 1995; Walker, 2015). Specifically, in the area of teaching, learning about our students' critical incidents can help to improve the quality of our pedagogical practice we adopt in the classroom. This is because critical incident technique allows us "to rigorously study a phenomenon and identify issues not previously considered" (Gremier, 2004, p.69). It can also provide rich, concrete, and detailed information from the participants' perspectives on the studied situations (Walker, 2015). By doing this, Brookfield (1990) also supports that the educators

should see the world as the learners see it and should immerse themselves in the learners' worldviews in an accessible but nonthreatening way. Critical incidents can be adopted by using a set of instructions asking the learners to identify and describe the incident with the details of time, location, and people involved in the incidents, as well as the reasons why that incident was significant to them (Brookfield, 1990, p.179).

Learning about critical incidents of the language learners may help us to understand the learners' perceptions and beliefs on significant phenomena happened during their language learning journey which may influence the way they learn or feel about the language. Griffiths (2008) explains that such beliefs on critical events are important in language learning as the "learners hold their beliefs to be true and these beliefs then guide how they interpret their experience and how they behave" (p.121). In connection to researching L2 motivation, particularly within a language classroom, focusing on critical incidents during a lesson "may well generate valuable insights into processes of motivation in the classroom" and can provide "a tightly bound contextual framework for analysing how motivation evolves organically among 'persons-in-context'" (Ushioda, 2016, p.572). In other words, Ushioda (2016) states that, focusing on learners' critical incidents would enable us "to understand why the persons involved behave in particular ways during the event under focus, and how their motivations contribute to shaping the way the event unfolds" (p.572). She further suggests that incorporating critical events to examine learners' motivation to learn L2 is particularly "well-suited to teacher research", as she states,

...since the research inquiry is locally grounded in one's own practice and experience and yet it is shaped by pedagogical principles (i.e. a desire to understand how motivation works in relation to a certain group of learners) which clearly have wider reach and value beyond the particular teacher and classroom under focus (Ushioda, 2016, p.572-573).

Lasagabaster (2015) also found in his L2 motivation research that critical incidents, at a certain point, could cause perturbations to the stability of students' motivation and may also produce motivational fluctuations. Critical incident technique may also be adopted in the wider contexts,

not only within the classroom, but also covering all events outside and inside classroom contexts that are relevant to the interested phenomenon.

With regard to this study, critical incidents of the participants were also observed through the approach of narrative inquiry, which I believed was one of the appropriate ways to elicit critical incidents of the students, particularly those that happened to be counted in their positive and negative English learning experience and related to their motivation to learn English language.

#### **4.4.2 Research methods**

According to Bryman (2016), a research method is simply defined as “a technique for collecting data” (p.40). It basically involves the use of a specific tool or instrument in data collection, such as observation, interviews, and questionnaire. As this study adopted the narrative inquiry approach, tools or instruments that could elicit personal past experience narratives and critical incidents of the participants were considered. Regarding typical forms of narratives, there are mainly three different types which are the written, oral, and multimodal narratives (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). To access each type of narrative account, different methods are required in the data collection process. This study, however, aimed to focus only on the participants’ written and oral narratives. The next section describes the methods used to gain personal written and oral narratives of the participants in this study.

##### **4.4.2.1 Language learning histories (LLHs)**

In language learning and teaching research, written narrative data can be generated in different forms by both language learners and teachers. Two forms of written data that the language learners are often asked, by their teachers or the language researchers, to produce are “learner diaries” and “language learning histories” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p.34).

Learner diaries are “autobiographical, introspective, documents that record the experiences of language learning from the learner’s perspective” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p.35). They are similar

to personal diaries in the way that they are regularly written over a period of time. The advantage of using learner diaries in language learning research is that they help the researchers to get access to the learners' affective dimensions, strategies used in learning, and the learner's own feelings about the language learning that the learners are engaged through the content provided in diaries (Barkhuizen et al., 2014).

Language learning histories (LLHs) are “the written stories of language learning experience” or “retrospective accounts of past learning” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p.37). The periods of time which LLHs cover can be varied, ranging from the entire period over which an individual has learned a language to shorter periods, like one year or one semester or even a few minutes' incident (Benson, 2011b). LLHs writing has been employed in language learning and teaching research (e.g. Lamb, M., 2011; Murphey and Carpenter, 2008; Murphey, Chen and Chen, 2004) in order to understand learners' beliefs, language learning experiences, as well as their future plans of learning the language.

For the purpose of this study, I aimed to explore the learners' motivation and identities in English language learning, both of which are regarded as complex constructs and are temporal. Thus, LLHs were chosen as one technique among others in this study to elicit the learners' personal feelings, perception, and perspectives of their past experience in language learning. Not only the learners' past experience data that could be reflected on by the use of LLHs, but also the learners' present and future perspectives as well. As Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) state, how individuals make sense of their history or past experiences will influence the way they view the present and project the future (see. Figure 4.1). The LLHs, therefore, was an appropriate method that helped me understand the learners' motivation and identity concept in English language learning within the temporal dimensions.

#### 4.4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

Another form of narrative data, apart from written narratives, is oral narratives. In language learning and teaching research, oral narratives refer to spoken accounts of language learning and teaching experiences. The method that is generally used to elicit oral accounts in narrative inquiry is interviews (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). According to Wellington (2000), interviewing allows the researcher to examine things that are unobservable, such as “an interviewee’s thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives” (p.71). Moreover, the interview can also provide the interviewee with a “voice” and a “platform” or an opportunity to make their perspectives heard (Wellington, 2000, p.72).

Researchers may use different approaches to interviews according to their research purposes. However, Barkhuizen et al. (2014, p.17) state that “a life history” approach, which concerns a retelling of an individual’s life story, is frequently adopted in narrative inquiry in order to capture “long-term language learning experiences”. Apart from employing the LLHs in collecting data, this study also incorporated the interviewing method as another way to elicit data of the learners in greater depth, especially in terms of their future perspectives. However, the way in adopting the interview method in this study was not purposely aimed at gaining life history narrative data but was rather to gain more insights to particular information of the participants.

In order to reach the research aims, the interviewing could not be totally unstructured as there were certain topics, such as, students’ perceptions about their English abilities, reasons behind such perceptions, their future visions in terms of occupations and relationships with English language, that needed to be elaborated in greater details in the interviews. Therefore, a semi-structured interview format, with open-ended questions, was adopted in this study to help track the participants’ perspectives in more depth. Applying the semi-structured interview to this study also allowed me to get the participants to clarify or elaborate on what they had mentioned either in their LLHs or at the time of the interview, and follow-up questions were asked after their replies

(e.g. how did you feel about that experience? why did you think that way?, how did that situation affect your English language learning?, what do you think was the cause of that?). In sum, the interviews provided a space for the participants to tell me more deeply about their language learning experiences, especially at certain points that they thought were important to them. In addition, the interviews also allowed me to understand how the targeted aspects were interpreted by the learners and how those aspects have developed over time.

#### **4.5 The selection of study site and sampling**

As this study was conducted under the qualitative strategy, nonprobability sampling was adopted. In nonprobability sampling, one cannot specify “the probability each element has of being included in the sample” and there is no guarantee that “every element has some chance of being included” (Hoyle, Harris, and Judd, 2002, p.185). Thus, the decision of how the elements are selected depends on other considerations (Kumar,2011). The study site and participants of this research were purposefully selected as they were considered to provide the best information to reach the study aims.

As this study was an insider research, the study site took place at a campus of a university in Thailand, where I work as a lecturer. The university campus is situated in a small province in the north-east of Thailand. This study site was also a good example of many other university campuses nearby and in the north-east area of Thailand, in terms of its size, number of students, and administrative system. With regard to the participants, again, first year students were purposefully chosen. The first rationale why first year university students were selected as participants was because the convenience in data collection. With the help from my colleagues who were, at that time, teaching the mandatory English courses for the first-year students, gaining access to the study participants was not difficult. In addition, first year university students had just passed the learning experience in the basic educational level which was the secondary education. They seemed to be in the stage that they have developed enough understandings and

confidence to look back, make sense, and judge their past experience, including the critical incidents (Brookfield, 1990), during their compulsory education and to project their lives towards the future years of university studying and their future career paths. The next section will detail the participants who took part in this study.

#### **4.6 Participants**

In the stage of planning how to recruit the participants, the total number of participants came to be the first concern. It was difficult to predict in the beginning how many participants would be willing to participate in this study. However, Creswell (2014) states that following the qualitative design, there is no right or wrong or specific answer of how many participants should take part in the study. My concern was that the size of the participants should not be too small to be unable to get rich data, and at the same time it should not be too large to be unmanageable. Thus, my initial plan was to recruit only about three to five participants as the participant size seemed to be relatively small and the data could be manageable when seeking to apply a deep analysis of each case. Nevertheless, when considering the possibilities that some of the participants might drop out from the study or the data provided from some of them might not be informative enough, I then decided to recruit as many participants as possible, to make sure that I could gain diverse and rich enough data.

With regard to the level of the participants, they were first year students in the study context mentioned previously. All of them enrolled in the mandatory English language courses and all were non-English major students. They were voluntarily recruited from different fields of study, consisting of Law, Computer Sciences, International Business Management, Economics, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Finance, Tourism, and Agro-industry. The data collection was set to be during the university's second academic semester which was between Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015, as it was considered to be the most appropriate time for the participants (e.g. less activities, well settled in the new learning



environment), and for me (e.g. having enough time to apply for the ethics approval, plan and collect data). The next section presents background information of the participants.

#### 4.6.1 Description and background of the participants

Initially, 25 students voluntarily participated in this study. However, after looking at the first phase data, which was from the LLHs of the students, only 17 out of 25 students seemed to provide informative data. In addition, when inviting them to the second phase of the data collection, which was the interview, one student could not take part and withdrew from the study. Therefore, there were in total 16 students joining in the interviews and could participate until the end of this study.

Table 4.3 below displays general background information of the 16 participants of this study.

Students (pseudonyms)	Genders	Age	Major of Study	Parents' Occupations
S1	F	20	Law	Father: rice farmer (passed away) Mother: rice farmer
S2	F	18	Law	Father: rice farmer, local council member Mother: housewife
S3	M	18	Law	Father: teacher Mother: teacher
S4	M	19	Computer Sciences	Father: soldier Mother: local officer
S5	M	18	International Business Management	Father: junk shop owner Mother: rice farmer
S6	F	18	Computer Sciences	Father: worker in Kuwait Mother: farmer
S7	F	18	Economics	Father: business man Mother: business woman
S8	F	18	Economics	Father: worker (passed away) Mother: worker
S9	F	19	Economics	Father: business man but retired, private tutor Mother: private tutor

S10	F	18	ICT	Father: worker at a car manufacture in Taiwan Mother: weaver
S11	F	18	ICT	Father: worker Mother: worker
S12	F	19	Finance	Father: teacher Mother: house wife
S13	F	18	Tourism	Father: policeman Mother: no job/house wife
S14	F	18	Tourism	Father: rice farmer Mother: housekeeper
S15	F	18	Agro-Industry	Father: (not mentioned) Mother: sub-district officer
S16	F	18	Computer Sciences	Father: rice farmer Mother: rice farmer

**Table 4.3 General background information of the sixteen participants of this study**

Most of the participants, 13 out of 16, were female students while, only 3 students were male students. The participants were aged between 18-20 and their English levels were between pre-intermediate to intermediate levels. Regarding their family background, the majority of the participants, nine out of 16, were from the working-class families in which their parents worked in agriculture field or were labourers in manufactures. The students from these working-class families were also first-generation students, with neither of their parents having earned a degree from college or university. Being able to study at university level, for them, means a way to escape from the poverty they have experienced and to be grouped in at least the middle-class in society. This group of students, however, tended to receive little support and guidance from their parents in helping them to prepare and cope with their studies, especially during their university studying. The rest of the students were found to be from middle-class families, in which their parents' occupations involved being business owners and governmental or private officers.

All of the participants started learning English from a very young age, at kindergarten level. Although this sample of students might not be representative of the whole population of Thai

students in Thailand, the sample could be generalizable to certain extent to students from other institutions, in the nearby provinces, within the north-east region of Thailand. More details regarding their academic background (e.g. English grades, perceptions of their English competency) will be discussed in the next chapter. In the next section, I will discuss how data from the participants were collected.

#### **4.7 Data collection procedures**

After designing the study, locating the researcher's role, and selecting participants, collecting data comes as the next step. When collecting data, there are many issues and processes that should be considered. Some research study may involve multiple steps and complicated methods. Therefore, having a well-planned data collection will enable the research to go smoothly and reach its aims. Before beginning the process of data collection in this study, I piloted the use of language learning history, as one of my research methods, with a group of 2-3 Thai friends, in order to evaluate feasibility in collecting data in a larger-scale. The interview protocol was also piloted with a few Thai students who were my friends and were studying in the UK. The following section describes the procedures of gaining data in this study, starting from explaining steps of gaining entry to the research field to the details of how the collected data was managed.

##### **4.7.1 Stage one: Gaining access to the study site**

The first aspect to be considered when collecting data is how to gain access and acceptance to the research field of the study. Creswell (2014) states that before starting to collect data, it is important to ask for the approval of "gatekeepers", or those "who provide access to the site and allow or permit the research to be done" (p.188). However, different study sites may require different procedures in gaining entry. Thus, it is important for the researcher to know who the gatekeeper of their study sites is, and what procedures need to be followed in order to obtain permission to conduct their studies. In this study context, which was a university campus in the north-east of Thailand, gaining access to it involved two groups of people. The first one was the Vice-

Chancellor of the university branch campus, who held the highest position in this setting. The Vice-Chancellor of this campus acted as a deputy to the Chancellor of the university, who ran the executive work in the main university campus which was not the same as this study site. The second group of the gatekeepers was the group of lecturers who taught in the English foundation courses and who were all my colleagues, as mentioned earlier in Section 4.5.

Knowing who the first gatekeeper was, a permission request letter (in Thai, see Appendix 2), together with other relevant documents such as the research proposal, the participant information sheet, and the participant consent form were submitted to the Vice-Chancellor for review. Additionally, some sensitive ethical issues that might occur during data collection was also addressed and submitted together. After a week, I received an approval letter from the Vice-Chancellor confirming that I was permitted to collect data at the university campus. Then, the next step was to contact the lecturers who were my colleagues to ask for their approval for access to their students. Although these lecturers were all my colleagues in this context, and gaining access to the students was quite easy and could be done verbally, a formal written request was sent to them via email. After receiving the lecturers' permission to access to their classes, by email and phone, the expected date and time to go to their classes were arranged. The schedule of participant recruitment is shown in Table 4.4.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
9.00 - 10.30		Law (Teacher C) Room 1406	Agro-Industry (Teacher F) Room 1406	International Business Management (Teacher A) Room 2207
10.30 - 12.00	Economics (Teacher A) Room 2301	ICT (Teacher D) Room 2303	Sport Sciences (Teacher D) Room 1406	
13.00 - 14.30		Computer Sciences (Teacher E) Room 1405	Accounting (Teacher G) Room 1406	Tourism (Teacher F) Room 1406
14.30 - 16.00	Finance (Teacher B) Room 1405			

**Table 4.4 Participant recruitment schedule**

However, since the ethics application of this study was under the review of the institutional review committees and was not approved until 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 (see Appendix 3 for the ethics approval letter of this study), the schedule of participant recruitment was then arranged to be the following week, which were during 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The next stage explains the processes of recruiting participants.

#### **4.7.2 Stage two: Recruiting the participants**

After being accepted to conduct the study and the schedule of participant recruitment was confirmed, the recruiting processes started. There were ten classes I had to go to, to recruit the voluntarily participants. I was given about 20-25 minutes to get access at the end of each class to explain about my study. The processes of recruiting the participants in each class were similar, beginning with introducing myself, the study topic, and the aims of the study. Next, I explained what voluntary participants would be asked and expected to do if joining in this study. In addition, the students were also informed about possible benefits and harm they might encounter from taking part in this study. The students were then invited to ask any questions about the participation in this study until they were satisfied. After this process was achieved, they were given the information sheet of this study (see Appendix 4) and the participant consent form (see Appendix 5) to sign.

According to Faden and Beauchamp (1986, as cited in Martin and Marker, 2007), informed consent is defined as “an autonomous authorisation which requires awareness, assent and absence of duress, and discuss in some detail what each of these involves” (p.2264). Bourke and Loveridge (2014) also explain the concept of informed consent as “the capacity and opportunity to ‘say or express yes’ to participation in research” (p.152). They also describe “the capacity and opportunity to ‘say or express no’” to participation in research as informed dissent (Bourke and Loveridge, 2014, p.152). In this study, the participants were provided necessary information that they needed to know about the process of data collection and how their information would be used in this research. The signed participant consent forms were the confirmation that all participants understood and accepted to take part in this study. However, the participant students were also informed that they had the right to opt out from this research at any time they wanted without giving reasons (see Section 4.9 for ethical considerations regarding power equality between the roles of students and teachers in the context of this study). Then, the volunteer students were asked to leave their contact details in order to be reached when arranging group discussions explaining what they had to do next.

### **4.7.3 Stage three: Collecting written narrative data through the students’ language learning histories (LLHs)**

#### **4.7.3.1 Arranging group discussions**

Overall, there were twenty-five students who voluntarily took part in this study. The participant students were contacted by phone after the recruitment day to join in group discussions. The group discussion purpose was to communicate with the students what they were required to do in this study. The group discussions were arranged at 3 pm. and 5 pm. for two days, so the students could choose when they could participate. Duration of each group discussion took only about 10-15 minutes. In the group discussion, the students received explanations about the first phase of data collection, which was writing their own English language learning histories (LLHs). A brief

explanation of what could be included in the LLHs was given together with some guideline questions. This was to make sure that the students understood the purpose of writing the LLHs, and to ensure that there should be nothing other than an honest and fair account of their histories as English language learners. The issue of ‘honesty’ of narrative accounts, however, could be problematic and was considered as a limitation of this study. Inconsistency in self-narration can often be found in narrative research, as “research subjects will likely tell different stories about the same thing at different times and to different people” (Maines, 1993, p.22). In this study, however, to ensure that the most truthful narratives would be provided, the participants were encouraged and reminded to share their experiences and stories honestly. The issue of translation of narrative data will be discussed in Section 4.8.4. After I explained about what should be included their LLHs, I encouraged the students to ask any questions with regard to the LLHs they had to write. The next section details the processes of asking the students to write their LLHs and the submission of them.

#### **4.7.3.2 Requesting the students to write their LLHs**

In this study, the LLHs played a vital role in collecting written data from the students. The LLHs that the participant students were asked to write included the stories of experiences regarding their English language learning, from when they began to learn English until the time that the data was collected. The length of students’ LLHs could be from one to four A4 pages or more depending on how much of the data the students were willing to contribute. The students were allowed to write either in English, Thai, or in a mixture of both languages. Allowing the participants to share their information and data in their first language can also enhance “participant comfort level with the data collector or their participant in the study” (Squires, 2008, p.272). In addition, by doing this, “the researcher may also obtain richer data from first language responses” (Squires, 2008, p.272).

Instructions and guiding questions were provided as a prompt or cue to help the students think about what to include in their LLHs (see Appendix 6). The purpose of using LLHs as a way to collect data was to explore the students' general attitudes towards English language learning and to learn about their overall motivational trajectories across time since the beginning of their English learning. Additionally, the LLHs could also help to capture those critical incidents happening during their language journey and enable me to understand factors associated with the students' positive or negative feelings towards learning English. The students were given about 2 weeks to produce their writing and were asked to submit their LLHs either by hard copies, at a specified place, or by email directly to me.

#### **4.7.3.3 Selecting informative data**

As mentioned earlier, the participants that seemed to be informative and willing to share their learning experience would be purposefully selected. Out of twenty-five students who submitted their LLHs, there were only seventeen students that were informative enough to be included in the next stage of data collection. Some of the students who were not selected included those who duplicated the other students' LLHs, those who produced only a few sentences or a small paragraph in their LLHs, and those who wrote about other irrelevant topics. Reading all the stories written by the students, I found that most of them provided the 'key moments' of their past experience of learning English. Those key moments could be linked to the "critical incidents" described previously, and seemed to fall into an "L2 Learning Experience" category which is one of the key components in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005). The L2 learning experience is concerned with "situated, 'executive' motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group or the experience of success" (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.86). Therefore, the data including these key moments and critical incidents were selected. Seventeen students were then chosen to take part in the next phase, which was the interview, to gain information related to their LLHs and



other related issues in more depth. The next section describes the steps in collecting interview data.

#### **4.7.4 Stage four: Collecting oral narrative data through semi-structured interviews**

The aim of the semi-structured interviews of this study was to further investigate other aspects or factors in relation to the students' motivation to learn the English language, which could not be elicited solely by the LLHs, such as their attitudes, goals, aspirations, or possible future L2 selves. The interviews were also employed to ask the students to clarify and elaborate on meanings they wrote in their LLHs.

##### **4.7.4.1 Establishing contact with the students and arranging the interviews**

The seventeen students who were chosen were contacted in order to arrange the time and location of the interviews. However, one student withdrew from the study, so there were in total sixteen students who participated in the interview. The time and locations of the interviews were set at the students' convenience. Nevertheless, for the students' and my own personal safety, the time of the interview was suggested to be during working hours. Locations of the interview selected by the students were mostly at the cafés outside the university campus. Table 4.5 below shows the arranged timetable and locations of the interviews.

<b>Students</b>	<b>Majors</b>	<b>Interview Dates</b>	<b>Appointment Time</b>	<b>Locations</b>
S1	Law	30/03/2015	09.30	Café A
S2	Law	30/03/2015	10.30	Café A
S3	Law	30/03/2015	11.30	Café A
S4	Computer Sciences	30/03/2015	14.00	Café B
S5	Inter Business	04/04/2015	11.00	Café A
S6	Computer Sciences	03/04/2015	11.00	Café B
S7	Economics	31/03/2015	10.30	Café C
S8	Economics	31/03/2015	11.15	Café C
S9	Economics	31/03/2015	11.45	Café C

S10	ICT	01/04/2015	10.30	University canteen
S11	ICT	01/04/2015	11.30	Café C
S12	Finance	02/04/2015	15.00	University working space
S13	Tourism	05/04/2015	14.00	Café B
S14	Tourism	05/04/2015	15.00	Café B
S15	Agro-Industry	04/04/2015	10.00	Café A
S16	Computer Sciences	03/04/2015	10.00	Café B

**Table 4.5 Interview schedule**

#### **4.7.4.2 Preparing the interview protocol**

Before collecting the interview data, the interview protocol should be prepared. The interview “protocol” or “schedule” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p.17) is normally used as a guide for the interviewer to follow in the interview. Using the interview protocol helps to ensure that “standard procedures are used from one interview to another” (Creswell, 2014, p.194) and helps the interviewers to stay focused. In this study, semi-structured interviews were adopted. Thus, open-ended questions, included in the interview protocol, were listed according to the research aims and the students’ LLHs. All the questions were then tried out with a group of 2-3 Thai PhD students, who were my friends in the UK, to make sure that the questioning items were easy to understand and could elicit the participants’ data in greater depth (see Appendix 7 for the interview protocol of this study).

#### **4.7.4.3 Building rapport with the students and conducting the interviews**

Positive relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee is very important when conducting in-depth interviews. To maintain a good relationship, it is essential that the interviewer build rapport with the interviewees from the beginning. Diccico-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) explain why establishing rapport is necessary when collecting in-depth interview data in that,

rapport involves trust and a respect for the interviewee and the information he or she shares. It is also the means of establishing a safe and comfortable environment for sharing the interviewee’s personal experiences and attitudes as they actually occurred. It is

through the connection of many ‘truths’ that interview research contributes to our knowledge of the meaning of the human experience” (p.316).

To establish good rapport with the participants in this study, the first thing I did was to be as friendly as I could. Many general questions were asked to develop a positive relationship and trust, as well as to create a non-threatening atmosphere. The interview was conducted in Thai, which was the native language of the participant students. This was to prevent possible language barriers that might arise when the students were interviewed in other languages which were not their fluent and native language. Issues of data translation will be discussed later in Section 4.8.4. The students were told that they had the right to stop or skip questions that they felt they were not comfortable to answer. It was also emphasized that they were in charge of the information they would like to share. Ensuring the students’ rights in the interview and respecting the data they shared could develop trust between them and me.

Before recording the interviews, it was important to make sure permission was given by the students. The students were also informed that the recorded interview data would be used for this study and for the publication from this study. Their information would be kept in a safe place. They were ensured that all the data received from them would be anonymous and no one could identify their real names or the third persons’ names they might refer to. Each interview took about fifteen to forty minutes depending on how much data the participants were willing to share (see Appendix 7 for lists of questions in the interview protocol). At the end of each interview, the students were asked for their permission to be in touch again in case that there might be follow-up questions.

#### **4.7.5 Stage five: Managing the data**

There were two sets of data that needed to be managed in this study. The first one was the data from the students’ LLHs. The LLHs data of the students, either from hard copies or from emails, were typed up into the text format in my computer. This was to make it convenient and easy when doing the analysis. Another set of data came from the interviews. The interviewed data were kept

on a voice-recorder before it was transcribed into the written form. After being transcribed, the transcriptions of the interviews in Thai language were kept safely in my personal locker. The next section explains how the data was analysed, and what analysis methods were used in this study.

## **4.8 Data analysis**

In this study, data analysis developed together with the process of data collection. As addressed earlier, after receiving the written data from the students, I had to decide which data were in great length enough to make interpretation on and which should be disregarded. This step of focusing on the informative data is called to winnow the data (Guest, MacQueen, and Namey, 2012).

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), data analysis can be described as,

the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others (p.153).

Analysis is concerned with “making sense of, or interpreting, the information and evidence that the researcher has decided to consider as data” (Goodson and Sikes, 2001, p. 34). This usually involves locating the information or evidence into a framework which may be in the form of “classifications”, “categories”, “models”, “typologies” or “concepts” (p.34). In this study, the analysis involved several processes and there were many issues to be carefully considered. The next sections will describe stages of data analysis of this study and also discuss some important issues related to them.

### **4.8.1 Stage one: Transcribing and immersion in data**

As described earlier, this study involved dealing with two sets of data, which were the written data from the students' LLHs and the spoken data from the semi-structured interviews. For the first type of data, the written narratives, there was no need to transcribe them. However, for analysis, they needed to be transformed into the same format which was text files. The written narratives that were hand-written were typed up and formatted in the same manner. For the second

type of data, the interview-digital recordings, they needed to be transcribed and formatted into text files as well. In qualitative research, transcribing is another important process that is considered as being time-consuming and sometimes it requires a good understanding of the contextual background. Therefore, in this study, I transcribed all the recordings by myself. This was to ensure that the important details of the interviews were covered and received attention. Also, transcribing data by myself also helped me to be familiar with the data and become aware of the key themes or issues emerged from each participant's account.

The tool I used to cope with the process of transcribing was a computer software named 'NVivo'.

According to Bandura (2006),

NVivo is a computer program for qualitative data analysis that allows one to import and code textual data, edit the text; retrieve, review and recode coded data; search for combinations of words in the text or patterns in the coding; and import from or export data to other quantitative analysis software (p.7).

The NVivo software was developed by the world's largest software developer for qualitative research called QSR International (Wong, 2008, p.15). It can be used as a management tool for the whole process of doctoral research (Johnston, 2006). In this study, the NVivo was firstly used to facilitate my transcribing process, helping me to save considerable amount of time. Then, it was used to help me in the coding process, which I will discuss in Section 4.8.2. During the process of transcribing, no real names of the students or the third person or the places mentioned in the interviews were transcribed. All of them were changed to pseudonyms. Figure 4.2 shows an example of how the transcribed data looked like in (Thai language).

37	11:24.1 - 11:29.3	แล้ว...คิดว่า ณ ตอนนั้นเนี่ย เราจะได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษอยู่ไหม	I
38	11:29.3 - 12:13.4	หนูว่าได้ใช้แน่นอนค่ะ คือ ปีนี้ก็จะเริ่มเปิด AEC แล้วใช้ใหม่ค่ะ แล้วคือ ภาษาอังกฤษมันก็จำเป็นด้วยค่ะ แบบว่า..ไม่ว่าจะงานใหญ่ ก็คือ ต้องใช้ภาษาอังกฤษค่ะ ยิ่งถ้าเกิดเรา ไปทำงานเกี่ยวกับบริการหรือว่า คือ ในอนาคตมันต้องมี ชาวต่างชาติมาอยู่ด้วยอยู่แล้วอะค่ะ เพราะว่าภาษาอังกฤษหนูว่าจำเป็นมากๆ เลยอะค่ะ สมมติว่าเราไม่มีพื้นฐานเลย แล้วมีแบบ ชาวต่างชาติที่เขาเปิด AEC แล้วเขามาแบบ..แข่งกับเรา แบบสมัครทำงานที่เดียวกับเรา แข่งกับเรา แต่ พื้นฐานภาษาอังกฤษเขาคงมากกว่าอะไรแบบเนี่ย เราไม่มีงานทำแน่ๆ คือตกงานแน่ๆ ค่ะ หนูก็เลยแบบ ออกกพยายาม ให้ตัวเองดีมากกว่านี้ค่ะ	S
39	12:13.4 - 12:18.3	แล้วตอนนี้เนี่ย หนูได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษบ้างไหม ใช้เมื่อไหร่บ้าง	I
40	12:18.3 - 13:11.3	ก็คือ..ถ้าเกิดได้ใช้บ้างไหม อาจจะ เป็น คือบางที่แบบเราไปห้างอย่างนี้อะค่ะ คือเจอฝรั่งบ้าง เขาดมเรา "อันนี้ราคา เท่าไหร่" อะไรอย่างเนี่ยค่ะ คือใช้ศัพท์แบบไม่ได้ยากเท่าไร เรา ก็พยายามตอบเขาได้ บางทีถึงเราจะตอบไม่ได้ เราก็ พยายามฟังว่าเขาถามว่าอะไร ราคาเท่าไรอย่างนี้อะค่ะ ก็คือมีแค่นั้น.. ในบางครั้ง น้อยครั้งมากค่ะ ที่จะได้ใช้ ภาษาอังกฤษ คือมีแต่ในห้องเรียน ในคาบเรียนอย่างนี้อะค่ะ คือ เหมือน ไม่มีใครใช้กับเราเลย ไม่มีใครพยายามใช้กับ เรา กลับไปบ้านก็ไม่มีใครใช้กับเราเพราะว่าแบบ..ที่บ้านก็อยู่ชนบท แบบพ่อแม่ก็..ไม่มีใครใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ มันไม่มีใคร พยายามใช้ ถึงเราจะพูดคนเดียว ก็ไม่มีใครพูดกับเราอย่างเงี้ยค่ะ	S

**Figure 4.2 An example of the interview transcript in the original language (Thai)**

In total, there were about 200 pages of transcript from all participants. To ensure that the transcribed data represented the original meaning that the participants were trying to convey, once the final transcripts were finished, they were sent back to the participants to check whether they were the correct transcription. This also helped to ensure that the transcripts were loyal to their oral statements and to avoid what Lichtman (2010, p.5) calls “misstatements”, “misinterpretations”, and “fraudulent analysis” that might happen in the study.

After transcribing, I spent a lot of time looking at those data and the students’ LLHs again and again. This kind of process is known as data “immersion” which Wallis (2010) refers to as “a process in which the researcher becomes familiar with data” (p.413). Immersing myself in the data allowed me to reflect on the students’ learning experience accounts and to identify key themes and patterns emerged from the data which would be helpful when it came to the coding process.

The next section will explain the process of data reduction and coding the data of this study.

#### **4.8.2 Stage two: Coding data and data reduction**

After having all written and transcribed data, the next step was to do the coding. Coding is known as “the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text and assigning a word or phrase to the segment in order to develop a general sense of it” (Creswell, 2014, p.241). In the coding process, codes which are “tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.56) are usually created. There are normally two types of codes created in qualitative analysis. The first type is called “a priori codes” which refer to “the coding of themes that are determined prior to the data analysis” (Willis, 2014, p.419). This type of code is usually developed from our understanding of the reviewed theories and relevant literature. Another type of code is known as “inductive codes” which mean “the coding of themes that emerge from the data” (Willis, 2014, p.419). To decide which type of coding method to be adopted, the main consideration should depend on the research questions. However, this study adopted the combination of coding types above, as will be further detailed below.

To begin the coding process, NVivo 10 software was chosen to help me in coding the data into categories. In the software, nodes which are themes, categories, or topics, can be created easily. Theme or category nodes can be created before we start coding or even while we are coding. At the end, the summary of each node can be overviewed and printed out for later analysis. In this study, the students’ LLHs data were firstly imported into the NVivo software. The first coding type used was the a priori coding, in which the codes were developed from the past reviewed literature. Therefore, the nodes or the categories, such as ‘learners’ attitudes’, ‘learners’ possible future selves’ were created. The transcripts of the interviews were, after that, also imported into the software and were coded in a similar way. The inductive coding method, however, was adopted to uncover emerging patterns of the students’ motivational trajectories in learning English. These codes were also sub-coded into the sub-categories and were done the same method again to generate smaller sub-categories which were ‘factors related to those motivational

changes'. The nodes created in the NVivo software with this inductive coding, thus, occurred while I was coding. Figure 4.3 and 4.4 illustrate example screen shots of the coding in the NVivo 10 software.

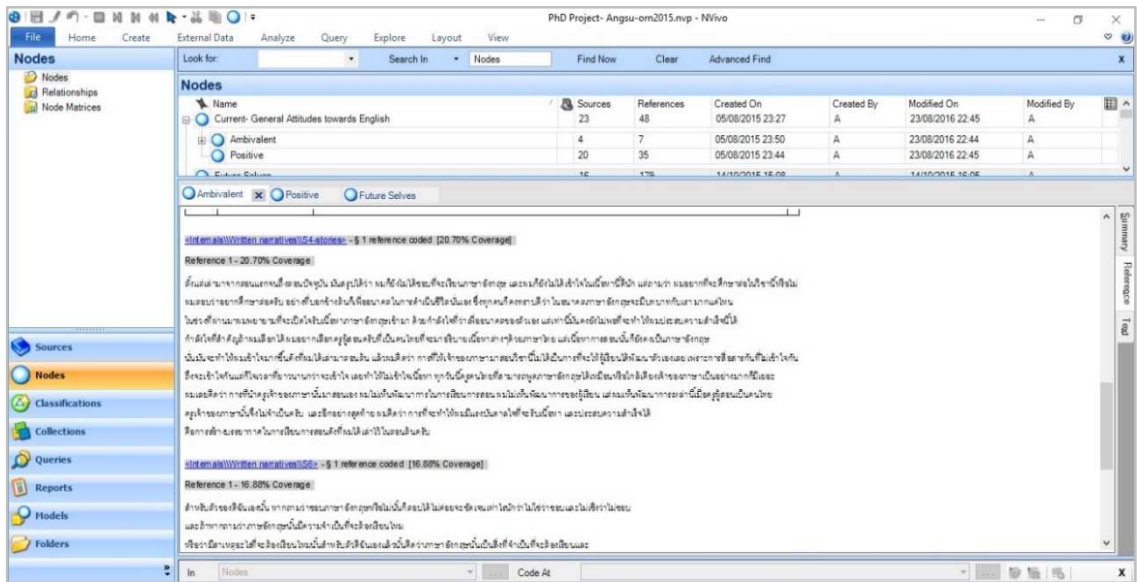


Figure 4.3 An example screen shot of the students' LLHs coding in the NVivo 10 software

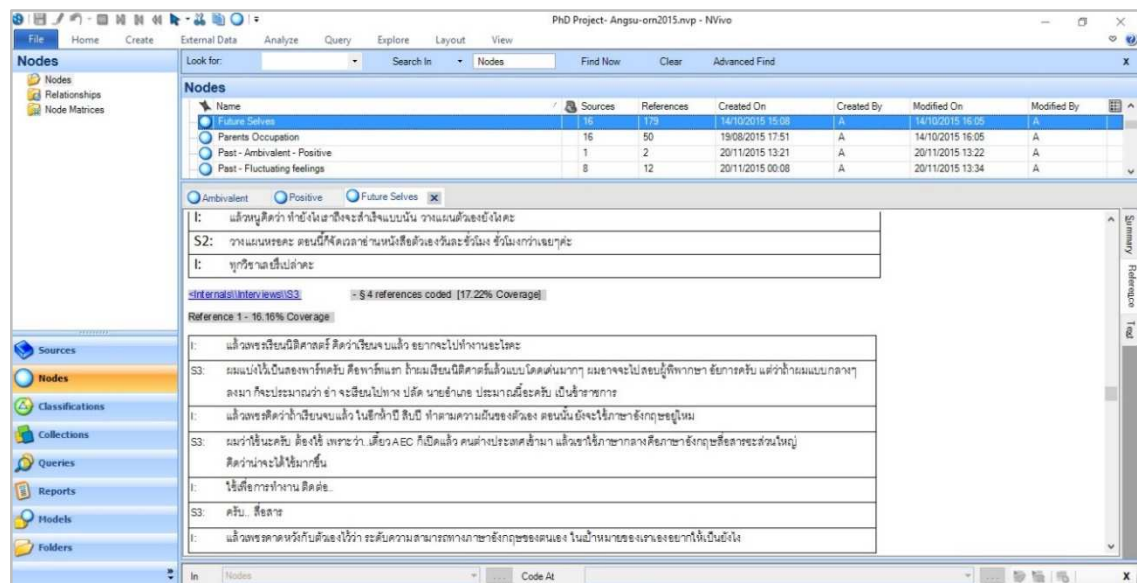


Figure 4.4 An example screen shot of the interview coding in the NVivo 10 software



The benefits of using NVivo software as a tool in the coding were also that it helped me to do the coding in a systematic way and helped to reduce human errors that might occur when doing it manually. This coding process also enabled me to reduce the data that were not relevant to the study and also helped to concentrate on the relevant categories or patterns. However, I only adopted the NVivo software to assist me in this coding process. After this, all the code summaries were printed out and analysed using thematic and content analytic methods. Furthermore, it should also be noted here that all the data I coded was in Thai language as I thought that doing this process in my first language would practically help me to better understand the real meaning that the data was trying to convey. The problem I found when coding the narrative accounts was that it was not easy to fragment the long experience accounts of the students into categories. However, combining two analytic methods helped me to minimize this problem. The next section will explain the analytic methods that were adopted in this study.

#### **4.8.3 Stage three: Analysing data and developing themes**

As mentioned earlier, this study focuses on the ‘analysis of narratives’ approach. Therefore, ‘content’ of the narratives was the main focus. There were two analytic methods involved in the analysis of narratives employed in this study. The first one was the content analysis. Content analysis refers to “a research method that detects, records, and analyses the presence of specified words or concepts in a sample of forms of communication” (Sproule, 2010, p.324). The communication forms are usually referred to as “texts” in which in this study were the students’ written narratives and their interview transcripts. In this research, the content analytic method was used to analyse emerging content data within key concepts of motivation theory, such as students’ attitudes and types of their motives in learning English. It was also employed to uncover possible factors that were associated with the students’ changes of motivation to learn English. The content analysis was employed together with thematic analysis in this study.

Thematic analysis is known as “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79). Barkhuizen et al. (2014) also point out that thematic analysis is concerned with “repeated reading of the data, coding and categorization of data extracts, and their reorganization under thematic headings” (p.75). In this study, thematic inductive coding was applied in order to explore the emerging patterns of the students’ motivational trajectories in learning English language from the narrative data. The patterns found were then categorised and developed into proper themes and categories. However, one of the potential pitfalls to be noted here was that the extracts or chunks of the data collected into themes were not yet the thematic analysis. They worked only as an illustration of evidence to support how I made sense of the data and decided to group them in such themes. Taking the constructivist assumption, I was aware that the themes, meanings and knowledge constructed could be influenced by my personal background experience which could affect the way I interpreted and analysed the data.

#### **4.8.4 Stage four: Data translation**

Translation, or what Larson (1998) describe as the transferring of meaning of the source language into another, has become one of the important issues discussed in the field of cross-language research. Doing research that involves more than one language, either collecting data from more than one language, or reporting data in a different language from the data collected, usually concerns the operation of translation between those languages. Thus, it is essential that translation-related decisions should be made explicit when conducting cross-language research. This is because the decisions on choices or methods adopted in translation processes can yield a direct impact on the research validity (Birbili, 2000) and its trustworthiness (Piazzoli, 2015).

Translation can be one of the challenging aspects when conducting cross-language research. There are several issues in translation that can have an impact on our research. Firstly, when the translation process involves employing translators or interpreters, this should be explained in the

research and should not just disappear. Temple and Young (2004) point out that giving information about translation procedures and the identification of the translator can enable the reader to understand the epistemological position held by the researcher. They explain that if the worldview that the researcher takes is related to social constructionist, interpretive, or non-positivist position, which sees that knowledge or social reality can be constructed and influenced by the social actors, then “translators must also form part of the process of knowledge production” (Temple and Young, 2004, p. 164). Bias of the translators also may not be completely eliminated. Therefore, the relationship between the researcher and the translator, if employed, should be acknowledged in the study.

Another issue to be concerned when employing a translator in cross-language research is the background culture and knowledge in the source language of the translator. The translators may be professional translators, interpreters, or native speakers who can communicate with the researcher. However, these people may not have the same background knowledge related to particular concepts of our research and may have different perspectives on them. When using a translator, therefore, it is important that the researcher needs to discuss and examine “the views of others involved in the research” (Temple, 1997, p.608). This is because it is “not just for words” that the researcher would depend on the translators, but also “a certain extent for perspective” of him or her as well (Temple, 1997, p.608). Therefore, by doing that, it can minimize the problem of conceptual equivalence.

In this study, the translation was done by myself. The translation process started after the coding and analysis were completed. The coded data was translated from Thai, my native language, into English. The reason why I chose to translate the data at this stage was because I would like to make sure that the meanings of my participants’ data were correctly understood and interpreted from the original language which I was familiar with. Van Nes, Abma, and Jonsson (2010) also point out that there may be some effect when the analysis is done in another language that is not our own. Thus, they recommend that the researcher should stay “in the original language as long

and as much as possible”, in order to “avoid potential limitations in the analysis” (Van Nes et al.,2010, p.315).

Regarding the translation process, ‘back translation’, or one of the common techniques used to eliminate word equivalent problems in cross-language research by translating the data from the source language into another and let someone else translate it back into the source language, then comparing the two versions if they agree, however, was not adopted in this study. This was because, in practice, the back-translation can be a very time-consuming process and it could be a huge task as all the data of this study was in narrative forms. Therefore, due to my limited time in doing this study, I decided to adopt another technique which was seeking consultation from other people, especially those who had a similar or related background to the topics in this study. To explain, after I finished the translation, the anonymised English translated data was sent to two people together with the data in original language. One of the consultants was my colleague who was an English language lecturer in a university. Another was a friend of mine who was a professional translator. Both of them had background and experience in the field of language education and were familiar with the terms and concepts used in this field. Therefore, the purpose of consulting them was to seek for agreements in word-usage or selecting in the translated data. Also, I asked for their suggestions in improving any parts or words that might not have been translated in the best possible way. When getting all comments back, the improvement was made on the translated data to ensure that the latest translated version of data used in reporting the study represented the most equivalent version to the original as possible. As to maintain the ethical commitment to my participants, it should also be stated here that, no real names of the participants, the third person or places mentioned by the participants were sent to the above consultants.

#### **4.8.5 Stage five: Interpreting and discussing data**

The stage of interpreting and discussing data can be regarded as one of the most important stages in the data analysis. This is because it needs to illustrate how the knowledge or social reality was

constructed and claimed, specifically from which theoretical basis and explanations. This process could be very challenging, as not all data could speak for themselves. Some of the data need our interpretation in making meaning of them. Therefore, a careful plan for interpreting and analysing data, or even positioning yourself in research, play vital roles in the knowledge construction. In addition, it is worth noting here again that how the data was interpreted and analysed in this research might be influenced by my personal cultural and historical background and experience, which I already claimed in the epistemological position section in this study. The findings interpretation and discussions of this study are presented in Chapter 4, 5, and 6.

#### **4.9 Ethical considerations**

According to Sieber (1993, cited in Sikes, 2004, p.25), ethics is about “the application of moral principles to prevent harming or wronging others, to promote the good, to be respectful and to be fair”. Wang and Geale (2015) also state that ethical considerations involve “a set of responsibilities in human relationships: responsibilities for the dignity, privacy, and well-being of the participants” (p.197). When conducting research that involves people, it is necessary to consider ethical issues behind our research activity to ensure that our study would cause the least harm to the participants. As this study involves collecting and interpreting lived experiences of humans, ethical issues concerning the adoption of a narrative approach needed to be considered and addressed.

Doing narrative research means the inquirers are entering the “midst of lives” of the participants, lives that will continue after we leave (Clandinin, Murphy, Huber and Orr, 2010, p.87). The position of narrative inquirers, therefore, cannot be placed separately from what is being studied but it is placed as a part of the phenomenon they are studying (Clandinin et al., 2010). Relationships, therefore, are key ethical concerns in narrative inquiry, as the interactions we develop with our participants may influence how those lived experiences are shared and comprehended (Park, Caine, McConnell and Minaker, 2016). Elliott (2005) also described that

ethical issues of narrative research primarily involve “the relationship between the researcher and the research subjects or participants, and the impact of the research process on those individuals directly involved in the research” (p.134).

Ethical issues regarding the use of narrative inquiry were carefully considered throughout the processes of conducting this study. From the beginning, the study project was designed to help enhance an understanding of Thai university students’ motivation to learn English across time, and their motivation relating to the aspects of selves and identities, which may be beneficial for language teachers, educators, and other stakeholders to further develop English language pedagogy in the context. This study, therefore, is ethical on the basis that it aimed to provide, although not directly, benefits to Thai language learners and to all stakeholders in the field of English language education in the context of Thailand.

The next ethical issue of this study concerns the access to research participants. As this study took place at the university I work at, gaining access might seem to be easy as stated earlier in Section 4.7.1, there was a need to be aware of the role or position I had, which would be recognized by my participant students. Sikes (2004) points out that, the main focus of ethical issues concerning the accessing research participants involves the questions of “social power” (p.27). Inequalities in social power, such as the role of students and teachers in the context of Thailand, may raise ethical concerns regarding degrees of freedom to say no in the research. Regarding Thai culture, teachers are normally considered as having “legitimate power” (French and Raven, 1959) or the positions that have authority over the students. Thai students are expected to pay respect and be obedient to their teachers as those behaviours are valued as the good characteristic of Thai students. Their freedom to say no to people who have power over them may seem to be limited. This imbalance of power in the context then raised my concern about which ethical practice I should adopt to help prevent or minimize the risk of such teacher authority effect that might have on my participant students.

With regard to the above-mentioned issue, the ethical practice that I adopted, after gaining permission from the gatekeepers to access my participants, was through building a good relationship with my participants. This was to ensure my participants that my position as a member of their university staff and as a colleague of their teachers, was not going to have an impact on their rights to say no in this research. In the first session, which was the introduction of this research study, the purpose and detailed information about the use of data in this study was provided in a friendly atmosphere. The students were invited to ask any questions they had in regard to this study project and their rights to opt out any time in this research without being penalized for doing so. In the group meeting session, all participant students were reminded again that they were in control of their information. It was confirmed that the data they shared would only be used for this research study and the publication from this study. They were informed that they had the right to share the amount of data information as much as they felt comfortable to. After these issues were acknowledged, the informed consent was subsequently obtained from the students to confirm the agreement to participate in this research study.

One of the main ethical concerns during the process of data collection was that this study should not be harmful to anybody. In social science, research harm may involve “psychological distress, discomfort, social disadvantage, invasion of privacy or infringement of rights than physical injury” (Israel and Hay, 2006, p.96). Although this study might not be physically harmful to my participants, I was also mindful that my data collection process might potentially cause psychological harm to them. Elliott (2005) also addressed that as narrative inquiry normally encourages people to construct and share stories about their lives and past experiences, it can also cause disturbance to some people as they may not find those experiences very welcoming. Thus, as a narrative inquirer, I needed to be aware of this issue as well. This study also involved an interview, which encouraged the participants to interpret and talk about their past experiences in language learning. This means, there might be possibilities that the participants would get upset when telling their painful stories of past experience or they would be vulnerable to sensitive

questions I asked. To avoid and prevent mental harm in this study, if the participants showed any sign of psychological distress, this study would immediately discontinue. Continuously, they were reminded of their rights to say no in every stage of this study's data collection.

A good rapport was established between me, as an inquirer, and my participants, at the beginning of the interview so as to try to eliminate the effect of power inequality. The interview began by us talking about general experiences and share personal stories with each other to develop an intimate relationship. The participants were also reassured that their confidentiality would be protected. It was confirmed that no identifying information (e.g. real names, school or teacher names) would be revealed in public. Only pseudonyms would be used in presenting data. Treating personal information about the participants in a confidential manner was a significant ethical commitment that would also allow the participants to be more open to share their data with me.

According to Lichtman (2010, p.57), "intrusiveness" can mean intruding on the participants' time, space, and personal lives. As time is precious, it is important to think about a reasonable amount of time that participation will take in joining in the research. This study tried not to be excessively intrusive for time of the participants. Therefore, the participants were asked to choose the time to take part in the interviews at their convenience. Refreshment treats after the interviews were offered to the participants, as well as the thank you emails, to show gratitude for them in taking part in this research and to ensure that this project was not 'rape research' (Sikes, 2004). Contact information (e.g. in social networking) of each other were also exchanged for future communication.

Another ethical issue concerning the use of narrative inquiry involves how the narratives of the participants are interpreted and analysed by the inquirer. In some cases, if the analysis of narrative data does not focus on detailed facts of particular experiences of the participants but on discussion of their identities, the participants may rightly feel that they have been deluded (Elliott, 2005). To be aware of this ethical issue, this study makes explicit its fundamental assumptions and



methodological position, as stated earlier in this chapter. The participants were informed about how their data were going to be analysed and used in the presentation. I was also mindful to explain the nature of qualitative research to my participants, informing that their information would be interpreted based on stories they have shared and how those data were interpreted and understood by me as an inquirer. All the participants were fine with that and agreed to sign the consent form.

#### **4.10 Limitations of research design**

Although each research design has its unique advantages in studying the phenomena, it also has limitations. As this study employed the qualitative approach, focusing on narrative inquiry, limitations regarding the adoption of this research design should be addressed. First, the limitation of the research design in this study concerns degree of generalisability of the findings. Generalisability can be described as the extent to which the findings discovered within one study may be applied to explain phenomena of other individuals in comparable situations (Horsburgh, 2003, p.311). As the general aim of qualitative research is not to test whether the results are “statistically significant or due to chance”, the findings of qualitative research, therefore, “cannot be extended to wider populations with the same degree of certainty that quantitative analyses can” (Atieno, 2009, p.17). This makes the generalisability of this study limited.

Another limitation of this research design also concerns the issue of subjectivity. Although an advantage of narrative research allows the researcher to understand people’s lived experience, the researcher needs to deal with stories which are “inherently multi-layered and ambiguous” (Bell, 2002, p.210). As mentioned earlier in Section 4.7.3.1, inconsistency in narrative stories could also be found (Maines, 1993). Therefore, by its nature, data interpretation of narrative research inevitably involves the subjectivity of the researcher. However, this subjectivity can be coped with by deciding what criteria would be used for judging the phenomena. Also by providing the

evidence showing that sensitive and systematic processes of analysis have been proceeded is also another way to warrant that the true nature of people's psychology is presented (Ratner, 2002).

#### **4.11 Summary of the chapter**

In this chapter, I have presented the fundamental stance of the methodological approach adopted in this research study. The chapter begins by presenting the aim and questions of this study. After that, I discussed about the philosophical background, epistemology and ontology, of this research project. I, then, justified the choices of strategies and methods used, including my role in this research. Detailed information about research design, as well as the main approach which is narrative inquiry, and data collection procedures were also presented. Justification for data analysis and some ethical issues concerning with this narrative research were addressed in this chapter. The next chapter illustrates the presentation of findings for the first research question, in relation to Thai students' general attitudes towards English language learning.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **GENERAL ATTITUDE ORIENTATIONS OF THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TOWARDS THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to present findings, corresponding to the first research questions which is, “what are the general attitude orientations of Thai university students towards the English language?”. The aim of this was to observe the present motivation of the students. At the beginning of this chapter, I would like to present background of the data collected from my fieldwork, in order to illustrate an overview of the student participants of this study, in terms of their majors of study, parents’ occupations, previous academic achievement in English, and perceptions of their own ability in English. After that, the findings and discussion on general attitude orientations of the Thai students towards the English language will be presented. The following section provides background data in this study.

#### **5.2 Background data**

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the data of this study came from two main sources, the written narratives and the oral narratives. For the written narratives, I employed the language learning histories or LLHs to elicit the learners’ feelings, perceptions, motivation and perspectives of their past and current experience in English language learning. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were incorporated as a follow-up method to investigate the learners’ language learning experiences in more depth. They were also used to explore the learners’ vision of their possible L2-related selves and see if those selves can help in explaining their motivation to learn English.

Seventeen participants initially voluntarily participated in this study. Looking at the stories the learners wrote, most students talked about significant events of their English learning experience. Some of those critical incidents have made the learners feel positive towards English and some

have made them feel the opposite. These particular moments fall into an “L2 Learning Experience” which is a key component in Dörnyei’s L2 Motivational Self System (2005). L2 learning experience “concerns situated, ‘executive’ motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group or the experience of success” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.86). Therefore, those moments and factors associated with them are worth investigating. All seventeen participants were invited to take part in the interviews. However, one participant withdrew from the study; thus, there were sixteen participants in total joining in the interviews. Table 5.1 below re-iterates general background information of the sixteen participants of this study, including genders, majors of study, and occupations of parents. The additional information presented here also includes the participants’ academic achievement in English, based on the first two English foundation courses they took at the university, as well as their self-perceptions on their ability in English. The additional information of English grades was included to assist in understanding the perceptions they had about their own capability in English.

Students	Genders	Major of Study	Parents’ Occupations	English Grades Semester 1	English Grades Semester 2	Students’ Self Perceptions of their English Competency
S1	F	Law	Father: rice farmer (passed away) Mother: rice farmer	D	D	Low
S2	F	Law	Father: rice farmer, local council member Mother: housewife	C+	C+	Low to Intermediate
S3	M	Law	Father: teacher Mother: teacher	D	D	Low to Intermediate
S4	M	Computer Sciences	Father: soldier Mother: local officer	D+	C+	Low to Intermediate
S5	M	International Business	Father: junk shop owner	D+	C+	Low

			Mother: rice farmer			
S6	F	Computer Sciences	Father: worker in Kuwait Mother: farmer	D	D+	Low
S7	F	Economics	Father: business man Mother: business woman	C	D	Intermediate
S8	F	Economics	Father: worker (passed away) Mother: worker	D+	D+	Low
S9	F	Economics	Father: business man but retired, private tutor Mother: private tutor	C+	D	Low
S10	F	ICT	Father: worker at a car manufacture in Taiwan Mother: weaver	D+	D	Low to Intermediate
<b>S11</b>	F	ICT	Father: worker Mother: worker	<b>B+</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>Low to Intermediate</b>
S12	F	Finance	Father: teacher Mother: house wife	B	C+	Intermediate
S13	F	Tourism	Father: policeman Mother: house wife	B	B	Intermediate to High
S14	F	Tourism	Father: rice farmer Mother: housekeeper	C	D+	Intermediate
<b>S15</b>	F	Agro-Industry	Father: officer Mother: sub-district officer	<b>D+</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>
S16	F	Computer Sciences	Father: rice farmer Mother: rice farmer	D	D	Low

**Table 5.1 Background information of the participants taken part in this study**

With regards to these sixteen participants, most of them are female and they were all the first-year university students when the data was collected. As described earlier in Section 4.6, the majors of their study varied; however, none of them majored in English. Regarding their family

background, more than half of the students were from the working-class families. The rest of the students, however, were from middle-class families. All participants started learning English at kindergarten level. In the next section, I will illustrate how the participant students generally perceived their own ability in English language and what reasons are behind such perceptions of the students. This exploration of the students' self-perceived competence was to facilitate an understanding of their English learning experiences. Also, as Takahashi (2009) states that when an English learner perceives that his or her competence in the language is high, he or she may develop positive attitudes towards language learning and be motivated to learn the language. Therefore, by exploring the students' self-perceived competence in English, it was also hoped to reflect their motivation in learning English as well.

### **5.3 Students' self-perceptions of their competency in English**

In the interview, the students were asked to evaluate their own competence in English language and explain why they felt such way. They were also asked to share their previous grades that they received from the mandatory English courses in the university, in order to assist understanding of their self-perceived competence. As revealed in Table 5.1, in general, what most students reported about their competence in English seemed to agree with the actual English grades they got, except two students, Student 11 and Student 15 (in bold), who seemed to perceived their competence a bit lower and higher, respectively, than their received grade results. However, overall, most students seemed to believe that they are at the 'low' and 'low to intermediate' levels of English. Table 5.2 shows the overall responses of the learners on how competent they thought they were in English, together with their English grade results from the first two semester at the university, as presented in the brackets.

English competency levels perceived by the students	Numbers of students	Students (English grade semester 1, semester 2)
High	0	-
Intermediate - High	1	S13 (B, B)
Intermediate	4	S7 (C, D) S12 (B, C+) S14 (C, D+) <b>S15 (D+, D+)</b>
Low - Intermediate	5	S2 (C+, C+) S3 (D, D) S4 (D+, C+) S10 (D+, D) <b>S11 (B+, B+)</b>
Low	6	S1 (D, D) S5 (D+, C+) S6 (D, D+) S8 (D+, D+) S9 (C+, D) S16 (D, D)

**Table 5.2 English competence levels perceived by the students and their actual English grades**

According to Table 5.2, the students' self-perceived competence in English appears to be varied, ranging from the 'low' level to the 'intermediate to high' level. The levels of their perceived competency were categorised according to the keywords they gave from the interview (e.g. 'intermediate level near the low level', 'around 60 percent', 'a low level'). The data, however, has shown that most of these students, 11 out of 16, seem to perceive their ability in English in the 'low' and 'low to immediate' levels. There were four students rating themselves in the 'intermediate' level and only one student positioned herself as in the level of 'intermediate to high'. It is interesting that none of these students assessed themselves as in a 'high' level. These findings appear to be in line with Grubbs, Chaengploy, and Worawong's (2009) study, who found that although Thai university students seem to have positive feelings towards English, they did not perceive very positively about their own competence in English.

Studies have suggested that students' self-perceived competence may be correlated with their achievement and anxiety (e.g. Boud and Falchikov, 1989, MacIntyre, Noels and Clément, 1997). For example, Boud and Falchikov (1989) summarise the general trend of studies on self-

assessment that high achieving students tend to underestimate their competence while low achieving students are likely to overestimate their competence. They explain that this is because the high achieving students tend to be aware of their weakness or deficiencies, judging their own performance to be underrated (Boud and Falchikov, 1989). On the other hand, the low achieving students tend to overrate their own achievements, partly because they may not be aware of the standards or criteria set for their courses, so “they err on the side of optimism” (Boud and Falchikov, 1989, p.544). MacIntyre, Noels and Clément (1997) also found that students who were anxious tended to underestimate their own ability in comparison with less anxious students who were likely to overestimate their performance.

Nevertheless, there was insufficient information here to draw a conclusion whether these participants’ self-perceived competence is associated with their academic achievement or the levels of their anxiety or not. The aim of this investigation was to explore how the students perceived and made judgements about their own English ability and why. It was hoped that the results would provide an overall picture of the present self-perceived competence of these students and would also help facilitate an understanding of their motivation in learning English in the future, which will be detailed and discussed in Chapter 7.

According to Dewaele (2010), a person’s self-perceived competence, which is a holistic judgement of his or her own ability to communicate in L2, “reflects a sum of various aspects of the L2, including perceived competence in grammar, phonology, lexis, syntax and, especially, pragmatics among experienced LX users” (p.69). In this study, the data has also shown that the students’ self-perceptions of their ability to use English concerned several linguistics aspects, including grammar, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and communicative skills. From the data, the aspect of grammar seems to be one of the most concerning areas that many participants referred to when asked to judge their own English competence.



Student 3, who ranked himself in the low to intermediate level, for example, referred to his poor grammar skills as the reason behind his rated competence level, as in, “*I guess I would be in the intermediate level near the low level. Because I am not good at grammar, not good at all. But when listening, I can catch the meanings in some sentences*” [Student 3, interview]. Although Student 3 indicated that his grammatical skills were not good, he seemed to feel that his listening skill is in an acceptable level. Student 12 also shared similar thoughts as she seemed to perceive that because she still lacked the grammatical competence, she was still in the intermediate level, as she said:

*I am still in the moderate group because I am not that good at grammar. I can only understand the simple tenses in the English. If the grammar is more complex, I won't understand it. I'm still not fluent or good at it.* [Student 12, interview]

Similarly, Student 14, who reported that she was also in the intermediate level, also stated, “*I don't know what others think, but I think I might be at the intermediate level. I actually don't understand the English grammar clearly*” [Student 14, interview]. This perceived lack of “grammatical competence”, or lacking “implicit and explicit knowledge of the rules of grammar” (Canale and Swain, 1980, p.4), can also influence willingness to communicate in English of students. Pattapong (2013) found that a lack of grammatical competence was attributed by Thai learners as one of the reasons behind their unwillingness to communicate in English class. She explains that the learners who were not grammatically competent “experienced difficulty in understanding the message and articulating their thoughts into actual speech” (p.81).

It was not only the aspect of grammar that seemed to be in concern of the participants when evaluating their own English competence, but also other linguistic aspects, including vocabulary and fluency as well. The data has revealed that certain participant students also attributed their perceived competency to the English vocabulary knowledge they had. For example, Student 5, who reported that he might be in a low level, stated “*I might be in the first level. Like, I only know little vocabulary. If calculating in percentage, I would be at around 20 percent out of 100*” [Student 5, interview]. While limited vocabulary knowledge was perceived as the main deficiency

to some students, certain students seemed to feel capable with the vocabulary they had. However, they appeared to be unconfident about their fluency, as Student 13, for example, stated:

*I think my competence is above 50 percent. I may be at around 60 percent... In communication, if the basic vocabulary is used, I can understand it. I am able to select words and make them meaningful. But if asked to speak it fluently in sentences, I still can't do that. So, I think I am still at that level. [Student 13, interview]*

Similarly, Student 15, who reported herself as in the intermediate level, seemed to be satisfied with her vocabulary knowledge. She also appeared to be aware of her English competence in terms of fluency as well, as in:

*In my view, I can't think that I am very good at English. I think I am in the intermediate level... Because I don't have much skill in the language. However, at least I know the verbs stuff. At least, I know some words and I can translate their meanings. But if compared with the foreigners, I am still not fluent. [...] At least I'm not ashamed of myself. There's no need to speak everything perfectly, but I can learn it. So, I think I am in the intermediate level. [Student 15, interview]*

Another example statement from Student 10 also showed that the aspect of fluency in using English could be the main reason behind the perceived competence in English of some students, as in, “*I think I would be in the low to moderate level. Because I know that I'm not fluent in English, so I think I wouldn't be that high*” [Student 10, interview]. However, it may also be assumed that a lack of English fluency may be partly a result of a lack of grammatical competence and vocabulary knowledge as well. Shen (2013) describes the term ‘fluency’ as,

the quality or condition of being able to speak or write a language or perform an action smoothly, accurately and easily, which includes the ability to produce written and/or spoken language with ease, the ability to speak with a good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary, and grammar, the ability to communicate ideas effectively, and the ability to produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties or a breakdown of communication (p.819).

Fluency and accuracy (grammatical competence), therefore, seem to be inseparable. Canale and Swain (1980) also state that communicative competence requires both “grammatical competence” and “contextual or sociolinguistic competence”, which refers to “knowledge of the rules of language use” (p.6). The data also revealed that communicative performance, or the ability to demonstrate the language knowledge in real L2 situations (Canale and Swain, 1980), was also

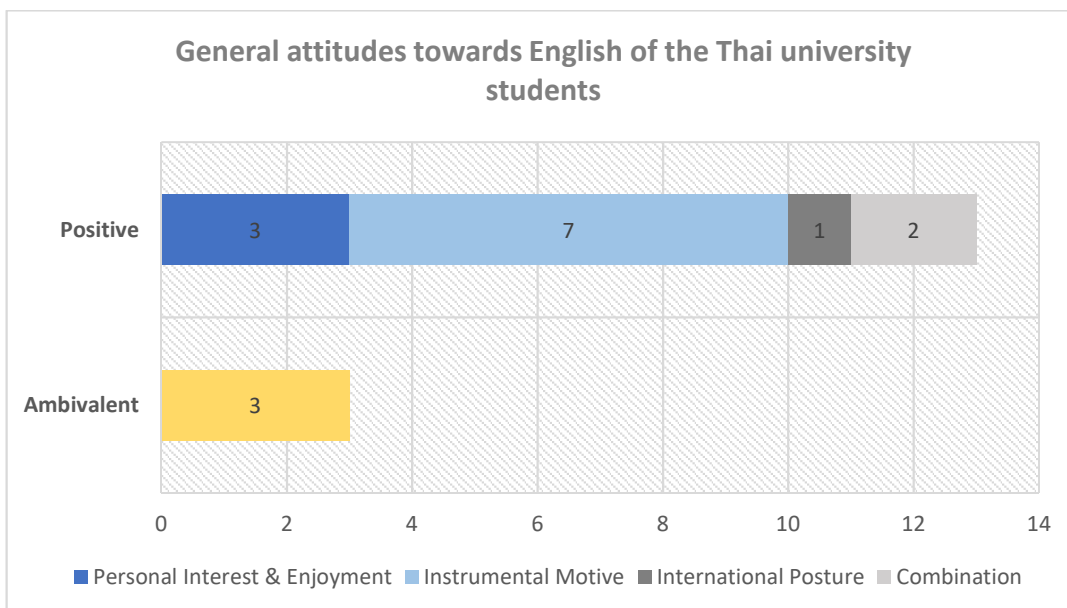
attributed by some students as the reason of their perceived English competence. For example, limited ability to comprehend utterances when communicating in English was mentioned by Student 16, as in, *“I am still in a low level. I still don’t understand what the foreign teachers said. I always need help from my friends”* [Student 16, interview]. A combination of various linguistic aspects was also found to be related to students’ explanation of their perceived competence, as Student 11 stated, *“because I still have problems in my listening and speaking skills. They are still not good enough. And there are many grammar points that I still don’t understand”* (Student 11, interview).

To conclude, the findings have shown that these Thai students had different perceptions of their own competency in English. Most of them appear to believe that they were at the ‘low’ or ‘low to intermediate’ levels. The linguistic aspects that seemed to involve with the perceived competence of these Thai students include the grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and the combination of these aspects and other skills. Such perceptions about themselves in terms of competency or ability could be an integral part of the self-concepts that the students may develop. According to Baumeister (1999), the self-concept is broadly defined as a person’s beliefs about himself or herself. These beliefs or perceptions are shaped through experience and can be influenced by evaluations of significant others and one’s personal attributions (Marsh and Shavelson, 1985). A person’s self-concept in reference to their capabilities to perform a given task can influence how they feel, think, motivate themselves and act (Bandura, 1994). Zimmerman (2000a) also states, the belief in one’s own capability can influence the person’s “choice of activities, level of effort, persistence, and emotional reactions” (p.86). Thus, understanding how the students perceived or formed concepts about themselves, or understanding the aspect of ‘actual self’ (Higgins, 1987), particularly in terms of ability, may facilitate better understanding of their attitudes towards English, persistence and motivation to learn English in the future. In the next section, the findings on general attitudes towards English of the students will be presented and discussed.

#### **5.4 Students' general attitudes towards English language**

This section presents the findings on general attitudes towards English language of the Thai students. The attitude towards L2 is defined as, “the set of beliefs that the learners hold towards the members of the target language group, the target language culture and in the case of classroom learning, towards their teachers and the learning they are given” (Atchade, 2002, p.45). To put it simply, the L2 learning attitude can refer to “the way learners feel about learning a given language especially as this influences their learning ability” (Atchade, 2002, p.45). In this study, the use of language learning histories (LLHs) and the interviews was to elicit a sense of general attitudes or dispositions towards English of the students. They also aimed to uncover factors that may have influenced the learners' attitudes, feelings or motivation to learn English.

When asked whether the students liked English, two main responses appeared to be revealed by the students, which include a positive attitude and an unsure or ambivalent disposition. It should be noted here that, the liking for English in this context may not limit only ‘liking English as a language’, but it may also include ‘liking English as a subject’ and ‘liking learning the English language’ as well. The aim was to explore the students' general feelings or attitudes towards English. Figure 5.1 shows overall attitudes towards English of the Thai university students when the data was collected.



**Figure 5.1 General attitudes towards English of the Thai university students (n=16)**

In general, most of the students, 13 out of 16, appeared to have a positive outlook towards the English language; while the rest of them, three out of 16 students, seemed to have an ambivalent disposition about it. Each participant student provided different reasons for their positive or ambivalent feelings for English. The following section discusses the responses with regard to the positive attitudes towards English language of the participants.

#### **5.4.1 A positive disposition towards English**

As displayed above, the findings have shown that majority of the students seemed to have a positive outlook towards the English language. This section aims to present the students' reasons or explanations for such positive feelings towards the English language. According to the data, reasons behind the students' positive dispositions towards English appear to associate with their intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000), such as personal interests and enjoyment in the language and culture, their extrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000), such as the instrumental value of the language and international posture (Yashima, 2002), and the combination of different motives. However, the findings have shown that extrinsic motivation seems to play a significant

role in these students' positive attitudes towards English, which I am going to discuss in the following section.

#### **5.4.1.1 Extrinsic Motivation**

##### *Instrumental motivation*

With regard to Ryan and Deci (2000), extrinsic motivation refers to reasons of doing something for its instrumental value or other separable outcomes, rather than for one's enjoyment of the task. The data has shown that instrumental motives, or what Gardner (2005) described as a person's desire to learn an L2 for practical or utilitarian purposes, seem to be salient for these students. More than half of the students who displayed positive attitudes towards the English language referred to its instrumental value when asked to explain why they felt such positively towards English. This qualitative data lends support to several quantitative studies which also found that Thai students seemed to be more motivated by the instrumental orientations than the integrative orientations (e.g. Choomthong and Chaichompoo, 2015; Kitjaroonchai and Kitjaroonchai, 2012; Wimolmas, 2013). Generally, many students stated that English is an important language because it helps them to communicate with foreigners, as in,

*Because English is another important language. We can use English when we work or when we go abroad. If we cannot speak English, we cannot communicate with the foreigners. [Student 7, interview]*

*Because I think that English will be used to communicate in the ASEAN community and we should value it. [Student 15, interview]*

Of these, certain students displayed the instrumental motivation to learn English with a 'promotion focus' (Higgins, 1998) or a desired end-state that concerns hopes, aspirations, or accomplishments. This promotion focus is considered as one type of the instrumental motives (Dörnyei, 2009a). An example of the instrumental motive with promotion focus is when a person studies an L2 in order to get a good job, have a higher salary, or gain professional advancement.

Students' responses related to this instrumental motivation with promotion focus are illustrated as follows:

*Because in the future, the English language will be very important to everyone. If I am good at English, I will get a good job and will be able to work abroad easily. This is for my own future. [Student 10, LLH]*

*Because I would like to further my studies and work abroad. So, I work very hard on it and try to always practise my English skills. [Student 11, interview]*

Another student also commented that being able to communicate in English can lead him to a brighter future, by enabling him to become qualified in furthering study abroad which he hoped would be a way to get him out of the poverty, as he stated:

*Now, I want to finish my study and be able to speak English because I would like to further my study abroad. Then I can have more experience and can escape from this poverty that I have now. [Student 5, LLH]*

This study found that students also displayed the sense of instrumental motivation in relation to 'prevention focus', or a motivational orientation that concerns the responsibilities, safety, and obligations (Higgins, 1998). An example of the prevention focus motivational orientation may include a person learns an L2 very hard in order to avoid negative outcomes, such as failing an exam, disappointing their parents, or not getting hired for a job. A student's comments relating to this issue can be illustrated as follows:

*If we are not good at English, we may not be able to get a job. Other foreigners who can speak English better than us will take all of it. And by then, they may even speak our Thai language fluently. So, I think if we are still poor at English, we won't definitely get hired for a job. [Student 16, interview]*

Some students view mastery of English as a way to prevent or avoid undesirable outcomes (prevention focus) that may motivate them to learn and persist in English language rather than studying it for gaining advancement (promotion focus). Higgins (1998) explains that regulatory focus, to approach pleasure (promotion) and to avoid pain (prevention), may vary across individuals and across situations occurring within positive and negative motivational states. Nevertheless, for many highly motivated students, it may not be easy to distinguish clearly

whether they have intrinsic or extrinsic motivation as the two orientations are very closely interrelated (Lamb, 2007a; Van Lier, 1996). Instead, Lamb (2007a) points out that the learners' extrinsic motivation in learning English should be conceptualised "on a continuum of 'internalization'" (p.31).

Ryan and Deci (2000) describes the concept of internalization as "the process of taking in a value or regulation" (p.60). They explain that "[w]ith increasing internalization (and its associated sense of personal commitment) come greater persistence, more positive self-perceptions, and better quality of engagement" (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p.60-61). Based on the self-determination theory, these participants' extrinsic motivation can also be explained in terms of differing degrees of autonomy. The data has shown that the students' instrumental motives seemed to fall into "identification" and "introjection" regulatory types of extrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p.61). A person whose external goals are internalised and accepted as being important and congruent with his/her personal values, has the identified regulation therefore tend to be more autonomous or self-determined (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

From the data, students who referred to the instrumental motives with promotion focus seemed to display the identification regulatory type of extrinsic motivation. Students' statements, for instance, "*if I am good at English, I will get a good job and will be able to work abroad easily*" [Student 10], or "*because I would like to further my studies and work abroad. So, I work very hard on it and try to always practise my English skills.*" [Student 11], can imply their sense of identification. People with identified regulation "feel greater freedom and volition because the behaviour is more congruent with their personal goals and identities" (Gagné and Deci, 2005, p.334). Identified regulatory students are more autonomously extrinsically motivated than introjected regulatory students.

The introjection or introjected regulatory explains "a type of internal regulation that is still quite controlling because people perform such actions with the feeling of pressure in order to avoid



guilt or anxiety or to attain ego-enhancements or pride” (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p.62). According to the data, it seems that students who displayed instrumental motives with prevention focus displayed this introjected regulatory style. As can be seen from Student 16’s comments, “...*I think if we are still poor at English, we won’t definitely get hired for a job*” [Student 16], the regulation has not been fully accepted as her own but seems to be more controlled by external pressure (the high competition in job market). When a person behaves in order to gain approval from others or having introjected regulation (Lamb, 2007a), which in this case involves performing acts in order to get hired for a job, they could be less self-determined or autonomous than becoming fully identified with it.

#### *International posture*

Influenced by the integrativeness, the concept of international posture has been proposed by Yashima (2002) to explain attitudes of the language learners towards an international community. International posture concerns an interest in relating oneself to the global community rather than any L2 community in specific (Yashima, 2009). This notion is different from an integrative orientation (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993), as the community that a person would like to communicate with is not limited only to the members of the English-speaking community, but also includes a wide range of international community members. From the data, one student displayed the sense of international posture as her reason for liking English, as she stated in the interview:

*Because I want to speak and be able to communicate with the people we don’t know who speak different languages from us. It’s like, I want to be able to communicate with them.*  
[Student 14, interview]

From the above statement, it seems that the language community that student 14 would like to interact with was not specific only to the English-speaking countries, like the UK, USA, or Australia, but it is more generally to any community in which its people speak different languages from the Thai. Although the international posture orientation has been found to have a strong

relationship with the aspect of ideal L2 self of the English language learner (e.g. Rieko, 2013), it may not be regarded as an intrinsic motivation. Yashima (2009) pointed out that international posture is more associated with the higher degree of autonomous or self-determined regulations of the extrinsic motivation (identified and integrated regulations), rather than the genuine intrinsic motivation, because it captures both aspect of instrumentality and the sense of the integrativeness.

Internalization seems to be the key in understanding degree of autonomy when the students are extrinsically motivated. Dörnyei (2005) also points out that instrumental motives will be closely related to a student's ideal self and can contribute greatly to his or her effort expenditure if they are internalised by that student. On the other hand, instrumental motives that are not internalized will be associated with the ought self and tend to have a short-term effect "without providing the sustained commitment that the successful mastery of an L2 requires" (Dörnyei, 2005, p.103). Therefore, understanding how the students internalise their extrinsic motives may also help us to understand how likely they are going to put their effort or persevere in learning the L2 in the long term as well.

#### **5.4.1.2 Intrinsic Motivation**

##### *Personal interests and enjoyment*

Intrinsic motivation involves doing something in order to satisfy one's inherent interests, pleasure, or enjoyment in the tasks (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The findings have revealed that students with positive attitudes towards English displayed the intrinsic motivation. It was found that students' intrinsic motivation was associated with students' personal interests in English language, its cultural aspects, and the English learning. Personal interests and enjoyment in various aspects of English appear to be the main reasons that some intrinsically motivated students referred to when asked to explain why they had positive attitudes towards English. Two students commented on the aspects of the English language itself (a fun language) and its culture (English music) as being

enjoyable and pleasurable. These aspects seemed to be the reasons for their favourable attitudes towards English, as they stated:

*Because the English language is fun, although it is not our language.* [Student 12, interview]

*Because I like listening to English songs, from the 90s and early 2000s, such as Blue's, Westlife's, etc. And when I was in a primary school, I participated in the Christmas Day activity and sang English songs. It was very fun and I was really happy although I didn't know the meanings. I have liked listening to English songs since then.* [Student 3, interview]

Apart from liking English because of its cultural aspect, another student interestingly referred to the nature of the English subject, which requires a lot of practice in communicative skills, as the reason of her positive attitude towards English, as she stated:

*Because I like to speak and learning English allows me to speak more often. Though I can't speak English very well, at least I can speak in the class, unlike learning mathematics that we are not allowed to speak that much.* [Student 13, interview]

From Student 13's statement, it can be implied that she was motivated to learn English because learning it satisfied her interest. When people do something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, they are intrinsically motivated (Ryan and Deci, 2000). However, this could also be viewed from the perspective of the most autonomous regulation type of extrinsic motivation, which is the integration (Ryan and Deci, 2000). People who have integrated regulation "have a full sense that the behaviour is an integral part of who they are, that is emanates from their sense of self and is thus self-determined" (Gagné and Deci, 2005, p.335) (e.g. I am doing it because it's a part of who I am). This integrated regulation shares many qualities with the intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). If viewing that Student 13 liked English because she enjoyed speaking the language, it could be implied that she was intrinsically motivated. On the other hand, if viewing that this student liked English (subject) because of the tasks provided by the teachers (speaking tasks), then, it could be implied that she was motivated extrinsically by the speaking activities in the class. Such activities may have become integrated with her personality (that likes

to speak). However, from the above statement, it can be implied that Student 13 also enjoyed speaking English as well, thus, it is quite reasonable to view that she was intrinsically motivated.

According to Gagné and Deci (2005), intrinsic motivation is an illustration of autonomous motivation. They explain that when a person engages in a task because of his/her innate psychological needs or interests in it, he or she is performing it “wholly volitionally” (Gagné and Deci, 2005, p.334), demonstrating a freedom and the greatest degree of autonomy. People who have “motivation from within” (Ockert, 2015, p.208), or intrinsic motivation, are likely to feel positive about the task and exert greater effort for a longer period of time, than those who are extrinsically motivated (Noels, 2001). From this perspective, the key message for the language teachers, thus, should include the question of how to promote the intrinsic motivation or the more autonomous regulations of extrinsic motivation to our language learners, so that they can sustain their learning more effectively (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

#### **5.4.1.3 A combination of different motivations**

The last type of the students’ reasons behind their positive attitudes towards English is categorised as a combination of different motivations. According to the data, certain students appeared to display a mixture of different motives for their liking for English. The utilitarian value of English was firstly mentioned by the students, demonstrating their instrumental extrinsic motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1959). However, the data also suggests that these students seemed to be intrinsically motivated to learn English as well, as they also displayed a sense of enjoyment when engaging with the English activities. The evidence from the students’ responses are illustrated below:

*Because right now English plays a vital role in our daily lives, so I would like to know it in order to use it for my future work... Also, speaking English is fun and challenging.*  
[Student 2, interview]

*Because English is the international language that most people use to communicate to each other. I am also addicted to online games which most of them are from foreign countries and are in English. And I also enjoy chatting with foreign friends. I think having*

*conversations with international friends is the best way to learn English.* [Student 9, interview]

The findings have suggested some students have more than one motivational orientation in learning English, including both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. Several studies have found that two types of these motivations can coexist and operate together to motivate students to engage in tasks (e.g. Hayenga and Corpus, 2010; Lemos and Veríssimo, 2014). The most optimal pattern of two naturally-occurring motivational orientations was found by Hayenga and Corpus (2010) to be a combination of high intrinsic motivation and low extrinsic motivation, which they called it the “good quality” (p.371) motivation. In their study, they found that students with the good quality motivation displayed higher academic achievement than students in other clusters, including the “high quantity” (high degrees of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations), “low quantity” (low degrees of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations), and “poor quality” (low intrinsic and high extrinsic motivations). However, in the study of Ratelle, Guay, Vallerand, Larose and Sénécal (2007), no difference in achievement was found between students in the high quantity type of motivational cluster and the good quality one. Their study also suggests that students in the more autonomous group appeared to have greater academic persistence than students in the other group (Ratelle et al., 2007).

As this study was not aimed at comparing the levels of different motivational types, there was insufficient information to make judgment whether the participant students were more extrinsically or intrinsically motivated. Nevertheless, the findings of this study suggest that students may have a combination of different types of motivations to learn English. Therefore, the language teachers should be aware of these complexities of motivations their learners may bring to the language class or may develop during their language learning. This way, the teachers can adjust their teaching to suit their learners, or at least introduce activities that promote the more autonomous motivations to them.

#### 5.4.2 An ambivalent disposition towards English

According to the data, some students also displayed an ambivalent feeling when asked if they liked English. The students who exhibited ambivalent feelings towards English appeared to perceive their ability in English in a low or low to intermediate level, according to their comments on self-perceived English ability which was presented earlier in Table 5.1. From their responses, it seems that the ambivalent feelings towards English of the students may have a connection to their perceived competence in English. When asked about the reasons of their unsure feelings or attitude towards English, the students seemed to comment on the issue of their ability. Examples of the students' statements can be illustrated below:

*I don't quite like English. But learning it is sometimes enjoyable. However, I am not a smart person. I sometimes can't read English or understand it. [Student 1, interview]*

*Now, I like English about 50 percent. Like, I mentioned in the story, I didn't quite like English because I had to study with the foreign teachers in the past. So, I didn't get any grammar knowledge. But now, like in this semester, a Thai teacher teaches me like a tutoring style and that has made me understand English more. Once I understand more, I want to study. [Student 4, interview]*

As can be seen, although Student 1 mentioned that she did not quite like English, she also displayed a degree of hesitancy, as she stated “*but learning it is sometimes enjoyable*”. It can be implied that this student did engage with English class activities and was intrinsically motivated. However, the reason for her not liking for it seemed to be associated with how she felt about herself in terms of ability in English. From her comments, it was found that strong word was used when she described her ability, as in “*I am not a smart person*”. This negative perception about one's own ability may have an influence on their motivation to perform a task.

Student 4's responses also suggested that perceived competence in English appears to have an impact on students' attitudes and motivation to learn English (“*once I understand more, I want to study*”). However, based on the data, it seems that Student 4 seemed to attribute his poor English to an external factor, that is the language teachers (“*I didn't quite like English because I had to study with the foreign teachers in the past. So, I didn't get any grammar knowledge.*”, “*a Thai*

*teacher teaches me like a tutoring style and that has made me understand English more*”). This external perceived locus of causality is considered not likely to enhance the sense of autonomy which can lead to an increase of intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Similarly, student 6 also demonstrated a degree of ambivalence about her liking for English. The findings have suggested that her perceived English ability seemed to influence how she feels about English. Having self-doubt about her competence in English also seemed to have an impact on her confidence to express her clear feelings about English as well, as she described:

*Like personally, I think I like it, but there is also something against my feelings. If I like English, I wonder why I am still not fluent in it or why I don't understand the English structures. Is it because of myself, the teachers, or the environment around me? Is it because I don't pay attention to it or the teachers are not good? It's like a combination of feelings. I am not sure if I can really say I like English since I am still not good at it. I still can't communicate in English. If the teachers say long sentences in English, I can't get them. And if I say I don't like it, it's not true because I like pronouncing English words. I like when the teacher is teaching. When I listen to the teachers teaching English, I really enjoy it and I am happy. [Student 6, interview]*

From Student 6's responses, she seemed to be both extrinsically motivated (“*I like when the teacher is teaching*”) and intrinsically motivated (“*I like pronouncing English words*”, “*I really enjoy it*”) to learn English. However, it is interesting that the same student displayed a combination of feelings towards English when asked how she felt about it. According to the data, how Student 6 perceived her ability in English seems to have an influence on the way she felt about the English language, affecting her confidence to be genuine about her feelings towards it (“*I am not sure if I can really say I like English since I am still not good at it.*”).

According to Deci and Ryan (2012), feeling competence is one of the human psychological needs that can enhance optimal development and functioning based on the self-determination theory. Students are more likely to feel more engaged with the tasks and internalize extrinsic goals if they feel efficacious or perceive that they have relevant skills and ability to accomplish them (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Perceived competence of people, thus, seems to have a close relationship with their intrinsic motivation. The above examples of the students' responses have suggested that

perceiving oneself as having low capability to perform in the language may have an impact on their feelings towards the language. This seems to support Bandura's (1994) statement that a person's self-concept about his or her own ability can influence how that person feels, thinks, motivates himself/herself and acts. Zimmerman (2000a) also states that a person's persistence in the tasks, degree of effort, and emotional reactions can also be affected by how they hold the belief about their own ability.

### **5.5 Summary of the chapter**

This chapter presented the findings, corresponding to the first research question regarding Thai university students' general attitudes towards English language. The background of the data collected from my fieldwork has been illustrated, giving an overview picture of the participants information in terms of their genders, majors of study, occupations of parents, English language ability, their perceptions of English capabilities, and reasons behind those perceptions. The findings on the students' general dispositions towards English together with the analysis were presented. In the next chapter, findings on motivational trajectory over time of the Thai learners, critical incidents in their English language learning, as well as factors involving in changes of their motivation will be presented and discussed.



# **CHAPTER 6**

## **MOTIVATIONAL TRAJECTORIES IN ENGLISH LEARNING**

### **AMONG THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

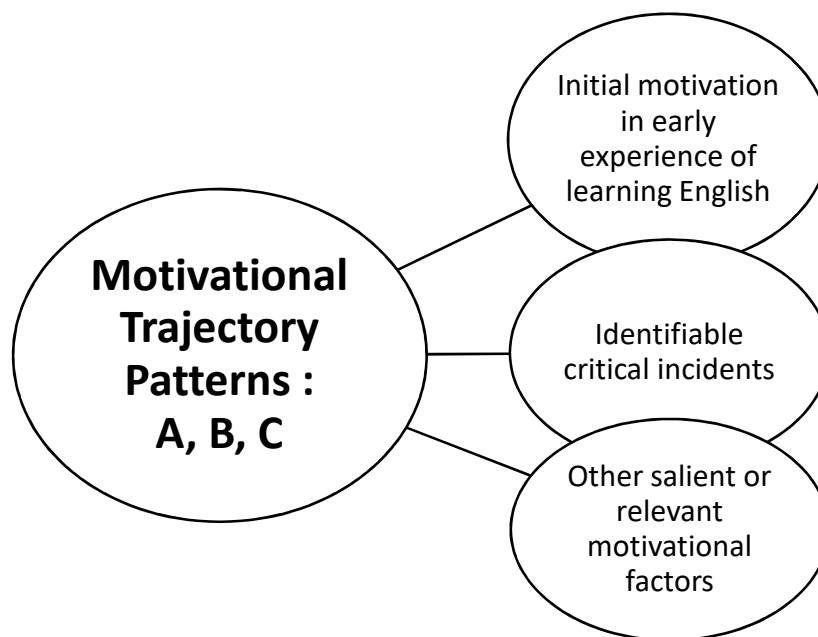
In the previous chapter, the learners' general attitude orientations towards English were illustrated in order to facilitate our understandings of the next aspects, which are the learners' motivational trajectories over time. This chapter is aimed at understanding motivational trajectories across a time-span for the Thai learners participating in this study. This corresponds to the study's second research question, based on anecdotes they revealed in their language learning histories (LLHs) and gave in the interviews. A holistic perspective was adopted in investigating the students' motivational trajectories. This was done in order to capture the whole picture, which included motivation and other relevant variables associated with changes in motivation over time. This chapter also aims to illustrate and discuss the findings regarding students' initial motivation in their early experiences of learning English, emerging critical incidents, and other salient or relevant factors associated with changes in their motivational dispositions. The following section presents and discusses the motivational trajectory patterns which emerged from the participants' narratives.

#### **6.2 Motivational trajectory patterns**

As one of the aims of the study was to investigate motivation throughout the learners' language learning experience, no category or theme of motivational trajectory was conceived before analysing the data. The learners' motivational trajectories were revealed by a data-driven or inductive analysis approach, which refers to "a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher's analytic preconceptions" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 83). I immersed myself in the participants' narrative accounts, both from the LLHs and

interviews. One by one, unique motivational trajectory patterns were established according to stories of experiences (LLHs) and critical or related events revealed by each participating learner. These unique trajectories of motivation, however, can be broadly grouped into three patterns: (A) Relatively low motivated in early stages of learning English, but more highly motivated at a later stage, (B) Relatively highly motivated in early stages of learning English and a sustained retention of high motivation, and (C) Fluctuating motivation – began with relatively high or low motivation, but then motivation fluctuated throughout the L2 experience.

In order to illustrate the complex findings in a systematic way, data findings and discussions are presented together according to these three motivational patterns, grouped together as themes. In each theme, I provide a detailed description of each motivational pattern. Initial motivation in the early language learning experiences of the participants are presented first, with a selection of vivid data extracts to illustrate Ushioda's (2013b, p.9) notion that "the quality of these initial learning experiences may similarly function as a litmus test for students' long-term motivational trajectories and self-regulatory processes". Other subthemes that emerged from the data, including critical incidents and other salient or relevant motivational factors, will be presented afterwards, with some compelling extracts from the participating learners' experiences. Data discussions are developed alongside key findings throughout this chapter. The study's thematic map of analysis is shown in Figure 6.1 below:



**Figure 6.1 Thematic map of analysis of this study**

**6.2.1 Pattern A: Relatively low motivation in the early stages of learning English, with motivation increasing at a later stage**

The first motivational trajectory pattern, or what I have categorised as Pattern A, describes a motivational trajectory that tended to start with relatively low motivation in learning English at an early stage or at the beginning of their language learning, but then there seemed to be an increase in motivation at a later stage in their lives and language learning. There were five out of 16 students whose trajectories appeared to display this upward trend. I am going to start from examining these participant students' early experience of learning English in order to understand their early stage of motivation or disposition towards English language learning. This will be based on their narrative accounts from LLHs and on semi-structured interviews.

### 6.2.1.1 Early experience and motivation of students' language learning (Pattern A)

#### *Perceived value of the English language and a Thai identity*

Through exploring the students' early experiences of language learning, the findings suggest that despite having positive feelings or attitudes towards English as presented in the previous chapter, this group of students displayed relatively low motivation in their early English learning experiences. One salient aspect concerning the low level of interest, low motivation, and disengagement with the language class activity appears to involve a lack of perceived value and goals in learning, as mentioned by most students in this group. Student 9, for example, commented that the reason she did not feel engaged with English in the early stage of learning was due to a lack of perceived value of the English language. She remarked: *when I was a kid, I used to wonder why we had to use English as we are Thai people. So, I didn't care about learning it* [Student 9, LLH]. Student 10 also mentioned a similar thing, as she wrote in her story: *when I was young, I used to think that English is not my mother tongue. So, I didn't feel I should care and work hard for it. Then, I became habituated to that thought. Every time I had an English class, I would read cartoon books* [Student 10, LLH].

From the data, it seems that students not perceiving the value of English language may be associated with their identity as Thai people. Generally, the English language tends to have little relevance in their daily lives (Hayes, 2008) (see Section 2.3.1). More evidence of this issue was also evident in Student 14's responses: *...and what made me didn't get English and didn't want to study English at all was a saying that many people like to say, which is 'English is not our father's and mother's language. Why do we have to learn it?'* [Student 14, LLH]. Similarly, Student 15 also commented that English was not in her interest in the early stage, as it was not seen as important or relevant to her life as her heritage language (Thai). She indicated: *I remembered that I started English in my kindergarten. [...] when I was in Grade 1, I really didn't*

*like English. I hated it very much. I had no idea why we needed to learn it. I thought it was not even our mother's tongue. I was so bored at it and it got me a real headache.* [Student 15, LLH].

These findings suggest that the students' Thai identity could have an influence on their engagement and motivation to learn English. Their Thai identity, which generally has little involvement with English in their daily life, may potentially affect how students perceive the value and importance of the English language. When students do not have the sense of connectedness or relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 2000) with the English language, it is likely that they will not internalise language learning goals or become engaged to achieving them. To conceptualise motivation, it is therefore also important to learn how the students' sense of self and identity within their socio-cultural contexts plays a role in both how they relate with the English language and how that initiates their motivation. Ushioda (2009) also emphasises that students' motivation should be understood from the person-in-context relational view, which focuses on the students' self and identity as real people, who live in particular socio-cultural and historical contexts, not only as language learners.

Having an identity as Thais who live in the area with little involvement with the English language may explain, in part, why these students did not see English as relevant to their lives, and why they, as such, had a low level of interest and motivation to learn it. This lack of seeing the relatedness, value or goals of learning English can yield an opposing impact on the students' motivation. This is because motivation usually involves "goal-directed behaviour" (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003, p.173). Once goals are set, it kick-starts people to move on and engage in goal striving (Gollwitzer and Oettingen, 2012, p.214). Without goal setting, it may be difficult for a person to be motivated to do something; in this case, to pursue language learning. A relatively low motivation to learn the language due to a lack of goals may be explained as being influenced by the contextual factor of the students, as mentioned above. As Rueda and Moll (1994, p.132) also state, motivation is a "situated phenomenon" which is socially and culturally relative and

context-specific. To conceptualize motivation in relation to this, there seems to be a need to take into account the students' socio-cultural contexts as well.

#### *The perceived difficulty of the English language*

Another important aspect concerning the students' low level of motivation to learn English in their early experience of learning also includes a perception that learning English is difficult. Examples of narrative accounts that appear to relate to the perceived difficulty of English include the following:

*Once I moved to primary school, English learning was even more difficult than in kindergarten. In kindergarten, I only learned the English alphabet, vowels, some vocabulary. But at primary level, I had to learn more vocabulary, such as numbers, days, months, years, and many things. I learned basic grammar. At that time, I thought learning English was so difficult and I didn't want to learn it. [Student 14, LLH]*

This kind of view was also shared by another female student, who described that the various features and domains to remember and to focus on when it came to the English language made her feel that English was very difficult, which had then lessened her motivation to learn it. She said:

*Many days later, the teacher asked me again how to pronounce some words. I was completely freaked out and overwhelmed. I didn't understand why English was so difficult. I had to remember all of the alphabet, know all meanings, and had to pronounce them correctly and improve my accent. I still remember at that time, I went to see the teacher and told her I didn't like English... [Student 15, LLH]*

The perception that English is a 'difficult' language seems to be quite common to many Thais, according to my experience as a teacher, a learner, and a peer in this context. This kind of perception may develop due to poor teaching methods and performances on the part of language teachers. These results, however, appear to support Saengboon's (2012) findings that "the inherent difficulty of English grammar and vocabulary" (p. 72) seems to significantly influence Thai students' attitudes toward English. Saengboon (2012) claims that, although the teaching performances of teachers may exert considerable influence on students' learning, they can only be partly to blame for the unsuccessful learning of certain students. His study suggests that the

reasons that some Thai students did not put much effort into English language learning also include the feeling and perception that English is a very difficult language. Combining such perceptions of the perceived linguistic difficulty of English, along with the poor teaching performances of some teachers, this is more likely to induce an opposing impact on students' motivation to learn English.

Considered in the perspective of the complex dynamic systems, as discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.6, these findings suggest that both the students' perceived value and difficulty when it comes to learning English may play a part in forming a particular motivational outcome or pattern. Through self-organisation, the system behaviour may fall into an attractor state, that is, a state of having relatively low motivation to learn or showing less effort in learning. According to Hive (2015, p. 20), an attractor state can be described as "stable tendencies, solutions or outcomes for dynamic systems". The stability of motivational patterns may continue to remain until a perturbation, or "a disturbing force that can jolt a system out of one attractor state and into a different direction" (Kra, 2009, cited in Hive, 2015, p. 23), occurs or is inserted into the system. Perturbations may act as triggers that can cause instability to the system (e.g. external rewards, tests, a sudden forced situation to use English). It may not be possible to indicate or predict the exact amount of perturbations that can destabilise the system, however, as different perturbations may have different impacts on each individual's dynamic systems.

This section discusses how the students reflected on their early experience of English language learning, mostly within the time period of kindergarten through to their primary school education. The findings indicate that the students showed relatively low motivation to learn English in their early language learning journey. It cannot be concluded, however, that their efforts would be discontinued, as Dörnyei, Henry, and Muir (2016) state that "persistence does not only depend on the strength of someone's initial motivation but also on how the process of realizing this motivation unfolds over time" (p. 26). This suggests that language motivation of students may be changeable at any stage of learning and experience. Thus, understanding how motivation has

changed, in what ways, and by which related incidents or factors may help us become aware of what we should be doing or should not be doing in wishing to enhance and maintain students' motivation. The next section presents the identifiable critical incidents revealed by this group of students and discusses how those critical incidents are associated with their motivational trajectories in learning English.

### **6.2.1.2 Critical incidents (Pattern A)**

Through examining the students' narrative accounts, the data suggests that most of these students mentioned particular incidents that seemed to play a significant role in changing their attitudes or feelings towards learning English. These incidents can be referred to as 'critical incidents', which Brookfield (1990) explained as the personal accounts of significant events in students' lives, as stated earlier in Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1.1. In the LLHs, these students were asked to write freely about their language learning experiences, with the help of some guiding questions (e.g. tell stories about your positive or negative experiences). By doing this, the students had full opportunities to include what they wanted to write. They could retrospect to their past experiences, make sense, and generate them in the way they wanted through their written stories. It is more likely that significant or critical events they experienced would, as such, be chosen for their narratives. Critical incidents represent the way people interpret the significance of the situations (Tripp, 1993). They also fall into the third key component in Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System, which is the 'L2 Learning Experience'. The L2 Learning Experience involves "situated" and "executive" motives that are associated with the immediate learning settings and experience (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p. 86). Investigating the critical incidents that the students wrote about thus also helped facilitate my understanding of their ongoing motivation within their situated learning contexts.



### *Teachers and their teaching*

The findings reveal that the critical incidents that emerged from these students' narratives were mainly associated with teachers and their teaching methods and styles. According to Williams and Burden (1997), teachers are categorised as significant others among various contextual variables who may have a potentially powerful impact on learners' motivation. The evidence of this can be seen from the extracts of Student 10, for example. As she wrote in her story, her motivation and persistence to learn English continued to be low until she got to higher secondary education level. In senior high school, she described that she started to notice the differences between her own competence of English, which was quite low, and her friends, which she claimed was very high. She reflected that while her friends were reviewing the English lessons learned each day, she only read cartoon books and just ignored English until one day she decided to attend an English tutoring session arranged by her school, aiming to intensively review English content and to prepare their students for an upcoming national examination. This session's purpose was to help the students get good scores in the exam, so it would help to increase the chances for the school's students to get into universities. She then explained that:

*...being tutored by 'that' English teacher on that day has made me realise that, English was not actually that difficult if I try hard, if I focus and love it. Since then, I began to pay more attention to it. Now that I am in the university, my life has changed a lot. I have changed from someone who never liked English, rather hated it, to become someone who likes English... I never think of giving up, although I am so poor in English like this. It was my own fault that I didn't want to get involved with English in the first place...*  
[Student 10, LLH]

After a long time of being uninterested in English, Student 10 became more motivated to learn it when she took that English tutoring session. Although it was not very clear how this teacher or their teaching methods had affected this student, the findings suggest that teachers can play a significant role in reshaping students' motivation to learn English. Another student also revealed similar incidents related to her teacher that had an impact in changing her attitude towards learning English. Student 9 wrote that when she was in Grade 3, she was taught by a native English teacher. Studying with this teacher made her feel more positive towards English, as she described:

*Until Grade 3, I got to study English with a native English teacher. [...] At first, I did not speak with the teacher because he only spoke in English. Until later, he tried to speak Thai to me and asked why I didn't open my mind to English. He told me English was not that difficult. Then, he gave me a fairy-tale book, which I really liked, but it was all in English. The teacher said he would help me to read it, two pages every day. Since then, I read the book with this English teacher every morning until I finished Grade 3. This teacher left school and went back to his country. I was so sad at that time but I knew, since then, I started to like English. [Student 9, LLH]*

From the data, it suggests that teachers' actions or their positive personality traits of being understanding, helpful, and dedicated to their students may trigger a positive attitude towards learning in students. Pintrich and Schunk (2002, p. 311) state that, "virtually everything the teacher does has potential motivational impact on students". It is not only their personalities that could help the students feel more positive towards the language, but also the teaching methods and styles that teachers choose to apply in their language classes. Another student also mentioned that her private tutor's teaching methods played a crucial role in changing her attitude towards English. Interestingly, this female student spoke about her experience in learning English mostly in terms of her private tutoring class outside school rather than the normal English classes in her school. She told in her story that her private tutor's lesson content and teaching styles were very interesting and different from what she had experienced before. She explained that this was when she began to feel positive towards learning English:

*...my private English class, when I was in Grade 5, was very interesting. What the teacher taught was totally different from what I learned in Grade 3 and 4. As I remembered, I got to learn to recite the multiplication table and calculate numbers in English. I memorised seasons in English, as well as some English idioms, etc. It was like I learned math, geography and English at the same time. At that moment, I knew that I started to enjoy learning English [Student 13, LLH].*

The above extract implies the impact of teaching methods on students' motivation. It should be noted here that such approaches, such as teaching mathematics and sciences in English, are not adopted in the current programmes of Thai schools. They are only implemented in special programmes, such as the English Programme (EP) and the English for Integrated Studies (EIS) (Ministry of Education, 2014, p.14). The English lessons and content that students learn in normal Thai schools usually depends on English course books. These are chosen by schools to be used

as guidelines in their teaching and may be varied in terms of difficulty and content. Nevertheless, what this student found special in her tutoring class may have been a different approach to teaching, one that focused on the content of subjects, rather than just singing English songs and dancing in every class. As she stated: *I was so bored and didn't understand why we had to sing the songs. Singing songs helped nothing. It was not interesting at all. I couldn't understand why the teacher asked us to only sing these same English songs...* [Student 13, LLH]. This result reflects the impact of selecting teaching methods and materials on the students' motivation, which seems to support Dörnyei's comments that "students will not be motivated to learn unless they regard the material they are taught as worth learning" (p. 63). This suggests that teachers may need to observe what their students are interested in, in terms of topics and activities, and try to integrate them into their teaching.

As can be seen, the critical incidents relating to teachers and their teaching methods appear to support Williams and Burden (1997, p.133), who note that teachers are significant others who share a great impact on students' motivation at all stages of the motivational process. They further explain that two main aspects of teachers can affect students' motivation to engage in the language. First, it involves the 'personality' and 'nature' of the teachers. Students are also more likely to be affected by how they feel about their teachers, which means any perception they may have about their teachers (e.g. accepting, kind, strict), as well as their perceptions of the relationship between their teachers and themselves, are likely to influence their motivation to learn (Williams and Burden, 1997). Secondly, it concerns the ways and methods the teachers adopt to demonstrate class activities. The findings have suggested that teacher-related factors seem to play a crucial role in reshaping students' motivation to learn the language.

The findings may also be explained in terms of the complex dynamic systems perspective, in that, although there were times in their early experience that the students' motivation was lead into unpleasant attractor states (relatively low in motivation), critical incidents happened in their lives that may have caused perturbations in the students' motivational systems, which can move

systems out of the attractor state. Lasagabaster (2015) also found, in his study of motivational fluctuations in students of English language in the Spanish context, that critical incidents can at certain points disrupt “the stability of students’ motivation” and “may emit motivational waves” (p.15). Cuong (2016) also found that, although critical incidents may have little impact on the motivational trajectories of Vietnamese students, critical incidents which relate to significant others (e.g. parents, teachers, classmates, or other people in their community) can change their perspectives in language learning. Lasagabaster (2015) points out that these critical incidents, which in his study were related to people, seem to have temporary or short-term effects on students’ motivation. In his study, students’ motivation tended to move back to the same attractor state and remain stabilised.

In the next section, other salient factors that also seemed to be associated with the motivation of this group of students will be presented.

### **6.2.1.3 Other relevant factors related to students’ enhancing of motivation (Pattern A)**

While critical incidents may have an impact on some students’ perspectives toward language learning, there seemed to be other underlying variables interacting within students’ motivational systems that may have also affected the students’ motivation to learn. The data suggested that other emerging motivational factors of this group of students were found to be associated with the future aspirations of students, the use of computer technology, and parental support.

#### *Future aspirations and possible selves*

The first motivational factor, future aspirations, which was mentioned by Student 14, seemed to have a powerful impact on her motivation to learn English, as she stated:

*One thing that cannot be forgotten is my dream to become an interpreter and a tour guide. I wished I could speak very fluent English. So, I began to think that English is important. I tried to work harder for it. I can say hi and greet in English. But I still had a feeling that English was difficult and there were many things to be remembered about it. [Student 14, LLH]*

The above extract indicates that the aspiration to become an interpreter and a tour guide acted as a motivational force for this student and as such, she paid more attention to English. Her perception that English is a difficult language, however, continued to have an impact on her motivation to learn, regardless of seeing the value in learning it. This perceived difficulty of the English language may attract the student into an undesirable attractor state of getting bored with language learning or lacking persistence in learning it. This student further told in her story:

*In secondary school, English was still difficult for me no matter how hard I tried for it, making me so lazy to learn. But my dream was a good motivator. I told myself if I didn't pay attention to it, I would never be able to speak English and I could never be the interpreter or the tour guide as I wish. I would never be successful in my future career.*  
[Student 14, LLH]

The student's aspirations reflect the concept of the L2 self in the L2 Motivation Self System (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a), which draw upon the notion of 'ideal self' (Higgins, 1987), or what a person would like to become (Markus and Nurius, 1986). A person's hopes or aspirations to become a proficient L2 user represent an 'ideal-L2 self', which serves as a powerful motivator for the students to learn at L2 because of a desire to reduce the discrepancy between their ideal self and actual self in the present (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). Considering the aspect of motivation, not opportunity, if the aspiration to become a fluent English-speaker is vivid and strong enough, it will create an attractor state, making the learners more motivated to learn English. As Nowak et al., (2005) state:

...an attractor for personal dynamics develops through two mechanisms: the synchronization of individuals' internal states in social interaction, and the self-organization of thoughts and feelings with respect to a higher-order property (e.g., goal, self-concept) (p.351).

Additionally, they also explain that "certain attractors are more likely than others to capture and maintain the dynamics of a person's functioning" (p.356). They claim that the varying strengths of each attractor is dependent on three aspects, which include its attraction basin, its depth, and its shape (Nowak et al., 2005). In brief, the findings suggest that the future aspirations that were developed later in this student's life might be a strong force to sustain and enhance her motivation

to learn English, despite having had relatively low motivation in her early experiences of learning English.

*The influence of digital technology – computer game and online chatting*

Another aspect mentioned by a student and which also seemed to be crucial in her changing attitude towards English was the use of technology. Apart from being influenced positively by the critical incident related to her teacher, Student 9 also voiced that the use of technology had helped her a lot in learning the English language. As she stated in her story:

*Until Grade 5, I started to play computer game and use internet. I liked playing game very much, but most of the fun games were in English. Because I liked playing computer game so much, whenever I saw any English words that I didn't understand, I would try to find the meaning of them. I never knew that I have learned a lot of English vocabulary from the games I played [Student 9, LLH].*

This finding suggests that the use of technology may enhance the student's motivation and learning a foreign language. A wide range of evidence in relation to the use of technology and language learning may be found in the area of CALL or computer assisted language learning. According to Beatty (2003), CALL refers to "any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language..." (p.7). In recent years, however, CALL may not only refer to computers, but also include other kinds of technologies as well. Golonka, Bowles, Frank, Richardson, and Freynik (2014), for example, list and review various types of technology that can enhance foreign language learning relating to classroom-based technologies (e.g. course management system (CMS), ePortfolio), individual study tools (e.g. electronic dictionary, gloss or annotation, intelligent tutoring system), network-based social computing (e.g. virtual world game, chat, social networking, blog) and mobile and portable devices (e.g. tablet PC or PDA, smartphone). The data revealed by Student 9 also supports Dourda, Bratitsis, Griva and Papadopoulou's (2013) findings that game-based learning can develop students' motivation, collaboration, and vocabulary acquisition in a foreign language.

One of the important things that online technology has to offer is that it allows students to learn the language freely in the way and at the time they want. Student 9 also supported that: *my interests in computer game and surfing on the internet have helped me in English learning a lot. They helped me to learn English without being forced by anyone and they helped to open my mind to English.* [Student 9, LLH]. This seems to support Kearsley (2000), who states that online learning “provides the learner with a great deal of autonomy-the choice of when, where, and how to learn”, or in other words, it gives the learner “a lot of freedom to pursue their own interests and methods of learning” (p.62). When students have the freedom to be in control of what they are learning, it is more likely that they will have more positive attitudes towards learning and will, as such, be motivated to learn.

It was not only the computer games that Student 9 mentioned that had assisted her in learning English and enhanced her motivation, but she also made a reference to chatting with an English-speaker through an internet-based social networking site as well, as she told in her story:

*Until I was in Grade 10, I found a chatting programme that I could chat with foreigners. So, I tried it [...] I went to a chat room and chatted with a friend, named “Jack”. I told him that I was not good at English and wanted him to teach me. He said yes, he would teach me English. Then, I chatted with Jack everyday until I felt good to speak English. Although I am still not fluent in English but I like English very much.* [Student 9, LLH]

Due to the limited opportunities to use English in face-to-face settings with foreigners in Thailand, online chatting may be considered another option for Thai students to practise their English. Slesongsom and Suppasetsee (2013) also found that online chatting helped to improve the English-speaking skills, self-confidence, and motivation to use language in real-time among Thai EFL students. In their findings, online chatting was found to have the potential to reduce stress during the students’ language production. Their results appear to be in line with Kongrith and Maddux’s (2005) study, who also comment that students displayed less anxiety when they independently used online learning technologies to assist their language learning. This is because online learning technologies provide a “nonjudgmental” and “independent learning environment”, which are also likely to improve students’ attitudes towards the L2 and its culture

as well (Kongrith and Maddux, 2005, p.97). Chatting online with strangers may be perceived as an unsafe activity and is a serious social concern for teenagers' safety. If students learn to use it in a safe way in a non-harmful environment, online chatting with English-speakers may yield multiple benefits to their language learning.

Additionally, given that L2 motivation has shifted the focus in relation to the notions of self and identities, as well as interactions with a person's social world, Student 9's participation in this cyber community should also be considered when conceptualising her motivation. Ushioda (2011a) states that the transportable identities of a person are not only established "in the physical world" of students' lives, interests, and social interactions outside of class, but they are also grounded "in the virtual world of cyberspace as well as mobile communication and entertainment technologies in which so much of their life is immersed" (p.206). Given her attempt and desire to be involved in English-speaking cyber-worlds, this may also explain why Student 9 developed a more positive attitude towards the English language.

### **6.2.2 Pattern B: Relatively high motivation in the early stages of learning English, with motivation increased or sustained at a high level**

The second motivational trajectory pattern I identified aims to describe the motivational patterns of students who seemed to start with a positive outlook in their early stages of English learning, and seemed to sustain this positive disposition as time went by. Two students out of the 16 appeared to display this motivational pattern, Student 2 and Student 11. The next section will look at these students' initial motivation in their early experience of English learning.

#### **6.2.2.1 Early experiences and motivation in students' language learning (Pattern B)**

##### *Teachers and their teaching methods*

From the data, it was found that language teachers were significant others that played a key role in shaping students' positive feelings when it came to their early experience of learning the



English language. While one student (Student 13) did not see the point of learning songs in the English language class, as presented in the previous section, Student 2, a Law major student, wrote in her LLH that she really enjoyed the English songs used in her English class. She appears to think that the English class activities were very enjoyable when she was young, as she recalled her very first moment of learning English:

*I have liked English for a long time before I came to study Law here...When I first attended my kindergarten, the teacher played English songs in the class and asked us to sing along. I really enjoyed singing and listening to them because there were animal cartoon characters shown in the songs' videos as well. [Student 2, LLH]*

An ICT major, Student 11, also shared a similar experience. She revealed in her story that she had liked English learning since she was in primary school. The reasons why she liked English were because of the two teachers. One was a female Thai teacher and the other one was a male German teacher, as she stated in her language learning history:

*I have liked English since I was young and the teachers were one reason why I like it. I remembered that I had two teachers at that time. One was an old Thai lady teacher and another was a German guy aged around 40-50. I was impressed by these two teachers. I also would like to thank them for making me like English, although none of my friends liked English at that time [...] Sessions with the German teacher were very fun and enjoyable because the teacher was not so strict. Most of the time we would play games and do activities on vocabulary. The teacher would teach us some new vocabulary that we often see and use in daily life. [Student 11, LLH]*

The above statements of students suggest that teachers were the early sources of motivation to learn for Student 2 and Student 11. Many scholars state that teachers are a key social figure and play a critical role in shaping students' motivation in language learning (Chambers, 1993; Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). They were regarded as significant others (Williams and Burden, 1997) who can yield a potentially powerful impact on learners' motivation at all stages of learning. For young learners especially, children in kindergarten and primary school level, it seems very essential that the language teachers are aware of how to create and nurture young children's motivation, as the learners may not be driven to learn solely by their curiosity, but also because of the teachers and their styles of teaching. Failing to realise how teachers' own actions can have an impact on students' motivation may lead to students being unmotivated to invest their efforts in language

learning, as Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) state: “almost everything a teacher does in the classroom has a motivational influence on students, which makes teacher behaviour a powerful ‘motivational tool’” (p.109).

There are some practical techniques that language teachers can adapt to their language classroom in order to nurture the students’ motivation, as proposed by Dörnyei (2001). The first strategy is creating basic motivational conditions. This technique involves preparing certain conditions for the successful use of motivational strategies. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) explain that the conditions that should be prepared before using motivational techniques include conditions about the teachers themselves (e.g. displaying appropriate behaviour and facilitating a good relationship with the students), about the classroom (e.g. setting the atmosphere in the classroom to be pleasant and supportive), and about the learner (e.g. arranging a cohesive group of students with appropriate group norms).

The second strategy is generating initial motivation. This involves creating positive attitudes towards language learning in students by enhancing students’ language-related values and attitudes (e.g. arousing their interests in language learning activity and L2-related cultures, reminding them of the beneficial consequences of mastering the L2, establishing appropriate incentive systems), increasing students’ expectancy of success and “goal-orientedness”, making the teaching materials relevant for the learners, and creating realistic learner beliefs (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.113).

After motivation is generated, it needs to be sustained and nurtured. The third strategy, therefore, is maintaining and protecting motivation. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) point out that maintaining and protecting students’ motivation can be done in a number of ways. These include making the learning tasks interesting and enjoyable, presenting the topics in a motivating way, setting clear goals for students, preserving students’ self-esteem and boosting their self- confidence or developing students’ learner autonomy. The last technique in enhancing students’ motivation is

encouraging positive self-evaluation. This strategy includes promoting effort attributions rather than ability attribution, giving feedback that is effective and motivational and enhancing student satisfaction (e.g. encouraging students to be proud of themselves after achieving a task).

The findings also suggest, however, that although teachers may not represent a good source of motivation, students can be self-motivated with the positive attitudes towards learning they already have. As Student 11 told in her story, her female Thai teacher was very strict. She sometimes gave punishments to students who did not finish their homework or could not recite the vocabulary by beating them, leading many of her friends to dislike, or even hate learning English. Nevertheless, it seemed that this teacher's behaviour had made Student 11 more motivated to learn, as she explained:

*For me, I think what the Thai teacher did has motivated me to learn English more. It was not because I was afraid to be punished. But I thought if I work hard on what the teacher wanted me to, I would be able to learn more. And once I tried my best in it with an open-mindedness, I have become to like English. I was hardly punished by this teacher as I could finish the tasks in time. I was one student that the teacher was always pleased with.*  
[Student 11, LLH]

The above statement suggests that being open-minded toward learning and continuing to perform one's best in language learning, like learning other subjects, can promote positive outcomes which can then lead to the feelings of accomplishment, proud and satisfaction about oneself. The motivation to invest more efforts in learning can then be generated and sustained. Importantly, the data also suggests that beating students should not be promoted and should be prohibited at all levels of education in Thailand, as it can lead to physical injuries and can be psychologically harmful to the students, potentially making them disengaged academically in the long run. In summary, the positive learning experiences which induced motivation and eagerness to learn the English language for Student 2 and Student 11 were related to their language teachers' teaching and behaviours. The next section examines the critical incidents that could be identified from the student's LLHs.

### 6.2.2.2 Critical incidents (Pattern B)

As Finch (2010) states, a critical incident is “not only an occurrence that has significant potential for influencing major change, but it is also perceived as such by the observer/participant” (p.423). Critical incidents found from the LLHs by the students in this group appeared to involve both positive and negative L2-related experiences: *experience of success* and *experiences of embarrassment*.

The identified incidents were found to induce a positive impact on students’ attitudes and behaviours in English language learning. I will begin by presenting Student 2’s critical incident, which is related to her experience of success in language learning.

Apart from having a positive feeling towards English in her early experience of learning, Student 2 revealed that experiencing achievement in the English language also made her feel more motivated to learn it. She wrote in her story that, after knowing that she was interested in the English language, her mother sent her to a private English class where she developed many skills in English, especially reading and writing. During the time that she took the private English class, she stated that she got very satisfying English results in school and was selected to participate in an English competition, as she went on in her story:

*I got the highest scores in English. I was also chosen to take part in the English spelling competition. I finally got a second runner-up place in the provincial area. It was the first prize that I had and I was so proud of it. Although I could not be the winner, I felt that it has driven me to try harder and like learning English more. [Student 2, LLH]*

This statement indicates that positive L2 learning and L2-related experiences may also have an influence on the development of students’ motivation in their L2 learning. The incident above has suggested that the language learner may be motivated to put more effort in language learning if they are encouraged to experience the feeling of success. As Ushioda (1998) states, students “may feel motivated to pursue language study because they perceive that this is what they are good at or what they enjoy most” (p.82). Crookes and Schmidt (1991) also state that humans like to

become successful by nature and usually perceive activities where they can achieve success as pleasurable. Drawing on Keller's (1983) education-oriented theory, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) elaborate that motivation may also be determined by the outcomes of activities, extrinsically (e.g. receiving good marks or prizes) or intrinsically (e.g. feeling of pride or satisfaction). When people experience those positive outcomes, their beliefs in their own self-efficacy may be enhanced, leading to anticipation of success in the next tasks. People who believe that they are likely to accomplish are generally more highly motivated than those who expect that they would fail (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991). This expectation of success falls into the component of expectancy, which draws upon the notions of locus control in attribution theory (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991). To explain, learners who attribute their success to their own efforts or capabilities are likely to be more motivated than those who attribute their success to external and uncontrollable factors (e.g. luck, teachers). To sum up, a positive incident of experiencing success may have been critical to Student 2 in that it induced a belief in self-efficacy, which may have then performed as a motivational impetus for her to invest more efforts in English learning.

The data also showed that it was not only positive critical incidents which were related to L2 that appeared to motivate students in this group, but critical incidents concerning negative L2 experiences could also act as motivational forces for the student to put more effort in language learning. The negative critical incident revealed by Student 11 concerns experiencing embarrassment when making mistakes in English in front of people. Student 11 said in her story that during her summer holidays when she was in high school, she got a chance to work in Bangkok where she had to use a lot of English with foreign customers. She stated that despite studying English for more than 10 years, she felt that it didn't help at all when it came to really communicating with the foreigners, as she had many communication problems. She went on to explain that there was an event that made her feel very embarrassed, when she said something wrong in English in front of many people, as she described:

*There was a time that people laughed at me only because I made mistakes by saying something wrong in English. I remembered, it was a very embarrassing moment. But that failure made me realise that I had to improve myself. Laughing of those people was a powerful impetus for me to strive more in learning English.*  
[Student 11, LLH]

The feeling of embarrassment is regarded as a self-conscious emotion which concerns other people and takes place in a social environment (Lewis, 2011). Grace (2007) also describes that embarrassment may be the cause of a loss of self-esteem, as people may feel that their esteem in the eyes of others has been eroded. From the above statement, despite seeing that negative incident as a threatening event and in turn letting it lessen her self-esteem and lower her effort, Student 11 seems to have taken it positively, as a powerful force that made her try harder in her English studies. She seems to believe that her English ability can be improved if more effort is invested.

Considering this in respect to attribution theory, which explains people's perceived reasons behind their success and failure (Peacock, 2010), it seems that Student 11 attributed that failure not to her lack of ability (which would be likely to affect or lower her pride and self-esteem), but her lack of effort (she felt that she should try harder). Weiner (1992) states that attributing the causes of failure to internal and controllable factors (e.g. lack of effort) gives people a greater feeling of control and encourages them to persist and try harder. On the other hand, attributing the cause of failure to internal and stable factors (e.g. lack of ability) or external and uncontrollable factors (e.g. luck, task difficulty) may be discouraging, which might prevent them from trying harder, as they would not believe that putting more effort would lead to success. This may help to explain why Student 11 still persisted in learning English despite facing a negative critical incident.

This finding also emphasises how being resilient is important for the language learner. Resilience can be defined as "a class of phenomena characterized by good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development" (Masten, 2001, p.228). A behavioural and emotional response to an academic or social challenge that is positive and facilitates the development (e.g. putting greater effort, looking for new strategies) is considered resilient, while any response to challenge

that prevents development and creates a negative outcome (e.g. giving up, helplessness) is not considered resilient (Yeager and Dweck, 2012). The data has suggested that although students may encounter negative L2 learning experiences, being resilient can help them respond to such negative experiences positively. It is therefore very important that students' resilience is promoted, so that they can "respond resiliently" when an inevitable challenge arises (Yeager and Dweck, 2012, p.312).

### **6.2.2.3 Other relevant factors related to students sustaining motivation (Pattern B)**

#### *Future aspirations*

Similarly to students in the previous group, the salient factor concerning the maintenance of students' motivation in learning English also appears to involve their future aspirations, or the 'wished-for self'. Based on the LLH data, it seems that Student 11's future aspiration influenced her attitude towards learning English and provided a feeling of self-efficacy in relation to this future goal. Graham et al. (2016) also state that this sense of competence and optimism about future progress plays an important role in language learners' motivational trajectories. Student 11 also engaged deeply with the research process, as she subsequently changed her study major from ICT to English. She wrote in her LLH that:

*Learning is not limited only in the classroom. From now on, I will practise English as much as I can. And I won't stop learning at this level because my ultimate dream is to be able to work abroad. [Student 11, LLH]*

Having a visualisation of oneself in the future which includes engaging with English-speaking or living and working abroad may serve as a motivational force for a person to invest in language learning. As Ushioda (2011a) states, future self-guides have "strong psychological reality in the current imaginative experience of language learners as they visualize themselves projected into the future as competent L2 users" (p.203). These future self-images, which may have a significant impact on the students' attitudes towards learning, inducing positive learning behaviours. Student 11's story also illustrates how engaging learners in reflective conversations can help them

examine their motivation, potentially influencing their future learning pathway. By reflecting on her past experience and imagining her future self, it seems that Student 11's future aspirations and ideal self were both strengthened, leading her to make a new choice in her learning pathway and into putting more effort into learning English. Lamb (2016) also found that his participant students were influenced by taking part in his longitudinal research on L2 motivation. In his study, motivation to learn English among Indonesian learners was found to be increased through the research process in terms of strengthening their 'ought-to' and 'ideal' L2 selves (Lamb, 2016).

Student 2's future aspiration also seemed to be one of the powerful factors that sustained her motivation to learn English during her secondary school experience. Having the opportunity to take private English classes in her early experience of learning English, as well as experiencing the feeling of success at L2, Student 2 had a dream to become an English language teacher. Due to her family's financial difficulties, however, she could not afford to take any more private English classes. She seemed to believe this placed her at a disadvantage:

*During my senior high school holidays, I had to find a part-time job to help support my parents as they got financial problems. I had to ride a bicycle to school every day and never returned to the private English class again. So, I only had the basic knowledge of English from my junior high school. I tried to focus in class and memorise vocabulary, but I never had a chance to learn and review all grammar points like my friends did at the private class. There were times that I wanted to ask my parents to support me for this. But I didn't want to bother them as they are only farmers. They are not like governmental officers. [Student 2, LLH]*

Given that English assessment in Thailand's high-stakes entrance exams focuses heavily on grammar and vocabulary, most Thai students want to strive towards achievement in tests, rather than towards developing their communication skills. Tutoring at private schools is often seen as an essential activity for many high school students in Thailand, as it is believed that it helps them in reviewing the important grammar points and content that may appear in the national exams. This shortcut in learning has become widespread in Thailand for more than a decade. Studying in normal school is sometimes considered insufficient to help them tackle difficult tests in the national exam, as the curriculum and lessons provided in schools usually aim to enhance



communication and focuses on other skills. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Section, 2.3.2, this mismatch between high-stakes testing and classroom teaching has been problematic, creating a new culture of taking private tutoring classes in many subjects, all over the country. Students who take private classes usually feel more confident in taking national exams than those who do not take them. This may help to explain why Student 2 pointed out that her knowledge of grammar was limited, because she could not afford to take a private class. She continued:

*My GPA dropped a lot during my senior high school. At that time, I wanted to be an English teacher. Until the last year of high school, I tried to apply for an English teaching major at many universities but didn't get any of them. I was very disappointed. I tried again in the main admission, I selected English Education for the first major I wanted and chose Law for the second place. However, the result came out that I got the Law major. I told myself that although I couldn't be an English teacher as I wished, I could be a police officer, which I also wished to be. So, I decided to study Law instead. [Student 2, LLH]*

It appears that Student 2 attributed her decline in grade to her inability to take the necessary private classes. It did not stop her, however, from trying to apply for her dream major of study, which was English teaching. Unfortunately, she did not succeed in gaining admission and steered herself towards a Law major instead. Although this student was not able to study an English major as she wished, it looked like she still had a positive attitude and was motivated to learn it in her first year in Law at the university, as presented in Section 5.4.1.3. The next chapter further investigates students' future possible selves and looks at their motivation regarding those aspects.

### **6.2.3 Pattern C: Fluctuating motivation – began with relatively high or low motivation but then motivation fluctuated over time throughout the L2 learning experience**

The last motivational pattern that seems to be the most dominant, which was displayed by most of the Thai students in this study, is identified as the 'fluctuating motivation' category. This motivational trajectory pattern was established based on the students' comments in their LLHs and in interviews regarding their motivation and attitude concerning learning English and their L2 learning experiences. Critical incidents emerged during their L2 learning, along with how they made sense of and felt about those events. According to the data, the majority of these students

(nine out of 16 students) displayed fluctuations in their motivation to learn English. The findings suggest that there are different factors associated with these students' initial attitudes and feelings towards learning English and their changes of motivation to learn English at a later stage. Table 6.1 below summarises the overall findings of relevant factors associated with students' motivational fluctuations across time.

Students	Feelings about English in early experience of learning/factors related to those affections	Factors associated with students' fluctuations in motivation	
		Identifiable critical incidents: positive (+) negative (-)	Other relevant factors
S1	Positive/Class activity	(-) Related to humiliating classroom experience	(-) Perceived value of English & difficulty of English (-) Lack of self-efficacy (+) Class activity
S3	Negative/Teacher	(+) Related to teacher (-) Related to teacher	(+) Parents
S4	Positive/Class activity	(+) Related to teacher (-) Related to (foreign) teacher	(-) Perceived difficulty of English
S5	Negative/(foreign) Teacher	(-) Related to (foreign) teacher	(-) Cultural capital (+) Future aspiration
S6	Positive/ Class activity	No identifiable critical incident	(-) Perceived difficulty of English (-) Perceived low self-efficacy (+) Teachers
S7	Positive/Class activity	(+) Related to parents (+) Related to teacher (-) Related to teacher	(+) Peers (as role model) (+) Future career
S8	Positive/Teacher & Teaching methods	(-) Related to teacher	(+) Teacher's personality (-) Lack of space to practise English (no access to an English-using community)
S12	Negative/Difficult language	(-) Related to teacher	(+) Teacher's personality and teaching methods (+) Future aspiration
S16	Negative/Teacher	(-) Related to teacher	(+) Teachers

**Table 6.1 A summary of findings regarding relevant factors associated with students' motivational fluctuations across time**

In the following section, the students' early experiences of English language learning will be discussed first, followed by the relevant factors that appeared to play a crucial role in the changes in their motivation throughout their L2 learning experience.

### **6.2.3.1 Early experience of language learning journey (Pattern C)**

The data shows that students had different feelings towards the English language in their early experience of learning. Certain students revealed in their stories that they had a positive attitude and positive feelings in their early learning, while some students reported that they had negative feelings and a negative attitude towards it. To illustrate the students' varying feelings, motivations and experiences in their early stage of learning, I have categorised students into two main groups: the first having relatively positive feelings towards learning English and the second having negative feelings towards learning English. The first group also includes an illustration of having some considerable interest in learning English, while the latter group appears to have very little or no interest in learning English.

#### *Having positive feeling towards learning the English language*

According to the data, five out of nine students in this group appeared to have had positive feelings and attitudes towards English language learning in their early experiences of learning (see Table 6.1). The most salient issue that appeared to play an important role in students having positive feelings involves their classroom contexts. The majority of students who had positive feelings towards English in their early learning experiences stated that they enjoyed learning English because the classroom activities were fun and pleasurable. The following example extracts capture the impact of classroom activities on the students' initial motivation in learning English:

*When I was young, I felt that learning English was enjoyable. I learned to recite English alphabets, A to Z, and memorise basic vocabulary. It was not that difficult. In my kindergarten, I sang English songs and watched English cartoons. At that time, I thought that English was fun and easy. [Student 1, LLH]*

*I started learning English when I was in the kindergarten. Everyone had to memorise English alphabets A to Z. At that time, I remember that my teacher introduced us to an English alphabet song. We all really enjoyed singing that song. I think the teacher used this method to make the kids remember the alphabets and it worked. [Student 7, LLH]*

One student also referred to her teachers and the teaching methods that they used as aspects which affected her positive feeling towards English in the early stage of learning:

*In my primary school, I had a chance to study in Bangkok. An English teacher who taught there was very good. She was very kind and paid attention to all students. She didn't teach only from books, but introduced us to a variety of activities, such as playing games that helped to enhance English skills, practising English conversation and pronunciation, which was totally different from the school I attended later in my late primary level. [Student 8, LLH]*

The above statements emphasise the importance of classroom activities on students' motivation, especially students who are young and beginners in English. They also reflect the impact that teachers' teaching methods may have on enhancing positive attitudes and feelings towards children's English learning. These classroom activities or teachers' teaching styles are usually considered as contextual variables for motivation. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) state that students' short-term motivation may be influenced by the specific features of a teaching and learning context (e.g. classroom activities, materials design, assessment) and also by teachers, whose roles can have a complex and multidimensional impact on the students' learning processes. The learners' immediate learning context is believed to have a powerful motivational impact on the learners' learning process. This has led to a growing interest in taking situated classroom variables into consideration when conceptualising motivation, since the cognitively-situated period of L2 motivation research in the early 1990s (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011).

#### *Having negative feeling towards learning the English language*

Not only can teachers' performances have a positive impact on students' feelings, they can also be demotivators. Based on the data, there is evidence which supports the assertion that students' negative feelings towards learning English in their early experiences may also be attributed to their teachers. The results showed that a few of the students who seemed to have negative feelings

in English in their early learning experiences commented in their LLHs that teachers played a crucial role in shaping those negative feelings, along with low motivation towards English in their childhood education. The following extracts illustrate the negative influence that teachers had on students' feelings about learning English, as mentioned above:

*In my primary school, I didn't like English that much and had very low interest in it because my teacher was very unkind. Her English lessons were also not interesting and hard to understand [Student 3, LLH]*

*My primary school English teacher was a foreigner. He couldn't speak Thai at all. Every time in English class, he only let us watch English cartoons. The cartoons were all in English and I didn't understand any of them. So, I didn't pay attention to learning that much and know very little about English. [Student 5, LLH]*

Teachers were found to be one of the top-ranking causes of students' lack of motivation in L2 language learning (Dörnyei, 1998b). The above statements may imply that the personalities of teachers (e.g. unkind, kind, strict), as well as their teaching performances and styles (e.g. boring, interesting), could play an important role in shaping the students' motivation when it comes to L2 learning. Young learners in particular require instructional approaches and materials that are appropriate for their age group. A lack of suitable teaching approaches or inadequate resources may lead to low interest or negative feelings towards the language in the early stage of learning. In addition, the evidence also shows that a lack of competent language teachers and school facilities may also influence how students would feel about the language. As Student 16 mentioned in her story:

*I started learning English when I was in the kindergarten in a small public school, situated in a village in Karasin province. In that school, there were no English teachers. There were only 5 teachers in total in the school. So, I had no interest and no idea what English was all about. In the English class, I was learning by rote as I was assigned to recite the A-Z. The homework I had was only drawing lines of English letters, unlike in other schools, in which their students can get to learn some vocabulary and do other interesting activities. But as I was a poor kid, my parents could not afford to take me to a better school. [Student 16, LLH]*

In the context of Thailand, the English language may be introduced at pre-school level if the schools' conditions allow for it. The above response can imply that introducing English to young learners at an early stage while schools are not ready may not be advantageous for the learners. A

lack of specially trained teachers can also account for the causes of a low interest or negative feelings towards English. This finding seems to support what Nunan (2003) found in other similar countries in Asia, such as Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea, and Vietnam; that teachers' lack of adequate and appropriate training in teaching English is a major problem in English education at primary school level. He also pointed out that "curricula, teaching methods, and materials should meet the needs of the learners of different ages and at different stages" (p.609). Failing to implement essential conditions in the early language classroom may induce negative outcomes rather than positive ones, which may subsequently lead to learners having a negative attitude towards learning English. This may stay with them for a long time.

Hayes (2012, p. 52) provides a list of factors that should be taken into account when considering educational plans for language learning in primary education. Some of the important issues that can be implemented with the English curriculum in the Thai educational system include:

- *Ensuring that there is an adequate number of teachers to teach the subject to each particular grade*
- *Ensuring that these teachers are well trained for the task*
- *Ensuring that instructional time is available in the curriculum for teaching the subject*
- *Ensuring that curriculum materials and teaching-learning approaches are appropriate to the age group*
- *Ensuring that appropriate and timely in-service training is given to teachers in the use of the materials and teaching-learning approaches*
- *Ensuring that appropriate evaluation procedures are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the innovation*
- *Ensuring that adequate material and financial resources are available to implement all of the above*
- *Ensuring that necessary adjustments are made to the curriculum and materials for all subsequent grades, and that teachers are given training to introduce them to these changes in the higher grades.*

(Hayes, 2012, p.52)

### 6.2.3.2 Critical incidents (Pattern C)

The critical incidents that students in this group described during their English learning experiences also played a significant role in causing fluctuations in their motivation to learn English. According to the data, the students' identifiable critical incidents appeared to involve three main issues, which were related to teachers, negative classroom experience, and parental influence. The critical incidents associated with teachers, however, seemed to be the most dominant for the majority of the students, as they were mentioned by seven out of nine students. There is only one student who did not detail any event that seemed to be critical or significant in her language learning experience.

Similar to the critical incidents found in the previous groups of students, the critical incidents from students in this group appeared to be concerned with teachers and their teaching performance. When asked to think about their past English learning experience in retrospect, the data shows that most of the students referred to their teachers or teachers' teaching approaches in their critical incidents. Teachers were mainly mentioned as being involved in students' negative critical incidents. One of the most salient teacher-related factors that the students mentioned was related to the teachers' personality, attitudes, and teaching styles. Four out of seven students who mentioned their teachers in their negative critical incidents stated that certain teacher behaviours made them feel less motivated to learn the English language. The following extracts are examples of the evidence regarding the teachers' characteristics and teaching performance, as mentioned above:

*When I passed to my Grade 6, I met a very unkind teacher. She made me scared of her so I didn't want to ask any questions. This destroyed all my little interest in English. [Student 3, LLH]*

*In my late primary school, I got to study with a very strict teacher. She only taught from English books, while the students could not even read or write. So, the learning process didn't happen. She made me feel that learning English was very boring. I couldn't get what the teacher was trying to teach me in class. So, I didn't want to learn it. I had no motivation to learn it at all. [Student 8, LLH]*

*I didn't pay attention to English that much in my senior high school, especially when I was taught by some Thai teachers who had bad attitudes towards us. Because my class was ranked at the last one of the grade level, teachers usually perceived that we were trouble-making students. And studying with the teachers who hold negative attitudes towards us had lessened my passion to learn. They always compared us with the top-class students. [Student 12, LLH]*

There is evidence showing that particular issues regarding native English teachers may have played a crucial role in generating demotivating impact on students' motivation. Two students revealed in their LLHs that constraints in communication between them and their native English teachers, such as language barriers, were the causes of their negative feelings towards learning English. As Student 4, for example, stated in his story:

*It made me feel demotivated to know that I had to study with the native English teachers because I didn't know how to communicate with him when I didn't understand the lessons ... I sighed every time I had this class. And as expected, the teacher didn't understand the students and the students couldn't communicate with the teacher. It all came out that I learned nothing from this course. [Student 4, LLH]*

Although teachers were found to be involved in the students' negative critical events, the data also suggest that teachers were associated with students' positive critical incidents as well. Certain students also referred to their teachers' positive personalities and teaching performances when reporting their positive critical incidents. Like Student 3, after becoming demotivated because of his primary school English teacher, he reported that his attitude towards English fluctuated again when he moved to Grade 7 at a new school, as he stated:

*In this new school, I changed my new attitude towards English. I met a very kind teacher who taught me in Grade 7. Her lessons were simple, easy to follow and had a wide variety of activities for us to do. This has changed me from the one who used to be stupid in English to become more competent in it once again. [Student 3, LLH]*

This seems to be similar to Student 7, whose L2 motivation fell due to the influence of her teacher's classroom performance. Student 7 also revealed, however, that her motivation in learning English had risen again after she studied with a native English teacher, as she stated:

*The reason why I didn't want to learn English was because I didn't understand the lesson. The teacher taught too fast and the more I didn't get it, the more negative feelings I had. I finally felt that English was too difficult. However, after I had a chance to study with a*



*native teacher, I was surprised that I could catch up the lessons very quickly. That native teacher helped us to practise all skills and made me like English. [Student 7, LLH]*

The above statements from the students show strong evidence of the impact of teachers on the students' fluctuations in feelings and motivation about their language learning. These findings are supported by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), who state that teachers are regarded as key social figures who can influence learners' motivation in both positive and negative ways. The findings also indicate that teachers are the most significant contextual variables associated with students' positive and negative critical incidents. They seemed to have a different impact on students' affective states during their language learning journeys, as Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) also stress that, "everything teachers say or do and how they communicate and behave in the classroom may potentially influence student motivation in different ways" (p.29).

Furthermore, the data also suggests that students' forging of particular identities in language learning may also be influenced by teacher-related factors. The above accounts reveal that certain students had developed their self-concepts (Baumeister, 2005) related to L2, as an incompetent L2 user (e.g. *from the one who used to be stupid in English* [Student 3]) and a proficient L2 user (e.g. *to become more competent in it once again* [Student 3], *I could catch up the lessons very quickly* [Student 7]), through the interactions they had with their language teachers. Such positive or negative self-concepts that the students held for themselves may have affected their motivation to perform in the next tasks, as Schunk (2003) posits that students need to have a sense of efficacy in order to achieve their goals at the beginning of a learning task. Without an adequate belief in self-efficacy, or through having a negative self-concept, motivation to invest more effort in learning may be low. According to the data, teachers seem to play a crucial role in forming students' positive or negative self-concepts. This can potentially affect their motivation.

The data has proven that no single characteristic of teachers can be clearly identified to have an impact on learners. There also seems to be a combination of other teacher-related variables (e.g. teaching performance, personalities, attitudes) that interact with each other to influence learners'

motivation. As Kubanyiova (2006, p.2) states, “the role of the teacher in engaging students in learning is immensely complex in that it concerns almost all academic and social aspects of the classroom environment”. The above findings have emphasised the powerful impact of language teachers as significant others (Williams and Burden, 1997) situated in students’ contextual settings. This impact may include fostering a student’s sense of self and identity, as a competent or incompetent L2 learner, as well as shaping their motivation.

Another critical incident emerged, which was also found to be concerned with the experience of being humiliated in the language classroom. The data has indicated that a humiliating classroom experience may be the cause of a student’s negative feelings about learning the English language.

Student 1, a Law major, wrote in her LLH:

*I studied English since I was in kindergarten and continued to study it in primary and secondary schools. Even now, I’m studying it but I think that English is still very difficult. I’ve never done well in English exams. The reason why I am not good at it is because I had a bad experience in English learning. At that time, the teacher asked me to read aloud an English passage in front of the class and I couldn’t pronounce some words right. All my friends suddenly laughed at me. I felt so bad and so embarrassed at that moment. It made me feel that my English was very poor. [Student 1, LLH]*

The above humiliating classroom experience appears to have had a negative impact on the student’s feelings towards learning English language. The incident also seems to have influenced how this student perceived her capacity in English, as she seemed to attribute her lack of English ability to the negative experience she had in that classroom (*The reason why I am not good at it is because I had a bad experience in English learning*). This lack of self-efficacy also seems to have had an impact on her sense of control, which subsequently had an influence on her motivation in learning English at university level. Student 1 also stated later that she passed the English course at her university level due to the help of others, not her own effort, as she said: *I think it was because of sympathy from the teacher and the support from my friends that made pass in the English course*. Having an external locus of causality like this, especially for success, may also lead to a “motivational style” known as “learned helplessness” (Williams and Burden, 1997,

p. 130), which may induce a person to give up trying because he or she feels demotivated as a result of having no control over their environment.

According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), the contextual factors (e.g. classroom setting, teachers, peers) of learners should not be simply considered as an isolated variable that can affect motivation, but they should rather be conceptualised as having the complex relationships with the learners. To conceptualise the learner's motivation under a complex dynamic perspective, contextual variables may also be considered in respect of a "negotiation" or "co-construction process", in which motivation can be conceived to be shaped by the shared responsibilities of members of that social community. In other words, the learners' motivation may be developed through interactions or negotiation processes which the learners have conducted with the other members of their situated community. This means that motivation may be conceived as a result of how individuals make sense of internalised social phenomena in the contexts they are situated in, as Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) put it, "the origins of motivation are social but the outcome is individual" (p.36).

Viewing motivation from the complex dynamic approach, the above critical incident played a key role in creating an attractor state of feeling negative towards English for Student 1. As Nowak et al. (2005, p.351) state, through "the synchronization of individuals' internal states in social interaction" and "the self-organization of thoughts and feelings with respect to a higher-order property", attractors of individual dynamics can be established. Negative feelings towards learning the language could be formed through the individual's internalisation process. The above humiliating classroom experience appears to have had an impact on the student's mental processes, or what has been termed "trilogy of mind", which consists of motivation, cognition, and affect (or emotion) (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.98). To explain, being humiliated in the language classroom may induce a feeling of embarrassment (affect), which may influence the conceptualisation of one's ability in English or a self-efficacy belief (cognition), which then could lessen desires to invest in future tasks (motivation). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) explain that

these three mental processes of learners should be viewed together as “dynamic subsystems” that have complex and constant interrelationships with each other and “cannot exist in isolation from one another” (p. 91). It may thus be hard to simply imply that the above incident had a clear-cut causative impact on the learner’s affective state.

Although the complex dynamic model has offered a very useful and realistic perspective to learn about the learners’ motivation, fully applying it to the analysis in this study may not be best helpful in illuminating changing interrelationships of humans’ diverse mental factors. This is because the relationships of humans’ mental variables can be very complex. Additionally, the motivational systems and subsystems of a person also change over time, making it very complex and too difficult to give a clear explanation of how each component interacts with each other and in to what degree.

In addition, as this study focused on the temporal dimension of learners’ motivation, concentrating on the learners’ motivational trajectories across time, it was not easy to thoroughly operationalise the complex dynamic approach with a whole analysis. It seems that a more appropriate and practical way to adopt the complex dynamic approach in this study was to integrate it with other models and to employ it as one of the useful ways to learn about a holistic view of complexities and dynamism of humans’ motivational systems and possible interactions between the learners’ affective components. This way, the complex and dynamic facet of motivation would not be neglected.

There is also evidence that members in the family could be involved in students’ critical incidents in language learning. Despite having a negative experience in her early stage of English learning, student 7 referred to her father as a significant person who changed her attitudes towards learning English in early primary school. She stated in her story that her father usually supported her sisters’ and her English learning by teaching them new vocabulary, along with how to find the meanings of English words in the dictionary. As she had gone through a negative experience in

learning English at an earlier stage, however, she perceived that English was a difficult subject and she stated that she did not want to learn English with her father. Nevertheless, she was convinced by her father to go back home and study English with him, as she told:

*Finally, my dad convinced me to go back home and learn new vocabulary. He taught me how to find meanings of English words in the dictionary. It was very painful to do something I didn't like. But after doing it for a while, I felt learning English was not that hard. I have to thank my dad for teaching me and changing my attitude towards English. He made me love it more and that was why I chose to study English. [Student 7, LLH].*

The above data suggests that parental factors can also play an important role in shaping the student's attitude and motivation towards learning English. By supporting their children's education through providing knowledge and learning strategies, parents can create an environment of learning at home. Moreover, taking an interest in them as individuals may also enhance affection, which can lead to positive experiences in learning. Such a supportive learning environment at home is likely to have an impact on students' learning achievement, as Choo and Tan (2001) state that "the family climate and home environment are among the most significant factors that may influence the educational outcome of youth" (p. 183).

This finding is also in line with what Lamb (2007b) found in his study, namely that parents or family can also mediate students' motivation to learn English. According to Lamb's (2007b) study, two ways that family mediates the motivation to learn English for the students concern the provision of means for learning and the influence on attitudes. For the first, parents may help enhance their children's attitude towards activities through supporting their children in attending additional English courses or providing them with English learning aids and resources. In the second, parents may help in changing attitudes in learning for their children by mediating the negative effects of school experiences. The above finding seems to support both ways of family as a motivational mediator, as found in Lamb's (2007b) study. Eccles, Wigfield, and Schiefele (1998) also point out that parental beliefs may be associated with children's high motivation towards achievement in through four ways, including the "developmentally appropriate timing of

achievement demands/pressure, high confidence in one's children's abilities, a supportive affective family climate, and highly motivated role models" (p.1052).

### **6.2.3.3 Other relevant factors related to fluctuations in the students' motivation (Pattern C)**

This section aims to provide findings regarding other relevant factors that appear to be associated with the students' fluctuating motivation across time. The data has shown that students' motivational fluctuations in English learning involved various factors. These seemed to mainly concern teacher-related factors (e.g. teaching methods and styles, characteristics), the students' perception of English difficulty, self-efficacy beliefs, and students' future aspirations. These aspects have also been found to be associated with the affective states of students from other groups and have already been discussed in previous sections. There is some evidence from the students' LLHs that shows, however, that other socio-contextual factors also played an important role in shaping their L2 motivation, including students' financial status, peers, and spaces or opportunities to practise English. Although such factors were not found to be typical factors for these students, they may be worth investigating, as they appear to capture students' motivation under the person-in-context perspective (Ushioda, 2009). To go beyond the linear approach in conceptualising motivation, Ushioda (2009) points out that the complexity and idiosyncrasy of an individual's personal meaning-making in their social contexts should not be neglected, but should also be taken into account.

#### *Financial difficulty*

Another factor associated with students' changes in L2 motivation seems to concern the financial status of students. The data has shown that certain students referred to financial difficulty during studying as having an influence on their learning in general, including their English learning. As Student 1, for example, revealed, her family's financial struggle limited her from fully concentrating on her studies in secondary school, leading to a drop in her grade:

*At that time, I couldn't even afford to buy the course books, so the teacher lent me some of them... I wished I could be good at English like my friends, so I put a lot of effort into it. But when I was at home, I had to help my mum to work for our family. I didn't have much time to read or study anything. My parents didn't support me that much...If I have a chance, I would like to take an extra course. But my family had no money. Even now, at the university level, no one support me. I have to get the student loan and support myself. I want my parents to be proud that their daughter can finish a degree. I only wish I can pass my English courses because I'm not good at it... [Student 1, LLH]*

The above data suggests that living in difficult financial circumstances can influence students' learning in a number of ways. The first and the seemingly most obvious effect is a student's lack of financial support to afford the necessary learning aids or materials, extra English courses, and even the school tuition fees. Secondly, students from low-income families may need to help financially support their parents and family by working part-time jobs or helping in the family's assigned tasks. Such work may obstruct the time students need to focus on and to review their studies, which may lead to unfavourable learning outcomes. Next, apart from having financial deficits, students may not fully receive parental support in terms of time to care for their education and encourage them to learn (if their parents have to work extra hours to earn money), or in terms of knowledge or learning strategies (if their parents had lower levels of educational attainment).

This finding has implied that students' socio-economic background, family dispositions and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) may produce a potential impact on students' language learning and may also influence their educational achievement (Kraaykamp and van Eijck, 2010), which can in turn have an impact on motivation. The above excerpt indicates that although the student might want to invest in the language (as in *I wished I could be good at English like my friends, so I put a lot of effort into it*), family circumstances, including struggling financially, could restrict the student from achieving what she wanted. The time that the student requires for studying may also need to be devoted to family tasks or jobs, which can potentially affect learning outcomes. Having had a negative critical experience (being humiliated in the classroom), plus suffering from economical hardship, it appears that student 1 has also formed a low self-efficacy belief as she stated many times in her LLH that she was poor in language learning. This low self-efficacy belief

can induce a “self-debilitating” thinking direction and may also have an impact on students’ motivation to sustain their effort in the face of threatening situations and failure (Bandura, 2012, p. 13).

Moreover, inequalities in students’ cultural capital can also mirror inequality in social class (Tzanakis, 2011), which may also lead to inequalities in schooling (Reay, 2006). The students’ socio-economic background was found to have a great impact on their performance in school (Reay, 2006). Parents from working class backgrounds, like in the above case, might be in a disadvantaged position to negotiate for better educational provision for their children, as they have limited resources and networks. Papapolydorou (2016) found that working-class parents seem to make use of their social capital or networks to maximize educational opportunities for their children less often than middle-class parents. This may partly be because they have less social capital. The above finding also supports Kormos and Kiddle (2013) who also found that self-efficacy beliefs of Chilean students are the most strongly influenced by their socio-economic status, in which low and lower-middle class students are found to be less confident and optimistic about their language learning ability than upper-middle and upper-class students. Regarding this, students’ pre-existing socio-economic inequalities should not be neglected when trying to understand students’ L2 motivation and should also be an important focus of the educational system.

### *Peers*

According to Williams and Burden (1997), peers are also considered as significant others within the students’ learning environment and they can influence the students’ motivation to learn a language. This is particularly common amongst young adolescent students, in which their relationship with peers appears to increasingly take over from the influence and relationship with their parents. As such, peers can have a great impact on students’ motivation (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). The findings of this study suggest that peers may be powerfully involved in a



student's changes in motivational orientations. As Student 7 revealed, having a friend who was good at the language made her become more motivated to be the same. Nevertheless, being more influenced by a low-achieving peer group, she became less motivated to learn:

*In my junior high school, I had a friend who was very good at English. She was very good in English grammar. I asked her why she was so good at it and she said because she loved it. She told me that she studied and practised English every day. At that time, I asked myself, 'I love English too but why I'm not good at it'. Since then, I told myself that I have to be good at English like this friend. During that time, I started to learn English more. But many things seemed to stop me from learning it. I joined with some friends who were not that interested in studying, so that made me move away from studying it seriously.*  
[Student 7, LLH]

The above data suggest that peer groups can be significant factors that can influence students' learning in positive or negative ways. Wigfield and Wagner (2007) also state that there is considerable evidence indicating that, "peers often gravitate to similar others, and strengthen each other's' motivational orientations and achievement patterns" (p.224). Having peers that are seriously engaged with learning may also develop students' positive academic motivation while, in affiliating with peers who are less motivated in learning, students may form similar motivational orientations and learning patterns. Peer group variables should thus be carefully considered when trying to create and sustain students' motivation over time.

Concerning the potential impact of peers on L2 motivation, Murphey (1996) has also proposed a motivational strategy called "near peer role models" (NPRMs) to inspire students in learning. The model is based upon presenting peers who share a similar culture and age group with the students and are successful in using English, as role models, in order to inspire the students in learning. His hypothesis on this is that the positive characteristics of peers may be psychologically attractive to students in the way that they seem to be possible and easy to replicate, as those peers share a similar background to the students (Murphey, 1998). The above student's case suggests, however, that this strategy may be the most useful if students' social groups outside of class also share similar learning orientations.

### *Limited opportunities to use English*

Another factor that also appears to influence students' motivation in learning English is related to having limited spaces or opportunities for them to practice their English. In the context of Thailand, English usage can be very restricted to certain areas of the country, such as major urban areas where businesspeople usually visit, or the main tourist locations (Hayes, 2016). This limited opportunity to communicate through the English language means that English is in the position of having little relevancy to the lives of most Thai people in general (Hayes, 2008). There is also evidence in this study to support that having no chance to use English outside the class may have a negative impact on motivation to learn English as well. Student 8 wrote in her LLH:

*One reason that made me lack motivation to learn English is because I thought English is not relevant to my life. I never used it in daily life. I had no opportunity to practise it or communicate with it outside the classroom. Because my hometown is in the remote area. It's not the tourist place. So, there were no foreigners there. Most of the parents in that area are also farmers or labourers. They have no skills or knowledge in English.*  
[Student 8, LLH]

It is not uncommon in this context within Thailand that students may lack opportunities to practise or use English outside of the classroom and in their daily lives, especially in some contexts such as in rural areas where there might be no foreigners because they are not tourist destinations. These few opportunities to use the language may form the conception that English has little relevance to their lives, leading to a low motivation to study it. To remedy this problem, Keyuravong (2015) states that using digital communication or implementing online communication projects with students from other countries may help Thai students gain more exposure to the English language. This way, students who lack the opportunities to communicate through English in their daily lives may feel more engaged with English and may perceive that English is more closely related to their lives, which can sustain their motivation to learn it.

### 6.3 Summary of chapter

Investigating the students' motivational trajectories across an established time-span allowed me to conceptualise the students' motivation from a more complex and dynamic perspective and to understand relevant motivational influences regarding the students' socio-cultural contexts. In this chapter, the data from students' LLHs was analysed through a thematic content analysis. The main findings in respect of the student's motivational trajectories across time have been presented and discussed. The chapter started by presenting a holistic view of the students' motivational trajectory patterns as identified from their LLHs. Each unique motivational trajectory was presented and discussed separately afterwards, together with three established sub-themes that served to correspond to the sub-research questions; the students' initial motivation in early experiences of English learning, critical incidents, and other salient or relevant variables associated with changes in the students' motivation.

In general, the motivation of these Thai students was found to have fluctuated throughout their language learning journey. There seemed to be three salient patterns of motivational fluctuations according to what the students revealed in their LLHs, including:

- Pattern A: Relatively low motivation in the early stages of learning English, with motivation increasing at a later stage
- Pattern B: Relatively high motivation in the early stages of learning English, with motivation increased or sustained at a high level, and
- Pattern C: Fluctuating motivation.

The findings show that the majority of this group of Thai students displayed the final identified pattern, which is a fluctuation in motivation over time. It was also found that most students had negative feelings towards English in their early learning experience. The main influence on their low motivation to learn English was found to relate to the students' lack of understanding about the value and importance of the English language, as well as the perception that English is a difficult language. The influence that seemed to be dominant in the positive feelings of students

in their early experience was found to be related to teachers, their teaching performance, and class activities.

Regarding the students' identifiable critical incidents, the findings indicate that teachers and their teaching methods or styles were the main influence on students' positive and negative critical incidents. They had a powerful potential to change the students' perspectives towards language learning. The critical incidents of these students were also found to relate to their success and failures in English usage, both inside and outside of a classroom context, as well as parental influence. Apart from teacher factors, which were found to be the main influence on students' motivational fluctuations, other relevant factors associated with the students' changes in affective states or motivation in learning English were found to relate to students' future aspirations and possible future selves, the perceived value and difficulty of the English language, self-efficacy beliefs, parental support, peers, cultural capital, digital technology (computer games or online chatting), and limited opportunities to communicate in English in their daily lives. The findings of this study provide insights for future pedagogical implications, which will be discussed in the final chapter.

In the next chapter, the findings on students' visions of their future L2 selves will be presented and discussed.

## CHAPTER 7

### THAI STUDENTS' VISIONS OF THEIR FUTURE L2 SELVES

#### 7.1 Introduction

While L2 motivational experiences can facilitate our understanding of how students' motivation has been shaped in the past, considering possible 'future selves' can also helpfully explain how their motivation towards learning English is likely to be in the future. This chapter corresponds to the last research question, which seeks to understand Thai learners' motivation in English learning within the perspective of their future English-related self and identity. The chapter begins with an overview of data analysis themes within the dimension of possible selves, followed by a presentation and discussion of the findings of each unit of analysis.

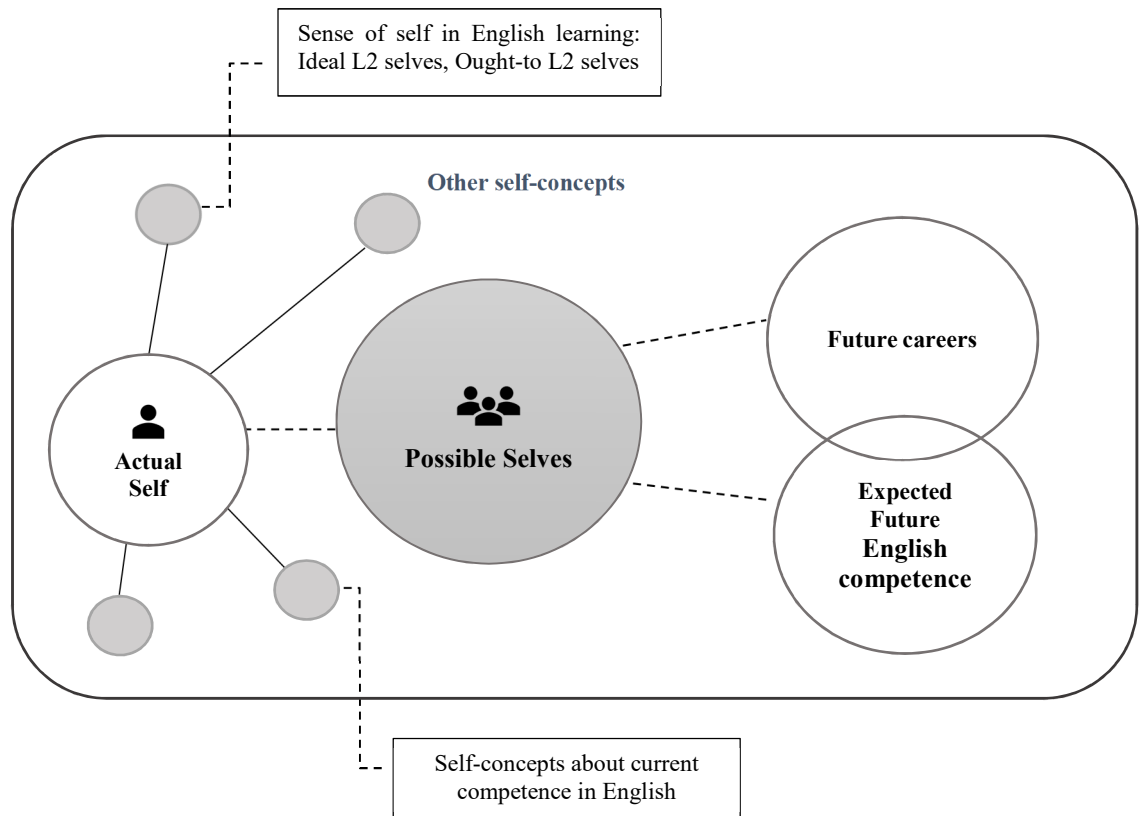
#### 7.2 An overview of the key themes of findings

In this chapter, the motivation of these Thai learners to learn the English language was also conceptualised in relation to their self and identity, drawing on the concepts of possible future selves (Markus and Nurius, 1986), which are believed to act as "incentives for future behaviour" of a person (p.954). According to Markus and Nurius (1986), possible selves are multifaceted and concern both the selves that people would like to become and are afraid of becoming. They are significant components of individuals' self-concepts (Markus and Nurius, 1986). In this study, the sources of data regarding the students' future self-concepts came from the semi-structured interviews, as well as parts of the students' written narratives in which the aspects of selves or future selves were mentioned.

The first dimension of self to present and discuss is students' senses of selves within their English language learning. To conceptualise the students' motivation in their English learning through senses of selves, questions concerning their reasons for learning English were asked in the interviews. At this stage, the a priori coding, or "the coding of themes that are determined prior

to the data analysis” (Willis, 2014, p.419) was adopted. The data associated with the ‘ideal L2 self’ and the ‘ought-to L2 self’ in English learning was captured and categorised with emerging detailed themes in response to the learners’ explained reasons for learning English.

Another dimension of self that this study is concerned with includes students’ conceptions of possible future selves. As possible future selves are multifaceted, however, this study only focused on the facets of students’ future occupations and their engagement with English and the facet of their future capabilities in English. To examine whether the students’ imagined future selves (future self-guides) are intertwined with English proficiency or not, they were asked interview questions relating to their future self-image (e.g. “How do you imagine yourselves in the next 5-10 years”), their future self-image in terms of English involvement (e.g. “Do you see yourself using English? If so, in what ways?”), in terms of English competency (e.g. “How do you foresee your English ability at that time?”), as well as their feared selves (e.g. “What are you afraid of becoming in terms of your English proficiency?”). By doing this, the learners’ motivation was observed based on the concept that motivation was a functional component in the process of forging their desired future selves in relation to the target language (Dörnyei and Chan, 2013). Generally, when asking the students to imagine their future selves, whether in terms of their future occupations or competency in English using such interview questions above, the responded data were mostly generated based on the students’ abstract goals and ambitions rather than their concrete imagery. This suggests implications for research methodology, which will be addressed in the next chapter. Figure 7.1 below illustrates the key themes of findings that will be presented and discussed in this chapter:



**Figure 7.1** The key themes of findings in relation to the concept of possible selves

### 7.3 Thai students' sense of self in English language learning

Students' senses of self in relation to their English language learning journey were revealed through asking about the reasons why the students had decided to learn the English language. Based on the interviews and LLHs data, all the students seemed to display a high awareness of the importance of English to their lives in this globalized era. Most of these Thai students perceived that having a good command of English would be an essential skill for their work in the future. The findings indicate, however, that these students appeared to project themselves differently in relation to their English language skills. This section thus aims to present the relevant reasons for their choice to learn English, as described by the students, which corresponded to their senses of self in language learning. The emerging reasons were then grouped into themes, as shown in the table below. Table 7.1 demonstrates the different types of motivational L2 selves (Dörnyei, 2005), namely, the 'ideal L2 selves' and 'ought-to L2 selves' that these Thai students revealed from their interviews and written narrative data.

Types of motivational L2 selves	Broad themes emerged	Participants/ Focus
Ideal L2 self (promotion focus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Future study, future career and job opportunity</li> <li>- A desire to go abroad</li> <li>- International posture orientation</li> </ul>	<p>N = 11 S2, S3, S5, S7, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15</p> <p>*some students stated more than one reason; hence, the themes that emerged may overlap</p>
Ought-to L2 self (prevention focus and promotion focus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Future career and concerns about potential unemployment</li> <li>- Immediate goals: Instrumental value of English for studying and graduation</li> <li>- The integration of Thailand into the ASEAN Economic Community</li> </ul>	<p>N = 5 S1, S4, S6, S8, S16</p>

**Table 7.1 Types of motivational L2 selves of the Thai students**

According to the data, the majority of the students, 11 out of 16, displayed a sense of an ‘ideal L2 self’ in their English learning, while five out of 16 students displayed a sense of an ‘ought-to L2 self’. The next section presents and discusses the students’ sense of their ideal L2 selves and the themes that emerged from their responses.

### 7.3.1 Sense of ideal L2 selves

The findings show that 11 of these Thai students appeared to reveal a sense of an ideal L2 self in studying the English language, rather than an ‘ought-to’ L2 self. All the students displayed positive attitudes towards English (see Chapter 5, Section 5.4.1). According to Higgins (1987), the ‘ideal self’ is regarded as a representation of the attributes that a person would ideally like to possess. This dimension of self includes cognitive and affective components like hopes, aspirations and wishes. These ideal L2 selves, however, refer to the L2-specific dimension of the ideal self, which, as Dörnyei (2005) explains, are attributes that an individual would ideally like to possess in their L2 learning. The data reveals that the 11 students who displayed this sense of ‘ideal L2 self’ had different perspectives about their goal of learning English. Emerging themes



corresponding to those responses regarding the students' ideal L2 selves were mainly related to future study, future career and job opportunities, going abroad, and international posture, which will be discussed in the following sections.

### **7.3.1.1 Future study, future career and job opportunity**

The first identified theme regarding the students' senses of the ideal L2 self appears to involve their future career, study, and job opportunities. A few students in this group expressed a wish to learn English in order to support their future study, career, or to improve their opportunity to get a job, as these motivated students revealed:

*I learn English for my current studying as well as for my higher education. I will also use it for my future work [Student 14, interview]*

*Because, currently, English has played an important role in our lives. So, first, I would like to study it for my future career. Also, speaking English is challenging, fun, and makes me gain more knowledge too [Student 2, interview].*

Student 2's responses also seemed to correspond to what she raised as reasons for her positive attitude towards English (see Section 5.4.1.3). One male Law student also pointed out that being fluent in English can increase one's opportunity to get a professional job, as he stated:

*Because in the field I am studying now, which is Law, the more fluent in English you are, the more advantageous and opportunities there will be in getting a job [Student 3, interview].*

Another female student stated:

*Because I think it is an important and useful language in both for work and communication with others. It also helps to increase more opportunity for ourselves [Student 12, interview].*

The findings suggest that some students view the importance of English language as something that yields utilitarian benefits, or is instrumental for their future careers. Student 12's response could imply her sense of an ideal L2 self that connects with using English both for future work and for international communication. Kim (2009) states that if students internalise utilitarian benefits as reasons for learning English and can relate them to their prosperous future, this may

imply the ideal L2 self. In addition, English is also seen to function as an important job skill that will increase the student's opportunity to get a professional job or establish their dream future career. This perspective of the ideal L2 self can be described as having a "promotion focus" (Higgins, 1998, p.15), which involves a person's hopes, aspirations, and accomplishments. The promotion focus also operates as one type of instrumental motive (Dörnyei, 2009a); for example, a person may have a strong determination to learn English in order to get a job or to facilitate career advancement.

The results seem to support recent studies on ideal L2 selves in English learning among Thai university learners (Rattanaphumma, 2016; Siridetkoon and Dewaele, 2017) which found that the English language was involved in Thai students' imagined self-images, especially in relation to their future careers. These studies also reported that Thai students viewed English as a primary channel that could lead them into future professions. These future self-images, as they related to using English, were found to play a vital role in motivating them to learn English (Rattanaphumma, 2016). Having this sense of 'ideal L2 self' linked to a promotion focus may partly help to explain why Students 2, 3, and 12 still held positive attitudes towards English, regardless of any fluctuating motivational trajectories in the past.

### **7.3.1.2 A desire to go abroad**

The second theme that was identified within this group of students was associated with wishes to have experiences abroad. Based on the data, this theme was mentioned most often by the students who displayed a sense of an ideal L2 self; six out of 10 of them. Points that the students raised within this theme involved hopes to travel, study, and work abroad. All these six students displayed a generally positive attitude towards the English language. As discussed earlier in Section 5.4.1.1, four of the students (Students 5, 7, 10 and 11) mentioned that they liked the English language because of its instrumental value. When asked specifically about their reasons to learn English, they again revealed a wish to go abroad.

*Because I would like to further my study abroad* [Student 5, interview]

*Because English is another important language. We can use English when we work or when we go abroad. If we cannot speak English, we cannot communicate with the foreigners* [Student 7, interview]

*Because English is very important. At the moment, English is involved in all fields of study. For example, in the area that I am studying, computer language is also English. And if we know more and be good at English, we will step forward and can work abroad easily.* [Student 10, interview]

*Because I would like to further studies and work abroad.* [Student 11, interview]

Holding in mind the prospect of oneself going abroad, either to study or to work, may stimulate these students to focus more on learning English. There seems to be another issue underpinning the desire to be proficient at English and to go abroad, however, which concerns the wish to escape economic hardship. Student 5 also revealed in his LLH that: ... *I want to finish my studies and be able to speak English because I would like to further my study abroad. Then I can have more experience and can escape from this poverty that I have now* [Student 5, LLH]. This statement may reflect the influence of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) on English learning. To this student, achieving in the English language means a stepping stone for him to further study abroad, which he believes can provide the chance to earn a lot of money. This may be explained in terms of the institutionalized state (Bourdieu, 1986), which elaborates that guaranteed academic qualifications (in this case, studying abroad) can promote a successful occupation, thus a person's cultural capital can be converted into economic capital (Sablan and Tierney, 2014). Thus, it appears to be that apart from this student's reasons for learning English because of a desire to go abroad, there is also a wish to escape from financial struggles. These promotion orientations in the ideal L2 selves therefore seem to lead to positive actions in students' English learning.

In the same vein, although the other two students (Students 12 and 13) did not mention the matter of going abroad as part of their *liking* for English (both explained their liking as personal interest), they pointed to travelling abroad when asked about their reasons for choosing to *learn* English.

Apart from mentioning that her reasons to learn English were related to work opportunities, Student 12 also revealed the issue of travelling abroad:

*... also English is essential when we travel abroad because it is the world's medium language. I would like to be able to communicate with anyone.* [Student 12, interview]

Student 13 also responded that:

*Because I have dreamed to travel abroad since I was young and I have always wanted to speak other languages rather than Thai* [Student 13, interview].

It seems that students mentioned English as the international language and did not point out any particular group of people that they wanted to use English with (e.g. American or UK English native speakers). This indicates their concerns with using English as part of an intercultural orientation or within the notion of “international posture” (Yashima, 2002) which I will discuss in the next section. Having ideal L2 selves relating to going abroad can be considered as having a promotion focus, as it involves their hopes and wishes of using English as their imagined future selves that go abroad. As You and Chan (2015) also state, the process of learners’ imagining their future L2 selves as being successful in the language can increase motivational intensity and effort in language learning behaviour. It may imply, therefore that having a vision of a future self going abroad (whether for studying, working, or travelling) can also function as a powerful attractor to increase learners’ motivation to improve in English.

Interestingly, the data also shows that being proficient in English was also seen as something to improve a student’s self-image. Apart from the wish to travel abroad, Student 13 cited another reason to learn English involving a visualisation of a self that ‘looks clever’. She stated in the interview that, ... *I think if we can speak, listen, read, and write in English, it will make us look cleverer* [Student 13, interview]. This desire to be perceived as intelligent if she can communicate in English may also function as a driving force for her to place greater focus on learning English. Drawing on the notion of self-discrepancy (Higgins, 1987), this reduces the gap between her actual self-concept and her relevant self-guides.

### 7.3.1.3 International posture orientation

The next emerging theme found in the ideal L2 self category relates to the international orientation aspect of using English. Students displayed a sense of self that would become part of the international community when asked about their goals for learning English. As English has now become a global language, the notion of integration (Gardner, 1985a) has been debated to be problematic in explaining L2 motivation of the learners. Yashima (2002) therefore proposes the concept of ‘international postures’ to explain the attitudes of language learners towards the international community. According to Yashima (2009, p.2), the notion of ‘international posture’ attempts to apprehend “a tendency to relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group”. Examples of the students’ responses showing this ‘international posture’ orientation are illustrated in the interview extracts below:

*I want to be able to speak English so I can communicate with foreigners and understand what they say. [Student 14, interview]*

*I learn English because I want to meet and talk to foreign people. Once we know how to use it, we will have advantages over others. [Student 15, interview]*

*Because English is the international language that most people use to communicate to each other...and I also enjoy chatting with foreign friends. I think having conversations with international friends is the best way to learn English. [Student 9, interview]*

The findings suggest that students’ reasons for learning English also include the willingness to communicate or interact with other people from foreign countries. The students did not mention any specific L2 groups (e.g. American, Australian, or English people) in the data from this study. These findings seem to support Yashima (2000), who studied Japanese EFL learners’ reasons for learning English. In her study, she also found that the learners displayed a tendency to study English for developing their interactions with others from different cultures; this theme was labelled the “intercultural friendship” orientation (p.125). The international friendship and instrumental orientations were also found to be a good predictor of the learners’ motivational intensity in her study. Students who are willing to interact with people from other countries in English tend to make more effort and display eagerness to learn (Yashima, 2000).

It was not only the statements revealing the students' desire to interact with foreigners that accounted for the international posture orientation, however. It may also include the responses around prospects of going abroad or working in an international environment. As Yashima (2009) states, learners with higher international postures orientation tend to envision their possible future selves speaking English with international friends, interacting with foreign people in different situations, pursuing their career abroad, or using English in business negotiations. These 'ideal selves' will act as incentives for students to learn and persist with English (Yashima, 2009). As a result, people who are "conscious of how they relate themselves to the world" are likely to be motivated to learn English because they can clearly see their "English-using selves" (Yashima et al., 2004, p.142-143). Although the international posture theme partially overlaps with the previous one, *a desire to go abroad*, I chose to categorise it as another theme since the students' responses on willingness to interact with the international community seemed to be more evident in the data.

The main themes emerged regarding the Thai students' sense of ideal L2 selves have been presented and discussed. Next, I will illustrate the findings and main themes found within the dimension of the students' 'ought-to' L2 selves.

### **7.3.2 Sense of ought-to L2 selves**

According to the data, five of the students seemed to display a sense of an 'ought-to' self when talking about their goals of learning English. Drawing on the notion of "ought self" (Higgins, 1987, p.321) which refers to a person's representation of the attributes that they think they should or ought to possess (i.e. a representation of an individual's sense of obligations, duties, or responsibilities), Dörnyei (2005) develops the L2-specific facet of it and called it the 'ought-to L2 self'. The ought-to L2 self tries to explain "the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes" (Dörnyei, 2009a, p.29). This

dimension of the L2-related self is also found to correspond to instrumental motives, especially the less internalised (more extrinsic) ones (Dörnyei, 2009a).

Referring specifically to these five students' general attitudes towards English (see Section 5.4), three of them showed ambivalent feelings towards the English language, while the other two students showed positive feelings. Most of these students also perceived themselves as 'low' level learners of English (Students 1, 6, 8, 16), except one student (Student 4) who placed himself as a 'low to intermediate' level learner. The data shows that students in this group revealed distinct reasons for learning English. The issues that emerged within this ought-to L2 self are categorised into three broad themes, which relate to their concerns about potential unemployment, exams and graduation, and the ASEAN economic community (AEC).

### **7.3.2.1 Future career and concerns about potential unemployment**

Generally, the students who displayed a sense of an ought-to L2 self seemed to perceive that English language has an important instrumental value in their current learning and their future work. The data suggests that their reasons for learning English involved both long-term and immediate learning goals. Regarding long-term goals, students mentioned the utilitarian benefits of English in their future career and studies:

*In the future, if we graduate, we may use English at work or in communication, something like that [Student 1, interview]*

*Because English is the world language and is widely used. Also, it is essential in working and learning. [Student 6, interview]*

*Because English is necessary in our daily lives and when we finished the study, we need to use it in our jobs and in communication. [Student 16, interview]*

From the above extracts, although these students displayed a career-oriented disposition as their reasons for learning English, which seems to correspond to the promotion focus in the ideal self-guides, they appeared to reveal a lesser degree of internalization. The data also indicates evidence of students' sense of obligation to learn English; that is, to avoid the negative outcome of being

rejected in the employment market. Students' statements regarding this undesired outcome include the following extracts:

*If we are not good at English, in the future, we may not get a job. So, no matter how difficult English is, we must get through it [Student1, LLH]*

*If we don't study English to improve our communication skills, it may be very difficult for us to get a job or we may not get any job [Student 6, interview]*

*And in the next 10 years, if we are not good at English, we may lose our job because other foreigners can speak better English than us [Student 16, LLH].*

The students' concerns about potential unemployment if they lack ability in English illustrated the sense of an 'ought-to' L2 self as they believed they needed to study English in order to meet future expectations; i.e. to get a job, and to prevent negative consequences such as being unemployed. This type of future self-guide relates to a "prevention focus", which Higgins (1998, p.15) explains concerns responsibilities, safety, and obligations. Such a prevention-focused orientation can function as a driving force for the students to put effort into their language learning. The above data could also imply that students' motivation to learn English from this perspective may be 'to avoid failure' rather than 'to succeed' in it. Although it is by no mean easy to compare the degree of motivation between the students who displayed ideal L2 selves and ought-to L2 selves in their learning, it may be possible to predict their emotional dispositions and the strategies they would be most likely to use.

Based on self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987), Higgins (1998) proposes that self-regulation, in connection to ideal and ought self-guides, concerns different preferences for methods and avoidance strategies used in reducing discrepancy. Self-regulation refers to "learners' efforts to direct their own learning by setting goals, planning how to achieve them, monitoring the learning task, using learning strategies to solve problems, and evaluating their own performance" (Chamot, 2014, p.78). The two distinct self-regulatory focuses, known as the promotion focus and prevention focus, have a great impact on individuals' feelings, thoughts, and actions (Higgins, 1998). Concerning feelings, an ideal self-regulation concerning a stronger promotion focus is



likely to bolster stronger “cheerfulness-related emotions” when the promotion focus is operating and to induce stronger “dejection-related emotions” when the promotion focus is not operating (Higgins, 1998, p.18). On the other hand, the ought-to self-regulation, with its stronger prevention focus, is likely to activate stronger “quiescence-related emotions” when prevention is operating and can induce stronger “agitation-related emotions” when prevention is not operating (Higgins, 1998, p.18).

Regarding the impact on people’s actions, Higgins (1998) states that these different regulatory focuses appear to be associated with different strategic inclinations. As the goals of people with promotion-focused orientations concern hopes and aspirations, their strategic inclinations involve making progress by striving towards that which matches with their goals (Higgins, 1998). On the other hand, as the goals of prevention-focused people concern duties, necessities, or obligations, their strategic inclinations tend to be cautious, prudent, and avoid things that clash with their goals, thus assuring safety and avoiding losses (Higgins, 1998). Crowe and Higgins (1997) also found that people with a promotion focus appeared to perform better and be more resilient when working on difficult tasks than people with a prevention focus. They appeared to be eager to find possible solutions, while those with a prevention focus tended to be more prudent against mistakes and were likely to quit more easily (Crowe and Higgins, 1997). People with a promotion focus were also found to be more fluent in generating more alternatives in tasks than the people with a prevention focus, who seemed to be more repetitive (Crowe and Higgins, 1997). Higgins (1998) points out that such strategic distinctions can determine ways in which individuals choose to solve problems and make decisions in their lives.

To conceptualise these students’ motivation to learn English from this perspective, it may be predicted that the stronger the sense of ‘ought-to self’ these students developed in their English learning, the more likely it was that they would develop emotional distress. Additionally, it may be that when facing difficult situations or tasks in English in the future, these students may be less proactive or give up easily, compared to those who have a promotion-focused ideal self. They

may also choose to ‘play it safe’ in learning, for example, remaining silent rather than actively participating in class, to avoid the risk of being rejected or facing negative consequences. Nevertheless, as Higgins (1998, p.28) states, people with a high degree of prevention focus should be more driven by incentives relevant to “goals of safety”, so the students with ought-to L2 selves may be more sensitive or motivated to correspond to obligations to learn the language to avoid undesirable outcomes, rather than to learn it for the purpose of self-accomplishment.

### **7.3.2.2 Immediate goals: Instrumental value of English for studying and graduation**

The findings show that students’ immediate goals also corresponded to their sense of an ought-to self in English learning. Such immediate goals included the hopes of achieving good grades and finishing their studies. When English was involved in such goals, the reasons for learning it seemed to support the ought-to self, i.e. to achieve those goals. As mentioned previously in Section 2.3, English language plays an important role at all levels of Thai education. It functions as a significant gatekeeper for students gaining entry to university. Furthermore, most universities have English language as a compulsory subject and require their students to take at least nine or more credits during their university years (i.e. three or more English courses). In some majors of study (e.g. Computer sciences, Tourism, Economics), students are also required to study English for specific areas relating to their field of studies, which is counted as a degree requirement. English, therefore, is generally deemed to be an important subject for the students who participated in this study.

Student 8 reported that she learned English because of its instrumental value in her current studies, which could then affect her chance of graduation. She stated:

*Because English is very important in our society nowadays... some courses are taught in English which can directly affect my graduation. Also, English may be used as a criterion in job recruiting. If we are not good at English, we may be disadvantaged and the job we want may be taken [Student 8, interview].*

Although Student 8 displayed a sense of obligation to study English for her immediate learning purpose (to pass the courses in order to graduate), she also appears to display a sense of fear or anxiety of not getting a job in the future. Apart from the sense of duty of learning English in order to finish her degree and to avoid chances of unemployment, however, which would be regarded as a prevention focus (Higgins, 1998), it seems that she also developed a promotion focus within her sense of ought-to L2 self. When asked about things that made her want to learn English the most, Student 8 replied:

*It is my goal to have a privileged job and to get paid a lot. Because when I get a good job which has a high salary, my life will be better. My family's financial status will also be better too [Student 8, interview].*

This response shows that Student 8 appears to have developed a mixed focus comprising both prevention and promotion within her sense of ought-to L2 self. These findings seem to align with Chen's (2012) study, which found that Taiwanese students' ought-to L2 self appeared to have a dual-focus, i.e. a mixture of prevention and promotion-focused instrumentality, in their language learning, which he claimed mismatched with the original theoretical concepts.

Another male student, Student 4, who had ambivalent feelings towards English also displayed a sense of obligation to learn English for his immediate goals:

*English language is a key aspect in my program of study (Computer Sciences). Because in this field, computer and technology, all of them involve the English language [Student 4, interview].*

This sense of duty in learning English for his current educational purposes is also similar to Student 8 in that it may not be very strong in relation to his sense of fear of not getting a job.

Student 4 also stated that:

*When the AEC starts, English will be very important. If we are not good at it, we may not be able to find a job. This drives me to learn English. Also, we may lose a job if we cannot communicate with our foreign colleagues in the future [Student 4, interview].*

Student 4 appears to demonstrate his fears, firstly about being unemployed, and secondly, his fear of losing a job if he was not able to use English adequately in his professional work. The sense of

obligation in relation to future work and employment opportunities seemed to be stronger than the immediate goals of his current learning. Interestingly, although Student 4 displayed a quite strong determination in learning English for his future work opportunities, his plans for future improvement of his English ability appeared to be rather blurred, as he stated: *I have no plan to study for it seriously. I only study English as it is planned for me in my study programme* [Student 4, interview]. This seems to support Lamb's (2011) findings, who also found that learners who exhibited ought-to L2 selves appeared to be more satisfied with the institute's provision and displayed a weaker degree of motivation and self-regulated learning. Another salient issue found to be associated with the students' sense of their ought-to L2 selves also involved the social concerns of Thailand becoming a member of AEC, which will be discussed in the next section.

### **7.3.2.3 The integration of Thailand in the ASEAN Economic Community**

Another issue frequently mentioned by the participant students as a reason for learning English was related to the integration of Thailand into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community, or the AEC, which took place in late 2015. It should be noted here that the data was collected in early 2015, before the AEC started. Students might thus have been influenced by tremendous social concern about the need to improve the skills of the Thai population to enhance the country's economy and its capacity to compete. Among those various skills, English competency is a key concern, as many reports have revealed that Thai learners' proficiency in English is still very low compared to other countries within the ASEAN community (Education First, 2017; Khaopa, 2013).

One of the agreements about the economic integration of the 10 ASEAN nations was that all member countries would allow free movement of skilled labour. This has resulted in Thai people having to compete against other member nations in the labour market, which requires people to be proficient in English and able to work in an English-mediated environment (Choomthong, 2014). The low command of English among Thais has therefore generated fears and concerns

among Thai learners, educators, and policy-makers, because it may diminish employment opportunities for Thai people in the vast AEC labour market (Mala, 2016). The findings from this study show that students were aware of its nation's integration within the AEC and the need for them to acquire competent proficiency in English, as some of them stated in the interviews:

*Personally, I think English is necessary for us nowadays. It will even be useful for us when we integrate with the AEC. English will have a lot of influence in our lives which will inevitably force us to know it* [Student 4, interview]

*Because English is very important in our society nowadays. Once we join the AEC, English will be used as a medium language in communication* [Student 8, interview]

*... Especially when Thailand joins the AEC, English will be very important. So, there is a need for us to study for it* [Student 6, interview].

Drawing on the concept of 'imagined community' (Norton, 2000), students who see themselves participating in the imagined international community, in this case participating within the AEC, may invest more in their L2 learning. This visualisation of oneself operating in international settings also corresponds to the international posture (Yashima, 2002, p.57), which explains, an "interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and, one hopes, openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude towards different culture". Nevertheless, from the students' statements above, it seems that their interests and willingness to associate with the globalised community of the AEC is somewhat weak, as the students did not seem to express precisely how English could help them to engage with international citizens, despite saying that English will be important in the AEC. The students' responses in relation to the AEC should thus be better understood as the effects of social pressure, rather than the sense of international posture orientations.

As mentioned earlier, Thailand's integration into the AEC in 2015 has raised a lot of concerns in Thai society, especially about Thai students' command of English. This concern has been emphasized through various social media, education, press, and published journals, resulting in Thai students becoming more attentive and aware of the importance of English language in the AEC era. Such social pressure plays a vital role in shaping Thai students' motivation to learn

English. According to Kim (2009), who studied the sociocultural interface between ideal self and ought-to self in Korean ESL students, when instrumentality orientations are less internalised, they correspond with the ought-to L2 self, rather than the ideal L2 self.

From the data, the students did not seem to internalise the instrumentality of English sufficiently. They seemed to be more concerned about how to prevent negative outcomes in the future. As Student 8 also wrote in her LLH: *once Thailand joins the AEC and opens its border, there will be more foreigners coming to work in Thailand. And if we are not good at English, they may take all the jobs we want* [Student 8, LLH]. Her statement seems to reveal a prevention focus, connected with the ought-to L2 self that she may develop from social pressure in relation to the economic integration of the ASEAN countries. Kim (2009) also explains that learners with prevention-focused ought-to L2 selves may be able to “reiterate reasons mandated by others in a speech community” but they may not “emanate from an internalised, promotion-driven self-image” (p.290). This may be the same case for Thai students when asking them to talk about the importance of English language in the AEC era. A recent study conducted by Kosonen (2017) also revealed that Thai students now view the English language as even more important than before Thailand joined the AEC in 2015.

Findings around the students’ sense of ideal selves and ought-to selves in relation to their English language learning, together with emerging themes, have been presented and discussed in the previous section. Next, the findings on students’ imagined future self-images will be illustrated and discussed.

#### **7.4 Thai students’ imagined possible future selves**

As mentioned earlier, this study also aims to understand the students’ motivation in relation to their visualisations of themselves in the future, drawing on the notion of possible selves (Markus and Nurius, 1986). Possible selves represent an individual’s beliefs of “what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming” (Markus and Nurius,

1986, p.954). Based on the framework of self-discrepancies (Higgins, 1987), Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) state that motivation to learn an L2 could be associated with the desire to achieve a ‘possible self’, as the person would try to reduce the gap between his or her ideal self and the actual self. Yashima et al. (2004, p.143) also pointed out that those who visualize “English using selves” clearly tend to be motivated to learn and use English.

In this section, more specific perspectives on how the students envisioned their future self and identity, particularly in terms of their future career, their engagement with English, and their imagined competency in English, as well as their feared-selves in the future, will be presented. As Dörnyei (2009a) states, the more elaborate and vivid the future self-image related to L2 that a person provides, the more motivational strength the person is likely to have. This section thus aims to focus on how the students envisioned their possible future careers and how clear they could see those future selves related to using English. It also looks at the students’ imagined future selves in terms of their ability in English. To observe similarities and differences in the students’ responses, I decided to present a holistic picture of the findings in two separate groups based on the previous themes of analysis, students with sense of ideal L2 selves and students with sense of ought-to L2 selves. The data summary can be shown in the table below.

<b>Students with sense of <i>ideal</i> L2 selves (N=11)</b>	<b>Perception of (current) English competency</b>	<b>Vision of future self and identity (Occupation)</b>	<b>Involvement with English in the future</b>	<b>Imagined competency in the future</b>	<b>Imagined feared-selves</b>
S2 [Law]	Low - Intermediate	A police officer	Use English with future foreign colleagues	Better than now	Lack or have very limited ability in using English skills
S3 [Law]	Low - Intermediate	a government officer, a court judge	Use English everyday and use with the foreign clients	Comprehensive level	Being not fluent in English and not capable to give advice to clients in English

S5 [International Business]	Low	Working abroad, owning a business, a flight attendant	Use English with clients when working	Very fluent	Being unable to respond in English when asked in English
S7 [Economics]	Intermediate	Owning a business	Use English to communicate with the foreigners and foreign clients fluently	A lot better than now	Being unable to communicate in English
S9 [Economics]	Low	Owning a business	Use English with other foreigners in general	Comprehensive level; not at a very high level	Being unable to communicate in English with foreigners
S10 [ICT]	Low - Intermediate	Owning a business	Use English with foreign customers	Better than now	Being stupid
S11 [ICT, 2015] [Changed to English major in 2016]	Low - Intermediate	Working abroad, a missionary, an interpreter	Use English to communicate when going abroad as a missionary or as use it in the church as an interpreter	Excellent	Having no progress, stop acquiring more knowledge
S12 [Finance]	Intermediate	Working in an organisation (an admin officer)	Use English at work for both speaking and document tasks	Good level	Having no progress and using poor English in both speaking and writing
S13 [Tourism]	Intermediate - High	A hotel receptionist	Use English to communicate at work	Fluent	Being unable to speak English
S14 [Tourism]	Intermediate	A tour guide, an interpreter	Use English to communicate with foreigners	Fluent	Being unable to speak English, not being able to communicate with foreigners
S15 [Agroindustry]	Intermediate	English teacher, flight attendant, owning a business,	Use English to communicate with other foreigners a lot	High level	Being unable to respond to the foreigners in English



		marrying a foreign guy			
<b>Students with sense of <i>ought-to</i> L2 selves (N=5)</b>	<b>Perception of English competency</b>	<b>Vision of future selves (Occupation)</b>	<b>Engagement with English in the future</b>	<b>Imagined English competency in the future</b>	<b>Imagined feared-selves</b>
S1 [Law, early 2015] [Quit study in late 2015]	Low	Not clear	Depends on whether student could finish her degree or not	If had a chance to continue study, would be able to speak English.	Being unable to speak English
S4 [Computer-Sciences]	Low - Intermediate	a government officer	Use English with foreigners in the AEC and at work	Not improve much	Being afraid of using English with foreigners, being unconfident to speak English
S6 [Computer-Sciences]	Low	Working in a company related to computer	Use English in writing computer programme	Good level	Having no improvement in English skills
S8 [Economics]	Low	Working in a bank or a financial institute	Use English at work with foreign customers, foreign investors, or when attending seminars with them	Improve to some degree	Being weak in English and unable to communicate with foreign customers
S16 [Computer-Sciences]	Low	Working in a bank	Use English to communicate at work	Able to communicate, but at a very high level	Being poor in English

**Table 7.2 A summary of findings in relation to students' imagined future selves**

Generally, in terms of future occupation, students revealed different imagined selves and identities working in various fields of occupation; some were related to their areas of study, but some were not. There appears to be two broad types of imagined careers in their responses, one with more chances of using English and being involved in international settings (e.g. a tour guide,

an interpreter, a flight attendant) and one with less chances of using English and to be involved in international settings (e.g. a government officer, a judge, an admin officer). When asked if they would be using English in the future, however, most of the students responded that they could envision themselves using English in the future. They could see themselves using English at work, in everyday life, or in other situations. Interestingly, most of the students who viewed themselves in the future as achieving a good to very good level in English appeared to have a sense of an ideal L2 self (S11, S12, S13, S14, S15). All of the students who displayed a sense of ought-to L2 self, however, seemed to perceive their present competence in English to be at a low to low-intermediate level.

#### **7.4.1 Students' imagined selves in terms of possible future careers**

As mentioned earlier, imagined possible selves in terms of dream occupations of the students, generally, appear to be varied, possibly depending on their expertise areas of study, interests, and maybe aptitudes. According to Fukada, Fukada, Falout, and Murphey (2011, p.338), possible selves are described as “future-projected identities that can generate and sustain goal-oriented behaviors”. These envisioned selves are believed to have an influence on how a person makes choices about their actions in the present. With regard to the students' imagined future careers, there seem to be two broad orientations based on the degree of possibilities of being engaged in the English language: one predominantly related to English usage and another one less closely related to English usage.

The first orientation of the students' visions of their future careers involved their imagined selves and identities that would be predominantly engaged with using English, i.e. working or moving abroad, or working in an English-mediated environment. According to the data, five out of 11 students in the ideal L2 self group displayed a future imagined self that seemed to be closely engaged with using English (Students 5, 11, 13, 14, and 15). Such imagined visualized selves

included identities that go or work abroad, identities that relate to working with people from international backgrounds, such as tour guides, interpreters, or flight attendants, for example.

Student 5, an international business major student, displayed his future possible identity as an international businessperson. He envisioned himself living abroad in Switzerland and owning a business, at the same time as being cabin crew in an international airline. He could vividly foresee himself using English with his future clients. As he stated in the interview:

*I see myself working abroad. The country that I want to go to is Switzerland which is a highly competitive country and very expensive. Also, it is like the place where the smart and qualified people are... If possible, I would like to have my own business, like selling Thai food. And what I also dreamed of is working in the trading business... apart from owning the business, I would also work full-time as a flight attendant [Student 5, interview].*

When asked whether he would still use English or not, Student 5 replied that he would definitely use English with his customers when working abroad. At the end of the interview, however, this student seemed to be unsure if he would be able to achieve that future self, as he described, *it's like my dreams are too high. And I don't know how to climb up to reach them. I'm afraid that once I go half way up, I would fall down again* [Student 5, interview]. Dörnyei (2009a) states that any future visions need to not only be elaborately and vividly created, but in order to make an ideal self an effective motivator, they also need to be substantiated and operationalised. The ideal self should be based on realistic expectations (Dörnyei, 2009a). Student 5's lack of confidence about his ability to achieve his imagined future self and a lack of concrete action plans for future learning may lessen the effectiveness and plausibility of ideal selves as motivators. As Pizzolato (2006) also states, "[t]he relation between what students want to become and what students actually become may be mediated by what students feel they are able to become (i.e., expected possible selves)" (p.59). This could imply that how the students feel about their ability (e.g. perceived self-concept) to achieve their possible self would be as important as the ability to create elaborate and vivid images of self, as it relates to English proficiency, in the future.

Student 11, a female student who changed her major from ICT to English after the interview was conducted, also foresaw her desirable self as working abroad, as she stated in the interview:

*Right now, I'm studying in the IT field but I don't like programming. I'd prefer the designing path. Maybe what I am studying now is not what I would work in the future. My dream is to work abroad. I am a Christian and I plan that when I graduate, I may apply to be a missionary in a foreign country [Student 11, interview]*

*After I come back from being a missionary in the foreign country, I may be an interpreter in a church or for other foreigners... I think my English will be great and I will be able to help everyone around me with English [Student 11, interview].*

According to the interview, she could not see herself working in the ICT field in which she was majoring. That might be the reason she decided to change her major to English after the interview process. This may reflect the impact of the self-image people wish to achieve (preferred self) on how they make certain choices in their lives (Fukada et al., 2011). Having a clear picture of her ideal self as it related to English speaking, Student 11 might have become more motivated to pursue an English major rather than ICT, resulting in the termination of her ICT major. Student 11's vision of being a 'good English speaker' may have also functioned as an incentive for her to work hard at learning the English language. Drawing on the self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987), her motivation to learn the language could be predicted to be high because of her attempt to reduce the discrepancy between her actual self and the possible self she wished to achieve in the future.

Similarly, a tourism major student, Student 13, also envisioned her future self working as a hotel receptionist in the south of Thailand, where most international tourists usually travel to. She envisioned herself using the English language competently with her foreign customers, as she stated in the interview:

*I think I would be a hotel staff and I would be working as a receptionist... I would use English a lot with the foreigners because I want to work in the south and there are many foreigners over there [Student 13, interview].*

In the same vein, Student 15 also visualised herself closely relating to many dimensions of English-using selves. Interestingly, apart from imagining herself as an English teacher, flight

attendant, and businessperson, she also imagined herself marrying a foreign man and establishing their business abroad together, as she told in the interview:

*I would probably be an English teacher, a flight attendant, or whatever I was thinking of...I think at that time I may have my own business, probably in Thailand, I am not sure. Because I may also have another business abroad with my future husband who could be a westerner or a foreigner and we would help each other work for our business [Student 15, interview].*

Although Student 15's visions of future careers seemed to be incongruous with her study major in Agroindustry, her future visualisations in relation to English seemed to be fruitful and vivid. She also expressed in her interview that she would use high degree of English language in her future life. Having various images of herself engaged with her English-using self would vigorously direct her to invest considerable effort in her English language learning. Additionally, when asked what could help her achieve those desirable selves, student 15 displayed relevant learning strategies that reflected a sense of autonomous learning, as she stated that: *apart from being spoon-fed by the teachers, the most important thing is we need to learn by ourselves. We need to utilise and practise our knowledge and skills with other people [Student 15, interview].* The learning plans this student developed in the interview indicate what Dörnyei (2009a, p.37) has called "operationalising the vision", explaining that a person's ideal self would not be effective if not accompanied by any concrete pathways or action plans.

The rest of the students, 11 out of 16, both from the ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self groups, displayed their possible future careers as having more limited contact with English. Students seemed to reveal various types of dream careers both relevant and not relevant to their majors of study, such as being a police officer, a business owner, a bank clerk, or a government officer. Based on the context, such imagined future selves are not generally likely to engage much with the English language compared to the first identified type of career-orientation. Nevertheless, most of them could vividly envision themselves using English in diverse situations, mainly at work, especially once they were asked the question about whether they would still be using English in that (future) time. A male student majoring in Law, Student 3, who was identified as

having a sense of ideal L2 self in learning English, visualised himself in the future in various dimensions. As he stated in the interview:

*I would divide my future into two parts. First, if my study result in Law is very outstanding, I may apply for a job as a court judge. But if my study result is just intermediate, I may go for a government officer path, like being a sheriff or a district chief officer, stuff like that [Student 3, interview].*

In his response to the imagined future career question, Student 3 mentioned nothing in relation to involvement in international settings nor using English. When asked if he would still be using English at that time, he replied that:

*I think I will still be using it because soon we will join the AEC and a lot of foreigners will come to our country. The language they mainly used as a tool in communication is English. So, I think I will be using English more often [Student 3, interview].*

Despite referring to his reason for learning English as increased opportunities to get a job, the issue of Thailand joining the AEC emerged in Student 3's response when he was prompted to think about future situations or settings where he might use English. He was also able to envision himself providing legal advice in English to foreign clients within the ASEAN community. His feared self, however, was unable to give legal advice in English to his future foreign clients. Although his imagined self in relation to English usage, once prompted, seemed to be quite vivid, it appears that Student 3 could not provide a set of concrete self-directed strategies. Instead, he pointed to taking more English classes from the private schools. As he stated: *my plans? I think I should take more private classes until I think I am in an okay level [Student 3, interview].* While his statement on his future learning plans indicates a lack of personal agency, but showed a certain degree of belief in the effectiveness of the private English classes that would help him to gain better competency in English, rather than his own learning process.

A female Economics student, Student 7, who was identified as having a sense of ideal L2 self in learning English, also foresaw herself owning an insurance company. It seems, however, that she could strongly integrate the English language with her imagined future self without any prompting, as she stated:

*I would be at home doing some businesses, but mainly it would be about an insurance. I would need to talk to many people. And when the AEC starts, we would definitely meet a lot of foreigners from many countries. English language would be the most important. If we only speak Thai, we won't be able to communicate with the foreign clients [Student 7, interview].*

This future self as it relates to using English within the AEC era may have motivated Student 7 to put more effort into studying English. Additionally, the self she was afraid to have, which is being unable to communicate with future foreign clients, may also emphasize the need for her to be good at English. This is to avoid becoming the self she did not wish to be. As Oyserman and Markus (1990) state, desirable possible selves will be maximally effective as a motivational resource when they are offset by feared selves. Dörnyei (2009a, p.37) thus integrates this into his strategic suggestions as “counterbalancing the vision”, which explains an importance of being aware of the feared self, or the self we would not like to become, to maximise the effectiveness of our positive possible selves. He explains that people tend to do something because they want to do it, but also because they do not want undesirable consequences. If future self-guides are accompanied by the expected negative outcomes, therefore, those desired future selves would be most potent (Dörnyei, 2009a). Regarding her learning plans, Student 7 seemed to have an awareness of selecting strategies that would be suitable for her learning style, as she stated:

*My plan is to start with myself. I need to memorise more vocabulary. I like learning English from reading. I would read the books that I like and learn vocabulary from them. I would also try to listen to English songs and listen to the accents. I'm trying to learn it in the way that would help me understand the most [Student 7, interview].*

The above statement indicates a sense of self-regulation. According to Pintrich (2000), self-regulated learning is described as “an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behaviour, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment” (p.453). Student 7 showed a sense of being in control of her own learning, as she appeared to be aware of the skills or areas in English (e.g. vocabulary) that she was not good at. She also seemed to realise what methods of learning worked best for her and was more likely to select those approaches. Being able to regulate her own learning may also enhance her motivation to pursue

the language; as Pintrich (2000) also points out, motivational processes are involved in all stages of self-regulation (e.g. forethought and planning, monitoring, reflection). Accordingly, Student 7's motivation to learn English language should be comparatively high, although she did not have a dream job that would require English to be heavily used in its day-to-day tasks (e.g. interpreter, tour guide).

Regarding the students who displayed a sense of ought-to L2 self, none of them appeared to have an English-focused career orientation. Four out of five students stated that they wished to work in a company or an organisation. Student 8, for example, who was majoring in Economics, envisioned herself working in a bank in relation to Finance; nevertheless, she displayed a degree of uncertainty about her future to some extent, as she stated in the interview:

*In the future? I have not decided if I should work at the bank or at the Ministry of Finance. It's like..I am still not sure which type of job would suit me. Working at the bank may be more stressful, but working at the ministry, we need to be a government officer. So, I am still hesitant because I am just in the first year. I still don't know which area of work I really like [Student 8, interview].*

Despite having some uncertainty about her future self, Student 8 was confident about her future use of the English language when asked if she would be using English in the future. Her imagined future self in terms of using English was relatively clear, as she described:

*I think I would definitely use it. And this year, the AEC will start. English language will be a must. Whatever job we do, we need to use English, especially the service jobs. In the future, there will be more foreigners coming to our country. English will be absolutely important. If we don't have a good background in English, other foreigners in the AEC who have better English than us would take all jobs we want. And we would definitely be unemployed. We would surely have no job. So, I want to try to make my English better than this [Student 8, interview].*

Although Student 8 did not seem to be confident about her possible future career, she appeared to have a clear vision of herself using English in the future. Pointing to the ASEAN community and job market demand for good proficiency in English, Student 8 showed a sense of obligation to improve her English skills. She seemed to be aware of the possible negative results if she was not competent in English, that is, she might not get the kind of job she wants or may become



unemployed. The societal demands for workers with a good command of English, in the AEC era, may function as a driving force for her to lead herself to meet the expectations of the wider job market. Motivation like this that is channelled by such external forces in the sociocultural environment, or less internalised within oneself, is conceived as the ought-to L2 self (Ushioda, 2014). When asked about her future plans for improving her English, Student 8 pointed to her personal attitude towards the importance of English language compared to other subjects, as she stated:

*I need to change my attitude and perspective, so that English is very important. It's like I need to see English as important as other subjects in my major. And it needs to start from myself. We should not blame the teachers or anything. I need to start memorising vocabulary and I need to be serious about it. Importantly, I need to see the value of it. If I lack good skills in English, I may have no job in the future or the job I want will be taken by someone else, something like that [Student 8, interview].*

Although Student 8 appeared to have a strong sense of the necessity to study English to avoid future unemployment, she also displayed awareness of learner autonomy, or being in charge of her own learning (Holec, 1981). Despite admitting that teachers and their teaching methods were involved in her lack of motivation in learning English in the past (see Section 6.2.3.2), she seemed to realise that she could be in control of her future learning. The way she persuaded herself to not attribute her failure to the teachers (e.g. *we should not blame the teachers or anything*) may maintain her motivation to persist with the language. As Pintrich (2000) states, how individuals reflect or attribute their successes and failures influences their motivation to achieve in new tasks. If they believe that they are in charge of their own learning, motivation to achieve in future tasks may be sustained, as they believe things will be in their control. Moreover, as Higgins (1998) explains, the strength of the prevention focus would increase as the strength of ought-to self increases. It may be predicted that the clearer the unwanted self-image Student 8 can create, the more she will feel the need to study English to avoid that negative consequence. This student may also be likely to respond more actively to the feared future self-image of being unemployed than the image of herself going abroad, as some of the students did.

Student 16, a Computer Science student who displayed a sense of ought-to L2 self in English learning, also envisioned herself working at a bank in the future. This time, without asking any prompt questions about whether she would use English in the future, she pointed out straight away the negative consequences that might happen if she could not speak English. Rather than pointing to unemployment as a reason, however, she cited being unable to communicate with foreign customers at work, as she stated in the interview:

*At that time, I would probably work at a bank. If I can't speak English, I won't be able to communicate with foreigners at work [Student 16, interview].*

Being able to visualise her undesirable (or feared) self in relation to using English may induce her investment in language learning. The presence of an awareness of negative outcomes alone, however, such as not being able to use English at work, without any sense of personal aspiration, may indicate a stronger sense of an ought-to L2 self. This may imply that the need to reduce the gap between her actual self and future self-guide is not for eliciting pleasure, rather for avoiding pain and the 'feared self' (Higgins, 1998; Dörnyei, 2009a). Concerning her learning plans, it seems that Student 16 could not give a detailed roadmap of how she was going to direct her future learning, although she seemed to be aware of the importance of being in charge of her own learning. Instead, she mentioned things briefly and in general stated that she had to study more, but did not specify much detail around the areas of her English skills she wanted to improve or the processes of improving them, as in:

*I have to study and use it more. Like I should not stop learning it and need to keep studying it, learn it in more depth. Because I didn't study English major so I have to help myself, or I may forget it [Student 16, interview].*

Similar responses regarding giving unclear action plans were also found with other students in the same group who showed a sense of an ought-to L2 self in learning but did not have dream careers that required a high degree of English usage. Although most of the students seemed to be aware that they would be using the English language at work in the future, they rather seemed to provide very general action plans for their future learning. They seemed to express the need to

put in more effort or to be more serious about learning. Nevertheless, there seemed to be a lack of specific plans or concrete courses of action to achieve their future goals. As they revealed in the interviews:

*At the moment, I try to study more because I am quite behind to my class. I can't catch up with the classes quickly... A senior student suggested me to watch video clips, like in YouTube, then buy and read books, stuff like that [Student 1, interview].*

*I think I will have to be serious with it. If we don't study more in the private classes, we need to be serious with it. Since the past, I have never been serious with English. I only memorised what I could [Student 4, interview].*

*The best I can do now is to try to focus on my studies. I need to try my best. And whatever results I get, I need to accept that because I already try my best [Student 6, interview].*

Students' hesitation in talking in detail about their action plans may suggest a lack of personal agency. Additionally, referring to others as sources of information in suggesting or helping them to become better in English, like *a senior student suggested to me...* and *if we don't study more in the private classes...* may also indicate an uncertainty and lack of confidence about their own learning strategies. This finding seems to support those of Lamb (2011) who also found a weak link between the personal agency of Indonesian students and their sense of obligation to learn the English language. Miller and Brickman (2004) also explain that once people commit themselves to personally valued future goals (or future self-guides), they have to "generate a coherent framework or system of proximal subgoals to guide action toward the attainment of those valued future goals" (p.15). They further state that failure to create an appropriate system of learning roadmaps of the people may concern two factors; the first one involving a lack of knowledge about paths or approaches that could lead them to the future goals. The second concerns ineffective or inappropriate skills for problem-solving or planning. The absence of the above skills is believed to diminish people's sense of self-regulation or capability to create meaningful paths to pursue their future self-guides (Miller and Brickman, 2004).

Interestingly, the findings from this study also suggested that financial insecurity may also have an impact on how a person envisions his or her future self-image. With her family financial problems, Student 1 displayed a degree of uncertainty about her future self, as she stated:

*Right now, I only wish to finish my study, get a good job and have money. If possible, I would like to study higher. I want to be a teacher. I want to teach the children. Now, I'm studying Law so I also want to teach Law. But I also want to teach the kids how to play musical instruments and sing. I want to finish my bachelor's degree. But I don't know if I can finish it. Now, I'm having some family problems and I don't have much money. My mum is ill and my sister asked me to leave the university to take care of my mum. I want to go home because I feel sorry for my mum, but I would also regret the time I have spent studying here. Now, I'm still deciding what I should do. If I quit this time, there may be no chance for me to study again. But if I don't quit, I would be worried about my mum [Student 1, interview].*

From the above interview extract, Student 1 showed great uncertainty about her future self (e.g. *I only wish to..., if possible...I don't know if I can finish it*). It seemed that she only revealed her 'wished-for' self rather than 'expected self' in the future. This might be the result of her financially insecure circumstances, which may have restricted her from having a clear future self-image. Eight months after the interview, Student 1 had quit her studies and gone back to her hometown to take care of her sick mother.

Saki (2017), who recently conducted a study in Japan, also found that learners who had a low degree of possible selves (i.e. learners who did not envision themselves clearly in the future) tended to have difficulties in setting their goals and tended to use language learning strategies less often than the learners with higher levels of possible selves. Asking about her relationship with the English language in the future, Student 1 voiced that she would still be using English only if she had a chance to continue her studies and get a proper job, as she stated:

*In my opinion, if I don't have a chance to study, I won't use English. If I don't study, I can't see my future. I don't know how to support my family. And when I don't have my mum, what would I do? I can't find the solutions. I don't know if I would finish my study because I have no one to support my studying. I have to support myself. I can't see what job I would do. If I don't study, perhaps I would work as a nurse assistant that I used to do, as a worker in the factory, or as a general labour. If I have a chance to further study and have a proper job, I think I would be able to use English in the future [Student 1, interview].*

It seems that Student 1's vision of herself discontinuing her studies was stronger than her vision of herself finishing her degree. She appeared to have her imagined future self working in labourer jobs. The findings show, however, that her imagined self as it relates to English usage seems unclear. Student 1 stated that she could not envision herself using English if she could not continue her studies, finish a degree, and obtain a proper job. In her view, English may be seen as something necessary for educated people and particular careers, but not working-class jobs. This lack of economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) thus seems to influence her visions of her future self, especially the self that is associated with English usage. From the data, it may be predicted that her motivation to pursue English language learning may be quite low, as she could not visualise herself clearly in the future using English. As Norton (2013) also states, language learners' investment in the language may be influenced by their cultural capital. This is because the learners would reevaluate their sense of selves and identities, as well as desires for the future, based on the value of their cultural capital (Norton, 2013).

Based on the hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943), Student 1's basic needs (e.g. safety needs, job, and financial security) may have to be fulfilled first before her other higher-level needs (e.g. psychological needs, self-esteem, self-actualization) would be strongly desired. In addition to the absence of economic safety that Student 1 was experiencing, she also seemed to lack time to invest in her studies as well (as ultimately she had to support her family and take care of her mother). The data suggests that it is important that students' motivation should also be understood in relation to their sense of self as real people who live in the unique socio-cultural contexts, or should be conceptualized under the person-in-context relational view (Ushioda, 2009). This is because apart from their identity as a language learner, the other 'transportable identities' (Zimmerman, 1998) (e.g. a daughter, a sister, a waitress) that students bring to class may also have an impact on their language learning and their motivation to learn the language.

#### 7.4.2 Students' imagined selves in terms of future English competency

As Oyserman and Markus (1990) state, self-concept is viewed as a multifaceted construct comprising various dimensions of self-representations. 'Possible selves' are seen as significant elements within a person's self-concept, as they reflect people's awareness of their own potential, as well as representing people's goals, motives, fears, and anxieties (Oyserman and Markus, 1990). One facet of possible selves that this study also aims to explore is the aspect of English competence that the students believed they would have in the future. Drawing on the notion of self-discrepancy (Higgins, 1987), learning about how the students perceive their current self-efficacy in English and how they expect their efficacy would be in the future may help us to understand their motivation better because they would attempt to reduce the discrepancy between their expected and actual selves in terms of ability. This section aims to present and discuss the findings regarding students' imagined possible selves in terms of their competency in the English language.

According to the data, students who displayed a sense of ideal L2 self generally seemed to envision their future competency in English as higher than those who had a sense of ought-to L2 self. It is quite apparent that students with the sense of ideal L2 self, who visualized themselves having careers that would require high demand for English usage, foresaw themselves as high level users of English (Students 5, 11, 13, 14, and 15). It was also found that most of the students who viewed themselves in the future as having a high proficiency in English also perceived their current efficacy in English as better in general, mostly from intermediate to intermediate to high levels, apart from Student 5 who perceived his current proficiency to be at a low level (see Section 5.3). These students stated in the interview that they imagined themselves in the future as 'excellent', 'fluent', and 'high level' users of English, as in the extracts below:

*I think I may use excellent English at that time. And it will be useful for me and people around me. When people need help with English, I can help them straight away [Student 11, interview].*

*It would be great. I will probably be fluent in English* [Student 14, interview].

*My level of English at that time would be high. I may also learn other languages in the ASEAN like Vietnamese and Laos as well* [Student 15, interview].

According to Dörnyei (2009a), however, the motivational impact of these possible selves may be enhanced or hindered by their perceived plausibility. He explains that possible selves would be greatly effective if they are perceived as possible and realistic based on personal circumstances. Possible selves that are more of a compromise, or are not too different from the person's actual self, may induce a powerful motivational impact, as the possibility to attain the future self is more plausible and manageable. Expected selves that are too different from the perceived actual selves or the person's reality may, on the other hand, have an impact on individuals' feelings of control and induce negative emotions (e.g. discouragement, lack of confidence, tension). Segal (2006) also adds that how people expect their future possible selves to become real can influence their "self-esteem, current mood, and optimism" (p.91).

Student 5, who perceived his current proficiency in English as being at a low level (rated himself only 20% out of 100), envisioned himself in the future as being very fluent in English. Despite having a strong determination to learn English so that he could go abroad and escape from poverty, he seemed to display uncertainty about whether his aspirations were realistic, as presented earlier in: *it's like my dreams are too high. And I don't know how to climb up to reach them. I'm afraid that once I go half way up, I would fall down again* [Student 5, interview]. Having a visualisation of himself in the future as a very fluent English user was a bit too different from how he perceived his current self (as a low level English user); plus, having no plausible plan of action to pursue that desirable self, Student 5 may have felt less confident about his desirable self and perhaps less motivated compared to those who were more confident about their future selves and had concrete learning plans to achieve them. Understanding how realistic a person expects their possible self to be is also important, as MacIntyre, Mackinnon, and Clément (2009) point out that "a highly unlikely possible self probably will have little relation to motivation" (p.197).

A few students envisioned their possible selves in terms of English competency at a ‘good’ or ‘satisfactory’ level. Neither Student 12 (who displayed a sense of ideal L2 self) and Student 6 (who displayed a sense of ought-to L2 self) stated in their interviews that they would like to have careers that would require a high demand of English usage in the future, but they did state that they would like to work in an organisation or a company. Their perceived present proficiency in English was at the intermediate (Student 12) and low level (Student 6). Student 12 voiced in the interview that if she continued to work hard at her English, it may lead her to the level she expected, as she stated:

*I think I will probably be at a good level because now I am quite okay with it. So, I think, if I continue to work hard at it, I will speak English more fluently. My grammar will also be better [Student 12, interview].*

Perceiving her current ability in English to be at an intermediate level (not too low) may promote the feeling of being competent and confident that she would be able to achieve the ‘good level’ if she made a consistent effort. Together with a plan of action for improving her English skills, Student 12’s idea of her possible self as being a competent user of English may have a considerable motivational impact. Student 12 revealed her plan to improve her English, as shown in the extract below:

*Like in the class, I need to pay more attention to it. Each lesson I learn has its own grammar points. So, I have to try to understand the uses of them and review them regularly. In speaking, I will have to speak English with the foreigners more often [Student 12, interview].*

Student 6 also visualised her future competence in English as being at a ‘good’ level; although she perceived herself at the present as being at a low level, as she stated:

*My English should be good. It must be good because now I am more confident and started to understand structures of English tenses better [Student 6, interview].*

As presented earlier, however, it appears that Student 6 did not provide a clear plan for learning English. She only stated generally that that she should try her best at learning, without articulating any detailed roadmap of how to link her present self to the future one. As discussed earlier, again,



a possible self with a lack of plausible plan may not have a great motivational impact on future behaviour. According to Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, and Hart-Johnson (2004), possible selves can be divided into two types: one that only promotes feeling good (the one with no strategies or plans to attain it), and another that serves to promote the regulation of one's actions. Oyserman et al. (2004) found, however, that the latter type of possible self had an impact on improvement of academic outcomes in school students. They explain that when students feel committed to invest their effort to achieve their possible selves and provide a roadmap linking their present behaviour to the future, their possible selves then serve self-regulatory functions. It can thus be implied that a vision of a future self as a 'good level' user of English, as Student 12 had, may have a greater motivational impact than it would for Student 6, as Student 12 seemed to have a clearer plan for how she would achieve the desired self than Student 6 did.

Half of the students, eight out of 16, envisioned that their English competence in the future would improve to some degree or would be at a comprehensive level. None of these students viewed themselves as having careers that would involve a high demand of English usage in the future. Students appeared to imagine themselves improving in English differently. The first group of these students envisioned that their English proficiency would improve greatly, to a certain degree, or just improve slightly (Students 2, 4, 7, 8, and 10), while the second group seemed to view that their future English ability would be at a comprehensive level (Students 3, 9, and 16).

Students in the first group stated in the interview that their imagined English competency in the future would be better than what they had now. Student 2, for example, revealed that: *my capability to speak, read, and write in English will be better because now I get to use English sometimes. I am gaining more experience of using it* [Student 2, interview]. Student 7, however, envisioned that her English would be much improved in the future, as in: *I think it will improve a lot more because now I try to practise it every day no matter what, speaking or listening. Like, listen to English songs* [Student 7, interview]. Student 4, however, stated in the interview that his English ability in the future may not improve much, as in: *I think in the future, my English ability*

*may probably not improve that much because even now I haven't understood it thoroughly. I have no plan to study for it seriously. Right now, I only study English as it is planned for me in my study programme* [Student 4, interview].

From the data, it looks like Student 7, who perceived her current self as being more competent than the others in the same group (at the intermediate level), displayed a higher sense of belief in her future English efficacy. The other students (Students 2, 4, 8, and 10), who perceived their present ability at a low or low to intermediate level, seemed to display a lower degree of confidence or beliefs in their future efficacy, as they did not indicate great degree of improvement in their future English competency in the interview. As Schunk (2003) states, it is not only self-efficacy that can influence students' achievement behaviours, but their behaviours can also alter their self-efficacy beliefs as well.

From students' statements about their current actions in learning (e.g. *because now I try to practise it every day no matter what, speaking or listening; I have no plan to study for it seriously. Right now, I only study English as it is planned for me in my study programme*), the beliefs in their future efficacy may also be predicted. As Schunk (2003, p.160) explains, when students perform in tasks, the progress they make toward their goals is evaluated, conveying the message that "they are capable of performing well". This will enhance their beliefs of self-efficacy in future learning. Schunk (2003) also points out that students who feel more competent in their learning work harder and persist longer when faced with difficulties, as well as accomplish at a higher level, compared to those who doubt their abilities. It may thus be implied that motivation of Student 7, who seemed to feel more efficacious for their learning performance, may have been higher than that of students who viewed their efficacy as lower at the present and in the future.

Some students appeared to visualize their future capabilities at a comprehensive level. This comprehensive level that the students expected to achieve seems to refer to their level of competence at using English to communicate at an understandable or effective level; though it

may not be considered ‘advanced’. Student 9, for example, who perceived her current ability as being at a low level, stated in the interview: *I won’t be at an advanced level, but I will be able to talk and communicate with other people, like understand each other* [student 9, interview]. Similarly, Student 16, who also perceived her English competency as being at a low level, also expected to use English at a communicative level, as in: *I think I will be able to speak it and able to communicate at an understandable level. My English may not be very high. It may be at moderate* [Student 16, interview]. These findings indicate that how the students perceived their current efficacy in English may also influence the way they foresaw their future competency. Students who perceived their efficacy as lower seemed to restrict their imagined future abilities to a limited level (e.g. *I won’t be at an advanced level* [Student 9]). In order to sustain motivation in language learning for these students, it may therefore be essential to increase their beliefs in their present self-efficacy as well.

## **7.5 Further discussions and summary of the chapter**

Apart from the students’ past experiences of language learning, the ‘possible self’ is considered as having a potential to be a powerful source of motivation for students to continue their investment in language learning. The findings have suggested that despite the different motivational trajectories the learners had during their past learning experiences with English, what has kept them resilient and persisting with the language seems to involve their future-oriented self-concepts or possible selves. According to Markus and Nurius (1986), possible selves are placed in a significant domain of self-knowledge (within the broad area of self-concept research), concerning how people think about their potential and their future. Regarding the complex dynamic systems perspective, the possible self can perform as a powerful attractor to stabilise certain behaviours within these systems. The findings indicate that envisioning a possible self is likely to induce positive or motivated behaviours in English language learning when it is associated with visions of the self being closely connected with using English in the future, and being competent in English. It was suggested by the data that being unable to view oneself in the

future as a fluent language user, as well as being influenced by the perception of the current self as being at a low proficiency level in English, may restrict the student's ability to plan for their future learning (especially students who had a sense of an ought-to self in learning), potentially leading to a lower investment in language learning.

Although possible selves, which represent individuals' enduring hopes and dreams, are likely to stabilise the motivational system and tend to be resistant to change, they can be reformulated all the time depending on situational conditions (Henry, 2015). As Markus and Nurius (1986, p.956) state, "possible selves are not well-anchored in social experience, they comprise the self-knowledge that is the most vulnerable and responsive to changes in the environment". This means that possible selves are particularly sensitive to situations people encounter in lives, as they can signal "new or inconsistent information" about the self (Markus and Nurius, 1986, p.956). When a new possible self is activated, a re-evaluation of the current self-image will also take place. Henry (2015) also explains that an awareness of the distance between a person's actual and an ideal self can also cause changes to possible selves. This can be seen from Student 1's scenario, for example, as she faced a financial struggle to continue her study and take responsibility for her mother's care, which resulted in a smaller chance of achieving her ideal future self, in which she saw herself becoming a graduate or having a job that she loved. Instead, this situation induced her to conceptualise new possible selves, for example being a nurse assistant or a labourer in a factory. This may explain why Student 1's future possible self in relation to English usage was unlikely to be realised, as the visualization of herself continuing to study quickly faded. As Henry (2015) concluded, "[r]e-evaluations of the chances of achieving a desired future self either more or less likely – are prompted by salient events, experiences, and implicit/explicit feedback relating to the development of target language skills" (p.86).

The changing nature of possible selves due to different contextual conditions have suggested that possible selves that may detract from the students' motivation may be re-evaluated by inserting positive experiences. As Henry (2015) explains, positive experiences can trigger a person to re-

evaluate possibilities to get close to their desired end state, leading to an enhancement of the ideal L2 self. On the other hand, if the experiences do not communicate any progress towards the person's ideal self, doubts of the possibility to achieve the desired possible self may set in, for example if the person perceives that the goal is too far away, leading to an alteration of the ideal self to become closer to the actual self, or a downward revision (Henry, 2015). As is suggested from the data, students who perceived their present selves as having low capabilities in English, especially those who did not reveal concrete or plausible plans of action, tended to expect that their future abilities would not be at a very high level, but rather at an achievable level, i.e. not too far from their current selves' abilities. These present and working self-concepts may be shaped or influenced by personal learning experiences or critical events in the past, leading them to form particular concepts about themselves. Markus and Nurius (1986) also point out that, "the value of considering the nature and function of possible selves is most apparent if we examine not the self-concept, which is typically regarded as a single, generalized view of the self, but rather the current or working self-concept" (p.957).

In summary, this chapter has revealed that this group of Thai students displayed different senses of self in their English language learning. The majority of the participating Thai students appeared to have a sense of an ideal L2 self in their English language learning, while about a third of them seemed to have ought-to L2 selves in relation to their learning. The findings indicate that the students with a sense of ideal L2 selves internalised the utilitarian benefits of learning English for their future study, future careers, and future job opportunities. They also seemed to view the English language as an important tool to link them to future aspirations such as travelling, working abroad, or connecting them to other people around the world. Their reasons for choosing to learn English showed a promotion focus (Higgins, 1998). On the other hand, it was also found that some students displayed a sense of obligation, or ought-to self, in their learning of English, concerning potential unemployment, their studies, and graduation, as well as the social pressure of the integration of Thailand into the ASEAN Economic Community. It was also found, however,

that students did not exclusively display a prevention focus (Higgins, 1998) which is regarded in theory as usually emerging within the ought-to self; instead, they seemed to have developed a mixed focus, i.e. both a prevention and a promotion focus, at the same time.

With regards to the students' possible future selves, the findings suggest that students who envisioned themselves as having future careers that would demand a high level of English usage seemed to perceive themselves better in terms of their current and future competence in English. All these students were found to be in the group that displayed a sense of ideal L2 selves for their English learning. The data also showed that these students provided clearer strategies and roadmaps for their future learning than students who perceived their capabilities as lower, both in the ideal L2 self and the ought-to L2 self groups. Other students who envisioned themselves as having careers that would not normally require a high use of English, however, were all able to imagine themselves in English-using situations when asked, mainly at work. There may be no apparent link between the students in terms of their perceived present and future abilities in English when considering the students from both the ideal L2 self and the ought-to L2 self groups. It was nonetheless noticeable that students who perceived their English ability as being relatively low in the ideal L2 self group seemed to have clearer plans of action for the future compared to those who perceived their ability as relatively low in the ought-to L2 self group. With the limitations of this study in terms of numbers of participants, however, this issue needs further investigation on a larger scale and maybe in the quantitative dimension as well.

# **CHAPTER 8**

## **CONCLUSION**

### **8.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the overall conclusion of the findings, together with relevant issues regarding the contributions and implications of this study, will be presented. The chapter begins by summarising the key findings corresponding to the study's research questions. Then, it addresses the limitations of this study. Contributions to knowledge and implications for English language teachers, schools, policy makers, parents and social community, as well as future researchers, are provided afterwards. My personal reflection as a PhD researcher is also presented in the last section.

### **8.2 Overall summary of findings**

This section aims at presenting the summary of the key findings which correspond to the research questions outlined at the beginning of the thesis. Before summarising the findings, the unique aspects of the findings will firstly be discussed. Following that, summary of the key findings will be presented. As this study has three main research questions, the findings were organized to be presented and discussed in three separate chapters: Chapters 5, 6, and 7. In this section, I will present the summary of the findings in order to answer each research question and sub-question in brief. To note again, the main aim of this study is to investigate the motivation of Thai university students in learning English over time.

#### **8.2.1 The novel and unique aspects of the findings**

This study adopted qualitative approach in studying Thai learners' motivation, with its uniqueness focusing on the learners' motivational dynamism across time. The first research question focused on the learners' attitudinal positions, aiming to examine the 'present' perspective of the Thai learners' L2 motivation. The second research question, on the other hand, aimed to capture the

'past' perspective of motivation, focusing on different developmental trajectories of the learners' motivation over time. In the last research question, the learners' motivation from the 'future' perspective was the focus, which was examined through the notion of future self-guides or visions of oneself in the future. Adopting the non-linear and socio-dynamic perspectives, as well as employing research methods dedicated to exploring the temporal dimension of learners' motivation, this study makes a unique contribution in terms of the findings on motivational changes across time of Thai university learners. The results of this study have confirmed that Thai learners' motivational trajectories were different and changed over time, supporting a need to adopt a more non-linear approach in conceptualising and gauging L2 motivation in the Thai context. The following sections summarise the key findings of this study.

### **8.2.2 RQ1: What are Thai students' general attitude orientations towards the English language?**

To address this question, the interview data regarding the students' general attitude towards English was investigated. The findings revealed that most the Thai students displayed positive dispositions towards the English language, while a minority of them displayed ambivalent feelings, showing uncertainty about whether or not they liked it. None of the students reported that they had negative dispositions towards English at the time that data was collected. These Thai students attributed their positive attitudes towards English to various reasons. The most apparent reasons for their liking of English was found to be involved with the instrumentality or utilitarian value of English. Other reasons were also found to relate to personal interest, combinations of different motives, and international posture (Yashima, 2009), respectively. Concerning the students who displayed ambivalent dispositions towards English, the findings indicate that the main reason for their uncertainty about their attitudes towards English concerned their beliefs about their self-efficacy in English. The results have suggested that although the students mostly held a positive outlook on English, a lack of belief in their self-efficacy may have influenced their



overall attitudes they had about English, which may have potentially induced ambivalent feelings towards the English language and learning.

### **8.2.3 RQ2: What motivational trajectory patterns did Thai students have over time?**

**RQ2.1:** Are there any identifiable critical incidents involved in Thai students' English learning experience? If so, what role do those critical incidents play in students' motivation?

**RQ2.2:** What kind of factors are associated with changes in motivational disposition of the students across time?

The above questions were addressed using data from the students' written narratives about their language learning experiences or what is called 'language learning histories' (LLHs) in this study. Employing narrative inquiry, especially using a life history approach, helped me to capture the Thai students' long-term experiences of language learning (Barkhuizen et al., 2014), as well as facilitating a better understanding of the "subjective meanings (including attitudes and beliefs)" and "emotions invoked" (Kalaja et al., 2008, p.4) of the students in the Thai context. The motivational trajectories of the Thai students were thus investigated through the aforementioned approach.

The findings indicate that Thai students' motivation to learn English language was complex and dynamic, which could be triggered by a variety of underlying factors within students' socio-cultural contexts. The Thai students' motivational trajectories, based on the data generated from their LLHs, were found to have fluctuated across the time they were measured and could broadly be categorised into three patterns, including a pattern of being relatively low in motivation in the early stages of learning English, but with motivation increasing at a later stage (Pattern A); a relatively high motivation in the early stages of learning English, with motivation increasing or being sustained at a high level (Pattern B), and a fluctuating motivational pattern (Pattern C). The

findings also suggest that the students' motivation across time was strongly related to their situated or immediate learning environment.

This study revealed that the majority of the Thai student participants displayed a motivational trajectory that most closely matched Pattern C, showing ups and downs in motivation throughout their past English learning journey. Most of the students reported that they developed negative affective states towards English in their early experiences of learning it. In respect to this, the finding has also indicated that the main influence on the students' negative feelings towards English in their early learning experiences was associated with a lack of understanding or realization of the English language's value and its usefulness, as well as the perception that English is a difficult language to learn. The teacher-related factors were, nevertheless, found to be the main influence on the students' positive attitudes towards English learning in their early language learning.

Critical incidents, or the learners' brief written accounts about significant events in their lives (Brookfield, 1990) were also explored to see if they had any links with their motivation. The findings indicate that the identifiable critical incidents, both positive and negative, that the Thai students revealed mainly concerned teachers' behaviours and their teaching performances. Other issues that surfaced in the students' critical incidents included experiences of success and failure in the usage of English inside and outside classrooms, as well as parental influence. The students' critical incidents were found to have a powerful impact on the changes in their perspectives towards learning English.

The results of this study also show that other relevant factors, apart from teacher-related influences, which were associated with these Thai students' fluctuations in motivation, also involved the students' future aspirations and imagined future selves, the perceived value and difficulty of English, their beliefs about their own self-efficacy in English learning, parental support, peers, cultural capital, digital technology, and opportunities to use English in their

everyday lives. The findings highlighted the need to incorporate the students' socio-cultural and contextual variables and the complex and dynamic interactions of these factors with students' motivation when interpreting students' motivation in language learning across time.

#### **8.2.4 RQ3: How do Thai university students visualize their possible future selves in relation to using English?**

**RQ3.1:** How do Thai students form their senses of self in English language learning?

**RQ3.2:** To what extent do the students' imagined possible selves help to explain or predict their motivation to learn English?

The last research question is aimed at investigating Thai students' predictions about their selves and identities in the future. The notion of 'possible selves' (Markus and Nurius, 1986) was incorporated in this study as to conceptualise students' L2 motivation and investment in relation to the aspects of selves and identities. The data used in addressing the last research question was mainly gathered from the interviews. Dörnyei's (2005) framework of the L2 motivational self system was also applied in the analysis in order to help explain students' motivation in connection to their senses of self in their language learning. The results have shown that Thai students appeared to have different senses of self in English language learning. The majority of them displayed a sense of an ideal L2 self in their English learning. These senses of ideal L2 selves in terms of future studies, future careers, living abroad, or becoming globalized citizens (international posture) were mentioned as reasons for persisting with their current English learning. It was found, however, that the minority of the Thai students also displayed a sense of obligation, or 'ought-to' self, for learning English. Their senses of ought-to selves in English learning involved concerns about being unemployed in the future, the obligation to finish their degree, and social pressure following the integration of Thailand into the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

In terms of the Thai students' imagined future selves, the findings suggest that those students who envisioned themselves working in an environment that would require a high demand of English usage perceived their current and future efficacy in English as higher than the rest of students. All these students displayed a sense of ideal L2 selves in their English learning. They also seemed to provide clearer learning strategies and future learning plans than those who perceived their self-efficacy in English to be lower. Motivation to invest in the English language among this group of students is likely to be higher. This study also revealed that the Thai students who had low self-efficacy but showed a sense of an ideal L2 self seemed to be able to generate a clearer plan of actions for their future learning, compared to those who also had low self-efficacy but displayed an ought-to self in terms of learning English. The findings indicated various implications for English language pedagogy in Thai contexts, which I am going to discuss in later sections.

### **8.3 Contributions to knowledge**

This study of Thai students' motivation in English learning over time has made significant contributions to the literature and knowledge in this area in several ways. Firstly, this study has contributed to the understanding of Thai university students' motivation to learn English language from the new realm of L2 motivation research, focusing on a more complex, dynamic, and situated approach (Dörnyei, 2009a), which has been found to be a scarce area of study in the context of Thailand. This study also generates significant insights, particularly on the L2 motivation of students living and studying in the north-eastern area of Thailand, where poverty is a more significant problem compared to other areas of the country and where the L2 motivation research conducted in this context is insufficient. Adopting a qualitative approach, this study also helped to fill the gap in L2 motivation research in Thailand, which has to date heavily relied on a traditional linear approach, employing quantitative strategy but neglecting to incorporate contextual or socio-cultural factors. As this study utilised narrative inquiry as the main approach, it also makes contributions to the methodology used to conceptualise learners' motivation in the context of Thailand. I believe that the approach of storytelling or language learning histories has

shed light on L2 motivational influences across the period of time studied, and I hope it will induce more investigation on a larger scale.

The findings of this study also expand on the knowledge of Thai students' motivation with respect to their sense of self and identity, especially within the framework of L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005; 2009a) and the person-in-context relational view of motivation (Ushioda, 2009), about which still very little research has been conducted in the context of Thailand (e.g. Prapunta, 2016; Rattanaphumma, 2016; Siridetkoon and Dewaele, 2017). This study has contributed to knowledge in relation to Thai students' visions of themselves participating in the AEC and connecting with the English language. I hope that the findings that have emerged from this study will be used as a guide or background information in developing future studies on L2 motivation in other areas within Thailand, as well as other similar contexts in Asian countries. Lastly, this study may raise awareness among teachers, parents and family, and Thai students' local communities in shaping positive and constructive L2-related experiences, as this study suggests that all these stakeholders have a shared responsibility to create an environment that helps facilitate students' learning, and to nurture and enhance their motivation. Valuable insights from this study provide several implications for those involved in language education in Thailand and other contexts, which I am going to address in the next sections.

## **8.4 Implications of this study**

This investigation of Thai university students' motivation to learn English over time has generated valuable insights into the area of L2 motivation in Thailand. New perspectives of conceptualising motivation have been applied to this study in order to capture the complex and dynamic nature of students' motivation. The findings of this study provide several implications for English language teachers and educators in Thailand, schools, policy makers, and the wider community.

### **8.4.1 Implications for English language teachers**

The findings of this study have reflected that the teacher is one of the most significant factors that could have a powerful impact on Thai students' motivation to learn the English language. The study indicates that the fluctuations in motivation of the Thai students during their past English learning experiences were mainly related closely to certain personal characteristics and attitudes, as well as the performance of their teachers in the classroom. In the light of this, it is hoped that this study will inspire English language teachers to pay attention to the attitudes that they bring to the classroom and reflect that their personalities, attitudes, or behaviours can affect learners' motivation. The evidence in this study suggests that language teachers who are kind, understanding, and motivational are likely to have a positive impact on learners' motivation than those who are very strict, put a lot of pressure on the learners, or have negative attitudes towards lower level students. This aspect of teaching should be taken more seriously.

In terms of pedagogical implications, this study suggests that language teachers, especially for young learners who are introduced to the English language for the very first time, should provide or emphasize clear purposes for language learning and make them explicit in class. The findings indicated that not knowing the value or purposes of English language learning was one of the main reasons for negative feelings towards learning the English language in the early stages. Regarding English lessons, the findings suggest that a wide variety of activities can help to promote learners' attention and engagement in English classes. Moreover, language teachers should evaluate their students' capabilities in English, their interests, and motivation, in order to arrange or create appropriate activities and a learning environment that will best facilitate their students' learning. One way to sustain learners' motivation to learn languages over time is also by developing learner autonomy and a sense of learner identity, which Lamb and Little (2016) suggested can be achieved through several strategies that encourage language learners to critically reflect on and discuss their learning needs and motivations. The finding also suggests that computers and digital technology, such as virtual games, online chat, or social networking, could also enhance students' motivation to learn English. Language teachers should therefore consider

implementing such technology-based learning into the classroom. Warni's (2016) study also found that incorporating online portfolios into English classes could help to enhance students' learning and motivation.

The findings on students' visions of their future L2 selves have suggested that language teachers should take part in helping their students to envision themselves in the future relating to English-language usage, or, as Dörnyei (2009a) terms it, "igniting the vision" (p.33). There are a number of ways that teachers can help their students to construct the sense of an ideal L2 self in their language learning, for example, teachers may guide students to generate ideal L2 selves and assist them in strengthening those visions throughout their language learning, so that those ideal selves can be sustained and continue to provide motivational impact on their language learning in the long term. Teachers may also arrange activities that allow the students to talk about their dreams or future aspirations and to share those desires with their friends, so that students who cannot clearly envision their future selves relating to English-usage can learn or be inspired by their peers' stronger visions.

This study also has emphasized the responsibility of language teachers in helping to enhance their students' beliefs in their efficacy in English, as a higher perceived L2 efficacy can influence students' motivation and investment in language learning. Practical recommendations in sustaining and enhancing learners' efficacy beliefs in the classroom level could include providing learning activities that are suitable for the age group, interests, and abilities. Activities used in class should be challenging but achievable, so that learners' self-esteem can be nurtured and protected. Teachers should also be aware that the feedback given to their students may destroy or lessen students' beliefs in their efficacy. They should ensure that the feedback provided is useful, constructive and motivational, as well as inspiring positive performances and behaviours in students. This study emphasizes the need for teachers to help students who have low self-esteem because of a lack of belief in their own self-efficacy to become more confident in their capabilities to make changes to their learning or language outcomes. Teachers should create a friendly and

constructive learning environment to help the students feel at ease when participating in activities. Another way this can be achieved is through encouraging the students to attribute their failures or successes to their own efforts, which are internal and controllable, or at least promoting a belief in self-efficacy and personal agency, strengthening their sense of control over their own learning. This should help students to be more resilient and not give up as easily when encountering difficulties or challenges during their English language learning and in other English-related situations.

#### **8.4.2 Implications for educational institutions**

For schools and university institutions in Thailand, it is recommended that sufficient learning materials and facilities should be provided to support teachers' instructional processes in the classroom. With enough learning aids, teachers can provide a variety of activities to suit their students' interests. Moreover, in terms of professional support, schools and higher education institutions should ensure that their language teachers, both Thai and native English, receive appropriate training regularly. This is because poor teaching performance may be likely to induce negative feelings towards learning the English language, which may eventually lead to negative learning outcomes. For early childhood education, if the conditions in schools mean that they do not have the resources to introduce students to another language, for example, having inadequate teachers or insufficient essential resources, the schools should consider delaying the introduction of English until the basic educational level (Grade 1). This is to avoid problems such as "inequity regarding access to effective language instruction, inadequately trained and skilled teachers, and a disjunction between curriculum rhetoric and pedagogical reality" (Nunan, 2003, p.589), which are likely to have a negative impact on students' learning and their initial attitudes towards the English language.



### **8.4.3 Implications for English language policy makers**

Regarding the implications for policy makers in Thailand, it is recommended that they should pay serious attention to problems that may arise from the mismatch between the national English language policy and its assessment (see Section 2.3.2). More attention should be paid to the negative consequences that the national tests may have on students' learning motivation. There is also a need for policy makers to consider inequalities between schools in urban areas and schools in disadvantaged areas in Thailand, where students' backgrounds and cultural capital can be very different and may influence their motivation and learning. The findings of this study also reflect the need for policy makers to improve the quality of English language teaching and learning in Thailand, particularly by emphasizing the creation and maintenance of learners' positive attitudes towards the English language. At the higher education level, this study recommends that university language policy should aim to support and strengthen students' future-projected identities, aspirations, and desires in relation to English usage, in order to maintain students' motivation to learn English.

### **8.4.4 Implications for parents and the wider community**

The findings of this study recommend that parents should take part in enhancing their children's motivation to learn English, as parents were perceived by the students as significant others who had a powerful influence on their motivation to learn English. Parents' support in terms of giving encouragement, providing interesting learning aids and materials, and offering learning strategies can help to strengthen their children's motivation to learn. There is also a need for students' local communities to encourage and emphasize the value and usefulness of the English language to students, so that students will feel motivated to learn and become successful in the language.

#### **8.4.5 Implications for research methodology**

With regard to the research methodology, the findings have reflected implications on the issue of the interview questions used to elicit Thai learners' future imagery. As the data showed that the learners' responses regarding their future self-guides was generated according to their abstract goals rather than the concrete imagery which is an important component of the future self-guides. Therefore, it is recommended that in eliciting responses that represent stronger imagery content characterising genuine future self-guides of the Thai learners, interview questions should be more specific and clearer in terms of an imagery perspective. With regard to this, the interview questions should better focus on the learners' imagination of who they could be in the future or the sense of who they would 'ideally' like to become. Rather than just asking 'how do you imagine yourself in the next 5-10 years?', the aspect of imagery should be emphasized when conducting the interview, through the question, such as, 'can you imagine a sense of who you would like to become in the future?', or 'do you have an ideal image of who you would like to become (as an English user) in the future?', 'If so, who can you see as yourself in the future?'. By slightly adjusting the interview questions, the future-oriented personal visions of the learners could be generated more vividly and imaginarily.

#### **8.4.6 Implications for future research**

Research on L2 motivation has been conducted widely in the context of Thailand, largely employing a quantitative approach to examine types of motivation that Thai learners display. This study has, however, shed light on the value of adopting a qualitative approach, incorporating narrative inquiry to conceptualise the complex nature of motivation and learn about its dynamics. For future research on L2 motivation in the Thai context, this study recommends that a more qualitative approach should be adopted on a larger scale or in other regions of Thailand, so that deeper understandings and a clearer picture of Thai learners' motivation can be developed. More studies should also be conducted to conceptualise motivation in English language learning among

young and adolescent learners in Thailand, integrating context-sensitive perspectives into consideration. It may also be worth to further examine Thai students' motivation and their visions of self in relation to English after the integration of Thailand into the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015. There is also a need for further research on L2 motivation, especially from a longitudinal perspective, and in relation to senses of self and identity in wider contexts in Thailand and in other Asian countries.

### **8.5 Limitations of this study**

Addressing the limitations of this study will be beneficial for future researchers. There are several limitations of this research to be outlined in this section. Firstly, as this study adopted a qualitative approach, it cannot be generalized, as generalizability is not the usual intention of this form of inquiry (Creswell, 2014). With limited numbers of participants, who were also purposefully selected and were all first year university level students, the findings of this study cannot, therefore, be generalized to other students at other study sites and at other levels of study outside the scope of this research. The generalizability of the particular themes arising from this research could, however, also be enhanced if additional cases were added, following the same procedures as this study, in the future. Additionally, this study might also be limited in terms of gender variables, as the participants in this study were mainly female; 13 out of 16 students. If investigating the perspectives of students of different genders might yield different perspectives of findings, which was not a focus for this study, this could be another limitation.

Secondly, there is also a limitation in how the motivation of the students in this study was examined and interpreted. Unlike in quantitative research, the students' motivation of this study was investigated based on the qualitative approach, focusing on the interpretation of narrative data generated by the students. By doing so, it may be inevitable that my personal background and experience could have influenced the way I interpreted the data of the students to a certain degree. The motivation of the students may therefore not be comparable to other kinds of

motivation gauged from other statistical methods or tools. Additionally, the results “cannot be extended to wider populations with the same degree of certainty that quantitative analyses can” (Atieno, 2009, p.17). The generalizability of this study is thus limited in this aspect.

A further limitation is based on the methods used in this study. As this study employed LLHs as a way to elicit the students’ motivations and experiences of English learning, it should be accepted that only the stories mentioned by the students were counted as data, and other important information which was not written in the students’ accounts might be missing. Additionally, stories of experience received from the students might include bias and may not always be accurate or truthful.

Another limitation of this study concerns the translation issue, as mentioned earlier. According to the time constraint of this study, back translation was not adopted, although it might be claimed as one of the most powerful translation techniques used in cross-language research (Brislin, 1970; Werner and Campbell, 1973). All the data in this study was translated by myself, employing two other language consultants in helping me to check word equivalence. In the final transcript, however, I decided on the word-selection, which could yield another limitation.

To conclude, as discussed above, there are several limitations of this study. It is important that they were explicitly addressed and minimized where possible. This could help to enhance the trustworthiness of the research and may be advantageous to future researchers who want to engage in further study in this field.

## **8.6 Personal reflection as a researcher**

Having the opportunity to study for a PhD has been one of the most invaluable experiences in my life. Being a novice teacher and researcher before starting this doctoral programme, I knew very little about how to carry out a research project and construct new knowledge appropriately and effectively, through a wide variety of useful available methods. Conducting this research project

has been a life changing experience, as it gave me the opportunity to develop many important skills as an independent learner, as a researcher and as a knowledge constructor.

In the early stages of my PhD journey, I greatly benefited from various research courses provided by the university. I have cultivated essential knowledge and skills in designing and forming my research focus. Learning about philosophical paradigms has also broadened my understanding of social science research and my world view in shaping and taking positions in this PhD project, which has been very important. As I was a novice researcher, there were times that I became stuck with the process of forming the research focus. Having discussions with my supervisors and colleagues, as well as reading more relevant literature, however, helped me to develop a greater understanding and extend my knowledge regarding those dimensions. Moreover, receiving insightful feedback from my upgrade examiners also fulfilled necessary conditions that helped me to conduct my research better.

Through the process of data collection, I have developed various skills, for example, in terms of planning how and when to collect the data, managing and protecting data information, anticipating incidents that could have happened, and how to deal with them. I have also learned to be careful and sensitive to various ethical issues that might have occurred during my data collection with the participants, some of which I had never thought about before. The data analysis process has also developed my rational and critical thinking, being able to make judgements and draw conclusions about the issues based on evidence from the data and from existing knowledge from others. It has also raised my awareness of the possible influences, including my personal knowledge, background, experience, and bias, may have on my data interpretation. The overall process of this PhD journey has given me precious experience and has changed the way I see the world and conceive knowledge. All the skills and knowledge I have developed from this PhD experience are invaluable and will be vital for my future research journey and professional career in my context.



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## APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **A story about myself**

## **A story about myself**

My name is Angsu-orn Na Nongkhai. But everyone in my family and my friends call me 'Wan' which means 'sweet' in Thai and it is my nickname. I was born in a small town, 'Mukdahan', which is in the North-east of Thailand. After I was born in 1985, our family moved to many cities due to my father's job relocation. We have finally settled down in Nong Khai, my father's hometown, in 1998 after my father was retired.

There are five people in my family: my father, mother, my two older sisters, and me. My father is now 78 years old. He was a government officer. My mother is now 62 years old and she was a primary school teacher. For me, they both are very generous, clever, and diligent. They have taught me by words and actions how to live our lives happily and meaningful to others. My sisters are now living in Bangkok, a capital of Thailand. My oldest sister works as a credit analyst at an American company, Honeywell. My second sister is an auditor at Deloitte Company. Although we do not live together, we always stay in touch.

Talking about my educational background, I studied in a small primary school in Loei city, which is also in the North-east of Thailand. I started learning English when I was in grade 5. My first English class was taught by an English teacher, and the memory of the first day he taught still impressed in my mind. Although the class was quite large, with approximately 40-45 students, it was very active and fun. Every of my friends seemed very excited and participative. The teacher started the class by introducing us the sounds in English. We learned and tried to reproduce the teacher's sounds and learned some basic conversations like greeting, introducing oneself, and taking leave. It was a lot of fun and I started to love English since then. Unfortunately, the English teacher did not teach us for the whole semester. We were then taught English by a Thai lady teacher. She taught us many vocabulary and grammar rules. I had always been interested in English and was very hard-working doing all homework and assignment the teacher assigned. However, my interest, motivation, and enthusiasm to learn English dropped down one day in our English class. As I mentioned earlier, I worked very hard in order to be good at English. I tried to participate in every activity and questions that the teacher asked us to do. But I was ordered not to answer anymore, with an angry voice and manners from the teacher, because there was only me answering the teacher's questions while the other friends were just being quiet. I told myself at that time, I would not participate in that class anymore as the teacher did not want me to. I thought she must hate me and at that time I felt really demotivated. I did not want to study English until I passed to grade 6 which I was taught English by a new kind teacher. I then started to love English again. From this situation, I think teachers themselves play vital roles in the class. They

can be inspirational and motivational teachers or they can be the demotivational ones. I imagined if I were a teacher, I would try not to demotivate my students.

In 1999, I attended junior high school in Nong Khai. The school is regarded as the best high school in Nong Khai. I still maintained my interest in English and did whatever to make my English improved. After school, in the evenings, my friends and I went to the English tutorial classes which were taught by the Thai teachers from my own school (we paid them for that). And on weekends, I joined other English classes, taught by Thai and English teachers, and English activities offered by the missionaries. The English classes I attended mainly focused on grammar and vocabulary that would be useful for the examinations. Only the English sessions provided by the missionaries offered the conversational English. However, after I finished junior high school, although I got the highest scores in the senior high school entrance examination, I still could not speak English very well.

It was always my dream to have a chance to go abroad, but my parents said I needed to be able to speak fluent English first, then I could think about it. That may be the point that I felt I really needed to be successful in English. So, I tried very hard on English again through all the time of my senior high school. Finally, I decided to do my bachelor's degree at Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, and definitely I chose the English major, although I finished the high school from sciences and mathematic pathway.

I was very excited to study at the best university of Thailand at that time. However, my first English class was not very successful and I felt a little upset about it. On my first class, a teacher asked every student to speak English in front of the classroom for two minutes. It was an impromptu speaking and I had never done that before. Two minutes seemed to be very long for me. I suddenly lacked of things to say because I could not produce sentences properly as I had limited time to plan what to say. I was so nervous, while other of my classmates, who are mostly from Bangkok, could speak English much more fluently than me and they seemed to be less nervous than me. After the class, I felt disappoint of myself and very embarrassed. I then kept thinking how I can be more confident and fluent in English speaking. I tried to find ways to improve my speaking, including having conversation with foreign friends, joining the University English club, watching English movies and reproduce the sounds, practising with myself, and going abroad in summer time!

I had a chance to go to Lake Tahoe which is located along the border between California and Nevada, USA, for three months when I was a sophomore. The programme I joined was called 'Work & Travel'. In this programme we had a chance to work, study, and travel within three

months during summer. I worked at the restaurant at that time and took the English course at an English centre in the town. Most of my friends are Mexicans and worked in the USA, so it was not only English language that I learned but also some Spanish from my classmates too. It was a wonderful summer I had and after I got back to Thailand, I found that I was more confident to speak in English no matter it was right or wrong.

Until my third year of studies, I was selected to be a president of the English club at my university. I was very happy and it was the first time that I spoke on the stage in front of many people without being nervous like the first time in my class. I then believed that if we tried hard, we would be successful in whatever we want.

It seems like the ways that I have chosen helped me to develop my English a lot, especially going abroad. I think that is because I have gained a lot more confidence when speaking English without being afraid to make mistakes. And it was in the real situations.

I graduated my Bachelor's degree in Education in March 2007 and found a very interesting job working with kids. I began my first job right away after graduating. My job was an activity leader at Tumble Tots, a child developmental centre, in Bangkok. My duties involved leading activities for babies and kids aged between 6 months to 7 years old, as well as their parents, using the curriculum provided from the UK. Why I chose to do this job is because I love kids and this job required me to speak English which I liked it.

After I worked as an activity leader for 6 months, I began to think about furthering my studies for a Master's degree in second language teaching. Therefore, I applied for a MA TESOL Studies at the University of Leeds and started my course in 2008. I had a good opportunity to work under Dr. Martin Lamb's supervision because my interest for dissertation was on learner's motivation in second language learning. This topic was introduced to me in a module I took with Martin and it attracted me a lot when I thought of all the reasons why I study English and I am here for. Thus, I decided to do my MA dissertation on motivation and metacognition in language development of the Thai learners.

After I finish my MA in TESOL Studies, I want to work as an English teacher to gain some teaching experiences. So, I went back to my town in 2010 and applied for a teaching job at ABC University. I was offered for a teaching position and I teach English to non-English major students. Our class size is between 40-60 students, depending on each major. Their English level is pre-intermediate and I have tried hard to motivate my students to learn English and to be responsible for their learning as I believe it might help them to be successful in English. I then



have become interested in learner autonomy area and motivation would like to research more on that with my Thai students. After teaching there for two years, I began to think about pursuing my PhD. I consulted with my colleagues and my MA supervisor, Martin, about this. They all suggested me to do it again in the UK and with Dr. Terry Lamb if I would like to specialize in learner autonomy and/or motivation.

That is a brief story about myself in general and in specifically how my English has been nurtured. This story may not cover every aspect of my life, but I have found that writing this story is enjoyable.

.....

*Angsu-orn Na Nongkhai*

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Permission request letter**



บันทึกข้อความ

ส่วนราชการ \_\_\_\_\_ โทร. ๕๒๒๑๗  
ที่ ศธ ๐๕๑๙.๓๗/๕๑๘ วันที่ ๘ มกราคม ๒๕๕๘

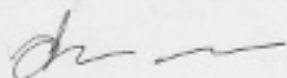
เรื่อง ขออนุมัติขอพระราชทานอนุญาตให้เก็บข้อมูลเพื่อใช้ในการวิจัย

เรียน รองอธิการบดี \_\_\_\_\_

ด้วยดิฉัน นางสาวอังศอร ณ หนองคาย พนักงานมหาวิทยาลัย ตำแหน่งอาจารย์สังกัดคณะศิลปศาสตร์ \_\_\_\_\_ ซึ่งปัจจุบันกำลังศึกษาต่อระดับปริญญาเอก มหาวิทยาลัยเซฟฟิลด์ ประเทศอังกฤษ สาขาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ มีความประสงค์ที่จะขออนุญาตเก็บข้อมูลจากนักศึกษา \_\_\_\_\_ เพื่อประกอบการทำวิทยานิพนธ์ในหัวข้อเรื่อง "An Investigation into Second Language Motivation: Understanding the Relationship between Second Language Motivation and Second Language Identity of Thai Learners of English" โดยโครงการวิจัยนี้ได้รับการพิจารณารับรองจาก คณะกรรมการสอบโครงการงานวิจัยและคณะกรรมการพิจารณาจริยธรรมการวิจัย จาก School of Education in University of Sheffield แล้ว โดยได้แนบเอกสารประกอบการพิจารณาดังต่อไปนี้

๑. โครงการวิจัย เรื่อง "An Investigation into Second Language Motivation: Understanding the Relationship between Second Language Motivation and Second Language Identity of Thai Learners of English"
๒. ผลการสอบโครงการวิจัย
๓. หนังสือชี้แจงการเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยและแบบแสดงความยินยอมการเข้าร่วมทำวิจัยของอาสาสมัคร
๔. แบบฟอร์มขอพิจารณาจริยธรรมการวิจัย

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณา

  
(นางสาวอังศอร ณ หนองคาย)  
อาจารย์ประจำคณะศิลปศาสตร์

๑๕๒๗



(ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์อรรุษา นิกประพันธ์)  
รองอธิการบดี \_\_\_\_\_

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## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Ethical approval letter**



Downloaded: 21/08/2016

Approved: 03/03/2015

Angsu-orn Na Nongkhai  
Registration number: 130113713  
School of Education  
Programme: PhD in Education

Dear Angsu-orn

**PROJECT TITLE:** An Investigation into Second Language Motivation: Understanding the Relationship between L2 Motivation and L2 Identity of Thai Learners of English

**APPLICATION:** Reference Number 002064

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 03/03/2015 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 002064 (dated 03/03/2015).
- Participant information sheet 005237 version 1 (11/02/2015).
- Participant consent form 004154 version 1 (15/12/2014).

If during the course of the project you need to [deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation](#) please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

Professor Daniel Goodley  
Ethics Administrator  
School of Education

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Participant information sheet: English & Thai versions**

## Participant Information Sheet

### **An Investigation into Second Language Motivation: Understanding the Relationship between Second Language Motivation and Second Language Identity of Thai Learners of English**

*You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.*

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#### **1. What is this project about?**

The aim of this study is to investigate Thai university learners' motivation to learn English as a foreign language and to understand the relationship between their motivation to learn English and their second language identity which involves how they have sensed or perceived themselves in any aspect relating to English language learning. It also aims to explore types of second language identity that Thai learners have developed and examine if those identities have any connection with their sense of identity and self.

#### **2. Why have I been chosen?**

This project will be focusing on the motivation, second language identity, and experiences in English language learning of Thai university learners. You will be chosen based on meeting **all the criteria**: You are a Thai university learner, live in Thailand, and have had experiences in English language learning.

#### **3. Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to, such as your grades. You do not have to give a reason if you would like to opt out from this study.

#### **4. What will happen to me if I take part?**

You will be asked to write a story about your English language learning experience. After that, you may be asked to participate in an interview which lasts approximately 30 minutes to 45 minutes. The interview will be audio recorded, and notes will be taken for the duration of the interview. This is to help the researcher to understand all the details that you describe and no one else will have access to the notes or recordings apart from the researcher's PhD supervisors.

#### **5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

Taking part in this project will have NO effect on the scores or grades in the English course and any courses that you are taking at the university. There are no physical risks of participating

in the research, and you will be able to choose the location of the interviews. However, since we will be talking about your experiences in the learning of English, there might be some challenging discussions; for instance, you might find yourself recalling a stressful or emotional time. But remember that you are in charge of how much you would like to tell me and you can stop or pause the interview at any point.

**6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for you, it is hoped that this work will enable English language educators to understand more about the motivation of Thai learners in learning English which may lead to an improvement of second language pedagogy and curriculum that could nurture and enhance Thai learners' motivation in learning English language.

**7. What if something goes wrong?**

If you are unhappy about anything, you are welcome to contact me. My contact details are provided in the last section of this information sheet. However, if your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction, then you can contact my PhD supervisors (their contact information is also provided in the last section), who will then escalate the complaint through the appropriate channels.

**8. Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

The information that we collect about you during the course of the research **will be kept strictly confidential**. You will not be identified in any reports or publications. However, there are some limits to confidentiality, for instance, if you share information with me that suggests that you or someone else is at risk of harm. If that happens, I may need to give information to someone who can help. But I would speak to you first before doing this.

**9. What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research project's objectives?**

As the main aim of this project is to investigate second language motivation of Thai learners in English language learning, thus, information regarding motivation in the learning of English will be sought. Additionally, information about how you make sense or perceive about yourself relating to English language learning will also be looked at to see whether it has any relationships with your motivation to learn English or not. Also, the presentation of your stories about language learning experiences will be analysed to understand your internalised life story.

**10. Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?**

The audio recordings of your interview will be used only for analysis and for illustration in the project reports. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings. No one will be able to identify you personally.



**11. What will happen to the results of the research project?**

Results of this project will be presented at my PhD viva, University of Sheffield. The findings are also hoped to be presented at other relevant conferences and published in journals or books. However, you will not be identified in any reports or publication. Findings from this research project can be requested from me by mail or email at any time.

**12. Who is organising and funding the research?**

The Office of the Higher Education Commission, Ministry of Education, Thailand, is funding this PhD research project.

**13. Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This research project has been ethically reviewed by the School of Education Ethics Review Panel, University of Sheffield.

**14. What do I have to do now?**

Think about the information on this sheet and ask me if you are unsure about anything. If you agree to take part in this project, please sign the consent form. The consent form will not be used to identify you. It will be filled separately from all other information. If, after the discussion, you would like to receive more information about this project, please contact me (my name and contact details are provided in the next section).

**15. Who do I contact for further information?**

**Ms. Angsu-orn Na Nongkhai (Researcher)**  
C38, Atlantic One  
16 St.George's Close, Sheffield, S3 7AN  
Tel: +44(0)7858043363 (UK), +66(0)818522528 (THAILAND)  
Email: ananongkhai1@sheffield.ac.uk

**Professor Terry Lamb (PhD Supervisor)**  
School of Education, University of Sheffield  
388 Glossop Road, Sheffield, S10 2JA  
Tel: +44(0)114 222 8118 (UK)  
Email: T.Lamb@sheffield.ac.uk

**Dr. Sabine Little (PhD Supervisor)**  
School of Education, University of Sheffield  
388 Glossop Road, Sheffield, S10 2JA  
Tel: +44(0)114 222 8089 (UK)  
Email: s.little@sheffield.ac.uk

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**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME**

เอกสารชี้แจงผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย  
(Participant Information Sheet)

เรื่อง An Investigation into Second Language Motivation: Understanding the  
Relationship between Second Language Motivation and Second Language Identity of  
Thai Learners of English

ท่านได้รับเชิญให้เข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้ ก่อนการตัดสินใจ ท่านจำเป็นต้องเข้าใจวัตถุประสงค์ของโครงการวิจัยนี้ว่าเกี่ยวข้องกับอะไรบ้าง กรุณาทำความเข้าใจกับข้อมูลด้านล่างต่อไปนี้ หากมีข้อความใดที่ท่านอ่านแล้วไม่เข้าใจ โปรดสอบถามหัวหน้าโครงการวิจัยเพื่ออธิบายจนกว่าจะเข้าใจชัดเจนดี ท่านสามารถนำเอกสารนี้กลับไปทำความเข้าใจหรือปรึกษาหารือกับผู้อื่น เพื่อช่วยในการตัดสินใจเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยครั้งนี้ได้

1. โครงการวิจัยนี้เกี่ยวข้องกับอะไร

โครงการวิจัยนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศของนักศึกษาไทยและเพื่อทำความเข้าใจความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษา กับอัตลักษณ์ในภาษาที่สอง ซึ่งเกี่ยวข้องกับการรับรู้และเข้าใจตนเองในด้านใดๆ ก็ตามที่เกี่ยวข้องกับภาษาอังกฤษ นอกจากนี้ โครงการวิจัยนี้ยังมีเป้าหมายเพื่อสำรวจประเภทของอัตลักษณ์ในภาษาที่สองที่นักศึกษาไทยได้พัฒนาขึ้นและศึกษาว่าอัตลักษณ์เหล่านี้เกี่ยวข้องกับตัวตนหรืออัตลักษณ์ด้านอื่นๆ ของพวกเขาหรือไม่ อย่างไร

2. เพราะเหตุใดฉันถึงถูกเลือกให้เข้าร่วมในการวิจัยครั้งนี้

โครงการวิจัยนี้มุ่งเน้นไปที่แรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ อัตลักษณ์ในภาษาที่สองและประสบการณ์ในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาไทยในระดับมหาวิทยาลัย ท่านได้ถูกเลือกเนื่องจากมีคุณสมบัติทั้งหมดตรงตามวัตถุประสงค์ของโครงการวิจัยนี้ ได้แก่ การที่ท่านเป็นนักศึกษาไทยระดับมหาวิทยาลัย อาศัยและเรียนอยู่ในประเทศไทยและมีประสบการณ์ในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ

3. ฉันจำเป็นต้องเข้าร่วมหรือไม่

ท่านสามารถตัดสินใจได้ว่า จะเข้าร่วมหรือไม่ หากท่านตัดสินใจที่จะเข้าร่วม ท่านจะได้รับเอกสารชี้แจงนี้เพื่อเก็บไว้ (และจะถูกขอให้เซ็นเอกสารยินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัย) ท่านสามารถถอนตัวจากโครงการวิจัยนี้เมื่อใดก็ได้โดยที่ไม่มีผลกระทบใดๆ ต่อผลประโยชน์ที่ท่านจะได้รับ เช่น คะแนนหรือผลการเรียน เป็นต้น ทั้งนี้ ท่านไม่จำเป็นต้องให้เหตุผลหากท่านต้องการที่จะถอนตัวออกจากโครงการวิจัยนี้

#### 4. จะเกิดอะไรขึ้นหากฉันเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้

ท่านจะถูกขอให้เขียนเรื่องราวเกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์การเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของท่าน จากนั้น ท่านอาจจะถูกขอให้มาเข้าร่วมในการสัมภาษณ์ ซึ่งจะใช้เวลาประมาณ 30 ถึง 45 นาที และการสัมภาษณ์จะถูกบันทึกเสียงไว้ ทั้งนี้ เพื่อเป็นการช่วยเหลือให้ผู้วิจัยเข้าใจในรายละเอียดที่ท่านได้ให้ข้อมูล และจะไม่มีบุคคลอื่นใดที่สามารถเข้าถึงข้อมูลของท่านได้นอกจากผู้วิจัยและอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาของผู้วิจัยเท่านั้น

#### 5. มีผลเสียหรือความเสี่ยงใดบ้างที่อาจเกิดขึ้นกับฉัน

การเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้จะไม่ส่งผลกระทบต่อคะแนนหรือผลการเรียนของท่าน ไม่ว่าจะในรายวิชาใดๆ ก็ตาม และไม่มีความเสี่ยงทางกายภาพใดๆ ทั้งสิ้น ท่านสามารถเลือกสถานที่สำหรับการสัมภาษณ์ด้วยตนเองได้ แต่อย่างไรก็ตาม การพูดคุยถึงประสบการณ์การเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของท่านอาจมีบางคำถามหรือประเด็นที่อาจทำให้ท่านไม่สบายใจหรืออึดอัด ท่านสามารถให้ข้อมูลได้เท่าที่ท่านสบายใจและท่านสามารถหยุดหรือเว้นช่วงการสัมภาษณ์ได้ทุกเมื่อ

#### 6. มีผลประโยชน์อย่างไรบ้างหากฉันเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้

ถึงแม้ว่าจะไม่มีผลประโยชน์โดยตรงต่อตัวท่าน แต่โครงการวิจัยนี้มุ่งหวังเป็นอย่างยิ่งว่าจะสามารถทำให้นักวิชาการหรือผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษได้เข้าใจแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาไทย ซึ่งอาจนำไปสู่การพัฒนาการเรียนการสอน ตลอดจนหลักสูตรที่จะส่งเสริมและสร้างแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาไทยได้

#### 7. หากมีสิ่งผิดพลาดเกิดขึ้น

หากท่านไม่พึงพอใจกับสิ่งใดระหว่างเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้ ท่านสามารถติดต่อผู้วิจัยได้โดยตรงตามที่อยู่และหมายเลขติดต่อในหัวข้อสุดท้ายของเอกสารนี้ อย่างไรก็ตาม หากข้อร้องเรียนของท่านไม่ได้รับการแก้ไขในระดับที่ท่านพึงพอใจ ท่านสามารถติดต่ออาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาของผู้วิจัย (ที่อยู่และช่องทางติดต่ออยู่ในหัวข้อสุดท้ายของเอกสารนี้เช่นกัน) ซึ่งจะช่วยเหลือข้อร้องเรียนไปยังช่องทางที่เหมาะสมต่อไป

#### 8. การเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยของฉันในครั้งนี้จะถูกเก็บเป็นความลับหรือไม่

ข้อมูลที่ท่านได้ให้ตลอดโครงการวิจัยนี้ จะถูกรักษาเป็นความลับอย่างดี ชื่อหรือข้อมูลส่วนตัวของท่านจะไม่ถูกเปิดเผยในรายงานหรือสื่อสิ่งพิมพ์ใดๆ แต่อย่างไรก็ตาม มีความเป็นไปได้ว่า ชื่อของมหาวิทยาลัยที่ท่านศึกษาอยู่นั้นอาจสามารถถูกระบุได้ เนื่องจากเป็นมหาวิทยาลัยเพียงแห่งเดียวเท่านั้น ที่อยู่ในเมืองที่เป็นสถานที่ทำงานของผู้วิจัย ซึ่งผู้วิจัยอาจจำเป็นต้องเอ่ยถึง นอกจากนี้ ข้อมูลอันเป็นความลับบางอย่างจากท่าน ที่อาจจะแสดงถึงความเสี่ยงหรือความไม่ปลอดภัยของตัวท่านเองหรือบุคคลอื่นๆ ผู้วิจัยอาจจำเป็นต้องแจ้งให้บุคคลอื่นทราบเพื่อทำการช่วยเหลือ แต่อย่างไรก็ดี ผู้วิจัยจะสอบถามและแจ้งให้ท่านทราบก่อนเป็นอันดับแรก

9. ข้อมูลใดบ้างที่จะถูกเก็บจากฉันและเหตุใดข้อมูลเหล่านั้นจึงสอดคล้องกับวัตถุประสงค์ของโครงการวิจัยนี้

เนื่องจากวัตถุประสงค์หลักของโครงการวิจัยนี้ มุ่งหมายเพื่อศึกษาแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาไทยในระดับมหาวิทยาลัย ดังนั้น ข้อมูลที่เกี่ยวกับแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของท่านจะถูกศึกษา ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับการรับรู้และเข้าใจของตัวเอง อันเกี่ยวข้องกับการเรียนหรือใช้ภาษาอังกฤษจะถูกศึกษาเช่นกัน เพื่อดูความสัมพันธ์กับแรงจูงใจที่ท่านมีในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ นอกจากนี้ การนำเสนอเรื่องราวประสบการณ์การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของท่านจะถูกนำไปวิเคราะห์เพื่อที่จะทำความเข้าใจเรื่องราวชีวิตและการตีความเหตุการณ์ต่างๆ ของท่านอีกด้วย

10. ข้อมูลเสียงของฉันจะถูกบันทึกหรือไม่และข้อมูลเหล่านั้นจะถูกนำไปใช้อย่างไร

การบันทึกเสียงในการสัมภาษณ์จะใช้เพื่อการวิเคราะห์และนำเสนอในรายงานโครงการวิจัยเท่านั้น ข้อมูลเสียงของท่านจะไม่ถูกเปิดเผยหรือนำไปใช้ในประโยชน์อื่นใดโดยปราศจากการอนุญาตจากท่านก่อน และข้อมูลเสียงของท่านจะถูกเก็บเป็นความลับอย่างดี

11. ผลของโครงการวิจัยจะถูกนำไปใช้ทำอะไร

ผลของโครงการวิจัยนี้จะถูกนำเสนอในการสอบปกป้องวิทยานิพนธ์ระดับปริญญาเอกของผู้วิจัย ณ University of Sheffield ประเทศอังกฤษ ผลของการศึกษานี้ยังถูกมุ่งหวังที่จะได้รับการตอบรับให้นำเสนอในที่ประชุมหรือตีพิมพ์ในวารสารหรือหนังสือ อย่างไรก็ตาม ชื่อและข้อมูลส่วนตัวของท่านจะไม่ถูกเปิดเผยเด็ดขาด ท่านสามารถขอผลของการศึกษานี้ได้โดยติดต่อมาที่ผู้วิจัย

12. ใครคือสนับสนุนการวิจัยในครั้งนี้

ผู้สนับสนุนทุนการศึกษาเพื่อทำโครงการวิจัยนี้ ได้แก่ สำนักงานคณะกรรมการการอุดมศึกษา (สกอ.) กระทรวงศึกษาธิการ

13. ใครคือผู้พิจารณาจริยธรรมการวิจัยของโครงการวิจัยนี้

คณะกรรมการพิจารณาจริยธรรมการวิจัย ณ School of Education, University of Sheffield ประเทศอังกฤษ

14. ฉันต้องทำอะไรต่อไป

ใช้เวลาพิจารณาข้อมูลในเอกสารชี้แจงฉบับนี้และสามารถถามผู้วิจัยได้หากมีคำถามที่ท่านไม่แน่ใจ หากท่านต้องการที่จะเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้ กรุณาเซ็นแบบฟอร์มตอบรับการเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย และภายหลังจากนี้ ถ้าท่านมีคำถามอื่นใดหรือต้องการทราบข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับการศึกษานี้ ท่านสามารถติดต่อผู้วิจัยได้ตามที่อยู่ด้านล่าง

15. ฉันจะติดต่อใครได้บ้างเพื่อขอข้อมูลเพิ่มเติม

**นางสาวอังศอร ฌ หนองคาย (ผู้วิจัย)**

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ขอขอบคุณท่านที่สละเวลาอ่านเอกสารชี้แจงฉบับนี้

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Participant consent form: English & Thai versions**



เอกสารยินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัย

หัวข้อโครงการวิจัย “An Investigation into Second Language Motivation: Understanding the Relationship between Second Language Motivation and Second Language Identity of Thai Learners of English”

ชื่อผู้วิจัย: นางสาวอังศุอร ณ หนองคาย

หมายเลขอาสาสมัครของโครงการวิจัยนี้: \_\_\_\_\_ กรุณากากบาทลงในช่องสี่เหลี่ยม

1. ก่อนที่จะลงนามในใบยินยอมเข้าร่วมเป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่างหรืออาสาสมัครในโครงการวิจัยนี้ ข้าพเจ้าได้รับการอธิบายถึงวัตถุประสงค์ของโครงการวิจัย วิธีการวิจัย และรายละเอียดต่างๆ ตามที่ระบุในเอกสารชี้แจงสำหรับผู้ร่วมโครงการวิจัย ซึ่งผู้วิจัยได้ให้ไว้แก่ข้าพเจ้า และข้าพเจ้า เข้าใจคำอธิบายดังกล่าวครบถ้วนเป็นอย่างดีแล้วผู้วิจัยรับรองว่าจะตอบคำถามต่างๆ ที่ข้าพเจ้า สงสัยเกี่ยวกับการวิจัยนี้ด้วยความเต็มใจและไม่ปิดบังซ่อนเร้นจนข้าพเจ้าพอใจ
2. ข้าพเจ้าเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้ด้วยความสมัครใจ และมีสิทธิที่จะบอกเลิกการเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้ เมื่อใดก็ได้ การบอกเลิกการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยนั้นจะไม่มีผลกระทบใดๆ ที่ข้าพเจ้าจะพึงได้รับต่อไป หากข้าพเจ้าไม่ต้องการตอบคำถามใดๆ ข้าพเจ้ามีสิทธิที่จะปฏิเสธได้ทุกเมื่อ
3. ผู้วิจัยรับรองว่าจะเก็บข้อมูลเฉพาะเกี่ยวกับตัวข้าพเจ้าเป็นความลับและจะสามารถเปิดเผยได้เฉพาะ บุคคลที่เกี่ยวข้อง (อาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาผู้วิจัย) เท่านั้น
4. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมที่จะให้ผู้วิจัยใช้ข้อมูลที่ข้าพเจ้าได้ให้เพื่อการศึกษาในอนาคต
5. ข้าพเจ้าได้อ่านข้อความข้างต้นแล้วมีความเข้าใจดีทุกประการ และได้ลงนามในใบยินยอมนี้ ด้วยความเต็มใจ

หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ติดต่อผู้วิจัย 061-3876788

ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย	วัน/เดือน/ปี	ลายเซ็น
ผู้วิจัย	วัน/เดือน/ปี	ลายเซ็น

สำเนา: เมื่อเอกสารฉบับนี้ได้รับการลงนามครบทุกฝ่ายแล้ว ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยควรได้รับสำเนาเอกสารยินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัยที่ ลงนามและวันที่เรียบร้อยแล้ว รวมทั้งเอกสารชี้แจงสำหรับผู้ร่วมการวิจัยเพื่อเก็บไว้ เอกสารยินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัยนี้จะถูกเก็บใน สถานที่ที่ปลอดภัย



## **APPENDIX 6**

### **Language learning history guideline: English & Thai versions**

### **My English Language Learning History**

Please write your own English language learning history since you have started learning English until present. The range could be from one to four A4 pages. You can write or type and send me via email in either Thai or English.

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*You may want to use the following questions to help in your writing.*

- What were your reasons for studying English?
- How did you learn English in school (kindergarten, primary, or secondary school) or outside school?
- What positive and negative experience did you have when learning English? How did you feel about them? What did you learn from them? (Motivation)
- What were you expecting in learning English before you came to the university?
- How have your parents or family supported you in learning English?
  
- Why do you learn English now?
- How proficient are you in English? (speak, listen, read, write)
- What are the areas that you still want to improve in?
- How have you changed the ways you learn English since coming to the university?
- What contributed to your success/lack of success? Why?
  
- What is your life goal?
- How do you see yourself in the next ten years?
- At that time, will you still use English? Will English be important to you, in what situations?
- What are your English learning plans and goals after graduation?
- What advice would you give to next year's first-year students?



Name of researcher: Ms. Angsu-orn Na Nongkhai  
Contact number: 081-8522528 Email: [angsuorn.n@gmail.com](mailto:angsuorn.n@gmail.com)

Your name.....

Faculty.....department.....

Contact number .....Email.....

## **My English Language Learning History**

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เรื่องราวการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของฉัน  
(My English Language Learning History)

จงเขียนเรื่องราวประสบการณ์ในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณ ตั้งแต่แรกที่คุณเริ่มเรียนภาษาอังกฤษจนถึงปัจจุบัน ความยาวตั้งแต่หนึ่งถึงสี่หน้ากระดาษ A4 หรือมากกว่านั้น คุณสามารถเขียนหรือพิมพ์ส่งทางอีเมลได้ โดยสามารถเลือกเขียนเป็นภาษาไทยหรือภาษาอังกฤษก็ได้

คุณสามารถใช้คำถามข้างล่างนี้เพื่อช่วยในการคิดและเขียนเรื่องราวประสบการณ์การเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของตนเองได้

- อะไรคือเหตุผลที่คุณเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ
- คุณเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในโรงเรียน (เช่น ในระดับอนุบาล, ประถมศึกษา, มัธยมศึกษา, มหาวิทยาลัย) หรือเรียนรู้นอกห้องเรียน (เช่น ที่บ้าน, ชุมชนหรือ อื่นๆ) อย่างไร
- ประสบการณ์ที่ดีและไม่ดีจากการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณมีอะไรบ้าง คุณรู้สึกอย่างไรกับเหตุการณ์นั้น และคุณได้เรียนรู้อะไรบ้างจากเหตุการณ์เหล่านั้น
- คุณมีความคาดหวังเกี่ยวกับการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษอย่างไรก่อนเข้ามาเรียนในมหาวิทยาลัย
- พ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองของคุณมีส่วนช่วยสนับสนุนการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณหรือไม่ อย่างไรบ้าง
- ณ ปัจจุบันนี้ ทำไมคุณจึงเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ
- ระดับความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษของคุณเป็นอย่างไร (ในด้านการฟัง พูด อ่าน เขียน)
- ทักษะทางภาษาใดบ้างที่คุณอยากที่จะพัฒนาให้ดียิ่งขึ้น
- คุณได้เปลี่ยนแปลงวิธีการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณหรือไม่ ตั้งแต่เริ่มเข้ามาเรียนในมหาวิทยาลัย
- คุณคิดว่าอะไรคือสิ่งที่ทำให้คุณประสบความสำเร็จหรือล้มเหลวในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ ทำไมคุณจึงคิดเช่นนั้น
- เป้าหมายในชีวิตของคุณคืออะไร
- คุณคิดว่าในอีก 10 ปีข้างหน้า ชีวิตของคุณจะเป็นอย่างไร
- ใน 10 ปีข้างหน้า คุณคิดว่าจะได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษหรือไม่ ในสถานการณ์ใดบ้าง
- คุณมีแผนในการพัฒนาภาษาอังกฤษของตนเองหรือไม่ อย่างไร
- หากต้องให้คำแนะนำในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษแก่รุ่นน้องในปีหน้า คุณจะแนะนำพวกเขาอย่างไร

ชื่อผู้เก็บข้อมูล นางสาวอังศอร ฌ หนองคาย  
เบอร์โทรศัพท์ติดต่อ 061-3876788 อีเมล [angsuorn.n@gmail.com](mailto:angsuorn.n@gmail.com)

ชื่อ..... นามสกุล.....  
คณะ..... สาขา.....  
เบอร์โทรศัพท์ ..... อีเมล.....

เรื่องราวการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของฉัน  
(My English Language Learning History)

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## **APPENDIX 7**

### **Interview protocol: English & Thai versions**

## INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (QUESTIONS)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

- Greeting/Rapport

- Ask general questions / ask permission to audio record the interview

- Ask Interview questions

1. Do you like English? Why?
2. When did you start learning English?
3. Could you please tell me more about your positive/negative English learning experience?
4. How did that happen? What do you think causes it? What did you do after that? How did you feel about it? Why did you decide to do that way?
5. How did that situation affect the way you learn English?
6. How proficient are you in English?
7. How successful are you in acquiring English language? Why do you think so?
8. What do you think other people (e.g. foreigners/teachers/friends) think about your English?
9. In what situations do you use English now?
10. What are the things that you found especially helpful to your English learning? Why?
11. How have your parents or family supported you in learning English?
12. What would you change about English class to make them more effective? Why?
13. How do you imagine yourself in the next 5-10 years?
14. What are your goals and expectations in learning English?
15. How will you reach that goals or expectations?
16. In what ways, do you think you will use English in the 5-10 years?
17. How proficient in English will you be at that time?
18. What is your life goal?
19. What contributed to your success/lack of success? Why?

- Thank the participants

- Ask for their permission to get back to them if necessary for follow-up interviews

กำหนดการและคำถามในการสัมภาษณ์

วันที่สัมภาษณ์..... เวลา..... ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์.....

- ทักทาย สร้างความคุ้นเคย

- ถามคำถามทั่วไป / ขออนุญาตอัดเสียงการให้สัมภาษณ์

- สัมภาษณ์ประเด็นต่อไปนี้

1. คุณชอบภาษาอังกฤษหรือไม่ เพราะอะไร
2. คุณเริ่มเรียนภาษาอังกฤษตั้งแต่เมื่อไหร่
3. ช่วยเล่าเรื่องราวประสบการณ์ที่ดีและไม่ดีจากการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณ
4. คุณรู้สึกอย่างไรกับเหตุการณ์นั้นและคุณได้เรียนรู้อะไรบ้างจากเหตุการณ์เหล่านั้น ทำไมคุณจึงตัดสินใจทำแบบนั้น
5. ประสบการณ์นั้นส่งผลต่อการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณอย่างไร
6. คุณคิดว่าความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษของคุณเป็นอย่างไร
7. คุณประสบความสำเร็จด้านภาษาอังกฤษมากแค่ไหน ทำไมจึงคิดเช่นนั้น
8. ในสายตาของผู้อื่นเช่น ชาวต่างชาติ ครู อาจารย์ เพื่อนๆ คิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษของคุณเป็นอย่างไร
9. ในตอนนี้ คุณได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเมื่อใดบ้าง
10. คุณคิดว่า อะไรบ้างที่เป็นประโยชน์หรือช่วยคุณในการเรียนภาษาได้มาก
11. พ่อแม่หรือครอบครัว มีส่วนช่วยในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณหรือไม่ อย่างไร
12. ถ้าเลือกได้ คุณจะเปลี่ยนอะไรบ้างในห้องเรียนภาษา เพื่อให้การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณมีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้น
13. คุณจินตนาการเห็นตัวเองในอีก 5-10 ปี อย่างไร
14. ความคาดหวัง หรือเป้าหมายในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณคืออะไร
15. คุณจะไปถึงเป้าหมายนั้นได้อย่างไร
16. ในอนาคตอีก 5-10 ปี คุณคิดว่าจะได้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษหรือไม่ ในสถานการณ์ใด
17. ในตอนนั้น คุณคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษของคุณจะอยู่ในระดับใด/เป็นอย่างไร
18. เป้าหมายในชีวิตของคุณคืออะไร
19. อะไรบ้างที่คุณคิดว่าจะทำให้คุณประสบความสำเร็จหรือไม่สำเร็จในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ

- ขอบขอบคุณผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์

- ขออนุญาตติดต่อกลับในกรณีที่ต้องการสัมภาษณ์เพิ่มเติม