

A GRID AND GROUP EXPLANATION OF EDUCATIONAL
PREFERENCES IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING:
A CASE STUDY OF THAI UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS

By

BORDIN WAELATEH

Bachelor of Arts in English
Prince of Songkla University
Pattani, Thailand
1991

Master of Arts in English
Prince of Songkla University
Pattani, Thailand
2003

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Dissertation Approved:

Dr. Edward Harris

Dissertation Adviser

Dr. Steve Wanger

Dr. Cecil Dugger

Dr. Kathryn Castle

Dr. A. Gordon Emslie

Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Entering into the 21st century, the world has been changing to be more globalized, interconnected, and competitive. This change does not occur only in areas of economics, technology, or communication but also in the field of education (Cheng, Mok, & Tsui, 2001; Leekpai, 2000). The changes, the advancement of technology, and the flow of overwhelming information go extremely fast. Almost all types of information including printed matter or online forms, are mostly presented in English (Dor, 2004). Thus, in this rapidly changing world, English is increasingly important as an international language for people as a means of communication (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2000; Hinkel, 2005). As Thailand is a part of this global community, Thai people cannot avoid being a part of the information revolution. Understanding English, therefore, is necessary for Thais to access the abundance of information in the world of change today.

In Thailand, English is taught as a foreign language known as EFL in schools and universities. It is commonly used in academic and business arenas (Kaewsanchai, 1988). Moreover, English is recognized as a key indicator of educational and professional successes. If college graduates use English effectively, they will be employed with high positions and good salaries (Mackenzie, 2002; Raksaphet, 1991).

Unfortunately, although Thai students spend a lot of time learning English, both in schools hours and after school tutorial classes, college graduates today cannot use English to communicate effectively in the real world (Mackenzie, 2002). Consequently, they encounter problems in entering the workplace where English is mainly used as the means to communicate, negotiate, and execute transactions (Wiriyachitra, 2001). This phenomenon indicates that the teaching and learning English in the Thai context is not successful in terms of equipping the students with English proficiency to serve the need of marketplace and to live in the world where English is a global language today (Srisant, 1990).

In response, English curriculum and teaching are required to be reformed. A major movement occurred when the Thai National Education Act was formally enacted in 1999. It provided guidelines and required that the teaching and learning of all subjects at all levels of education should be grounded in learner-centered method (Ministry of Education, 1999). Parts of the Act state:

Section 22: Education shall be based on the principle that all learners are capable of learning and self-development, and are regarded as being most important. The teaching-learning process shall aim at enabling the learners to develop themselves at their own pace and to the best of their potentiality. (p. 10)

1. Learning reform which will follow the guideline and spirit of the provisions in the Act by attaching highest importance to learners. The Office of National Education Commission has conducted research and development on learner-

centered teaching-learning process, allowing learners to develop at their own pace and in accord with their potential (p. 26).

According to the above statement, the paradigm of teaching has been shifted from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered culture, from subject matters to human beings (Hallinger, 2004; Khemmani, 2006). Based on the legislation, a learner-centered approach is mandatory and imperative in every classroom.

Statement of the Problem

According to the national reform act, one of the ultimate goals of education is to encourage students to be autonomous and life-long learners (Office of the National Education Commission, 2000). One way to support such goal is through promoting learner-centered educational culture (Kantamara, Hallinger, & Jatiket, 2006). Therefore, the learner-centered teaching approach has been obligatory for all levels of education to reform learning consistent with the guidelines in the reform act (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2000; Prapaisit, 2003). The roles of instructors are also encountered to be shifted from knowledge imparters to facilitators, who provide student guidance and encouragement and assist them to learn (Cheng et al., 2001). Teachers are expected to articulate their teaching with a new paradigm of learning (Pang, 2001).

Despite the fact that the government mandated a learner-centered method in education and the encouragement of using this approach in teaching, the implementation of a learner-centered approach in classrooms is not being incorporated pervasively. Most teachers or faculty members still use the traditional teaching methods such as grammar-translation approach and rote memorization (Hallinger, 2003; Kantamara et al., 2006;

Sawaswadee, 1991; Vanichakorn, 2003). Teachers still use a teacher-centered approach with which they are familiar (Prapaisit, 2003). Audio-lingual method, stressing on mimicry, memorization of set phrases (Skinner, 1974), is also widely practiced in learning foreign language class (Saengboon, 2002). Some teachers believe that teaching and learning need to be changed in order to promote practices and language skills that avoid maintaining the status quo, but eventually they still prefer to use traditional approaches (Sinprajakpol, 2004).

According to Kantamara et al. (2006), one important factor that results in unsuccessful implementing learner-centered approach may be that teachers or faculty members do not truly understand the concepts of the learner-centered culture. Some faculty members claim that they have already understood and applied a learner-centered approach in their instruction, but it could not work well in practice because they understand only superficial concepts of the method (Eiemchinda, 2001). In relation to the same issue, Burns (1996) postulated that some faculty members may believe they should do something grounded in learner-centered approach while they are in class, however, they may practice differently. Faculty members may value and perceive their teaching in many different ways.

As Burns (1996) further noted, the perception and preference of teaching has a direct influence on their actual teaching in one way or another. This is in line with Harris (2005) who mentioned, “the heart of any educational environment is a set of shared beliefs and values” (p. 30). Furthermore, these beliefs, values, and preferences of teaching methods lead to actual practice in their classroom (Sinprajakpol, 2004). Many empirical studies showed that in order to understand the way faculty members teach

English is important to uncover the structural components of their thoughts and beliefs (Andrews & Hatch, 2000; Fang, 1996; Hancock & Gallard, 2004). Moreover, Britzman (1991), Goodman (1988) and Richards (1998) also posited that faculty members' beliefs, values, and preferences of teaching methods might be one of the hindering factors in implementing a learner-centered approach.

One theory that can help in explaining this problem is Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology. A grid and group theory can explain why faculty members employ or prefer certain teaching methods. According to Douglas, cultural forces affect all practices in any given school. Douglas espouses the use of grid and group "for anyone desirous of checking out the pressures of constraint and opportunity which are presumed to shape individual response to the social environment" (Gross & Rayner, 1985, p. xxii).

There are two main factors contributing to social constraints in complex interactions between individuals within organizations and the organization's environment (Douglas, 1982). Harris (2005; 2006) applied grid and group theory to school contexts. He said that grid refers to individuals' choices within a social system. For example, autonomy of schools is sometimes constrained by bureaucratic rules regulating curriculum, choosing classroom texts, teaching methods, or grading processes. Consequently, faculty members have limited freedom to make decisions on these matters (high-grid). On the other end of grid continuum or low-grid, faculty members experience more independence and freedom in choosing teaching methods, texts, and grading procedures. The group dimension refers to social incorporation of members committed to a larger social unit. A high-group culture believes that the survival of the group is more important than the survival of individuals. In low-group environment, school loyalty and

traditions are low because individual interests come before the interests of collective arrangement (Lingenfelter, 1996).

In fact, culture cannot be detached from everyday life, including teaching and learning environment (Clayton, 2003). In other words, teaching and culture are interrelated. Mayers, Cutri, Roger, and Montero (2007) claimed, “it is vital that teachers see that teaching is, by its very nature, a profoundly cultural act” (p. 26). In connection to this study, the framework of grid and group typology describes individual choices and preferences in a particular socio-cultural context of EFL faculty members in a university setting. Since the grid and group typology has been proved useful in explaining teaching and learning contexts (Harris, 2005), it is worthwhile to employ it to investigate the preferred teaching approaches of individual faculty members as well as how they relate teaching practice in EFL classroom in the Thai context.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to use Douglas’s (1982) typology of grid and group to explain the teaching culture of the EFL environment at Thailand Southern University, (TSU) and to explain the different teaching practices among faculty members.

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer to following five research questions.

1. What is the teaching culture of EFL classrooms at Thailand Southern University?

2. What are Thai university faculty members' preferences in learning environment?
3. How are these preferences manifested in teaching EFL classrooms?
4. How, if at all, does grid and group typology explain the relationship of teaching approaches and faculty members' preferences?
5. What other realities are not explained through grid and group typology?

Theoretical Framework

This study primarily employed cultural theory of grid and group typology. In fact, the grid and group typology (Douglas, 1982) was originally used in cultural anthropology in order to understand the dynamics of culture and social changes (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990). This theoretical framework also served in comprehending school culture and learning environments (Giles-Sims & Lockhart, 2005; Harris, 2005).

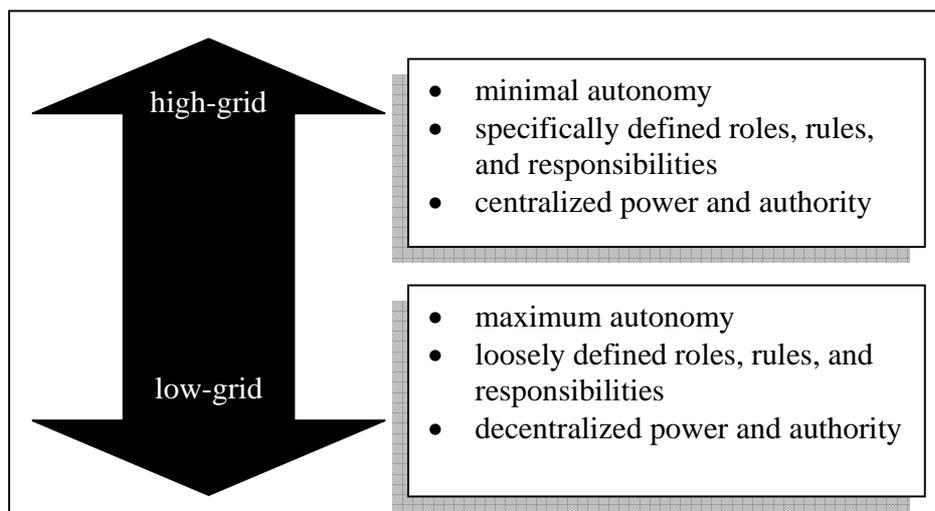
Grid and Group Typology

The essence of Douglas's typology of grid and group is to explain the two factors which are interrelated to social obligations and classify social contexts as well as provide specific characteristics about cultural values, beliefs, and behaviors (Douglas, 1982). This typology draws contextual meanings to explain behaviors and interactions in social settings (Harris, 2005). Grid dimension explains individual members interacting with the organization or society, while group is concerned with social incorporation of individual members in organization or society (Douglas, 1982).

Grid dimensions. The grid dimension constitutes a degree of an individual's choice to minimize or maximize his/her autonomy within an organization or social

system which embedded some social constraints such as bureaucratic or seniority system, and work procedures (Harris, 2005). In the school context, for example, a high-grid environment ties up teacher's freedom. Junior faculty members have little freedom for liberal interaction with senior colleagues since the seniority system is a stronghold and there are many explicit ruling hierarchical orders. Choosing a teaching approach has to be in line with the set guidelines. On the other end of the grid continuum, low-grid, teachers can exercise their freedom easily. Their voices are heard by others. The grid dimensions are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Grid Dimensions.

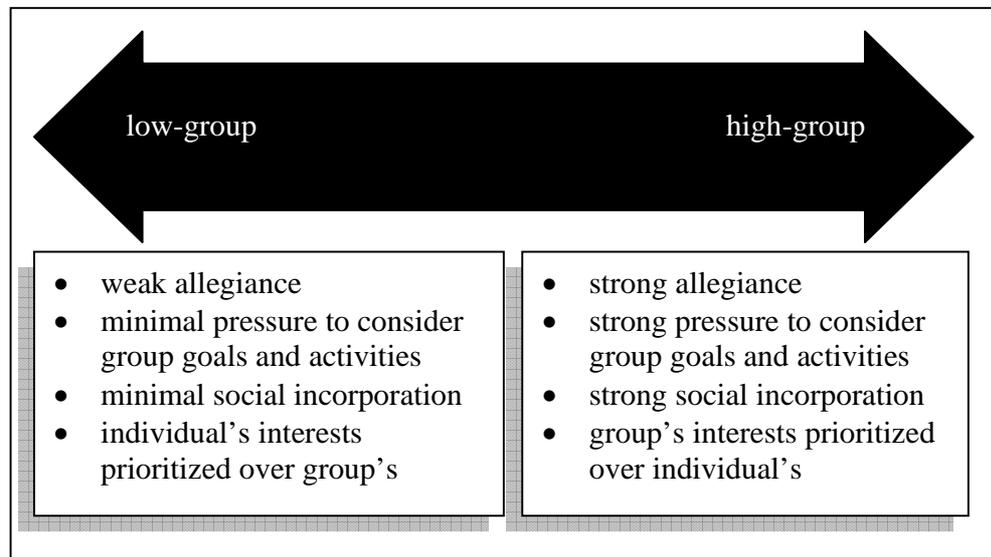


Source: (Harris, 2005).

Group dimensions. The group dimension associates with collective relationships among each other in a wider social context (Gross & Rayner, 1985). It connotes that the more the group socializes together, the stronger the group will be. On the far right of the group continuum, high-group, it represents the notion of the group survival which is the

ultimate goal rather than an individual's interests. The strong commitment of every individual toward group goals is obviously seen. The low-group swings into the opposite site. The incorporation among the group members is low. Members in a school tend to have sub-groups and factions. The group loyalty or allegiance is weak. Schools or departments do not have strong traditions (Harris, 2006). Figure 2 shows the continuum of the group dimension.

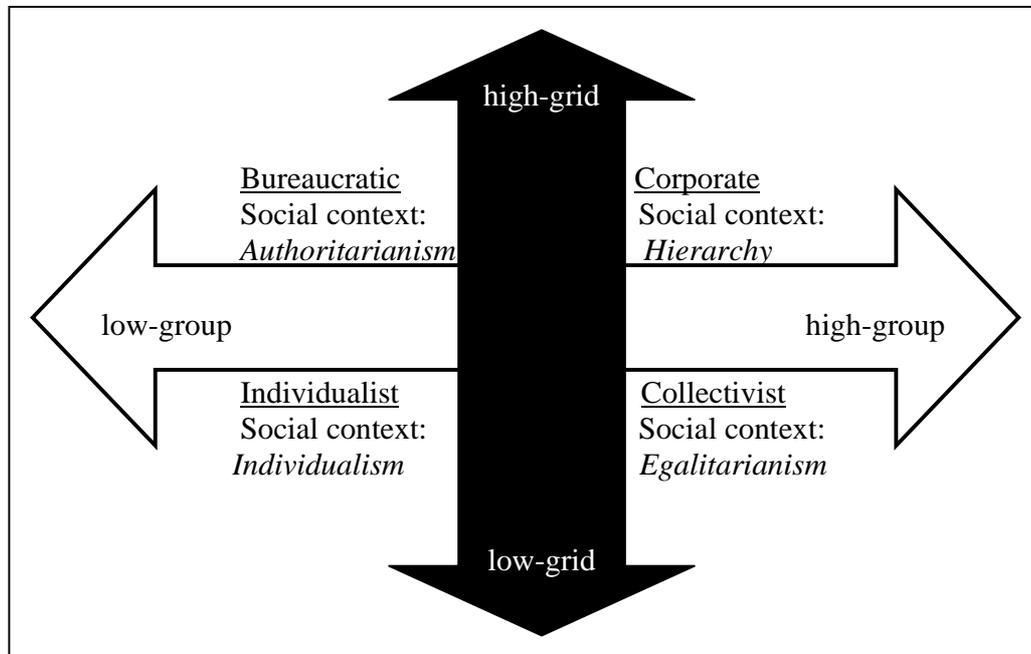
Figure 2: The Group Dimensions.



Source: (Harris, 2005).

However, when the grid and group dimensions work together, four culture prototypes of Douglas emerge, as shown in Figure 3,

Figure 3: Types of Social Environments.



Source: (Harris, 2005).

Four culture prototypes. The grid and group typology reflects four different social contexts below:

- 1) low-grid & low-group (individualist): Every individual has no constraint of group rules, so he/she can seek risks for personal gain.
- 2) high-grid & low-group (bureaucratic): Personal autonomy of individual is very limited and is defined by roles in a hierarchical society.
- 3) high-grid & high-group (corporate): The individual's identification is gained from group membership and rules are explicit.

4) low-grid & high-group (collectivist): It values unity, equal distribution and group goals as well as survival are highly respected.

Conceptualizing the connectedness of culture and teachers' beliefs is essential to understand the teaching and learning process, as competency in the classroom often depends on the teachers' perceptions in setting up certain learning environments (Sheets, 2005). Therefore, the framework of Douglas's grid and group typology (1982) can be a theoretical lens to draw attention of the researcher who needed to seek an explanation of the social interaction and cultural dynamics in a higher education institution setting. In language teaching, this typology lies in its potential to help explain individual preferences and why faculty members prefer a certain teaching environment as well as why they adopt certain teaching methods. It is, therefore, necessary to employ the strengths of this framework to determine its theoretical significance for a case study regarding Thai EFL classroom teaching culture.

Procedures

The research methodology of this study was qualitative, which serves to explain the complexity of social interactions and it takes the researcher into natural settings. The distinction of this inquiry is a close interaction between the researcher and participants because it utilizes multiple methods—interviews, participant observations, document analysis, and surveys (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Moreover, this method is more pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in the lived experiences of people (Mertens, 2005). A feature of this qualitative study is rich detailed information about a small number of people or cases and in-depth description in the area of investigation. In the qualitative

paradigm, the researcher attempts to view holistically all aspects of the case because it is believed that “there is not a single objective reality but multiple realities of which the researcher must be aware” (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993, p. 11). From this description, the researcher was convinced that qualitative inquiry can better explain and interpret the phenomenon and interactive experience of people in the specific context of a university setting where complexity operates. By employing qualitative inquiry, the researcher would be able to understand deeper perspectives captured through face-to-face interaction with participants of the research setting (Lichtman, 2006).

According to Yin (1994), when types of “how” or “why” questions are posed, case studies are the preferred strategy. Both Yin (1994) and Merriam (1988) agreed that case studies are a special kind of qualitative work that investigates a contextualized temporary phenomenon within specified boundaries. This case study explained the detailed description of how teaching and learning environment took place and investigated the preferences of teaching atmosphere. It is in line with the description of Creswell (2007), stating that in a case study, the researcher provides an in-depth exploration of a bounded system, such as, an activity, a process, or an individual, based on extensive data collection.

Researcher

The researcher plays a vital role in the qualitative research process and the researcher is an instrument of the study (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004). It is through the researcher’s eyes and ears that data are collected, information is gathered, settings are viewed, and realities are constructed. Moreover, the researcher is responsible for analyzing the data through an interactive process that moves back and forth between

data collected and data analyzed, and finally the researcher interprets and makes sense of the data as conclusions (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Experience, knowledge, skills, and background of the researcher are influential to a qualitative model (Lichtman, 2006).

In this study, the researcher was the only person who collected, interpreted, and made sense of meaning of the data. His role might have bias or subjectivity on the study in one way or another. In addition, the researcher also was fully aware of the following factors that might have certain affects on data collection and interpretations. First, the researcher had a positive perception towards the learner-centered approach. Second, the researcher had been working at the TSU's English section for only three years. Many senior faculty members, who are highly respected by the campus community, used to be his professors when he was an undergraduate and graduate student in this campus. Some of them were in charge of Associate Deans. The researcher might be nervous when interviewing and observing them in classrooms. Furthermore, his data interpretations of these senior faculty members might have been affected since Thai culture highly values seniority and hierarchical systems. Third, the researcher used to teach a Foundation English course for several semesters except the semester of conducting research, and this course was used as a case of interviews and classroom observations. The researcher's experience in teaching this course might have certain influences on data interpretations as well.

The qualitative inquiry realizes this bias. However, the researcher needs to minimize the subjectivity as much as possible through trustworthiness, integrity, and the credibility of the researcher. It is essentially important that the researcher had to describe and explain "as closely as possible the way the world is and actually operates" (Patton,

2002, p. 546). Besides, triangulation by employing several methods of data collection is one way to minimize the subjectivity of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This study used four data collection strategies: a survey, interviews, observations, and documents.

Data Needed

The data needed in this study were the expression of beliefs and values about personal preferences and their current teaching practice of each individual faculty member, including teaching approaches, and teaching environment. The ways faculty members teach and classroom management were also needed.

Data Sources

In selecting participants for the study, a purposive sampling technique was used as the logic of purposive sampling participants lies in selecting “*information-rich cases*” (Patton, 2002, p. 230) for study in depth. Participants of the study were divided into three groups. The first group consisted of 20 EFL faculty members who were working at the English section, Department of English and Linguistics (DEL), Faculty of Arts and Sciences, TSU. A survey method was used for this group. Group two consisted of ten faculty members, and an in-depth interview method was employed. Group three had four participants, which were chosen from the interview group for class observations. The participation in the study was totally on a voluntary basis. Conditions were agreed that if the faculty members decided to participate in the study, it did not mean that they would be in whole process of study. They were free to discontinue participation at any time without reprisal or consequences of any kind. The selection criteria were mentioned in the data collection. In addition to the participants, the documents or artifacts related to

teaching such as teaching materials, field notes, classroom textbooks, and exercises were counted as the main sources of data collection.

Data Collection Strategies

This study relied on four methods for data collection deploying all core methods of qualitative inquiry: 1) survey questionnaires, 2) in-depth interviews, 3) classroom observations, and 4) document assessment (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Survey questionnaires. The first set of survey data were derived from 20 faculty members who were teaching EFL at the TSU's English section. A Grid and Group Assessment Tool (Appendix B), originally developed by Harris (2005), was employed by his permission. This assessment form has been used for multiple times in evaluating school culture in the United States (Harris, 2005) and also in Thai schools context (Chitapong, 2005).

The assessment tool was used as a part of assessing faculty members' preferences about their working atmosphere including teaching environment. Once the assessment tools were answered, they were forwarded to plot on a Grid and Group Graph Template (Harris, 2005) (Appendix D) for further investigation to determine on which quadrant within four quadrants of the grid and group typology (Douglas, 1982) each survey form fell.

In-depth interview. As qualitative studies depend extensively on in-depth interview (Patton, 2002), this study was designed to have an informal conversational interview with ten faculty member representatives from collectivist and corporate categories gained from the survey results. The variation of faculty members' demographics, such as teaching experiences, levels of education, and country of

graduation, gender, was taken into account. In addition, these faculty members must be assigned to teach Foundation English course and willing to talk to the researcher.

Seven loosely structured interview questions were employed for interview sessions. For the reliability of the questions, a pilot interview with a few faculty members was conducted. The following questions were used to guide the interview sessions.

1. Tell me about the learning environment in your Foundation English.
2. What are the factors that affect your instructional plan?
3. What are the roles of the faculty member in the teaching process?
4. What are the roles of the students in the learning process?
5. How do students learn in your class?
6. Explain how students are evaluated in your class.
7. Why do you teach the way you do?

Classroom observations. Through direct observation the researcher could witness the recurring patterns of behavior and relationships in classrooms. This method may reflect that behavior is purposeful and expressive of deeper values and beliefs (Patton, 2002). Erlandson, et al. (1993) said that the data obtained directly from the statement of participants should be checked against the observed behavior. In this case, after the interviews were conducted, the researcher conducted informal classroom observations of those four purposive faculty member representatives. The role of the researcher was a non-participant observer or an “onlooker” (Patton, 2002, p. 265). The observation checklist adopted from Murphy’s (1997), constructivist checklist (Appendix C), and video-recording were used to collect details and a concrete description occurred while the faculty members were teaching.

Document assessment. Documents allow the investigator to get comprehensive and historical information already existing (Mertens, 2005). The study used all related documents such as field notes from class observations, a final course evaluation required by the university, university publications and websites, handouts, texts, exercises and quizzes, examination papers, virtual classroom, and other artifacts. They supplemented and entailed additional information portraying the values and beliefs of the participants.

Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data gathering and data analysis go hand in hand in order to build a coherent interpretation of the data (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The study used Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology to serve as a lens for coding categories, sorting data, and assisting in conceptualizing themes. Emerging themes were also explained as other realities that were not in the grid and group typology as stated in the last research question.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study extended to contribute on the following three areas:

Research

Through various methods of collecting data, this research could help to comprehend why faculty members prefer to teach the way they do, and how the learner-centered approach has been or not been implemented in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, the study filled the gap in the literature in the teaching culture research.

Practice

The study provided pictures of faculty members' beliefs about the teaching environment. The research findings could be a piece of information for policy makers or educators to consider when to introduce or adopt any initiatives like a learner-centered approach or any other top-down policy in Thai educational context. The factor of culture, beliefs, and values should be understood and respected.

Theory

This study constituted an explanation of instructional methods theory as well as demonstrated how the cultural theory of grid and group can serve the account of learning environment in educational institution setting. The study tested this framework's usefulness in classroom setting to determine its theoretical significance for future case studies regarding teaching culture.

Glossary of Acronyms

Throughout this study, several acronyms are used. The followings are brief explanations of each acronym.

1. EFL stands for English as a Foreign Language. It refers to a use English by speakers in non English-speaking countries. In Thailand, Thai is an official language and English is considered as a foreign language.

2. LCA stands for learner-centered approach. It is a teaching approach where learners are placed in the center of the learning environment and they are the main agent of learning. It is believed that learners can actively construct knowledge themselves under proper environments (Nunan, 1988).

3. TCA stands for teacher-centered approach. Teachers' role is the primary information givers while the learners passively receive information (Weimer, 2002).

4. TSU stands for Thailand Southern University. It is a multi-campus public university located in Southern Thailand where the study took place. However, TSU is not a real name of the university.

5. DEL stands for Department of English and Linguistics. Participants in this study were from this department. DEL is also pseudonym.

Summary

The study aimed to explain the teaching culture of EFL faculty members at Thailand Southern University (TSU) by employing Douglas' (1982) grid and group typology as a study framework. The study also intended to explain the difference teaching performances among faculty members and their preferences in teaching.

Organization of Study

Chapter II is devoted to review related literature. Qualitative research methodology including data collection strategies used in the study was deliberately discussed in Chapter III. Chapter IV mentions a presentation of data of this case study. Chapter V provides an analysis and interpretation of the data. Chapter VI presents a summary, conclusion, and recommendation for further studies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on literature review and is divided into three major sections. Section one presents a review of learner-centered approaches as a general concept, and Thailand's interest in this approach. Part two unveils a review of the degree to which learner-centered approaches have been implemented in Thailand's educational context. Part three discusses the notion of culture and teaching, how cultural teaching and learning environment are related. The chapter ends with a discussion of Douglas's grid and group typology and how it has been applied in previous empirical research.

Throughout this literature review, comparisons are made between what is perceived as teacher-centered and what is perceived as learner-centered in order to present readers the distinctions between the two approaches. A summary is provided at the end of the chapter.

Learner-Centered Approach

Foundation of Learner-Centered Concepts

While there are numbers of theoreticians and advocates relating to the concept of learner-centered methods of teaching, this chapter reviews four prominent ones—Jean-

Jacques Rousseau, John Dewey, and Lev Vygotsky. These educators play a vital role in contributing to teaching and learning.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) provided a significant insight epistemology and philosophy of learning by saying that education is an important part to all humankind. He believed that children are naturally good. In terms of learning, every individual has a different learning style and should be regarded as a self-active soul. People must be encouraged to reason their way through their own conclusion and not rely on the authority of the teacher (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2000). Furthermore, Rousseau's notions on learning emphasize the interaction between students and their environment. As learners are situated and surrounded by certain environments, they are supposed to choose independently their learning experiences to suit their learning nature (Henniger, 2002), and while they are encountering difficulties, they are given opportunities to solve problems themselves (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2000; Winch, 1996).

Another important theoretician in learner-centered learning is John Dewey (1859-1952). He believed, "... the development of experience comes about through interaction means that education is essentially a socially process" (Dewey, 1938, p. 58). Moreover, Dewey posited that students are free to explore or experience the content of the lesson, and a role of teacher is to determine the appropriate amount of this free activity (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2000). Henson (2003) said that Dewey recognized an individual's psychological dimension along with social dimension and he believed, "life is a process of continuous renewal, a series of on-going experiment" (p. 9).

In addition, learning should be problem-based and fun, as "problems are the stimulus to thinking" (Dewey, 1938, p. 97). Students should be exposed to real life situation by allowing them to learn from their experiences and construct knowledge by themselves. Eventually, they

can apply such knowledge in different situations. Dewey contributed a powerful path to the importance of student-learning.

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), viewed learning as “negotiating meaning” (Henson, 2003, p. 13). Henson explained that Vygotsky desired students to work in small groups learning to solve problems. Before solutions are finally met, students hold a rigorous discussion towards the problems. In the discussion sessions, everyone is able to share their ideas equally and help each other. The ways of collective solving problem as a group, like these students do, is better than working alone. From this idea of individuals must construct their own knowledge, it becomes the basic theory of constructivism. Constructivists believe that individual must construct their own knowledge through interactions with environments (Murphy, 1997). From this notion, Vygotsky related to the learner-centered educational culture that it contents each learner must construct his or her own understanding by relating to prior experiences or existing knowledge (Gagnon & Collay, 2006; Jarvis, Hoford, & Griffin, 2003). In the sense of learning achievement, Vygotsky gave a priority to potential rather than achievement because potential is a much more dynamic concept than achievement (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky perceived human inquiry is embedded within culture, which in turn is embedded within social history (Cole & Wertsch, 1996).

One of the key concepts of Vygotsky was the Zone of Proximity Development (ZPD), the heart of the relationship between instruction and development (Au, 2007). ZPD is “...the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Vygotsky further elaborated by describing how a teacher or a more advanced peer might provide an explanation to enable a learner to attain a higher level of achievement with support (Eun, Knotek, & Heining-

Boynton, 2008). According to Wortham (2002), there are two levels of ZPD: what the child is able to perform independently, and what the child is able to perform only with help. Adults play a role in assisting children to expose to new experience. Vygotsky main focus was on social environment and he believed that talking and thinking are major tools of learning, and not all learners reach the highest stage of development (Pass, 2008).

Per the above, the concept of learner-centered instruction has been developing for centuries, and it continues to take on different shapes. However, the basic notion of learner-centered approach of teaching is to pay primarily attention to learners' needs and interests and learners are the center of learning process through creating proper learning environments by teachers (Cole & Wertsch, 1996). In other words, students are provided opportunities to construct knowledge by themselves from a facilitation of teachers. So that teachers are expected to assume a critical role to support students' learning and develop students' multiple intelligence and lifelong self-learning abilities (McCombs, 2000).

How Learner-Centered Approach is Look Like.

The learner-centered instructional approach is first and foremost based on constructivist epistemology which asserts that knowledge is temporary, nonobjective, internally constructed, and socio-culturally mediated (Crotty, 1998; Fosnot, 1996; Hendry, Frommer, & Walker, 1999; Murphy, 1997). Constructivists postulated that knowledge is neither discovered nor passively received from the world or authoritative sources, but through actively constructed meaning and understanding as individuals or groups make sense of their experiential worlds (McClellan & Soden, 2004; Schunk, 2004).

Based on constructivist perspectives, the learner-centered approach is a system of instruction based on a learner's individual choices, interests, needs, abilities, learning styles,

types of intelligences and educational goals within an authentic context where situated thinking is highly important (APA, 1997; McCombs & Whisler, 1997; Prawat, 1996). In relation to this, Estes (2004) described that a learning process resides with students and teachers. Sometimes students and teachers are collaborators, sharing equal power. According to APA (1997), McCombs and Whisler (1997), and Henson (2003), the learner-centered approach based on the principles of active learning environment where it (1) emphasizes the students as the main agent of learning; (2) makes student learning the principal goal; (3) concentrates on the use of intentional processes on the students' part; (4) encourages teacher-student interaction in which students become more active learners; (5) expects the teacher to act as a facilitator or a guide; (6) focuses on how well students learn rather than the frequency of information transmission; and (7) views each phase of the instruction in terms of its effects on students' learning.

To illustrate how the learner-centered approach is actually applied in teaching classrooms, the review presents four instructional stages of the learner-centered approach environment: instructional objectives, instructional contents, instructional methods, and instructional evaluations. These stages can portrait the whole process of learning in a classroom from beginning to end.

Instructional objectives. Objectives should be clear and easy to understand. Good curriculum should detail instructional objectives as a framework which is easy to follow for both teachers and learners. If there are no such instructional explicit objectives, teachers may be distracted and spend much time on irrelevant topics (English, 1992). The main point is to ensure that learning is made relevant to learner's goals as planned. While instructional objectives in a teacher-centered approach classroom go in the opposite direction, teacher emphasizes on conveying information and memorization (Hung & Koh, 2004). Students are not engaged with

the environment and lack motivation to learn because what the teacher teaches is not relevant to their interest (Visser, Visser, & Schlosser, 2003).

A problem-solving-based approach should be included in the instructional design, with opportunities for discovery, and emphasizes conscientious thinking over various viewpoints (Slavin, 2005). Teachers should know how to plan and prepare lessons, follow the lesson objectives, relate each lesson to the past as well as connect to the future lessons, and care about the student's needs. (McEwan, 2002; Nunan, 1988). A good instructional design should connect and integrate these points together.

Instructional contents. Teachers need to create learning tasks relevant to the real world (Cunningham, Duffy, & Knuth, 1993). The objective is that learners "...can actually see how the knowledge is used in different settings and what power it gives them to use the knowledge" (p. 6). In addition, English (1992) stated that exposing learners to relate to the real world can support them in setting personal learning goals through teamwork and cooperative learning in the classroom or outside world. Then, students are to be gradually transformed into self-directed learners.

Teachers need to design instructional contents based on learners' strengths, interests, prior knowledge, and experiences (McCombs & Whisler, 1997; Savignon, 1983; Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996). In order to meet these requirements, teachers may study students' demographic backgrounds, academic orientations and learning styles including preferred teaching styles of students (Grabowski & Curtis, 1991). It means that instructional contents should meet every individual student.

The relevance of instructional contents to learners is valued through soliciting problems from learners and using those as the stimulus for learning activities which is called "problem-

based learning” (Savery & Duffy, 1996). According to Grennon & Brooks (1993), making relevance of contents through a problem-based learning can be established through teacher assistance in some levels, sufficient time for student reflection, hypothesis generation and testing, and through complexity of the problem. George & Collay (2001) noted a clear anecdote of a learner-centered learning. It is like the experience of learning to ride a bicycle. A child may know the principles told by his parents, but he still cannot ride it unless he has to ride a bicycle himself. Even if a great description and guidance about riding a bicycle has not been given to the child, his knowing by doing the task himself and constructing his own of action can gradually help him and eventually he learns. In a teacher-centered approach, instructional content may potentially be impractical and far from students’ reach, and there may be a disconnect between content and students’ learning styles (Weimer, 2002).

Instructional methods. The advocates of the learner-centered approach believed that all knowledge can be actively constructed by learners (Nunan, 1988; Roberts, 2003; Savery & Duffy, 1996; Servetter, 1999). The learning emphasizes on the process rather than the final outcomes (Murphy, 1997). In order to understand how active process of information goes and learners construct meanings, Perkin (1992) said that once the information is delivered the student will interpret and elaborate on it, rather than receive and memorize the given information without further interpretations. However, the interpretation or constructing meanings of any individual learner is different, depending on individual experience, background and personal judgment (Weimer, 2002).

As learning process is individualistic, McCombs (2000) stressed on individual learners by recognizing students’ experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capabilities, and needs. Due to the notion of recognizing diverse differences of learners, Grennon and Brooks

(1993) said students should be given an opportunity to express their ideas and share with others. Teachers are required to listen to every student's expressions what they think or understand on a particular topic, so that it can be the key to change students' understanding of the concept and help them to grow intellectually. If the teacher values the students' different perspectives, through this process students are guided to become more autonomous thinkers (Coe, 2006). Thus, teachers play a greater role in scaffolding students to such stage.

In addition, cooperative learning fits perfectly the learner-centered approach of teaching (Sharan & Sharan, 1992). They further elaborated that cooperative learning is considered to give learners more active and more constructive roles by creating meaning and interpretation by themselves. This learning assumes that knowledge is a social construct, a consensus among the members of a community of knowledgeable peers. The process of collaborative learning is not merely looked upon individuals; rather, it is viewed as a process of interaction and negotiation with all agents involved in learning environments. Everyone involved can take initiative and roles including teachers in fostering facilitating classrooms. Teachers focus more on setting up conditions in which students learn by working together on substantive issues (van der Linden, Erkens, Schmidt, & Renshaw, 2000). However, it is important to pay attention on cooperative behavior in classroom environment (Weimer, 2002).

With the support of information technology and networking nowadays, teachers are expected to apply computer instruction to replace traditional instruction gradually (Maurer & Davidson, 1998). Also, teachers may use this innovation to network and work with students, parents, or peer teachers so that teaching and learning can extend beyond the boundaries of one class or one school to an entire network of related parties (Mok & Cheng, 2000).

The teacher-centered approach is mainly associated with the transmission of knowledge (McDonald, 2003). Teachers use their expertise in content knowledge to help learners make connections. The effort to get to know the learner individually and students' processing information are secondary (Milambiling, 2001). Moreover, Jonassen (1991) argued that teacher-centered classes depend heavily on class textbooks for the structure of the course. In this regards, it is believed that there is a fixed world of knowledge that the student must come to know through the transmission of the teacher.

Instructional evaluations. In the learner-centered approach point of view, an assessment process is one of the most effective tools in promoting students' learning process (Weimer, 2002). Furthermore, in this process, student's errors are translated in a positive light and as a means of gaining insight into how they organize their experiential world (Murphy, 1997). The evaluation drives the learner-centered teacher's design for learning opportunities, permits students to build skills in independent decision making, and links students to lifelong learning behavior through self-regulation (Greer, 2007). The assessment gives teachers continuous feedback on how students are learning what they hope from their learning (Beachler & Glycer-Culver, 1998). Weimer (2002) presented four ways to incorporate the learner-centered evaluation into a learning environment. Teachers should: (1) focus on the learning process, (2) reduce the stress and anxiety in evaluation experiences, (3) not use hidden agendas in the evaluation process, and (4) include more formative feedback opportunities in the learning process.

To illustrate, there is a range of alternative forms of the learner-centered approach evaluations. For example, open-ended response items, performance events, and portfolios can be used to determine student needs of learning (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 1998). Huba & Freed (2000) added that evaluations may include essays, the thesis, projects, development of a product,

performance tasks, exhibitions, case studies, critical incidents, clinical evaluations, oral exams, interviews, and comprehensive exams.

The traditional teaching evaluation is strict with standardized test formats, focusing a teacher's attention on the presented contents and skills of narrow scope (Slavin, 2005). Multiple-choice, short answers, and true-false testing methods are among the test formats (Hoyle et al., 1998).

Roles of Teacher

Understanding the role of teachers in a learner-centered approach provides useful guidelines to encompass teaching practice. The role of the teacher is to facilitate appropriate experiences that promote a learning engagement of students. In fact, teachers in a learner-centered classroom perform as guides, coordinators, resource advisors, partners, facilitators, sense makers, co-learners, and tutors or coaches (Cheng, Mok, & Tsui, 2001; Gergen, 1995; Mayer, 1996; Roberts, 2003). Von Glasersfeld (1995) asserted a metaphor of the teacher's role as a midwife in the birth of understanding. Also, teachers must not be perceived as authority figures who are never questioned. Dewey (1938) said, "the teacher loses the position of external boss or dictator but takes on that of leader of group activities" (p. 59). Traditionally, learning tends to be through didactic transmission (Henson, 2003).

Teachers in a learner-centered environment use content to develop student skills in learning and to create self-awareness by starting with existing knowledge and ladles it out to students (Henson, 2004). To achieve this, the teacher-learner interaction becomes more active, cooperative, collaborative, and inquiry oriented as teachers step aside and allow greater students autonomy (Weimer, 2002). Cheng et al. (2001) illustrated a comparison of the learner-centered approach with traditional teaching as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Roles of Learner-Centered and Traditional Teachers.

learner-centered teachers	traditional teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facilitators to support students' learning • Individualized teaching style • Teaching to arouse curiosity • Teaching is a process to initiate, facilitate, and sustain students' self-learning and self-actualization • Sharing joy with students • Teaching is a life-long learning process • Multiple local and global sources of teaching • Networked teaching • Unlimited opportunities for teaching • The emphasis is on what matters rather than what is right or wrong. • Teachers are present to aid in the creation, synthesis, and interpretations of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The center of education • Standard teaching style • Teaching is to transfer knowledge • Teaching is a disciplinary, delivering, training, and socializing process • Achieving standards in examinations • Teaching is a transfer and application process • Teacher as the sole source of teaching and knowledge • Separated teaching • Limited opportunities for teaching • The emphasis is on mirroring what is accepted as true. • Teachers impart the information to the learners.

Source: (Cheng, Y. C., Mok, M. C., & Tsui, K. T., 2001).

Legislation in Thailand for Learner-Centered Approach

As Thailand is a part of the new era of information age, knowledge becomes the driving force of new types of economic, social, and political developments (Gabbard, 2000; Tileston, 2007). In facing the challenge of knowledge-based society, education plays a prominent role in fostering the knowledge forces among Thai people. In 1997, Thailand's economic growth encountered a recession period, due in part to inadequacies in its educational system (Bangkok Post, 1998; ONEC, 1998). It was questionable whether or not graduates have capacity to meet the challenges of the information age. Thai education is not designed to produce the highly motivated, independent thinkers and learners demanded by today's era of global transformation

(Ministry of Education, 1996; ONEC, 1997). In response to this force, the national educational reform law was endorsed in 1999 with an intention to change education and learning process of the country (Office of the National Education Commission, 2001). In this legislative mandate, learning process is one of the key contents to this educational reform, as a teacher-centered approach is no longer the desirable methods of teaching (Hallinger, 2003). It has been obligatory for all levels of educational institutions in Thailand to reform their teaching approach consistent with the guidelines in the reform act. (Khemmani, 2006).

In this reform act, there are many other components relating to the national education. It includes the following issues: (1) ensuring basic education for all children, (2) reforming the education system, (3) reforming the learning process, (4) recognizing the administrative system, (5) introducing a system of educational quality assurance, (6) enhancing professionalism and the quality of the teaching profession, (7) mobilizing resources and investment for education, and (8) adopting information and communication technology for educational reform (Kantamara, Hallinger, & Jatiket, 2006).

The implementation of the educational act places a greater urgency for all the people who are related to education, namely, the government, policymakers, teachers, or all educational staff (Crosbie, 2006). One of the high-ranking policymaker, Dr Rung Kaewdang, a former Secretary General of the National Education Commission, claimed:

Learning by rote will next year be eliminated from all primary and secondary schools and be replaced with student-centered learning... Any teachers found failing to change their teaching style would be listed and provided with video-tapes showing new teaching techniques. If they still failed to improve, they would be sent for intensive training.
(Bunnag, 2000, p. 5)

The National Educational Act 1999 is legitimate to further implement the learner-centered approach in classrooms. In other words, learners are placed the most important in teaching process and it has inspired those who are responsible for providing education to review their concepts, convictions, and practices. Teachers are expected to provide learning experiences that allow all students to become independent and life-long learners (Fry, 2002; Khemmani, 2006).

Implementation of Learner-Centered Approach in Thai EFL Classrooms

Experience of EFL Teaching Methods from The Past

English language in Thailand has been taught for almost a century, but the results are not on a satisfactory level (Srisa-ant, 1990; Sukamolson, 1993). Sukamolson further elaborated that the level of achievement and proficiency in every skill, namely, listening, speaking, reading, writing including grammar, and integrated skills attained by Thai students on all levels of education are low. Moreover, a study of Prapphal & Opanon-Amata (2002), showed that Thai graduates, alongside graduates from neighboring Laos, gained the lowest levels of English proficiency in Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Thailand's TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) average is below 500.

In the Thai educational system, English is offered as a compulsory subject from primary education, secondary, and university levels as a foreign language course which is called EFL (English as a Foreign Language) (Sawaswadee, 1991). According to a report of Thai national profiles of language (Wongsothorn, Sukamolson, Chinthammit, Ratanothayanonth, & Noparumpa, 1996), there are about 99% of Thai primary grade schoolers studying English. Mostly they continue studying English in high school. Thai students need to study hard if they

want to further at a university level as English is a required subject in the annual national university entrance examination which is very competitive (Saengboon, 2002). Furthermore, nowadays the credit hours required for university students has now increased from six credits to 12 (Prapphal, 2008).

Upon the students' completion of the university level, they will have been exposed to English language courses about 12-14 years throughout primary, high school, and university education. However, most of Thai university graduates' English communication level is lower than expected and in many cases non-functional (Mackenzie, 2002). His research characterized Thai students in learning English as: (1) lacking of willingness to speak due to a culturally-based seniority system and shyness, (2) having an over-emphasis on accuracy rather than fluency, and (3) having an ingrained attachment to rote memorization.

In order to understand what happens with EFL teaching and learning process, it is undeniable that the approaches teachers employed during their explicit instruction can impact learners' language acquisition, if teachers stay with an approach that does not encourage and motivate students to monitor their own output or even to produce it (Sinprajakpol, 2004). Transferring knowledge from a teacher to students, with an emphasis on textbooks, has long been a major practice of most schools throughout the country (Kwangsawad, 2001). This learning process has engendered boredom and passivity on the part of learners, and the lack of inquisitive minds and eagerness to learn has resulted in low achievement (Hallinger, 2003).

Kwangsawad (2001) argued about learning English that it is a learning the body of knowledge, and the teacher of English has this knowledge but the learners do not. It is the role of the teacher to transfer this knowledge to the learners. Students learn the structural rules of the language and its vocabulary through memorization, reading, translation, and writing. Approaches

to learning do not place emphasis on communicative activities. As a result, Thai students are good at memorizing the skills of grammatical rules, but are unable to use these skills to communicate effectively with others, especially with native speakers of English.

Traditionally, a typical English classroom in Thailand is conducted by the teacher using grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods (Mackenzie, 2002; Saengboon, 2002). The main characteristics of grammar-translation method is the explicit teaching of grammatical rules that learners are expected to memorize and then apply them as best as they can to translate tasks into the native language. This approach was historically used in teaching Greek and Latin in the medieval and early Renaissance periods and became popular in early years of the 19th century (Danesi, 2003). Stern (1983) said, “The approach lays little or no emphasis on the speaking of the second language or listening to second language speech; it is mainly a book-oriented method of working out and learning the grammatical system of the language” (p. 454). Classes are taught in the students’ mother tongue, with little active use of the target language. Vocabulary is taught in the form of isolated word lists and is learned through direct translation from the native language. Extensive explanations of grammar are always provided. Grammar instruction, as its name suggests, provides the rules for putting words together and only later the rules are applied in the production of sentences through translation from one language to the other (Brown, 2000).

Despite all of these drawbacks, Sinprajakpol (2004) mentioned that there are at least four reasons that grammar-translation approach is still widely practiced in EFL classrooms especially among non-native speaking teachers. First, a few grammatical points are normally presented within a chapter and many examples and drilling activities are set out. Second, grammar features are evidently presented in the course book. It is easy for the teachers to follow the ready-made explanation and examples, and they do not need to be fluent in the spoken language. Third,

grammatical terms such as subject, verb, adjective, preposition, and so forth can be used by teachers for explicit teaching. Fourth, it is easy for teachers to control the pace of the class. Once students memorize the grammatical points along with certain drillings, they are expected to meet the lesson objectives. This teaching method is fixed and structured.

Brown (2000) also supported Sinprajakpol's (2004) observation that grammar-translation method is good for the left-brained students who respond well to rules, structure and correction; this method can provide a challenging and even intriguing classroom environment. In addition, the grammar-translation method can easily evaluate students' performance by using formal written examinations or any standardized testing formats through close-ended examination papers, such as, multiple-choice, true false, and error recognition. The annual university entrance examination also uses a grammar-based test with no speaking and listening skills involved (Saengboon, 2002).

The second teaching method that is commonly seen in the Thai EFL classroom is audio-lingual method. This method was introduced after adopting language laboratories in learning foreign languages, as well as after the technology of portable tape-recorders and film stripes taken into language laboratories (Davis, 2001). An audio-Lingual approach is based on the principles of behavioral psychology. Learners are taught to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language through conditioning—helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement as learners overcome the habits of their native language and form the new habits required to the target language speakers (Skinner, 1974).

Structural patterns are taught by using repetitive drills. Little or no grammatical explicit explanations are provided; grammar is taught inductively. There is abundant use of language laboratories. Great importance is given to precise native-like pronunciation (Larsen-Freeman,

2000). Teachers can control stimulus and response as they believe that students may use the target language communicatively if they reiterate it over a period of time. However, Nunan (1999) critiqued those teachers who use this method: teachers may not realize that students will not be independent in expressing their own ideas and share the ideas communicatively with their peers or teachers since students are reinforced to repeat the patterns provided by the teacher, the text, and the tape-recorder. This is opposite to the learner-centered culture believing that learning is not a stimulus-response phenomenon but it requires self-regulation and building of conceptual structures through reflection and abstraction (von Glasersfeld, 1995).

In sum, these two EFL teaching methods are far from satisfactory academic achievements, especially in communicative skills. Thus, it is one of the key indicators for an urgent need of Thai teaching and learning reform in 1999 (Khemmani, 2006). Shifting to some other teaching approaches may be needed by paying more attention to learners rather than to teachers. Or teachers may employ a variety of teaching methods rather than using one instructional method exclusively in order to suite Thai culture and learning style of individual learners. However, it is believed that those teachers are in favor of the ultimate goal of developing students' communicative competence (Wasanasomsithi, 1988).

Current Practice of Learner-Centered Approach

The learner-centered approach concept is not new in Thailand. It has long been implemented through various spectrums of understandings and practices (Eiemchinda, 2001). Unfortunately, the understanding of educational staff, especially teachers, is superficial, and its effective implementation are far from satisfactory (Hallinger, 2003).

Since the educational reform has been promulgated in 1999, a learner-centered approach becomes imperative. There were many project initiatives introduced by ONEC (2000), the

central unit for national educational policy-making, to boost the learner-centered education and revise the EFL curriculum in every level of education. One of the main aims is to interpret the educational reform especially the learner-centered approach into the same direction nationwide. Countless workshops, conferences, teacher trainings and professional development programs were frequently held among different levels of administrators, teachers, and relevant educational staff (Kwangsawad, 2001).

As a result, ONEC (2000) has developed several indicators regarding activities for both learners and teachers, which can be viewed as general guidelines for learner-centered classrooms. All ONEC's indicators are in line with the essence of learner-centered concepts that have been reviewed earlier. For example, learners are given greater opportunities to have intensive practices until they realize their own aptitude and working methods. Problem-solving based and self-inquiry based activities are engaged to learning process. Analytical thinking through several ways is promoted. As for the teachers' guidelines, they will play more prominent roles and also enjoy a higher standing. For example, teachers should provide suitable environment which motivates learners to learn. Individual differences of learners are valued. Group activities are encouraged by supporting students' strengths and providing remedial measures for weak students. Formative assessment is preferred over summative evaluation. Teachers also should teach ethics and disciplines about traditional Thai culture. Under ONEC (2000) codes of conduct, both teachers and learners are clearly provided certain frameworks as a legitimate policy platform for educational reform.

As it is mentioned earlier, the learner-centered instructional approach is based on constructivism theory of learning, not a theory of teaching (Grennon & Brooks, 1993; Richards, 2003). However, Fosnot (1996) posited constructivism in relation to teaching as well. In

Thailand, the terms ‘student-centered,’ ‘learner-centered,’ and ‘constructivism’ refer to the same concept of teaching and learning (Vanichakorn, 2003). She claimed, ‘student-centered’ and ‘learner-centered’ are used more prevalently than ‘constructivism.’ Parkay (2001) supported this idea saying that constructivist approaches can go along with student-centered culture.

Several empirical studies on instructional methods or classroom action research have been investigated in Thailand. Saengboon (2002) studied the use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Thai EFL classroom. The aim of CLT was to foster the learner’s communication ability. Objectives reflected the needs of the learners. CLT includes functional skills as well as linguistic objectives (Nunan, 1999). This teaching technique de-emphasizes ~~an~~ explicit grammar instruction and it relies heavily on the use of group/pair work (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). According to Pica (2000), CLT keeps the characteristics of the learner-centered approach as it puts the focus on the learner. There were four EFL teachers participants in Saengboon’s research. Saengboon (2002) used several methods for data collection—survey, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations—in order to investigate whether the research participants employ CLT in their classroom. In the continuum of their adherence to the CLT principles, the study showed that only one teacher came closest to the CLT pole. The wide range of teaching strategies and techniques suggested that these teachers illustrated divergent teachings from one another and from CLT tenets. The researcher in this study observed that although these teachers had good intentions to teach communicatively, they seemed not to understand the applications of CLT.

In the Prapaisit’s (2003) study, she found that policy makers, policy distributors, supervisors and teachers interpreted the definition of learner-centered approach in a similar way, saying that this approach aims to develop learners to their optimal level, and students’ active

engagement in learning is the key. Learning and teaching activities are designed to meet learners' needs and interests which are in line with ONEC's definition. However, this group of people had different view on implementation of learner-centered approach especially the roles of teachers. Some teachers' roles were decreased and distorted. Prapaisit (2003) also observed and interviewed three different classrooms teachers whether or not they employed learner-centered approach in their teaching practice. The results of this qualitative study showed that none of them implemented such method in their EFL classrooms. Native language was mostly used due to teachers' low English proficiency, and lack of confidence to speak.

Vanichakorn (2003) conducted research on four Thai teachers who had been educated in the United States, and all of them were familiar with constructivist-based skills and strategies, and they were expected to apply these skills in their EFL classrooms in Thailand. These teachers were from different school settings. In the interview sessions, which were set prior to the classroom observation, all of them understood the idea of constructivist-based classroom. However, once she went to have a participant classroom observation, it was found that only one out of four schoolteachers could be considered a "constructivist" teacher. In this constructivist-based class, the only teacher who had employed constructivist-based skills supports all characteristics listed in Murphy's (1997) classroom observation checklist (Appendix C). The other three teachers accommodated only some constructivist characteristics. Among them, one teacher reflected a totally traditional teaching approach. The study mentioned some barriers to implement learner-centered approach. For example, students were familiar with teacher-centered approach which was not easy to convince them to learn collaboratively. Limitations in selecting textbooks, limited time of teaching and bureaucratic norms of schools were among the major constraint factors.

In later year, Sinprajakpol (2004) investigated teachers' beliefs about teaching language learning and teaching. She collected data from three Thai EFL student teachers.

The results revealed that the three EFL student teachers' beliefs about English teaching and learning needed to be changed in order to promote communicative practices that avoid maintaining the status quo. Interestingly, the study disclosed that student teachers' preferences about their teaching are in traditional audio-lingual, grammar-translation, and synthetic approaches.

From the empirical research studies above, there is evidence that teachers were aware of the importance of the learner-centered approach. Unfortunately, many of them could not apply its concept into teaching practices as planned; even the teachers knew the theory and some of them have been trained in learner-centered environments.

As the national reform act has been introduced to Thai society for a decade, its implementation of the learner-centered approach seems to be far from the set goals (Prapphal, 2008). Unclear statement of vision could be one thing to blame for. According to Hallinger (2003), the problem of articulating a cloudy vision for the reform may come from three factors. First, many English terms, such as student-centered learning, constructivist classroom, or learner-centered approach have been imported from western countries. There are no Thai equivalents. As these terms are translated into Thai, this leads to different interpretations and much confusion. Second, leaders who make decision and people who implement the decisions have never been viewed as equal partners. Top-down communication and orders are commonly practiced. Third, the reform primarily focuses on changing the system, less focus on what the outcome of students will look like. Prapphal (2008) suggested that an active involvement of all

stakeholders such as teachers, learners, or administrators are needed to be addressed in order to understand the purpose, nature, benefit of the educational reform.

Barriers in Implementing Learner-Centered Approach

Beliefs of teachers and students can affect classroom practices; both sides should understand properly and play their parts effectively (Yilmaz, 2008). Richards and Lockhart (1994) said, “It is necessary to examine the beliefs and thing process with underlie teacher’s classroom actions... It is based on the assumption that what teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe” (p. 29). Many teachers’ fundamental perceptions remain unchanged, such as viewing teachers as transmitters of knowledge. So the shift to the learner-centered approach happens only in method rather than in the conceptual framework underlying method (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996). There is a need for changes of teachers’ basic assumption from traditional instructional concept where both learners and content are relatively fixed entities for them to be more fluid and flexible (Prawat, 1992).

In learner-centered settings, learners are encouraged to be active learners, and not to wait for teacher to tell them (Thamraksa, 2003). Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt (1992) asserted about students’ belief. Students perceive that knowledge should be presented by teachers rather than discovered. Smart students know answers to all problems, and if students can’t solve problems within five minutes, they will never solve it. Moreover, when a poorly trained teacher tends to employ cooperative learning mode by organizing group work activities, for instance, students often translate that the teacher is lazy or neglects the class (Lee & VanPatten, 2003).

Thai culture may play a role as hindering factors to implement the learner-centered approach. Shifting from a teacher-centered to learner-centered approach is the process of change

(Carless, 1999). According to the study of Halliger & Kantamara (2000) about the role of leadership in implementing non-traditional systematic reform in a typical Thai school, when educational leaders encounter implementing the challenging new approaches to learning and teaching as well as management, they tend to lean to traditional Thai culture values and norms. Thais avoid confrontations, particularly with persons of higher status. Thus, change hardly occurs as Thai culture suggests eluding uncertainty.

There are many other constraints in implementing learner-centered approach in a Thai context. For example, teachers have a limited knowledge in English especially in spoken language (British Council, 1977) and many teachers lack knowledge of teaching methodologies (Naksuk, 1984). Grammar-translation approach has existed for centuries (Halliger & Kantamara, 2000); it is hard to change overnight. Classroom management including time is also a major constraint because the time limits (only 50 minutes per a class period) and too many students in a class—45-50, as well as heavy teaching load of teachers (Cook & DeHart, 1996; Prapphal, 2008), and standardized tests required by the curriculum (Yilmaz, 2008). The learner-centered approach is a ‘top down mandate’ but no proper preparation has been made (Halliger & Kantamara, 2000).

Culture and Teaching

The Relationship of Culture and Teaching

People view the world through varied lenses. Each lens is composed of a diverse spectrum that includes many facets of people’s lives such as environment, previous experiences, backgrounds, or education. This individual way of looking at the world is the individual

perspective through which he/she judges events and surrounding people (Davis, 2001). What is the definition of culture? Pai & Adler (2001) defined culture as:

...a system of norms, standards, and control mechanisms with which members of society assign meanings, values, and significance of things, events, and behaviors; culture includes patterns of knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs, as well as material artifacts produced by human society and transmitted from one generation to another. (p. 245)

Culture affects everything an individual learns by growing up in a certain social context and results in a set of expectations, beliefs, and values (Clayton, 2003). In a classroom context where the interaction of the teacher and students occurs, the teacher will find that students have individual differences in several aspects, even though they appear to be the same cultural group. Students bring to class different historical backgrounds, religious beliefs, and personal preferences, especially on their learning styles. The role of the teacher is to integrate the cultures of the students into the curriculum and create a supportive environment for learning. If the teacher fails to understand the cultural factors in addition to the intellectual and physical factors that affect student learning and behavior, it will be impossible to help students learn (Gollnick & Chinn, 2002). Sheets (2005) also supported the argument that acquiring knowledge of cultural groups that differ from the teacher is needed in order to enhance, develop and to design the types of pedagogical tools. Competent teachers acknowledge the connection between culture and learning. This process requires reflection, knowledge, time, hard work, and sustained commitment. In sum, there is no “cultural-free” teaching or learning. Classrooms are bounded with culture. Culture and education are inextricably related (Mayers, Cutri, Roger, & Montero, 2007).

Furthermore, in the classroom environment, teachers have a special authority derived from the role. For example, a teacher has a teaching role in controlling subject matters, defining the schedule, or planning the lesson. Students internalize these rules and they may or may not obey the teacher. Both teachers and students bring their independent wills to the classroom. It is in the contests of will that students and teacher struggle for power in their relationships with one another. For example, a teacher may encourage or tear down students. Students may obey or refuse the authority of the teacher. When cultural differences occur, it is likely to have misunderstanding or conflict (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003).

To cope with such environment, Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter (2003) further posited that teachers should be open to different ways of thinking and learning and be willing to adopt new ways of looking at the learner, classroom, and practices of teaching. They suggested that teachers should recognize that the teaching curriculum is only a small part of what students will and must learn and that their success with the curriculum will depend on how well the teacher master the cultural agenda for learning that surrounds schooling.

Thai Culture Perceives Learner-Centered Approach

In the traditional Thai culture, there is a strong belief that knowledge is associated with age, position, and status. A strong tradition of teacher-centered, rote learning is consistent with these cultural values and rigidifies roles and responsibilities in a Thai classroom. Thus, a learner-centered approach into classrooms seems to be “foreign” to Thai teachers’ perceptions (Kantamara et al., 2006). This is one of the innovative changes in Thai education. In facing such a change, it needs to be suitable or appropriate to the home culture which is being introduced; otherwise it would be a confusion (Carless, 1999).

Geert Hofstede (as cited in Hallinger & Kantamara, 2000) identified four dimensions that have an impact on change in the Thai school: (a) the high power distance—the behavior of administrators, teachers, or students to show unusually high deference towards those of senior status people who make decision; (b) the collectivist facet—the context for change by locating change in the group more than in individuals; (c) the high level of uncertainty avoidance—strongly socialized to conform to group norms, traditions, rules and regulations; (d) the feminine—high value on social relationships and seek harmony and avoid conflict. As this study relates to the cultural teaching, the researcher was aware of these four dimensions which are bounded in the Thai society.

Douglas's Grid and Group Typology Used in Research

A theoretical framework of grid and group has been developed as a means to understand the diverse but finite range of social organization and value found empirically (Caulkins & Peters, 2002). This fourfold typology is recently advanced and applied more widely throughout the social sciences (Lockhart, 2001). The theory helps to explain how persons derive a limited range of answers to basic social questions: How does the world work? What are humans really like? How are persons held accountable (Wildavsky, 1994)? In order to answer these questions, it would produce orientations toward two basic social dimensions: constraint upon individual roles by external imposed rules—grid and the experience of the members within bounded social groups—group (Giles-Sims & Lockhart, 2005)

Grid, a dimension ranging from low to high, pertains to the degree to which an individual is constrained by external rules, while group indicates the degree to which individuals are embedded within social groups, particularly bounded social groups (Caulkins & Peters, 2002).

Each society has to define its social relationships with reference to these variables. People must choose whether to value individual autonomy, conformity to a group, or a blend of these extremes (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003). When these two variables are put in a matrix, they define four distinctive social environments or social games: authoritarianism, hierarchy, individualism, and egalitarianism.

The grid and group typology reflects four different social contexts below:

1) low-grid & low-group (individualist): Every individual has no constraint of group rules, so he/she can seek risks for personal gain. This environment is individualism, which encourages members to make the most of individual opportunities, to seek risks that result in personal gain, and to be competitive and proactive in carving their future in life. Teachers in this environment generally reject formal or structured organization. They like the environment where autonomy reigns and power are in their sphere of control. Achievements are measured by individual success. Students are highly motivated.

2) high-grid & low-group (bureaucratic): Personal autonomy of an individual is very limited and is defined by a role in a hierarchical society. This environment is authoritarianism, which promotes limited opportunity for advancement and opportunity, compliance to rules and procedures, lack of control on school goals and reward by teachers, and autocratic rules by administrators. Chain of command is clear. Communication flows one way—top down. Work procedures are explicit. Roles and positions of staff are significant in the organization.

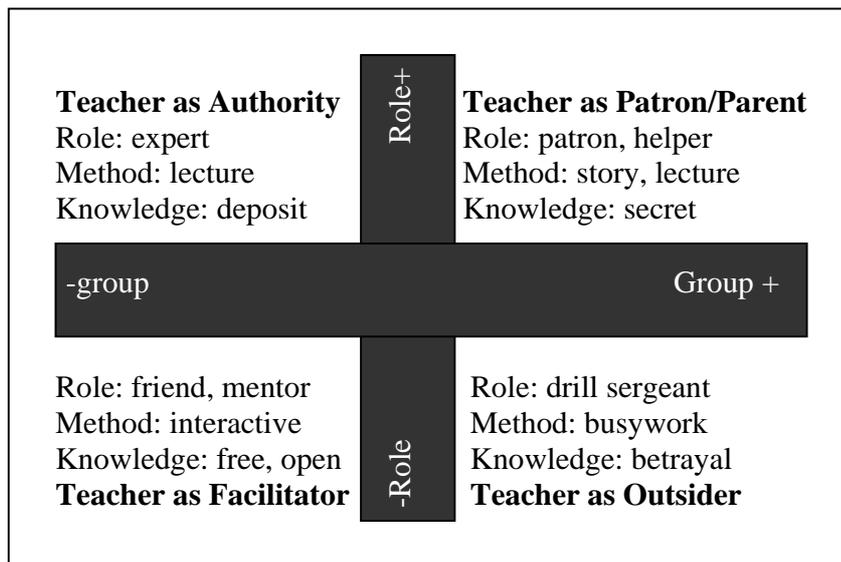
3) high-grid & high-group (corporate): The individual's identification is gained from group membership. This environment is hierarchical, where members understand what is good for corporation is good for the individual. Administrators, teachers, staff, and students work in a cohesive and integrated system. In a corporate mind-set, teachers, students, and community

members collaborate in a cohesive, independent system. All administrators in all levels are highly valued.

4) low-grid & high-group (collectivist): It values unity, equal distribution and group goals as well as survival are highly respected. The environment is egalitarianism, which places a high value on unity, equal distribution of teaching supplies and space, as well as rejection of authoritarian leadership and hierarchy. Teachers and students have much independent power and voice in making decision and activities (Harris, 2005).

This grid and group typology was taken into classroom context by Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter (2003). They illustrated the role of the teacher in each of the four prototype social games as in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Four Prototype Teacher Roles.



Source: (Lingenfelter, J. E., & Lingenfelter, S. G. 2003).

Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter (2003), classified the role of the teacher into four prototypes.

1. Teacher as a facilitator (low-grid and low-group): It is like American classrooms where individual freedom is highly valued, and teachers work in a facilitator role. Classrooms emphasize student dialogue and interaction. Teachers are perceived as not the final experts and students are willing to criticize when they feel the teacher has not done it well.

2. Teacher as authority (high-grid and low-group): This role commonly happens in Asian student classrooms. Teachers are not expected to be wrong or to admit if they are and teachers receive a high respect. Last names are commonly addressed to teachers. Students prefer receiving a handout of the lecture in advance so they will not miss a word. They believe that the teacher is a transmitter of knowledge. Students bring their authoritarian expectation to class.

3. Teacher as a patron/parent (high-grid and high-group): This occurs when a hierarchical social game is highly valued, community group is important, and the leader is hierarchical. Students expect their mentor to care for them the way a mother or father cares for children, helping financial needs and giving guidance on personal and academic matters.

4. Teacher as an outsider (low-grid and high-group): When a teacher is perceived as an outsider, members see the teacher as a threat to students' values and identity. The teacher controls the class, while students resist, defying the teacher's efforts to get them to learn. Egalitarians reject outsiders. An insider begins with trust and can teach in a way that maintains the integrity and identity of the group, a Muslim imam in a Muslim village school is an example (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003).

A grid and group typology has been applied by interdisciplinary variety of fields (Caulkins, 1999). Among them, it was used to investigate instructional technology among faculty members in colleges in the United States. As it was shown in Stansbury's (2001) study, her descriptive case study described the organizational context of higher education institutions. She

used grid and group typology to describe the faculty members' preference to use IT in their instruction. The Participants in the study were faculty members in the College of Veterinary Studies (CVS) and the College of Human Ecology (CHE) at a Midwestern University. The assumption of the study was that faculty members' preferences for IT use were culturally derived and historically situated. This qualitative study employed questionnaires, interviews, observations, and document assessment.

Findings of the study indicated some similarities and differences in the cultures of the two selected colleges. The overall cultural context that best described each college is different. CHE was best described as a corporate (high-grid and high-group) culture, while CVS best fitted in the collectivist (low-grid and high-group) category. The study also suggested patterns of barriers and incentives related to IT use in each college. In CHE, two primary barriers to IT use emerged. One was the risk of not meeting retention, promotion, and tenure guidelines, and the other one was lack of the IT tools that were available and accessible to all faculty members. In CVS, the primary barrier to IT use was lack of time for IT development. However, Stansberry (2001) remarked that both colleges' faculty members were motivated intrinsically to use IT. Some of their reasons were that using IT can enhance instruction and enrich students' experiences, can keep up with the rest of the world as well as it was fun, easy, and effective.

In a Thai school cultural context, Chitapong (2005) used a grid and group typology as a theoretical lens to examine teachers' attitudes toward professional development (PD) using the cultural context of two primary schools located in the far South of Thailand. The participants of the study were school administrators and schoolteachers from two schools where their cultural contexts were different. This qualitative study used survey, interviews, observations, and document analysis as a data collection for further analysis. The data were characterized

according to cultural context presented by Douglas's(1982) grid and group theory. The research results showed that there were some similarities and differences in the cultures of the two schools sites, and some differences in their PD practices. School one best described as the collectivist (low-grid and high-group) culture, while school two best fitted in the individual (low-grid and low-group) category. Chitapong (2005) concluded that the major cultural differences deal with group dimensions, as individual environment is low-group while collectivist environment is high-group. In PD practices, school one was deeply entrenched in traditional training activities, while school two was far more varied based on individual preferences.

Giles-Sims & Lockhart (2005) also employed the grid and group typology into family issues research. How parents discipline their children matters by associating between parents' disciplinary practices and their children's developmental outcomes. This study drew on the grid and group typology to explain the association between demographic factors, such as class, ethnicity, and gender, and disciplinary practices in micro-social terms. This grid and group theory application contributes to the theory development through (a) bridging macro-explanations and micro-explanations by showing how culture contributes to shaping parental practices, (b) distinguishing rival sets of core beliefs and value priorities that help researchers and practitioners understand parents, and (c) indicating ways for practitioners to apply these distinctions in family intervention.

Chastain (2005) explained in the case study how organizational culture affects the implementation of six school improvement strategies in two public high schools located in a suburban area in the southwestern part of the United States. The study also looked at factors that influence individual faculty members to practice the strategies as well as described the relationships of grid and group in the decision making process to implement the practices. The

findings of this study revealed some similarities and differences in the two high schools. School one and school two were placed in the corporate culture which is a high-grid and high-group categories. The results also disclosed barriers and incentives to the implementation of the school improvement strategies. The barriers for both schools included lack of the principal's support, financial support, professional development, and community support. In both schools, incentives included improving instructional strategies and student learning, and student achievement.

Besides from the above areas, the grid and group framework has been applied to other different fields such as urban environment (Aronsson, 1999), career expectation (Hendry, 1999), improving schools and raising student achievement (Chastain, 2005), immigration community, its identity and allegiance (Tsang, 1998, 2002), and school culture (Harris, 1995).

Summary

The chapter reviews the characteristics of a learner-centered approach and the concept of constructivist theory of learning as well as Thai legislation about the learner-centered approach in Thai education. The chapter also reveals the implementation of the approach into Thai classrooms through providing the evidence of empirical research. The last part of the chapter discusses the relation of culture and teaching including Thai culture perceptions of changes. The grid and group typology, which is used as a cultural theoretical framework for this study, is also reviewed by supporting some empirical research that has employed the grid and group typology.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology and data collection procedures. The data for this study were obtained from various sources including survey questionnaires, in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documents. Since this study involved human subjects and relied on studying the whole situation rather than identification of specific variables (Lichtman, 2006), qualitative inquiry was the most appropriate method.

Qualitative inquiry is concerned with process rather than with outcomes or products. Furthermore, this research method is best suited for research problems in which the researcher does not know the variables and need to explore and learn more from participants because the literature might yield little information about the phenomenon of study. The researcher who uses this approach is interested in how different people make sense of their everyday lives within the context of their natural occurrence. (Atkinson, 1990; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). One qualitative research characteristic is to “allow the research design to emerge (flow, cascade, unfold) rather than to construct it preordinately (a priori)” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 41).

Qualitative research method has been accepted in the field of language teaching and learning since the research focus has shifted from studying of teachers' behaviors to investigation of teachers' thought processes (Burns, 1996; Peacock, 1998). This is in line with Richards' (2003) idea that qualitative research is appropriate to apply in the field of language teaching because it can provide valuable information and insight. Thus, this study employed qualitative inquiry to investigate faculty members' thoughts about their teaching method as well as their preferences in teaching EFL classrooms.

According to Yin (1994), this research is regarded as a case study because it attempted to describe "how" and "why" of the phenomenon and the researcher had little control over events within real-life context. Patton (2002) posited that case study "can be individuals, groups, neighborhoods, programs, organizations, cultures, regions... or anything that can be defined as a specific, unique, bounded system" (p. 447).

Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at a public university called Thailand Southern University (TSU) located in the far South of Thailand. It is a pseudonym used in this study. This interdisciplinary university is considered as one of the largest and most comprehensive regional universities in the kingdom of Thailand. TSU Campus A, one of the five multi-campus universities, was chosen to be a place where data of the study were collected. With a population of about nine thousand students, this medium-size campus offers seven colleges or faculties mainly in languages, arts, communication science, education, social sciences, religions as well as science and technology. The researcher worked as a fulltime faculty member in this university.

In selecting the EFL faculty members as participants, a purposive sampling method was used. Purposive sampling is a nonrandom sampling technique in which the researcher chooses persons with specific characteristics to participate in a study (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). The logic and power of purposive method lies in selecting “*information-rich cases*” (Patton, 2002, p. 230) for in-depth understanding of cases. In the setting of criteria for participant selection, there can be different assumptions depending on the research paradigm study. The investigator is interested in discovering the patterns how the participants make sense of their worlds. It also requires participants who are willing to allow the investigator to watch them acting in natural environments and/or talk with them about their actions and intentions (Hatch, 2002). From the above description, this study employed a purposive sampling method in the participant selection as it intended to explain the great detail of the teaching culture and to understand the relationships of teaching EFL classrooms with their preferences of teaching environments.

The purposive sample in this study was divided into three stratified layers depending on data collection method. To illustrate, the results of the first method, survey, provided information to determine the second layer of population to interview. The interview results also provided information to determine the third layer of population for class observations. Therefore, the criteria in selecting participants for this study were the following:

1. The first layer of participants consisted of 20 faculty members who taught EFL in the research setting university—TSU’s Department of English and Linguistics. The participants were asked about their thoughts, perceptions, values, beliefs, and preferences

of EFL teaching culture. At the time of conducting research, there were 23 faculty members in the English section. Two faculty members were on leave to pursue their education. The researcher excluded from the research participants.

2. The results of the first layer plotted the participants into different quadrants according to grid and group typology. Subsequently, ten representatives were taken to further interview sessions. This group of participants was not only faculty members who taught EFL, but all of them were teaching Foundation English in the first semester of 2008 academic year (June-September 2008). The variation of teachers' demography—years of teaching experience, levels of education, country of graduation, gender—was also taken into consideration as a criterion for in-depth interviews.

3. The participants in the third layer were basically taken from the second layer participants for class observations. They were four participants as the researcher purposively selected from the interview sessions. The major criteria were the variety of teaching methods and teaching experience gained from interview sessions. The demographic background of the faculty members was considered. A variety of teaching approaches with different faculty members' backgrounds could vastly contribute to the study.

4. All faculty members showed their interest in participating in this study. Before data collection was conducted, the participants were asked to read the consent form and sign their name on it. However, if they accepted to participate in the study, they were free to discontinue participation at any time without any reprisal, penalties, or consequences of any kinds as stated in the consent form.

In the Thai bureaucratic culture, hierarchical order and seniority are dominant characteristics (Kantamara, Hallinger, & Jatiket, 2006). The researcher recognized these cultural values so the researcher formally presented this study's objectives to English section head, department head, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, as well as the Dean, respectively. They all agreed and allowed the researcher to conduct this research.

Researcher as an Instrument

The educational background of the researcher is both Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the research setting university. As for teaching experience, the researcher was given an opportunity to teach Thai language and culture to American Peace Corps volunteers in Bangkok for a year and worked as an English instructor in TSU Campus A.

According to the researcher's teaching experience, English capability of students in TSU Campus A recently has been getting lower compared to students five or six years ago. One of the obvious pieces of evidence was the number of students who failed in English classes, especially in Foundation English course, is gradually growing (TSU, 2007). The major reason was due to the unrest situation in the southernmost part of Thailand where TSU Campus A is located. Previously, students from all regions of Thailand came to study. However, the student demography has changed after the eruption of violence in 2004 (McCargo, 2006; The Nation, 2008). It threatened to students to choose TSU Campus A as their educational site. It left rooms for local students to take their seats instead. The Registrar Newsletter (TSU, 2008) revealed that in the academic year of 2008 there were 67% of student population was from the areas nearby TSU and 96% were southerners. It showed that students at TSU Campus A were mainly the local

students. In relation to this, the National Reconciliation Commission (2006) disclosed that the outcomes of students in the deep south areas were lower than the national standards. Thus, the weakness of students' academic performance was obviously seen in the high number of failed students in English.

As the demography of students changed and the number of students who failed in English has increased, employing the same teaching approach as the faculty members have been familiar with may or may not be suitable for the current classrooms. For these reasons, the researcher was interested in studying the teaching culture and teaching methods among EFL faculty members as well as implementation of a learner-centered approach.

In the qualitative point of view, the researcher is an instrument for collecting and interpreting data (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthern, 2004; Patton, 2002). The researcher enters into the lives of participants, decides which questions to ask and in what order, what to observe, what to write down within guiding frameworks (Hatch, 2002). In this study, the researcher was the only person who designed the study, collected data, and made meaning of the data. Moreover, the researcher had a positive perspective towards the learner-centered approach.

Data Collection Procedures

This study relied on four methods of data collection deploying all core methods of qualitative inquiry: 1) survey questionnaires, 2) in-depth interviews, 3) direct observations, and 4) document analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). It is believed that no single method or item of information should ever be given serious consideration

unless it can be triangulated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data triangulation, the employment of a variety of data sources collected in a study, is needed in qualitative methodology to illuminate an inquiry question and to establish the information gathered is generally supported or disconfirmed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Lichtman, 2006; Patton, 2002) and to provide a rationale for increasing the apparent validity of such findings (Miller & Fredericks, 1996). In the qualitative perspective, all information collected from the field “were bound together in a whole cloth pattern in which each part was dependent on every other part” (Erlandson, et al. 1993, p. 12). Throughout the study, the researcher constantly observed people and events, engaged in participant interviews, and examined documents relevant to the phenomenon under study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

Survey Questionnaires

Surveys are useful means of gathering data from a large group of people (Anderson, 1988; Creswell, 2003). In the survey, the researcher used questionnaires with multiple questions asking about faculty members’ preferences of their teaching methods. Questionnaires can obtain information about thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personality, and behavioral intentions of research participants. Furthermore, the content and organization of questionnaires corresponded to the researcher’s research objectives (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). Marshall and Rossman (1999) stated, “the characteristic or belief can be described or measured accurately through self-report. In using questionnaires, researchers rely totally on the honesty and accuracy of participants’ responses” (p. 96). The survey questionnaires of this study (Appendix B) were adapted from the Grid and Group Assessment Tool, originally developed by Harris (2005) based on Douglas (1982) grid and group typology. The researcher received permission from

him to use the survey. In fact, this questionnaires have been used in several fields such as school culture, information technology, students' performances in the United States (Chastain, 2005; Harris, 2005; Stansberry, 2001). Also, this tool was taken to examine the primary school culture in Thailand (Chitapong, 2005). Since the survey participants were faculty members of English, the questionnaires remained in English. Hard copy questionnaire papers were used.

Qualitative inquiry produces a wealth of detailed data about a much smaller number of people and cases (Patton, 2002). In this study, there were only 20 participants answering the survey. However, before all 20 EFL teachers in English section, Department of English and Linguistics, to answer the survey, the researcher gave a forwarding letter to the dean to sign, informing the participants about the objectives of the study and asking them to answer the attached survey questionnaires. A consent form was enclosed (APPENDIX G).

Once the responses to the questionnaires were completely answered, the Grid and Group Graph Template (APPENDIX D), which was developed by Harris (2005), was used to plot the answers to determine on which quadrant within the four quadrants of grid and group typology (Douglas, 1982) each survey form may fall. In fact, there were sixteen responses in collectivist and four in corporate environments.

In-Depth Interviews

The main purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in the interviewees' mind (Patton, 2002). In other words, the researcher wanted to learn what the interviewee thinks or feels about certain things, or to explore the shared meanings that people have (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Rubin and Rubin said that interviewing "is a great adventure ... [it] brings

new information and opens window into the experiences of the people you meet” (p. 1). The basic assumption behind interviewing is that the thinking of others is meaningful, knowable, and explicit. The role of the interviewer is to figure out what is in and on someone’s mind (Patton, 2002).

In this study, ten faculty members participated in the interview sessions—seven from collectivist and three from corporate environments. These faculty members were not only EFL teachers, but they were teaching Foundation English, in the first semester of 2008 academic year (June-September 2008), and were purposively selected based on the variation of faculty members’ demography—teaching experiences, gender, and levels of education. Purposive samples typically rely on saturation of data, meaning that there would be no new information observed in data further. In setting guidelines of adequacy for estimating the sample size there is no clear rule how many can be saturated (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

All participants were asked to respond to the same set of open-ended and loosely structured questions in an informal conversational interview atmosphere. It is in line with Marshall and Rossman (1999) stating that the typical in-depth interviews in qualitative research are like conversational and informal atmosphere with predetermined responses. The set of questions provided a framework for the interviewer to develop deeper and sequent questions (Patton, 2002). The purpose of the interview was to examine the teaching practice environment as well as their preference in teaching Foundation English classes. The probing questions were used to elicit specific responses regarding characteristics of instructional methods employed in classrooms. The majority of the interview questions were based on the research questions and some were based on

extensive review literature of instructional methods, learner-centered approach, and barriers in implementing learner-centered classrooms. The following questions were used in the interview.

1. Tell me about the learning environment in your Foundation English class.
 - Characteristics of the classroom
 - Classroom atmosphere
2. What are the factors that affect your instructional plan?
 - Who makes decisions on classroom instruction?
 - Are there any restrictions that you have to follow in planning your classroom instructions and activities? What are they?
3. What are the roles of the teacher in the teaching process?
4. What are the roles of the students in learning process?
5. How do students learn in your class?
 - What kinds of strategies would you implement if a student has difficulty in learning?
 - How do you allow for different student perspectives?
6. Explain how students are evaluated in your class
 - What kinds of formative and summative evaluation do you use?
 - Who makes decision in evaluation process?
7. Why do you teach the way you do?
 - What techniques can you describe your teaching?
 - How do you know that?

To ensure that both the researcher and interviewees better understand each other, the interview sessions were conducted in Thai. As Patton (2002) said, “It is tricky enough to be sure what a person means when using a common language” (p. 392). Before the interview contents were approached, the session began with developing a rapport and getting the participant to trust the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Also, demographic questions such as age or years of teaching experience were asked in order to help the interviewer locate the respondent in relation to other people (Patton, 2002). Once the rapport had been established, the interview found a way to connect with the participants’ experiences (Lichtman, 2006). The interviews were audio-recorded with respondents’ permission. During the interview sessions, the researcher jotted down some points to make the connection from one point to another easier. Tape-recording was later transcribed verbatim and notes were made for analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Fitzpatrick et al., 2004).

Direct Observations

Observing is one of the popular methods of data collection for all research studies, especially qualitative inquiry, in order to obtain firsthand information regarding subjects (Morgan, 1997; Tomal, 2003), and also to help understand the complexity of human behavior and interrelationships among groups, their cultures, settings, and social phenomena (Lichtman, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Observers should be equipped with functioning senses and be natural (Patton, 2002).

The observation used in most qualitative work is usually called “participant observation” because the researcher acts as a participant at some level in settings. Distinctions between participation and observation are blurred throughout the literature

(Hatch, 2002). Lichtman (2006) suggested that it depends on the researcher as the research develops a focus. The researcher may need to balance the issues of intrusiveness and proximity to the action (Hatch, 2002). In fact, observation is used as a check that enables the researcher to verify that the individual is doing what he believes he is doing (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). A good point of the interview is to “permit the respondent to move back and forth in time—to construct the past, interpret the present, and predict the future ... A major advantage of direct observation, on the other hand, is that it provides here and now experience in depth” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 273).

In this study, classroom observations were conducted as a third step of data collection. The researcher observed four Foundation English classes taught by four different faculty members. The observations took place on the second month after the semester started. Each class was observed once. The researcher entered into the classroom with broad areas of interest but without predetermined categories (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Murphy’s constructivist checklist (1997) was adapted and used during the observations (Appendix C) as a general guideline. This checklist has been used in class observation in Thailand (Vanichakorn, 2003). The role of the researcher was a non-participant observer or an “onlooker” (Patton, 2002, p. 265), watching what happened and videotaping events occurred in the classroom settings. Field notes from observations were kept for further analysis.

Documents

Records, documents, artifacts, and archives provide a particular rich source of information (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Merriam, 1988). Some of the materials provide only some factual details and others serve as sources of rich descriptions. (Bogdan &

Biklen, 2007). Many document materials were taken into consideration for analysis.

They included standard course evaluations, course syllabi, hand-outs, PowerPoint presentations, course texts, workbooks, exercises, quizzes, virtual classrooms, examination papers, field notes, and others. This information was helpful in supplementing and providing additional details for the description of the phenomena happening inside and outside classrooms that the researcher could not find from the survey, interviews, and classroom observations.

In order to understand the number of participants and data collection procedures described above, it could be summarized in a form of table shown below.

Table 2. Data Collection Procedures.

Methods of data collection	Number of participants & documents	Criteria of participants	Tools used
1. Survey questionnaires	20 participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EFL faculty members from TSU's English Section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assessment tool (Harris, 2005) graph template (Harris, 2005)
2. In-depth interviews	10 participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> based on survey results representing from two quadrants (collectivist & corporate) teaching Foundation English various backgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> semi-structured interview questions probing questions tape recording transcribing field notes
3. Classroom observations	4 participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> based on in-dept interviews representing the interviews various backgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> observation checklist (Murphy, 1997) field notes VDO taping Transcribing

4. Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teaching materials • course syllabi • handouts & texts • PowerPoint • workbooks • exercises, quizzes • virtual classrooms • exam papers, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relation to the study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
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Data analysis

In qualitative research, data gathering and data analysis go hand in hand in order to build a coherent interpretation of the data (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Analysis of data serves as means to transform data into findings and there is no formula or recipe for that transformation. The challenge lies in making sense of massive amounts of data (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Patton, 2002). The construction and naming of the categories followed the guidelines outlines by Merriam (1998), which stated that the categories should (a) reflect the purpose of research, (b) be exhaustive, (c) be mutually exclusive, (d) be sensitizing, and (e) be conceptually congruent (Merriam, 1998).

The study used Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology to serve as a lens for coding categories, sorting data, and assisting in conceptualizing themes. According to Patton (2002), setting themes or patterns is called inductive analysis. Once the inductive stage has been established, confirmatory stage of qualitative analysis may be deductive in testing and affirming the appropriateness of inductive content analysis, including examining data that do not fit the theme developed. Emerging themes were also explained as other realities that are not in the grid and group typology as stated in the last research question.

Questionnaire data provided insight information about cultural preferences in the EFL faculty member environment. Four cultural environments of grid and group typology quadrants were used as major themes to explain the teaching culture. The information from in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documents reinforced the description in the quadrants of cultural bias.

For the interview, verbatim transcriptions were created. Field notes gained during and after the interviews and observations were categorized based on the different cultural themes by scanning the data for regularities, patterns, similar ideas and characteristics, and relationships. They were organized into binding files.

Documents, artifacts, interview transcriptions, and VDO transcriptions from the class observation as well as field notes found from the setting were organized. This information had certain significant meanings to the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) said, "Qualitative research depends heavily on ongoing analysis, and coding is a good device for supporting that analysis" (p. 66), and it also empowers and speeds up analysis. The researcher tagged and labeled the descriptive information into different topics and divided them into subtopics at different levels of analysis by using short words indicating certain topics or themes, entailing little interpretations. The themes, topics, and subtopics were basically created through the grid and group cultural explanations.

Some codes had small units of information, some had copious amounts. Other codes progressively emerged during the coding process and data analysis because during the data collection, the researcher was open to what the site had to say, rather than determined to force-fit the data into certain directions. The researcher separated them into different files for different explanation.

After the analysis was done, the researcher held a peer debriefing with other qualitative researchers who employed the same theoretical framework. The session included the review of data and research process the phenomenon explored. A peer review provides support, pushes the researcher to the next step methodologically, and asks hard questions about methods and interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It also provides feedback to the researcher or simply serves as a sounding board for ideas. By the assistance of peer debriefers, the researcher adds credibility to the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Summary

This chapter provides an explanation of the methodology of the study. It starts with a discussion of qualitative inquiry and case study. Data collection procedure is mentioned in details, by stating four methods of data collection mechanisms. They are survey questionnaires, in-depth interviews, observations, and documents. The chapter ends up with a description of data analysis which the researcher employed conceptualizing themes of Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology. The next chapter will reveal data from the field as a narrative portrait.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF DATA

This chapter describes the organizational context of one campus at Thailand Southern University (TSU), a major higher educational institution in southern Thailand. In particular, the chapter provides a narrative portrait of faculty members who were teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language) during this study.

The Unit of Analysis

The primary unit of analysis was the EFL program of one campus at TSU. The researcher will describe the participants of interview sessions and classroom observations in the study. Pseudonyms are used in order to protect their real identities. There were ten participants from the interview sessions. They were Sandy, Bam, Pla, Mimi, Honey, Fon, Kate, Ann, Rain, and Nid. Some of these interviewees were asked to allow further classroom observations. Four of them were Bam, Pla, Mimi and Kate. They all were faculty members teaching Foundation English at TSU.

Thailand Southern University

History of Institution

TSU was the first university in southern Thailand and was founded in 1967. The university was designed to be a multi-campus, public university (TSU, 2007). TSU Campus A was chosen to be the first campus of TSU. The second campus, turned to be the main campus of TSU system, was established five years later or in 1971. Another three campuses were gradually established in other parts of southern Thailand in order to serve the education to the local need in each area (TSU, 2007).

Campus Characteristics

All campuses of TSU not only serve the needs of the local communities but also offer variety of fields of study to serve the development of the nation as a whole. For example, TSU Campus A, located in the predominantly Muslim populated area, offers education, humanities and social sciences, arts, communication, and science and technology as well as Islamic studies which makes it the first higher education institution offering Islamic Studies in the country. TSU Campus B, where the office of the president is placed, focuses on applied sciences such as engineering, agro-industry, health sciences such as medicine, nursing, dentistry, management sciences, and liberal arts. TSU Campus C emphasizes tourism and hotel management and international studies. TSU Campus D offers technological management as well as foreign languages. TSU Campus E, which is the TSU's newest campus, emphasizes on commerce and computer sciences. Each campus is unique in course offering.

In the year 2008, TSU celebrated its 40th anniversary. Throughout the year, TSU held several activities on all campuses. The president stressed that TSU was directed to

be a research university. According to the president's website (TSU, 2008), TSU was ranked fourth in Thai higher educational institutions due to its outstanding research products, students, and service to the community. However, Ann, one of the interviewed faculty members, said, "It is unbelievable that TSU is ranked in the top five chart of Thailand's best university because we are a regional university, and we believe that we are left behind from famous universities in Bangkok. Anyway, it's good if our president can lead our university to this position."

Administrational System

As a multi-campus university, TSU has its own administrative system, which is somewhat different from other campuses in Thailand. According to the TSU Act, the university council, comprising of well-known scholars in various fields and politicians, played a key role in guiding and supervising university affairs both administratively and academically. The Ministry of Education has decentralized its authority to the university council in many ways. For example, the university council has full authority to approve courses or degrees offered by the university. Establishment of a new department, even faculty or college, has to be approved by this body. The TSU president acted as a secretary-general in the university council board. Within the university, the executive staff, led by the president, administers the university. The president, who is officially appointed by the King, appoints a number of vice presidents and deputy presidents, to be responsible for various university affairs and campus branches.

In 2008, there were six vice presidents assigned to bear the responsibility for different matters, such as, academics, students, planning. Every vice president had to

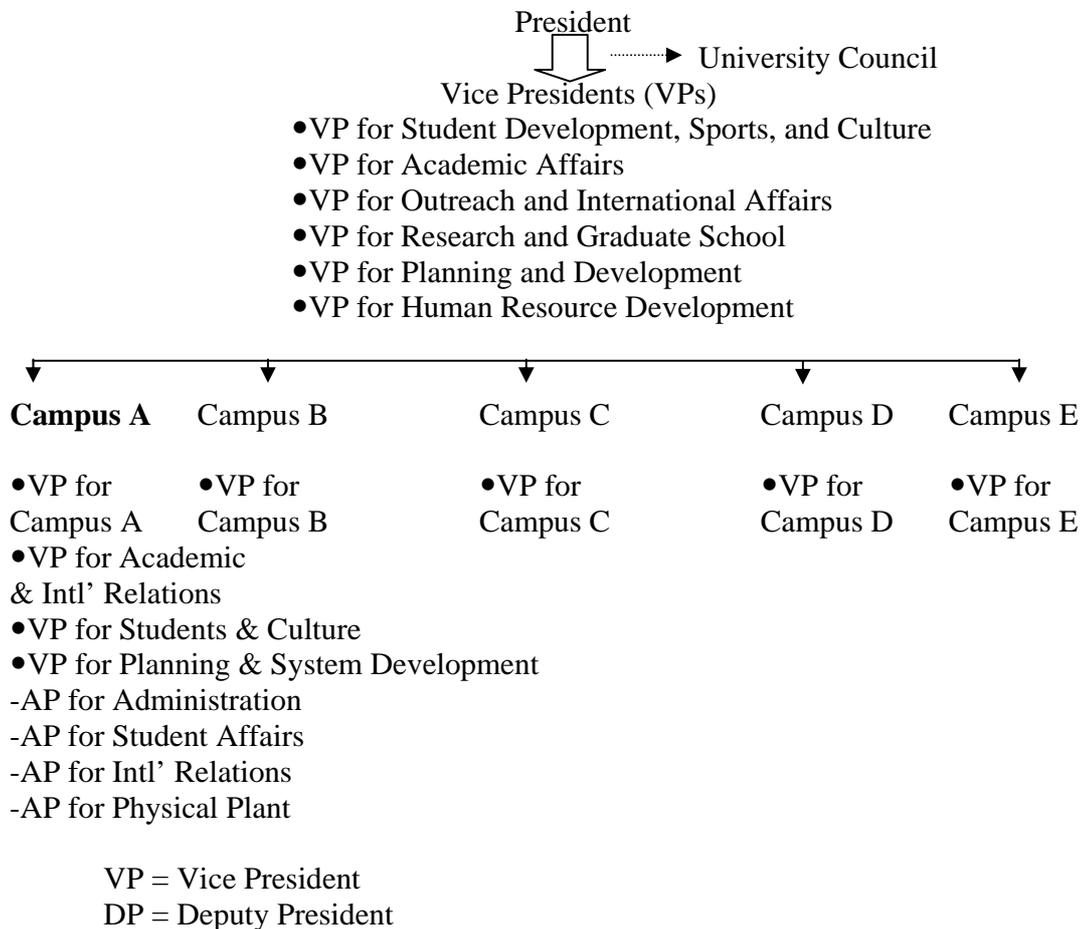
report the progress to the president on the assigned responsibilities. Each of the five TSU campuses has its own vice president to manage and oversee the campus affairs.

Vice presidents work as presidents in the campuses because he or she was given certain authority from the president in making decision administratively and academically. The role of the president is to coordinate, monitor, and create connections among these vice presidents and make final decisions on certain matters. In each campus, there is a set of executive members to handle various campus affairs, comprising of vice presidents and deputy presidents. The number of the executive team depends on how large the campus is.

All the executive members ranking from president, vice presidents, deputy presidents, and school deans from 28 faculties from all five campuses have a monthly meeting called a “Dean Meeting.” The meeting venues rotate from one campus to another, even the location of each campus is far apart. The administrators are obliged to attend the meeting sessions. Figure 5 below highlights the TSU organizational structure with emphasizing on Campus A which was the research setting of the study.

TSU Campus A is the second largest campus in the TSU system after Campus B. There were almost nine thousand students scattered in seven faculties. Some of them were in education, humanities, Islamic studies, science and technology, for instance. The vision for TSU Campus A claimed, “...to be a reliable leading higher educational institution, to produce qualified graduates and to create a body of knowledge for local multicultural society, based on research and appropriate technology.”

Figure 5: TSU Structural Administrative System.



Student Demography at TSU Campus A

According to the 2008 Registrar's Bulletin (TSU, 2008), The Campus A accommodated 8,719 students including all levels of educations. More than half of them were four-year undergraduate students. Students in education, languages, social sciences constituted over half of the whole student population. One explanation is that these fields had a variety of major subjects. About two thirds were female students. The students were mostly (about 96%) from the provinces in South of Thailand. Among these, there

were 67% of students who came from the Deep South of Thailand, the predominantly populated Muslim area. It was obvious that the number of Muslim students was relatively high. This area encountered with unrest incident erupted in 2004 and there was violence almost everyday (McCargo, 2006; The Nation, 2008). So parents were afraid to send their children to study at the university. It affected the student demography in terms of cultural diversity on campus. Sandy said:

Right now, we are not really multicultural society since there are limited numbers of students from other areas coming to study here. Mostly students are local. I understand that students from other parts of Thailand are afraid to come down here after the eruption of violence in the area many years ago. It's not good for our people because we probably never know how to live in multicultural society which is very important for our today's world.

University uniform was mandatory in all TSU campuses including this campus, especially when students attended class and met faculty members in the office. Male students wore white button-down shirts, either long or short sleeves, with dark-color pants. Wearing jeans were also a common practice. Females wore white short sleeves blouses with a TSU logo on it, black skirts and black shoes. Students wore this typical uniform to class, attending any university activities or event to contact department officials or faculty members in TSU. Muslim female students were allowed to wear white *hijab* (a piece of clothe covering Muslim females' head) to the class and hijab was adopted as a university uniform too.

How Foundation English was Taught

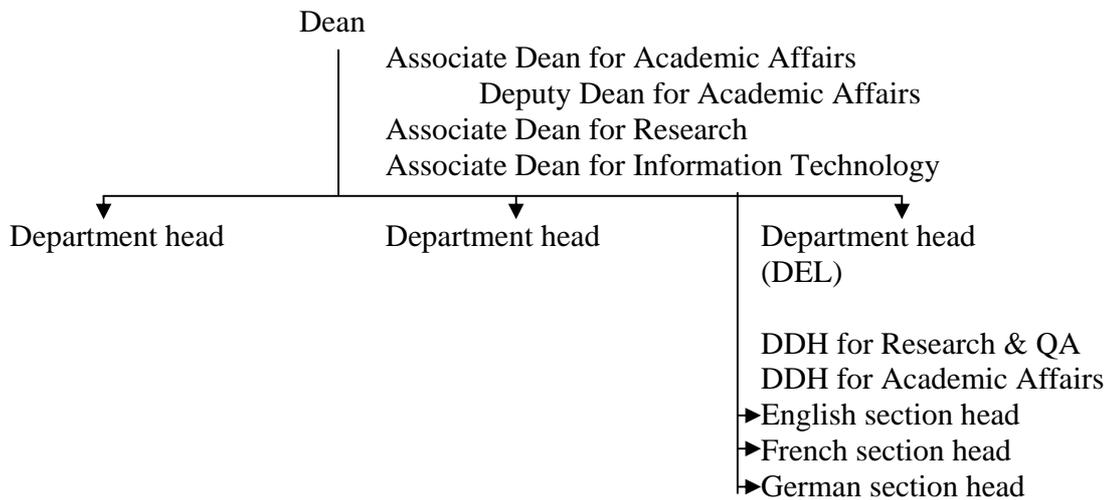
Department of English and Linguistics

The main academic department responsible for teaching English in this campus was Department of English and Linguistics (DEL), Faculty of Arts and Sciences. However, the department did not offer only the English language, but also French and German. The department was led by the department head, who supervised all three different foreign language sections. Under the line of administration, there were two deputy department heads. In each foreign language section, there was a section head even if there were only three faculty members in a section like German. English and French had their own major subject students while German offered elective courses. In the English section, there were 23 faculty members all together, French section had five, and German two. In every section, there were a number of native speakers of English, French, and German, respectively. These foreign language native speakers worked under a year-by-year contract.

In the office of department head, there was one support staff member working in the office which was exclusively separated from other faculty members' office. The main responsibility of the support staff was to coordinate all paper work between DEL and other departments in the university, as well as to assist the department head and DEL administrative staff. Sometimes the support staff had to type teaching materials and exam papers for those faculty members who were not good in typing skills. DEL had one janitor who made all faculty members' office clean. The janitor swept and mopped the office floor and hallway every other day. The janitor would prepare and serve

refreshments to the meeting attendees as DEL held meetings. The administration chart of DEL can be illustrated in Figure 6 shown below.

Figure 6: Administration structure of DEL.



DDH = Deputy Department Head

Regarding the department head selection process, I was able to witness the process in November 2008. The former department head resigned because of some reasons after serving the position for three years. In fact, the term of the department head is four years. In the selection process, all faculty members in the department were officially invited to participate in a meeting in order to discuss the most qualified faculty member to work as a chief. In the meeting, a few faculty member names were nominated for consideration. After that, all the meeting attendees exercised their vote by writing a preferred name on a piece of paper. To follow the principle of democracy, a person who got a majority from the vote should be chosen to be the head. Then, the chosen name was forwarded to the dean for approval and further appointment. However, prior to the appointment, three faculty member representatives from DEL would be invited to provide

some relevant information about the candidate to the dean. These representatives could reveal any information related to the candidate through their personal perceptions. Once the department head was officially appointed, she chose her working team, comprising of two deputy department heads and three section heads. It depended on the preference of the department head and faculty members' willingness to work with the individuals.

Participants: Faculty Members

In this presentation, the terms faculty members, instructors, and teachers may be used interchangeably. They all connote the same meaning—university teachers. In general, to be a faculty member at TSU, a candidate has to hold a Master's or doctoral degree in particular fields. If there are no candidates after the announcement has been posted for a period of time, bachelor's degree holders with first honor are also acceptable. However, those who hold bachelor's degree are obligatory requested to pursue their Master's as soon as possible. Financial support was granted. Some faculty members got study grants from outside agencies.

In the English section, from 23 faculty members, only two males were diverse in terms of their age, degree, country, teaching experience, as well as professorship. Three doctoral degree holders graduated from the United States. Many of them earned Master's and bachelor degrees from Thailand, even from TSU itself. A few of them earned degrees from Malaysia. Almost all of the English faculty members held degrees in English, linguistics, literature, and communication. Among them, two faculty members were on leave for pursuing their Master's. The oldest faculty member was over 60 years of age, while the youngest was 24. Of course, teaching experience varied depending on their teaching years.

Every faculty member including the department head was obliged to present a job commitment contract called “Terms of References” (TOR) every six months to the department head. TOR is a contract between faculty members with DEL. For example, they needed to mention how many teaching hours a week they had, what research topic would be done, what outreach projects they were going to undertake. In short, teaching, doing research, and community service were counted as a work load and must appear in TOR. Kate touched this point by saying, “In my TOR, I expect my teaching evaluation is at least good or excellent. So I got it, I’m so happy with it.”

These DEL faculty members taught English language courses either as general education courses or English major subjects, mostly undergraduate level. Some of them, who qualified, taught graduate students in English major. Regarding the teaching load, it was regulated by the university; faculty members were assigned to teach about ten hours a week for undergraduate students. If the teaching load is over ten, they will be paid extra. Pla said, “I teach thirteen hours a week this semester, and I’m happy with it. If I teach more, I will get extra payment. So it’s just fair enough. I don’t think that thirteen hours a week is a big deal for me.”

Besides teaching, faculty members were engaged in conducting research and serving the community by getting involved in any projects of helping students or the community nearby. For example, they might hold workshops on how to write job application forms, or job interview sessions. In the summer break (March-May), they may organize English Camps for children. These activities were written on TOR. After six months passed, DEL held a meeting to evaluate the performance of each faculty

member based on the TOR contract. The evaluation related to the salary. It means if the evaluation is graded good, the salary is supposed to increase accordingly.

Foundation English

Almost all faculty members in the English section taught or used to teach Foundation English course which was one of the core courses and general education subjects for undergraduate students. Each semester, Foundation English normally accommodated students in more than 10 groups, a group of about 50 or 55 students maximum. The first semester of 2008 academic year, there were 30 groups covering 1,534 students (TSU, 2008). In fact, this course was designed for freshmen who entered the university with English score of the university entrance examination over 30 out of 100. However, students in this course were not only freshmen but there were also sophomores, juniors, and even seniors. From the interview, eight out of ten faculty members said their classes were mixed of school year students. Some faculty members had to be responsible for more than one group depending on the assignment of the English section. Rain said:

This semester I teach three classes of Foundation English. It is really tired for me because I have to say the same thing up to three times. However, it doesn't mean that I have to teach exactly the same thing in every class, depending on the nature of each class. Sometimes I got confused which group has been presented, which group has not. It's good, though. This is my responsibility. It [English section] gave me three groups, I'm still fine.

Designing course syllabus. As this course required many faculty members to teach, they decided to hold meetings from time to time discussing the course syllabus

(APPENDIX G) and teaching materials especially before the course started. All 30 groups of Foundation English used the same course syllabus and core materials, such as, quizzes, worksheets, exam papers for both mid term and final exams. To make it easy for running the course, the meeting appointed two coordinators working as liaisons to coordinate with all members concerned. Honey was appointed to be a coordinator, she said:

We have to deal with several things, such as, ordering main texts and external reading books from Bangkok, selling them to students within the first few weeks after the semester starts. Then, we need to do a financial report to the meetings of our department. We are supposed to accumulate workbooks of each chapter from different instructors to copy and be ready to distribute to students. As you know, we have TA [Teacher Assistant] students helping us to check the workbooks and exercises in the Self-Access Learning Center. Dealing with TAs is also our responsibility by matching TAs with respective teachers. Again, calling for meetings is our main responsibility. We have to invite all teachers by sending letters and reserve the meeting room. You can see that coordinators are not such an easy task. If we don't manage the task properly, we will be scolded by the group. It's a tiring job indeed... Normally junior teachers are assigned to be coordinators."

In the meeting sessions, all Foundation English instructors discussed designing the course syllabus together based on the textbook and course description. For example, each chapter would last in how many periods? What listening lab lesson would be used in each chapter? The meeting also talked about cutting off some parts from the text.

Speaking and listening parts mostly did not include in the class simply because they consume lots of time in running activities. Kate said, “Actually, speaking and listening are fun because they are activity-based lessons, but they are time-consuming and difficult to be evaluated in the exams. That’s why we delete many of them out.” However, all grammar points appeared on the course syllabus. It stated the teaching pace and topics to be taught in each week. In one semester there were about 17 weeks including midterm and final exam weeks. Each teaching period would last within one and a half hours. All instructors were supposed to follow it. In Nid’s class, she said, “I mostly follow 95% of my teaching plan from the course syllabus. If I can’t catch the pace, I have make-up classes.” Bam also said, “I just follow the course syllabus because it is very clear. I like this syllabus, just easy to follow.”

Besides the course syllabus, the meetings also assigned every faculty members to prepare workbooks, quizzes, exam papers both mid term and final ones. They had deadlines to submit each task. In addition, supplementary exercises and other drilling worksheets remained open for individual faculty member to reinforce students’ understanding on particular grammar points, vocabulary, and reading passages. After the mid term and final exams, the meeting was held to discuss a grading system. “We come to talk among all of us to discuss how to mark each item. For example, if students have a misspelling, they will be deducted 0.25. It’s very delicate thing. Marking takes a lot of time for me,” said Honey.

Regarding the exam papers, this group of instructors was divided into two small groups; first half was responsible for the mid term papers, while the second half for the final ones. Regarding the process of the exam papers, once they were drafted, they were

sent to a committee, set by DEL, to check the contents and format. After that, the course coordinators took the papers for further printing process.

Textbooks. There were two main books used in Foundation English course – classroom text and external reading novel book. In the first semester of 2008 academic year (June – October), all faculty members agreed to use a classroom text book called “*New Headway: Intermediate Student’s Book*, 3rd Edition, Oxford University Press, and “*The Speckled Band*” as an external reading book.

All faculty members held meetings as a major process of choosing the texts. Principally, it was agreed that everyone had an equal opportunity to propose any texts available in the market based on the course description and objectives (APPENDIX G). After the first meeting, some of them contacted bookshop agents in Bangkok, asking the agents to send sample texts. When the books had arrived, they placed them in the department desk with a piece of paper by asking the faculty members to give their ideas which books should be the best for the course text and external reading book. This process took a few weeks because they needed to review each book and give their ideas of their preference. Then, the coordinators held another meeting to discuss their ideas towards the books. After debating was made, they officially announced that *New Headway: Intermediate Student’s book*, 3rd edition and *The Speckled Ban* were the choice. Students did not have any involvement in the text choosing process.

The first half of the classroom text, six chapters, was for Foundation English and the second half, six chapters, was used for upper Foundation English course. In fact, the New Headway text, which is labeled as an intermediate level, has been used since 2007 academic year. Traditionally, the classroom text was changed every two years, while the

external book every semester. After one year of using this book, there were some feedbacks from the faculty members. Kate revealed her disagreement in using the current text. She said:

Personally, I don't agree on the selected text because there are many other good classroom books available in the market. However, ... I should follow what the meeting says. I don't want to share my idea so much in the meeting since most of the meeting body is senior faculty members. I want to pay respect to them. So I had better be quiet. I just followed whatever they say. However, in my class, I have full authority to manipulate the text and contents. Many parts of the current text have been cut off from my teaching as they are too complicated and they are not relevant to the exam papers..... I choose only the ones that relevant to the tests, quizzes, or exams. Mostly I highlight the grammar points. I know that my class is a sort of tutorial session. You can see that in my class I use lots of additional handouts collecting from other texts. I spend lots of time on collecting these handouts because I think that students should have been given extra exercises, besides exercises in the textbook. Many occasions I ask my students to find supplementary activities relevant to the topics they are studying from the library and present them in class.

Bam shared her idea on the selected text. She said:

Personally, I don't agree in using the current text. It's simply because the reading passages are very difficult and out of students' contexts. Vocabulary introduced in the text is too difficult. Moreover, the contents are tough for our students. You

may know how weak our students are... So this causes problems for their learning process.

In previous years, faculty members from the department wrote communicative English classroom textbooks for the foundation English courses. But now they changed to use market texts. Mimi showed the preference of using self-written text over ready-made ones. She said:

We have to change the course text every two years because we need to expose to the most updated text available in the market, but sometimes we use home-made texts. It means we wrote the text by ourselves. This is our tradition that has been practicing for years. I think if we write by our staff, we know and we can gear our text to the directions we want. We all know what grammar points, levels of vocabulary, reading passages, and communicative skills should be focused on. We know the level of our students. The contexts are relevant to southern Thailand and students are familiar with them. I don't know when it exactly started to use ready-made books from the market. Of course, it's colorful and written by native speakers of English. But some contexts are far from our students' reach and understanding. Anyway, I think for those students who have to study this course for more than one time, because of some reasons, they should not study the same text. And I think changing text is to serve the need of faculty members as well because they may get bored with the same text, I believe.

Bam agreed with using self-written text. But at the end, she said, "It depends on the decision of the English section and our teachers together."

Apart from the main textbook used in this course, the external reading short novel was also taken into the course. The storybook was “*The Speckled Band*”, written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The notion behind adopting a novel book is that students would be able to expose to the target language in a form of short story and reading comprehension. Ann said:

Studying foreign language requires learners to expose to the target language as much as possible because studying language is a skill subject. Students are supposed to be with the language everyday. They should not recite isolated vocabulary but students need to understand when such vocabulary is used in sentences. The reading could also enhance their vocabulary used in reading contexts. However, this is an ideal.

The course used only a simplified version of the novel, rather than the original text because the language structures and vocabulary are easily understood by students who study English as a foreign language. The difficulty of the language in reading long passages like this one is classified as an intermediate level. It could go with the classroom text because they were in the same level. Importantly, this external reading text was not brought to the teaching class. In other words, this activity was a self-study task. It was designed to encourage students to read outside classroom. This was an agreement from the meetings. If students encountered any problems and needed any help, they could consult their friends who were in the English major. The intention of this task was to help students to be responsible in the lessons and to value the self study approach. In reality, Ann perceived it in the opposite way. She noted:

I would say that this activity doesn't work at all for these groups of students. I don't think that students read it as we expected. Before the final exam, they ask someone, especially their friends who are in English major, to read and translate the text into Thai. Sometimes English tutors outside the campus translated it and they sell the translated version to our students. Then the students read the Thai translation version only and ignore the English version... This could be problems for students as they meet the exam questions; they can't answer the questions because questions are in English. So how can these students understand the questions? And how can they answer them in English? It's impossible... So I think that our initial expectation has been twisted... At the beginning of the semester, we ask them to buy the book which cost less than one hundred bath [less than three dollars]. Many of them refused. They just copy from friends.

Language lab. In order to complete this course, students were supposed to be in the language lab once a week as it was stated in the course syllabus. This was part of the self study program and there was no score of attention anymore. Here, they were able to practice listening and speaking skills. Short and easy dialogues and conversations in daily life were among the topics in the lab. The students listened to the English language conversations from native speakers. After listening, they were asked to follow the conversation patterns and the voice of students was recorded. Mostly, the topics were related to the classroom teaching themes. The lab software, "Tell Me More," bought from Bangkok, was an interactive program and students could have an interaction with the presented dialogues. In the lab class, there was a lab assistant monitoring the class, and the faculty members were optional to attend. However, the faculty members could trace

their students learning performances and achievements through a report from the lab assistant. Ann emotionally expressed her idea on the listening lab. She said:

I'm very frustrated with our students right now who often keep asking me whether or not they will get scores in attending the lab. Sometimes I scold them back because they should realize that this is a self learning activity which I told them in the first few weeks. They can improve listening and speaking skills if they attend. They should not go there for getting scores or something... Let me tell you frankly, many years ago faculty members were obliged to attend the lab to teach students. But now, you see, they are optional. I would say none of us attend. Believe me. There could be many reasons. One of them is that listening lab class doesn't count as a teaching load. Is it very straight forward to you?

Self Access Learning Center. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences provided a room for self learning activities, which was called "Self Access Learning Center," located in the first floor of the school faculty building. The room is equipped with reading materials and supplementary exercises as well as cable TV channels. Many channels broadcasted in English, such as, CNN and BBC. All students who studied Foundation English were unconditionally invited to join ~~in~~ this center ~~as~~ to enhance or practice whatever skills they wanted to learn in English. Moreover, there were 10 Teaching Assistant students (TAs), who were senior English major students, to offer assistance that students might need. TAs were available from 9.00 a.m. till 5.00 p.m on Monday through Friday. They took turn to the center because TAs also had to attend their classes. They were available to be asked and consulted about English lessons of Foundation English. Besides giving consultation, they were in charge of grading students' exercises, workbooks, and quizzes. Sometimes

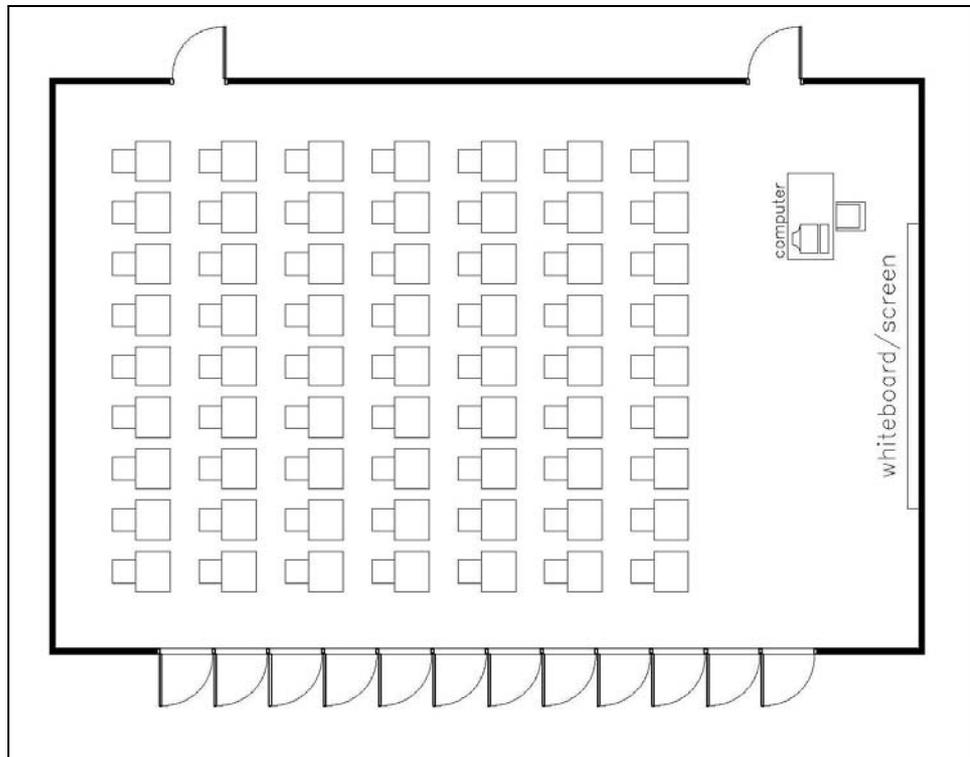
these students held tutorial sessions, especially before mid-term and final exams. Honey said:

Many students may not know that there are other activities besides turning in their workbooks here... I can't see our students watch TV in English or check out books from the center. I think the center doesn't meet its main objectives anymore. Sometimes I could see TAs are reading their study book or chat on the Internet because no student comes.

Physical Classrooms Arrangement

Students' chair arrangement. The university had one main central study building serving for all faculties or schools in the campus to hold regular classes, but not for lab class or any classes that require special equipment. All English classes including Foundation English were taken in this four-story building which accommodated 40 classrooms. The typical rooms were about 6x12 meters wide and could hold 50-60 students. However, there were a number of lecture halls which could accommodate students from 100-500. These large rooms were not for Foundation English courses. The plan of the typical room is shown in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7. Map of Classroom.



Lecture chairs were used and placed in rows and columns, about 8-10 chairs in a row, and they were close to each other. Foundation English class is usually not more than 55 students, so the seats are enough to accommodate the whole class. However, the chairs could be easily moved depending on activities initiated by particular classes and occasions, such as small group discussions, mid-term or final exams.

During the class observations, the first or first two rows were normally unoccupied unless the instructors asked them to move forward. Students preferred to sit from the third row until the end of the class, especially those who came earlier. If there were any students who came late, they were automatically supposed to sit in the front rows. Male and female students sat in a group according to their gender. It was unlikely

to see students from different genders sitting together. Most females sat in the front and males were in the back. This happened in all classes. The ratio of male and female in the class was about one to three.

In Kate's class, the researcher could see she explicitly asked her students to move closer to the instructor's desk. Then, she said in Thai, "Don't be afraid of me" several times before starting teaching. Then she said, "Please come closer." At the beginning, no one tended to move. They looked at their friends for a few seconds before slowly moving themselves to the front row. In fact, the students were familiar with their instructor because my observation was taken a month and a half after the semester started. Still, students were reluctant to sit in the front rows.

In Pla's class, she wanted to divide the classroom into six small groups for certain language activities, she told students that within one group, both genders should be mixed up, so that students could be able to share views among males and females. She asked students to count from one to six. Obviously, it was not by voluntarily basis. However, some groups had no males because the number of male students was relatively small compared to their female classmates. In general, from four class observations there were only two classes, Pla's and Kate's, which held small group activities for half and hour after an hour of lecture and PowerPoint presentations.

Pertaining to the classroom arrangement, many students preferred to sit on the same chair where they sat in the first few days after the semester started. In fact, the instructors did not ask them to do so. Sandy perceived about reshaping the classroom chairs and students' preference to sit on the same seat. She said:

In my class, I never use or rearrange the chairs into other shape or small groups. I found many obstacles to do so. First, we have limited time in teaching. You know, we are given only one and a half hour per period but we have to cover many content topics. The time doesn't allow us to move chairs back and forth and hold discussion; even I know that discussion is essential in learning process. Second, we have too many students in a class, so it's hard to manage into a U shape as it should be... From my observation, many students wanted to sit on the same chair. Actually, I don't want them to do so. I think if they change their seat, they can meet and make new friends. It's hard to encourage them to change their seat. It is probably because they want to stay together with their friends. They don't know friends who come from different majors.

In the class observation, the Muslim females, who wore scarf or hijab, usually sat together, and they were the predominant group of the classroom population. While the females students who did not wear a scarf sat among themselves. This picture was commonly seen in Foundation English classrooms. Mimi said, "Students from the same major subjects or the same school year tend to sit together because they are intimate, easy to talk, and even easy to copy from each other." Rain also supported Mimi's idea; she said:

In my class there are many major subject students. In each different major they prefer to sit together. It's understandable that because they are close to each other, but they should sit with others as well, so they will learn from others. Another thing that I don't really like about sitting together among close friends is they

copy exercises with each other. When I check the exercises, I know right away.

The master copy is only one or two.

However, Bam pointed out in a positive way of having chairs in rows as all students could easily see their instructor and the PowerPoint presentation on the screen.

Bam said:

Students in my class sit in rows while the teacher is given a space in front of the class. This is good for me because students are able to see their teacher and see the blackboard and even my PowerPoint presentation easily. If I let them make a U-shape or circle, for instance, it would be difficult for them to see the presentations posted on the screen. In my class, I have lots of PowerPoint presentations. So, setting chairs like this is quite realistic for me. However, when I have quizzes, I ask them to separate the chairs. In the midterm or final exams, of course, the chairs are separated by staff.

Fon, a colleague of Bam, agreed with arranging the chairs in rows as Bam said but she had her own reason. She said:

In my class, I hardly move the chairs. The chairs are placed as they are, meaning that they look like a classroom pattern. Besides lecturing, I'm sitting in front of the class and students are sitting in rows, I also employ a conversation or dialogue system. The idea is that I may ask a couple of students, one is sitting in front rows and his or her dialogue partner should be a student from the back or the other rows, but not from the same row. If I put like this, students should speak louder in order to get his or her dialogue partner heard. At the same time, the classmate can

also hear their speaking or dialogues. This is my strategy and I use it in many classes too.

Mimi said she used to form small groups in her reading class as she noted:

The lecture chairs in my classroom are put into rows unless I have group activities which are not often. In reading class which is a part of this course, I normally asked students to form a circle for discussion. I let them to discuss the introduced topics. As you know, sometimes it's hard to get the students to discuss since their language is not enough and are passive to the group discussion.

In sum, teaching Foundation English in TSU Campus A employed a classroom where the instructor had a certain space in the front and students had their own space. All students face to the same direction – their instructor.

Classroom teaching facilities. Every room was equipped with air conditioners and electric fans due to the tropical rainforest climate in southern Thailand situated near the equator, and it is hot and humid almost all year round. The desk for instructors was set in front of the class room and equipped with a computer, overhead projector, LCD projector, and opaque projector. Most of the rooms had a blackboard and chalk and some were white board and markers. Faculty members could not use the computer or opaque projector, unless they officially register their name at the technician desks by filling a certain form and then the technicians would unlock and switch on the computer every teaching period. A microphone was available upon request at the technician room. Filling the form was also a regulation. Two out of four of the observed classrooms faculty members used a microphone in their teaching. Kate did not use it because “I don't really like using a microphone and my voice is loud enough, I think. Using a microphone makes

my hands busy in holding it and it's also difficult to move myself here and there." Bam had her own reason too. She needed a microphone because:

I have to teach almost three hours in a row. Imagine if I don't have a microphone to help projecting my voice, I will be in trouble. However, before I can use this stuff including computer and other educational technology which are available in the class, I have to write my request to the technicians. In fact, you have to request them every time when you want to use. Now we are allowed to write the form only once a semester. It's ridiculous if I have to ask every time I want to use.

Teaching Environment

Teacher-student interactions. In the class of Foundation English, all faculty members used Thai as a medium of instruction, except some classroom language sentences were occasionally used, such as, 'What have you learned from the passage?' 'What is it about?' 'Do you understand?' 'Understand?' Nid gave her reason why she spoke Thai to students, she noted, "I mostly use Thai in my class, even this is an English class. It's almost impossible to speak English to students because students won't understand what I'm saying. Their listening and speaking backgrounds are obviously weak. How can they understand?" Ann said sarcastically, "Oh... how can we speak English? Sometimes when I speak Thai, they don't really understand what it means. Speaking English in this class is even far beyond students' reach." Mimi used to try to speak English in many cases, especially at the beginning of her work here many years ago. Lately, she tried to speak English slowly. However, she said, "... but when I see students' faces after I spoke English for a while, they understand nothing. Now I had

better use Thai all the way long, except some classroom language.” From the observation, Mimi spoke some easy classroom language.

Concerning question-answer interaction, the researcher could hardly hear it in the classes. When the questions were articulated by the instructors, the class was silent as students might be afraid or were shy to response. Sandy said:

It’s a common thing if you come to my class and you rarely hear any responses from students. I don’t know whether they understand or not. I don’t think this situation happens only in my class. As you know our classroom language is Thai. I ask them in Thai. They have no confidence to answer. I think they may be afraid that their answers will be wrong. If so, they are shy to the classmates. When I was a novice teacher, I was frustrated with this. Now I’m okay, just accept what the reality is.

Sometimes the instructors repeated the questions for a few times asking students on the topics. If there was no answer from the class, they called students’ names instead. If so, the students would be hesitant in providing the answers. Nid said:

My strategy is that I usually ask my students one by one, by calling their real names, and I hold up my score record sheet intending to send a message that I will give scores if the question is answered. If they provide answers correctly, I pretend marking scores on the sheet. Actually, I don’t take these scores to count in the final grade any more but the students believe I do. I just want to stimulate their responses. I think this strategy works well in my class. I think our students are very score-oriented. They will do classroom activities if I have scores for such activities. Otherwise, they will be passive and did not pay much attention.

In many cases when the instructors asked questions in a big group with no specific names articulated, the responses came from the same students who were sitting in the front seats. In the worse cases, when there was no answer from the class, the instructors started showing their negative feelings towards students. Mimi used to be emotional when her class was silent after the questions were repeatedly articulated. She said:

When I ask students for several times and no responses from the floor, I will be emotional. Sometimes I can't control my emotion by expressing not good words because, you see, they are supposed to know something we learned last period or the meanings of very simple words. It shows me that they don't be prepared for the class and don't revise the lesson or even don't pay attention to the class either. I know that I have to control my emotional expressions in class. This is one of my weak points.

Ann also was emotional when she encountered the same situation like Mimi. She said:

I'm really frustrated about students' reactions. Sometimes I can keep my feeling inside but sometimes I can't. It depends on the situation. Now I change myself, if there is no answer, I'll answer myself. Don't waste the time. I don't care whether they know or not. It makes me happy. I tell them the answer and the students just write down what the answers are. I know that they just want to have the right answers; they never try to answer themselves.

Another faculty member, Kate, found a different way to facilitate students' participation when they did not supply responses. She said, "Are you awake?", "What are you doing?", "Are you with me now?" Again, the class was silent. Eventually, she

unveiled the answers and students just wrote down what she said. Sometimes Kate made big noise to draw attention from the class. “I hit the table to call their attention because they need to listen to my explanation carefully. I believe they don’t pay enough attention to my lecture, why they can’t give answers,” said Kate. When students got bored with the lesson, the researcher could observe in Kate’s class that she just told short joke stories in Thai for a few minutes. As the students laughed, she moved back to the classroom contents again.

At the end of a teaching period, the faculty members liked to ask questions like, ‘Do you have any questions?’ either in Thai or English but still nothing was heard from the floor. Students seemed ready to leave the room. Rain had some assumptions upon student passive reactions. She said:

Why students don’t want to question in class? I think there are some reasons. One, they don’t know the contents. Two, I think they are probably don’t know how to good form questions. Three, they are shy to speak in the public like classroom.

Four, I think they don’t want the classmate knows that they don’t know. They had better ask their friends or just forget it.

As far as the class observations were concerned, the researcher could see an active interaction when the teacher divided students into small groups. Students were happy to share their ideas on behalf of the group. It was seen in Pla’s and Kate’s classes. They spent about half an hour for small group activities. When the instructors asked questions, the students were encouraged to participate in answering questions, especially in Kate’s class. She held a fun competition environment on grammar points that had been presented. Scores were written on the board if any group could answer correctly. The

Participants in each group took an active part in the activity. Students enjoyed answering the teacher's questions posted on the screen. Only some active groups mostly supplied the answers, while some other groups remained silent. This was totally different from the lecture hour of the class.

Using pronouns. There were many pronouns made by the faculty members to call students and address themselves. There were a few words used to address themselves, such as, "Kroo" (teachers in general) "Ajarn" (university teachers), "Phom" (a subjective pronoun for males). "Kroo" and "Ajarn" can be used by both male and female faculty members. In the case of Pla's class, she always called herself, "Ajarn Pla." While the pronouns used to address the students, the researcher heard many words too, such as, "Nak Suksa" (university students) "Khun" (you- a term used in general and in formal situations), "Luuk" (daughters), "Tee Rak" (darlings). For example, Pla spoke to her students. She said, "Now *Ajarn Pla* wants *Nak Suksa* to count from one to six in order to divide you into six groups." The sentence was in Thai. Sometimes the researcher heard Pla called her students "Luuk" as well. In Mimi's class she sometimes called her students "Tee Rak," especially when she was happy with students' responses. Calling students by real names and nicknames were frequently heard. It depended on the intimacy of both sides and characteristics of each faculty members. The pronouns of addressing students were interchangeable among these words. Interestingly, Bam's class, all students wore temporary name tags with their nickname on it. So she called her students by nicknames. Most of students in Bam's class were freshmen and my observation was made in the first month after the semester started.

Movement in class. During the lecture hour, Bam and Mimi sat on the assigned chair, while Kate sat on the table. Pla stood all the time at the vicinity of instructor's table. She frequently moved between the screen and students' area. Most of them used a PowerPoint presentation explaining grammar, except Bam. Sometimes they moved to the screen pointing the words or sentences they were mentioning. Bam just sat on the chair and used an oral presentation. After an hour of the lecture, they held language activities relating to the grammar points presented. In the activity session, the faculty members moved themselves to students' spaces. In Bam's class, she made a small group presentation and sang a song. Pla's class held small groups and let each group think about adjectives and put them into sentences. When the activity was over, she asked students to clap their hands together. The class was relaxed.

Grammar-based contents. According to the course objectives stating in the syllabus (APPENDIX G), the focus point of this course is on four communicative skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing and to get the students understand English-speaking country cultures. However, all of the interviewed faculty members perceived that this Foundation English course was grammar-based instead of being communicative. Nid shared her views on the contents of this course. She said:

“I think this course is grammar-based because we all agree that grammar points are important and we really focus on them. You can see that all workbooks, quizzes, and even exercises are testing grammar. If you look at our exam papers, grammar has the highest weight of scores compared to other parts. My teaching has to gear toward grammars instead of communication. Otherwise, my students can't answer the exam papers. ... I think teaching grammar might be easy to

teach, if we look at the teachers' side. Grammar is very static, so the teachers can reuse their teaching presentation over and over, I think.

Sandy added that this course should put emphasis on communication "... but I don't know why we change to be grammar-based." Ann also supported:

It's no doubt that Foundation English is grammar-based. I know that grammar is important in English, but why we have to study complicated structures, such as, past perfect continuous tense, which is hardly found in real life. On the other hand, students don't know even the basic tense like present simple tense and simple words. I think teaching grammar is the easiest way and easy to evaluate."

It was confirmed from the class observation; all faculty members spent an hour out of one and a half hour explaining grammar points and translate them into Thai. All observed classes totally relied on the classroom text.

Teaching approach. Either grammar class or reading class was predominantly taught by lectures. The instructors were ready with the prepared PowerPoint presentations, explaining how to use certain English tenses, modal verbs, and reported speech, for instance. Explanation was undertaken in Thai in order to help students understanding. "I know English grammar is complicated. If we speak English, the students will get nothing. Even we use Thai; I have to repeat the same thing for a few times," said Rain. She elaborated further:

I use lectures as the main teaching approach right now. I know that it's not good for teaching foreign language, but I don't know. This is the way we do and we work under some limitations... If you look at the course syllabus, it might suggest

you that teacher-centered approach is used in class because we don't state clearly about classroom activities.

The other faculty member, Honey, she said, "To be honest, I use only lecture in my class. It's more practical to our situation. We have more than 50 students in a class, how can we hold a communicative approach?" Ann and Rain mentioned the same point that the main strategy of teaching was lectures too. They hardly used small group discussion.

The roles of students while their instructor was giving lecture were to listen to it carefully and write down what it was projected on the screen and the instructor explanations. Ann got annoyed with using a PowerPoint presentation sometimes because "when I use it, projecting on the screen, the students just write down what it appears on the screen. They never write my explanation. It's like school students. When they read the notes later on, they may not understand what it means."

At the end of the interview sessions, the researcher also asked them how many percentage of employing teacher-centered (TCA) over learner-centered (LCA) approaches. All ten faculty members evaluated that it would probably be about 70%-90% of teacher-centered approach. For example, Sandy said her class was:

My class was not 100% LCA for sure. If I have to evaluate roughly my class I would say 30% LCA and 70% TCA. I know this is not an ideal classroom. I think if we have to implement the LCA seriously, teachers will be tired, especially with our current students.

There were some other reasons why LCA could not be taken place in EFL classroom.

Honey stated:

I think this approach [LCA] is good anyway. Faculty members should act as facilitators or guides to students.... Personally, I don't think that we can use LCA with our students right now because they have very limited background in English ability and enthusiasm in learning English. It's hard to occur in our school system. If you do it without understanding the real philosophy of it and good management, students may learn nothing from the class. They can't answer exam questions.

Fon also shared her reasons by saying:

We need more space to run activities. Our classroom has limited space to move chairs around since we have more than 50 students. The only thing we can do is a pair work activity. The number of students is too big to have LCA activities. The ideal class number should be around 25. But we have double. If we had that number, we could make a circle and hold discussions.... Students are provided spaces for their active participation and the role of teachers should be limited, less speaking, let students talk. Teachers just guide and facilitate the class. Most importantly, LCA needs more time to run the class, but we don't have such huge time to play with students.

Rain proposed her idea about the feasibility in organizing LCA classroom by providing chances for students to learn as a group both inside and outside classroom. She said:

In my idea, if we really want to hold LCA in our Foundation English class, we need to have mini-projects posted to students by letting them work together among themselves. These projects can reinforce them to have self-study skills

both inside and outside classroom. It's something like task-based activities.

Teachers should assign certain tasks. At the same time, teachers have to work even harder than before because they need to prepare the lesson carefully.

Initiating task-based projects requires thinking carefully from the teachers' side before throwing the initiatives to students for further implementation. Sometimes teachers may get tired with activities like these.... Students should be given spaces to think freely what they want to find information and present it to the class. In reality, this idea can hardly happen in our classroom because students should have some basic knowledge of communication in English. If not, only a handful of students work hard and the rest of the group won't work and withdraw themselves from the group.

Evaluations. The evaluation was based on the course syllabus and all 30 groups of Foundation Class followed it. Bam said:

I just follow the course syllabus which states midterm 30%, final exam 45% including external reading part, the rest are quizzes, exercises, class attendance. I think the evaluation is grounded on summative system. In fact, I don't really appreciate this evaluation scale, but I should follow the meeting outcomes.

Nid responded to this evaluation system. She said, "If we only count the midterm and final exams, it's not fair for students. Personally, I don't agree with this system.

Participation and learning process in class should be considered the most important part."

The researcher also observed the exam papers both midterm and final. They were in the same pattern with three parts—vocabulary, grammar and expressions, and reading. About 80% of the papers were close-ended questions and multiple choices.

Perspectives of faculty members towards students. Statistics from the Registrar's Office (TSU, 2006, 2007, 2008) revealed that more than half of students who studied Foundation English course failed or got Fs which was equivalent to Es under TSU system. The failed students were increasing in recent years. Faculty members shared views on students' performances, mostly in negative ways.

The first point was about students' weak background in English and inappropriate study skills. Their English capability was obviously lower than university level students. Honey said:

...some students don't even understand very basic words, such as how to use verb to be in a sentence. I think they have negative view towards English since they were in high school.... Once they come to the university, they never pay attention to this course, simply because they don't like it. I think the worse problem is that they don't have university study skills. They perform here like they did in high school. I'm not sure how often they go to the library.

Fon added, "We have to accept the reality that our input students are low in English background, far from our expectation and course contents we present in this course." Nid agreed on this point by saying, "Generally, students are academically weak, but it's challenging."

Self-motivation was also a major concern among faculty members. Sandy said, "Obviously, I think students in my class lack interest in English and no self motivation in learning English. They don't care about their homework which was assigned to do before coming to class. They seem to ignore this task." Ann perceived her students:

The only thing I want to say here is that they are very lazy [raise her voice], irresponsible, unenthusiastic in learning, and very passive. I'm so frustrated with them... Poor responsibility is not acceptable to me. They come to the university for a degree, not for knowledge. They never realize the importance of studying at all... They destroy their parents' expectations.

Nid pointed out one example from her class. She said, "Realistically, there are less than 10% of students who are prepared before coming to class... Once I said this activity or exercise has marks, they will do it. If not, they just forget it." Another example of showing low motivation of students was that they showed unwillingness to come to class when the faculty member wanted to have a make-up class. Rain expressed that:

If I can't catch up the lesson plan stated in the course syllabus, I need to hold make-up classes, sometimes in the evening time or on weekends. But the problem is that it's hard to schedule. I thought that weekends should be the best for our make-up class, but students say they want to go back home, instead of coming to class. I'm frustrated with this thing.

Fon expressed her disappointment towards students' performances. She asserted:

Sometimes I feel discouraged because I spend lots of time in preparing classroom lessons and activities, but at the end of the day they seem to learn nothing from me. It's like they never come to the class and know nothing about the introduced lessons. You can imagine how it would be if I didn't have a good preparation.

However, there were a number of students who were highly attentive and they studied hard. These group of students were responsive and active to class activities, did assignments by themselves, and they could adapt themselves to a university environment

very well. Mimi said, “A handful of my class students perform well. They are cheerful; they will do tasks whatever I ask them to do. I’m happy with this group.” Pla also mentioned. She said, “Some classes of mine are full of joy, especially the first few front rows. They are very attentive to the lessons.”

Faculty Preference of Learning Environment

Roles of Faculty Members

The role of faculty members is crucial in developing education. In the interview sessions, there were many interesting points worth mentioning here in order to provide some expectations from faculty members about their own roles. First, faculty members should be competent in the subject matters of English. Mimi said:

Teachers should really know the contents what he or she is teaching and should not mislead students. Because teachers should not present what in the text only, but they should know more than that... From my experience, I could see many teachers do not really know about English... This is very bad because teachers are role models to students. Students will remember what the teachers say. If the teachers say something wrong, then students will pronounce that words wrongly not only in the class, but also after class.

Sandy stated, “... students will remember whatever the teachers teach, such as pronunciation, grammar, word meaning, without any arguments. So, teachers are required to teach correctly.”

Next, being well prepared for the lessons was mentioned by Pla and Mimi. “Preparation prior leaving for class is the important role for teachers because good

preparation can help students' understanding easily," said Mimi. Pla supported this idea. She also said, "Even though preparation consumes lots of time because we have to know how to prioritize the presentation avoiding confusion. I think it worth doing. You see if teachers have good preparation, students will enjoy learning and eventually they will love studying English." Bam suggested that teachers should know their students' ability too. It would be easy for doing lesson plan. She noted:

The most important role for teachers is to understand their students—what are the strengths and weaknesses of each student. The teacher has to figure out this.

Otherwise, it would be problematic to some students. Some of them may understand through this presentation, but some may not. We can't use the same teaching approach to all students who have different background and motivation.

Teachers need to adjust according to the nature of student learning... We [the teachers] have the same topic but presentation can make in a variety of ways... If we know our students, class preparation is easy to make."

Fon added to Bam's idea, "Teachers should understand learning style of individual students, especially those who are weak and left behind. We [the teachers] need to pay equal attentions to all students."

After that, availability and accessibility of the instructors to students were crucial too. Kate said:

Teachers should be available if students need helps. It would be good if teachers build relationship like they are friends. So students are willing to talk and express themselves. Teachers should not put themselves in such high position. You know that it's hard to narrow the gap; the only way is the teacher should be friendly

with students as much as possible. It doesn't mean that if we are close to them, they won't pay respect to us. However, this is my personal idea.

Pla also supported, "I would like to see our students feel warm when they come to see their teachers. Sometimes they can't express their problems in class because of some reasons, so they should be able to express themselves freely outside class with teachers."

Another important teachers' role was to encourage learning atmosphere in class. Honey remarked, "I think faculty members should arouse or motivate a relaxing learning atmosphere and decrease tension in classroom. If the environment in class is unfriendly or tensed, students might feel unhappy and get bored in studying."

Apart from these, another role of faculty members was to teach the study skills and morals. Kate touched this point. She said, "Role of teacher should not focus only on subject contents but also on study and life skills. These skills can be with them forever." One activity that all ten faculty members agreed upon was that faculty members should supply lots of supplementary exercises in order to help Foundation English students to pass this course. For example, Sandy said, "drilling and bombarding with exercises are really needed to reinforce the students to understand the presented points."

Roles of Students

Faculty members expected a number of roles from students. First, students should change their attitude towards English. Honey mentioned, "they should delete any biases about English. How they can make themselves feel good and happy when they are studying English." Bam agreed, "Opening their mind is extremely important, so that it's easy for teachers to transmit knowledge into them. If they remain closed, how we can put knowledge on them."

Second, students needed to have self-motivation in learning. Mimi said, “they should realize why they have to study English.... They should know the purposes. If not, it’s useless to sit in the class and study what they do not like. Sandy added to this point:

If they have motivation, they don’t only study from their teachers or in classroom. There are countless English activities and lessons online. Studying English today is pretty much easy if students are willing and have motivation to learn themselves. The point is about self-motivation.

Ann supported this point:

From my observation, self-motivated students will expose themselves to English as much as they can. They will listen, talk, read, and write English a lot. I remember when I was an undergraduate student, I brought the dictionary to class every hour and when I had free time I went to the library reading books.

Third, students required to know study skills and implement them. For example, Kate said, “They [students] should read all hand-outs, do exercises, or look up some unfamiliar words from the dictionary before coming to attend class.” Pla elaborated further, “Active participation in class is the key too. If they don’t understand some points, they should ask right away. Students should not perceive teachers as something highly superior, an untouchable figure.” Bam clearly addressed that:

...learners need to spend their time in revising lessons after class. These are steps of study, not only English but other subjects as well. Reading or revising books after class can help students’ understanding ever better. In the class, they took a big chunk of subject contents. So, they need to digest them through reading

repeatedly before going to study the next period. On the other hand, if they leave their non-understanding there, it's hard to catch up the next period lessons.

Nid noted, "If they just attentively listen to what I'm teaching in class and do all exercises I supply them, I'm sure that they will be in a good shape. If so, I'm more than happy."

Summary

The description of a case study illustrated above projected as a portrait from collected data in the research site. In the next chapter, the researcher will analyze the case study through the lens of grid and group (Douglas, 1982).

CHAPTER V

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

The previous chapter presented a narrative portrait of the Department of English and Linguistics (DEL), detailed information of data. It provided some essential background and culture in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), including preferences of learning environments in the research setting. The information paved ways for further data analysis. The narrative portrait from the data presentation was derived from extensive observations, in-depth interview sessions, documents, as well as my personal experience as a faculty member in teaching EFL in Thailand Southern University (TSU) for three years.

This chapter focuses on the data analysis of the case study. The presentation of analysis is divided into two main parts. First, it analyzes the current culture of the organization ranking from the university to department levels including teaching culture. The presentation format followed the description of Harris (2005), focusing on four social environments: the stage (the space in which work occurs), the cast (the participants), the plot (activities and interactions within the organization), and the time (time frame for the activities and interactions). Grid and group considerations (Douglas, 1982) guide the analysis throughout the chapter.

Second, the questionnaire survey results will be discussed. It shows some expectations and preferences of faculty members in DEL toward their working atmospheres including classroom teaching. The survey employed the Grid and Group Assessment Tool (APPENDIX B), which was developed by Harris (2005) based on Mary Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology, was adopted for this study.

Organizational and Classroom Teaching Cultures

The analysis of the first part deals with the predominant culture of the university and DEL by using theater imagery to describe the holistic process of understanding the setting. Four aspects of an artistic performance were used to illustrate the analysis—the stage, the cast, the plot, and the time. The stage refers to all classrooms, technology, offices, language labs, and other physical environment like posters and handouts. These places and objects have certain significant meanings to participants and to the working culture in the organization.

The cast includes all parties or people who get involved in TSU and DEL, classroom setting, such as, administrators, dean, department heads, deputy department heads, section heads, faculty members, and students. The plot denotes activities and interactions among faculty members themselves and with students both inside and outside class. The time reflects a time frame where all activities are bounded by a specific time frame (Harris, 2005).

The Stage

Grid considerations (high-grid). The overall university administration system can be understood as a high-grid environment. The high-grid culture is framed with many

rules and regulations. Rules and regulations govern most activities and work arrangement and provide significant control features (Harris, 2005). It starts with a clear “chain of command” in TSU. The TSU president acted as a head of the organization with several vice presidents located in different campus. The vice presidents have been delegated some authority to handle certain affairs and their reports should appear on the president’s desk. Each position has its own rules and limited boundary of administration. This environment promotes limited opportunity for compliance to rules and procedures. For example, it took a week or two to get a letter from the department to the president’s office because it had to stop on many desks through various levels of administration.

In addition, according to Harris (2005), the high-grid environment reinforces division of labor and specialization, including authority-directed policies and procedures. In this case, the policy was directed by the president and he relayed down to his subordinates, vice presidents and deputy presidents in different levels, and even department head. All along the line of the chain of command, everyone had to work under the same policy suggested by the president.

The high-grid environment in the department is conveyed in a number of ways. The office space and facilities are handled differently depending on roles, positions, and work titles. One feature of high grid is that it is characterized by role distinction and explicit classification which keep them apart (Douglas, 1982). For example, the faculty members had their own small office. One room accommodated six offices, and each office was temporarily blocked with partitions, while the office of the department head was separated and spacious with a one-person support staff working in the front. Regarding technology use, six faculty members shared two sets of computer and one

printer. At the same time, the department head was provided one set of personal computer and a printer separately.

In the physical classroom management it was obvious that faculty members and students seemed to have a demarcation with the faculty member in the front. It is an explicit division of space and role between the faculty member and students. Students' seats were aligned in straight rows and columns, with the faculty member's desk positioned at the front of the room. It looks like an industrial assembly line. Sandy said, "I never use or rearrange the chairs into other shape or small groups. I found many obstacles to do so."

It also appeared in Fon's class. She said, "I hardly move the chairs. The chairs are placed as they are, meaning that they look like a classroom pattern." Similar situation occurred in Mimi's class. Basically, whatever reasons would be, the students' chairs were set as they were. Students felt secure in their space, while the faculty member was also comfortable sitting on the provided chair with a sense of distance in between. As Harris (1996) mentioned, individuals are secure in their social stratum because high-group system provides structured network that preserve them. This space arrangement is supporting evidence for a high-group environment.

Group considerations (low-group). The individual is unconstrained by external boundary of ascribed status (Douglas, 1982). This claim can be seen in the office arrangement among faculty members in DEL. Junior faculty members set their office next to each other, while the seniors set among themselves. In classrooms, students were happy to sit together among their groups and were not likely to associate with classmates from another group. The groups could mean religious affiliation, major subjects, school

years, genders. For example, Rain said, “In each different major they prefer to sit together... because they are close to each other.”

The sense of belonging into the group is low. According to Douglas (1982), if participants of the group and their interactions among the group are loosely integrated, they are categorized as low group. Each member in the social environment focuses on specific one-to-one goals rather than general organizational goals and activities.

The Cast

Grid considerations (high-grid). In all theater performances, roles and responsibilities of the players are important. The distinctions among participants are specifically defined by roles, rules, and responsibility (Harris, 2005). Differences in roles and responsibilities were evident among all people in TSU. For example, the distinctions between the administration staff with general faculty members, faculty members with support staff, support staff with janitors and field workers, faculty members with students are designated by their roles and job descriptions. They have a well-defined role and scope of employment. Lingerfelter (1996) described a role as the specialization of labor into tasks that are marked by differences in skill, authority, and compensation. The responsibilities and specialization explicitly appeared on their “Terms of References” (TOR), a contract between a staff member with a department where he/she belongs to. Every six months all staff members were required to clearly state their job responsibilities as well as the expected outcomes of each task on this contract. The performance assessment was totally based on the TOR.

In a high-grid environment, individuals do not freely transact with one another and retrain individual autonomy (Harris, 2005). From the interviews, the researcher

acknowledged that some faculty members had withdrawn themselves due to the fact that their voice would not be heard in the administration, especially in the meeting. In fact, the meeting is considered to be a place where everyone can express and share ideas freely. However, within the current context of working atmosphere, not everyone equally spoke in the meetings. Voices of senior faculty members were louder. Junior colleagues did not participate actively in sharing their views. They prefer to be silent and follow whatever the meeting suggested. As Bam mentioned about choosing a textbook which she did not agree and finished her sentence by saying, “It depends on the decision of the English section and our teachers together.” Junior faculty member’ voices were still unheard. There was an explanation from Kate. She said, “I want to pay respect them [senior faculty members].” This is a part of the Thai culture; juniors should be humble and should listen to the seniors because the juniors are placed in lower rank. Kate continued, “So I had better be quiet.”

TSU faculty members were also ranked according to their tenure – Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and lecturer. Each faculty member begins as a lecturer and has an opportunity for achieving promotion through publishing articles and conducting research. The professorship is highly recognized. Thus, the tenure distinguishes faculty members according to their specialization. This constitutes a high-grid environment.

The belief of seniority also has great influence in the classroom. Faculty members are considered superior (Hallinger, 2004). It is in line with a high grid environment where hierarchy is valued (Douglas, 1982). In a classroom context, the status of faculty members and students is unequal. Students who are considered inferiors should pay

respect to the superiors. For example, children or students should not be out-spoken or vocal in the presence of a superior. If they want to speak, they need to use soft noise with good manners. In fact, this culture has been gradually implanted while students were at the beginning of school years and wherever they are in the society of the Thai hierarchical culture. These beliefs were also brought to classrooms by both sides, faculty members and students.

From this expected role, it made students to be inactive in a way of interaction with the faculty member. Being silent is considered as a good manner, while asking rigorous questions might be translated into the opposite way. It is so common to see students stay silent when the questions are posted. Sandy illustrated, "It's a common thing if you come to my class and you rarely hear any responses from students. I don't know whether they understand or not. I don't think this situation happens only in my class."

Asking questions in a class might be offensive to classmates because most of students think that their function is to listen to the lecture without questioning. If someone has questions, he or she should help oneself or meet the faculty member individually outside classroom and sometimes they just forgot them. Rain provided several assumptions why students do not post questions in class. She elaborated:

One, they [students] don't know the contents, which parts of the contents should be asked because they don't understand. Two, I think they are probably don't know how to form questions. Three, they are shy to speak in the public. Four, I think they don't want the classmate knows that they don't know. It means that

when you already know why you have to ask the teacher. They had better ask their friends or just forget it.

The hierarchical structure of classrooms environment restrained students to freely express themselves in the class through asking questions or sharing ideas. In such environment, an individual student was constrained by the faculty members who were in a higher status of hierarchy and by the classmates who tended to hold back him or her from asking questions.

In a high-grid environment, faculty members kept certain distance with students. It could be seen from using pronouns. Faculty members addressed themselves “Ajarn” (university faculty members), or even “Kroo” (a general term for teachers), both inside and outside classes. It connoted an idea of a high and respectful status of being faculty members. Students also addressed “Ajarn” whenever they communicated with the faculty member. On the one hand, students wanted to show respect to their faculty members. On the other hand, it showed a top-down hierarchical relationship between them.

Group considerations (low-group). Low-group environment indicates low group-focused activities and relationships among the community participants, organizational loyalty is also weak (Douglas, 1982). On the ground, there were a couple of evidences presenting a low-group culture. The researcher could see the social interaction of DEL faculty members was low. Senior faculty members associated with their colleagues of the same age. Their association was evident not only within DEL, but also with other departments. For example, senior faculty members had their group for lunch and other social functions. The junior colleagues were separated in other group either from the same or different departments. It showed the relationships among faculty members were

weak and limited depending on the seniority rather than the DEL group. Harris (1994), said that one prominent feature of low group is limited allegiance to the larger group is limited.

Throughout the data presentation in Chapter 5, those interviewees were not satisfied with the management of Foundation English, such as, text selection, grading system, or grammar-based teaching. This dissatisfaction would not be freely expressed and discussed in the meetings as a group. However, they expressed this matter through individual interviews. The group solidarity was so weak because their expression in the meeting may not be heard or their participation may not make any differences (Harris, 2005). The individual bears no responsibility toward the duty of the group.

The Plot:

Grid considerations (high-grid). Classroom interactions reveal a high grid culture as faculty members enjoyed using a lecture as the main mode of teaching approach. The faculty member and students are explicitly distinguished by roles (Douglas, 1982). The classroom interactions were controlled by the faculty member and students played an audience role passively. The faculty members are perceived as final experts; students do not take a challenge to disagree with them. Students hesitated to criticize when they feel the faculty member has not done it well because students do not expect the faculty member to be wrong (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003). For example, Rain said, “I use lecture as the main teaching approach right now...This is the way we do...” Ann mentioned her students saying, “... the students just write down what it appears on the screen.” The oral and PowerPoint presentations of the contents were placed in between

the faculty member and students, rather than a communication showing concern to individual students' understanding. It is an example of a high-grid environment.

As the high-group environment is measured by the amount of work completed and standardized worksheets and exams (Harris, 2005), supplying handouts of the lectures or exercises by the faculty member is preferable. The student role is merely to remember what is presented in handouts. Kate provided evidence, she said, "...in my class I use lots of additional handouts collecting from other texts... I think that students should have been given extra exercises, besides exercises in the textbook." Nid also thought in the same way, she mentioned, "our students need to have lots of exercise, so I have collected exercises from various books and give them to practice."

The course evaluation was mainly based on examinations and quizzes. Bam said, "I just follow the course syllabus which states midterm 30%, final exam 45% including external reading part, the rest are quizzes, exercises, and class attendance." Three quarter of the total scores are reserved for formal examinations, only 25% are for classroom activities. The summative evaluation is used rather than formative assessment. The achievement of students' performance is measured by examinations. Honey gave an example about marking exam papers. She said, "...if students have a misspelling, they will be deducted 0.25. It's very delicate thing," This environment shows a clear portrait of high-grid culture where individual participants and activities are fully defined without ambiguity. The culture of high-group ties to measurable outcomes over the process of learning (Douglas, 1982).

Group considerations (low-group). In a low-group environment, individual interests frequently supersede the interest of collective arrangement (Lingenfelter, 1996).

The students in Foundation English were from various majors and school years. In some group, there were freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Each different group sat together. It indicates a low group environment in a sense that each different group keeps their main interest over the interest of the Foundation English class. They were not happy to associate with other groups. They showed unwillingness to talk and discuss with whom they were not familiar with. Thus, this is one of the hindering factors for faculty members to hold group work or other classroom activities. This is considered to be a low-group culture.

The Time:

Grid considerations (high-grid). A typical high-grid environment outlined calendar for specific activities. The calendar serves to shape and define both working agenda and working relationships (Harris, 2005, Lingenfelter, 1996). Educational calendar in TSU was announced through the campus website. Faculty member teaching calendar was also fixed and hard to move to other times or days because of time clashes with students' calendar and classroom availability. Faculty members were expected to teach the same amount of course hours—ten hours a week, regardless the time for research and other activities. Faculty members should inform the department head about office hours and teaching schedule and put them in front of the office, so that the students could know this information. Class attendance is clearly stated in the course syllabus. It said, “80% of class attendance is required.”

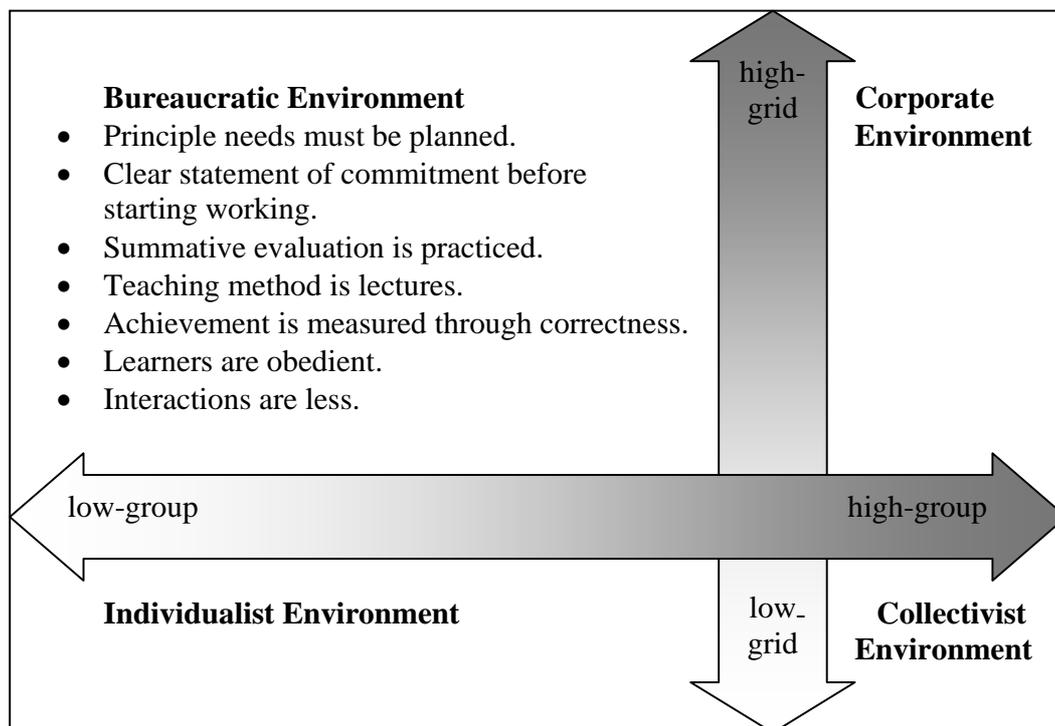
Group considerations (low-group). A low-group environment integrated loosely teamwork and coalition; work schedule was prioritized above social interaction (Harris, 2005). Individual faculty members were suggested to submit the teaching calendar to the

department head. Meetings schedule would not coincide with teaching class. Sometimes it was difficult to schedule the meeting time.

Summary

In summary, TSU administration system ranking from the top to departments showed a clear chain of command and rules. Job titles and descriptions are highly important. Faculty members are considered as final experts in instruction. A top-down communication flow with formal written and explicit letters is mainly practiced. Student achievement is measured only by time and final outcomes. All are bounded with the Thai hierarchical culture. Figure 8 illustrated the grid and group typology categorizing the working culture of faculty members in DEL under a bureaucratic social environment.

Figure 8. DEL Grid and Group Typology.



Cultural Preferences

In collecting information of working atmosphere preferences, the researcher sent a grid and group questionnaire to 20 EFL faculty members in DEL. The dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences officially issued a forwarding letter on his behalf, asking faculty members, who taught EFL in the DEL, to answer the attached survey questionnaire. About a week, the researcher received all 20 copies; even though sometimes the researcher had to follow up for several times to get the questionnaire back since some of them were busy with their teaching and office work.

Based on the Grid and Group Assessment Tool, the numbers on the continuum were numbered one through eight. In order to translate the numbers, Harris (2005) explained that number 1, 2, and 3 are considered as “low,” number 4 is “mid low,” number 5 is “mid high,” and number 6, 7, and 8 are “high.” From this assessment tool, it reveals the preferences of working environment including teaching culture among faculty members in DEL. The results are described through grid and group continuums and end up with a summary showing that what culture or social environment is preferable in their working atmosphere.

Grid Continuum: Low-Grid

128 of the responses were in the weak grid category, while 33 were mid low, 13 were mid high, and 66 were high grid. The questions that most obviously denoted low-grid included:

Item # 5: - I prefer a work atmosphere where individual teachers have full
autonomy in choosing instructional methods or strategies.

Item # 6: - I prefer a work atmosphere where individual teachers have encouraged to participate or take ownership of their education.

In a grid continuum, faculty members prefer their work atmosphere under low-grid (see APPENDIX E). The grid consideration gauges the degree of an individual faculty member's freedom but it is held back by social roles and expectations (Harris, 2005). From the survey, faculty members chose to work under non-hierarchical authority structures including minimal rules and role prescriptions. Working under a tight hierarchy is required to strictly follow rules or regulations which are mostly set by authorized people posted in the top levels. From these rules or expected roles, they have a limited space to exercise their own creativity and potentials for their workplace especially in their teaching. For example, they mostly chose the first item, stating that "I prefer a work atmosphere where authority structures are non-hierarchical." Thus, they need to be unchained the hierarchical order system and rules and be independent.

Faculty members would like to have independence in choosing textbooks, even their teaching methods. This low-grid environment promotes a sense of freedom and individual worth. As the case of Foundation English, there were many groups and many faculty members got involved in teaching this course. In fact, faculty members had certain freedom in choosing classroom textbook and external reading novel books by holding meetings for several times to share and discuss ideas and eventually to allow all faculty members to think and suggest their proposals in the meetings. It sounded like an equal sharing because every individual member had been given the right to propose and talk.

However, some faculty members did not like the selected textbook. As it is shown in Kate's interview, she said, "I don't agree on the selected text because there are many other good classroom books available in the market." Bam also had the same idea, "Personally, I don't agree in using the current text. It's simply because the reading passages are very difficult and out of students' contexts. Vocabulary introduced in the text is too difficult. Moreover, the contents are tough for our students." This dissatisfaction could mean that the textbook selection process described above does not really serve the faculty members' freedom. Kate pointed the reason in her dissatisfaction that "I don't want to share my idea so much in the meeting since most of the meeting body is senior faculty members." Faculty members have some limitations in expressing ideas in the meeting. She might want some spaces or independence for faculty members to think and even to find good textbook for their class. Freedom of choosing does not only mean through meetings, it could be other solutions.

The low-grid learning atmosphere allows faculty members to personalize their teaching for each student. From the survey, faculty members selected their "teaching and learning atmosphere where instruction is individualized or personalized for each student." Each individual student may have different learning strategies. "One fits all" concept can not be applied in this environment because the nature of each student, such as, learning approaches, motivations, and backgrounds, is different. Bam mentioned the importance of customizing in teaching to each individual student; she said, "...role for teachers is to understand their students -- what are the strengths and weaknesses of each student... Some of them may understand through this presentation, but some may not. We can't use

the same teaching approach to all students who have different background and motivation. Teachers need to adjust according to the nature of student learning.”

The relationships between faculty members and students play a vital role for classroom environment. However, a gap of the faculty members and students remained wide, faculty members expressed to have a closer relationship. Kate suggested that:

Teachers should be available if students need helps. It would be good if teachers build relationship like they are friends. So students are willing to talk and express themselves. Teachers should not put themselves such a high position. You know that it’s hard to narrow the gap, the only way is that teachers should be friendly with students as much as possible.

It shows that faculty members realized there is a wide gap with students. So, they expected to narrow it down through establishing friend-like relationships. Talking about personal information of each other or even holding icebreaking activities may be needed. If the relationships are established, students feel secure to access faculty members and also the classroom will be relaxed. Honey supported this idea. She said, “I think faculty members should arouse or motivate a relaxing atmosphere and decrease tension in classroom.” Thus, establishing good relationships with students can bridge the gap and create relaxed classroom atmosphere. The low-grid environment of student-teacher relationships might occur.

Most low-grid items were chosen; however, the survey shows that one high-grid item was highly rated. Faculty members prefer to work under explicit job description (item # 2). It sends a message that the faculty members would be happy to work under

their specialization and everyone has their own Terms of References (TOR) which was being used at that time.

Group Continuum: High-Group

177 of the responses were in the high-group category, while 21 were mid high, 41 were mid low, and 21 were low group. The questions that most obviously denoted high-group included:

Item # 3: I prefer a work atmosphere where intrinsic rewards primary benefit everyone at the department.

Item # 7: I prefer a work atmosphere where curricular goals are generate collaboratively.

Item # 11: I prefer a work atmosphere where responsibilities of teachers and administrators are clear or communal with much accountability.

Item # 12: I prefer a work atmosphere where most decisions are made corporately by consensus or group approval.

Under group continuum where the degree of the people is valued through collective relationships to a larger social unit or organization, faculty members prefer to work under high-group environment. They value the relationships among all members in DEL and unity of the group. According to the survey results, faculty members' socialization and work are expected to be incorporated or united. The intrinsic rewards should primary benefit everyone at the department over individual. It indicates that the goal or the existence of the group prioritize over individual's interests.

For example, curricular goals are generated collaboratively. In order to set a curriculum including its goals, the department head or the executive members in DEL did

not design it themselves, but they held a working committee comprising of faculty members who got involved in teaching, or holding activities. The ad hoc committee members sat together to discuss and find consensus in designing a curriculum. The researcher had an opportunity to observe the meetings. They had rigorous debates and justifications in plotting a curriculum. Every meeting member was assigned to study and do research in particular topics and should be ready to present it in a meeting next time. Once the curriculum was drafted, it was sent to the readers to provide further comments and suggestions. The readers were well-known scholars in particular fields recognized by the community and the university, mostly those who worked in different universities. They may have different views towards the draft curriculum. This whole process starting from the beginning till the end requires a good teamwork. Because of involving of many people, it takes a period of time to finish before submitting to the university council for further approval. This example shows the collaborative working as to get a group consensus. However, faculty members may like to get real involvement in other tasks. It does not mean only academic tasks, but social activities should be held in showing the group cohesiveness as well.

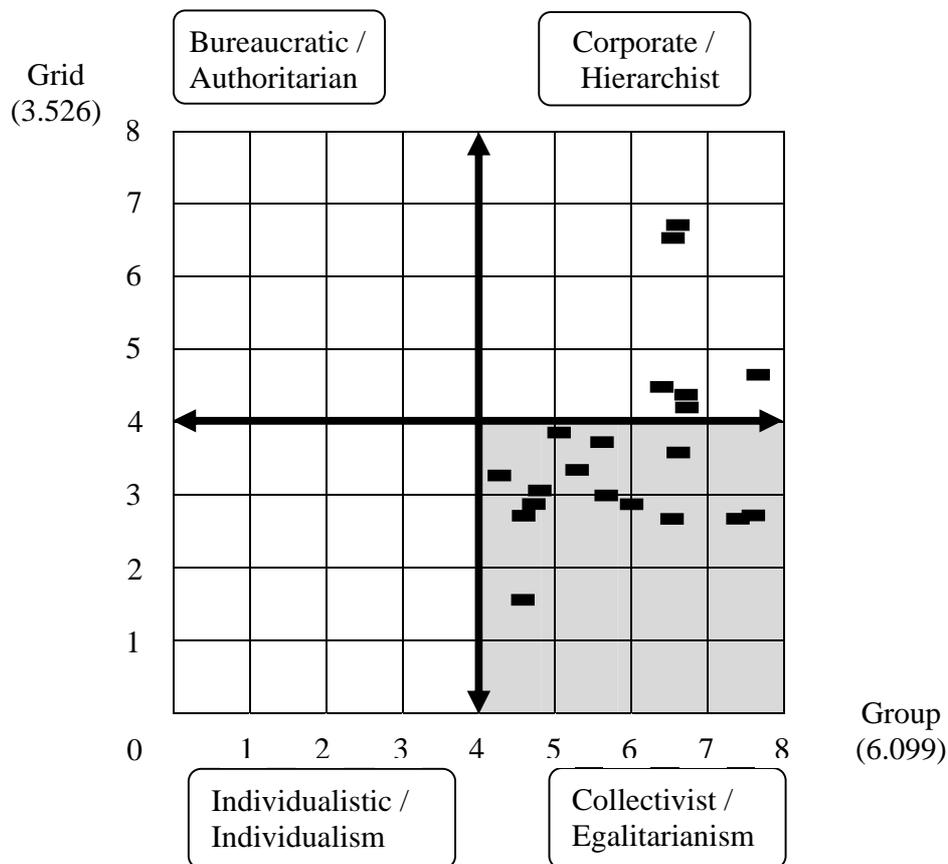
However, the meeting does not mean every individual participant has really an equal opportunity to share in the meeting. The hierarchical atmosphere remains there and everywhere. Promoting a really involvement of participants in the department is highly needed by the faculty members, according to the survey. Faculty members expected to have a culture of egalitarianism or loyalty to the department. This is one of predominant features of strong group environment. DEL is expected to hold good interaction of the

group and get all faculty members and students involved in order to uphold allegiance to the whole department rather than its individual members.

The survey showed very clearly that DEL faculty members hoped to have an accountability of individual responsibilities. It includes all levels of hierarchical administration and all faculty members in the DEL. The executive staff, comprised of the department head, deputy department heads, and section heads, is mostly concerned with administrative affairs with little involvement from the faculty members. High-group environment suggests to have more accountable and more space in administration process.

Grid and Group Assessment Tool results described above can be plotted to represent an actual case where a number of survey responses are clustered in the collectivist quadrant, 14 out of 20, with a few responses or six members scattered in corporate area as shown in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9. Clustered Points of Individual Cases.



Grid and Group Summary: Collectivist Environment

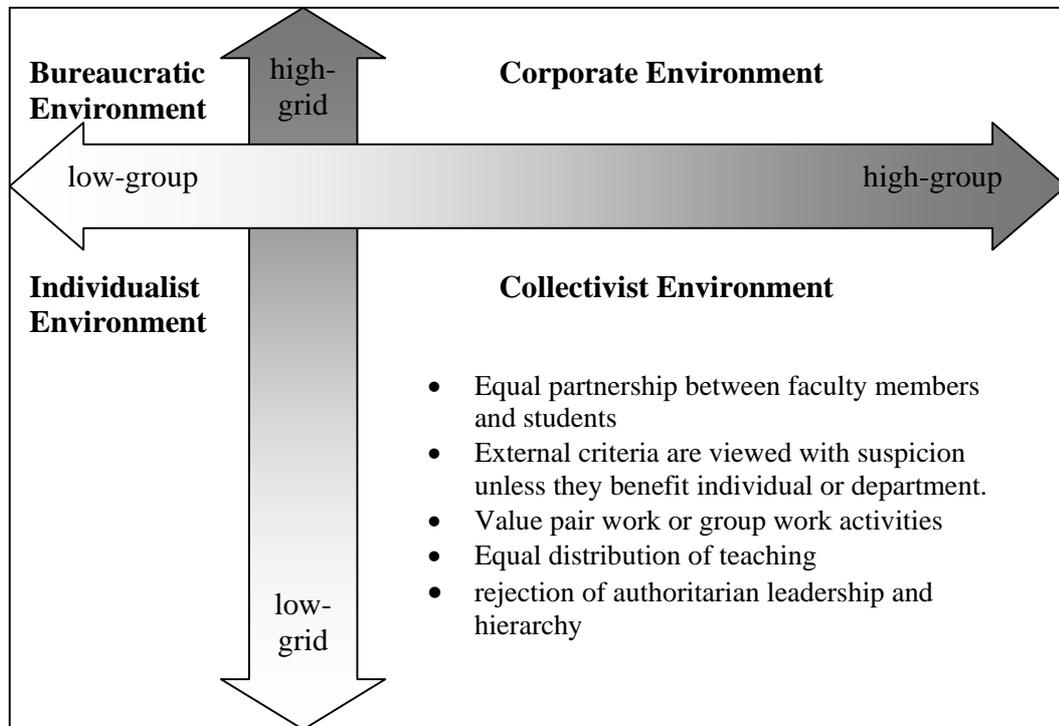
Based on the responses to the Grid and Group Assessment Tool and further extensive observation and interview sessions, faculty members in DEL appear to prefer their working atmosphere to be in a collectivist (low-grid, high-group) social environment. The major features of the collectivist environment are:

- Equal partnership among executive staff and faculty members is based on department success.
- The decision of classroom activities is a matter of mutual agreement between faculty members and students.

- Teaching approaches are determined by the nature of learning of each individual student.
- Decentralized decision and non-hierarchical order are highly valued.
- Faculty members and students work collaboratively for the success of the whole class members.
- Students view themselves in relations to all classmate members.
- A student's academic success and even faculty member's achievement are vital sources of being proud to whole department.
- Students are more active in engaging in classroom activities, rather than being passive and little interaction by both faculty member and students.
- Pair work or group work classroom activities allow student to express themselves.
- Faculty members encourage students to set the team goals and strive to meet them.
- Authentic teaching materials are tools to connect students from their classroom to the wider world and students may construct collective understanding towards the real world.
- Integrating all skills into work-based instructions is encouraged.

Therefore, the preferred working atmosphere among faculty members on teaching EFL in DEL can be plotted into Douglas's grid and group typology as shown in Figure 10.

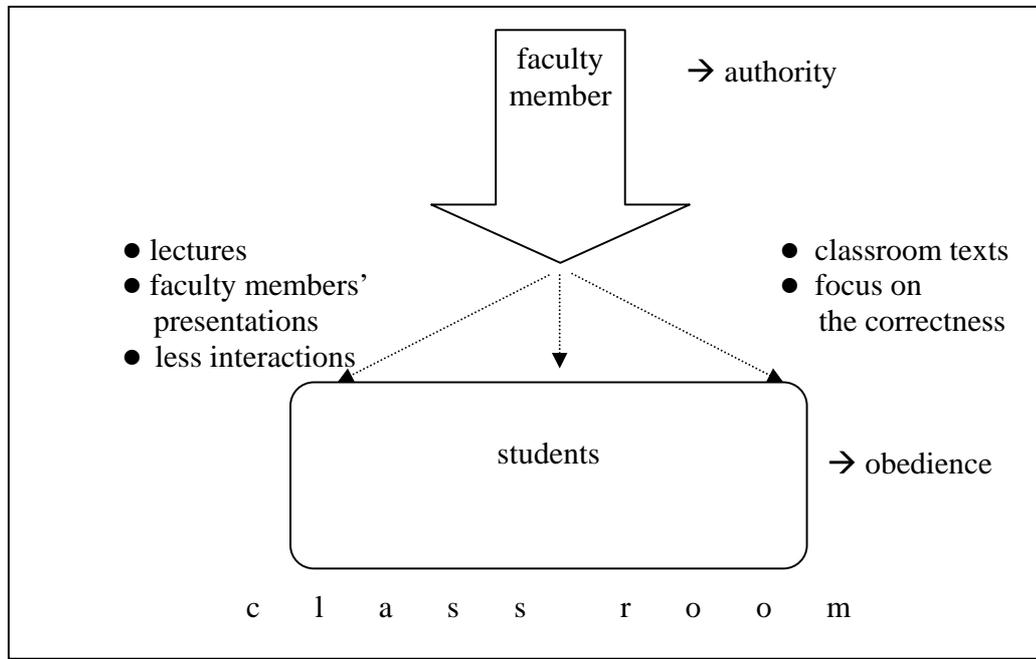
Figure 10. The Grid and Group Typology of Cultural Preferences of DEL.



Summary

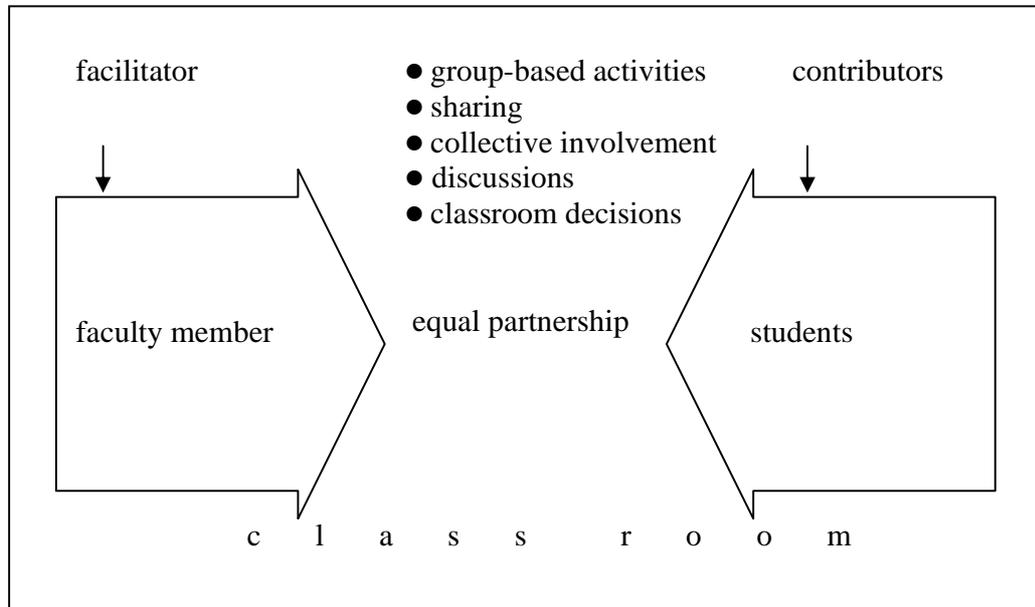
From the analysis above, it could be seen that the working culture including the culture of teaching EFL is predominantly bureaucratic environment, which is high grid and low group. There are many rules or governmental regulations that everyone has to follow. The environment is hierarchical with little individual independence. Faculty members have their own space while the students have theirs. There seems to be two separate entities in a classroom—faculty members and students. So, the relationship between faculty members and students is vertical and hierarchical which is clearly in line with teacher-centered approach as illustrated in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Vertical Interaction of Teaching Approach in a Bureaucratic Environment.



However, regarding their preferences for working atmosphere including teaching classrooms, the faculty members expect to change for a collectivist environment where decision making is decentralized. Faculty members and students are given an equal opportunity to create their classroom activities which is in line with the notion of the learner-centered approach. The communication is horizontal that can occur in a number of ways as it is depicted in Figure 12.

Figure 12. Horizontal Interaction of Teaching Approach in a Collectivist Environment.



In sum, the analysis all through this chapter indicates that the actual structure of the context is identified as a bureaucratic environment (high-grid and low-group) offering little individual autonomy. Hierarchical system based on gender, seniority, or group affiliation has significant meaning in the society. However, the preference of the participants reveals on the opposite way. They prefer their working culture to be a collectivist environment (low-grid and high-group). In this culture, the participants are treated as equal partner. The notion of cooperation and group harmony is recognized.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & BENEFITS

The main purpose of this study is to use Douglas's (1982) typology of grid and group to explain the teaching English as Foreign Language (EFL) cultural environment at Thailand Southern University (TSU), and to explain different teaching practices among faculty members of EFL teaching in this university. The following questions were used to guide the whole study.

- Q1 What is the teaching culture of EFL classrooms at Thailand Southern University?
- Q2 What are Thai university faculty members' preferences in learning environment?
- Q3 How are these preferences manifested in teaching EFL classroom?
- Q4 How, if at all, does grid and group typology explain the relationship of teaching approaches and faculty members' preferences?
- Q5 What other realities are not explained through grid and group typology?

The qualitative inquiry case study was the method of the study. The participants were English faculty members working in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, TSU. The data collection included a survey by using Grid and Group Assessment Tool initiated

by Harris (2005), in-depth interview sessions, classroom non-participant observations, as well as documents relevant to the study.

Summary of Findings

Throughout this study, the following five research questions guided the direction of the research. The next section of this chapter includes discussion of the five research questions of the study.

Q 1: What is the teaching culture of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms at Thailand Southern University?

Teaching culture in EFL classroom at this university was most appropriately plotted in a bureaucratic quadrant (high-grid and low-group), with evidence of the following characteristics:

- Individual behavior is fully defined and without ambiguity.
- Communication flows in the top-down direction—from faculty members to students.
- Classroom interaction occurs mostly from faculty members.
- Lectures are the obvious teaching approach.
- Group discussions are hardly undertaken.
- One course syllabus is applied to all groups of teaching class.
- Summative assessment is emphasized over formative one.
- Excessive exercises are posted to students.
- The correctness of grammatical structures is a focal point.
- Thai or the local language is a medium of instruction instead of English.

- In students' perception, classroom scores are more important than knowledge contents.
- Students rely heavily on their faculty members.
- Self study activities introduced by faculty members are ineffective.

In the bureaucratic environment, all faculty members and students are bounded with hierarchical social atmosphere, especially Thai culture where hierarchy is one of the most predominant characteristics. In fact, learning and social cultures are interrelated and coexist as both faculty members and students bring these beliefs and expectations to the class. Students view faculty members as authority figures which lead to independent thinking being less valuable. Rote memorizing appears to be a key characteristic for students in gaining knowledge (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003). These particular students were mostly low motivated and weak in English background. Consequently, these factors support the teaching EFL classrooms in TSU to be teacher-centered that is a key feature of a bureaucratic environment. In addition, the workplace of the faculty members is characterized by bureaucratic and hierarchical environment ranking from the university down to department levels. The beliefs of workplace hierarchical culture may have some effects to the classroom culture.

Q 2: What are Thai university faculty members' preferences in learning environment?

The environment of learning preferences was best described as a collectivist (low-grid and high-group) culture. The major characteristics of collectivist environment are as the following:

- Faculty and students share equal partnership in learning.

- Multiple learning opportunities are valued, such as, problem solving, inquiry, study groups.
- It focuses on individual and group needs.
- The gap between faculty members and students are bridged through establishing positive relationships.
- Students are given more opportunity to participate in classroom discourse.

These characteristics cover a notion of the learner-centered approach in which students are actively engaged in the learning environment. The collectivist culture fosters group cohesiveness and maintains group values. Thus, egalitarianism refers to integration of the individual into a classroom community. However, the relationships of faculty members and students are key issues for the egalitarian social game. Students may feel free to study with faculty members who are seen as insiders. On the other hand, if students view faculty members as outsiders, students form a group against the faculty member. It is because the relationship between the two sides does not yet established; egalitarians reject outsiders (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003). Egalitarians are typically antiauthoritarian and they do not believe that positive development can occur by working within the existing system (Harris, 2005).

Q 3: How are these preferences manifested in teaching EFL classrooms?

The typical EFL teaching on the TSU campus is obviously instructor-oriented with limited contribution from students. In other words, the teaching is based on the teacher-centered approach. None of the four classrooms employed all learner-centered characteristics, even half of them, according to Murphy's checklist. Faculty members play a major role of imparting knowledge to students while students put themselves in as

passive receivers. This traditional teaching approach is a common practice. Several justifications are addressed by faculty members. For example, unreadiness of students to attend English, time constraint, and a big number of students in a class are among many other reasons. According to Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter (2003), this teaching culture may serve them well “when it is the only culture in focus. In fact, it is a palace when there are no other contesting voices...” (p. 20). They continued that when faculty members are pushed into outside boundaries of their culture, they may be blurred to see and do things. They do not exactly know how to move toward that direction.

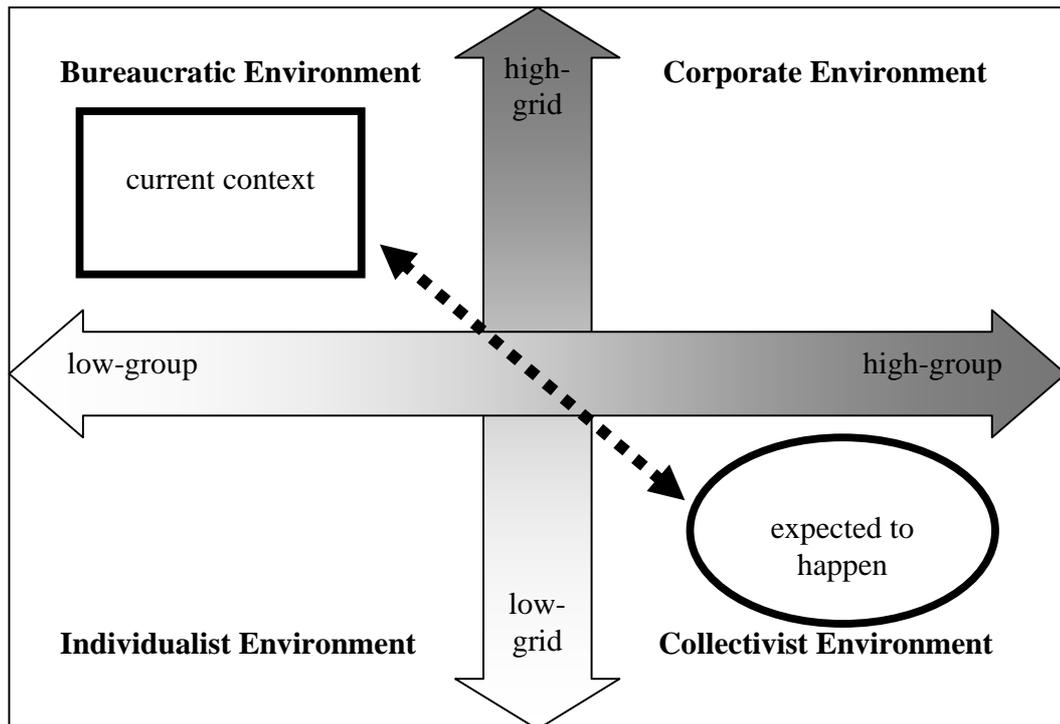
Even though the main teaching activity is dominantly teacher-oriented, from the researcher’s classroom observation as well as interviews, there were some positive movements from faculty members to demonstrate a notion of students’ contribution by introducing study groups, pair works, and students’ presentations. Some faculty members spend some time of their class with these activities besides lectures or PowerPoint presentations. To be optimistic, these minor activities are considered to be a good “push button” in striving toward the collectivist classroom culture.

Q 4: How, if at all, does grid and group typology explain the relationship of teaching approaches and faculty members’ preferences?

As it is explained in research question one, the teaching culture of EFL classrooms in the university is categorized as a bureaucratic environment which is high grid and low group. The teaching was directed by faculty members through lectures. At the same time, their teaching cultural preference indicates collectivist environment which is low-grid and high-group. The direction of interest is placed to both faculty members and students. From Douglas’s grid and group typology’s four quadrants, the relationships

between bureaucratic and collectivist environments are posted in a diagonal quadrant pattern. It means both two dimensions of grid and group are placed in the opposite corners as depicted in Figure 13.

Figure 13. Conflict Pattern between Diagonal Quadrants.



For instance, bureaucratic culture praises to motivate students through time-on-task learning activities (low-group), while collectivist culture believes in increasing students' motivation through collaborative learning opportunities (high-group). Thus, shifting of learning environment from one culture to another like this requires hard efforts and contributions from all concerned members. However, when everyone needs cultural stability and continuity for personal and communal well-being, change should take place. People should recognize the causes of their discomfort, and then they are more capable of finding ways to change their behavior (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003).

It is predictable that change inevitably encounters conflicts (Harris, 2005). For example, some faculty members are likely to keep distances in relationship with students as they believe that the status of faculty members and students in the Thai hierarchical culture has to be maintained. They may oppose to accept an equal partnership in class because they may think faculty members know well how to deal with certain contents as they have years of teaching experience (high-grid and low-group).

According to Harris (2005), conflicts can be either positive or negative, depending how to handle them, and conflicts do not occur only in organizations or in any social units. In fact, conflicts “can occur within an individual” (p.172). So, it is a common phenomenon that change comes along with conflicts. However, the essential improvement in learning environment relies on several factors, such as, university culture, power relationships, and time. All in all, the change should occur from the inside out or bottom-up, rather than from the outside in or top down. According to Douglas’s typology (1982), in order to move from high-grid to low-grid dimension, participants should be given more space and engagement in activities. While boosting high-group environment, the relationships among participants and striving for the group goals should be considered.

Q 5: What other realities are not explained through grid and group typology?

From the explanation above, Douglas (1982) grid and group typology has demonstrated a great tool to explain the cultural environment and differentiate among the four cultures: bureaucratic, corporate, individualist, and collectivist. However, within one society, it does not mean that it meets or absolutely matches all characteristics of a

particular culture. The theory can indicate the prominent characteristics found in the social context only.

However, the theory does not explain explicitly how to move from one culture to another. No clear steps are illustrated. In this case, for example, there are no step-by-step guidelines on how to change from a bureaucratic to collectivist culture, or from a teacher-centered to learner-centered curriculum. The theory does not define specific guidelines how to create learner-centered atmosphere. The theory just projects broad suggestions on it, but no sequential steps are expressed. Moreover, the theory also does not mention the directions to move to. For example, if one culture is bureaucratic, the theory lacks information to guide which culture should change to, corporate, individualist, or collectivist.

Douglas's grid and group typology is not a "prescriptive" theory. However, there are some other prescriptive theories that can have a better explanation about change, such as, Fullen's change theory (2003) or Wallace's Revitalization Movement theory (1956). They present more explicit step-by-step guidelines. For example, reshaping culture by building a community of professional learners must be set first. Then, it follows by changing the context before changing behaviors, and many others (Fullen, 2003). These are more prescriptive approaches and can be used in conjunction with grid and group theory.

Conclusions

According to the analysis, there are two components of findings from the study. First is the outcome of the current practice of cultural environment of EFL faculty

members at TSU, especially Department of English and Linguistics (DEL). Second is the result of EFL faculty members' cultural expectations or preferences in their working contexts.

The overall cultural context that best describes cultural environment at TSU, the university level, and down to DEL is a bureaucratic culture (high-grid and low-group). This culture is bounded with hierarchical organization ladder; the TSU president to the department head administration is explicitly charted by the organizational chain. Many rules and regulations are embraced and guided by the working system including explicit job descriptions and roles. This culture is also shared and practiced in the teaching classroom context. The course syllabus and many core teaching materials applied to all groups of class. Lectures in forms of monologues were delivered by the faculty member in front of the class and students just listened and wrote down what was presented; it was the key teaching approach with less interaction with students. The students' achievement was typically measured by the standard exams. These features coincide with teacher-centered teaching approach where teachers play major role and students rely on teachers. There is lack of connection between teachers' instructional approaches and students' learning style (Weimer, 2002). The class depends heavily on textbooks for the structure of the course (Jonassen, 1991). Faculty members have authority as they control the subject matter taught in the class, plan the lessons, and define the evaluation framework. This control is focused on outcomes such as grades (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003).

The results of cultural preferences fall into the opposite direction. The EFL faculty members preferred the collectivist cultural environment (low-grid and high-group). The main notion in the collectivist culture is to share equal partnership for group

success. Active involvement of all stakeholders, such as, the department head, deputy department heads, faculty members, support staff, and students, is taken into consideration. The engagement of the group participants in certain activities is promoted. The major role of faculty members is to facilitate, guide, and coach students through mutual agreement. The gap between faculty members and students is narrow. As students are more independent to learn, their ideas and contributions to determine class activities are highly valued. These characteristics are in line with the learner-centered teaching approach because the whole process of learning looks upon the active contribution from learners. Faculty members focus more on setting up conditions in which students learn by working together on substantive issues (van der Lind et al., 2000). The key notion of the learner-centered approach is that all knowledge can be actively constructed by learners (Nunan, 1988; Roberts, 2003; Savery & Duffy, 1996; Servetter, 1999). In this culture, the faculty member “is seen as someone who comes alongside students to help in their struggle to learn, which involves cooperative, not individual, effort” (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter, 2003, p. 42).

The followings are the implications drawn from the research findings. First, moving from the existing bureaucratic towards collectivist cultures may require great efforts by all parties who get involved in education as these social cultures have different features and accommodate in diagonal quadrants. Second, faculty members should realize and commit in the change efforts. The policy of the university should direct and support in whatever means to implement the learner-centered teaching environment. For example, the university may state in its policy that transforming to the learner-centered approach (LCA) environment is one of the main agendas. The

characteristics of LCA teaching should be visual and build understanding among faculty members. At the initiating stage, some resistance may be seen because it is so common in the change process (Fullen, 2003, Harris, 2005).

Third, building relationships and channel of communication between faculty members and students and even among the faculty members themselves are the key task. The gaps should be bridged through various means. For example, faculty members may hold social gatherings or sport events by inviting faculty members and students to participate. Using technology is an optional channel for communication especially between faculty members and students by establishing student-friendly online classroom. Those students who have questions but they are shy to ask in class can use this channel, instead.

Fourth, establishing knowledge management communities among the faculty members is also a way to consider. For example, a group of faculty members may host a faculty learning community by sharing their ideas in an informal way every other week and providing opportunity to every discussant to talk about their teaching achievement and difficulties to the group and from the discussion it might improve to further classroom research.

However, these initiatives do not mean that bureaucratic culture has no meaning. The researcher believes that there is a good essence of this culture especially in the Thai social context. Being humble and respecting people especially those who are older or teachers remain a valuable asset of the Thai culture. Transforming from teacher-centeredness to LCA may require ample of time because both faculty members and students are familiar with the bureaucratic culture for centuries.

Recommendations

The recommendations could be applied to not only education institutions located in multicultural areas of students, but it also could be extended to any institutions where English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is taught, especially those institutions which accommodate students who are relatively low in English background and motivation in learning English.

1. As this study focused on faculty members who taught EFL, the other important side of learning is learners. They also play a major part in the learning process. The future study may pay attention to students' perspectives, attitudes, studying strategies, as well as learning styles of studying English. If these factors are revealed, faculty members, instructors, or even any relevant people like policy makers as well as administrators may take them into further consideration in designing EFL courses and lay-outing course syllabi in order to meet the course optimum objectives.

2. Throughout the chapters in this paper, many faculty members mentioned that grammar-based topics were mainly used in English courses. Therefore, many said that grammar-based teaching was not applicable for daily communication in the target language. I may propose for the future study that the investigation should explore any mechanisms and suitable strategies to shift from grammar-based teaching to the communicative approach. It is believed that teaching communicative approach could equip learners to be able to communicate in their daily talks.

3. As TSU is located in the south bordering Malaysia, this neighboring country shares some similarities with the deep south of Thailand such as ethnicity, religion,

culture, and language. A comparative study of teaching EFL between bordering states of Malaysia and the southern border provinces of Thailand could be further investigated.

Benefits

The findings of this study could impact three areas: research, theory, and practice.

The discussions are as the following:

Research

As this research has employed several methods of data collection and used Douglas (1982) grid and group typology as lens to analyze the teaching environment, the findings of this qualitative study could be a tool to understand faculty members teaching practices why they taught the way they did as well as how far the learner-approach teaching was manifested in classrooms, especially in Thai context. One recommendation to be noted for further research is the investigation of students' preferences in learning environment, English subject in particular, in university settings by employing grid and group typology as a theoretical framework.

Theory

This study has extended the application of Douglas (1982) grid and group typology in the area of learning environment in a higher education institution. According to this theoretical framework, it is useful to explain the educational preferences of faculty members of their teaching classrooms. It shows the effectiveness in assessing the relationships of teaching approaches and faculty members' preferences—how these two are related. Moreover, this study also supports Harris' (2005) grid and group

categorization of school social culture relating to analyzing educational management in school.

Practice

The findings of this study can be drawn into two practical implications. The first implication is that faculty members must support and push together toward learner-centered classrooms. They have a direct interaction with students in classrooms. The second implication is that TSU should play a crucial role in improving teaching and learning environment because it has directly affected students learning skills not only while they are in the university but also students' future life regarding their inquiring skills to be lifelong.

The bottom-up shift from the teacher-centered approach as described in bureaucratic environment to the other end of the learner-centered teaching as in collectivist culture needs a rigorous involvement from faculty members or teachers because they are the most important agents in the learning process (Prawat, 1992). Faculty members should understand the real concepts and applications of the learner-centeredness through various professional developments, such as, attending seminars, workshops or discussing to experienced faculty members who have practiced the learner-centered approach. Establishing a learning group of faculty members like the knowledge management community in departments or schools is a great platform for sharing ideas and expertise among the same professional staff. Classroom research should be carried out and share the outcomes in the community. In addition, developing curricula and course syllabi must be seriously considered whether or not they are in the line with or hinders to learner-centered classrooms.

In a bureaucratic environment, the top-down reinforcement by setting teaching and learning process improvement as a main agenda should be declared and put explicit measurements. For example, each course syllabus must state clearly how to integrate students' contribution and active participation into the lessons. Through the process of educational quality assurance, the university may hold activities in promoting the learner-centered teaching approach. Exemplary faculty members should be rewarded, for instance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2008
IRB Application No ED0895
Proposal Title: A Grid and Group Explanation of Educational Preferences in English as a Foreign Language Teaching: A Case Study of Thai University Classrooms

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 6/10/2009

Principal Investigator(s):
Bordin Waelateh Edward Harris
Charoenpradit Rd., Muang, 308 Willard
Pattani 94000 THAILAND, Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Shelia Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B

Grid and Group Assessment Tool

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Name: _____ (code: _____ for researcher only)
2. Gender: Male
 Female
3. What is your religious affiliation? Buddhism
 Islam
 Christianity
 Atheist
4. How long have you been teaching? 1-5 years
 6-10 years
 11-15 years
 16-20 years
 21-25 years
 Over 25 years
5. What is your highest level of education? Bachelor's degree
 Master's degree
 Doctoral degree
6. Where did you graduate from? Thailand
 ASEAN countries
 Europe
 North America
 Others (specify) _____

INSTRUCTIONS

Below are 25 items. Each item reflects a continuum from 1 to 8. For each item, read the entire item and choose the statement that you think best represents your Department site. Then, on the continuum, mark the button that represents the degree to which that statement applies to your Department site.

There are no “good” or “bad” responses to these items. The numbers and 8 represent extremes along a continuum, with numbers 2-7 providing a continuous scale between the two extremes. For example: If the statement were:

In my Department we drink: Weak Coffee (1).....Strong Coffee (8), the strength of the coffee could be indicated along the continuum of 1 through 8; however, one answer would not be better than another.

GRID CONSIDERATIONS

1. I prefer a work atmosphere where authority structures are:

*Decentralized/
non-hierarchical*

*Centralized/
hierarchical*



2. I prefer a work atmosphere where my role(s) is/are:

*Non-specialized/
no explicit job descriptions*

*Specialized/
explicit job descriptions*



3. I prefer a work atmosphere where teachers have:

*Full autonomy in
textbook selection*

*No autonomy in
textbook selection*



4. I prefer a work atmosphere where individual teachers have:

*Full autonomy in
generating their educational goal
for their classrooms*

*No autonomy in
generating their educational goals
for their classrooms*



5. I prefer a work atmosphere where individual teachers have:

*Full autonomy in choosing
instructional methods/strategies*

*No autonomy in choosing
instructional methods/strategies*



6. I prefer a teaching and learning atmosphere where students are:

*Encouraged to participate/take
ownership of their education*

*Discouraged from participating/taking
ownership of their education*



7. I prefer a work atmosphere where teachers obtain instructional resources (i.e. technology, manipulative, materials, tools) through:

*Individual competition/
negotiation*

Administrative allocation



8. I prefer a teaching and learning atmosphere where instruction is:

*Individualized/personalized
for each student*

*Not individualized/personalized
for each student*



9. I am motivated by:

Intrinsic/self-defined interests

Extrinsic/institutional rewards



10. I prefer a work atmosphere where hiring decisions are:

*Decentralized/controlled
by teachers*

*centralized/controlled
by administrator(s)*



11. I prefer a work atmosphere where class schedules are determined through:

Individual teacher negotiation

Institutional rules/routines



12. I prefer a work atmosphere where rules and procedures are:

Few/implicit

Numerous/explicit



Sum of grid scores: _____

Average of grid scores (sum/12): _____

GROUP CONSIDERATIONS

1. I prefer a work atmosphere where instructional activities are initiated / planned by:
Individual teachers working alone *All educators working collaboratively*

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

←-----→

2. I prefer a work atmosphere where socialization and work are:
Separate/dichotomous activities *Incorporated/united activities*

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

←-----→

3. I prefer a work atmosphere where intrinsic rewards primary benefit:
The individual *Everyone at the Department*

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

←-----→

4. I prefer a work atmosphere where teaching and learning are planned / organized around:
Individual teacher goals/interests *Group goals/interests*

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

←-----→

5. I prefer a work atmosphere where performance is evaluated according to:
Individual teacher goals, priorities, and criteria *Group goals, priorities, and criteria*

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

←-----→

6. I prefer a work atmosphere where members work:
In isolation toward goals and objectives *Collaboratively toward goals and objectives*

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

←-----→

7. I prefer a work atmosphere where curricular goals are generated:
Individually *Collaboratively*

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

←-----→

8. I prefer a work atmosphere where communication flows primarily through:

Individual, informal networks

Corporate, formal networks

← ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ →

9. I prefer a work atmosphere where instructional resources are controlled / owned:

Individually

Collaboratively

← ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ →

10. I prefer a work atmosphere where educators and students have:

*No allegiance/loyalty
to the Department*

*Much allegiance/loyalty
to the Department*

← ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ →

11. I prefer a work atmosphere where responsibilities of teachers and administrators are:

*Ambiguous/fragmented
with no accountability*

*Clear/communal with
much accountability*

← ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ →

12. I prefer a work atmosphere where most decisions are made:

*Privately by factions
or independent verdict*

*Corporately by consensus
or group approval*

← ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ →

13. Please indicate your degree of satisfaction with professional development offered at your site:

Extremely dissatisfied

Extremely satisfied

← ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ →

Sum of grid scores: _____

Average of grid scores (sum/13): _____

Appendix C

Observation Checklist

CHARACTERISTIC		supported	not supported	not observed
1	Multiple perspectives and representations of concepts and content are presented and encouraged.			
2	Goals and objectives are derived by the student or in negotiation with the teacher or system.			
3	Teachers serve in the role of guides , monitors, coaches, tutors and facilitators.			
4	Activities, opportunities, tools and environments are provided to encourage metacognition , self-analysis - regulation, - reflection & - awareness.			
5	The student plays a central role in mediating and controlling learning.			

CHARACTERISTIC	supported	not supported	not observed
6 Learning situations, environments, skills, content and tasks are relevant, realistic, authentic and represent the natural complexities of the 'real world'.			
7 Knowledge construction and not reproduction is emphasized			
8 This construction takes place in individual contexts and through social negotiation, collaboration and experience.			
9 The learner's previous knowledge constructions, beliefs and attitudes are considered in the knowledge construction process.			
10 Problem solving higher-order thinking skills and deep understanding are emphasized.			
11 Consideration of errors provides the opportunity for insight into students' previous knowledge constructions.			

CHARACTERISTIC	supported	not supported	not observed
12 Exploration is a favored approach in order to encourage students to seek knowledge independently and to manage the pursuit of their goals.			
13 Learners are provided with the opportunity for apprenticeship learning in which there is an increasing complexity of tasks, skills and knowledge acquisition.			
14 Knowledge complexity is reflected in an emphasis on conceptual interrelatedness and interdisciplinary learning.			
15 Collaborative and cooperative learning are favored in order to expose the learner to alternative viewpoints .			
16 Scaffolding is facilitated to help students perform just beyond the limits of their ability.			

CHARACTERISTIC		supported	not supported	not observed
17	Assessment is authentic and interwoven with teaching.			
18	Primary sources of data are used in order to ensure authenticity and real-world complexity.			

Adapted from: Murphy, E. (1997). Constructivism: From philosophy to practice. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 444 966).

Description of checklist characteristics

1. Multiple perspectives:

- Concepts and content are presented differently, using several means.
- Provide multiple representations of reality
- Wide variety of tools used and data accessed
- Provide tools and environments that help students interpret the multiple perspectives of the world
- Different perspectives are shared among teachers and students.

2. Student-directed goals:

- Student can choose their own topic to explore.
- Students set purpose for their own learning; what they want to achieve.
- Students are encouraged to identify their own questions, goals, and issues.
- Goals and objectives are derived by students or in negotiation with teacher.
- Students are motivated by their individual interests.

3. Teachers as coaches

- Teachers serve in the role of guide, monitors, coaches, tutors, and facilitators.
- Teachers guide students' interactions as they work collaboratively to solve problems.
- Teachers are participants bring a content expertise that can be shared with students.
- Teachers are not engaged in direct instruction.

4. Metacognition

- Activities, opportunities, tools, and environments are provided to encourage metacognition, self-analysis, -regulation, -reflection, & -awareness
- Foster reflective practice: by having students compare their own thought processes with more expert practitioners or use journals to encourage students to be reflective about their problem-solving experiences
- Provide insight into students' thought processes and make these processes explicit to them
- Encourage self-awareness in the knowledge construction process

5. Learner control

- Students play a central role in mediating and controlling learning.
- Encourage ownership and voice in the learning process
- Inquiries are entirely student directed and driven.

6. Authentic activities & contexts

- Create real-world environments that employ the context in which learning is relevant
- Focus on realistic approaches to solving real-world problems
- Provide real-world, case-based learning environments, rather than predetermined instructional sequences
- Provide authentic versus academic contexts for learning
- Embed learning in realistic and relevant contexts

7. Knowledge collaboration

- Focus on knowledge construction, not reproduction
- Focus on process, not product
- There is little or no 'instruction' or knowledge transmission.
- Provide experience with the knowledge construction process

8. Knowledge collaboration

- Support collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation
- Students are encouraged to respond to each others' work, share findings, and make comments and suggestions
- Students work collaboratively in small groups to solve problems
- Teachers work collaboratively with students; being on equal status
- Embed learning in social experience

9. Previous knowledge constructions

- Students' previous knowledge constructions, beliefs, and attitudes are considered in the knowledge construction process
- Relevant concepts are pretaught, and appropriate background knowledge are drawn.
- Provide sensitivity toward and attentiveness to student's previous constructions
- Students brainstorm on what they already know about the topic or the concept.

- Appropriate questions are asked to elicit student's previous knowledge on the concepts.

10. Problem solving

- Problem-solving is fostered through students' participating in questioning and commenting on each others' work.
- Higher-order thinking skills and deep understanding are emphasized.
- Knowledge acquired is dictated by the problems to be solved.
- Provide a rich problem-solving environment in which students observe, interpret, predict, hypothesize and make inferences

11. Consideration of errors

- Use error as a mechanism to provide feedback on learners' understanding
- Students explore independently such that errors become part of the problem-solving process and provide students with feedback on their progress
- Students' work is commented and questioned by other student thus allowing the opportunity to refine concepts
- Students are encouraged to consider alternatives when things go wrong and to use the errors as a means to learn and improve their understanding

12. Exploration

- Students participate in a form of exploratory learning; applying skills of finding, ordering, and using materials form a variety of sources.
- Teachers provide a rich exploratory environment containing a wide variety of resources, tasks and activities in which students can pursue their personal interests and goals.
- Students are encouraged to seek knowledge independently.
- Concepts and content are explored as students problem solve the problems

13. Apprenticeship learning

- Provide opportunity for apprenticeship learning in which there is an increasing complexity of tasks, skills, and knowledge acquisition
- Students experience first-hands activities with an opportunity to practice with teachers or more expert peers
- Students work as designers, inventors, and creators with mentors to guide them through the completion of tasks.

14. Conceptual interrelatedness

- Stress conceptual interrelatedness, providing multiple representations or perspectives on the content
- A wide range of tools, data & authentic sources are used to indicate the natural complexity of the interrelatedness concepts
- Students can see the interrelatedness of concepts through reading and commenting on each others' notes
- Allow opportunities for knowledge integration among various concepts

15. Alternative viewpoints

- Students are encouraged to consider various interpretations of their findings
- Students are encouraged to consider multiple solutions and strategies
- The collaborative problem-solving approach encourages negotiation of perspectives
- Students are provide with varying data sources and are encouraged to compare findings with each other
- Collaborative and cooperative learning are favored in order to expose the learner to alternative viewpoints

16. Scaffolding

- Provide support and assistance for knowledge and skills that student cannot yet perform by themselves
- Create activities that allow students to function at the cutting edge of their individual development
- Gradually withdraw support once students can perform the tasks by themselves

17. Authentic assessment

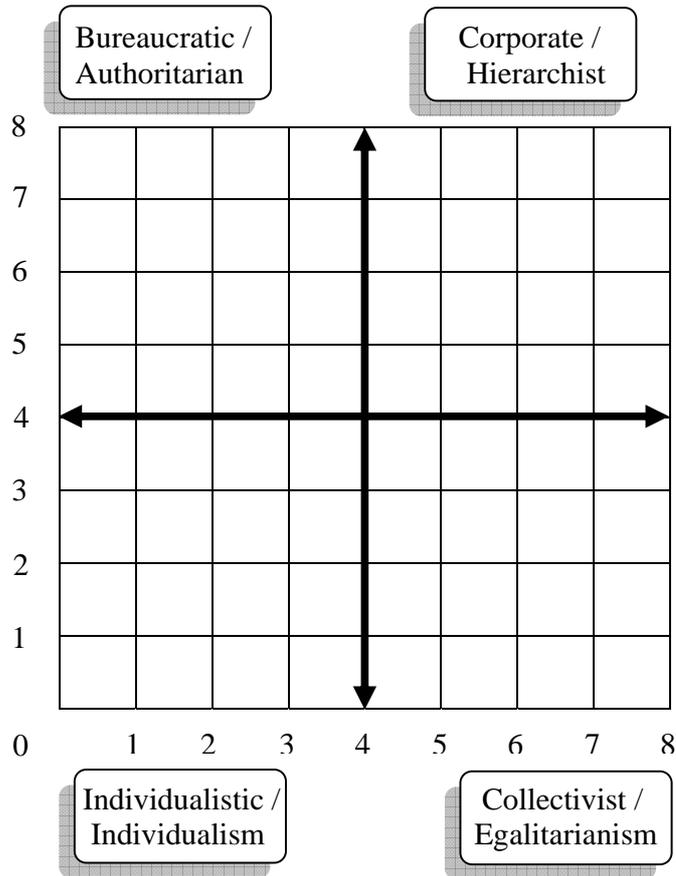
- Evaluation should serve as a self-analysis tool
- Diagnostic teaching attempting to remedy learner errors and misconceptions
- Assessment is authentic and interwoven with teaching
- Teachers encourage creative problem-solving by avoiding the right/wrong dichotomy, suggesting instead that multiple strategies and solutions are possible

18. Primary sources of data

- Primary sources of data are used in order to ensure authenticity and real-world complexity
- Students have access to the resources within the library of the program as well as to outside resources

Appendix D

Grid and Group Graph Template



Appendix E

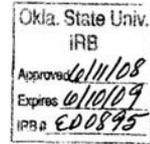
Grid and Group Questionnaire Tally Table

GRID The degree to which individuals' choices are constrained by external rules such as roles, expectations (Harris, 2005)	← low → high							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1: I prefer a work atmosphere where authority structures are <i>non-hierarchical -- centralized/ hierarchical</i>	5	4	4	3	0	1	3	0
2: I prefer a work atmosphere where my role(s) is/are <i>Non-specialized(no explicit job descriptions) – specialized(explicit job descriptions)</i>	0	1	0	1	0	2	3	13
3: I prefer a work atmosphere where teachers have <i>Full autonomy in textbook selection- No autonomy in textbook selection</i>	8	6	3	1	0	0	1	1
4: I prefer a work atmosphere where individual teachers have <i>Full autonomy in generating their educational goal for their classrooms - No autonomy in generating their educational goals for their classrooms</i>	8	2	7	1	0	1	1	0
5: I prefer a wok atmosphere where individual teachers have <i>Full autonomy in choosing instructional methods/strategies -- No autonomy in choosing instructional methods/strategies</i>	10	5	3	0	0	1	1	0
6: I prefer a wok atmosphere where individual teachers have <i>Encouraged to participate/take ownership of their education-- Discouraged from participating/taking ownership of their education</i>	10	6	2	0	0	0	2	0
7: I prefer a work atmosphere where teachers obtain instructional resources (i.e. technology, manipulative, materials, tools) through <i>Individual competition/ negotiation-- Administrative allocation</i>	4	1	0	1	3	4	4	3
8: I prefer a teaching and learning atmosphere where instruction is <i>Individualized/personalized for each student-- Not individualized / personalized for each student</i>	3	5	2	3	1	2	0	4
9: I am motivated by <i>Intrinsic/self-defined interests-- Extrinsic / institutional rewards</i>	5	0	2	8	2	0	2	1
10: I prefer a work atmosphere where hiring decisions are <i>Decentralized/controlled by teachers-- centralized/controlled by administrator(s)</i>	3	2	3	8	0	1	3	0
11: I prefer a work atmosphere where class schedules are determined through <i>Individual teacher negotiation-- Institutional rules/routines</i>	2	2	2	3	5	3	1	2
12: I prefer a work atmosphere where rules and procedures are <i>Few/implicit-- Numerous/explicit</i>	5	2	1	4	2	2	3	1
Total	63	36	29	33	13	17	24	25

GROUP The degree to which people value collective relationships and extent to which they are committed to the larger social unit (Harris, 2005)	Low high							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1: I prefer a work atmosphere where instructional activities are initiated / planned by <i>Individual teachers working alone-- All educators working collaboratively</i>	0	0	2	5	5	3	3	2
2: I prefer a work atmosphere where socialization and work are <i>Separate/dichotomous activities-- Incorporated/united activities</i>	0	0	1	5	1	3	4	6
3: I prefer a work atmosphere where intrinsic rewards primary benefit <i>The individual -- Everyone at the Department</i>	2	0	0	4	1	1	3	9
4: I prefer a work atmosphere where teaching and learning are planned / organized around <i>Individual teacher goals/interests -- Group goals/interests</i>	0	1	1	5	2	1	5	4
5: I prefer a work atmosphere where performance is evaluated according to <i>Individual teacher goals, priorities, and criteria -- Group goals, priorities, and criteria</i>	1	3	1	3	3	1	4	4
6: I prefer a work atmosphere where members work <i>In isolation toward goals and objectives -- Collaboratively toward goals and objectives</i>	0	0	0	1	0	5	7	7
7: I prefer a work atmosphere where curricular goals are generated <i>Individually -- Collaboratively</i>	0	0	0	1	0	2	7	10
8: I prefer a work atmosphere where communication flows primarily through <i>Individual, informal networks -- Corporate, formal networks</i>	0	1	3	3	4	4	2	3
9: I prefer a work atmosphere where instructional resources are controlled / owned <i>Individually-- Collaboratively</i>	0	1	1	5	0	2	7	4
10: I prefer a work atmosphere where educators and students have <i>No allegiance/loyalty to the Department-- Much allegiance/loyalty to the Department</i>	0	0	0	2	1	4	4	9
11: I prefer a work atmosphere where responsibilities of teachers and administrators are <i>Ambiguous/fragmented with no accountability-- Clear/communal with much accountability</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	15
12: I prefer a work atmosphere where most decisions are made <i>Privately by factions or independent verdict-- Corporately by consensus or group approval</i>	0	0	0	3	1	3	4	9
13: Please indicate your degree of satisfaction with professional development offered at your site <i>Extremely dissatisfied -- Extremely satisfied</i>	0	2	1	3	3	5	1	5
Total:	3	8	10	41	21	36	54	87

Appendix F

Consent Form



CONSENT FORM

- Project Title:** A Grid and Group Explanation of Educational Preferences in English as a Foreign Language Teaching: A Case Study of Thai University Classrooms
- Investigators:** Bordin Waelateh, (Graduate student at Oklahoma State University)
B.A. (*English*), Prince of Songkla University (1991)
M.A. (*English*), Prince of Songkla University (2003)
Certificate (*ELICOS*), The University of Western Australia (1997)
Certificate (*TEYL*), University of Maryland Baltimore County (2007)
- Purpose:** As an EFL faculty member, you are invited to participate in a research study being conducted at [REDACTED] Thailand. This study is designed to explain the teaching culture of the EFL environment as well as to explain the different teaching practices among faculty members. The information sought will be your thoughts, preferences, perceptions, beliefs, values, feelings, and experiences about EFL teaching.
- Procedures:** As an EFL faculty member, if you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete the 5-page questionnaire called 'Grid and Grid Assessment Tool'. It would probably take 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. You may also then be asked to get involved in an individual interview to discuss teaching approaches and techniques. Additionally, the researcher may observe your classes by videotaping your teaching. Finally, you will be asked to provide materials from your class such as tests, exercises, quizzes and exam papers, virtual classroom and other artifacts. The responses from the questionnaire, interview, and classroom observations will in no way affect your regular teaching.
- Risks of Participation:** There are no known risks associated with this study which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. You may possibly feel emotional discomfort when answering questions about your personal thoughts and feelings.
- Benefits:** The primary benefit to be expected is helping to comprehend why faculty members prefer to teach the way they do, and what the study reveals as to the extent the learner-centered approach has been or not been implemented in EFL classrooms. It will be a baseline for further development of the learner-centered approach in an EFL teaching.

APPENDIX G

Course Syllabus

Course Syllabus:		Foundation English			Semester 1/2008	
Course Description:		English for communication and as a study tool; external reading with maximum reading level 2,500 words. For those with O-NET / A-NET scores between 30-65.				
Objectives:		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To enhance students' abilities in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing 2. To enhance students' understanding of the culture of English-speaking countries 3. To encourage students to develop self-study habits 4. To provide students with basic knowledge and learning strategies for their future study 				
Content:						
Week	Contents	Lab	Workbook	Reading Passages		
1 2 - 6 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - course description - evaluation & requirement • Selling Textbooks 	Lab Orientation				
2 & 3 9 - 20 June	Unit 1 Grammar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Auxiliary Verbs: BE, DO, HAVE p6-7 - General Knowledge Quiz p6 - Questions & Negatives p6-7 - Short Answers p8-9 Vocabulary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What's in a word? p12-13 Everyday English: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Expressions p13 Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Wonders of the Modern World" p10-11 	T1.2 (p7) T1.3 (p7) T 1.5 (p8) T1.6 (p8) *T1.8 (p9) T1.12 (p13)	Topic 1 : Verbs "BE, DO, HAVE" (Main Verbs & Aux. Verbs)	Passage 1 Passage 2		

<p>4 & 5 23 June – 4 July</p>	<p>Unit 2 Grammar: - Present Simple p14-15 - Present Continuous p14-15 - "I don't know if I'm happy." P15 - Simple or Continuous? P17 Everyday English: - Numbers & dates p21 Reading: - "The Clown Doctor" p18-19</p>	<p>T2.2 (p15) *T2.3 (p16) *T2.4 (p16) *T2.6 (p19) *T2.8 (p21) *T2.9 (p21) *T2.10 (p21)</p> <p>TMM</p>	<p>Topic 2 : Present Simple Tense</p> <p>Topic 3 : Present Simple VS Present Con.</p>	<p>Passage 3 Passage 4</p>
<p>6 & 7 7 – 18 July</p>	<p>Unit 3 Grammar: - Past Simple p22-23 - Past Continuous p22-23 - "The Tale of Gluskap and The Baby" p23 - Past Simple VS Past Perfect p24 Vocabulary: - Art & Literature p25 - Collocations p25 Everyday English: - Giving Opinion p29 Listening & Writing: - Books and Films p28</p>	<p>T3.1 (p22) T3.2 (p23) T3.3 (p24) *T3.4 (p24) T3.7 (p29)</p> <p>TMM</p>	<p>Topic 4 : Past Simple Tense</p> <p>Topic 5 : Past Simple VS Past Con.</p> <p>Topic 6 : Past Simple VS Past Perfect</p> <p>Topic 7 : Mixed-Tenses Exercise</p>	<p>Passage 5</p>
<p>8 21 – 25 July</p>	<p>Revision</p>			
<p>9 26 July – 3 Aug</p>	<p>Mid-term Exam</p>			

<p>10 & 11 4 – 15 Aug</p>	<p>Unit 4 Grammar: - Modal Verbs of Obligation & Permission p30-32 - have (got) to / must - can / be allowed to - Modal Verbs of Suggestion p32-33 - should / must. Vocabulary: - Nationality Words p36 Everyday English: - Request & Offer p37 Reading: - "A World Guide to Good Manners" p34-35</p>	<p>*T4.1 (p30) *T4.2 (p30) T4.4 (p32) T4.6 (p33) *T4.8 (p36) *T4.11 (p37)</p> <p>TMM</p>	<p>Topic 8 : Modal Verbs of Obligation, Permission & Suggestion</p>	<p>Passage 6 Passage 7</p>
<p>12 & 13 18 – 29 Aug</p>	<p>Unit 5 Grammar: - Future Forms - going to VS will p38-41 - Present Continuous p38-41 Vocabulary: - The weather p44 Everyday English: - Traveling Abroad p45</p>	<p>T5.1 (p39) *T5.2 (p40) T5.3 (p40) T5.4 (p40) *T5.7 (p45)</p> <p>TMM</p>	<p>Topic 9 : Future Forms</p>	<p>Passage 8 Passage 9</p>
<p>14 & 15 1 – 12 Sep</p>	<p>Unit 6 Grammar: - Questions with like p46-47 - Gerund VS Infinitive p48-49 Vocabulary: - Describing food, towns, and people p52 - Collocations p52 Everyday English: - Signs and Sounds p53 Reading: - "Global Pizza" p50-51</p>	<p>*T6.2 (p47) *T6.4 (p49) T6.6 (p52)</p> <p>TMM</p>	<p>Topic 10 : Verb Patterns (Gerund VS Infinitive)</p> <p>Topic 11 : Passive Voice</p>	<p>Passage 10</p>
<p>16 15 – 19 Sep</p>	<p>Revision</p>			
<p>17 25 Sep – 10 Oct</p>	<p>Final Exam</p>			

Evaluation:	Workbook (คะแนนกำหนดโดยคณาจารย์)	10 %	
	*Quizzes	10 %	* อ.ประจำชั้น พิจารณาความเหมาะสมของเนื้อหาและเวลาทดสอบ
	**Lab Test	5 %	** สอบ lab 2 ครั้ง คือ ก่อนสอบ midterm และ ก่อนสอบ final
	Midterm Exam	30 %	
	Final Exam	30 %	
	External Reading	15 %	
	TOTAL	100 %	
Passing Score:	40 %		
Grading Criteria:	T-Score (อังกฤษ)		
Requirement:	80% of class attendance is required.		
Textbook:	Liz and John Soars (2003). New Headway: Intermediate Student's Book , 3 rd Ed. Oxford University Press.		
External Reading:	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's The Speckled Band		
References:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Alexander, L.G. 1990. Longman English Grammar Practice. New York: Longman. Azar, B.S. 1981. Understanding & Using English Grammar. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall. Murphy, R. 1985. English Grammar in Use: A Self-Study Reference and Practice Book for Intermediate Students. New York: Cambridge. 		

VITA

Bordin Waelateh

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Dissertation: A GRID AND GROUP EXPLANATION OF EDUCATIONAL PREFERENCES IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: A CASE STUDY OF THAI UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS

Major Field: Applied Educational Studies

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Pattani, Thailand, on May 13, 1967, the son of Waeduramae and Maekyoh Waelateh.

Education:

Graduated High School from Saiburi Islamic School, Pattani, Thailand, in March 1987; received Bachelor of Arts in English and Master of Arts in English from Prince of Songkla University (PSU), Pattani Campus, in 1991 and 2003 respectively; Completed a certificate of Teaching English to Young Learners, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, in 2007; completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education in Applied Educational Studies major at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July, 2009.

Experience:

Secretary to the International Program of Epidemiology, PSU, Hat Yai Campus in 1991-1992; Thai Language and Cross Cultural Trainer, the US Peace Corps, Bangkok, Thailand, in 1993; Secretary to the Vice President, PSU, Pattani Campus, in 1994-1995; Malay Language Trainer to the US Peace Corps Volunteers in 1994; Head, Foreign Affairs Office, PSU, in 1996-2005; University lecturer in English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies, PSU, in 2006-present; Associate Director for Administration and Foreign Affairs, Institute for Southeast Asian Maritime States Studies, PSU, 2009-present.

Name: Bordin Waelateh

Date of Degree: July, 2009

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: A GRID AND GROUP EXPLANATION OF EDUCATIONAL PREFERENCES IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: A CASE STUDY OF THAI UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS

Pages in Study: 190

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Applied Educational Studies

Scope and Method of Study:

This qualitative study used Mary Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology to explain the cultural context and preferences of foreign language instruction in a public university located in southern Thailand. Several data collection strategies were employed, including survey questionnaires, in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Triangulation, prolonged engagement, and peer debriefing are examples of several techniques used to ensure trustworthiness.

Findings and Conclusions:

The findings of this study revealed that the overall context of TSU's working atmosphere and classroom settings was best described as bureaucratic (high-grid and low-group). The typical features of the teacher-centered approach were mainly adopted as a mode of teaching. However, the English faculty members preferred a collectivist (low-grid and high-group) work atmosphere where active collaboration and equal partnership between teachers and students are highly valued.

The study suggests that a change from a bureaucratic to collectivist environment requires great effort, since these cultural prototypes are in diagonal quadrants of the grid and group typology. In order to implement a more learner-centered educational environment, emphasis should be placed on changing the teaching-learning environment and bridging relationships between faculty members and students as well as among the faculty members themselves.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Edward Harris
