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THESIS

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF THAI BILINGUAL STUDENTS IN TERMS OF SPEAKING: A CASE STUDY OF SARASAS WITAED BANGBUATHONG SCHOOL

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of

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This study aims to investigate the factors and their influences affecting the acquisition of English speaking-skills in Grade 6 bilingual students, and also the difficulties in oral communication encountered by students and the coping methods they employ. There were twelve students (six males and six females) participating in this case study. Three groups of data were collected; classroom observation: the students behaviors, interactions, and participation were observed in their normal class environment, semi-structured interview: all students were interviewed individually, and unstructured interview of the students' English teacher.

The study revealed that attentiveness, motivation, English interaction with classmates and class participation all have significant effect on students' language acquisition. Even in a bilingual environment, deficiencies in these areas effectively reduced the students' opportunities to acquire English-speaking skills, resulting in difficulties in oral communication. These difficulties included problems with limited vocabulary, sentence structure, tenses, subject-verb agreement and pronunciation.

Research observed that the students employed the coping methods which are use of synonyms, message adjustment, communication avoidance, code switching, appealing for assistance, consulting a dictionary and gesturing. In the same manner as result, the teacher interviews confirmed and highlighted the data from the classroom observations and the semi-structured interviews.

Student's signature	Thesis Advisor's signature	/ /

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I am indebted to many people who have helped me both directly and indirectly. I can only mention a few of them here.

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Pramote Borisut

May, 2010

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, English is becoming more important to people around the world. It is the most widespread medium of international communication and is employed by people in many areas. Crystal (1997: 53) says "the present-day world status of English is primarily the result of two factors: the expansion of British colonial power and the emergence of the United States as the leading economy". Therefore, the influence of English usage has expanded rapidly, as can be seen in Asian countries. Tucker and Corson, (1997: 221) state that:

…The Asian countries have, in recent years, undergone impressive economic growth and rapid socio-cultural transformation through the use of English, a language which enables these newly industrializing economies to continue plugging into the international grid of finance and industry…

In other words, English use among non-native speakers (NNSs) is increasing globally. It is estimated that 80% of regular users of English are non-native speakers (NNSs) (Krachu, 1986).

Currently a vast and ever increasing proportion of the world's population is able to speak English as a foreign language. Indeed, speaking more than one language is considered "the norm", and ever increasingly, the second language being spoken is English. This has momentous ramifications for Thais and especially Thai children who will determine the future of the country. Participation in the global economy, not to mention politics and academie requires mastery of the new global language of business, finance, academia, science, and politics: English. This is why the private English bilingual educational system is supported by the Thai government.

Since Thai-English Bilingual program was officially introduced into the Thai educational system in 1995, the integration of both Thai and English language was applied as a medium of instruction at the primary educational level. Sarasas Affiliated School was the first school in Thailand to operate a bilingual (Thai-English) program and was granted their license by the Private Education Board Office, Ministry of Education. Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School is one of the schools that are operated by Sarasas Affiliated School. It provides students with the ability to acquire English directly from native English-speaking teachers to ensure that students will have an adequate exposure to the English language that they will eventually acquire it naturally. At this school, the bilingual program becomes very popular among parents because their children show a dramatic improvement in their English skills and also maintain good academic standards within the Thai curriculum.

In bilingual education, a good second language program should be designed in concert with the first language program (Carrasquillo and Baecher, 1990). Second language learning in a bilingual schooling system should be based on the language development program that at the same time promotes first-language literacy in the initial grades. This enhances the gradual acquisition of a second language by students, allowing them to acquire the language naturally.

Since the students who enrolled in the bilingual school need to deal with instruction in two languages, they are expected to learn and acquire English as a second language. They need to make regular use of the four primary language skills in English in their learning. However, speaking is considered as the foremost skill, and the one that needs the most training and practice. Bailey (2002) states that:

…For English as a second language learner (ESL), speaking English can be particularly difficult because, unlike reading or writing, speaking happens in "real time." That is, the person we are talking to is listening and waiting to take his or her own turn to speak. Spoken English is almost always accomplished via interaction with at least one other speaker. Finally, because spoken communication occurs in real time, the opportunities to plan and edit

output are limited, whereas in most written communication, the message originator has time for planning, editing, and revision…
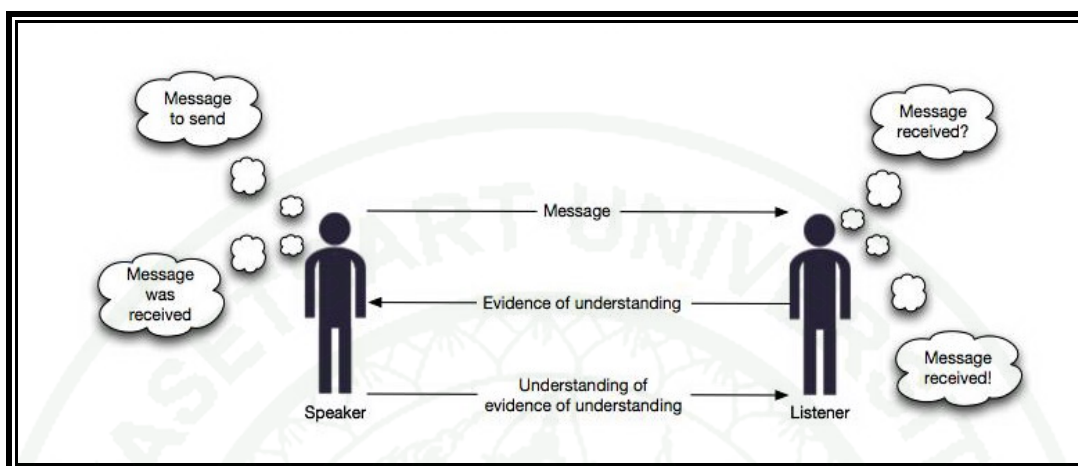
Figure 1.1 Speaking is a real time process
Source: Bailey (2006: 132)

As mentioned above, speaking is a real time process, so the bilingual students who are the second language learners seem to encounter more difficulties when speaking English. As Beardsmore (1982 cited in Bhela, 1999) has noted, many second language learners have difficulties with phonology, vocabulary and grammar of L2. These difficulties cause miscommunication and unsuccessful conversation. Due to high expectations from parents and the public viewpoint, students in the environment of bilingual education are expected to be sufficiently competent in speaking and understanding English. That is why the communicative competence of the bilingual students in terms of speaking is now considered the primary skill to be developed. There are a number of researchers who studied the effects of a bilingual environment on second language acquisition, for example, Scheu (2000); Purdie and Oliver (1999); Myles and Cheng (2003); Escamilla (1994); Collier and Thomas (2002). Those studies were conducted in many countries with participants of different sociological backgrounds in order to draw out the factors influencing their second language acquisition in terms of speaking. The summaries and findings of those studies will be discussed in more detail in the Previous Studies section (chapter 2).

Students of the Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School are mostly Thai or non-native English speakers. Due to the fact that they do not have an extensive English-speaking environment outside their school, the effectiveness of employing English skills in their educational and communicative environment is not at the optimal level. Even though they study with native English-speaking teachers for several hours a day, they still encounter problems understanding the concept of what they are being taught. These problems can eventually lead to unsuccessful learning. Issues concerning the English-speaking competence of students have been extensively discussed among the school administrators. They put more effort into solving these problems. The school regularly organizes an individual speaking tests conducted by the native English-speaking teacher of each subject. Several activities were held at the "English zone" where students are required to communicate only in English. These activities are aimed at encouraging and making students more comfortable to speak with their peers in English in a natural setting. As Allwright and Bailey (1991) suggest, if a learner is particularly shy or anxious, teachers may have to work towards a generally more relaxed atmosphere before they can expect the learner to be willing to speak.

According to Bhela (1999), speakers tend to rely on their native language structures when they need to produce a response. If the structures of the two languages are different, then a high frequency of errors may occur. The problems could, therefore, be the effect of how they have been raised by their monolingual parents who only speak Thai as is often discussed by the school administrators. The Thai language that is spoken at home would cause the difficulties to learn a second language at school. In contrast, the children who are raised speaking two languages interchangeably will be able to speak and to listen in equal proficiency in both languages (Williams and Snipper, 1990). They can acquire a second language easier than students who are raised speaking only a first language.

However, other related variables can also affect the students' second language learning and acquisition. These involve language aptitude, attitudes, motivation, language anxiety, language learning strategies and environmental factors. The discussion of these variables will be included in the section of related theories and

previous studies. According to Tucker and Corson (1997), these variables may well be the causes of difficulties faced by students when trying to acquire a second language. Therefore, it is interesting to uncover the actual problems encountered by bilingual students in the process of English as a second language acquisition and to find out how they deal with those difficulties.

Objectives of the Study

This study focuses on the difficulties in oral English communication encountered by Grade six bilingual students at Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong in the academic year 2007, and the coping methods they most frequently employed to solve those difficulties. The following objectives, therefore, are shaped in order to fulfil the needs of specific purposes in the study.

There are two main objectives in this study:

1. To investigate what the factors are and how they influence Grade 6 bilingual students' acquisition of English-speaking skills

2. To identify the oral communication difficulties and coping methods that students use to overcome those difficulties

Research Questions

The research questions are based on the extensive background and statement of the problems and review of literature. This present study is conducted to answer the following specific questions:

1. What are the factors influencing Grade 6 bilingual students' acquisition of English-speaking skills?

2. What are the difficulties encountered by students and how do they cope with those difficulties?

Significance of the Study

This research will benefit many areas and disciplines, including those where English is used as a medium of instruction; it will be of special benefit to schools, teachers and eventually to students. The findings will provide guidance on how to better encourage the bilingual students to practice and master speaking English. Schools will be able to make use of the findings in designing a more effective curriculums, programs and activities. The findings will also aid teachers in creating a classroom environment that encourages and assists students in speaking English: these will provide insights that will help teachers create effective activities and guide their in-class interactions with students, helping them to make the in-class learning experience both a positive one and an effective one. Apart from the benefit previously mentioned, the findings will also directly benefit students by making them aware of the obstacles they may encounter, and providing them with effective methods for overcoming them.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

1. This study was grounded upon observation and interview regarding six variables influencing the acquisition of English-speaking skills, adapted from McKibbin and Celeste (2002: 221):

   a. *Attentiveness*

   b. *Motivation*

   c. *Interaction with Classmates*

   d. *Class Participation*

   e. *Oral Communication Difficulties*

   f. *Coping Methods*

2. This study limits itself to twelve Thai Grade 6 bilingual students (six males and six females) at Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School whose native language is Thai.

3. The selection of the twelve participants was based on their level of English proficiency, four students (two males, two females) drawn from each proficiency level (low, medium, and high proficiency) as determined by their English academic records in school year 2007 (see Appendix B, page 130).

4. The study employs classroom observation, semi-structured interview, and unstructured interview.

5. This study aims to explore difficulties in language acquisition of grade six bilingual students in terms of speaking only.

6. The finding of this research study cannot be generalized to all Thai bilingual students of all ages and grades, due to the narrow age-group being studied and small size of population.

Terminology Used in the Present Study

Bilingual Education: refers to an education system that integrates both Thai (L1) and English (L2) as a medium of instruction at the primary educational level. It provides the students with an environment conducive to acquiring both languages naturally and directly from teachers who are native speakers.

Bilingual Students: refers to the Thai students who speak Thai as their first language. They employ English as a medium of communication when they are being taught in English subject classes.

Participants: refers to the twelve bilingual Grade 6 Thai students (six males and six females) who are studying at Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School in academic year 2007, and have been selected to participate in this study.

First language (L1): "first language" or "L1" refers to Thai, the native language of all twelve participants.

Second language (L2): in this study, "second language" or "L2" refers to English. It is studied and employed as a medium of communication in a bilingual school by all participants of this research study.

High English proficiency students: in this study, "high English proficiency students" refers to the four Grade six participants (two males and females) who earned exam scores in the 85-100 range for their English medium subjects in the previous exam period.

Medium English proficiency students: in this study, "medium English proficiency students" refers to the four Grade six participants (two males and females) who earned exam scores in the 61-84 range for their English medium subjects in the previous exam period.

Low English proficiency students: in this study, "low English proficiency students" refers to the four Grade six participants (two males and females) who earned exam scores in the 35-60 range for their English medium subjects in the previous exam period.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are many researchers currently involved in the study of the acquisition of second language speaking skills, especially English-speaking skills, giving the growing prominence of English as the world's common language. These researchers include: Krashen (1981); Thomson (1993); Tucker and Corson (1997); Gardner *et al.* (1987); Chomsky (1975); Gayle *et al.* (2006), Skinner (1957); and Lantolf (2000). Their theories will be illustrated and described in this chapter.

The following topics are presented in this chapter:

1. Definitions of relevant terms
2. Related theories
3. Previous studies

Definitions of Relevant Terms

Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Second language acquisition is the process by which people learn languages in addition to their native languages after a first language is already established. Additionally, the process can take place both inside and outside a classroom.

Krashen (1987) describes second language acquisition as the process of acquiring a second language that involves both an acquired system and a learned system. The acquired system is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. On the other hand, the learned system is the product of formal instruction and it comprises a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about the language, for example, knowledge of grammar rules.

Hamers and Blanc (1989) state that second language acquisition covers all cases of acquisition of a second language after the basic forms and functions of a first language have been mastered through formal and informal learning.

Gass and Selinker (2001) define second language acquisition as learning a non-native language in an environment in which there is considerable access to speakers of the target language. The language to be learned is often referred to as the "target language" or "L2", compared to the first language, "L1", referred to as the "source language".

Bilingual Education

This section will discuss the definition of bilingual education. Bilingual education is known as an education system that provides and uses two languages for instruction, learning, and communication. Many scholars such as Cummins and Corson (1997); Soltero (2004); Hamers and Blanc (1989) define the term bilingual education as the use of two or more languages of instruction in school.

According to Cummins and Corson (1997), bilingual education refers to the use of two or more languages for instruction. Languages are used to teach subject matter content rather than just language itself. Normally, the bilingual education is usually offered from kindergarten to sixth grade or beyond.

According to Soltero (2004), the bilingual education refers to an education context that promotes the continual development of the native language and maintenance of the home culture while adding a second language and culture. In the additive form of bilingual education, the child's first language and culture are not replaced by the second language and culture. In addition, they will further develop the first language in conjunction with the acquisition of the second language and culture. In addition, Hamers and Blanc (1989) emphasize that bilingual education should give instruction on the same content in both first and second languages at approximately the same time (i.e., during the same school day, or at least the same school week). The

students must be taught in their first language until they are able to use the second language for learning. The second language should be first taught as a subject, and then both first and second language will be employed as a medium of instruction at a later stage.

Related Theories

Second language acquisition, or SLA, is a theoretical and experimental field of study that looks at the phenomenon of language development – in this case the acquisition of a second language. Krashen (1981) claims that the process of second language acquisition is very similar to the process of acquiring a first language. Both require meaningful interactions in the target language, where the speakers are concerned not only with the form of their utterances but with actual communication – the messages they are attempting to convey and understand. In this process, grammatical regulations and concerns over errors are out-of-mind, and are only relevant in so far as they assist or impede effective communication, where "message sent" equals "message received". Figure 2.1 illustrates the interaction of acquisition and learning in second language production.
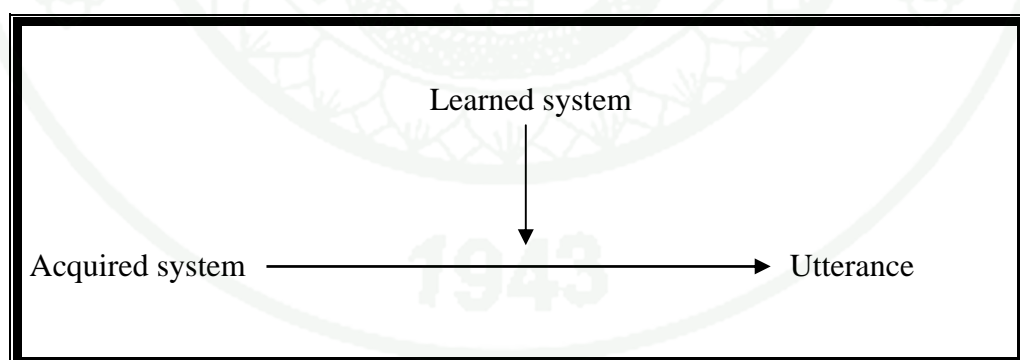

Figure 2.1 Model for second language performance

Source: Krashen (1981: 2)

Moreover, Thomson (1993) promotes two main controls to make input comprehensible: context for the target language, and a growing knowledge of the world surrounding the target language. The learners should be able to learn almost any language given the following: the language learner understands himself, his social context, the nature of language acquisition, has access to a native speaker, and is willing to devote time and persevere through some frustration and embarrassment. Given an appropriate strategy, every language learner can be a successful, efficient language learner. Reflecting Krashen's Hypothesis, Thomson promotes a learning environment that facilitates language acquisition through strategies that encourage high learner motivation, low stress interaction, and high self-confidence levels. To this end, Thomson encourages use of tools, communing, understanding, talking, and evolving that develop a sense of self-awareness, a learner-controlled learning environment, and accommodation of individual strengths and weaknesses. Table 2.1 summarizes Thomson's fundamental presuppositions regarding language acquisition.

Table 2.1 Fundamental presuppositions regarding language acquisition.

Fundamental Presuppositions regarding Language Acquisition	
Communing	Second language acquisition occurs through comprehension of real messages.
	Messages must contain input that is a little more than the level the learner currently understands.
	Acquisition occurs when the learner is focusing on something other than acquisition (i.e. focus on the message).
	Second language acquisition occurs when the learner is not 'on the defensive'.
	The learning environment should be comfortable and should keep anxiety levels low.

Table 2.1 (Continued)

Fundamental Presuppositions regarding Language Acquisition	
Understanding	Second language acquisition produces listening skills prior to speaking skills.
	Learners should be given a "silent period."
	Second language acquisition is not conscious interaction with/awareness of grammar rules.
	Consciously learned grammar is a tool for specific tasks, such as writing and editing, and should be used when time allows.
Talking	Second language acquisition does not require tedious drilling.
	Second language acquisition takes time and develops slowly/ subtly as opposed to learning, which can be fast/ obvious for some people.
Evolving	Focus of study should remain on receiving quality input, not on receiving error correction.
	Activities should be adjusted to keep the learner comprehending and processing target language

Source: Thomson (1993: 23-24)

In Thomson theory, the goal is for the learner to be able to directly comprehend language within its own system of communication, and language activities should help develop speaking ability. The learner uses visual aids and physical responses to aid in the recollection of language and visualization of the objects and concepts the language refers to. This ensures that the learner receives the stimuli necessary to imprint the image in his memory and also that the learner knows what is being spoken about during the acquisition and development process.

According to Tucker and Corson (1997), second language students in bilingual programs are introduced to literacy and receive at least a part of their initial academic instruction in their primary language, while also receiving second language instruction. In the most promising bilingual model, two-way immersion or developmental bilingual education, students from two linguistic groups are brought together in a structured program where each group is exposed to and learns the other's language through a two-way communication channel. The students acquire second language speaking skills in a proper classroom environment where there are two linguistic groups participating. Students in these programs have been found to function at or above grade level in both languages at the end of primary education.

However, the bilingual students' speaking proficiency of the second language might not reach the optimal level due to related variables: language aptitude, attitudes, motivation, language anxiety, language learning strategies and environmental factors, which affect the students' second language oral difficulties (ibid). In the same way Krashen (1981) proposed that language aptitude relates to second language speaking, attitudes, motivation, self-confidence and anxiety in subconscious language acquisition, and as such affect the oral proficiency of second language speakers.

Regarding the oral difficulties in acquiring second language, the factors previously mentioned influence speaking proficiency. Gardner *et al.* (1987) discovered that for oral skills -- which require interaction with members of the target culture – the effect of language aptitude, attitudes, motivation, language anxiety, language learning strategies, and environmental factors are more severe than they are for other skills which do not require interaction with members of the target culture. Furthermore, these factors were implicated as causes for second language retention. The students would encounter problems due to limited vocabulary, negative transfer, and pronunciation. The students who are enrolled in an ineffective bilingual environment, have negative attitudes, and have less motivation, are reluctant to speak with native speakers, and as a result they are bound to encounter more oral difficulties than students who are enrolled in effective bilingual programs and have positive attitudes.

Since the early nineteen seventies, SLA researchers have been attempting to describe and explain the behavior and developing systems of children and adults learning to speak a new language. There are many proposed theories concerning acquisition of a second language in terms of speaking. In this section, three related theories concerning second language acquisition will be discussed: the Nativist Perspective, the Behaviorist Perspective, and the Interactionist Perspective.

Nativist Perspective

The nativist perspective believes that children are born with the capacity to acquire language inherently. According to this view, children are inspired to acquire language and to communicate. However, Chomsky (1975) claims that the human brain has a built-in mechanism called the language acquisition device (LAD) that infers the rules of language when triggered by the stimulation of spoken language. Once the language acquisition device is activated, children discover the regularities of language and begin to internalize the rules of grammar. That is to say, it happens without the reinforcement or training.

The way in which Chomsky visualizes linguistic competence and language performance can be represented schematically as follows:

- LC-Linguistic competence
- LP-Language performance
- LAD-Language Acquisition Device
- SC- Social context
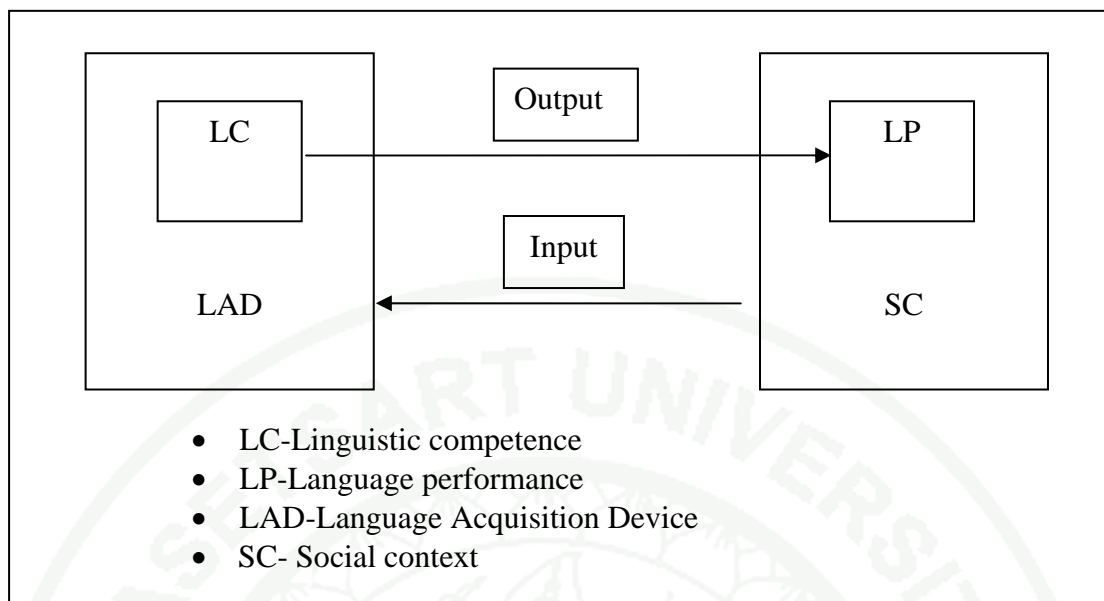
Figure 2.2 Language Acquisition Device

Source: Chomsky (1975: 22)

The diagram shows that the linguistic competence is embedded in LAD. The LAD receives input that is the language data from the social context and then using this input, the linguistic competence, which is in the LAD generates the grammar of the language performance in social context.

Behaviorist Perspective

According to the behaviorist point of view, language learning is determined by stimuli from the environment. People have often assumed that children develop language by imitating what they hear from adults. As Gayle *et al.* (2006: 33) say, "learning can be observed and the learner behavior will be affected by the environmental factors that impact the students' learning". That is, the children will produce language or speak when they receive positive reinforcement by rewards and attention. As Skinner (1957) claims, reinforcement is the key element. A reinforcer is anything that strengthens the desired response. It could be verbal praise, a good grade or a feeling of increased accomplishment or satisfaction. The theory also covers negative reinforcement, such as punishment, which results in reduced responses. In

addition, Rydland and Aukrust (2005) state that in L2 development, the use of repetition by children can be a way of learning, interacting socially, and aiding participation in play. That is to say repetition allows the child to participate in extended discourse in L2. From the behaviorist perspective, second language learners acquire language through imitation, reinforcement, and repetition which can be presented in Skinner's condition as follow:

Figure 2.3 Skinner's Condition
Source: Skinner (1957: 135)

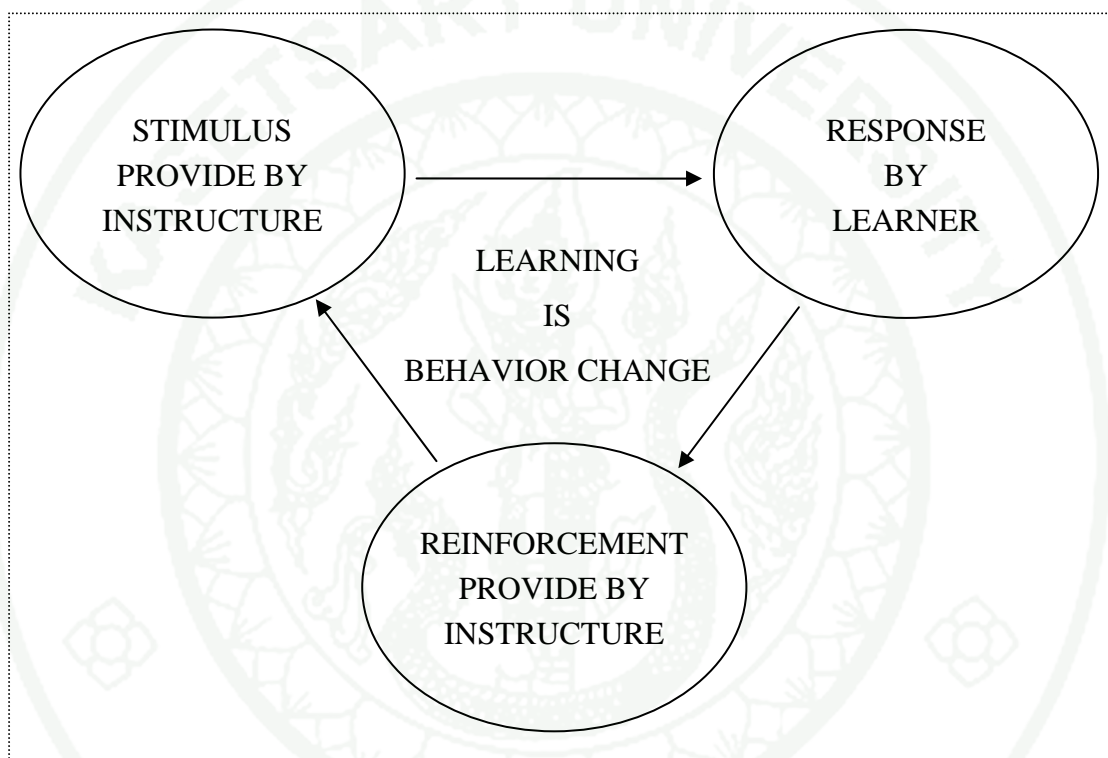The diagram shows that learning is behavior change. Changes in behavior are the result of an individual's response to events (stimuli) that occur in the environment. The Stimulus-Response pattern is reinforced (rewarded), and the individual is thus conditioned to respond.

Interactionist Perspective

The relationship between social interaction and L2 acquisition, although still marginalized in mainstream L2 research, has been the focus of increasing interest. The first systematic studies on these questions were undertaken in the late 1970s and early 1980s by Faerch and Kasper (1983); Hatch (1978); Long (1983). To date, the role of social interaction in L2 acquisition has met with very different interpretations in research, ranging from it being a strong to a weak influencing factor. The weak version of the interactionist approach acknowledges that interaction is beneficial for learning by providing occasions for learners to be exposed to comprehensible, negotiated, or modified input. This framework basically assumes that social interaction plays an auxiliary role, providing momentary frames within which learning processes are supposed to take place.

Contrary to this position, the strong theory recognizes interaction as a fundamentally constitutive dimension of learners' everyday lives (Lantolf, 2000: 26). That is, interaction is the most basic site of experience, and hence functions as the most basic site of organized activity where learning can take place. In this view, social interaction does not just provide an interactional frame within which developmental processes can take place; as a social practice, it involves the learner as a co-constructor of joint activities.

The interactionist theory combines the nativist view that humans are born with the ability to acquire language and the behaviorist view that language is learned through the environment. According to Gass (1997), the interactionist perspective focuses on two main issues: input and conversational interactions in which learners engage. Humans were born with the ability to learn to speak and then develop their communication skills through their social interactions.

Additionally, interactionists see language as a rule-governed cultural activity learned in interaction with others, while nativists perceive language ability as an innate capacity to generate syntactically correct sentences. In other words,

interactionists believe environmental factors are more dominant in language acquisition, while nativists believe inborn factors are more dominant. Furthermore, the major distinction between interactionist and nativist theories of SLA is that nativist scholars such as Krashen (1981) emphasize comprehensible target language input that is one-way input and, while interactionists acknowledge the importance of two-way communication in the target language.

Social Interactional Features Cause L2 Oral Difficulties

The social interactional features of bilingual programs provide better opportunities for language learning and development than do traditional Foreign Language classes in an otherwise monolingual academic environment. Bilingual programs provide natural environment of social interaction for language acquisition, which is certainly to result in better knowledge of second language speaking (Long, 1983). Swain and Lapkin (1991) claim that children who had adequate bilingual social interaction had received more L2 learning opportunities; those with a bilingual background performed significantly better in the acquisition of L2 than did children from monolingual backgrounds. Both first and second language acquisition is facilitated by interaction between the students themselves and also between the students and instructors. By integrating students and an instructor in a bilingual classroom environment, the programs offer the students access to native models of speech and behavior exhibited by the instructor. That is, the bilingual environment promotes positive attitudes toward both languages and cultures and is supportive of full proficiency in both languages. This additive bilingual environment supports the ongoing development of the native language while a second language is learned.

Even though humans learn language through interaction, interaction experiences may sometimes encourage or discourage the language learning processes. For example, interaction or communication with people who are from different roles and status, might cause an uncomfortable atmosphere that could create speaking barriers. As Kumpulainen and Wray (2002: 14) suggest, "social interaction among students themselves is different from interaction with teachers. In teacher-student

interaction, the teacher will be the person who controls the content of interaction and the distribution of speaking turns". On the other hand, in peer interaction, students will control the content and distribution of speaking turns themselves. Since teachers and their students differ in many ways, the differences can lead to speaking difficulties and miscommunication because every social group has subtly different styles of speaking and personal contact behavior (Lemke, 1989: 8). Therefore, the communication among the students themselves takes place more easily because they tend to be more relaxed among their peers, and are more inclined to produce or speak the language in a bilingual environment over which they have more control. It can be said that the bilingual environment promotes the language learning processes of the students. Therefore, students also need to learn to interact with others outside their peer group.

Comprehensible Input and Its Role in Foreign Language Learning

Comprehensible input tends to have an important role for L2 learners in acquiring second language. According to Krashen (1985), comprehensible input suggests that learners acquire an L2 only when they are presented with meaningful and contextualized language input at the i+1 level where i refers to the current level of competence and 1 refers to language a little beyond the i level. To optimize acquisition, he further argues that the input should be comprehensible, relevant, interesting, sufficient and presented in a situation that encourages a low filter setting (i.e., encouraging positive attitude).

Moreover, Krashen firmly believes that speaking is the result of acquisition and not its cause. This means that speech cannot be taught directly but emerges on its own because of building competence via comprehensible input. Therefore, the implications for teaching are that teachers must provide as much comprehensible input as possible. At the same time, the teachers must help comprehension through visual aids and exposure to a wide range of vocabulary rather than studying of syntactic structure. Furthermore, the classroom atmosphere must be relaxed while focusing on classroom activities that allow speaking skills to emerge.

Comprehensible Output and Its Role in Foreign Language Learning

Swain (1995) suggests that the essence of comprehensible output (CO) lies in the fact that learners are provided with opportunity to talk and to write in order to learn. The comprehensible output has generally been seen not as a way of creating knowledge but as a way of practicing already-existing knowledge. Implication of CO for L2 learning is that it is imperative for learners to have considerable in-class opportunities for speaking. This could be accomplished by pushing learners to make use of their resources. That is, the learners must have their linguistic abilities stretched to the fullest. Swain (1993) suggests that teacher-led and collaboratively structured sessions can make these goals attainable.

In short, L2 learners need rich input in order to produce the output effectively. On the other hand, formal settings are required whenever the learners have inadequate input. This is to assist and to reinforce the learners to acquire second language in the proper environment which provides adequate input data.

Previous Studies

Scheu (2000) conducted research under the topic of the cultural constraints in bilingual code switching. The main purpose of the study was to examine whether and in what way cultural factors affect bilingual code switching. The informants of the study were 48 bilingual year 11 students of the German school in Madrid, Spain. They were taught mainly in German as the first language and in Spanish as a second language. The questionnaires were used to gather some personal data. The speech data used in both the interviews and the natural settings environments (such as classrooms and playground activities) were recorded. Interestingly, the study revealed that students are able to use both languages interchangeably. There was no student who adhered to his mother tongue due to the fact that their life experiences relating to both cultures support the language used.

Purdie and Oliver (1999) conducted a research study to examine language-learning strategies of bilingual students in Australia. The 58 students who participated in the study were from 9 to 12 years old. The students came from three main cultural groups: Asian, European and Arabian. The data were collected from a structured interview. The interview contained questions or statements relating to the family, educational and cultural background, attitude to English in the classroom, in the playground, and at home, English language efficiency beliefs, and the use of language learning strategies. The findings from this research study were that the sociological background of each student plays an important role in their English language learning and their learning strategies.

Myles and Cheng (2003) conducted research to investigate the difficulties which twelve non-native English-speaking international graduate students at a Canadian university experienced in their adjustment to higher education in an English-speaking university. They employed the semi-structured interviews that allowed students to talk freely and openly about their studying experiences. The findings showed that the cultural differences caused speaking difficulties. Specifically, the participants reported that the relationship between teacher and student was different from their countries of origin, e.g., the participants felt uncomfortable calling their teacher's first name. Consequently, they hesitated to initiate a conversation with their teachers. The researcher advised that the positive relationship between instructor and student is important in order to encourage the student to communicate. Moreover, ethnocentric behaviors can lead to misunderstanding between interlocutors.

Escamilla (1994) conducted a research study to examine language use in bilingual classrooms and the school environment outside the classroom. The study was composed of a variety of ethnic and linguistic groups such as Mexican-American, African-American, Cambodians, Vietnamese and Samoans. It is interesting to note that 50% of the students who first entered the school could not speak English. In order to conduct this research, the researcher spent two days every week for one semester collecting the data by using the observation, interview, and review of parent

notebooks. This research indicated that the school should create a bilingual environment that reflects and recognizes the importance of the two languages used. Moreover, the students' attitude in learning the second languages is the crucial factor in acquiring the language.

Xu (2006) researched the factors which affect classroom oral participation. He focused on classroom based foreign language learning as it is one of the few ways to determine how well students learn, and is typically the only opportunity the vast majority of students have for actually conversing in the foreign language, and thus is principally concerned with creating opportunities for learners to practice L2 and to produce output. The study focused on 143 third-year college students enrolled in typical college beginning foreign language courses. In order to collect data, the researcher employed a questionnaire covering factors affecting classroom oral participation: language experience, previous learning, perceived competence, desire to communicate, attitude to activities, topic, and classroom atmosphere. The participants rated each factor and the responses were scored on a seven-point scale: strongly agree=7, moderately agree=6, slightly agree=5, neutral=4, slightly disagree=3, moderately disagree=2, strongly disagree=1. The data was processed by SPSS after adding up the score in each item. The results indicated that learners' perceived competence and desire to communicate were the chief factors influencing oral participation.

Lam (2007) examined ESL learners' problems and coping strategies in oral communication. The participants of this research were 41 secondary school students of about Grade 8 students who had studied English as a second language for seven to eight years in Hong Kong. A quasi-experimental design was adopted in this study in which a treatment class received strategy training (N = 21) and a comparison class (N = 20) served as a control group. Selected strategies were taught to the treatment class with a view to help the students cope with English group discussion tasks, in which the learners were asked to agree on a ranking order. It was believed that the tasks might provide an ideal avenue for the students to try out strategies in order to cope with oral communication problems as they negotiated meaning. A multi-method

approach to assessing the effects of the strategy intervention was adopted. Data was collected on a pre-post basis from (1) the learners' performances in group discussions, (2) the observations of learners' strategy use and (3) the interviews of selected participants, four for each group. The research revealed that the types of coping strategies most frequently employed by students frequently are paraphrasing, simplification, activating background knowledge, monitoring contribution, abandoning message, asking for help, taking risks, using gestures, monitoring turn-taking, using fillers, and planning ideas in advance.

Pawapatcharaudom (2007) investigated the English speaking problems and coping strategies of Thai students in the international program at Mahidol University. All participants were studying at the undergraduate level and had passed the entrance examinations. The study employed a scaled survey questionnaire to measure English language problems and coping strategies from 30 Thai students. The questionnaire was comprised of three sections. The first section collected students' demographic data, including academic as well as personal characteristics, such as age, gender, fields of study, and prior experience in English language learning. Section two was designed to ascertain the English-speaking difficulties encountered by the students: linguistic problems, socio-cultural obstacles, and barriers to intercultural communication. Section three was aimed to find students' solutions. This section attempted to consider the learning strategies as solutions that participants employed to solve communication difficulties. The questionnaire had six categories of second language learning strategies including cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, memory-related strategies, compensatory strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. The result from the questionnaire was that the metacognitive strategies were the most frequently used strategies that Thai undergraduate students in international program at MU applied in the research. They employed the following strategies; relying on context to figure the meaning of unfamiliar words in the text. Furthermore, the compensatory strategies were the least frequently used. They did not use gestures when they could not think of a word during a conversation in English. The research also revealed that the most serious problem of all participants was that they could not explain their ideas clearly in English, and thus could not have a formal

conversation in English. They felt uncomfortable talking with a native speaker instructor in the classroom. Furthermore, the research revealed the students' solutions and coping methods for overcoming or avoiding those difficulties which were; *Repetition*: if they did not understand any lesson, they would repeat it many times until they understood clearly, *Monitoring*: when someone corrected their English errors, they tried not to repeat the same errors; *Imaging*: they remembered new English words by making a clear mental image of it or by drawing a picture. The least frequently employed strategy was practicing. The participants revealed the lowest frequency of taking every opportunity to practice English.

Yan-hua (2007) explored the difficulties encountered by overseas students in a total immersion situation, attempting to establish the possible causes for those difficulties and proffering suggestions for overcoming them. The research participant was a Chinese female student enrolled in the one-year Political Administration MA program at the University of York, England. In collecting data, the researcher employed a five-hour semi-structured interview. Only the relevant data were noted down in Chinese. The object of the interview was to gain an insight into the study life, academic and daily routine, and the subject's attitude toward speaking English. The interview questions were guided by the research questions. The researcher was ready to develop discussion threads with the participant when necessary. The research revealed that the participant had difficulties in adapting herself into the English-speaking environment. Moreover, she lacked overseas life experience pertaining to her area of study. Her lack of fluency was very discouraging. It can be inferred that she felt lonely and inadequate at the start. She did not actively take part in seminars or discussions. The participant said "It is hard to communicate with my international roommates or friends. I cannot express myself clearly and they cannot understand my problems. Most of the time, I have to turn to talk with Chinese classmates or friends. Now, when I was in the seminar, I often wondered whether people could understand me or whether they had the patience to listen to me." Furthermore, the subject self-segregated herself, gravitating to her Chinese friends, rather than taking advantage of opportunities to fully immerse herself in an English-speaking environment. The data also showed that different English-speaking difficulties correlated with different

coping methods. The participant was passive and avoided expressing critical views and creative thinking. Her attention was not on what she should express, but was always taken up by trying to follow the lecturers and doing detailed note taking. The research finally suggested the current Chinese students should adjust themselves to being actively involved, and not passively live as alien victims; they needed to learn to appeal for help from both university staff and native speaking peers.

Dadabhai (2007) investigated the effects of age and environment on the ability to learn English as a second language. The participants of this research were two Indian immigrants who later migrated to the United Kingdom. They both came from the same part of India and shared the same cultural and first language experience. However, they differed in the age at which they emigrated from India to the United Kingdom. The first participant was 25 year of age, and had emigrated from India when he was 16 years old. His mother tongue was Hindi, and he was not taught any English for the duration of his education in India. The second participant, 41 years of age, had emigrated from India when he was 32 years old. His mother tongue was also Hindi and had not studied English in his education in India. The data was collected by recording their English conversation in a natural situation. Their relatives who could speak English were asked to telephone them and then record their conversation. The findings showed that the older participant encountered more difficulties than the younger one. He spoke less and there were many of *'ummm'* and *'uhhh'* indicating a comparative lack in self-confidence. He hesitated to speak in English and had difficulty thinking of what to say next. The younger participant, only 25 and unmarried, made friends with native speakers who helped him in practicing his English. In comparison, the older participant came to the UK to marry and work. His social group also migrated from India and used first language as a medium of communication most of the time. Therefore, he had limited opportunity to practice his English. Evidently, his social group and environment had a deleterious or retarding effect on second language acquisition.

Acquiring a second language can be difficult for learners. What can make them interested in learning the language, especially in monolingual countries, are the school and classroom environment and the teacher's ability to make learning an enjoyable process. As seen from the reviewed literature such as Scheu (2000); Purdie and Oliver (1999); Myles and Cheng (2003); Escamilla (1994); Xu (2006); Lam (2007); Pawapatcharaudom (2007); Yan-hua (2007), the oral communication difficulties encountered during L2 acquisition often involve environmental factors. A rich and stimulating learning environment is essential to the development of verbal and intellectual skills for even a first language, and plays an even greater role in second language acquisition especially in terms of speaking.

Similarly, a bilingual educational environment is also a significant factor in the learning and mastery of L2 (Dadabhai, 2007). Since the bilingual learners are expected to be competent in both first and second language, a bilingual education should therefore provide an adequately stimulating environment for promoting attentiveness, motivation, interaction and participation in acquiring second language speaking skills.

Based on the framework of second language acquisition research, those researchers previously mentioned endeavored to find out the factors influencing the participants' L2 oral communication. The results of the studies pointed out that the ability in acquiring second language speaking skill was related to environmental factors such as sociological background, attitude, cultures, and relationship between learners and instructors. Therefore, this research study was conducted to investigate the factors that affect Grade 6 bilingual students' acquisition of English speaking skills, and to explore the coping methods the students employ to overcome oral communication difficulties.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this research is to explore difficulties in language acquisition of Grade six bilingual students at Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School in terms of speaking. In order to achieve the aim of this research and to answer the research questions, an appropriate methodology is needed to be well-prepared and well-designed for the collection and analysis of data. This chapter presents the details of the research method, specifically: research approach, sampling, research instruments, data collection, data analysis, verification, and ethical concerns.

Research Approach

This research study employed qualitative research, which uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton 2002:39). Qualitative research, broadly defined, means any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 17) and instead, the kind of research that produces findings arrived from real-world settings where the phenomenon of interest unfold naturally (Patton, 2002: 39). Unlike quantitative researchers who seek causal determination, prediction, and generalization of findings, qualitative researchers seek instead illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations (Hoepfl, 1997).

The qualitative method used in this present study is adduced by Bryman and Burgess (1999: 140) that "the qualitative methods consist of three kinds of data collection: direct observation, semi-structured interview, and unstructured interview". All these research instruments were utilized in this research.

The observation data was drawn from the participants' activities, behaviors, interaction, oral communication, and the environmental factors influencing them. From these factors the researcher noted how attentiveness, motivation, interaction with classmates, class participation, and oral communication difficulties influenced students' English speaking skill. Additionally, the researcher also noted how they overcame or coped with the oral communication difficulties they encountered. The data received from observations was utilized in the composition of questions for semi-structured interviews. The questions were crafted to elicit information regarding any relevant factors including participants' experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge. Furthermore, the unstructured interview was conducted in order to interview the English teacher regarding students' oral communication difficulties and coping methods. The additional data received from the English teacher was used to verify the data collected from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews.

Sampling

Purposive sampling was used to determine the participants for this study (six males and six females), all Grade 6 students in Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School. The reason for using participants of this age group is that younger students tend to acquire second languages more easily. Many researchers who investigated second language acquisition such as Asher and Garcia 1969; Seliger, Krashen, and Ladefoged 1975; Oyama (1976 cited in Odlin, 1989) have noted that younger children acquire language faster than adult informants. Scheu (2000); Purdie and Oliver (1999) also indicate that younger children are more likely to achieve native pronunciation and improve their speaking skills more easily than adults. Therefore, this study focused on Grade six students selected on the basis of their performance in English courses, as indicated in their academic record. The research participants were divided into three groups. The first group was composed of four students (2 males, 2 females) who obtained the highest scores on English exams in the latest academic year. The second group included four students (2 males, 2 females) whose scores were in the middle range. The third group was composed of four students (2 males, 2 females) who obtained the lowest scores.

The rationale of the participants' selection is that the Grade six students are in the last year of the primary school. Secondary school students encounter English instructors who normally speak faster, and curriculum and textbooks that are more complicated. All these factors constitute even greater obstacles to learning and acquiring English speaking skills, especially when the requisite fundamental English ability for that level has not been adequately developed. Consequently, the researcher believed that this study (of Gr.6 students) will provide useful data revealing how attentiveness, motivation, interaction with classmates, class participation, and oral communication difficulties influenced students English speaking skill. Moreover, the possible approaches for overcoming those difficulties should also be revealed. Therefore, the students can be better prepared for English instruction at the secondary and college level.

General Information of the Participants

After receiving the students' most recent academic reports from the school (see Appendix B, page 130), the researcher classified the students into three groups according to their grades.

Table 4.1 Group A Students

Students with the highest English exam scores for academic year 2007

Code	Gender	Semester 1		Semester 2	
		Mid	Final	Mid	Final
A1	Male	99	97	99	96
A2	Male	93	93	96	94
A3	Female	95	92	95	92
A4	Female	98	86	87	90

Table 4.1 includes two male students and two female students, all with English exam scores in the 85-100 range, who were consequently placed in Group A.

Table 4.2 Group B Students

Students with mid-range English exam scores for academic year 2007

Code	Gender	Semester 1		Semester 2	
		Mid	Final	Mid	Final
B1	Male	67	69	82	79
B2	Male	83	70	73	76
B3	Female	78	62	70	69
B4	Female	72	67	76	74

Table 4.2 includes two male students and two female students, all with English exam scores in the 61-85 range, who were consequently placed in Group B.

Table 4.3 Group C Students

Students with low English exam scores for academic year 2007

Code	Gender	Semester 1		Semester 2	
		Mid	Final	Mid	Final
C1	Male	39	52	55	53
C2	Male	44	52	54	54
C3	Female	47	52	54	60
C4	Female	52	52	60	57

Table 4.3 includes two male students and two female students, all with low English exam scores in the 35-60 range, who were consequently placed in Group C. It should be noted that all twelve research participants were selected from the same class. They had the same instructors and shared the same class environment.

General Class Environment

The classrooms had extremely poor acoustics: they were constructed with concrete block walls and slab floors and ceilings, with no sound absorbing or insulating material, and were consequently virtual echo-chambers. The classrooms not only amplified all background noise in the room, they channelled in noise from all other parts of the school. There were 30 students in the class. Desks were small and packed tightly together, greatly encouraging students to chat amongst themselves, disregarding the lesson, and also facilitating rampant copying. This also made it difficult for the teachers to circulate and offer individualized attention, particularly to students not seated on an aisle. The classroom lacked visual stimulators and appropriate learning aids that would help motivate students and facilitate their level of understanding. In short, the classroom environment was de-motivating, and encouraged inattention, distraction, lack of participation and disorder.

Despite these difficulties, the teachers made a good effort to circulate, to offer individual attention and assistance, and to control the class. The English teacher frequently offered incentives to motivate the students, including offering brownie points, giving quizzes, and generally encouraging the students individually and collectively. The Thai teacher worked at maintaining discipline, but, unable to speak English herself, was unfortunately unable to help the students to study in the English classroom.

Classes were 50 minutes in length, and were usually conducted in a pattern of:

1-3 minutes: introductions, announcements

3-10 minutes: review of past lesson and the vocabulary for the week

10-20 minutes: lecture/demonstration

20-50 minutes: in class activity/exercise

Research instruments

Data collection is an essential component to conducting research. Data collection is a complicated and hard task. It is also very difficult to say which is the best method of data collection. O'Leary (2004: 150) remarks "Collecting credible data is a tough task, and it is worth remembering that one method of data collection is not inherently better than another." Therefore, the data collection method to be used would depend upon the research goals and the advantages and disadvantages of each method.

As previously mentioned, the research instruments employed in this study were observation, semi-structured interview, and unstructured interview.

Observation is one of the collecting data processes. It involves looking and listening very carefully. The observer requires to watch and to listen to the participants in order to discover particular information regarding their behavior. Jorgensen (1989) states that observation is the most common methods for qualitative data collection, participant observation is also one of the most demanding. It requires the researcher become a participant in the culture or context being observed. The literature on participant observation discusses how to enter the context, the role of the researcher as a participant, the collection and storage of field notes, and the analysis of field data. Participant observation often requires repetition due to the fact that the researcher needs to become accepted as a natural part of the culture in order to assure that the observations are of the natural phenomenon, That is to say, the participants are expected to behave naturally. Therefore, the observer requires revisiting the research field for the constancy of data.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the *field notes* technique was employed in the observational process. Field notes refer to transcribed notes or the written account derived from data collected during observation. These data are records of what the researcher experienced and learned through interaction among participants. Bernard (2002) claims that field notes should include an account of

events, how participants behaved and reacted, what was said in conversation, where participants were positioned in relationship to one another, physical gestures, and all other details and observations necessary to make the story of the participant observation experience complete. Field notes may be written either discreetly during participant observation or following the activity, depending on the setting and how much the researcher participated in the field. However, notes should be expanded into summary as soon as possible before the memory of the details fades. That is to say the researchers need to expand the notes into rich descriptions of what they have observed. This involves transforming the raw notes into a narrative and elaborating on their initial observations.

Semi-structured interview is non-standardized and are frequently used in qualitative analysis. The interviewer does not do the research to test a specific hypothesis (David and Sutton, 2004: 87). The researcher has a list of key themes, issues, and questions to be covered. In this type of interview the order of the questions can be changed depending on the direction of the interview. An interview guide is also used, but additional questions can be asked.

Unstructured interview refers to a non-directed and is a flexible method. It is more casual than the other type of interviews. There is no need to follow a detailed interview guide. Each interview is different. Interviewees are encouraged to speak openly, frankly and give as much detail as possible. In an unstructured interview the researcher has to be a good listener and note or record new or interesting data the interviewee provides. Minichiello (1990) defines unstructured interview as interviews in which neither the question nor the answer categories are predetermined. They rely on social interaction between the interviewer and interviewee to elicit information.

Data Collection

The researcher made an attempt to ensure readiness before data collection started. At the beginning of each data collection process, when meeting the participants, the researcher began the process of observation, semi-structured

interview, and unstructured interview by informing them of the purpose of the data collection and the benefit of the outcome of this study. After that, the students were asked to relax and follow their own routine.

Observation

The participant behaviors and interactions were observed in their normal classroom environment. The researcher visited the research field every two days for an approximate period of one month, observing the students' behavior and verbal interactions in the classrooms where English was used as a medium of instruction, and the environmental factors influencing their speaking proficiency. The researcher examined and evaluated the participants in six areas as shown in the following table.

Table 3.1 A Classroom Observation Checklist

No.	Domains
1.	Attentiveness
2.	Motivation
3.	Interaction with Classmates
4.	Class Participation
5.	Oral Communication Difficulties
6.	Coping Methods

Adapted from: Mckibbin and Celeste (2002)

Each item in the classroom observation checklist can be explained as follows:

1. *Attentiveness*: The role of attention in learning is getting a student to clearly understand a concept of what they are being taught. Attention is part of focus, concentration, a component of intelligence.

2. *Motivation*: It gives intensity and direction in learning. It is the condition that activates students in speaking English.

3. *Interaction with Classmates*: It refers to the English communication among the participants and classmates while they are interacting in the classroom.

4. *Class Participation*: It refers to the enthusiasm and frequency of participation in classroom English activities.

5. *Oral Communication Difficulties*: It refers to difficulties which cause the students' English speaking proficiency such as limitation of vocabulary, sentence structure and tenses.

6. *Coping Method*: It refers to techniques that the participants employ to solve the different speaking difficulties that they encountered.

Since there were twelve participants, the researcher made use of two assistants who assisted with classroom observation. The researcher prepared the assistants in advance regarding the six areas to be observed. Each of the three participant groups was observed by only one of the three observers (the researcher and the two assistants); each observer observed only four participants.

The field-notes technique was employed at this stage. Observers sat at the back of the classroom and took notes describing the environment, circumstantial factors, and the specific phenomena as they occurred regarding the observation checklist. The field-notes technique was used to collect the data from the classroom observation, informal and formal discussions among research participants and with the teacher. The example of field-notes can be seen in Appendix D, page 149. During and after site visits (both pre and post site visits), summary findings were produced based on field notes from every visit (see Appendix E, page 151). The synthesis of the field notes into site visit summaries facilitated the researcher in analyzing plausible interpretations and its relationship with key content categories.

Semi-Structured Interview

The questions in the semi-structured interview were based on the data gained from the classroom observations. The researcher interviewed all twelve participants in Thai individually, collecting qualitative data by setting up a situation (the interview) that allowed research participants the time and scope to talk about their opinions on the questions asked. The interview process was conducted during the lunch break so as not to interrupt the participants' normal classes. Each participant was interviewed individually in a room alone with the interviewer. The interviews were audio recorded and subsequently transcribed. The interviews took approximately ten minutes for each participant. However, the length of each interview also depended on the ongoing (unstructured) questions that occurred during the interview. The interviews of all twelve participants were conducted over the course of three days.

The objective has been to understand and to draw out the research participants' oral communication difficulties, approaches they employ to cope with difficulties, and environmental factors influencing their oral communication. The interview mostly used open-ended questions, some suggested by the researcher ("Tell me about…") and some that arose naturally during the interview ("You said a moment ago…can you tell me more?" see Appendix C, page 143). As a result, the participants were able to talk freely.

The researcher worked to build a rapport with the research participants, and conducted the interview as a natural informal conversation. This made the participants feel more comfortable and relaxed. The positive rapport between interviewer and interviewee, enabled the collection of data that could not be easily observed (attitude, feelings and emotions, for example). The participants provided data that was relevant to the research. Each question were asked when the interviewer felt it was appropriate.

Unstructured interview

The unstructured interview method was used to collect data from the English teacher. The English teacher was encouraged to talk about each group of participants and detailed information about each of the research participants, rather than to answer specific questions.

The English teacher shared his opinions of each of the students, especially in terms of the primary research axes: *Attentiveness, Motivation, Interaction with Classmates, Class Participation, Oral Communication Difficulties, and Coping Methods*. The results were compared with the findings of the in-class observation and the student interviews to confirm those findings.

Data Analysis

Every research instrument was then processed and analysed qualitatively. Data on verbal communications skills and patterns collected from classroom observations and interviews were analysed using content analysis as defined by Bazerman and Prior (2004): "*content analysis is a systematic and replicable research tool used to compress many words of text into fewer content categories.*" In other words, this technique is used for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages. It enables the researcher to include large amounts of textual information and systematically identify its properties. The method of *content analysis* is most commonly used by researchers in the social sciences to analyze recorded transcripts of observations and interviews with participants.

Observation

As mentioned earlier, summary findings were written every time the researcher had completed each classroom observation. The summary findings were based on the field-notes taken by the researcher and assistants during the in-class observation. There were seventy-two summary findings for all research participants in

total: six summary findings per participant. The researcher then analysed the significance and relationships of the key-words and concepts indicated by the summary findings. As previously mentioned, content analysis was used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within responses. Therefore, the data was then grouped into key content categories: Attentiveness, Motivation, Interaction with Classmates, Class Participation, Oral Communication Difficulties, and Coping Methods.

Examples of Observation Data Analyzed by Using Content Analysis

Attentiveness: He knew when he should talk and when he should focus on the class' activities. He paid attention well to the teacher's explanations, and was very focused on the lesson.

Motivation: His classmates often initiated speak to him in English. He responded positively when the teacher reviewed the lesson and offered brownie points *Interaction with Classmates:* He was able to use English with his classmates effectively, and often did so. He always started to communicate with them in English.

Class Participation: He was very active and participated well in answering and asking the questions. Even though the teacher did not ask him, he sometimes volunteered to answer the questions.

Oral Communication Difficulties: He did often encounter difficulty thinking of the right word. Consequently, his attempts to communicate are often interrupted and uneven. He is not yet able to produce the correct verb form intuitively.

Coping Method: His principle way of dealing with this is to settle for a synonym, or, if he does not know one, to provide a definition of the word rather than the word itself.

Interview data

The semi-structured interview data was translated and transcribed into English. The researcher transcribed all of the words spoken in each of the twelve interviews in order to receive the relevant data. The researcher then analyzed the significance and relationships of the key-words, sentences and concepts revealed from the interview transcriptions. Then the data was then grouped into the same key content categories previously mentioned. Lastly, the data received from interviewing an English teacher was transcribed. It was used to confirm the research finding received from participants as can be seen in Appendix F, page 153)

Reliability and validity in this present study

Triangulation has raised an important methodological issue in naturalistic and qualitative approaches, because traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with these. So, in order to control bias and establish valid propositions when using these approaches, triangulation can be employed to overcome the inherent weaknesses of qualitative and naturalistic methodologies. Data triangulation from the three main sources of the same phenomenon was applied throughout the analysis process in the study. The researcher employed different sets of research instruments to cross-check the different sets of data received.

This study employs a qualitative approach that attempts to produce the significance and relationship of the key-word and concepts of students' behaviours, and the relationships between them, which will be recognized as both real and meaningful. The researcher is concerned about the generalizability: whether the research instruments and methods are reliable and valid.

Reliability refers to the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (Joppe, 2000).

Kirk and Miller (1986) identify three types of reliability referred to in research, which relate to: (1) the degree to which a measurement, given repeatedly, remains the same (2) the stability of a measurement over time; and (3) the similarity of measurements within a given time period.

To ensure the reliability (consistency of data collection, analysis, and interpretation) of the research instruments, after a period of time, the researcher reanalysed the data two months after the first analysis has been conducted. The reliability was calculated using this formula:

Percentage Agreement

PA% = agreements / (agreements + disagreements) X 100

97% =   80 / (80+2) x 100

The agreement of the retest result was 97 % which is acceptable for social research that requires 95 % of agreement (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994).

Validity determines whether the research truly measures what is intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. In other words, the research instrument should allow the researcher to elicit the data and to answer the research questions. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) suggest that there are four types of validity: 1) face validity is the extent to which an instrument is truly measuring what the researcher wants to measure a particular characteristic for ensuring the cooperation of participants; 2) content validity is the extent to which a measurement instrument is a representative sample of the content area (domain) being measured. A measure instrument has high content validity, if its items or questions reflect the various parts of the content domain in appropriate proportions, and require the particular behaviors and skills that are central to that domain; 3) criterion validity is the extent to which the results of an assessment instrument correlate with another; and 4) construct validity is

the extent to which an instrument measures a characteristic inferring from patterns in people's behavior that cannot be directly observed.

To ensure the validity of the classroom observation checklist, the researcher adapted the classroom observation checklist from Mckibbin and Celeste (2002) as previously mentioned in the data collection section. All items in the checklist must have a logical link with the objective of the study in order to draw out only the relevant data. Additionally, the checklist was constructed and revised based on recommendations from the thesis advisor, the thesis committees and the experts in the field. Therefore, the results obtained could be generalized to the target population.

Ethical Concerns

The research was conducted with the full knowledge, cooperation and formal consent of the school. An official letter requesting permission and stating research objectives was submitted to the principal. A copy of an official letter can be seen in Appendix A, page 128. Additionally, the research did not place any of the participants at risk. All participants and their parents were fully informed about the study and its data collection procedures. The participants' parents have been granted full access to all findings of the research and the recording and transcript of their child's interview. The nature of the research (title, background of the study, objectives, and benefits) was fully explained to the school administration, the participants, and their parents before research commenced. The analysis of the data received from all research instruments revealed the students' second language difficulties in terms of speaking and coping methods. The research result was reported while maintaining the anonymity of the individual student's name.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, the researcher analyzes the collected data to ascertain the answers to the following questions:

1. What are the factors and how do they influence Grade 6 bilingual students' acquisition of English-speaking skills?

2. What are the difficulties encountered by students and how do they cope with those difficulties?

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section presents the results from the class observation. The second section presents the results from the semi-structured interview. The third section presents the results from the unstructured interview of the English teacher.

To answer questions 1 and 2 posed above, the data was analysed using content analysis as defined by Bazerman and Prior (2004). The results are descriptively presented according to each research instrument; classroom observation, semi-structured interview, and unstructured interview.

Classroom Observations Results

The participant behaviors and interactions were observed in their normal classroom environment. The researcher visited the research field every two days for an approximate period of one month. The researcher made use of two assistants who assisted with classroom observation utilizing a classroom observation checklist adapted from Mckibbin and Celeste (2002): *attentiveness, motivation, interaction with classmates, class participation, oral communication difficulties, and coping methods.*

Attentiveness

The participants' attentiveness was observed during their English-medium classes. The observers monitored and recorded all characteristics and behaviors relating to attentiveness (and inattentiveness). These specifically include interest level, enthusiasm, note taking, listening, focus on the teacher (or other speaker) when talking or doing class demonstrations, verbal and non-verbal responses, ability to repeat back (or otherwise demonstrate awareness of) what the teacher had said, and following directions (Did the student quickly do as he was told, or did he seem to miss the instruction and have to have it repeated one or more times?). Furthermore, the observers also observed the area of distractibility, talking out of turn, chatting with neighbors, doodling, daydreaming, eye-wandering, studying/doing work for other classes, reading comic books, fidgeting, and frequent and prolonged trips to the bathroom or water fountain.

A1 research participant was a talkative and cheerful male student. He knew when he should talk and when he should focus on the class' activities. Even when his classmates tried to initiate a conversation with him, he replied and then returned to the lesson. He paid attention well to the teacher's explanations, and was very focused on the lesson. He took notes in his textbook. He did not hesitate to take part in the group's activities. He seemed to understand the lesson well as evidenced by his frequent and natural responses to his teacher.

A2 research participant was a sometimes quiet male student. He would become less reticent after the teacher started the lesson. He was, however, easily distracted when his classmates initiated a conversation. Generally, however, he was very attentive to the lesson, and listened carefully to his teacher and classmates' conversation. He stayed in his seat most of the time and did not ask for teacher's permission to go out during the class. When the teacher asked all students to group activities, he was very attentive to his tasks. He finished his work quickly and then assisted the other group members who were weak in English.

A3 research participant was a very friendly and talkative female student. She was once disciplined by the Thai teacher for interrupting class and distracting classmates during the lesson. She responded to discipline well, and immediately quieted down. When the teacher started to speak, she ceased what she was doing and gave her full attention to the teacher. She was conscientious about doing her class-work. She sometimes left her seat to chat with her friend, but as soon as the teacher started speaking, she would return to her seat and listen attentively to the teacher. She listened to conversations between her classmates and teacher. She demonstrated good initiative in group activities, and intently engaged others in conversation.

A4 research participant was a cheerful, sociable and energetic female student. Most of the time, she paid good attention to the teacher. She also noted down examples the teacher showed on the board. She often looked disapprovingly at classmates who spoke out of turn or chatted with each other while the teacher was speaking. She would ask for permission to leave the class, and would return quickly, so as not to miss much of the lesson. As her English was good, she had to exercise great patience with other group members who were slow learners and took much more time to finish group conversation.

B1 research participant was a quiet male student. He paid close attention to his textbook. He did not, however, pay adequate attention to the teacher, even when the teacher was explaining and giving examples on the board. Consequently, he did not understand the lessons well, and was thus also unable to participate well. When the teacher asked questions, he was usually not able to answer. He sometimes listened to his classmates when they were talking, but he did not take part in their conversation. He did not often take part in class activities. Most of the time, he remained in his seat and did not misbehave by playing or chatting with classmates. He participated in group conversation hesitantly. His English speaking ability was not as good as other group members.

B2 research participant was a very active male student. Most of the time, he talked and played with his nearest classmates during class. Even though the Thai teacher who monitored the class was very strict, he still talked with his classmates quietly. He did not pay good attention to the teacher. When questioned by the teacher, the teacher sometimes had to repeat the question several times before he understood. He once asked for the permission to sharpen his pencil at the back of the classroom; he took an inordinate amount of time to finish this task. He seemed to be unengaged when required to participate in group conversation. His English was inferior to that of the other group members.

B3 research participant was a talkative and friendly female student. Even though she talked with her classmates, she immediately turned her attention to the teacher when the lesson began. However, she seemed to not understand what the teacher was saying. She would often ask her classmates to explain what the teacher was saying, and while doing so, missed listening to the teacher. She sometimes was not able to answer the teacher questions. She was not enthusiastic to join in group conversation activities, and wanted, but was not allowed, to be in the same group with her close friend.

B4 research participant was a well behaved female student. She was not very talkative and was very attentive to the teacher's lecture. However, she did not pay attention to dialogue between the teacher and her other classmates, but was attentive when the teacher was speaking with her. She focused on her textbook and wrote extensively in it. She was very attentive when she participated in group conversation and dual conversation. She tried to finish her part even though her English was marginal.

C1 research participant was a very active and talkative male student. He was inattentive in class and mostly talked with his classmates in Thai. The Thai teacher disciplined him almost everyday for interrupting his classmates. He was seated in the first row because it was more convenient for the teacher to bring his attention back to the lesson. He was disinterested in the interactions between the teacher and his

classmates, and rarely listened to them. He rarely showed interest in answering the teacher's questions.

C2 research participant was an energetic male student. Even though some days he was quiet at the beginning of the class, he was typically talkative. He paid adequate attention to the teacher. Even though his English was poor, he tried to participate in class activities. On one occasion, he went to the rest room, and took an inordinately long time to return to class, and consequently missed much of the lesson. He rarely volunteered to answer a question. Despite his poor English, he did not hesitate in group conversation.

C3 research participant was a quiet and reserved female student. She was inattentive in class. She was sometimes absent minded and looked outside of the classroom. Even though the teacher encouraged all students to participate in class, she seemed disinterested. When she did listen to the teacher, she seemed not to understand what was being said. The teacher also had to repeat questions several times before she understood what was being asked. She was hesitant to volunteer an answer to overhead questions. She seemed uninterested in group activities. Her English was poor compared with other members in her group.

C4 research participant was an active and cheerful female student. She paid adequate attention in class. However, she was easily distracted by her classmates: when her classmates started talking to her, she always replied and continued to chat with them, disregarding the teacher and the lesson. Consequently, she often missed what the teacher was saying. She avoided answering questions. She participated in group conversation happily even though her English was poor.

Motivation

Student motivation is, of course, key to success in any academic subject. The researcher and assistant observers observed and recorded all characteristics and behaviors that (a) indicated each participant's degree of motivation and (b) suggested

what specific external factors served to motivate or demotivate each participant. Special attention was paid to their individual responses to rewards, praise, and special attention from the teacher, compared with instances when no such encouragements or inducements were offered. Also, special attention was paid to their varying responses to group settings, limelight/on-the-spot/front-of-the-class performance, and one-on-one/private interactions.

A1 research participant was very conscientious when studying in class. He eagerly interacted in English with his teacher and classmates, often serving as liaison/translator when his classmates did not clearly understand the teacher. He regularly volunteered to answer questions. A1 never hesitated to participate in any activities, and always did good work in them. A1 responded positively when the teacher reviewed the lesson and offered brownie points

A2 appeared fairly introverted, and did not actively initiate conversation with his classmates. However, when communication was initiated by another, specifically the teacher, he responded happily and without hesitation. A2 was somewhat reluctant to volunteer to answer overhead questions, but would volunteer readily when the teacher offered brownie points. A2 participated in all class activities. He regularly acted as group leader as his English ability was superior to the rest of the group members, who were not able to initiate English conversation.

A3 research participant, a sociable and chatty girl, often disregarded the lesson to talk with her friends (in Thai), and was warned by the Thai teacher several times because of talking in class. She was, however, evidently motivated by grades, as she would focus on the lesson when the teacher announced that they would be quizzed on the material afterwards. Brownie points were also a motivator for A3, as there was a marked increase in her volunteering to answer overhead questions when the teacher offered brownie points. A3 would often explain/translate what the teacher had said into Thai to help neighboring students who were weak in English. She willingly participated in all activities, and did good work in them. She regularly acted as group

leader as her English ability was superior to the rest of the group members, who were not able to initiate English conversation.

A4 research participant would typically volunteer to answer overhead questions, and even became quite eager to do so when brownie points were awarded for answering. She happily participated in all class activities. The participant seemed to enjoy studying in the class. However, when her classmates would start chatting with her in Thai, she would respond in kind, letting it distract her from the lesson.

B1 research participant did not participate much in class. He seemed unmotivated to speak English with others. He volunteered to answer a question only once, but the teacher called on another student. B1 occasionally started talking with his classmates in Thai, but stopped when the teacher asked him to. He seemed to avoid interacting and communicating with the teacher. The prospect of brownie points and quizzes had no noticeable effect on B1's level of motivation. B1 also seemed uninterested in class activities, and though he would join a group, he remained fairly unengaged. Sometimes the Thai teacher urged him to participate more in the class, which would be marked by a slight, but short-lived, improvement in his level of participation.

B2 research participant seemed to avoid speaking English with others, but was perfectly willing, able, and confident interacting with his classmates in Thai. Consequently, his avoidance of English communication was not due to introversion, shyness, or lethargy, and so must be rooted in the student's interest in, and/or difficulties with, speaking English. Discipline by the Thai teacher did not produce any increase in his willingness to participate in English, though it did reduce his propensity for chatting with classmates in Thai. B2 did not volunteer to answer overhead questions. Despite the teacher's attempts to interact with him personally, and to give him help, B2 did not interact much with the teacher. B2's partner for conversation drills was no better in English than B2, and so their conversation drills went slowly, and B2 had little incentive from peers to improve.

B3 research participant clearly wants to improve in English, and enjoys participating in class. Despite her limited proficiency, she constantly tried to communicate in English with her classmates and teacher. B3 is also evidently motivated by brownie points, as the offer of these produced a marked increase in her eagerness to volunteer answers and her general enthusiasm. She would consult classmates with better English before hazarding an answer to the teacher. In group activities, she did not hesitate to join group discussions and was motivated by the other members to speak English.

B4 research participant was not enthusiastic about participating during the lecture/teacher-led portion of the class. She did not volunteer to answer overhead questions, avoided answering directed questions, and was generally resistant to communicating in English and interacting with the teacher. The prospect of brownie points or advance warning of a quiz did not affect her behavior, and so evidently are not motivators for her. B4's class partner was also weak in English and spoke in Thai most of the time. However, B4 frequently asked the Thai teacher to explain the lesson in Thai, which evinces a genuine interest in the subject matter and learning in general. Explanations in Thai had a positive affect on B4's level of interest and participation, and so evidently are a motivator for her.

C1 research participant was inattentive and disinterested, despite individual attention from both the English and Thai teacher. He seemed to avoid interacting with English teacher, though he would interact (in Thai) with the Thai teacher. He did not volunteer to answer overhead questions. The offer of brownie points had no effect on his unwillingness to volunteer. C1 was slow to answer directed questions, and required much coaching and coaxing from the teacher, before he spoke the answer correctly, after which the teacher would have everyone applaud him. C1 was slow in completing conversation drills/activities. His partner was also poor in English, and frequently abandoned the lesson or activity to chat in Thai, making for a further disincentive to practice and learn English.

C2 research participant was an energetic and enthusiastic boy, who is evidently more enthusiastic about interacting with his classmates than he is about learning English, and so almost always switches to Thai, due to his (and their) lack of proficiency in English. When he was unsure as to the teacher's meaning, he would ask a classmate nest to him (in Thai) instead of asking the teacher. C2 also allows himself to be distracted by his class partner, who frequently initiates non-class related conversations in Thai. C2 does not provide feedback to the teacher, even when solicited. He usually only can answer directed questions properly with much prompting and coaching from the teacher, who attempts then tries to give C2 some positive reinforcement by having the class applaud him.

C3 research participant was a quiet and absent minded student. She seemed disinterested in speaking English with her classmates and teacher. Even though the teacher reviewed the lesson and offered brownie points, she did not volunteer to answer overhead questions. C3 did not appear to understand the teacher's directed questions, or at least did not want to attempt an answer: after repeated attempts by the teacher to get her to answer, C3 would turn to her classmates, asking them (in Thai) to give her the correct answer. C3 seemed to be the weakest member of the group when participating in group activities. The group members would coach her in Thai when she encountered difficulty.

C4 research participant interacted with her classmates in Thai very well, but avoided communicating in English. She did not volunteer to answer questions; the offer of offer of brownie points did not increase her voluntarism. C4 did not appear to understand the teacher's directed questions, or at least did not want to attempt an answer: after repeated attempts by the teacher to get her to answer, C4 would turn to her classmates, asking them (in Thai) to give her the correct answer. C4 did not take advantage of opportunities to obtain help from the English teacher, but instead preferred asking for help from Thai teacher, who unfortunately was not able to speak English well. During the group activities and conversation drills, C4 communicated with other students in Thai.

Interaction with Classmates

Students' social relationships have been recognized as important for their academic skills development (Zirpoli and Melloy, 1997). In school, interaction with classmates influences students' school adjustment and classroom engagement. Also, the more they interact with their classmates in English, the better they are able to develop their English speaking skill. Consequently, the researcher and assistant observers monitored and recorded the participants' interactions with their peers in the area of speaking initiative, English speaking proficiency, and frequency of using English and Thai as a medium of communication.

A1 research participant interacted well with his fellow classmates at appropriate times in appropriate ways. He did not interrupt them when they spoke, nor did he ignore them while they were speaking, but generally listened to them, politely. He was able to use English with his classmates effectively, and often did so. He always started to communicate with them in English. However, some of his classmates who did not understand or were unable to respond in English replied in Thai. His classmates consulted with him very often when they wanted to better understand the lesson. He also advised his classmates as to the correct answers to the teacher's questions.

A2 research participant was normally quiet at the beginning of the period during the lecture, and would become more talkative during the activity portion, interacting more with his classmates. His English was superior to that of a friend who sat next to him. Even though this friend was not talkative, A2 tried to communicate with him in English regularly. He also communicated in Thai with classmates when they started a conversation in Thai. He sometimes has English conversations with his classmates concerning general subjects not related to the lesson.

A3 research participant interacted extremely well with her classmates. She spoke English well and her next friend was able to communicate with her in English. Therefore, she often employed English as medium of communication during the class.

Sometimes, her friend did not understand what she was saying, so A3 would then explain or repeat in Thai what she had said in English. Moreover, she assisted her classmates, completing their tasks when they encountered difficulties.

A4 research participant interacted with her classmates very actively. She was a very talkative student who communicates with classmates in both English and Thai. Even though her English was not as good as others from in Group A, she never hesitated to use English as a medium of communication. She spoke loud and clear to her classmates. She would revert to Thai when she was not able to continue in English conversation and also when her classmates started a conversation in Thai. She also interacted with her group members during the activities. She employed English in her conversation when interacting and helping her classmates with their exercises.

B1 research participant had good interaction with his classmates. He spoke Thai to his classmates most of the time because he was not competent in English. The student next to him also was not very good in English; therefore, he had to communicate in Thai much of the time. Sometimes his interactions were inappropriate (chatting during the lesson): when warned to behave by the teacher, he reined in his interactions with his classmates. He was able to interact with others in English even though his English was sub-marginal. He sometimes combined both English and Thai in his communication. When conducting a conversation exercise, a friend who was weak in English selected him as his partner: B1 was still able to complete the exercise and helped his partner with his part.

B2 research participant was highly interactive, and tried to converse in English most of the time when interacting with his classmates, though he still communicated in Thai quietly with the student next to him. When he had difficulties answering questions, his classmates assisted him by guiding him and sometimes telling him the correct answer in English. He was sometimes able to initiate a conversation in English with his classmates, but most of the time he communicated in English only when his classmates initiated it. His conversational English was far from fluent.

B3 research participant interacted well with her classmates in both English and Thai. She was able to converse in English smoothly. However, most of the time, she spoke Thai with her classmates. She consulted with her classmates when she had difficulties and needed help finding an answer to the teacher's questions. She interacted with her partner very well in dual conversation. When at a loss for the right word, her partner would help/prompt her, and B3 would then continue on unphased by the little interruption. She did not hesitate to join group discussions and activities. She was able to interact with other group members smoothly.

B4 research participant was quiet during the lecture and would become more talkative during the activity. She avoided interacting with her classmates in English, preferring to communicate with them in Thai most of the time. The Thai teacher had to encourage her to participate in group activities. She tried her best when interacting in a group. She got along well with her group members. Sometimes, the group members assisted her when she encountered speaking difficulties.

C1 research participant mostly interacted with his classmates in Thai. The Thai teacher warned him not to speak Thai very often because he interrupted the teacher and distracted his classmates. He seemed to have difficulty employing English in his conversation. Even though his friend seated next to him was good at English and started speaking English with him, he would only usually reply in a short English phrase or single word, or he would just reply in Thai. He would sometimes initiate an English conversation with his friend even though his English quite poor, exhibiting many grammatical and syntactical errors. He would take a long time to complete his role-play activities, and his partner and teacher had to help him complete the exercise.

C2 research participant interacted well with his classmates, showing much energy. Lacking basic English proficiency, he mostly communicated in Thai. Not understanding the teacher's English, he often asked his classmates to explain the lesson to him in Thai. He did not initiate English conversations. When his classmates initiated English conversations with him, his replies would be extremely short. He participated confidently in group activities. Due to his lack of proficiency, group

members would help him complete his exercises. His role-plays took a long time due to his limited vocabulary.

C3 research participant did not participate in lessons or class's activities. She did not interact much with her classmates. Most of the time she sat quietly and sometimes paid attention to what happened outside the classroom. When she interacted with her classmates, she normally employed Thai in her conversation. She was able to start an English conversation but then she switched to Thai when she could not complete her thought in English. She frequently did not understand what her classmates said in English. She was also reluctant to take part in group activities.

C4 research participant interacted well with her classmates, though mostly in Thai. She avoided interacting with classmates in English. She asked her classmates to explain in Thai when she did not understand the English lesson. When asked a question, she consulted with her classmates to find the correct answer. She worked with her classmates in group activities. She interacted with other group members very well even though she struggled with conversing in English.

Class Participation

The researcher and two assistant observers observed and recorded the participants' class participation. This includes an initiative in class participation, cooperation, reaction to the teacher and volunteering in answering questions.

Thai students grow up in a passive educational environment, in which the teacher is the unquestionable authority and the prime source of knowledge. Many of Thai students are considered as passive students who do not show initiative in class participation when required. However, this study's observations indicate that at least some Thai students are active, energetic, and cooperative when required to participate. Nonetheless, still some of the participants indeed tended to be introverted, hesitant, and apprehensive when required to actively participate, and needed more encouragement.

A1 research participant had good participations in all class activities. He was very active and participated well in answering and asking the questions. Even though the teacher did not ask him, he sometimes volunteered to answer the questions. He showed the interest to the teacher instruction. He also had a good individual conversation with his teacher. He always reacted to the teacher's order. He never hesitated to be a part of the class's activities. He often performs in front of the class. When conducting a small or big group's activities, he was always initiative and acted as a group's leader.

A2 research participant, though a quiet student, participated in class activities very well. He was able to answer the teacher's question most of the time. He did not interact much with his classmates. Even though he was not very social, he was able to perform as a leader when conducting both small and large group activities. When the teacher asked him to perform in front of the class, he also did not hesitate to do so. He was very attentive to the lesson and showed interest in the teacher's explanations, making eye contact with his teacher most of the time. When participating in activities, he was able to communicate well in both group and individual face- to- face conversations.

A3 research participant was very good student, who actively participated in all aspects of the class. She always volunteered to answer overhead questions. Moreover, she regularly asked the teacher for clarification when she did not fully understand the lesson. A3 acted as a leader when engaged in both a small and large group activities. She showed that she was very proficient in both group discussion and face-to-face conversation with the teacher. She was very engaged in the lessons and showed her interest by responding both verbally and non-verbally most of the time.

A4 research participant participated in all class activities. She never hesitated to answer the teacher's questions. However, she sometimes refused to perform in front of the class because she seemed unconfident in her answers. She actively participated in both small and large group activities. She also acted as a leader when starting group discussion. She responded to very well when the teacher asked for

more participation by the class. She was very engaged in the lessons and showed her interest by her reactions, and by responding both verbally and non-verbally most of the time.

B1 research participant, while in no way disruptive, was typically not actively engaged in the class, and mostly sat passively listening and taking notes. He did not show much interest in interacting with the teacher. He rarely raised his hand to volunteer, but even then was not called upon. He only interacted with the teacher when directly asked for an answer or for his opinion, and the interaction was always initiated by the teacher. Most of these interactions were not successful. In group activities, B1 was a cooperative but passive group member.

B2 research participant had good interaction with his classmates. He listened to the teacher and sometimes spoke-up, nodded, or otherwise reacted to show his interest. He would volunteer to answer questions, and answered direct questions willingly, though it was often necessary for the teacher to repeat the question. B2 would make stumbling and error-filled attempts at interacting with the teacher. He participated in both small and large group's activities hesitantly. He participated hesitantly and passively in group activities, but he was none-the-less cooperative, and worked in harmony with other group members.

B3 research participant typically participated in all class activities. She regularly volunteered to answer questions. She also consulted with her classmates, and she even asked the teacher for further explanation when she did not understand. When she was asked to perform in front of the class, she would hesitate at first, and then rise to the occasion and complete her assigned task. She was able to have an individual face-to-face conversation with the teacher even though her English was poor. She participated in all group activities, but was sometimes hesitant to join her assigned group because she wanted to be in the same group with her close friend.

B4 research participant did not much participate in class activities. She sat and listened to the teacher's lecture carefully. She seemed to avoid answering questions. However, when she was asked to participate, she did not hesitate to do so. She participated in group activities with her classmates. Even though her English was weaker than other group members, she was able to complete her work herself. When the teacher asked whether she understood the lesson, she said yes and nodded her head slightly.

C1 research participant talked with his classmates most of the time. He did not listen to the lesson. He lacked basic proficiency in English, and thus did not often answer questions – though he did rarely raise his hand to volunteer an answer. When asked a question directly, he responded in single-word or short phrase answers. He responded to the teacher by nodding his head to show that he understand the lesson. He participated in both small and large group activities without hesitation. Even though he was a passive group member, he interacted with his group members confidently.

C2 research participant participated in class activities well. He did not hesitate to engage in the activities even though he lacked a basic English proficiency. He tried his best to participate to answer questions. Therefore, the teacher was usually pleased with his enthusiastic participation. He showed positive responses (indicating understanding) to the teacher's explanations. He was a passive member of the group. However, he confidently participated in group activities, and interacted well with all other members. He did not have much individual interaction with the teacher because he preferred to ask for further explanations from his classmates.

C3 research participant avoided participating in class activities. She seemed to be distracted while the teacher was instructing the class. She did not try to answer questions. Most of the time, she chatted in Thai with her classmates. She did not give any response to the teacher's enquiries as to whether she understood the lesson.

C4 research participant, though not at all unsociable or introverted, she avoided answering questions and participating in class activities. Sometimes when she had to answer a question, she was unable to do so, due to her lack of basic proficiency in English. When she did not understand the lesson, instead of asking for assistance from either the English or Thai teacher, C4 looked for help (in Thai) from her classmates. When the teacher asked the class as a whole if they understood, C4 made no response, not even by nodding or shaking her head. Finally, C4 did not attempt to initiate conversation with the teacher.

Oral Communication Difficulties

In order to discover what common pitfalls students encounter in real-time spoken English fluency, observers closely observed and recorded the participants' attempts to speak English in class. Significant hesitations, discontinuities, and full breakdowns were noted along with their apparent causes/triggers. Also, errors in grammar, word choice, and pronunciation were noted along with their effects on the flow of the participants' speech.

A1 research participant was very confident in his English speaking and other abilities, as was evidenced by the preceding reports. He readily conversed with his teachers in English, and was quite proficient. Though he naturally encountered difficulties, these did not intimidate, embarrass, or discourage him: he simply tried his best, worked with the teacher to try to find out the right way to say what he wanted to say, and then moved on. That being said, A1 did often encounter difficulty thinking of the right word. Consequently, his attempts to communicate were often interrupted and uneven. A1 was not yet able to produce the correct verb form intuitively, but must stop and think about it, caused him to hesitate, broke up the flow of what he was saying, and even arrested his conversation entirely.

A2 research participant, though not very talkative, was very confident when he had to communicate in English. He communicated in English with his classmates and teacher most of the time. During the observation period, A2 fumbled constructing

appropriate sentences on only a few occasions, though his word order still often mimicked Thai constructions. He did, however, sometimes hesitate while trying to recall the correct word. A2 also hesitated while trying to think of the appropriate form and tense of the verb, and made several frequent mistakes in this area.

A3 research participant was very confident when speaking with her classmates and teacher in English. She did not encounter many difficulties compared with other research participants. She was able to construct appropriate English sentences in real-time conversation. A3's only real impediment to fluency was due to having to operate within the limits of her vocabulary, and she occasionally encountered difficulty employing new vocabulary words properly. She also would make mistakes in the matters of subject-verb agreement and tense, but these did not cause her to falter or hesitate. She had little difficulty making herself understood.

A4 research participant was very confident when speaking English, even though she was not as proficient as the other three members of the A Group. Though she would make frequent errors in grammar and sentence structure, these did not cause her to falter, hesitate, or stop. A4's only difficulty in maintaining the pace and flow of her conversation arose from uncertainty over vocabulary: she would often hesitate, while groping for the correct word. Failure to recall a correct word or a reasonable synonym would usually arrest her speech completely. Her principal grammatical errors involved questions of tense and subject-verb agreement. She also typically answered questions with incomplete sentences.

B1 research participant was not able to communicate in English smoothly, and made many errors when speaking. B1 often hesitated or stopped completely when trying to recall the correct word or term. Conversations with the teacher took a long time because he was not able to complete his thought, and typically spoke in sentence fragments and disjointed key words. He made frequent errors in tense and subject-verb agreement.

B2 research participant had difficulties with vocabulary. When speaking, he often struggled to recall the appropriate words. B2 was usually unable to form answers in complete sentences. He made frequent mistakes in tense and subject-verb agreement, usually employing the wrong form of the verb, and sometimes even the wrong verb itself.

B3 research participant had trouble with employing vocabulary, and regularly struggled to recall the correct words and terms to answer the teacher's questions. In group conversation, she also, at times, had difficulty remembering the right word or words, causing her to freeze, and abandon her attempt to express herself. B3 also made frequent errors in sentence structure including speaking in incomplete sentences, and also errors in basic grammar, including mistakes in tense and subject-verb agreement.

B4 research participant required a long time to answer questions and express herself in group activities, conversation drills, and all other English communication. She had difficulty recalling words, and did not construct complete sentences. She typically spoke verbs only in the present simple tense, regardless of what was required in the context, and failed to modify the verb for third person singular subjects. She had difficulty identifying the subject of a sentence. Sometimes B4 also had problems with pronunciation, causing here to hesitate, interrupting the flow of her speech.

C1 research participant, though very talkative in Thai, avoided speaking English. C1 seemed to understand the teacher and his classmates when they spoke English, but had difficulty constructing complete sentences on his own. C1 had a lot of difficulty with employing vocabulary. In group activities and conversation drills he was unable to speak smoothly. C1 made many errors in terms of tense, often confusing past and present, and vice-verse, even in the same sentence. He also struggled in pronouncing new and difficult terms.

C2 research participant spoke English fearlessly, though far from flawlessly. He was not afraid of making mistakes when speaking English. However, he made constant mistakes in tense, subject-verb agreement, sentence structure, and word choice. Difficulty with vocabulary would cause him to hesitate while he struggled to recall the appropriate word. This was a regular problem, presumably due to a very limited vocabulary. He also had difficulty pronouncing complicated words. C2 would take a long time to finish an exercise, or form an answer, requiring many unfamiliar words.

C3 research participant lacked a basic English-speaking proficiency: she was unable to construct even simple sentences properly, and her speech was hesitant, erratic, and uneven. When participating in conversation drills and group activities, she would struggle with specific words which caused many delays and interruptions in her speech. C3 also had difficulty with tense and subject-verb agreement. It was difficult for her to pronounce words of more than two syllables.

C4 research participant was unable to construct proper sentences longer than a few words. C4 also had difficulty with vocabulary, causing her to falter and hesitate while groping for the right word or struggling with its pronunciation. Words of more than two syllables caused her difficulty. She took longer than most of the class to complete conversation drills. C4 also had difficulty with tense and subject-verb agreement.

Coping Methods

Wishing to determine if there were any common coping methods for common difficulties, the observers, while observing the participants for speaking difficulties, also took note of the participants' evident coping methods for dealing with those difficulties. It was discovered that some participants employed similar coping methods when encountering similar difficulties.

A1 research participant's principal difficulties were that he often could not quickly recollect the appropriate word, and that would cause him to hesitate while he struggled to remember it. His principal way of dealing with this is to settle for a synonym, or, if he does not know one, to provide a definition of the word rather than the word itself. A1 infrequently would fail to understand what the teacher had said; when this happened, he would ask the teacher for clarification or further explanation. When speaking with classmates, if they were unable to follow or engage in the conversation, A1 would change the topic.

A2 research participant typically skirted difficulties expressing himself, or formulating an answer, by paraphrasing and simplifying what had been covered by the teacher or in the book. He often prepared his answers by consulting his dictionary before responding the teacher. A2 regularly replaced difficult vocabulary words with simple synonyms or lengthier definitions/explanations of the term. A2 made many grammatical and syntactical errors, but did not let these trip him up: he was typically able to express himself completely, without hesitating along the way.

A3 research participant would respond in sentence fragments when unable to construct a complete sentence. She would substitute synonyms or definitions when unable to recall the correct terminology from the lesson. She also employed body language and gesture to illustrate what she was trying to explain. A3 still allowed confusion over verb tense and subject-verb agreement to slow her down and trip her up, and still made mistakes in these areas anyway, and so evidently had not yet developed an effective coping method for this difficulty.

A4 research participant would substitute synonyms or definitions when unable to recall the correct terminology from the lesson. She would also paraphrase or simplify what had been covered by the teacher or in the book, though often responded with sentence fragments. A4 would also solicit assistance from her classmates when she reached sticking points, usually involving recollecting the correct terminology from the lesson. Even when able to construct proper sentences, A4 still tried to

convey the gist of the matter when answering the teacher. On rare occasions, A4 did resort to attempting to change the topic when she did not know the answer.

B1 research participant often allowed difficulty recalling the correct terminology to interrupt his responses. Frequently, B1 solicited help from his classmates, and sometimes waited for the teacher to guide him. He avoided communicating in English with others, and sometimes did not respond to the teacher's questions. When he did reply, he answered in short phrases and key words. B1 also employed body language and gesture to help convey his meaning. B1 was, however, generally able to make himself understood.

B2 research participant avoided communicating in English in class. When he had to communicate, he searched for assistance from his classmates, who prompted him, often supplying the vocabulary word or term that he was groping for, and might even tell him the complete answer. Instead of speaking the completed sentences, the participant spoke in disjointed words and phrases. He substituted simple words for more difficult vocabulary. He would also combine Thai and English while talking with his classmates. Moreover, B3 employed body language, gestures, and other non-verbal cues in order to help clarify his meaning. Though he was often unsure as to the proper grammar to use in the moment, he did not let that uncertainty, or concerns about using poor grammar, hold him back from attempting to speak. When he made an error and the teacher corrects him, he listened to the teacher's corrected version, and then repeated it.

B3 research participant communicated in English more often than the other participants from the B Group. B3 did not let grammatical or syntactical errors, or fears of making them, interrupt her speech, but typically spoke in incomplete sentences. She would, however, hesitate trying to recall the correct word or terminology. She was sometimes able to replace difficult words and terms with simple ones. When she could not think of a synonym, B3 asked for assistance from her classmates and her teacher. When answering a question, B3 typically only answered with key words or simple phrases that conveyed the core meaning. B3 also

attempted to change the topic when she was not able to converse further on the subject. Seemingly as a last resort, B3 would switch to speaking Thai.

B4 research participant would often search for assistance from her classmates and teacher when she found herself at a sticking point. Regularly, B4 referred to her Thai-English dictionary before attempting to answer the teacher. When she was not able to construct an answer in English, she avoided responding, and, when pressed, responded only with key words, and disjointed phrases, instead of complete sentences. B4 also made use of body language, gesture, facial expression, and tone to help convey her meaning. When speaking with her classmates, when she was unable to continue on topic in English, she attempted to change the subject or switched to Thai.

C1 research participant would ask for assistance from his classmates when he encountered sticking points. He solicited his classmates help to guide him through both difficult vocabulary and sentence structure. He also consulted his textbook when he was having difficulty. When answering a question, C1 typically responded only by speaking key words and short phrases with poor grammar, but was usually able to convey his meaning adequately. He frequently avoided answering questions altogether. When speaking with his classmates, he often switches to Thai. He often avoided communicating in English with his classmates and teacher, or would attempt to change the subject.

C2 research participant looked for assistance from his classmates and teacher when vocabulary became a sticking point. C2 also employed body language, gesture, and tone to help him convey what he is trying to say. C2 would answer questions with key words or short phrases, but was usually able to convey his meaning. When speaking with his classmates, when unable to continue on topic in English, he would attempt to change the subject or switch to Thai. When unable to follow the conversation at all, C2 typically avoided participating altogether.

C3 research participant usually avoided communicating in English with others. Unable to construct proper sentences when speaking, C3 typically answered only with phrases, key words, and gestures. She solicited assistance from her classmates and teacher when struggling with vocabulary. C3 would withdraw from a conversation when unable follow or engage in it. If compelled to participate, she would switch to Thai or try to changes the topic.

C4 research participant searched for assistance when she was not able to continue the conversation. She would look to her classmates for help and check the textbook before answering her teacher's questions. Unable to construct proper sentences when speaking, C4 typically answered only with phrases, key words, and gestures. Despite grammatical errors and speaking incomplete sentences, C4 was usually able to convey her meaning. C4 accepted the teacher's assistance and cooperated with his efforts to correct her grammar and pronunciation. C4 typically switched to Thai when conversing with classmates.

Additional Observations

Apart from the six main categories previously described, the classroom observation also revealed another factor that might influence students' English speaking proficiency. It is interesting to note that all participants interacted with their Thai class teacher in Thai. The class teacher was unable to communicate effectively in English. Most of the time, she simply disciplined students. When speaking to the students, she spoke Thai almost exclusively. She rarely used English words or phrases to command and direct the students, not even for such rudimentary commands as "sit down" and "[be] quiet".

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Semi-structured Interview Results

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The questions in the semi-structured interview were based on the data gained from the classroom observations. The researcher interviewed all twelve participants in Thai individually for an approximate period of ten minutes per student. The interview

questions covered six areas including *attentiveness, motivation, interaction with classmates, class participation, oral communication difficulties, and coping methods.*

Attentiveness

A set of open-ended questions were employed to elicit information concerning their attentiveness in their English-medium classes. Participants were also asked specifically about their relevant behaviors and traits that were noted during the observation phase.

A1 research participant reported that he had been studying in the bilingual program for six years, since he was in the First Grade. He believed he knew the appropriate times to speak during the lesson. He was quite conscientious about not interrupting the teacher or misbehaving during the class. A1 said he paid good attention to the teacher because he wanted to understand the lesson well. He also took notes in his textbook, particularly regarding new vocabulary. When asked about his perfect attendance record this semester, A1 answered that he did not want to miss any classes because he did not want to get behind, and because he wanted to perfectly understand every lesson.

A2 research participant said he had been studying in the bilingual program for seven years, since he was in kindergarten (Kg 2), and that he had little difficulty understanding the teacher, and so it was easy for him to pay attention to the lesson and the teacher's questions. He said that though he was a quiet student, he had no difficulty becoming engaged in the class. A2 said he also paid close attention to other students when they were speaking, so he could follow the conversation and respond appropriately. A2 made a point of not playing in class or otherwise disrupting it. He asked to leave the class during the lesson only when it was necessary. He preferred to finish his tasks or activities quickly so that he can assist his weaker classmates.

A3 research participant started her bilingual education in kindergarten. In class the Thai teacher sometimes disciplined her for talking out of turn. However, A3 said she paid attention when the teacher was speaking. She did not like to remain seated at her desk, but traveled to other classmates after she finished her tasks. She did not like to be absent from school if it was unnecessary because she was afraid of falling behind in the class. In fact, she was only absent twice, due to illness.

A4 research participant was enrolled in bilingual education when she was six years of age. According to the latest semester, she had never been absent from school. A4 said she always paid attention in class, and did not like to talk with her classmates while the teacher was teaching. She even told her classmates to stop talking when they were talking in class, ignoring the teacher. She asked permission to leave the classroom only when it was necessary. Additionally, she came back to the class as quickly as possible because she did not want to miss any of the lesson.

B1 research participant started his bilingual education when he was in kindergarten (kg 2). He typically missed 3-5 days per semester due to illness and traveling with his family. B1 knew he did not pay attention to the teacher in his English classes, and was not very diligent taking notes, but he did try to compensate by focusing on his textbook. B1 stated he did not want to speak or answer the teacher's questions in class. B1 admitted that he was easily distracted by other classmates.

B2 research participant have been studying in bilingual school for five years. He transferred from a monolingual school when he was in grade two. He was absent from the school four days in the latest semester. He once traveled with his family and was not able to come back to school on time. He talked out of turn during class and consequently had been disciplined by the class teacher and subject teacher quite often. He preferred not to express his opinion if the teacher did not ask him directly. He liked to move around the classroom—or even leave it—if he had the chance. He would even ask for permission to sharpen his pencil when he wanted to talk with his friend at the back of the class.

B3 research participant transferred from another bilingual school when she was in the Third Grade. She was absent several times in the latest semester due to family trips. In class, she was able to manage a balance between talking with her classmates and concentrating on the lesson. However, she sometimes would miss what the teacher had said because she was asking her classmates to explain what the teacher had said before that. B3 could not bear to be separated from her close friend in the class, and always wanted to be in the same group with her during the activity. She was less attentive to the activity if she was forced to join another group.

B4 research participant has been studying in the bilingual program since she was in the First Grade. She has been studious, and has had no absences in the latest semester. She normally paid attention to the teacher because she wanted to understand and follow the lesson. However, she sometimes did not pay enough attention to her classmates when they were speaking. B4 said this was because she was worrying and thinking about her own answer if the teacher called on her. She recorded the new vocabulary emphasized by the teacher in her textbook so she can review it later. She did her best to complete her dialogue drills because most of the group members were good in English.

C1 research participant was eight years old when he first started his bilingual education in the Third Grade. Before then he attended a Thai monolingual school. He was a sociable student who liked to talk with his classmates and so paid little attention to the teacher. He was absent four days in latest semester because of illness. He was moved from the back to the front of the class where the teacher hoped he would be more attentive to the lesson. He still did not take notes or record the vocabulary: he claimed this was because that it took him too much time to write down every thing given by the teacher. He often asked for permission to go to the rest room because he wanted to take a break from the class.

C2 research participant has been enrolled in a bilingual program since the First Grade. In this semester, he was absent three days because of a family trip. In the class, he was more interested in the class activities, and wanted to be involved with them.

He did not take notes on the subject matter or vocabulary. He said he preferred to listen rather than take notes. He sometimes left the class, ostensibly to get a drink or go to the bathroom, but actually just to take a break, and even to talk and play with other students when he was outside the class.

C3 research participant has been studying in a bilingual program for six years. She transferred to the current school when she was in the Third Grade. A quiet student, she liked to sit at her desk but without paying attention to the teacher. She was absent for more than five days in the latest semester. She paid no attention to the teacher, did not understand the lessons, ignored questions and avoided answering them. She took no notes, and said this was because she did not like to write down anything while studying.

C4 research participant transferred from Thai monolingual school to the bilingual school when she was in the Second Grade. She reported that she was often absent from school. In the latest semester, she was absent for three days because she had to go to the dentist. She distracted easily by her classmates talking to her. She said she did not want to ignore her classmates because they were close friends. She sometimes needed the teacher to repeat a question. Only sometimes did she take notes or write down vocabulary list. She reported that she did not want to listen to the teacher and write at the same time. She often asked for permission to leave the classroom even though it was not necessary, but just because she wanted to take a break from the lesson.

Motivation

The participants were initially just asked to describe (1) their own level of motivation and their reasons for learning and practicing English, and (2) what external factors (teacher, parents, peers, classroom environment, etc.) motivated and demotivated them. The researcher then attempted to draw out more details with follow-up questions based on the previous answers and the data collected in class observation. The interviews showed that the participants who received the right sort

of support and motivation such as sufficient English speaking environment and future English speaking career were more creative and adventurous learners, while the participants who did not receive adequate and appropriate support and motivation tended to have less interest and a much poorer attitude toward learning English.

A1 research participant reported that he enjoyed studying English and liked learning new words and terminology. A1 also had a genuine thirst for learning in many subjects, and wanted to know English because so much was written in English on every subject. Moreover, he wanted to be a doctor in the future, and so needed to master English in preparation for Medical School and his future career. He also said he believed that doctors who are fluent in English have more opportunities and advantages than those who only speak Thai. A1 also admitted that he was also motivated by the offer of brownie points and extra credit.

A2 research participant reported that he benefited from the use of English as a medium of instruction. He liked to study in English even though he sometimes felt overloaded due to having to study other subjects in Thai on the same day. His opinion toward English was positive. He believed that English is important to his future career and prospects. He wanted to be pilot, and knew that pilots must be fluent in English as English is the language of air traffic control, and the primary language for communicating with foreign passengers. He also said that as a pilot he would be travelling all over the world, and English—as the principal international language— would be very useful. A2 said he liked answering his teacher's question, and that he liked getting good marks from answering more questions.

A3 participants reported that she liked using English when communicating with others, and enjoyed using English as a medium of instruction. She mentioned that it was very helpful to actual be in an English-speaking environment, and that English-medium instruction from native speakers provided an exposure to "every-day English" that she could not get from a Thai-based English grammar class. As she wanted be an English teacher in the future, mastering English is a must, so she liked practicing speaking English whenever she had the chance. A3 also reported that she

has been disciplined by the Thai teacher for talking (in English) with friends while the teacher was speaking. Though she stopped talking at that moment, but she said she would never give up in practicing English with others. A3 also said she answered questions very often because she enjoyed competing with her classmates for special marks.

A4 research participant reported that she enjoyed using English as a medium of instruction because it gave her a chance to communicate in English with classmates and teacher. She had a positive attitude towards English, and wanted to be fluent. A4 would like to be a flight attendant like her mother, and be able to travel to many countries, and she knew that English would be a great help to her. A4 noted that while her mother was fluent in English, her father had only limited English-speaking skills. She said she always volunteered to answer the teacher's questions, and was very motivated by the teacher's offers of special marks to the students who answer the questions. A4 also reported that she liked it the fact that the teacher circulated among the students very well, and that she had many opportunities to interact directly with him. She said she felt very comfortable communicating in English with her teacher.

B1 research participant said that he liked using English as a medium of instruction. However, he sometimes had problems understanding the teacher, especially when he spoke fast. B1 mentioned that he preferred to study Thai subjects because he understood them better than he did his English subjects. B1 wanted to be a musician, and to perform in different countries. However, he mentioned that English fluency, for him, was unnecessary because his musical instrument skill was more important. In the class, he communicated with others in English very little because it was speaking English is difficult for him. He was motivated by the offer of special marks, but he had rarely felt like he was able to answer, and the few times he had offered to answer, the teacher called on another student, and so, in this class, he no longer felt motivated by them.

B2 research participant reported that he had difficulties using English as a medium of instruction, and preferred studying in Thai. He mentioned that he wanted to be an engineer in the future because he was good at Mathematics. He believed that English was not important for his future career. B2 said that was why he talked (in Thai) in class instead of paying attention to the lesson. Attempted by the Thai teacher to discipline him for this only discourage him from participating at all, though they did encourage him to be quiet. B2 also reported that it was very de-motivating having a class partner who was even less proficient in English than he was. He would like it if he had a partner who could help him when he encountered difficulties. However, the applause he got from classmates and the teacher did make him feel more comfortable and less worried speaking in front of the class.

B3 research participant enjoyed using English as a medium of instruction. She reported that she tried her best to communicate in English even though her English was less proficient than some of her close classmates. She realized that English was important nowadays, as her parents continually reminded her. B3 mentioned that she wanted to have a good career with a high income, and believed that job candidates who were fluent in English will be hired and promoted over those who were not. She tried very hard to communicate with her teacher, especially when the teacher reviewed the material for the coming examination and offered special marks to students who answered his review questions. B3 reported that she studied and practiced English with a classmate who was fairly proficient. Also, she always received much encouragement from every group member in in-class group activities.

B4 research participant reported that she felt uncomfortable in English classes because she lacked a basic proficiency in English. Though she realized the importance of English, not being able to understand most English conversation, she did not pay attention well in class, nor can she adequately answered the teacher's question, nor participated in other class activities. She mentioned that she wanted to receive special marks but she was not able to provide the correct answer to the teacher. She always felt nervous when the teacher called on her specifically, and so tried to avoid interacting with the teacher. B4 also reported that it was very de-motivating having a

class partner who also was not proficient in English, and that she would like it if she had a partner who could help her when she encountered difficulties. As it is now, B4 must rely on assistance from the Thai teacher, but as she was also not proficient in English, she was unable to help her.

C1 research participant reported that he did not like to speak English, especially, in the English classes where he felt very uncomfortable and overwhelmed. Consequently, he talked with his classmates in Thai during his English classes. C1 said he wanted to join the military when he grew up, and that he believed English would not be necessary for his future career. C1 said that he preferred to study subjects in Thai, for the obvious reasons that understand the lesson and can participate. C1 avoided interacting with the teacher because he was unable to communicate with him. C1, however, did report that he felt more relaxed now attempting to answer direct questions from the teacher, as his best efforts, however flawed, were welcomed and encouraged by the teacher.

C2 research participant said he did not like to study in a class where English was used as the medium of instruction: he did not understand the lesson and cannot participate. C2 also pointed out that he did enjoy classes where Thai was the medium of instruction. C2 had no plans for his future career. However, he said that his future career should not involve English because he would not be proficient in it. During the lesson, instead of asking the teacher, he usually asked his classmates (in Thai) for help when he did not understand the lesson. The student next to him was not proficient in English either, and the two talked together in Thai very often. C2 said that if his class partner started speaking English with him, he did try to reply and communicate back in English. C2 said he would be motivated by the chance to earn special marks if he stood a chance of earning them, but given his inability to understand, let alone answer the questions correctly, special marks did not motivate him. C2 indicated it did encourage him when the teacher helped him to answer a question in proper English, and even though he was not able to speak smoothly, the applause from his classmates was also encouraging.

C3 research participant said that she neither liked nor felt comfortable when studying English subjects. This was because she did not understand the lesson which affected her not to participate in class activities. She mentioned that she felt more comfortable and more involved in Thai classes. C3 said she wanted to be a chef in a five-star hotel, like her father. She mentioned that she enjoyed fine cuisine and liked to cook with her father when they were at home. She added that English was not essential for success in her future career. C3 indicated that the special marks offered by the teacher drew her attention even though she was not able to answer the questions. Moreover, the exam reviews drew her attention and encouraged her to participate more in the class. She added that she gained more confidence when the teacher repeated the questions for her several times. She was then able to figure out what she was asked.

C4 research participant did not enjoy using English as a medium of instruction. She realized that her English proficiency was weaker than most of her classmates. She personally preferred studying in an all Thai-medium environment. She added that she studied in a bilingual program because it was her parents' requirement. C4 reported that she wanted to be a lawyer. She also acknowledged that she would have better opportunities if she was fluent in English. However, English-fluency was not necessary for a Thai lawyer. During the class, she did not communicate in English very often. Instead, she talked in Thai with her classmate who was always willing to do the same. C4 said that she would have volunteered to answer questions if she was able to provide the correct answer. She also would like to receive the special marks from the teacher, but was unable to earn them. When she did not understand the lesson, she sometimes got assistance from the (non-English-speaking) Thai teacher.

Interaction with Classmates

The participants were asked about the frequency, level, and circumstances of their interaction (in English) with their classmates. The researcher attempted to draw out which language was mostly employed during all such interactions inside and outside the classroom.

A1 research participant reported that he enjoyed using English as a medium of communication with his classmates. He most of the time interacted with his classmates in English. He also mentioned that he was the one who often start interacting in English with his classmates. However, he sometimes spoke Thai during the class due to some of his classmates ask for more explanations concerning the lesson they did not clearly understand. The participant added that both English and Thai were spoken outside the classroom. He most of the time communicated with his classmates in Thai. This was because almost all of his classmates preferred using Thai as a medium of communication when they were outside the classroom. Moreover, the class teacher who monitored all students did not require them to use English as a medium of communication. Therefore, the students were free to speak the language that they were easily to communicate and understand.

A2 research participant reported that he normally spoke English with his classmates. However, he concentrated on the lesson and interacted with his classmates in appropriate times. He sometimes spoke Thai with his classmates when he was assisting them with the lesson. A2 also said that he spoke both English and Thai outside of class, though conversations with fellow students were almost always in Thai. A2 also mentioned that the student next to him was not very talkative. A2 reported that he had to initiate conversations in English with him most of the time. On the other hand, his classmate would occasionally attempt to initiate a conversation in Thai, to which he would also reply to him in Thai.

A3 research participant said that she preferred to communicate in English with other students during the English classes. She added that she liked to speak and practice English with her classmates. The classmate who sat next to her was fairly proficient in English as well, and the two of them often conversed in English together. Nevertheless, she sometimes spoke Thai with her classmates when she had to help them understand the lesson. She frequently assisted her classmates with their English. Moreover, she had to reply to her classmates in Thai when they started a Thai conversation. A3 reported that she spoke both English and Thai outside the classroom, though conversations with fellow students were almost always in Thai.

A4 research participant reported that she normally conversed in English in English classes, and never felt shy speaking English with her classmates. On the other hand, she also spoke Thai with her classmates during English classes when she was having difficulty with the English, and needs assistance from her classmates. Moreover, she also spoke Thai when her classmates did not understand her English. A4 added that she spoke both English and Thai outside the classroom. While she had to speak English at the canteen, she mostly spoke Thai with other students as they always spoke Thai outside of English classes.

B1 research participant said that he usually spoke with her classmates in Thai during the English classes, but did try to converse in English occasionally. B1 added that his next classmate often started conversations with him in Thai, and so he had to respond in Thai. B1 said he did not often speak English with his classmates during class because it was very difficult for him. Moreover, the students mostly used Thai when they were outside the classroom. B1 also stated that he communicated in English with his classmates only when he was in the English classroom, and even then, he was relegated to being only a good listener because he was not fluent himself.

B2 research participant said he preferred speaking Thai with classmates even during the English classes. Even though the Thai teacher had warned him not to do so, he felt more comfortable talking with his classmates in Thai quietly. B2 sometimes responded in English to his classmates when they classmates initiated an English

conversation with him. He also tried to ask (in English) his classmates to assist him when he was not able to answer the teacher's question correctly. B2 said that the student next to him always talked to him in Thai during class. Outside the classroom, B2 said he always interacted with other students in Thai. The only opportunity he had to speak English outside the classroom was when he was in the school canteen. B2 said that all students were required to communicate in English during lunch, but this just meant that most did not engage in conversation at all.

B3 research participant reported that she was able to speak both English and Thai with her classmates, though she usually spoke Thai with them because they typically cannot or will not, but in any case do not, speak English outside of class. B3 also switched to Thai when she reached a sticking point in English. B3 tried to converse in English with the student next to her in class, but met with limited success as her neighbor was not proficient in English and preferred to communicate mostly in Thai. B3 stated that she employed both English and Thai with other students outside the classroom. However, the opportunity for speaking English outside the classroom was limited by the fact that almost all students would only speak Thai outside of English classes.

B4 research participant was not comfortable speaking English with her classmates in or out of class. She said that most of the time she tried and became stuck in the middle of conversation, and was unable to continue. Though she sometimes tried her best to communicate in English with classmates, she finally ended up switching to Thai. Also, the student next to her lacked a basic proficiency in English, and very often started talking with the participant in Thai. B4 added that she mostly spoke Thai when she was outside the classroom. Almost all of her classmates communicated in Thai and hardly ever conversed in English. The participant mentioned that she tried to communicate in English with classmates only in English classes.

C1 research participant reported that he normally spoke Thai with his classmates during English classes, even though he was regularly warned by the Thai teacher not to do so. C1 sometimes spoke English with other students, especially, the student next to him who was reasonably proficient, and started English conversations with C1 frequently. However, C1 was not able to continue and finish the conversation in English, and would subsequently switch to Thai, or combined Thai with English. C1 said that he would, however, sometimes start an English conversation with his neighbor. C1 added that he mostly spoke Thai apart from English class and the school lunch break, because almost all students always spoke only Thai, though they occasionally would use short English phrases and English words.

C2 research participant did not like to interact with his classmates in English, and almost always communicated with them in Thai, even during the English classes. However, he sometimes tried to communicate in English with classmates when they initiate it. He said he was able to make short replies in English, and that he can use English to make simple requests, e.g., "May I borrow you eraser?" He said that speaking long English sentence was very difficult for him, and felt more comfortable confining himself to short English sentences. C2 added that he usually spoke Thai outside the English classes, just like every other student. C2 mentioned that the only opportunity he had to speak English was in his English classes.

C3 research participant reported that she preferred speaking Thai with other students during the English class. She found it too difficult to speak English in class most of the time. She did say that she sometimes started talking with her classmates in English. However, when her classmates went deeper into the conversation, she was not able to follow what they were saying, and so she switched to Thai. The student who sits next to C3 had a marginal proficiency in English, but was not much help to her: most of the time they conversed in Thai. C3 also added that she almost always spoke Thai with other students outside of her English classes, including during the lunch break.

C4 research participant said that even in English classes, she preferred to interact with her classmates in Thai rather than English, as it was much easier and more convenient. She sometimes did not understand the lesson and so needed her classmates to explain the lesson to her in Thai. Even though the class teacher required the students to interact in English, C4 insisted that she was unable to comply as she lacked basic proficiency. She added that her class partner was also not proficient in English. C4 also said that Thai was spoken almost exclusively outside of English classes, and so she had little opportunity to practice conversing in English. The only opportunity she had to interact in English with her classmates outside of class was in the canteen during lunch.

Class Participation

The participants were asked about their feelings, attitudes, and experiences regarding active participation in English-medium subjects. The participant responses corroborate the data from the observations. Personality type, temperament, and socialization were indicated to be the main determinants of level of class participation, with ability (or inability) to speak English a secondary but significant factor. Speaking in any language being primarily a social activity, students who are more social and less socially inhibited are more communicative, and therefore gain more practice in speaking and interacting than those who are more passive, withdrawn, introverted, and inhibited.

A1 research participant reported that he often interacted with the teacher during the class. He liked to answer the teacher's questions. He added that he wanted to practice speaking English. Therefore, if there was a chance to speak with teacher in the class, he would take the chance and practice speaking English. A1 often volunteered to answer questions when no other students were able to provide the correct answer. A1 mentioned that he sometimes did not understand the teacher's explanations, but when he did not understand, he asked the teacher for clarification, resulting in more, rather than less, English conversation with the teacher. Also, at times the teacher did not clearly understand A1, causing A1 to try to provide the clear

answer, which satisfied the teacher. The participant said that he often had entered into conversation with the teacher when he met the teacher outside the classroom. He also said that the teacher was very friendly when speaking with him.

A2 research participant said that he enjoyed interacting and communicating with the teacher in English during class. A2 very often answered the teacher's questions even when not asked directly and even when another student had been asked. A2 said that the he was quick to interject because other students did not know the correct answer and it was also a good chance for him to interact with the teacher. Moreover, A2 sometimes initiated the conversation, asked the teacher a question or to provide an explanation. A2 added that he always followed the teacher's instructions. A2 also reported that he showed the teacher his understanding by nodding his head. Finally, A2 mentioned that he always communicated with the teacher when he had a chance to meet the teacher outside the classroom.

A3 research participant reported that she felt comfortable interacting and communicating with the teacher in English during class. She liked to converse with teacher in English when she had the chance. A3 said that she always imitated the teacher's accent, and mimicked the teacher's pronunciation. Therefore, her pronunciation was superior to the other research participants. A3 always answered the questions the teacher put to her. Moreover, she never hesitated to perform in front of the class when the teacher asked her. She confidently responded to the teacher and finished the tasks assigned. She added that she always engaged the teacher in conversation even when she met him outside of class. A3 said that she started by greeting the teacher, and then continued to converse with the teacher for a long as time permits.

A4 research participant revealed that she felt comfortable interacting and communicating with the teacher in English. She said that she wanted to practice her English speaking. Therefore, she took every opportunity to communicate in English with her teacher. A4 revealed that even though her English speaking was far from fluent, she always tried her best to answer the teacher's questions. She added that she

preferred to speak loud and clear when responding to the teacher, so the teacher did not need to ask her to repeat her answer. A4 often noted down the teacher's pronunciation of various words, and then practiced imitating their pronunciation from her notes. A4 added that she sometimes refused to write answers in front of the class when she was not sure with the answer. The participant always responded to the teacher by saying audibly that she understood the lesson while other students simply nodded their head.

B1 research participant revealed that he did not like to interact or communicate with the teacher during the class because he often did not completely understand his teacher. He added that he only understood some of what his teacher said. Therefore, he preferred to keep quiet while studying in the class. Moreover, B1 did not often volunteer to answer the teacher's questions. Even when the teacher asked the same question to the whole class, B1 did not respond. He only answered direct questions from the teacher. Typically, B1 answered in a soft voice because he was unsure of his answer. B1 also explained that he did not interact with the teacher much because of his lack of proficiency in English.

B2 research participant said that he did not concentrate on the lesson in class. He most of the time interacted with his classmate and did not initiate interactions with his teacher. B2 admitted that he did not interact with the teacher often. When the teacher asked him a question, he sometimes answered with a combination of English and Thai, which the teacher asked him to correct himself and gave his answer all in English. This, he said, was the reason he avoided interacting with the teacher. He added that it was difficult for him to give a quick answer in English at the moment. However, B2 said that he usually understood the teacher and was able to follows the teacher's instructions when asked to do tasks. He sometimes preferred to use gestures in response to the teacher.

B3 research participant said that she felt comfortable interacting with the teacher in English. She often interacted and communicates with the teacher during the class. She said that she tried to volunteer to answer the teacher's question even though

she sometimes had difficulty forming the answer in English. When this happened, she then asked her classmates and teacher for assistance. She cooperated well with the teacher when she was asked to do activities. B3 added that she understood the teacher's instructions and never hesitated to follow them. When the teacher asked the class if they understood the lesson, B3 always responded verbally and audibly. She said that early in the school year she had little interaction with her teachers, but when she got familiar with them, she felt more comfortable interacting and communicating with teacher.

B4 research participant claimed that she did not interact and communicate with the teacher often. She preferred to listen to the teacher's lesson and to take short notes in her notebook. She said that she normally did not volunteer to answer the teacher's questions even though she knew the answers, because some of her classmates were also able to answer the questions. B4 mentioned that she would answer a question if no other students were able to answer it. She was quiet most of the time when in the class. Consequently, she only communicated with the teacher when the teacher asked her a direct question. She added that she was able to answer the teacher's questions. When she did not understand the lesson or encountered difficulties with the English, she preferred asking for help from her classmate instead of her teacher.

C1 research participant said that he did not often interact or communicate with the teacher. He added that he did not completely understand what the teacher was saying, yet he rarely told the teacher he did not understand, nor did he ask the teacher for clarification, but preferred to ask his classmates to explain what the teacher said. Sitting in the front row did not encourage C1 to communicate with the teacher. C1 also found it difficult to form an English response to the teacher in real-time. Therefore, C1 avoided communicating with the teacher both in and out of class. C1 also did not like to volunteer answers to the teacher's overhead questions, and would not generally attempt to answer unless asked directly. However, C1 indicated that he always followed the teacher's instructions for group activities.

C2 research participant reported that he usually attempted to interact with teacher during the class, despite a lack of English proficiency. In fact, C2 said he liked to practice speaking English. He tried his best, often volunteered to answer the teacher's questions. When C2 did not understand the teacher, he asked for clarification, and when unable to formulate a response in proper English, he asked the teacher for assistance. C2 said that he followed the teacher's instructions for class activities. When the teacher asked for a response from all students, C2 typically answered verbally and clearly. While at the beginning of the school year C2 felt uncomfortable interacting with the teacher, his comfort-level improved throughout the term as he got to know the teacher better.

C3 research participant reported that she did not like to interact and communicate with the teacher during class. Due to her lack of proficiency in English, C3 preferred to listen quietly and followed the teacher's instructions. Normally, C2 did not initiate interactions with the teacher, nor did she ask for clarification when she did not understand the lesson. C3 avoided responding to overhead questions, even on the infrequent occasions when she knew the answer. C3 only tried to communicate with the teacher in response to a direct question.

C4 research participant stated that she was uncomfortable interacting and communicating with the teacher. She added that she was able to ask the teacher short questions, but, that she was quickly overwhelmed when the teacher attempted to continue the conversation, and consequently avoided communicating with the teacher most of the time. C4 understood that her English speaking skills were behind most of her classmates. C4 rarely volunteered to answer overhead questions. When asked a direct question, she formed a response only with great difficulty, and it took her a long time to answer. C4 sometimes did not cooperate with the teacher when asked to read aloud. She mentioned that she often did not respond at all when the teacher asked the class if they all understood the lesson.

Oral Communication Difficulties

The participants were asked questions designed to test and corroborate the data collected in the classroom observations, and to elicit and identify any other difficulties that had been missed or did not manifest during the observation phase. They were first asked simply what gave them trouble and caused them to falter. Where they did not on their own identify difficulties they were observed to have, they were asked about those specific difficulties, and how much of a problem they felt these were for them.

A1 research participant reported that he often encountered difficulty thinking of the right word to use, and that this often prevented him from completing his statement or question. Consequently, his attempts to communicate were often interrupted and frustrated. Similarly, uncertainty as to the correct form of the verb to use caused him to hesitate, breaking up the flow of what he was saying, and even arresting his conversation entirely. Though he understood how to conjugate the verb, when in a real-time conversation, he was not able to produce the correct verb form intuitively, but must stop and think about it. Even though A1 was able to continue the conversation when he used the incorrect verb form, he preferred to use good grammar. By constantly checking and correcting his own grammar, A1 gradually improved his English speaking skill.

A2 research participant identified three principal difficulties: 1) difficulty remembering and reproducing the correct pronunciation, especially of the new vocabulary; 2) difficulty recalling the correct word, and how to use it in a sentence, especially for the new vocabulary; and 3) confusion as to the correct sentence structure, proper word order, and especially subject-verb agreement. None-the-less, A2 noted that he still was able to make himself understood by the teacher and his classmates. When he made an error, the teacher sometimes corrected him and asked him to repeat the corrected statement. A2 added that he had little to no difficult with subject-verb agreement and proper verb forms on written exercises and exams, and that the difficulty only manifested in real-time conversation.

A3 research participant said that she did not have difficulty constructing complete English sentences in real-time conversation. She was able to have long conversations and to respond to the teacher in complete sentences. A3 did identify uncertainty as to proper word choice and a limited vocabulary as her principal difficulty and chief obstacle to fluency in English. In real-time conversation as well as written exercises, however, A3 made frequent errors in subject-verb agreement, and exhibited a virtual obliviousness to these errors. Interestingly, this lack of self-consciousness on this matter actually helped her to feel more comfortable speaking English and facilitates the ease and flow of her conversation (bad grammar not withstanding); in other words, her lack of concern and/or awareness about this problem spared her the uncertainty-born hesitations of many of her classmates, keeping her conversation flowing because she was not constantly stopping herself to check and think whether the verb should end in an "s" or not. A3 did realize (due to feedback on written and oral exercises) that subject-verb agreement was one of her weaknesses.

A4 research participant claimed that difficult and unfamiliar vocabulary was a significant obstacle for her, and complained that her attempts to communicate are often frustrated by the limitations of her vocabulary; hesitations while groping for the right word interrupted the flow of her speech, and uncertainty as to the correct word to use often caused her to respond in incomplete sentences. A4 also frequently employed the wrong tense in real-time conversation without noticing her mistake, though she had no great difficulty with tense in written work and exams. A4 also made frequent mistakes in subject-verb agreement during real-time conversation, but showed no significant problem with this in her written work.

B1 research participant reported that his most serious difficulty was his limited vocabulary. Not knowing the correct word regularly frustrated and interrupted his attempts to converse in English. Also, even when he knew the words to be used, uncertainty as to proper word order also frustrated and interrupted his speech. Consequently, he was regularly unable to produce a complete sentence in real-time conversation. B1 also encountered typical difficulties with subject-verb agreement

and tense when speaking, though he knew the rules of grammar, and was able to demonstrate that he did in his written work.

B2 research participant said that he was not very confident when he had to communicate in English. He added that it was difficult for him to produce correct and complete English sentences due to his limited vocabulary, and that he consequently was very often unsuccessful in his attempts to converse in English. B2's lack of confidence made him hesitant to answer questions or interact with others in English. He claimed that he was usually unsure of the correct verb form and tense, and was constantly doubting and second-guessing his choices. B2 indeed constantly made mistakes regarding subject-verb agreement and tense. However, he also mentioned that the teacher and his classmates were able to understand what he was trying to say.

B3 research participant said that she too suffered from a limited English vocabulary. She was unable to produce long sentences in English, was more comfortable speaking in short sentences, and typically answered questions in incomplete sentences or one or two word answers. B3 added that when attempting to speak English, she still typically followed Thai syntax, and had difficulty constructing correct sentences in English. She still had difficulty with adjective placement, often putting the adjective after, rather than before, the modified noun. B3 also reported that the proper choice of tense in different situations was difficult for her, and that she always combined the present and past tenses in the same situation. She also indicated difficulties with subject-verb agreement.

B4 research participant said that her English speaking ability suffered from a general lack of confidence, and that her teacher's efforts to correct her when speaking were in fact counter-productive, exacerbating her lack of confidence and discouraging her from interacting with the teacher and speaking English in general. B4 also identified a limited vocabulary as one of her significant impediments. She found that she was always struggling—often unsuccessfully—to produce the right English words, which frustrated her attempts to converse, and limited her to incomplete and otherwise grammatically flawed sentences. B4 also encountered difficulty with tense

and subject-verb agreement in real-time conversation, making frequent mistakes, though she understood the rules of grammar and demonstrates this in her written work. B4 re-emphasized that her teacher always corrected her when she made these mistakes while speaking.

C1 research participant claimed that he did not like to employ English as a medium of communication in class. He said that it was difficult for him to construct English sentences due to his limited vocabulary. He added that he was able to construct short and simple sentences, but had no confidence in his ability to construct longer and more complicated sentences. C1 also admitted that he made constant mistakes regarding sentence structure. He said the reason for this was because he had to think in Thai and then translate into English. In addition, he had difficulty with tense and subject-verb agreement. He mentioned that the teacher often corrected him when he spoke, and then lets him repeated the corrected phrase. C1 also reported having difficulty pronouncing words of more than three syllables.

C2 research participant said that he was not afraid of making mistakes when speaking English. He identified difficulty with English word order as his principal problem, adding that most of the time he had to think of what he wanted to say in Thai first, and then try to translate it into English, causing the all too typical problem of English words being spoken with Thai syntax. C2 indicated that trying to re-order the words correctly usually took too much time for him to be even marginally fluent in real-time English conversation, and that he would rather speak English badly but in real-time, than speak it well but taking far too long to say anything. C2 also identified his limited vocabulary as a major problem, but that, instead of taking a lot of time groping for the right word, he simply tried to confine himself to what he can say with the simple vocabulary he had mastered. C2 specifically mentioned that he had difficulties with the proper use of the verb "do" in conversation, despite being to explain the grammar rules concerning it. C2 also mentioned that difficulty with tense and pronunciation of unfamiliar words interrupted the flow of his spoken English.

C3 research participant had difficulty constructing complete English sentences of more than a few words. She said that she needed to think of what she wanted to say first in Thai, and then translated that into English. Since the sentence structures of the two languages were so different, she frequently made many mistakes in word order. C3 complained of a limited vocabulary, and of struggling to express what she wanted to say, and how this interfered with her ability to speak smoothly. She also mentioned difficulty pronouncing unfamiliar words, and how this too disrupted the flow of her spoken English. C3 added that she frequently experienced difficulties with subject-verb agreement and tense. C3 said that the teacher seemed to understand what she was trying to say despite the errors in grammar, syntax, word choice, and pronunciation.

C4 research participant reported that the difficulties she encountered most arise from her limited vocabulary. She complained of always having to struggle to think of the correct word. This problem caused her to avoid communicating in English with her classmates and teacher in class, and limited her to communicating in short sentences, sentence fragments, and short simple words. C2 also expressed a difficulty with both tense in conversation and subject-verb agreement. She said that she had no time to consider her speaking base or the grammar rule while she was conversing in real-time. Furthermore, C2 indicated that the pronunciation of unfamiliar words of more than three syllables caused her difficulty, and resulted in intermittent delays in speaking.

Coping Methods

The participants were asked to identify their methods for coping with the difficulties they identified during the interview, or that were noted during the observation phase. The interviews show that there is substantial overlap in coping methods employed by the participants; some participants made use of similar methods, just as there is substantial overlap in the difficulties they encounter.

A1 research participant's principal difficulty involved thinking of the right word. His principal coping methods for his problem were to: 1) try to think of another word or words with a similar meaning; 2) try to provide an explanation or definition in place of the vocabulary word itself. When both of these two methods failed him, A1 interrupted himself, asked the teacher and his classmates for assistance. When he particularly had little or no idea what the correct terminology was in English, A1 simply attempted to avoid speaking, or, failing that, to change the subject. If all else failed, he switched to Thai.

A2 research participant simplified his English sentences, instead of struggling to employ difficult vocabulary or construct complicated sentences. He added that his classmates also understood him well when he used simple vocabulary in conversation. When he was unable to recall a specific word, he would employ a synonym or give more explanation or definition in place of a single term. However, he often made sure of himself by consulting the dictionary. He added that this might take time but he could speak more accurately and effectively. The teacher assisted him with his sentence structure, correcting his mistakes, and making him repeat the corrected sentence. A2 said he often switched from English to Thai when communicating with his classmates.

A3 research participant's principal difficulty was recalling the correct word. When this happened, she attempted to think of a synonym, and employed body language to help convey the meaning when possible. If unsuccessful in this, she will interrupt herself to seek assistance from the teacher. When she and her classmates misunderstood the meaning of the conversation, she immediately switched from English to Thai. Also, though she rarely had difficulty constructing complete sentences, when she did have problems doing so, A3 would simply omitted some parts of the sentence, speaking in phrases, sentence fragments, and disjointed single words and word clusters instead.

A4 research participant principal difficulty was with difficult vocabulary. A4 reported that she frequently replaced the difficult vocabulary with simpler words that share or conveyed a similar meaning. She added that most of her classmates and her teacher understood what she was trying to convey. In addition, she also gave an explanation of a difficult vocabulary word rather than used the word itself. A4 searched for assistance from her classmates and teacher when she encountered a difficulty that she cannot solve on her own. She sometimes discontinued the conversation among classmates when she felt that her classmates did not follow or did not respond to her. She then changed to a new topic that her interlocutors understand. In the same way, A4 switched from English to Thai when she believed her classmates did not understand her.

B1 research participant reported that in most situations when he cannot recall the key vocabulary word, he simply stopped speaking and turned to the class and his teacher for assistance. B1 added that when unable to form his thought into a complete sentence, he simply omitted some of the words and spoke in phrases, sentence fragments, single words and word clusters instead, in an effort to convey the meaning of what he wanted to say. When unable to express himself in English, B1 attempted to change the topic or avoided class participation altogether. If he participated and could not change the subject, he switched to Thai. B1 tried his best to speak in complete sentences, despite difficulty with tense and subject-verb agreement.

B2 research participant avoided communicating in English in class. When he must, he searched for assistance from his classmates, who prompted him, often supplying the vocabulary word or term that he was groping for, and may even told him the complete answer. Instead of speaking the completed sentences, the participant spoke in disjointed words and phrases. He substituted simple words for more difficult vocabulary. He also combined Thai and English while talking with his classmates. Moreover, B2 employed body language, gestures, and other non-verbal cues in order to help clarify his meaning. Though he was often unsure as to the proper grammar to use in the moment, he did not let that uncertainty, or concerns about using poor grammar, hold him back from attempting to speak. When he made an error and the

teacher corrected him, he listened to the teacher's corrected version, and then repeated it.

B3 research participant also identified a limited vocabulary as her principal impediment to spoken fluency. She was sometimes able to replace difficult words with simple ones. When she could not think of a synonym, B3 asked for assistance from her classmates and her teacher, or she spoke in incomplete sentences. When answering question, B3 typically only answered with key words or simple phrases that convey the core meaning. She also attempted to change the topic when she was not able to converse further on the subject. If all failed, she switched to Thai. B3 also said that she did not worry about following the rules of grammar when speaking: she was content to make grammatical errors rather than to hesitate and cogitate about matters of tense, subject-verb agreement, and proper word order, and preferred to simply try to convey the approximate idea in a timely manner.

B4 research participant stated that she often searched for assistance from her classmates and teacher when she found herself at a sticking point. She also mentioned that she sometimes used her Thai-English dictionary to make certain she's using the correct word. B4 said that when she was not able to construct an answer in English, she simply avoided responding, or, if pressed, will respond only with key words, and disjointed phrases, instead of complete sentences. B4 also made use of body language, gesture, facial expression, and tone to help convey her meaning. When speaking with her classmates, if she was unable to continue on topic in English, she attempted to change the subject or will switched to Thai.

C1 research participant stated that he always asked for assistance from his classmates when he encountered a sticking point. He solicited his classmates help to guide him through both difficult vocabulary and sentence structure. C1 also consulted his Thai-English dictionary and textbooks in advance to ensure that he will use the appropriate vocabulary, and know how to pronounce the words correctly. C1 said he typically responded only by speaking key words and short phrases when he was not able to construct the completed sentences. When it was too difficult for him, he

simply avoided communicating in English. C1 cooperated with the teacher's attempts to help him construct complete sentences and correct his grammar. When speaking with his classmates, he often switched to Thai.

C2 research participant indicated that he never avoided communicating in English in class, even though his English-speaking ability was far from proficient. He claimed he tried to construct complete sentences, but was aware that, more often than not, he spoke in Thai patterns of speech, as he lacked the necessary familiarity with English sentence structure. C2 accepted the teacher's assistance and correction, listened carefully when the teacher said the corrected sentence, and then repeated it himself. When vocabulary became a sticking point, C2 looked for assistance from his classmates and teacher. C2 also employed body language, gesture, and tone (the use of inflection, pitch, stress, volume that were used in English to convey the attitude, emotional state, and desire of the speaker) to help him convey what he was trying to say. C2 added that when he was unable to respond in long sentences, he answered with key words or short phrases. When speaking with his classmates, if he was unable to continue on topic in English, he would attempt to change the subject or will switch to Thai. If he was not able to follow the conversation at all, C2 typically avoided participating altogether.

C3 research participant explained that she had great difficulty speaking English, and so typically tried to avoid doing so. She solicited assistance from her classmates and teacher when struggling with vocabulary. However, when she did not receive assistance from others, she tried her best to express at least the general idea of what she was trying to say. She responded to questions with key words and short phrases instead of complete sentences. C3 mentioned that she withdrew from a conversation if she was unable follow or engage in it. If compelled to participate, she switched to Thai or tried to changes the topic. C3 also made use of body language, gesture, facial expression, and tone to help convey her meaning.

C4 research participant solicited assistance from her classmates and teacher when she encountered difficulties speaking. She said that she would also, sometimes, searched her textbook and dictionary to find the appropriate vocabulary word to answer the teacher. Despite efforts to speak in complete sentences with proper syntax, most of the time C4 resorted to answering in short phrases and key words instead only, hoping they will be sufficient to convey her meaning. C4 accepted the teacher's assistance and correction, listened carefully when the teacher said the corrected sentence, and then tried to repeat it herself, also following the teacher's pronunciation. C4 also made use of body language, gesture, facial expression, and tone to help convey her meaning. In conversation with her classmates, C4 typically switched to Thai.

Interestingly, all participants reported that they never used English when communicating with their Thai class teacher. They claimed that they only interacted with their Thai class teacher in Thai, with the sole exception of occasionally answering by saying words or short phrases such as "yes," "no," "I do". They added that they sometimes had to be the translators for their Thai teacher while the English teacher was trying to explain something to her. A1 participant reported that the Thai class teacher has limited English skills. A2 participant added that the Thai class teacher understood some English, but had difficulty speaking English. B3 participant stated that she and her classmates normally communicate with her Thai class teacher only in Thai.

Teacher's Interview Results

The researcher made use of unstructured interview with the English teacher to draw out the students' information concerning *attentiveness, motivation, interaction with classmates, class participation, oral communication difficulties, and coping methods.* The teacher was encouraged to speak openly, frankly and give as much detail as possible in an interview lasting approximately thirty minutes.

Attentiveness

The English teacher was asked about participants' attentiveness, relevant behaviors and traits during normal English classes such as focusing on the lesson, responding to the teacher in class and also their rate of absenteeism.

Group A participants were characterized as hardworking students. They rarely interrupted the lesson. They did not chat or play with neighbors during class. A2 and A4 especially were most attentive to the lesson and the teacher. All A Group students responded to the teacher and generally understood him well, and were able to follow the lesson effectively. Moreover, A Group students rarely left class during the lesson. Moreover, none were absent even once from school during the last academic year.

Group B participants were described as talkative, especially B1 and B2, who were very active and frequently talked with their neighbors in Thai. B3 and B4 were more attentive, comparatively, during the lesson. The teacher reported that they all often missed what he had said and were not able to respond to his questions. Group B participants were absent from the school many times each semester, particularly B1, B2 and B4, who left much of their work unfinished until the end of the term.

Group C participants were reported to be most inattentive in class. They spent most of their class time talking with their neighbors in Thai. C1 and C4 frequently interrupted the lesson by chatting with nearby classmates, while C2 and C3 were better behaved. The teacher stated that they all were absent from the school many times and fell behind. Moreover, they frequently took restroom breaks during the lesson.

Motivation

The English teacher was asked to comment on the participants' level of motivation and their motivators and demotivators, with special emphasis on the effect of the classroom environment and the award of incentive marks.

The teacher stated that participants in Group A were naturally motivated just by the opportunity to learn and the whole learning experience. Even though most of the students conversed in Thai during the English lessons, Group A participants initiated and tried to employ English as a medium of communication. They all routinely volunteered to answer questions, especially when incentive marks were offered.

Thai speaking neighbors caused Group B participants to routinely converse in Thai in class, and were generally a significant demotivating factor. The teacher reported that B1, B2, and B4 seemed to avoid speaking English with him as well as with their neighbors. B2 was especially obstinate in his reluctance and refusal to speak English; he was often disciplined by Thai teacher and preferred to sit still when asked to participate in English-speaking activities. B3 was more eager to speak English especially, when she wanted to earn more incentive marks. The offering of incentive marks had little effect on the other participants in the B Group.

Group C participants talked in Thai with their neighbours frequently and exclusively. When they wanted to understand the lesson, they sought help from the Thai teacher rather than English teacher. C2 and C4 were easily distracted by their Thai speaking neighbors. C participants avoided interacting directly with the English teacher, especially C3 who was very disinterested in speaking both English and Thai: she rarely volunteered to answer questions; the offering of incentive marks had no effect on her participation.

Interaction with Classmates

The English teacher indicated that Group A participants were superior students. They never interrupted the lesson, and they interacted with classmates at appropriate times. They frequently interacted with others by using English. A1 A2 and A3 were able to use English with classmates whereas A4 sometimes had to switch from English to Thai. The teacher added that classmates who sat next to Group A participants were also good in English.

B2 and B3 interacted with their classmates in appropriate times, and rarely disrupted the lesson. On the other hand, B1 and B4 tended to disrupt the lesson more frequently. B1 and B4 spoke Thai with their classmates when they should be using English. Only when they were disciplined, they became more conscientious in using English in English classes. B2 and B3 seemed to put more effort in English communication, even though they usually switched to Thai.

The English teacher reported that all Group C participants lacked of English-speaking proficiency. They interacted with classmates almost exclusively in Thai, and frequently disrupted the lesson when doing so. C1 was frequently disciplined by the Thai teacher for this. The others seemed to avoid using English when interacting with other students, particularly C3 who was frequently distracted and absent-minded during the lesson.

Class Participation

Group A participants were reported to be active students in class. They were all energetic and respond to the teacher well when requested. They never hesitated to cooperate with teacher and other students, and enthusiastically joined and participated in group activities. The teacher indicated that all four A Group students were always among those students who volunteered to answer questions.

Group B participants showed little initiative when it came to participating in class activities. They kept quiet and hesitated to take part in activities when requested. However, B3 seemed to be more alert than the others in the group, and more willing to participate and to use English in class activities. All four switched from English to Thai and vice versa when engaged in group conversation activities.

The English teacher stated that Group C students did not participate in class activities unless they were directly instructed to do so by either himself or the Thai teacher, and then took part only hesitantly and unenthusiastically. C1, C3, and C4 avoided answering his questions altogether. Moreover, instead of asking him for help when they encountered difficulties, they asked their classmates in Thai. C2 tended to be more eager to join in activities and more willing to use English as a medium of communication, despite her lack of proficiency.

Oral Communication Difficulties

The English teacher reported various oral communication difficulties encountered by Group A participants. All participants struggled to communicate due to a limited vocabulary. Verb conjugation also caused all of them some difficulty, frequently interrupting the flow of their speech. A2, A3 and A4 all stumbled over subject-verb agreement. A2 and A3 had difficulties with correct sentence structure. Only A2 had significant difficulties with pronunciation.

All B participants had difficulty with vocabulary and subject-verb agreement. Their attempt to communicate in English often faltered because they did not know the correct word or words for the situation. They also struggled and stumbled over subject-verb agreement. Only B4 seemed not to have significant difficulty with sentence structure. B1 was able to conjugate verbs correctly while B2, B3, and B4 were not.

All Group C participants encountered most of the same oral communication difficulties. They all suffered due to their very limited vocabulary and typically adhered to Thai sentence structure. Difficulty with subject-verb agreement and pronunciation caused all of them great problems, often causing them to switch to Thai or give up entirely. C1 and C4 had difficulty with English verb tenses and conjugations, causing them to speak haltingly.

Coping Methods

The English teacher was asked about the methods participants employed to overcome their oral communication difficulties in English. He reported that Group A participants all engaged in substitution; choosing a synonym or definition when the correct word can't be recalled. However, they would ultimately switched to Thai when speaking with classmates when they found that their interlocutors did not follow them. A1, A3, and A4 asked for help from both classmates and the teacher when they were struggling whereas A2 preferred to consult a dictionary. A3 was the only one who frequently used gesture to support and clarify what she said. When the oral communication difficulties became so severe that that they were unable to continue in English, A1 and A3 chose to discontinue the conversation.

All B participants frequently adjusted or abbreviated their sentences when they were not able to construct complete ones. They also asked for assistance from both classmates and the teacher when they reached sticking points in their speech. B1, B2, and B3 frequently engaged in avoidance. Only B2 and B3 were able to engage in substitution or definition. B4 often consulted a dictionary in advance to prepare the correct and complete answer, while B2 was the only one from this group, according to the teacher, who employed body language and gesture to clarify his point. However, all participants automatically switched from English to Thai when speaking with classmates, or as soon as they encountered serious oral difficulties.

According to the teacher, there were no participants from Group C who were able to use substitution of synonyms and definitions in place of vocabulary terms they were unable to recall. Though all were very weak in English speaking skills, they were able to respond with single words or phrases, and (all but C1) by using body language and gestures to help clarify their meaning. All from this group sought assistance mostly from classmates to help them through speaking difficulties. They rarely asked for help from the teacher. C1, C2, and C3 regularly avoided speaking English except when they were directly asked by the English teacher, at which point they responded only hesitantly and timidly. C1 and C4 had been seen to consult a dictionary to prepare an answer. However, when talking with classmates, they all switched to Thai.

Conclusions from these findings will be elucidated in the next chapter, including recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the results of the research. It encompasses four main sections: major findings, implications of the findings, limitations of the study, and recommendations for further research.

Conclusion of the Major Findings

The research questions are concluded item by item. The following research question is the first item to be discussed:

Research question 1: What are the factors influencing Gr.6 bilingual students' acquisition of English-speaking skills?

Attentiveness

Regarding participants' attendance, the data from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews revealed that two of the four A Group research participants had spent significantly more time in an English-Thai bilingual educational environment than the participants in Groups B and C. The four A Group participants started bilingual education in or before Grade 2. By contrast, the Group B and C participants mostly began bilingual education in grade 2 and 3. Additionally, some of the research participants from Group B and C not only began their English language education later, they also started in schools non-bilingual programs before transferring to Sarasas.

Attendance tended to play an important role on participants' acquisition of English–speaking skills. It is interesting to note that even though there were two students from Group A, participants A1 and A4, who started in a bilingual program later than other students from the same group, they had near perfect attendance, and

rarely absented from class. On the other hand, the research participants from Groups B and C had a significantly higher rate of absence, and even when at school, frequently left their classes to use the rest room and to drink water.

According to the results from the classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, group A research participants were observed to be more attentive to their lessons and in-class activities than were the B and C Group participants. All A Group participants concentrated on the lesson. In contrast, most of the participants from Group B and C typically did not pay attention during class, preferring to communicate in Thai among themselves while the teacher was speaking. Participants in the A Group seemed well attuned to social cues as well, knowing when they needed to pay attention to the teacher, and when it was appropriate to talk or play amongst themselves, while the B and C Group participants seemed to lack this skill. The A Group research participants were genuinely interested in hearing what the teacher had to say, while the B and C Groups were generally uninterested, and typically did not pay attention without threat of discipline by the Thai teacher.

Krashen (1985) states that attention is related to consciousness, noticing, awareness, and understanding. When the learners are conscious of something, then they attend to it and vice versa. It may be concluded that the learning process for second language acquisition demands that the student pay close attention throughout the class period, making the most of the time available with the teacher. If this occurs, then cognitive processing of the teacher's language patterns can occur, which will lead to integration and organization with prior information in the learner's schema. A person whose attention is divided receives only bits and pieces of, not only the lesson, but of the words and language patterns of the teacher, undermining the principle strength of English-medium instruction. Thus, only snippets of language patterns and information are transferred to the language centers of the brain and long-term memory.

Students' motivation

In looking at students' motivation, it can be concluded that A group research participants had positive motivation toward learning English. They all benefited from using English as a medium of communication. Moreover, they all reported that English was essential for their desired future careers (airline pilot, English teacher, and flight attendant). Especially enthusiastic was participant A3 whose mother not only encouraged her but also spoke English with her at home. In contrast, almost all research participants from group B and C revealed that they felt uncomfortable using English as a medium of communication. They preferred to speak Thai even when they were in English classes. They reported that English was not particularly important for their future careers. Among the eight B and C group participants, only two (B1 and B3) felt marginally comfortable speaking English during class. However, the difficulties they encountered when speaking discouraged them significantly and inhibited their efforts.

When the teacher offered some reinforcement to motivate students, the A group research participants paid attention to the lesson very well. They also participated in answering the teacher's questions because they reported that they wanted to get a good grade at the end of semester. The group B and C research participants also wanted to get brownie points, but, despite such inducements, they avoided answering questions because of the difficulties they encountered when attempting to communicate in English.

It can be inferred that supportive motivation encouraged the initial stage of second language learning for the students. On the other hand, the students were more reserved and inhibited, took no initiative when they had negative attitude toward second language. Obeidat (2005) claims that learner motivation is characterized by a desire to gain advantages through mastery of the second language, including, but not limited to, pragmatic benefits such as a high salary, power, and good career options. However, it stands to reason that a tense classroom environment can undermine learning and demotivate students. In contrast, learner motivation will reach its peak in

a safe and relaxed classroom environment in which students can express their opinions and feel that they do not run the risk of being ridiculed. Gardner (1985) points out that the motivation can be referred to any thing associated with the immediate context such as the course and the teaching environment in which the language is taught. To be motivated to learn, students need both ample opportunities to learn and steady encouragement and support of their learning efforts. Because such motivation is unlikely to develop in a chaotic classroom, it is important that the teacher organises and manages the classroom as an effective learning environment. Furthermore, because anxious or alienated students are unlikely to develop motivation to learn, it is important that learning occurs within a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.

English interaction with classmates

With regards to the *English Interaction with classmates,* it was found that group B and C research participants interacted with their classmates in Thai most of the time whereas group A research participants used English as a medium of communication when interacting with classmates. It is interesting to note that active English speaking classmates directly influenced the English interactions of the participants. Since group A research participants were seated next to active English speaking classmates, they were able to interact and communicate with each other in English regularly. In contrast, group B and C research participants tended to have limited chances to interact with their classmates in English, due to the fact that these participants were seated next to students who were not active English speakers and who, like the B and C participants themselves, also preferred to use Thai as a medium of communication. Consequently, group B and C research participants had less opportunity to interact with fellow students in English compared with group A research participants. Nevertheless, all research participants hardly interacted with each other in English when they were outside the classrooms. The all reported that almost all students preferred and felt more comfortable using Thai. The amount and quality of interaction opportunities available to ESL learners influenced their second language learning.

Swain and Lapkin (1991) state that interaction is a social behavior that occurs when one learner communicates with another. It can occur face-to-face, in which case it usually takes place through the oral medium. English interaction at school tended to hold the learners' greatest opportunity for improving their English speaking skills. Opportunities for interaction in classrooms varied as a function of the instructional activity structures typically employed in various subject areas, especially English classes where the learners are required to use English as a medium of communication. However, learners will not succeed at acquiring English speaking skills if they lack opportunities to interact with other learners in English.

Class Participation

Regarding class participation, group A research participants participated in all class activities very well. They all reported that they liked to participate in class activities, and that they all felt comfortable employing English when participating. They all routinely volunteered to answer the teacher's questions. Interestingly, A group research participants also offered to answer questions specifically directed to other students. On the other hand, group B and C research participants tended to be silent when they were required to participate in English activities. Almost all participants from group B and C rarely asked questions or volunteered to answer them. Therefore, the teacher often asked them the questions directly. Only B3 and C2 research participants reported that they felt comfortable participating in class activities. When asked to participate in group activities, most of the group B and C research participants participated reluctantly. They tended to be passive members of the groups, and preferred not to initiate speaking English in groups.

It can be seen that classroom participation plays a very important role in the acquisition of English speaking skills. The more opportunities the learners have to participate and to practice speaking English in the classroom, the more they are able to acquire adequate speaking skills from their classmates and teachers. Galvan and Fukada (1998) point out that energetic students will participate more actively in the classroom than the passive students. Moreover, the participants who are considered as

having passive personalities are least likely to initiate a question or volunteer an answer to a teacher's question. However, knowledge of students' personalities such as being passive or active students can help teachers and administrators understand and predict student performance so they can restructure the situation to facilitate more student participation.

Research question 2: What are the difficulties encountered by students and how do they cope with those difficulties?

Oral Communication Difficulties

According to the classroom observation and semi-structured interview, it can be concluded that almost all research participants encountered linguistic problems with *Limitation of vocabulary, Sentence structure, Tense, Subject-verb agreement, and Pronunciation,* all of which resulted in oral communication difficulties.

Limitation of Vocabulary

In looking at *Limitation of Vocabulary*, the research participants from all groups encountered this difficulty; the participants from group B and C tended to experience this difficulty more seriously. Group A research participants were able to recall the problem vocabulary after thinking for a short moment. Moreover, they were capable of employing other words that share similar meanings, and then continued speaking. On the other hand, B and C participants took longer time to recall the problem vocabulary. They frequently struggled and then produced incomplete sentences. This result was confirmed by the interview of English subject teacher (see appendix F, page 153). He reported that the participants who were set in A group are the top students in the class. They had fewer difficulties with vocabulary than the participants from B and C group.

Additionally, the teacher added that vocabulary limitations had a strong impact on the students' speaking ability. Likewise, most teachers and language learners agreed that vocabulary was one of the most important areas of language learning because it carried the main information load in a communicative situation (Lewis, 1933). That is to say the ESL learners with an inadequate English vocabulary tend to encounter oral communicative difficulties.

Sentence Structure

Regarding *Sentence Structure*, the research revealed that B and C participants encountered difficulties of the difference of English and Thai sentence structure more frequently than Group A participants. As Noochoochai (1978) mentions that English and Thai syntax coincidentally fall into the same basic type: SVO (Subject, Verb, Object). *Auxiliary verbs* tend to precede *Verbs, Adverbs* tends to follow *Verbs,* and *Prepositions* tends to precede *Nouns,* however, English noun phrases and verb phrases are constructed differently from Thai. Additionally, proper sentence structure varies from language to language. These differences affect how learners perceive and produce the spoken languages that are not represented in their native language (Wayland *et al.,* 2006). That was the reason why the difference of sentence structure of both English and Thai caused communication oral difficulties of most participants.

As Gass (1997) suggests, native language (L1) can greatly affect second language (L2) acquisition, especially in terms of speaking which is a real time communication. This effect can be described as negative transfer where the L2 learners employed their L1 sentence structure when speaking L2. As Pawapatcharaudom (2007) maintains, transfer does occur in language learning and exert an influence negatively on the acquisition of a second language.

English Verb Tense

With regard to the *Verb Tense*, it is interesting to note that almost all research participants encountered difficulty with accuracy of forms in a certain tense, especially B and C participants. They encountered difficulty with *Verb Tense* more often than the A participants. The participants reported that even though they employed the wrong tense when speaking, the teacher and classmates understood the message that they tried to convey. However, the English teacher spent a significant amount of time correcting those errors.

The possible explanation for this difficulty is that English verbs are required to be conjugated to reflect both the point in time and the aspect of the event or action, as well as with regard to the person and number of the subject. On the other hand, there is no system of tenses to mark temporal relationships in Thai (Sindhvananda, 1970). Thai verbs do not inflect for number, tense or aspect as they do in English. Instead, the temporal placement of a situation or event is shown predominantly through context. Where specific reference to a time is needed, and not available through context, time adverbials are generally used. In addition, it has been claimed that there is a system of auxiliary verbs which function as 'tense and aspect markers' (Noochoochai, 1978). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the non-existence of tense in Thai is the primary cause of difficulty mastering verb tenses in English, especially in regard to the real-time activity of speaking.

Subject-Verb Agreement

In English, the subject and verb must agree in number and person: both must be singular, or both must be plural. Difficulties occurred in the present tense because one must add an **-s** or **-es** at the end of regular verbs when the subject is third person singular: **he**, **she**, **it**, or words for which these pronouns could substitute. As a result, *Subject-Verb Agreement* caused all participants difficulty. It is interesting to note that lack of concern or awareness regarding this difficulty, allows A3 to speak fluidly without faltering when she made this mistake. She reported that she speak flowingly

because she was not constantly stopping herself to check and think whether the verb should end in an "s" or not. However, the teacher always corrected those errors and asked students to repeat the correct sentence.

All participants experienced subject-verb agreement difficulty in real-time conversation. The obvious cause of this is that the participants' first language (Thai) does not conjugate its verbs. Such constructions being unnatural to native Thai speakers, making it second-nature for themselves does not come easily. In the meantime, Thai's lack of conjugated verbs impacts the spoken English of learners, including the participants. As Bhela (1999) says, in speaking the target language (L2), second language learners tend to rely on their native language (L1) rules and structures to produce a response. Thus, errors are expected to occur in L2 due to the differences of languages.

Pronunciation

The research found that A and B research participants did not encounter much difficulty with pronunciation. They could pronounce all English consonants reasonably well. There was only A2 who reported that he experienced with pronunciation difficulty. In contrast, all C participants tended to encounter difficulties with pronunciation frequently. They were unable to pronounce both the initial and final "v" and "th" sounds. The final "l" sound also caused them much difficulty. Ending consonants in general were frequently problematic.

It is interesting to note that A and B participants had more interaction with the English teacher than C participants who typically avoided communicating with him. Some of the A and B participants even imitated the English teacher's pronunciation while speaking, most notably A3. She said that she always tries to imitate the teacher's accent, and to mimic the teacher's pronunciation. On the other hand, C participants prevented themselves from communicating and practicing English with the teacher, and thus denied themselves the benefit of listening to, and reproducing, proper, native English pronunciation.

As previously mentioned, pronunciation difficulties had been thought to be caused by the transfer of phonological aspects from the L1 to the L2 (Selinker, 1972). The second language learners attempt to pronounce the L2 sounds by using their repertoire of L1 phonemes and allophones. Since the two languages may contain sounds that seem to be the same but are produced by differing articulatory motions, they are acoustically different and may be perceived to be divergent from the target by the proficient listener. If that divergence results in a sound that better resembles another word to a native listener (e.g., "I would like some *French fries*," comes out sounding like "I would like some *fresh fli*es"), confusion and miscommunication results, often interrupting or even terminating the whole conversation.

Coping Methods

To be able to speak English effectively, students need to refine their speaking ability by integrating their prior knowledge, language proficiency, and metacognitive skills with coping with all the oral communication difficulties the learners encountered. The participants from this study indicated all the methods they employ in coping with speaking difficulties, specifically: use of synonyms, message adjustment (paraphrase, simplify, approximation), communicative avoidance, code switching, appealing for assistance, consulting a dictionary, and use of body language & gesture. Each of coping methods will be concluded item by item.

Use of Synonyms

English is a language with exceptionally rich vocabulary; therefore, it is not necessary to repeatedly use the same word when speaking. Accordingly, it was found that all participants made use of synonyms when they were struggling with difficult words. Simpler terms conveying the same or similar meaning were frequently employed by the participants when they were not able to recall the proper word from their vocabulary lists. For instance, B3 participant reported that she regularly replaced difficult words with simple ones when speaking with others.

It can be inferred that L2 speakers with limited vocabulary frequently search for synonyms, simple vocabulary or attempt to repeat their own and their interlocutors' words. Because of L2 Speakers' limited vocabulary, lack of experience with all the nuances of the words, and consequent improper usage, even sympathetic and patient interlocutors may find it very difficult to understand them correctly. Even English teachers who are accustomed to dealing with them still often find it difficult to make sense of what they are trying to say.

L2 speakers frequently pause as they try to find simple words. As Lemke (1989) claims that when L2 speakers are called on to handle topics by performing functions associated with the intermediate level, they frequently resort to synonyms and simple vocabulary instead of using difficult words with which they are unfamiliar.

Message Adjustment

The research showed all participants adjusted messages (paraphrasing, simplifying, and approximating) in order to deliver uncomplicated sentences while speaking. Message adjustment involved communicating the whole message without abandoning any part of it, and participants who adopted this method did not avoid conveying their intended message when they encountered speaking difficulties. Instead, they got their message across and expressed it successfully without altering or modifying it, achieving their communication goal. For instance, participant A1 when he was unable to recall a word or term would define it or paraphrase it. He said that he would give a wordier explanation or definition in place of a single term. Participant B1 simplified his messages when he encountered speaking difficulties. He reported that he simply omitted some of the words and speaks in phrases, sentence fragments, single words and word clusters instead, in an effort to convey the meaning of what he wants to say. C3 participant provided an approximate idea to convey the intended message. She claimed that she tried her best to express at least the general idea of what she is trying to say when she had difficulties involves thinking of the right words.

It is possible to conclude that second language speakers communicate minimally and with difficulty by using a number of isolated words, adjusting messages, and memorized phrases limited by the particular context in which the language has been learned. When responding to direct questions, they may utter only two or three words at a time or an occasional stock answer. As Birdsong (1989) claims that with adjusting messages, the unskillful second language speakers will be able to convey their intended message with a simple form of the language.

Communicative Avoidance

With regard to Communicative Avoidance, it was discovered that almost all participants from group B and C avoided communicating with others in English when they encountered difficulties with oral communication except B3 and C4. Participant A1, though placed in the high English proficiency group, sometimes avoided communicating with the teacher. This happened when he particularly had little or no idea what the correct terminology was in English. Similarly, participant B4 simply avoided responding to the teacher when she was not able to construct an answer in English. Likewise, C3 typically tried to avoid communicating when she had great oral communication difficulties.

Avoidance was regularly employed by most of the participants who faced oral communication difficulties. Chief among things avoided (besides teachers) were a target language word, structure, sounds, and entire communication that they consider too difficult. As Faerch and Kasper (1984) claim, L2 learners possibly give up on communication in L2 and avoid initiating any form of interaction in it. It can be said that second language learners resort to avoidance due to their desire to feel safe from errors that might occur and possibly cause them embarrassment.

Code Switching

This study found that participants switched languages from English to Thai when they encountered difficulties with English. The participants emphasized and

repeated their words, sentences, and ideas in Thai so that they would be understood by their interlocutors. Even when participants were in the classroom, they usually switched from English to Thai to chat with their peers. Participants stated that they have to explain in Thai because they were not good at explaining in English. Moreover, if they explained in English, they were afraid of being misunderstood by their interlocutors due to the limitations of their English speaking skills. For instance, A4 reported that she switched from English to Thai when she believed her classmates did not understand her. Correspondingly, B4 added that when speaking with her classmates, if she was unable to continue on topic in English, she switched to Thai. Similarly to C3, she withdrew from a conversation if she was unable to follow or engage in it. If compelled to participate, she switched to Thai or tried to change the topic.

It can be concluded that difficulties in oral communication regularly resulted in code switching. According to Bloom and Gumperz (1972), code switching occurs when the language being used is changed according to the oral difficulties situation in which the interlocutors find themselves. Likewise, Spolsky (1998) stated that oral difficulty situations are an important factor determining which language is to be used. In other words, L2 learners speak L2 when they do not encounter any significant difficulties communicating in it. On the other hand, they automatically switch from English to Thai when significant difficulties are encountered.

Appealing for Assistance

Asking for assistance is another type of coping method regularly employed by all participants. The research indicated that the all participants relied on others around them such as classmates and teachers. When struggling with oral communication difficulties, while communicating with a teacher, the participants automatically searched for assistance from their classmates. Correspondingly, when they did not get the assistance from classmates, the participants relied on the teacher who assisted them to complete the sentences. For instance, participant A4 claimed that she searches for assistance from her classmates and teacher when she encounters a difficulty that

she cannot solve on her own. B3 participant reported that when she cannot think of a synonym, she may ask for assistance from her classmates and her teacher, or she may speak in incomplete sentences. Additionally, C1 participant stated that he always asked for assistance from his classmates when he encountered a sticking point. He solicited his classmates help to guide him through both difficult vocabulary and sentence structure.

As one of the coping methods, assistance seeking also facilitates the participants in language learning. According to Newman and Goldin (1990), "The students make use of assistance seeking as an executive self-learning strategy. The participants gained assistance from surrounding persons, classmates and teacher, in order to promote and assist them to communicate in English more effectively".

Consulting a Dictionary

Even though spoken communication is a real time process, this study found that some of the participants made use of dictionaries to find the appropriate word to use in their conversation. It was observed that participants A2, B4, C1, and C4 applied this method. A2 reported that he often makes sure of himself by consulting a dictionary. He added that this might take time but he can speak more accurately and effectively using one. B4 claimed that she sometimes uses her Thai-English dictionary to make certain she's using the correct word. Moreover, C1 said he often consults his Thai-English dictionary and textbooks in advance to ensure that he will use the appropriate vocabulary, and know how to pronounce the words correctly. Likewise, C4 stated that she searches her dictionary and textbook to find the appropriate vocabulary word to answer the teacher.

Thus, consulting a dictionary was a means by which L2 learners cope with some oral communication difficulties they encounter. They could prepare themselves in advance to arrange the most suitable terms and to avoid errors that might possibly occur during communication. Wen and Johnson (1997) did research on what good language learners do to learn effectively. They found that the students frequently used

and relied on bilingual dictionaries constructively when they were not able to recall the proper terms.

Use of Body Language and Gesture

It was observed that the participants frequently made use of body language and gestures in order to cope with oral communication difficulties. The participants tried to continue speaking even though they were encountering difficulties. They made use of body language and gestures to illustrate and to clarify the terms that they were not able to recall. Moreover, body language and gestures assisted them in getting through their conversation (overcoming sticking points) as well as helping them to convey their intended meaning. Five participants were observed to make significant use of body language and gestures: participants B2, B4, C2, C3, and C4. B2 reported that he employs body language, gestures, and other non-verbal cues in order to help clarify his meaning. B4, C2, C3 and C4 claimed that they make use of body language, gestures, and facial expressions to help convey their intended meaning.

Body language and gestures were among the coping methods frequently employed by the participants who regularly encountered difficulties with oral communicative. The body language and gestures used in conversational situations arise from the development of L2 learners basic vocabulary of tangible objects used in every day life. According to Singelis (1994), the communicators might encounter verbal difficulties that cause misunderstanding of the content in an interaction. Consequently, the reliance on body language and gestures may be even greater than normal. In truth, body language and gestures can convey the emotion, as well as the ideas of the speaker. These can accentuate the message into something that the interlocutors can picture in their minds.

The oral communication difficulties encountered during L2 acquisition often involve environmental factors. In a general sense, the results of this study are consistent with the previous studies (Scheu, 2000; Purdie and Oliver, 1999; Myles and Cheng, 2003; Escamilla, 1994; Xu, 2006; Lam, 2000; Yan-hua, 2007) regarding how

factors including environment influence students' English speaking proficiency and cause them oral communication difficulties.

Implications of the Present Study

A rich and stimulating learning environment is essential to the development of verbal and intellectual skills for even a first language, and plays an even greater role in second language acquisition especially in terms of speaking. Through this study, it is hoped that the bilingual school and teachers will better understand the influence of environmental factors on students' speaking proficiency.

Certainly, the results of this study can offer great benefits to the bilingual schools, teachers, and students. The school should be, therefore, aware of providing an additive bilingual environment where all students naturally have the opportunity to acquire a second language while continuing to develop their native language proficiency. Additionally, the school can design a more appropriate and practical way of instructions that suit the bilingual students. That is to say, the school should make up for the lack of a favorable sociolinguistic environment, sparing no means to create an English environment. Thus, a school should be filled with English songs, set an English Day, organize English contest, show English movies, broadcast English radio, and paint every wall with English. Likewise, the English teachers should encourage and motivate the students to communicate extensively in English and necessarily create an appropriate environment in order to assist the student to speak English more effectively while they are studying in English classes. Appropriate teaching methodologies should be considered in order to enhance students' English proficiency. Furthermore, attractive rewards might encourage students to be more interested in their English lessons. This conforms to the interactionist theory that combines the nativist view that humans are born with the ability to acquire language and the behaviorist view that language is learned through the environment Kumpulainen and Wray (2002). Humans were born with the ability to learn to speak and then develop their communication skills through their social interactions (Gass 1997). Therefore, a rich bilingual environment is necessary in order to promote

students' speaking ability and reduce the oral difficulties they might encounter during the English communication.

Another implication is that the English speaking skill of the Thai class teacher is very limited. She was not able to use English as a medium of communication properly. She rarely used English words or phrases to command and direct the students, not even for such rudimentary commands as "sit down" and "[be] quiet". Therefore, Thai is always the medium of communication between students and the Thai class teacher because the teacher herself is not proficient in English so students do not have exposure to real-life usage of English in the classroom. Therefore, the school should pay very close attention in order to improve the Thai class teachers' English speaking ability. This is to reinforce and to assist the students to expose the usage of English speaking in the classroom.

Limitations of the Present Study

This study employed only twelve students of grade 6/2. Other students from other classes were not involved in this study. This limitation is due to the fact that the students were in the final examination period at the time of the study, and therefore the school administrator suggested that the study should be restricted to Class 6/2 as that class is considered to be a class of fast learners compared with the other Grade 6 classes, and thus the study would be less likely to interfere with 6/2's preparation for their exams.

In the semi-structured interview session, all the participants did not respond very well to the open-ended questions. The researcher regularly repeated the questions to them by using some leading questions. Additionally, the time constraint is also a limitation of this study: the researcher had to complete the interview session of twelve participants within two lunch break periods (100 minutes) due to the limited availability of students during school hours.

Furthermore, there is no certain confirmation that the results of this study can really be generalised to Thai bilingual students as a whole due to the small sample size of this present study, and all participants being drawn from a single class.

Recommendations for Further Study

In general, most oral communication difficulties and coping methods employed by the students in this study can be applied to a wider population of L2 learners. As seen from the results, the students experience similar oral communication difficulties, specifically: limited vocabulary; constructing proper sentence structure; the appropriate use of tenses and subject-verb agreement; and pronunciation. In concordance with the oral difficulties, students revealed methods for coping with those difficulties, specifically: use of synonyms, message adjustment, communication avoidance, code switching, appealing for assistance, consulting a dictionary, and use of body language and gestures. It is also important for schools and teachers to focus on encouraging the students to speak in English more frequently. As it was reported by students that they encountered difficulties using English as a medium of oral communication at school, subsequent studies should focus on the frequency and severity of the difficulties encountered by students. This is to reveal what difficulties cause proficiency of English-speaking skill the most and vice versa. Therefore, the finding will assist the schools and administrators to prioritise these difficulties and allow schools and teachers to develop an effectively balanced curriculum for addressing them.

Additionally, it is suggested that further research should compare students enrolled in different bilingual school environments, so as to better ascertain the effect of environmental factors on second language acquisition in terms of speaking.

Finally, it is recommended that further studies examine the effectiveness of different learning activities inside and outside the classroom with regard to the differing rates of code switching that occurs in each activity. This would provide useful information which could be used to improve the choice and development of such activities, enhancing the effectiveness of this and other similar educational programs.

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APPENDICES
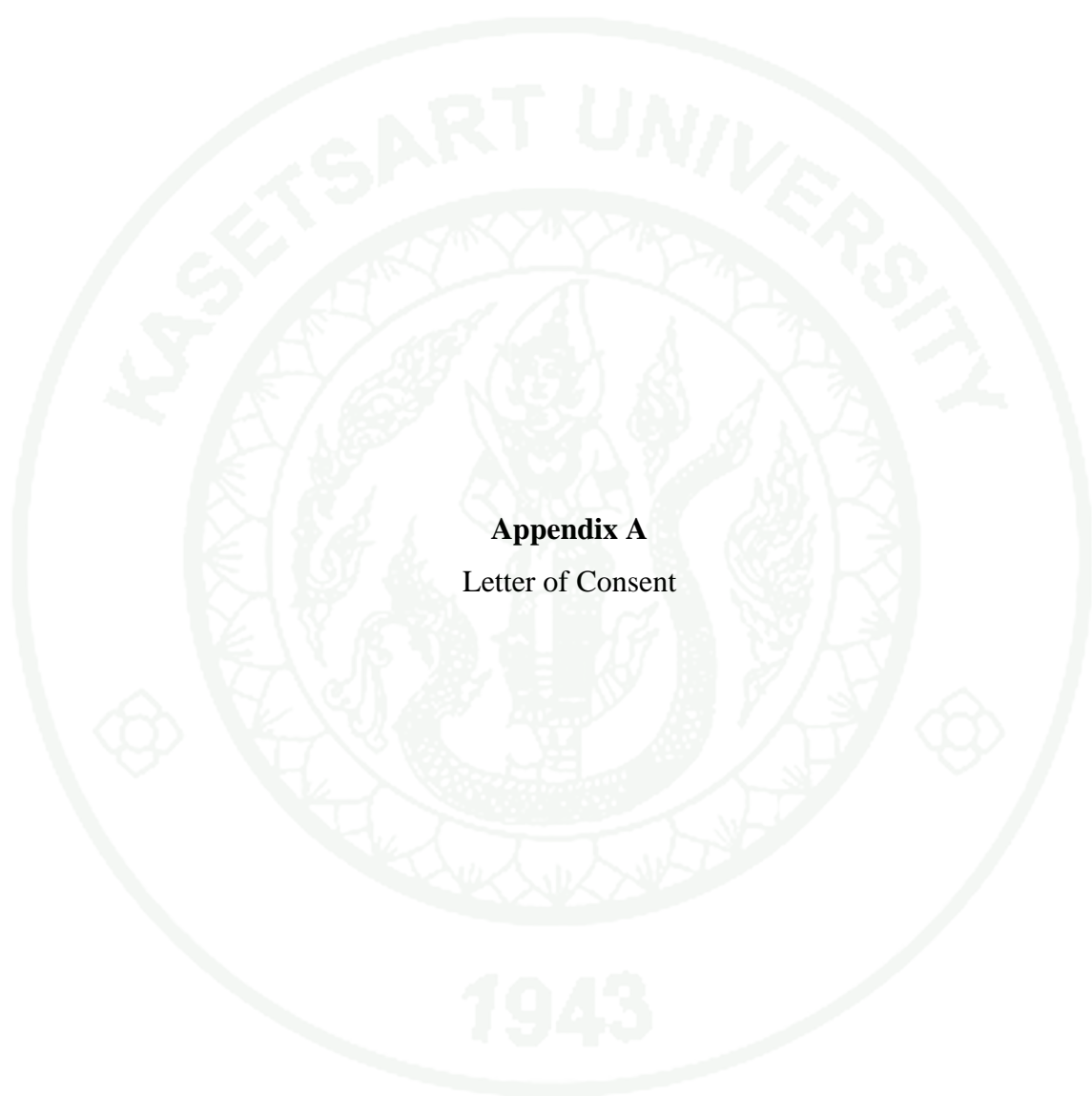
Appendix A

Letter of Consent

21 Moo 5 Pimolrat, Bangbuathong,

Nonthaburi 11110

January 24, 2008

Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School

Lampoe, Bangbuathong

Nonthaburi 11110

Request for permission to do research

Dear Principal Preeya Nilkaew

  I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study. I am currently doing a Master's degree in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at Kasetsart University, Bangkok. As part of my study, I am conducting a research study entitled "Second Language Acquisition of Thai Bilingual Students In Terms of Speaking: A Case Study of Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School". The research aims to explore the students' difficulties and their solutions. Depending of the scope of the research, information concerning students' speaking skill is really essential for the study. Data must be obtained through Grade 6 students' participation in the classroom and activities. Students will be observed and interviewed during the data collection process for an approximate period of one month.

  The information gathered from the observation and interviews will remain strictly confidential. Results from the study will be useful for the development of bilingual students' speaking skills and substantially benefit students receiving bilingual education in the future.

  If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would greatly appreciate your consent to my request.

Sincerely yours,

(Pramote Borisut)
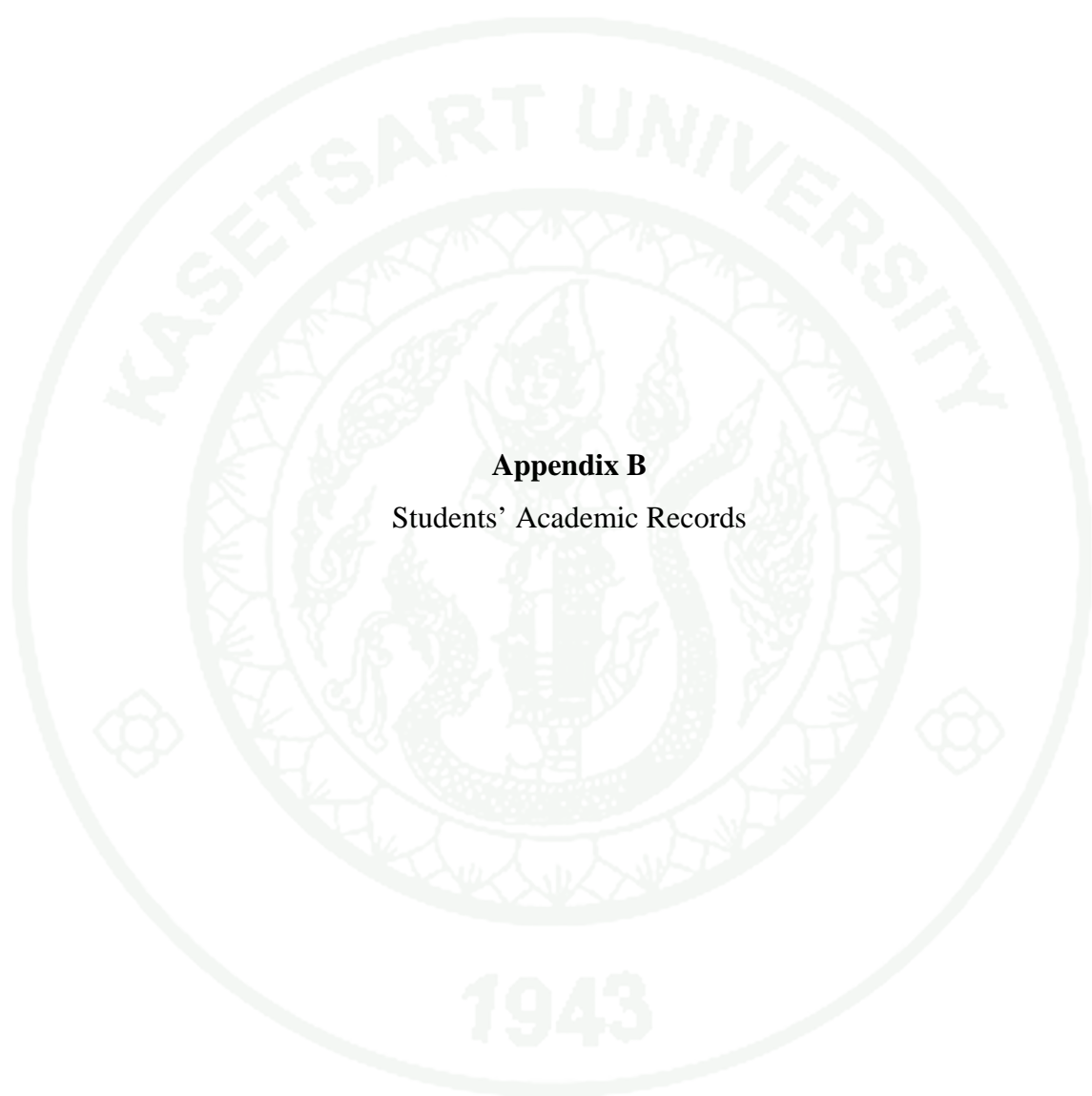
Appendix B

Students' Academic Records

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number		1	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	A1			

Result	86-100 % Excellent	A	66-75 % Good	C
Top Score	76-85 % Very Good	B	50-65 % Pass	D
100%	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	Final	Mid-Semester	Final
English	99	97	99	96
Mathematics	100	95	96	94
Science	97	99	98	96
Social	98	97	97	97
Health	98	99	100	100
EFL	100	96	99	100
P.E	90	100	99	100
Moral	90	92	94	94
Average	**97**	**97**	**98**	**97**
Grade	**A**	**A**	**A**	**A**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number	17	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	A2		

Result	86-100 % Excellent	A	66-75 % Good	C
Top Score	76-85 % Very Good	B	50-65 % Pass	D
100%	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	Final	Mid-Semester	Final
English	93	93	96	94
Mathematics	89	92	88	90
Science	97	98	94	93
Social	97	93	97	96
Health	95	92	97	90
EFL	88	88	92	89
P.E	84	78	83	86
Moral	93	93	89	93
Average	**92**	**91**	**92**	**91**
Grade	**A**	**A**	**A**	**A**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number	32	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	A3		

Result	86-100 % Excellent		A	66-75 % Good		C
Top Score	76-85 % Very Good		B	50-65 % Pass		D
100%	Semester 1			Semester 2		
	Mid-Semester		**Final**	**Mid-Semester**		**Final**
English	95		92	95		92
Mathematics	97		97	98		91
Science	76		88	98		91
Social	94		98	96		94
Health	94		98	92		93
EFL	90		96	76		89
P.E	91		97	92		90
Moral	85		91	79		81
Average	**90**		**95**	**90**		**90**
Grade	**A**		**A**	**A**		**A**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number		29	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	A4			

Result Top Score 100%	86-100 % Excellent A 76-85 % Very Good B		66-75 % Good C 50-65 % Pass D	
	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	**Final**	**Mid-Semester**	**Final**
English	98	86	87	90
Mathematics	93	96	86	92
Science	88	87	83	89
Social	98	88	98	93
Health	87	96	93	89
EFL	95	95	93	94
P.E	94	93	89	90
Moral	86	89	77	89
Average	**92**	**91**	**88**	**91**
Grade	**A**	**A**	**A**	**A**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number	8	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	B1		

Result Top Score 100%	86-100 % Excellent	A	66-75 % Good	C
	76-85 % Very Good	B	50-65 % Pass	D
	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	**Final**	**Mid-Semester**	**Final**
English	67	69	82	79
Mathematics	64	66	63	60
Science	41	58	52	52
Social	56	55	68	63
Health	58	75	69	70
EFL	60	60	65	60
P.E	73	71	73	70
Moral	49	62	53	61
Average	**59**	**65**	**66**	**64**
Grade	**D**	**D**	**D**	**D**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number		4	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	B2			

Result	86-100 % Excellent		A	66-75 % Good		C
Top Score	76-85 % Very Good		B	50-65 % Pass		D
100%	Semester 1			Semester 2		
	Mid-Semester		**Final**	**Mid-Semester**		**Final**
English	83		70	73		76
Mathematics	68		68	75		72
Science	52		69	76		69
Social	78		80	82		80
Health	82		81	81		78
EFL	71		73	69		59
P.E	82		75	85		78
Moral	70		64	60		61
Average	**73**		**73**	**75**		**72**
Grade	**C**		**C**	**C**		**C**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School
Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number		21	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	B3			

Result Top Score 100%	86-100 % Excellent	A	66-75 % Good	C
	76-85 % Very Good	B	50-65 % Pass	D
	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	Final	Mid-Semester	Final
English	78	62	70	69
Mathematics	62	56	56	53
Science	51	49	56	58
Social	60	60	62	60
Health	66	75	64	62
EFL	66	64	63	65
P.E	68	69	77	73
Moral	62	60	51	58
Average	64	62	62	62
Grade	D	D	D	D

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number		25	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	B4			

Result	86-100 % Excellent	A		66-75 % Good	C
Top Score	76-85 % Very Good	B		50-65 % Pass	D
100%	Semester 1			Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	Final		Mid-Semester	Final
English	72	67		76	74
Mathematics	51	59		59	60
Science	47	55		51	52
Social	61	66		68	63
Health	72	82		82	79
EFL	68	60		60	61
P.E	78	75		76	73
Moral	62	59		53	52
Average	**64**	**65**		**66**	**64**
Grade	**D**	**D**		**D**	**D**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number	10	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	C1		

Result Top Score 100%	86-100 % Excellent A 76-85 % Very Good B		66-75 % Good C 50-65 % Pass D	
	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	**Final**	**Mid-Semester**	**Final**
English	39	52	55	53
Mathematics	54	59	58	52
Science	49	41	51	56
Social	43	46	62	60
Health	64	63	60	59
EFL	48	54	55	58
P.E	62	57	66	64
Moral	46	34	54	50
Average	**51**	**51**	**58**	**57**
Grade	**D**	**D**	**D**	**D**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number		6	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	C2			

Result Top Score 100%	86-100 % Excellent A		66-75 % Good C	
	76-85 % Very Good B		50-65 % Pass D	
	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	**Final**	**Mid-Semester**	**Final**
English	44	52	54	54
Mathematics	56	50	59	53
Science	45	33	52	70
Social	50	41	50	69
Health	53	65	70	71
EFL	44	59	56	56
P.E	73	69	72	70
Moral	42	35	52	52
Average	**51**	**51**	**58**	**62**
Grade	**D**	**D**	**D**	**D**

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School

Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number		22	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	C3			

Result Top Score 100%	86-100 % Excellent　　A 76-85 %　Very Good　　B		66-75 % Good　　　　C 50-65 % Pass　　　　D	
	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	**Final**	**Mid-Semester**	**Final**
English	47	52	54	60
Mathematics	50	52	56	57
Science	37	45	50	49
Social	56	22	55	52
Health	64	71	66	65
EFL	47	54	56	60
P.E	66	62	69	67
Moral	56	47	52	51
Average	**53**	**51**	**57**	**58**
Grade	**D**	**D**	**D**	**D**

| Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee

Sarasas Witaed Banguabthong School
Bilingual Program

Report Card	Academic Year : 2007

Student Number		31	Grade 6	Class 2
Name	C4			

Result	86-100 % Excellent	A	66-75 % Good	C
Top Score	76-85 % Very Good	B	50-65 % Pass	D
100%	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Mid-Semester	Final	Mid-Semester	Final
English	52	52	60	57
Mathematics	68	54	51	56
Science	44	40	52	60
Social	44	32	60	74
Health	63	69	73	65
EFL	51	57	58	73
P.E	68	64	74	70
Moral	59	52	56	53
Average	56	53	61	64
Grade	D	D	D	D

Parents' signature	Principal : Ms. Preeya Nilkaew
Asst. Principal:Ms. Narunchara Kitkan	Director: Ms. Sayomporn Thongnuedee
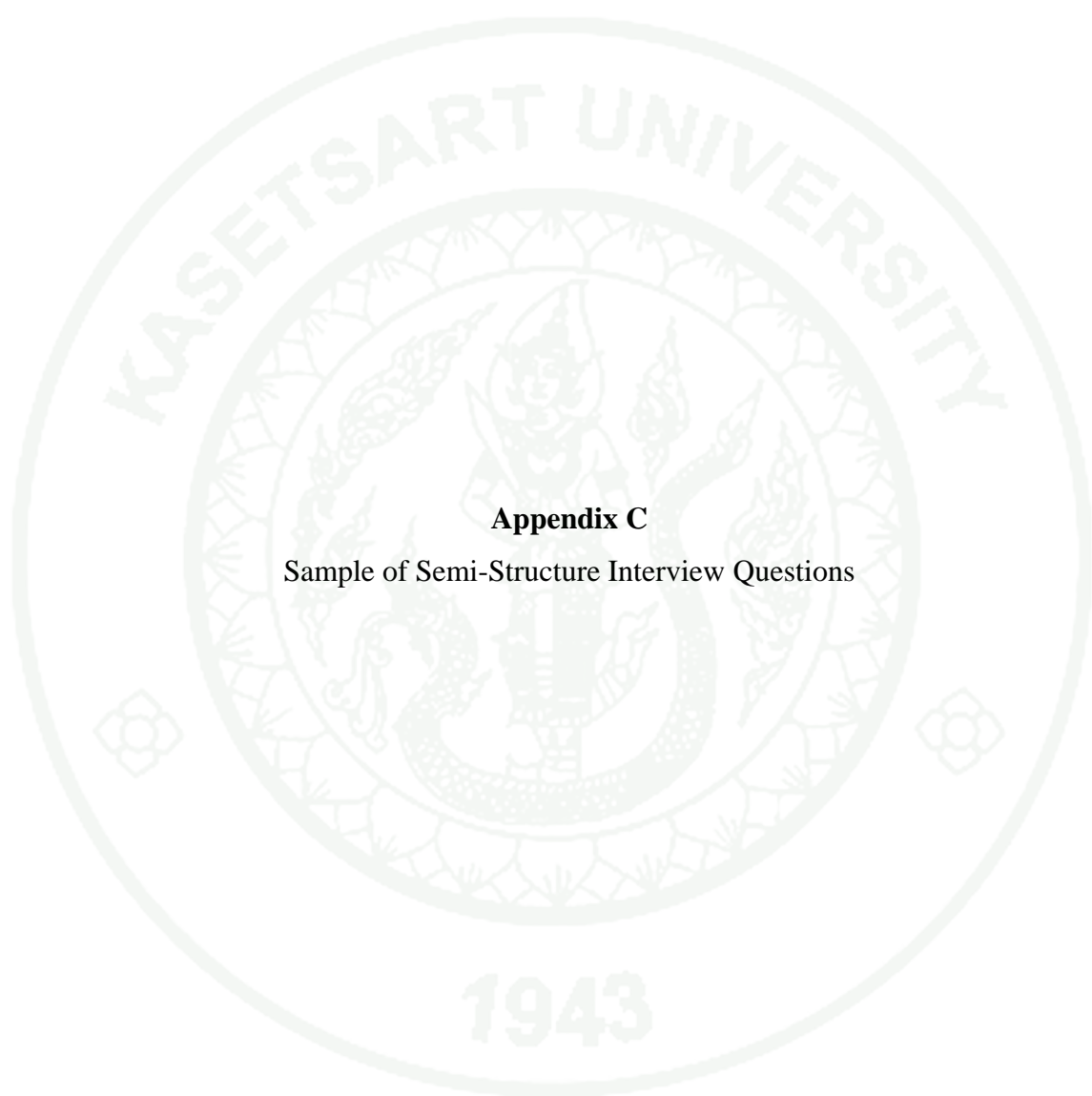
Appendix C

Sample of Semi-Structure Interview Questions

Appendix Table C1 A Semi-structured Interview (English version)

Category	Questions
Attentiveness	1. How long have you been studying in Thai-English Bilingual School Program?
	2. How often did you absent from school in each academic year?
	3.What language is mostly spoken between you and classmates during English classes?
	4. How often did you ask for permission to go out of the classroom during the lesson?
	5. Is there any other technique you used to improve your speaking skills?
Motivation	1. How do you feel with using English as a medium of instruction?
	2. Why are you interested / not interested in answering teacher's questions?
	3. What will you react if your classmates talk to you in Thai during English class?
	4. What language is mostly spoken by your next classmate during the English class?
	5. Is there any effect from receiving compliment or complain from teacher in answering next questions?
Interaction with Classmates	1. What language is mostly spoken between you and your classmates during English class?
	2. Are your next classmates talkative? What language do they mostly speak?
	3. Who normally starts English conversation?
	4. How do you feel between using English with your classmates and your teacher?
	5. What language is mostly spoken outside English classroom?

Appendix Table C1 (Continued)

Category	Questions
Class Participation	1. How do you feel when asked to participate or to answer questions in English?
	2. When you do not understand questions or lessons, who will you ask for help? And why?
	3. Have you ever volunteer to answer questions? What makes you decide to do that?
	4. How do you response to the teacher when he asks whether you understand the lesson?
	5. How do you feel when asked to form a group for practicing English with classmates? And how well you communicate with other members?
Oral Communication Difficulties	1. What makes your English conversation with teacher regularly hesitated?
	2. Why do you use words or phrases in order to answer questions instead of using completed sentences?
	3. Why does the teacher correct your sentences and then let you repeat them?
	4. Can you use different tenses in order to describe different situations happened? And why?
	5. What makes you regularly stop speaking when you have to pronounce difficult words?
Coping Methods	1. What is your solution when you cannot recall the vocabulary?
	2. What is your solution when you cannot speak in completed English sentence structures?
	3. What is your solution when you cannot conjugate the specific verbs into the form of past tense?

Appendix Table C1 (Continued)

Category	Questions
	4. What is your solution when verb used in your sentence does not agree with the subject?
	5. What is your solution when you are not confident to pronounce English words?
	6. What is your solution when you are not able to solve the problems by yourself?

**Appendix Table C2** A Semi-structured Interview (Thai version)

หมวดหมู่	คำถาม
Attentiveness	1. คุณได้ทำการศึกษาในโรงเรียนระบบสองภาษาโดยใช้ภาษาไทย และ ภาษาอังกฤษ ในการเรียนการสอนมาเป็นเวลากี่ปี
	2. คุณขาดเรียนบ่อยแค่ไหนในแต่ละปีการศึกษา และเพราะเหตุใด
	3. คุณชอบพูดคุยกับเพื่อนในระหว่างที่ครูทำการสอนหรือไม่
	4. คุณขออนุญาตออกนอกชั้นเรียนในระหว่างการเรียนการสอน วิชาภาษาอังกฤษบ่อยแค่ไหน
	5. นอกจากจะตั้งใจฟังครูพูดในห้องแล้ว ยังมีวิธีการใดๆ ที่ทำให้คุณพัฒนา ทักษะการพูดของคุณอีกบ้าง
Motivation	1. คุณมีความรู้สึก หรือ ความคิดเห็นอย่างไรต่อการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นสื่อ การเรียนการสอน
	2. เพราะเหตุใดคุณจึงมี ความสนใจ/ไม่สนใจ ในการอาสาตอบคำถาม ของคุณครูเมื่ออยู่ในห้องเรียน
	3. คุณจะคุยกับเพื่อนหรือไม่ เพราะเหตุใด ถ้าเพื่อนร่วมห้องของคุณ ชวนคุณคุยเล่นเป็นภาษาไทยในระหว่างการเรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ
	4. เพื่อนที่นั่งติดกับคุณนั้น ใช้ภาษาใดในการสื่อสารกับคุณมากที่สุด ในระหว่างการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ

Appendix Table C2 (Continued)

หมวดหมู่	คำถาม
	5. การได้รับคำชม หรือ การตำหนิ จากคุณครูนั้น มีผลใดๆ ต่อการพูดภาษาอังกฤษในครั้งต่อๆไปหรือไม่ อย่างไร
Interaction with Classmates	1. คุณใช้ภาษาใดมากที่สุดในการสื่อสารระหว่างกันกับเพื่อนร่วมห้อง ระหว่างการเรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ 2. เพื่อนที่นั่งติดกับคุณ เป็นคนคุยเก่งหรือไม่ และส่วนใหญ่ใช้ภาษาใด ในการสื่อสารกับคุณ 3. โดยปกติแล้ว ระหว่างคุณกับเพื่อนนั้น ใครเป็นผู้ริเริ่มสื่อสาร ภาษาอังกฤษ มากกว่ากัน และในกรณีใดบ้าง 4. คุณมีความรู้สึกเช่นไร ระหว่างการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการสื่อสาร กับเพื่อนร่วมห้อง และ สื่อสารกับครูผู้สอน 5. คุณใช้ภาษาใดสื่อสารกับเพื่อน เมื่ออยู่นอกห้องเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ เพราะเหตุใด
Class Participation	1. คุณมีความรู้สึกเช่นไร เมื่อถูกถามให้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม หรือตอบคำถาม ต่างๆ เป็นภาษาอังกฤษ 2. ในกรณีที่คุณไม่เข้าใจคำถาม หรือบทเรียน คุณจะถามขอความช่วยเหลือ จากใคร ระหว่าง เพื่อนร่วมชั้น หรือ ครูผู้สอน เพราะเหตุใด 3. คุณเคยอาสาเป็นผู้ตอบคำถามบ้างหรือไม่ เมื่อครูผู้สอนตั้งคำถามโดย ไม่ได้ระบุตัวผู้ตอบ และคุณมีเหตุผลใดที่ทำเช่นนั้น 4. เมื่อครูผู้สอนถามคำถามเพื่อเน้นย้ำว่านักเรียนทุกคนในห้อง เข้าใจบทเรียนหรือไม่ คุณได้ทำการตอบรับต่อคำถามนั้นหรือไม่ อย่างไร 5. เมื่อถูกสั่งให้จัดกลุ่มเพื่อฝึกสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษ คุณมีความรู้สึกเช่นไร และ คุณสามารถสื่อสารกับเพื่อนในกลุ่มด้วยภาษาอังกฤษได้ดีหรือไม่ เพราะเหตุใด

Appendix Table C2 (Continued)

หมวดหมู่	คำถาม
Oral Communication Difficulties	1. เพราะเหตุใดเวลาคุณพูดตอบคำถามครู คุณมักจะหยุดพูดเป็นช่วงๆ
	2. เพราะเหตุใด คุณมักจะพูด หรือ ตอบคำถาม โดยการใช้กลุ่มคำ หรือ คำเดี่ยว แทนการใช้ประโยคเต็ม
	3. เพราะเหตุใด ครูจึงทำการแก้ประโยคที่คุณพูด แล้วให้คุณพูดซ้ำ
	4. คุณสามารถใช้รูปแบบโครงสร้างของประโยคภาษาอังกฤษ พูด หรือ บรรยาย เหตุการณ์ที่เกิดในอดีตกาลได้ หรือ ไม่ เพราะเหตุใด
	5. เพราะเหตุใด การพูดภาษาอังกฤษของคุณจึงหยุดชะงักบ่อยครั้ง เมื่อคุณต้องออกเสียงคำยาก หรือ คำที่มีหลายพยางค์
Coping Methods	1. เมื่อคุณ ไม่สามารถคิดคำศัพท์ที่จะใช้พูดในประโยคได้ คุณแก้ปัญหาด้วยวิธีใด
	2. เมื่อคุณ ไม่สามารถพูดได้อย่างถูกโครงสร้างประโยค คุณแก้ปัญหาด้วยวิธีใด
	3. เมื่อคุณ ไม่สามารถผัน คำกริยาให้เป็นรูปของอดีตกาลได้ คุณแก้ปัญหาด้วยวิธีใด
	4. เมื่อประธานและ คำกริยาของประโยคที่คุณพูดไม่สอดคล้องกัน คุณมีวิธีแก้ไข หรือ แก้ปัญหาด้วยวิธีใด
	5. เมื่อคุณ ไม่มั่นใจที่จะออกเสียงคำภาษาอังกฤษ คุณแก้ปัญหา ด้วยวิธีการใด
	6. คุณจะใช้วิธีการใดๆ ต่อไป หากพบว่าคุณ ไม่สามารถแก้ปัญหานั้นๆ ได้ด้วยตัวคุณเอง
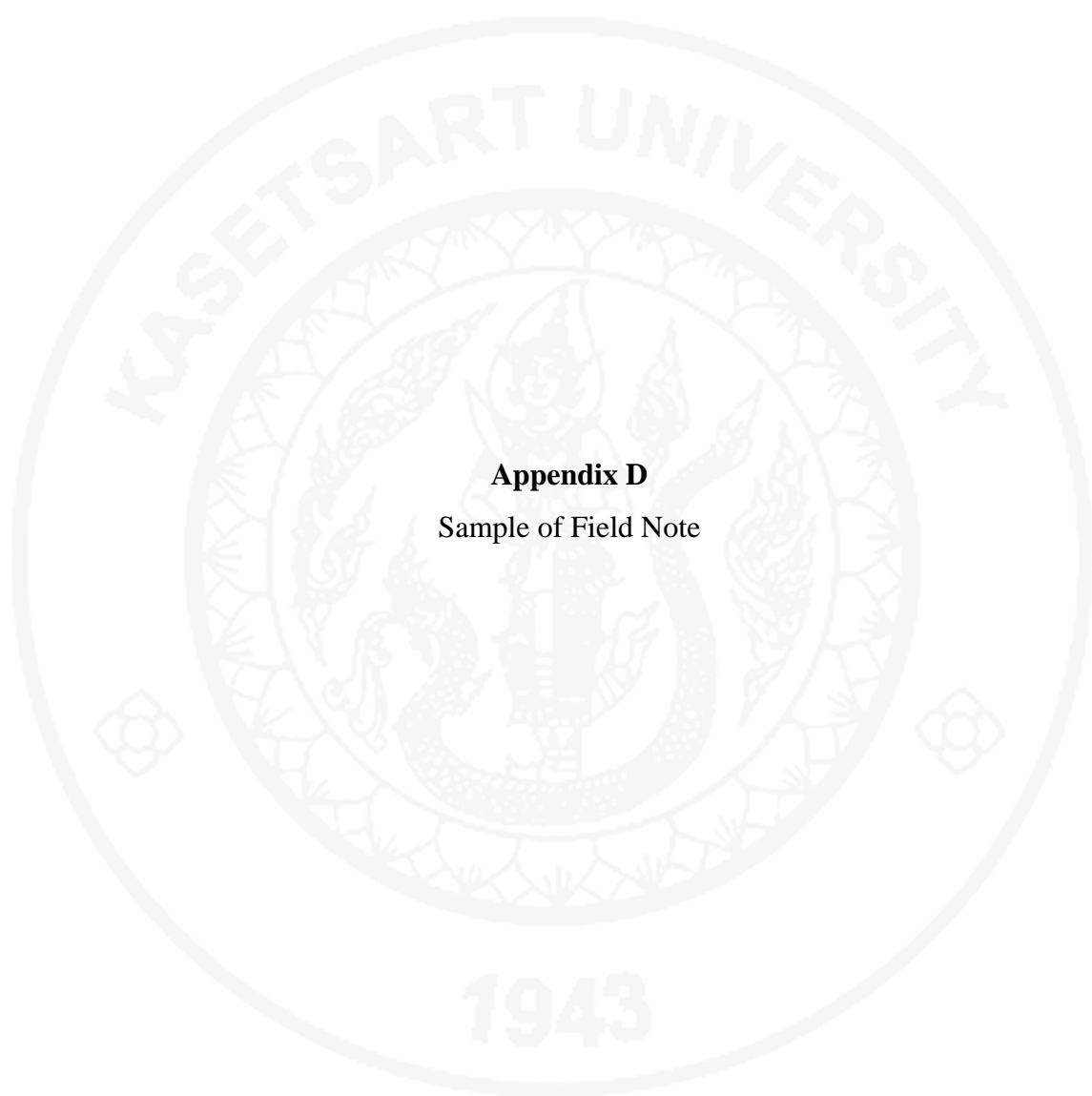
Appendix D

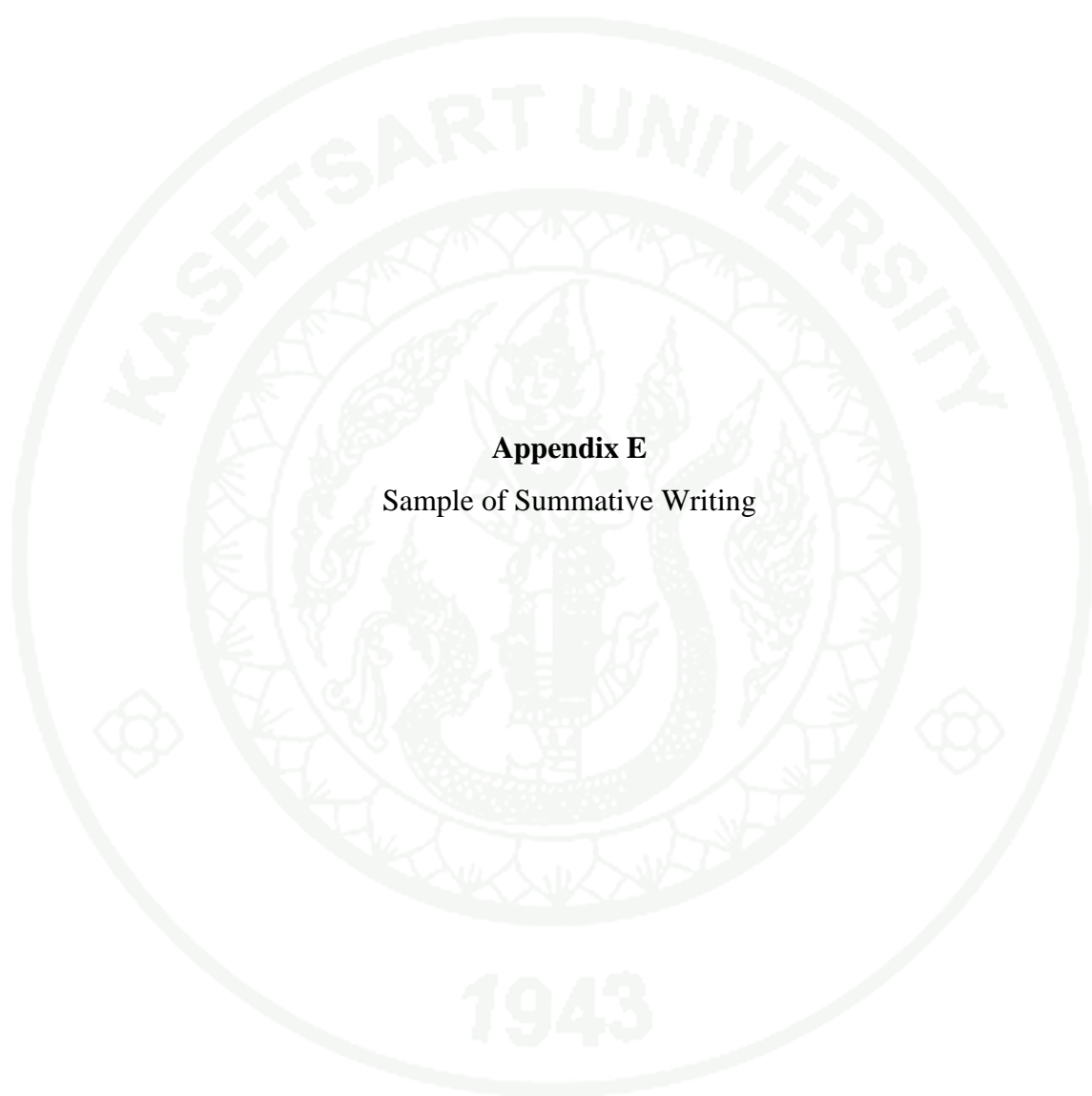Sample of Field Note

Field Notes

Observation work sheet

Data collected from the 1st observation on January 29, 2008 at Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School, Nonthaburi Province, Thailand.

Period of time: 10.45 – 11.35 am.

Observer: Mr. Pramote Borisut   **Male participant**: A1

Setting	Activities	Attentiveness	Motivation	Interaction	Participation	Difficulties	Coping Med	Remarks
1. Grade 6/2 in a bilingual school.	Lesson introduction	Talkative, cheerful, speak E well	T. & mates speak to him often	Interact with mates well in proper time	Good participation	Confident Eng. speaker	Synonym	Why he enjoys learning so much?
2. 33 students, a Thai class T. a foreign T.	Asking for an expressing opinions	Focus lesson well	Mates often ask him questions	Interact in E effectively	Answering & asking questions well	Vocabulary, proper words	Try to explain the words in sentences	Motivation to be asked?
3. A board divided into two. One for Thai T. One for Eng T.	Asking about and reporting another's opinion	Know when to chat, when to concentrate	Be a volunteer to translate to mates	Always start Eng conversation	Respond to T. order well	Verb tenses	Ask for clarification from T.	
4. 2 doors, 2 ceiling fans	Asking and answering questions	Follow the textbook well	Always finish tasks early	Give advise to mates what to answer	Good volunteer		Change the topic	
5. Students' seats are set in 8 columns and 4 rows.	Students' role play	Attend activities well	Respond well when offered brownie point	Good at both listener and speaker	Perform in front class often			
6. A1's seat is set in column 2, row 3	Doing exercise in the book	Understand lesson well		Smooth Eng. When speaking	Always act as a leader			

Appendix E

Sample of Summative Writing

Summative Writing

Data collected from the 1st observation on January 29, 2008 at Sarasas Witaed Bangbuathong School, Nonthaburi Province, Thailand.

Period of time: 10.45 – 11.35 am.

Male participant: A1

Observer: Mr. Pramote Borisut

The English class of grade 6/2 students today was interesting. The English teacher started the lesson with the introduction of today's lesson. My research participant, A1, was very quite at the first place. He paid a very good attention to what his teacher said and explained. He initiated to speak English with his classmates in appropriate time. On the other hand, his classmates often asked him questions because he seemed to understand the lesson well. A1 participated well in class activities. Interestingly he often volunteered answering questions to his teacher. He seemed to understand his teacher better than his friends. Sometimes, he told his friends the answers when it was needed. When it was time to role-play, he spoke the dialogue smoothly. He was sometimes struggled with some vocabulary but he finally came up with the words that share the similar meaning. He also tried to explain the difficult words in sentences. If these do not work, he would change the topic of communication. When he did not understand what his teacher was explained, he raised his hand and asked for more explanations. He also finished his exercises before others students.
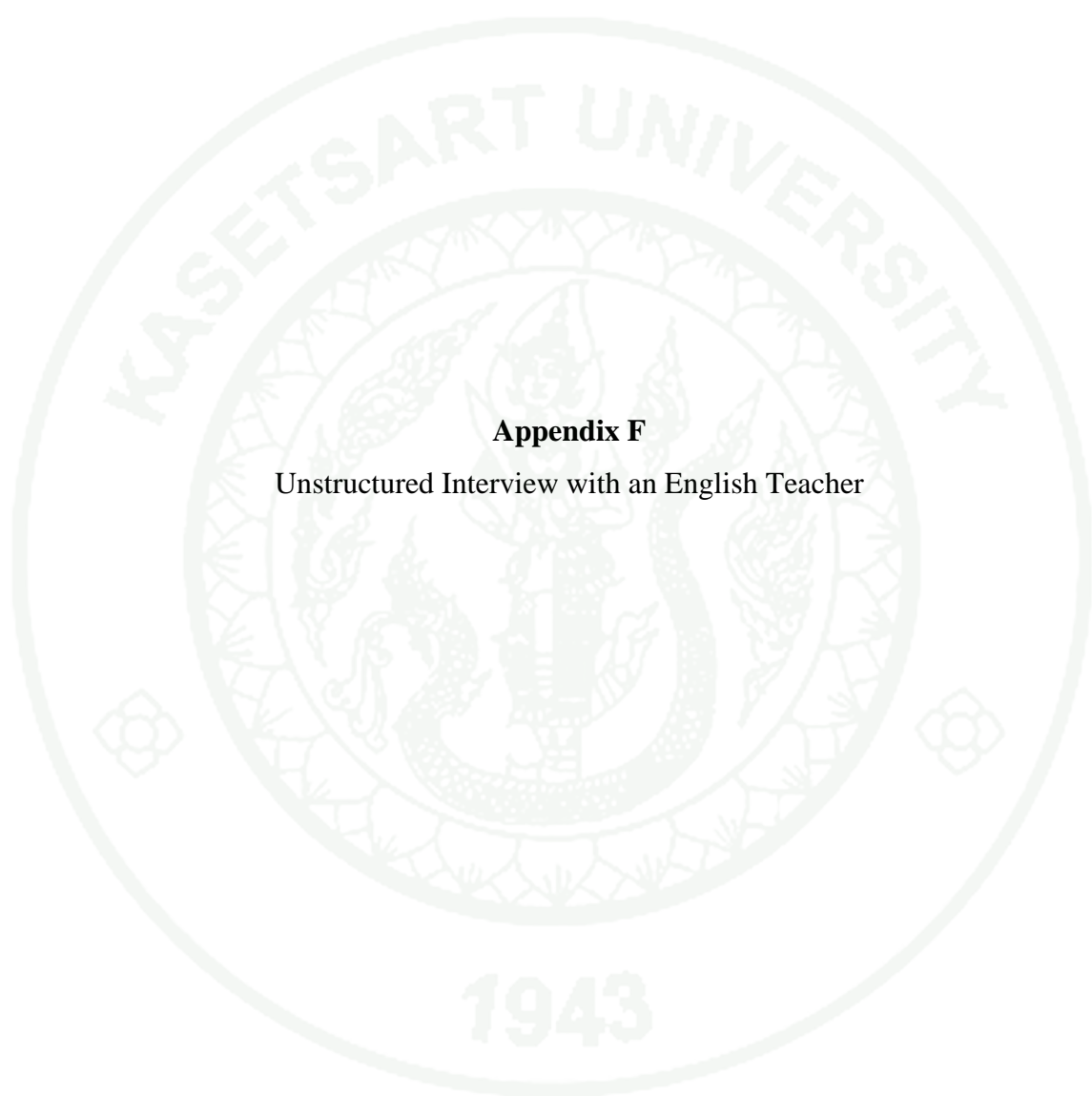
Appendix F

Unstructured Interview with an English Teacher

Oral Communication Difficulties

Limitation of Vocabulary

"The A group students are fast learners. You can see it from their academic record. They some time have vocabulary difficulties and most of the time they can get through this problem quickly. On the other hands, B and C group students are quite slow in class. They have more serious vocabulary difficulties than A group students. Most of the time they falter in communicating and in answering my questions."

Sentence Structure

"In general almost all students can construct simple and short English sentences. However, when they are required to speak more complex sentences where they need to use adjectives, prepositions, and adverbs; they were unable to do it correctly. I can see that almost all students translate from Thai to English. That is why they speak English with the Thai pattern."

English Verb Tense

"None of the students can use the correct tense when speaking. They do not inflect the verb to match time or span of events. So, I have to correct it for them and let them repeat. However, they surprise me because most of them can do my paper exams that test verb tense usage heavily."

Subject-Verb Agreement

"Students know all the grammatical regulations about Subject-Verb Agreement. They all study it both in my class and grammar class. They know how to inflect verbs in accordance with the subject of the sentences. None-the-less, they always have difficulty making use of their grammar knowledge in real-time conversation. Even though they can convey the meaning of what they wish to say, this

difficulty would stay with them in the upper level of education. That's why I have to correct it for them."

Pronunciation

"English pronunciation seems to be a difficulty only for the C participants. They cannot correctly pronounce some of the English sounds that do not exist in Thai, and they typically cause difficulty for these students. Beside, all C participants are pretty slow. They hardly ever initiate talking to me."

Cope Methods

Use of Synonyms

"All students are able to make use of simple words. When they are not able to come up with difficult words, and the flow of their speech falters, then they may take a few seconds to substitute simple words that have a similar meaning."

Message Adjustment

"The students try their best to communicate with me. Even though they regularly have speaking difficulties, they try to facilitate their speaking by paraphrasing, simplifying and approximating words and sentences."

Communicative Avoidance

"I can see that most of student occasionally avoids responding to my questions and communicating with me. This happens when they cannot talk or are not very sure about what to talk about or to say."

Code Switching

"Code switching is used by all students regularly when they speak with their friends and are struggling with the English, especially the students who are in group C. They frequently switch from English to Thai when they cannot speak and when they don't understand their classmates."

Appealing for Assistance

"Every student will first seek help from their classmates when they cannot continue to speak to me on their own. This is also when they are not so sure about the answer. The classmates are also happy to help them. However, if that does not work, I will finally guide them what to say."

Consulting a Dictionary

"Most of the students in the class have their own Thai-English dictionary. They often make use of the dictionary when they are not able to recall the suitable vocabulary. When I ask them a question, many of them immediately start searching their dictionaries in order to construct a good sentence."

Use of Body Language and Gesture

"Not all students use body language and gestures while speaking. The students who have more speaking difficulties tend to use gestures more often. They use their hands and facial expressions to help them get through the conversation."

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name	Mr. Pramote Borisut
Date of Birth	May 23, 1978
Place of Birth	Nonthaburi, Thailand
Educational Background	Bachelor of Arts in English for International Communication, Saint John's University