



**Implications of dynamics of students' positioning and
interpersonal relations for opportunities for
language learning in an MA-EAL classroom in Thailand**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

Abstract

Although the significance of students' relationships in language learning is undisputed, there is limited classroom research related to this topic. Drawing on positioning theory (Davies and Harré, 1999), sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf and Thorne, 2007) and informed by the focus on interaction in Douglas Fir Group's seminal paper (Douglas Fir Group (DFG), 2016), this classroom-based research investigates how students position themselves and their classmates, the explanations for their choices, and how the dynamics of positioning and interpersonal relations affect opportunities for English language learning. The data, collected in an English course Master's level class in Thailand over one 13-week semester, includes audio recordings of group discussions and whole-class interactions, videos of whole-class discussions, interviews and online conversations. Six students were selected as focal students and their interactions were tracked across different contexts. The students' positionings and their dynamics were associated with task solidarity, individual support, expertise, power, and social distance. The shifting positions across and within group discussions suggest that the students' relations consistently influenced their task performance. Analysis of the data also shows that fluidity, overlap and multi-directionality are characteristics of the dynamics of positioning negotiated between class members as they seek to participate in group discussions to help each other talk or gain recognition for that ability to explain topics in English. Opportunities for English language learning were provided for students who were able to position/reposition themselves to engage in group discussions across time. This work contends Storch (2013), who relied on a small set of fixed, static categories, and offers a more nuanced understanding of students' interpersonal relations. The thesis closes with pedagogical and methodological implications.

Key words: positioning, interpersonal relations, dynamics of interpersonal relations, opportunities for language learning

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1 Introduction

1.1 Focus of the Study

Interpersonal relations are involved in the development of human beings as well as individual maturation and “communal forms of remembering, deciding, problem solving and so on” (Harré, 2015b, p. 2). Relations between individuals influence how they act and speak towards each other. While from the social psychological perspective, *relations* is used to explain social activities, in language education, *relationships* is used to highlight its connection to learning, as clearly stated by Breen, “social relationships in the classroom orchestrate what is made available for learning, how learning is done and what we achieve” (1998, p. 119). Relationships between teacher and students in the class play a role in the learning process. However, both relations and relationships have not been central in prior English as an Additional Language (EAL) classroom-based research. Many researchers acknowledge the significance of relationships (Sato & Ballinger, 2016; Riese, Samara & Lillejord, 2012; Philp & Iwashita, 2013) or recognize that relationships play a role while students are completing tasks (Taguchi, 2007; Sato & Viveros, 2016), engaging in specific incidents such as student disputes (Toohey, 2001), or reflecting students’ larger social positions (Foster & Ohta, 2005). Those researchers paid attention to the recognitions of named relationships established between students (such as classmates, friends, or peers) but are not attentive much to how students are interpersonally connected from their perspective. This thesis not only foregrounds students’ interpersonal relations to add more insights from the social

dimension into classroom-based research, but it also specifically explains how and why those relations impact the opportunities for language learning.

The most commonly addressed relationships of students in an EAL classroom are in *peer interaction* research, which suggests how the interactions of peers affect their language production when they talk about language. Peer interaction researchers address relationships between students as *peers*, but they focus on students' interaction without the teacher's oversight (Philp & Iwashita, 2013). This definition of peer relationships lacks detail as to how students are interpersonally connected to become peers. In other words, how those relationships are formed and how they impact students' relations not clearly explained. Moreover, the significance of relationships is not highlighted.

A significant amount of research on peer interaction has investigated students working in pairs/groups through constructs such as interdependence, scaffolding or tutoring. But how peers connect to each other is not something that is foregrounded. Riese et al. (2012) have used meta-ethnography and integrative analysis on a number of peer interaction-related pieces of research and found that most peer interaction researchers do not elaborate on how relationships between peers are established and influence their opportunities for learning English in the classroom. The classroom research that follows is an example of the importance of relationships, which needs to be elaborated on further. Foster and Ohta (2005) found that students' relationships become more significant in pair or group interactions when they struggle with a task. These researchers examined how young adult native and non-native speakers of English helped each other to accomplish a task by self-correcting and encouraging others to continue talking when communication has broken down. Foster and Ohta claim that these changing interactions between students facilitate language development and learning. Another example is the specific situation of disputes between students. Toohey (2001) investigated disputes between two young learners of different nationalities and found that disputes provided opportunities to negotiate meaning or positions of power for one student but reduced those opportunities for the other. The two learners displayed power and competence as domination and subordination, influencing how they behaved and talked in English with each other. The participation in activities and conversations was reduced for the one displaying as subordinate to the other. Following on from these

two examples, a careful investigation of the relationships between students should be conducted. The dynamics of interpersonal relations could explain communication breakdowns or involve disputes and could provide clearer insights into the impact of students' relationships on the opportunities for language learning. Hence, investigation into peer interaction needs to be taken a step further. The dimension of relationships needs to be expanded to include a more nuanced examination of peer interaction.

Many researchers have used predetermined categories in their analysis of peer interaction in ways that largely ignore complex interactions, power, proficiency and personal alignment. Along with pairing students of high and/or low proficiency, the patterns of interactions between students have been used by several researchers to investigate their language production while talking about language (Choi & Iwashita, 2016; Kim & MacDonough, 2008; Sato & Viveros, 2016; Storch & Aldosari, 2013; Watanabe & Swain, 2007; Young & Tedick, 2016). For instance, Storch and Aldosari (2013) claimed that the pattern of expert-novice found in pair work significantly impacted students' language production and L2 learning. Sato and Viveros (2016) also claimed that increased language production is linked to a *collaborative mindset* or a *positive peer relationship*, collaborative interaction and L2 development. Nonetheless, the impact of relationships between peers on negotiating expert-novice was not clearly explained. Those patterns of dyadic interaction also lack a detailed explanation of how and why students' relationships are constituted.

Peer researchers who are more attentive to non-language-related episodes found that social discursive moves also contribute to production of language. Martin- Beltrán et al. (2016) found that students opened space for collaborating to complete the task as a group talking about language. Those students produced non-language-related topics, or *the social discursive moves* to work, as a group, and those moves are evidence that students provide themselves with more opportunities for using language. This peer interaction research suggests that relationships between students are closely related to language production. It is also an invitation to shift focus from explaining what students do to how students are interpersonally connected in order to open up opportunities for language learning.

My thesis focuses on students' interpersonal relations and the dynamics of those relations, which change how students react in small group work, rather than

categorizing their relationships based on pre-existing ones or limited sets. To focus on and foreground students' interpersonal relations, I investigate interaction, classroom learning environments, the sociocultural perspective, and positioning theory. The following section briefly gives a justification for each concept/theory.

Interaction in the classroom is a major concern in the thesis as it explains how students' relations are negotiated and changed in small groups and in the classroom, as well as linking the dynamics of students' relations to opportunities for language learning. Many scholars in the field have determined that learning takes place at a point of interaction. Learning occurs in interaction, and studying interaction is quite the same as studying learning (Ellis, 2000). Learning language is not only having linguistic knowledge, but also "doing", which is a process or activity in which learners participate (Larsen-freeman, 2010, p.177). This statement suggests language learning occurs at the point of interaction. Interaction is also a solid unit of analysis to explain how opportunities for learning are provided. While we cannot investigate how learning is processed inside a learner's brain, we can study, analyze and evaluate what is learned in interaction (Walsh, 2011, p.182). It is plausible to emphasize interaction in an investigation of students' interpersonal relations.

The sociocultural perspective explains how interaction is closely related to social surroundings and cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). This perspective is used in this thesis to address how students' backgrounds, their classmates and their reactions in group activities that are associated with their opportunities for learning. For instance, one way that students engage with each other is to render assistance in pair/group work. When students help each other, such as helping or requesting assistance, relationships are formed. This thesis will place importance on how students make sense of relationships in social contexts, including their backgrounds and the descriptions of relationships informed in their interviews. Applying the sociocultural perspective to the thesis illuminates our understanding of students' relationships in terms of the participants' status and the interaction negotiated within those relationships.

A transdisciplinary framework for SLA in the seminal paper by Douglas Fir Group (DFG, 2016) is also drawn on to mark the significance of interaction in multilingual contexts and language learning. This framework indicates that learning is

an ongoing process beginning at interaction level (DFG, 2016, p. 24). Interaction shapes and is shaped in specific multilingual contexts of actions as learners employ both cognitive and emotional capacities to engage with others. As I investigated interaction in an EAL classroom in Thailand, where Thai and non-Thai students work collaboratively in small groups in the classroom, English was not the only means used to make meaning to complete tasks and build relationships. This multilingual context adds more facets into how students' relationships are negotiated through language(s).

Opportunities for language learning are also provided within positive classroom environments (Fraser, 1998; Pickett & Fraser, 2010; MacLeod & Fraser, 2010). However, those environments are not static, as students change the way they react in group work and in the classroom over time. These changes suggest the dynamics of interpersonal relations. A close investigation of interaction in small groups in the classroom potentially adds more insights into the opportunities for language learning in the field of language education and highlights the significance of changing interaction across time.

Positioning in this thesis is not only used to foreground and elaborate on how and why students' relationships are negotiated in group work by (re)distributing what people demand or request from others for actions (*rights*) and what others must do (*duties*), it also tracks changes of interaction across time. Rights and duties are not equally distributed between people in positioning (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & Van Langenhove, 2010; Van Langenhove & Harré, 1999). Some people are assigned to have more rights to act or perform duties than the others. This unequal distribution suggests a fixed set of relationships negotiated between people. Regarding changes in positioning, this thesis uses *positioning* in positioning theory (Harré and Langenhove, 1999, Harré, 2012, 2015) to track how two or more people distribute rights and duties which are assigned or ascribed by the others across time. The distribution suggests people's interpersonal relations are negotiated and changed. I use the following example to illustrate this point. An individual claims the right to manage a meeting by giving turns for others to talk, and when the others start talking, he or she listens. To reclaim the right of managing, the individual must interrupt or change the topic. This example of (re)positioning indicates that positioning has both static and dynamic features. While the assigned positioning of manager is fixed, the ascribed positioning is subject to

change with the redistribution of rights and duties. This dual feature is useful for tracking changes of student interaction in group work at the moment when students claim/reclaim the rights to talk at different points of time, not as a single snapshot or episode of interaction.

While investigation of interactions in previous classroom research has focused on how student interaction impacts on language learning and deliberately explains relationships as the background, this thesis will begin by investigating student interaction to foreground the interpersonal relations which are negotiated in positioning in small group discussions. Investigation of student interaction from the sociocultural perspective, language education, and positioning will potentially add more insights into the multifaceted dimensions of relationships as a potential factor affecting their opportunities for language learning.

1.2 Contributions of the Thesis

The contributions of this thesis to the field of English language education are as follows.

1.2.1 Contribution to Knowledge

The thesis offers insights into and evidence of the impact and consequences of interpersonal relations on learners' opportunities to learn English, a dimension of the learning process which has rarely been foregrounded in the field of language education and EAL teaching and learning. Although previous research has demonstrated that language educators are aware that learners' interactions affect language learning opportunities (Foster & Ohta, 2005; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Philp, Adams, & Iwashita, 2013; Sato & Ballinger, 2016; Sato & Viveros, 2016; Storch & Aldosari, 2013; Taguchi, 2007; Toohey, 2001; Young & Tedick, 2016), little classroom-based research on the impact of students' relations has been conducted (Philp et al., 2013). The focus of this research is to expand understanding of students' relationships and of their effect on EAL students' language learning opportunities.

1.2.2 Contribution to Teaching Practice

All interactions have an interpersonal dimension, including that in pair/group learning activities. The more teachers understand the impact of students' relations on language development and learning opportunities, the better they can potentially strengthen the foundations of language teaching and learning (Martin- Beltrán et al., 2016). Language learning in the classroom could be redefined and brought closer to real-world situations in which interpersonal relations are involved. By offering insights into the impact of the dynamics of relations across time, teachers will be able to improve the language-learning environment, particularly for cooperative or collaborative work. In short, the thesis offers alternative pedagogical implications to foster relationships between students that can facilitate both language development and the learning environment at the same time.

1.2.3 Contribution to Research Methodology

The longitudinal focus of this thesis will potentially offer a unique perspective and originality on positioning for investigating social phenomena in the EAL classroom. Although positioning theory has been adopted in and adapted to classroom-based research (e.g., in the work of Anderson, 2009; Arkoudis, 2005; Herbel-Eisenmann, Wagner, Johnson, Suh, & Figueras, 2015; Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Kayi-Aydar, 2018), it is relatively novel and needs further study in order for it to be located in the language classroom context. This thesis uses positioning theory to elaborate on the dynamics of students' relations, with additional explanation of the opportunities for language learning in the field of English language education. Those dynamics cannot be investigated in a single snapshot of interaction. Hence, analysis of student positioning across time will greatly contribute to tracking the recurring dynamics of relations that expand over the length of a research period.

1.3 Definitions of Terms

In this thesis, I use language that is familiar to language educators but that has specific meaning in this thesis. Theoretical terms and concepts will be defined and elaborated on in Chapter 2, but two terms need defining from the outset.

1.3.1 Named Relations

Named relations or *relations*, is defined as sets of relationships which are negotiated by two or more students when working in groups or in the classroom. There are two kinds of named relations.

Assigned in conjunction with a task, such as chapter leader or group members. These sets are predetermined and named by the instructor.

Ascribed by research participants, such as *Pheuan* (a Thai word roughly translated as 'friends' or 'peers'), a dominant speaker or a novice. These sets of relations are informed by students or their peers to position someone before, during or after group work. In case that those relations are not named, a researcher refers to the descriptions from the reviewed literature.

1.3.2 Dynamics of Interpersonal Relations

Dynamics of interpersonal relations, *dynamics of students' relations* or *dynamics*, refers to the ongoing negotiation of interpersonal relations in the flow of interaction, as revealed in the analysis, which have potential to impact the language use across time.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter has provided the focus of the study and its contribution to the field. The outline of the remaining chapters is as follows.

Chapter 2 explores and reviews how interaction has been defined in previous research and linked to language learning. Firstly, interaction is explained within a transdisciplinary framework for research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (DFG, 2016) to define interaction and how it is associated with language learning in multilingual contexts. This is followed by a summary of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), which conceptualizes learning through social interaction. Next, I review the research on peer interaction that is a) classroom-based, and b) adopts a social perspective on students' interactions and their opportunities for language learning. Classroom language and learning environments are also discussed to establish the connection between language and classroom context.

This chapter also explains and discusses why positioning is central in this thesis by discussing its contributions in applied linguistics and beyond. Unresolved issues in the reviewed literature are highlighted and used to present a rationale for constructing the research framework and generating three research questions.

Chapter 3 explains why a case study of a classroom was selected as the methodology. This is followed by a description of a) the research context and the participants of the study, b) data collection methods, c) ethical approval, and d) the limitations of the data collection method and process. Next, the data analysis method section describes the coding system and explains its use in the selection of data for analysis as well as how data was selected for further linguistic analysis. The rationale for combining linguistic choices and positioning analysis is also presented in three phrases.

Chapter 4 analyzes positioning in group discussions. The first section explains and describes two named relations which affect positioning and uses interview data to present the storylines or narratives that informed the rights and duties of students which are used to position themselves and others in group discussions. The next section is arranged around arguments to describe and discuss how students' positioning constitutes dynamics of students' relations. Extracted episodes from group discussion scripts and excerpts from interviews are used to support each argument. The chapter ends by linking students' positioning and dynamics of interpersonal relations to opportunities for language learning.

Chapter 5 analyzes the dynamics of relations of the three focal students across time. The purposes of using English are identified from students' interviews to reconstruct storylines which are used for positioning. Changes in language use between peers and non-peers in positioning are tracked at different points of time to explain the dynamics of interpersonal relations that are closely associated with the opportunities for language learning. At the end of the chapter, the implications of the dynamics that affect students' opportunities for language learning in relation to positioning are discussed. This chapter adds a longitudinal dimension to the investigation of students' relations, a fact which distinguishes the thesis from previous research.

Chapter 6 discusses the major implications for and consequences of dynamics of interpersonal students' relations on opportunities for language learning. The findings are compared with the reviewed literature and theories. Opportunities for language learning are discussed to answer the set research questions.

Chapter 7 summarizes, and addresses the pedagogical and methodological contributions and limitations of the thesis and suggests future research directions on dynamics of students' relations in EAL classrooms.

2 Literature Review

Insights into EAL students' classroom relations in small group discussions need closer investigation of student interaction, students' sociocultural backgrounds, and how they (re)distribute the rights and duties assigned by the teacher or ascribed by classmates to complete group work. This chapter reviews the concepts and theories underlying interaction and positioning, drawing on supporting empirical research that has investigated interaction, relationships and positioning in EAL classrooms.

The chapter begins with a discussion of how language is learned through interaction from the SLA and language education fields. While the DFG's transdisciplinary framework locates interaction as a beginning point of learning, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory focuses on interaction, which is socially constructed. It also explores how previous research into peer interaction has investigated student interaction and the significance of the social dimension for interaction. This is followed by a review of classroom discourse and learning environment research to investigate student interaction, which may affect students' opportunities for language learning. Finally, positioning theory and previous research applying the theory both inside and outside classroom contexts is reviewed to argue that positioning in interaction potentially offers an alternative for investigating and explaining the dynamics of relations in EAL classrooms.

2.1 Interaction and Language Learning

Learning takes place at the point of interaction (Brouwer and Wagner, 2004). People react to each other and make sense of what is learned. Language serves as a tool to facilitate interaction between people or social activities (Wertsch, 2007). How people use language in interaction and how language changes over time suggests the opportunities for language learning. Many scholars in applied linguistics and language education have investigated interaction from different perspectives/approaches (Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Norton, 2000; Atkinson, 2002; Tarone & Swierzbin, 2009; Duff, 2020) and agree that interaction involves, supports, or promotes learning (DFG, 2016). However, student interaction in EAL classroom activities, e.g. group discussions, does not always provide equal opportunities for language learning to all students. The next section discusses interaction in the DFG's transdisciplinary framework for SLA, which addresses interaction as individuals engaging with others, followed by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which focuses on the significance of the social surroundings that co-construct individuals' interaction. Drawing on interaction from the DFG's framework and the sociocultural perspective to frame the dynamics of relations in EAL classrooms is helpful for explaining how interaction affects or is affected by students' negotiation of relations in social contexts and, in turn, how those dynamics are involved in English language learning.

2.1.1 Interaction in the Transdisciplinary Framework for SLA

Interaction addressed in the DFG's transdisciplinary framework not only associates students' interaction with language learning, but it also helps to expand the insights into students' dynamic relations that affect their opportunities for language learning in the EAL classroom. Learning begins at the microlevel of social activities in the DFG's transdisciplinary framework (Hall, 2019, p. 68), and in those activities, learners' interaction shapes and is shaped by the larger levels in multilingual contexts (DFG, 2016; Duff, 2019). The focus on the moments when learners use languages (L1 and L2) to react and engage in those activities not only explains how contexts shape learners' interaction, but also indicates the way they engage in such contexts, i.e. small group work in a Thai-EAL classroom.

This framework is divided into three levels of mutually dependent (*macro*, *meso* and *micro*) levels). Interaction is placed as the social activity (micro level), which is connected to larger levels, i.e. a range of ideological structures (macro) and sociocultural institutions and communities (meso). Each level potentially affects and is affected by multilingual contexts. Figure 2.1 illustrates the location of interaction at the micro level and its connection to the other levels.

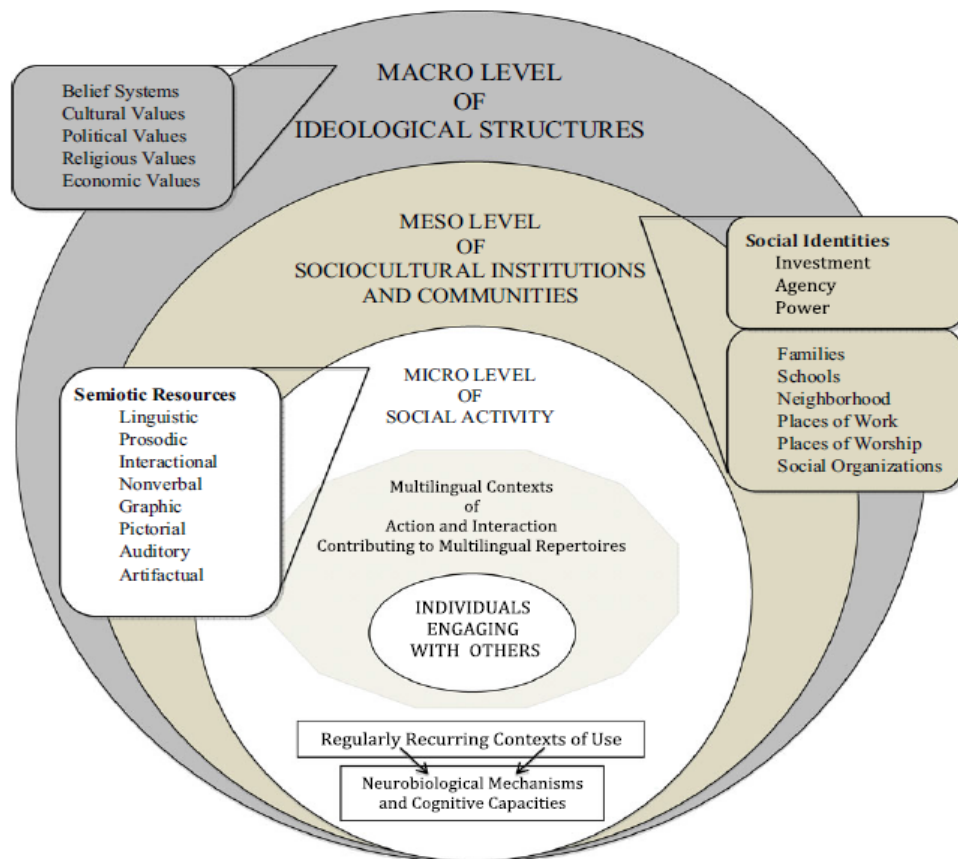


Figure 2.1: Multifaceted Nature of Language Learning and Teaching

Although individual interaction is located in the smallest circle, *Individuals engaging with others*, it is governed by multilingual contexts of action and interaction. This means interaction shapes and is shaped by languages - the next (the meso) level, and the largest one (the macro level). This framework allows researchers to explain and argue that learning takes place in interaction between learners where multilingual contexts play a role. Learning in this framework is explained in one of ten fundamental themes, as it is “situated and attentionally and socially gated” (DFG, 2016, p. 27). From this perspective, repeated experiences of interaction are crucial for language learning. The regular (re)occurrence of interaction in social activity, which is shaped by informal

and formal surroundings (such as family or school), potentially provides opportunities for language learning.

People's relationships and their language learning within the DFG framework involve "bonding relationships" and "complicated interpersonal and social relations" when people are learning an additional language (DFG, 2016, p. 28). It is suggested that the enactment of these relationships affects how people act and react to each other. People connect to each other in a wide range of relationships, such as baby and caregiver, teacher and students, employer and employees, and so on. These relationships shape how they talk and act towards each other in different contexts. Further investigation of the interpersonal relations between learners is suggested as it can reveal not only how bonding and interpersonal/social relations play a role in learner interaction, but also offer more insights into how opportunities for learning language are provided to them.

Contexts in which people engage change over time, providing opportunities for learning (Duff, 2019). Changes within and across the three levels are necessary to explain the opportunities to learn and use language(s) throughout a person's life, e.g. from childhood to adulthood or from classroom student to worker in the workplace. In addition, more social dimensions of potential relevance to SLA can also be explored to elaborate on the different intersecting characteristics of learners that might be significant for their opportunities for language learning. Social dimensions, therefore, play a part in building bridges between the macro, meso and micro levels of the framework. Tracking changes in students' interaction in small group discussions and at different points of time not only highlight the nature of interaction, which is non-static and closely linked to learners' individual differences, but it is also useful to address how opportunities for learning are provided across contexts and time. The expansion of and further suggestions for the framework allow the current thesis to pay more attention to the dynamic relations that extend outside group work.

2.1.2 Social Interaction and Learning in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Interaction can be investigated through the lens of the sociocultural perspective in which sociocultural surroundings and backgrounds play a role in the development process of

the mind. *Social interaction* is used to emphasize that role. Social interaction from the perspective of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory puts emphasis on the social and cultural contexts that affect people's language use. Understanding sociocultural contexts is the key to this theory. This section begins with a discussion of *mediation* and *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)*. At the end of the section, how sociocultural contexts, which are informed within this perspective, play a role in student interaction, is discussed.

Social interaction points specifically to interaction between two or more people that impacts their mental development. In the original work by Lev Vygotsky and his colleagues on learning and mental development, sociocultural theory focuses on the development of children's minds and their interactions with parents and other people. The development processes of children's minds occur when they participate in cultural, linguistic or historically formed settings, such as family, peer groups and school (Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner, 2015, p. 207). When this theory is applied to the field of language education and applied linguistics, the focus is on three concepts of sociocultural theory: the inter-related notions of *mediation*, *the ZPD*, *imitation* and *internalization*. Among these notions, mediation and the ZPD are related to the investigation of interaction in this thesis.

As locating opportunities for language learning is one of the purposes of this thesis, it is vital to understand the role of language, which is used as a tool to mediate relationships between students. Humans use cultural artefacts, such as physical tools, books or language; activities, such as play, education or work; and concepts, such as religion, to build an indirect, or *mediated*, relationship between themselves and the world. Researchers use sociocultural theory to investigate how human social and cultural activity is organized through these cultural artefacts (Lantolf, 2000). Humans use those tools to direct and control their physical or mental behaviour. Mediation can be explained through humans' actions and interaction with the physical world. For example, people use a shovel to dig a hole, and that use of shovels mediates the digging process (Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner, 2015, p. 207). Over time, the objective of hole-digging is the same, but the action of digging might change to a more mechanical tool, such as a backhoe. The shift in tools and action in this case suggests the mental development of humans. In EAL classrooms, language is not only a symbolic tool for

mediation, but it is also an object to be learned while engaging in social activities, such as groupwork. How students use language to mediate social activities, such as group work, indicate mental development. Thus, mediation is central to explanations of language development.

While adults are helping a child to achieve greater independence in the development of the mind, a ZPD is created (Zuckerman, 2007). However, such assistance, or “guidance”, from more capable peers to a child is not identical to that for adult learners due to the more diverse sociocultural contexts, suggesting how relations between them play a vital part in language learning according to the original definition of ZPD:

The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in cooperation with more capable peers. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)

Vygotsky also claims that “social relations or relations among people genetically underlie all higher functions and their relationships” (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 163). This quote addresses the significance of social and interpersonal relations as regards changes in the distance between the actual level of development and the potential level in the ZPD. Vygotsky found that learning collaboratively with others precedes and shapes development. Regarding mental development, when a child works collaboratively in groups, s/he might need some assistance because of different levels of knowledge. Once the child has reached the limit of her/his ZPD, such as being unable to solve a problem, s/he might interact with her/his parents or peers to get help or those people may offer her/him some guidance to solve a problem with some help. Over time, that child might solve the problem by her/himself, without any guidance. Although this social activity does not directly impact the child's development, it can encourage changes in development. In this regard, social and interpersonal activity is involved in the cognitive development of the child (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

The guidance or problem-solving activities vary for adult learners as they have choices to give assistance or to help solving problems, for instance, in how some learners become recognized as experts or more capable learners than others, how those

relations affect their language use, and how more/less capable students help or get help from each other to resolve struggles or problems, and what the consequences are of doing that. Investigation of these social activities is fundamental for explanations of the language development of adult learners moving beyond the ZPD.

The status of capable learners can be challenged with changed language use. Swain and Lapkin (2002) view speaking as a cognitive activity between learners in which thought is externalized as utterances. An utterance that an individual learner uses can be questioned, reflected upon or disagreed with. In this sense, language which is used in learners' relations of experts/novices or more capable persons/help-seekers is shaped or reshaped through collaboration between them. Therefore, an investigation of language used in collaborative work, such as group discussions, potentially reveals the social interaction which promotes language learning through dynamics of relations.

Mediation of social activities, assistance from more capable peers and sociocultural backgrounds in the sociocultural perspective will be adapted to the thesis to explain language development and investigation of student interaction. This thesis will also expand on the interaction between adult learners, who have different ways to mediate social activities and interpersonal relationships in the EAL classroom.

2.2 Interaction between Second Language (L2) Learners in Classroom Research

Some named relations (i.e. teacher and students) in the classroom are assigned, along with responsibilities, to accomplish tasks. However, more sets of relationships have been investigated and appear to play a role during task performance. This section explores how peer interaction researchers and scholars have investigated student interaction within the context of a language learning classroom, how relations have been addressed in the previous classroom-based research, and how those researchers explain the function of interaction in language learning. The following review of peer interaction research focuses on how researchers recognize and articulate the impact of peer interaction on learning English, while the research on classroom interaction and the classroom learning environment discusses classroom interaction and settings.

2.2.1 Peer Interaction

Researchers of peer interaction distinguish between teacher-student and student-student interactions using the word “peer”. Peer interaction refers to “any communicative activity carried out between learners, where there is minimal or no participation from the teacher” (Philp, Adams and Iwashita 2013, p. 3). Peer interaction is therefore a space for students to experiment with correcting and polishing language on their own. A group of students may “play” or “experiment” with language by using different resources, for example a shared first language (L1), knowledge about language or background understanding of the current topic, to overcome difficulties in communication. They may correct their peers' English and be corrected, creating opportunities for developing fluency in speaking English without assistance from the teacher (Philp et al., 2013, p. 20). However, talking about language is one of the peer interaction research concerns linked to language learning. The sections that follow discuss this point in peer interaction research, interpersonal relations addressed in peer interactions, and task designs, which impact the effectiveness of peer interaction. It finally notes the temporal aspect for investigation of interaction from the researchers in this field.

Interpersonal relations in peer interaction

In previous peer-interaction research, Language-related Episodes (LREs), or “any part of the dialogue where learners talk about the language they produced and reflect on their language use” (Swain & Lapkin, 2002, p. 292), were often highlighted to identify how language is used in peer interaction, such as giving and receiving corrective feedback. Swain and Lapkin (2002) claim that the production of LREs in peer interaction provides students with opportunities for language learning. The quantity of LREs is used to explain to what extent students produce grammatical forms, make lexical choices and select meanings, mechanics (e.g. pronunciation) and cohesion at the sentence and discourse levels in language learning tasks. However, in later work on peer interaction, researchers recognized social relationships and their impact on the quantity and quality of LREs by using descriptors such as *social discursive moves* (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016), patterns of interaction (Storch, 2013), mixed-proficiency and collaborative pairs (Leeser, 2004; Storch & Aldosari, 2012) and positions (Jakonen & Morton, 2015). These researchers have discussed how social relationships between peers potentially affect how peers use language pairs or groups to reflect on their English use.

Social discursive moves refers to moment-to-moment discourse that learners use to build relationships (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016). These moves, co-occurring with LREs, are not task-oriented but affect students' language use with respect to giving feedback or correcting each other's grammar. A range of social discursive moves, namely social enquiry, solidarity, support, impatience and lack of support for one another, emerged in the LREs. Adolescent students in these scholars' studies asked questions about their peers' personal experiences and stories, shared similar experiences and helped each other to overcome language difficulties, which made them feel part of the group. These moves suggest that students not only used language to complete tasks, but also to negotiate interpersonal relationships, which then impact how students solve problems. The researchers found that students who participated in social discourse moves produced more LREs, providing more opportunities for language learning. Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) also concluded that the social discursive moves provided mutual learning opportunities for students and recommended more research to investigate how students negotiate relationships in group work.

Storch's system for categorizing relationships between peers has been widely adopted and used to explain how contributions of mutuality and equality affect task completion and the production of LREs. Pairs of dyadic interaction seen during peer interaction affect the quantity and quality of LREs in dyadic conversations (Storch, 2013, p. 62). Relationships between students in the work of Storch are formed in four interaction patterns: collaborative, cooperative (dominant/dominant), dominant/passive and expert/novice (see Figure 2.2).

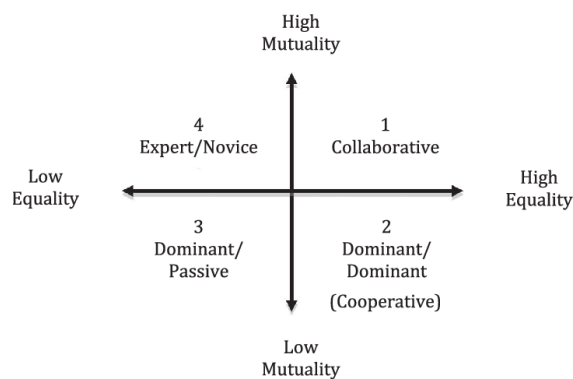


Figure 2.2: Model of Dyadic Interaction (Storch, 2002)

Storch's model explains four kinds of interaction as relationships between students and their peers during collaborative writing in the L2 classroom using two intersecting continua: equality and mutuality (Storch, 2013). When equality and mutuality are high, the relationship is labelled collaborative (Quadrant 1), as a pair of students contribute to the task and engage with each other's suggestions. They both produce LREs to solve problems in language use. Next, high equality and low mutuality are dominant/dominant or cooperative (Quadrant 2), as the pair contribute to the task but do not engage with each other's contributions. They cooperate on the task but have a high level of conflict as they do not always welcome each other's suggestions. When equality and mutuality are low, the pattern is labelled dominant/passive. This relationship suggests that one student takes control of the task, while the other contributes less to it (Quadrant 3). Since the dominant student takes control, the passive student produces less quantity and a lower quality of LREs. The last type of pattern, low equality but high mutuality, is labelled expert/novice. Storch explains that the levels of contribution to the task in this pattern are unequal, as one student is an expert or tutor and encourages the other student to talk (Quadrant 4). Storch's model specifically explains types of relationships found within LREs in a writing task, rather than the dynamics of students' relations over time.

Subsequent researchers, such as Kim & McDonough (2011), Dobao (2016), and Chen (2017), have adopted Storch's model in their work to examine the quantity and quality of LREs, and found some instances that do not fit into the pattern of interaction. For instance, experts in one group are not categorized as experts in another, or dominant students do not always cooperate to do the task. These dynamics between students make it difficult to categorize and explain relationships. Even Storch herself states that labelling interactions as patterns is by its very nature "imprecise" and highlights that global analysis is needed to code and elaborate relationships in depth (Storch, 2013, p. 63). Indeed, shifting focus to the dynamics of relations which emerge in student interaction and tracking those dynamics across time in this thesis will potentially generate insights into students' relationships that open opportunities for language learning in more depth.

Task designs

Peer interaction researchers often focus on how students perform tasks designed by the teacher. Assigning students to collaborate on and complete a task can impact the effectiveness of peer interaction in many ways. However, relations are manipulated as part of the task designs. The ascribed relations negotiated during pair/group work also influence opportunities for language learning, not only the relations assigned by the teacher. For example, assigning and grouping students with regard to levels of language proficiency does not always promote effectiveness in peer interaction. In contrast to the model prescribed by Storch, several studies of peer interaction suggest that pairing high-high proficiency students contributes to students' successful resolutions of LREs and matching low-low proficiency students results in the opposite (Leeser, 2004; Storch and Aldosari, 2012). In some classrooms, high proficiency students may lose opportunities for language learning when paired with low proficiency dyads (Leeser, 2004), but in others they learn more (Watanabe and Swain, 2007). Mixed proficiency dyads benefit each party only if they work collaboratively.

Relations between students play a role in performing the task rather than type of task. Peer tutoring and Word Search tasks are used as an illustration for this point. A task that allows students to "teach" other students impacts the effectiveness of peer interaction since it allows more types of relationships to be negotiated in pair/group work. As an illustration of a peer teaching task in Lee (2016), when students were assigned to teach their peers in a group English-writing consultation task, their relationships changed from peer/peer to tutor/tutee. Lee found students' relationship as tutor/tutee affected their beliefs concerning how they learned about writing. Student tutees were categorized by their responses and reactions into three groups - passive, inactive and active - using a range of language to respond to tutor talk. These categories showed unequal opportunities for using language, corresponding to their relations. Lee concluded that writing consultation is not a tutor-dominant activity, as student tutees also react and participate in group consultation, rather than just listening to the tutor. Although Lee did not elaborate on how they changed their relationships, the results clearly show that students not only perform tasks as their own assignments but also relate to each other to renegotiate their relationships during tasks. In addition, a problem-solving task, which requires knowledge from a textbook or knowledge of the

world, also involves another set of relations to be manipulated. In the work of Jakonen and Morton (2015), students shared knowledge with each other to negotiate relationships of knower and knower. In a Word Search task, Jakonen and Morton investigated Epistemic Search Sequences (ESS), or the moments when students in groups resolve knowledge gaps in pedagogic/problem-solving tasks, to determine how they accomplished the task. ESS are displays of an unknowing stance indicated by requesting information; so how students shared information in the group was central to their research. The researchers examined students' interactions and found that relationships of knowers (K^+) and knowers (K^-) emerged and affected how they accomplished the task. Knowers provided opportunities for themselves and their peers to resolve a knowledge gap, to practise unknowledgeable responses for knowers (K^-) and to contest knowing responses. Students who made many requests were perceived as knowers; they could ask for help or make judgements on answers. Requesters opened up opportunities for knowers to co-construct answers or locate problems. However, in another context, knowers could also act as knowers when they responded to questions from the teacher. Shifts between knower and knower affected students' discovery of knowledge by producing more language use, which in turn offered opportunities for language learning.

From the peer interaction literature reviewed above, it is clear that the production of LREs and task effectiveness of peer interaction is affected by multiple dimensions of relationships between students, and that a range of relationships emerges from interaction. Philp et al. (2013) asserted that further research on relationships between peers should be conducted to gain more insights into their impact on the quantity and quality of LREs, and on opportunities for language learning. This thesis aims to investigate and discuss the relationships between students by focusing more on the constitution of interpersonal dynamics, potentially yielding more breadth and depth of understanding of the impact of students' relations on language learning.

Another issue arising from the above research is its use of the word *peer*. Interaction between peers does not occur only when the teacher is not in a position of oversight; it occurs and changes while students are performing the task. More emphasis on peer relations or negotiation for being peers could add more interpersonal

dimensions to peer interaction research. In my perspective, a clear distinction should be made between peers and other relationships negotiated while students are working without the teacher's presence, such as expert, novice, dominant speaker and so on. These named relations suggest students are socially connected in different ways that they potentially affect how students use language in pair/group work. The term 'peer' can be used to identify a theoretically non-hierarchical relationship between classmates in pair or group interaction, yet the research repeatedly demonstrates that hierarchies of different forms and types of relations are both assigned and ascribed. In this thesis, the word 'peer' will be used only when introduced in an effort to avoid any assumptions about the relations between participants.

Two points that need to be considered in the investigation of relationships in peer interaction research are "imprecision" and "fixation" when labelling students' relationships, as suggested by Storch (2013). I propose an alternative investigation of those relationships. The imprecision of labelling students' relationships will be informed by students' perspectives, i.e. students' interviews about what they perceive or how they define the relationships between themselves and others when they argue, discuss or give feedback. Investigating the ascribed relations will be allowed for more flexibility in the stage of analyzing and categorizing relationships in order to capture the dynamics. Investigating dynamics of students' relations could potentially yield more insights into how students' relations affect their language use and their opportunities for language learning over time and across contexts. Detailed proposals for investigating the dynamics that emerge from the data will be covered in Section 2.3, Positioning and Interaction, and Chapter 3, Research Methodology.

Interaction across time, public and private Spaces

Interactions that provide students with opportunities for language learning in the classroom develop across time and in public and private spaces (Batstone & Philp, 2013, p. 110). Recurring interactions allow students to re-solve the same LREs problems and potentially learn from them. However, the distinctive feature of peer interaction is that peers create "space" or physical and interpersonal contexts to resolve a problem. While talk in public spaces, such as a whole-class discussion or group discussion, is heard by everyone, private spaces, which are created between two learners using their L1 in an EAL classroom, are inaudible to others. These interpersonal relations between students,

shifting between public and private spaces over time, provide more depth in peer interaction. Time and spaces will be included in the data collection and analysis to locate the opportunities for language learning.

This subsection has covered interpersonal relationships to address how peer interaction has been discussed by researchers. The next section draws on previous research on classroom interaction and the classroom learning environment to elaborate on how students' relations are affected by their language.

2.2.2 Language Use in Classroom Interaction and the Classroom Learning Environment

Although language choices used in interaction between teacher-students and student-student, such as recasting, clarifying requests or to giving feedback, have the same purposes for communication, the ways students react to their teacher and other classmates are not identical. For teacher-student interaction, the teacher has full control of turn-taking, participation and contribution of each student to promote classroom interaction (Walsh, 2002, 2006, 2011; Sert 2017; Tai & Brandt, 2018; Kimura, Malabarba & Hall, 2018). It is interesting to explore who gains control in student-student interaction, and how language choices are used for negotiation of students' relations. The following section explores and discusses interpersonal relations addressed in classroom interaction and classroom environment research to place the connections between language choices and negotiation of relations.

In the EAL classroom, context can be viewed as backgrounds in which an event occurs and the language used in that event. Contexts can be viewed as “[sets] of circumstances accomplished through language” (Walsh, 2011, p.25). This statement indicates that language and context are inseparable. It also suggests that there is more than one context in the classroom, such as pair/group work or classroom presentations. The language choice used in different contexts is key to uncovering students' relations between pairs or in small groups. Investigating interaction in these spaces, along with a range of language choices, will provide an understanding of the dynamics of how relations change across contexts. This section begins by addressing some key interactional features adapted from classroom interaction research and stating why they are helpful to elaborate on students' language used in their interpersonal relations,

followed by a look at the concerns of language choices used in classroom interaction. In the last part of this section, dynamics of relations are discussed within the frame of the classroom learning environment. Unlike the previous section, where students' relations affect interaction and their language use, this section starts by looking at how language and context facilitate the negotiation of those relations.

Language choices in classroom interaction

Language choices in this thesis are adapted from interactional features in classroom interaction research. Classroom interaction is accomplished through *classroom discourse*, or talk, including verbal and non-verbal languages between teacher and students or just between students (Sert, 2015). The interactional features between teacher and students have been addressed in the four features of classroom discourse: control of interaction, speech modification, elicitation and repair (Walsh, 2011, p. 4). First, the teacher controls interaction as he/she assigns which students speak/with whom/when/for how long and directs the lesson and manages classroom interaction. It is the teacher who allocates turns to students in the classroom. Second, the teacher also modifies or changes his/her spoken language to help learners' comprehension, specifically using strategies such as comprehension checks, repetitions, clarification requests, asking students for clarification or turn completion. Applying these strategies implicitly affects how the teacher negotiates new sets of relationships between students. The teacher also asks questions to get students' responses. Those questions are either "display" (checking understanding) or "genuine" (promoting discussion and debate) questions. Lastly, the teacher deals with students' language errors by ignoring, indicating errors, and getting individual or all students to correct. Within this aspect, students' language use is controlled by the teacher's instructions and the relations between them are singular. In teacher-student interaction, the teacher has full control of the turn-taking, participation and contribution of each student, so it is interesting to note how these features emerge or change in student-student interaction.

Adapting the interactional features of classroom to the thesis as language choices is helpful to provide a basic understanding of classroom language used between students. In this thesis, some terms that describe how language is used, such as turn-taking, comprehension checks, asking for clarification or making requests, will be used to describe student-student use of language in interaction, as those terms are

comprehensible to researchers in classroom-based contexts and explain how relationships between students are negotiated. For instance, students who have interactional competency take turns to interrupt, hold the conversation and pass it to others (Walsh, 2011, p.163). This turn-taking suggests that student relations change from listener to speaker or from silent to talkative, depending on the context at a given moment. Overlaps and interruptions also constitute “listenership”, showing that students have understood what others have said and help to prevent communication breakdown (McCarthy, 2003). These interactions seem to suggest that new sets of relations emerge during group interaction, affecting students' language use. Analyzing those features from interpersonal dimensions can potentially inform how the relationships between students that are negotiated through language provide opportunities for language learning.

Classroom interaction helps to frame interaction within the classroom context, and the features of classroom discourse provide a guide for analyzing language use. The next section elaborates on a classroom learning environment where students' relations are located and how power and social distance are involved in the environment.

Interpersonal relations as a classroom learning environment

Several researchers in education (e.g. Fraser, 1998; Pickett & Fraser 2010; MacLeod & Fraser, 2010) have measured perceptions of a positive learning environment by using different instruments, such as the Learning Environment Inventory (LEI), Classroom Environment Scales (CES) or the What Is Happening In this Class? questionnaire (WIHIC). These scales, which include student cohesiveness, involvement, task orientation, cooperation and equity, all foreground relations between students. Positive learning environments that provide learning opportunities for students in class include assistance between students, high participation and focus on the task, as well as cooperation between students (Pickett and Fraser, 2010). In other words, student engagement in assisting each other or engaging with each other on a task promote a positive learning environment in the classroom. Shernoff, Ruzek and Sinha (2017), highlighted two features of environmental support, namely motivational support and supportive relations, as increasing students' engagement in class. During groupwork, students negotiate supportive relations that help them to engage in the task with more concentration.

The classroom learning environment has been defined not only from a physical perspective, such as seating arrangements and facilities or conditions, but also from its social nature. In the education field, the learning environment involves “many relationships that exist between the teacher and students or among students” (Pickett & Fraser, 2010, p. 321). A range of relations between students is accomplished through their interaction and language use.

In order to explore how interpersonal relations are negotiated in a positive classroom learning environment, I reviewed classroom-based research conducted on *assistance between students, friendship, solidarity and group cohesion*, to understand the consequences of these relationships. The focus of the thesis is to explore how those dimensions between students emerge from the analysis and impact the dynamics of students' relations.

Assistance between students

Researchers who have conducted studies on peer learning activities (e.g. Kobayashi, 2003; Nicholas, 2015) found that students' positive behavior in group work, i.e. helping each other on an assigned task, impacts their language learning processes and enhance opportunities for learning language. When EAL students shared experiences, worked on collaborative dialogues and rehearsed outside the classroom, they attempted to use their group's shared knowledge and help each other to work on tasks (Kobayashi, 2003). Out-of-class preparatory activities became opportunities for them to help each other to perform the task and discuss how they might complete the task, using both L1 and L2. Different forms of rapport were provided. While one group of students committed to working together after class for several hours, the other group members worked independently within a few hours of meeting. Therefore, the opportunities for students to use language discussing the task depended on how they committed themselves to giving/accepting assistance.

Assistance between students is also an opportunity for students to use language in pair work. In the work of Nicholas (2015), three dyads of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students supported each other indirectly by using language to allow sufficient time for each other to self-correct and encourage them to complete their sentences. They not only performed the task as assigned by the instructor, but also helped their peers to co-construct the story by repeating words, asking questions and/or pointing out

grammatical forms. Nicholas called this support 'affective assistance', which creates a comfortable environment for students to talk. This sensitivity to each other's needs went beyond the students' understanding of some grammatical points. Shifts between help-giver and help-receiver created different relations between students and provided more opportunities for language learning.

The dynamics of students' relations that potentially affect how they assist or get help from others in order to complete an assigned task were understated. For example, Kobayashi (2003) did not explain how interpersonal relations were negotiated and changed; detailed insights into interpersonal dynamics in peer support are absent from that research. Moreover, Nicholas (2015) did not explain further why students assisted their peers and what made them change their relations while performing the task. Adding the dimension of interpersonal relations to the research on assistance between students will offer insights into how students' relations affect effective assistance such that it provides opportunities for language use.

Friendship, solidarity and group cohesion

A positive learning environment is associated with the interpersonal dimensions behind students' relations. Those dimensions are constructions of friendship, solidarity and group cohesion. In this regard, changes in language choices to negotiate a range of relationships potentially affect the environment and the opportunities for language learning. The classroom-based research that follows illustrates the close connection between language and classroom learning environments.

Assigning young students in the same group with friends creates learning opportunities for them and has a positive impact on their language learning and development as well as social growth (Haworth, 2000). Haworth's classroom offers a vivid example of how students reduce social distance and maximize opportunities to act and speak more in group discussions. Examining prosody, interpersonal cues, voices and genre, modality and turn-taking, Haworth described how one student developed interpersonal cues or expressions of personal perspectives during conversations with his friends over time. Although the student did not take significantly more turns across his tasks, the turns he took were extended and varied in language choices. Both relations and interpersonal cues provided over time increase opportunities for language

development. By adding detailed analysis of the dynamics of students' relations through language choices across time, this thesis could provide greater insights into opportunities for language development.

An illustration of language used for building friendships is also found in the work of Davies (2005), where a group of female students offered positive friendship to each other in collaborative work. The students stated that friendship between peers gave them confidence to experiment with words and ideas, lexical and grammatical cohesion, be affirmative with minimal responses and take longer turns to express their ideas in the group. In order to prevent breakdowns in relationships, they also monitored their language during disagreements. Language was used to build and maintain friendly relations between them. Additionally, the students in Davies' class also recognized that the language used for building friendships helped them to learn, cooperate and maintain friendships in class throughout the semester. As positive classroom environment is also enhanced with negotiation of relations, opportunities for language learning arise.

Completion of a group task is related to students' solidarity, resulting in their relations within and between groups. In a study of how solidarity in language classrooms affects opportunities for language learning by young Spanish students, Méndez and García (2012) found that peers reacted differently to each other than did peers with non-peers. Relations between peers and non-peers in this class were determined by the individual or common interests of students who participated in the same group in order to complete tasks. The meaning of peer in this research includes a sense of friendship informed by students, which expands beyond the meaning from peer interaction indicating that peers are students who work in groups without the teacher's presence. Solidarity, or a sense of unity as a peer group, is closely related to students' behaviors. Students took sides with their peers and used language to interrupt non-peers, allowing their peers to continue talking while performing group work simultaneously. This behavior suggested the impact of relations between peers and non-peers on their language use. While peers had more opportunities to use language, non-peers lost those opportunities within the changed environment. A positive environment created from relations for one group of students might be a negative one for others in this case.

Building group cohesion, or social ties between group members, is another set of students' relations which influence how students behave and use language in the group

(Hinger, 2006). A cohesive group or a group of students who always work in the same group in Hinger's research who often worked or shared academic and personal matters with each other by using a used specific language that is comprehensible to them to perform a task or negotiate group cohesion. Cohesion could be initiated through group-building utterances, such as compliments or supportive statements. By analyzing two classes of teenagers during instructional time and the effects of group cohesion, Hinger found that students who attended an intensive course showed more group cohesion than those on a non-intensive course. Cohesive groups of students produced more positive group-building utterances about peers' ability to maintain the cohesion of their group. Positive statements (e.g. compliments), mutually supportive statements and encouraging turn-taking were used to create a positive environment and promote contributions to the task. A supportive classroom environment that allowed learning to take place was created through the cohesiveness of students and their peers.

Cohesion thus affects how language is used. A cohesive group voluntarily formed by peers approached a task and produced language in a distinctive way compared to a group formed by the teacher in the work of Leslie (2015). Students in the cohesive group adjusted their turn-taking by changing their interaction in the group (e.g. from silence to requests for information) to maintain group cohesion. Leslie called this transition from using language at the beginning and end of talk a Zone of Interactional Transition (ZIT), referring to Markee's definition: "talk that occurs at the boundaries of different classroom (and perhaps other institutionally oriented) speech exchange systems" (Markee, 2004, p. 584). When the cohesive group struggled or needed help to solve a problem or reached the ZIT, students in that group produced language to overcome their struggle and maintain supportive relations. The researcher argued that the transition to the ZIT potentially had a positive impact on oral interaction effectiveness, e.g. increased language production and greater participation in group discussions. In this case, the effectiveness of group cohesion that affected a positive learning environment depended on the group members and their group formation.

Thus, previous researchers have suggested that friendship, solidarity and group cohesion promote students' language production, create a positive environment and providing more opportunities for language learning. Transition from using language at the beginning and at the end of talk in Leslie's work suggests changing dynamics

between students over time. However, dynamics of students' relations cannot be the only 'positive' side. Researchers cannot assume that positive relations offer learning opportunities for all circumstances until they have investigated all aspects of relations.

This thesis not only investigates positive relations between students that facilitate a positive learning environment, but also examines relations that seem to be neutral or opposite to positive ones to locate opportunities for language learning. In this way, it will offer more comprehensive and well-rounded insights into students' relations as learning environments.

Power and social distance

There are parallels between researchers' investigations into the interrelation of power as a process and the asymmetry of power (Bloome et al., 2005; Devos, 2016) and degrees of social distance, i.e. familiarity and mechanics, e.g. laughter, teasing and jokes (Thompson, 2014; Thonus, 2008; Kontio, 2017). These researchers also explain how power and social distance affect students' language use and opportunities for language learning. This section explores and discusses how power and social distance play a role in shaping and being shaped by the learning environment. Interpersonal relations in the shifts of power and social distance are also discussed.

Power between students is not equally distributed (Poynton, 1985, p.77). Students exercise power through language in a number of ways. Equal-unequal power is evident in who is talking and holding the floor in an exchange (Eggins, 2004, p. 184). Students who take more turns in talk and continue talking are likely to be more powerful while those who are silent and do not participate in group work have less power. This unequal distribution of power suggests that students' relations are affected by how students exercise power in talk.

Bloome et al. (2005) explained power in the classroom by comparing two more specific power models: power as product and power as process. While 'power as product' is a fixed consequence of the exercise of power at one point in time, the 'power as process' model explains shifts of power over time. Power is viewed as "a set of relations among people and among social institutions that may shift from one situation to another ... and that structures relationships among people" (Bloome et al., 2005,

p.139). In EAL speaking classes, the scholars found that students who mastered speaking skills gained “power” (as a product) and were viewed as having higher status. Simultaneously, students who mastered better speaking skills had the “power” to define who was a “good English speaker” and a “bad English speaker” (a process). The process of exercising power, therefore, involves the structuring of “good speaking skills” and setting the “commonness” of a social group through words, symbols, language and behavior. Students who could not align themselves to the group, such as expressing opinions in class or asking questions of the teacher, became less powerful and lost opportunities to participate in the group. The exercise of power changes how students act and speak in group work and changes the environment of the classroom.

In one study of a content and language integrated classroom, students switched their relations to capable peers to balance power by taking multiple turns, requesting clarification and/or checking comprehension (Devos, 2016). Capable peers referred to their real-world experience to show that they knew about the topic and made their points to help less capable peers understand the discussed topic. This moment of ‘balancing’ power affects students’ relations, suggesting that relations are negotiated through changes in language.

The negotiation of social distance affects students’ language use and creates another set of relations. Social distance describes how close people are and how they align themselves with others’ viewpoints (Coffin, Hewings & Sarah, 2009). Social distance includes dimensions such as formality and/or familiarity between people. Terms of address, pronouns, clause structures, specialist lexis, ellipsis, contractions, colloquial language or L1 are used to mediate levels of formality or familiarity (Coffin et al., 2009; Thompson, 2014). For example, one can recognize the use of the expressions “Can you ...?” and “Could you please...?” to make a request, or the greetings “Ladies and gentlemen” and “Hi, guys” to greet different groups of people. In an EAL classroom context, the negotiation of social distance is evident between students who are recognized as peers and non-peers, specifically when they talk in private or in their native language. Changes in social distance through language also suggest students’ relations are negotiated.

Laughter can also mark changes in social distance between students in collaborative work as it creates a more comfortable environment for students to give opinions and work on a writing task. Familiarity and acquaintanceship, which are consequences of a closer social distance between students and tutor, potentially allow more effective communication between two speakers (Thonus, 2008). Students may laugh to reduce the distance between knowledgeable/less knowledgeable, as seen in Thonus' analysis of conversations between student-tutors and EAL students in academic tutorial sessions. Laughter patterns that emerged from the data showed that co-ordinated laughter, not single-party laughter, created familiarity between students and tutors, and this in turn corresponded with more opportunities to talk about a writing topic.

Students' relations change through their use of language for teasing, creating a playful and comfortable learning environment. Humour, jokes and teasing create trust, friendship and affinity between speakers, and these relationships allow them to take more speech turns (Shively, 2013). In her classroom-based research, Shively found that Spanish students increased their use of humour over time through language in an L2 community. Humour in L2 suggests that students 'play' or 'experiment' with language, providing themselves with more opportunities for using L2. Friendship, in combination with humour, helps to shape how students construct spontaneous verbal humour in their L2. Relations between friends are likely to create a comfortable environment for students to use L2 with their peers. In another classroom context, teasing provided a social space for male EAL students to create affinity and a community and to negotiate power between competent and incompetent students regarding subject content (Kontio, 2017). Students teased each other about their behavior at the beginning of the semester and had changed their use of English by the end of the semester. Most teasing occurred in their L1, but it affected how they used hybrid language comprising their native language and English with their classmates. As students teased each other, their social distance decreased, making them peers studying the same subject.

In this thesis, I explore the language used in the exercise of power and how the negotiation of social distance affects students' dynamics of relations, specifically moments when students attempt to balance power and change the social distance in group work.

Participation in group work

Participating in group work creates opportunities for language learning. Participation is related to students' relationships and changes in the relations. This section discusses the participation or non-participation as dynamics in relations.

Grouping students for collaborative work does not guarantee students will participate or assist each other. This notion was raised in the work of Morita (2004; 2012). In her research, graduate students had a number of reasons for not participating, such as limited content knowledge (less experienced/knowledgeable), learning goals, and identity as newcomers. These reasons were context-specific, suggesting that factors contributing to non-participation can vary with context.

Asymmetries in social relations affected how young Thai students in Northern Thailand participated in play groups where different sets of social relations were constructed (Howard, 2010). Hierarchies, construed in their kinship terms and personal names, were used. The ages and institutional status of speakers affected the negotiation of politeness and formality. Relations between older/younger students affected how they talked to each other and how they participated in the group. Older pupils could command younger ones and seemed to gain control of the conversation and the play group. It has been noted that insights into the asymmetry of social relations can be a critical aspect vis-à-vis language learning and the social development of children. It is also interesting to explore whether such asymmetry in relations is evident in adult learners in EAL classrooms and, if so, to what extent.

Students' relationships in pair work affect their participation. This emerges in task expansion or students' interaction beyond task instructions (Hellerman, 2007). Students in Hellerman's work asked personal questions related to task instructions, participating in pair work interpersonally rather than completing the task. This interpersonal dimension also provided 'peer space' (Hellerman, 2007, p.147). Those students who created peer space developed an understanding of interpersonal resources to engage in group work and participate in the academic community in the classroom.

The aforementioned research on interaction between L2 learners focuses on opportunities for language learning through the production of L2 and the positive environments that facilitate those opportunities. However, insights into how the

dynamics of interpersonal relations change over time and across contexts have not been fully elaborated on. The following section introduces the concept of positioning as explained in social psychology to explain students' relations that go beyond a fixed status.

2.3 Positioning Theory and the Investigation of Dynamics of Interpersonal Relations

Positioning theory provides explanations of how people orient themselves towards each other and how their actions shape social structures while they are interacting (Kayi-Aydar & Miller, 2018). Positioning and actions shape who people are in a particular conversation. Positioning theory in social psychology, conceived by Davies and Harré, is defined as:

...based on the principle that not everyone involved in a social episode has equal access to rights and duties to perform particular kinds of meaningful actions at that moment and with those people. In many interesting cases, the rights and duties determine who can use a certain discourse mode...A cluster of short-term disputable rights, obligations and duties is called a 'position'.

(cited in Harré, 2012, p. 193)

Positioning is the set of actions of individuals that are governed by the rights and duties. While *rights* are expressions of demands or requests for action by someone else, *duties* are those expressions for oneself (Harré and Slocum, 2003). It is clear in this definition that rights and duties are unequally distributed and debatable. People can claim or reclaim rights from others anytime as *position* is a temporary cluster of rights, obligations and duties that is subject to change. Positioning theory concerns "how people use words (or discourse mode in positioning theory) to locate themselves and others" (Moghaddam and Harré, 2010, p. 2). People use language as a tool for ascribing rights and claiming rights for themselves and assigning duties to others. Positioning has direct moral implications, such as some person or group being identified as 'trusted' or 'distrusted', 'with us' or 'against us', 'to be saved' or 'to be wiped out' (Moghaddam & Harré, 2010, p. 2).

Positioning has been chosen for this thesis as it involves social interaction interrelated with detailed backgrounds of people or storylines, categorizing how people locate themselves towards each other in a conversation (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Hirvonen, 2016; Slocum & Langenhove, 2003). In this way, people position/reposition themselves over time to (re)distribute rights and duties. These changes in positioning will be used to analyze and explain the dynamics of interpersonal relations in the EAL classroom. The sections that follow explain and discuss the major concerns and key concepts of positioning theory and show how positioning has been used in other fields, before exploring previous work in language education and applied linguistics. Critiques of positioning theory and how scholars have applied the theory in their disciplines and have modified it are explored. At the end of this section, the potential for applying positioning theory to language education and applied linguistics is discussed.

2.3.1 Distribution of Rights & Duties, Positions and Roles

The distribution of *rights* and *duties* is central to positioning theory (Herbel-Eisenmann et al., 2015). What other people must do for somebody is a *right* while what somebody must do for others is a *duty* (Moghaddam et al., 2008). People do not have equal access to rights and duties, which is why they act or behave towards others in different ways. Attempts to claim rights and duties to talk or act, access those rights can be accomplished through actions and speech. The actions and language uses to access rights are regarded as *positioning*.

Unequal access to rights and duties depends on the social and personal attributes of a person in a given situation (Harré, 2012). To illustrate this point, I give an example of positioning in the workplace. The head of department has access to rights and duties to speak or act, such as giving orders and assigning duties to subordinates, but the rights are restricted to the subordinates. The status of leader and subordinates is fixed, so they do not have equal access to the right to speak or act. That status is called *roles*. However, positioning theory emphasizes people's negotiation of unequal rights and duties. The theory seeks to explain the causes and consequences of social phenomena or problems that emerge in communities or societies. Positioning theorists argue that the concept of role fails to explain why, in some situations, an individual's or a group's position is contested and rejected by others. They argue that role is someone's fixed status and it may be problematic to use the term to explain the dynamic nature of social action

(Langenhove and Harré, 1999). For instance, in the case of positioning in the workplace sketched above, subordinates can speak or act to argue with others without authority from the head of the department. This change of action does not mean they change their roles because they are still subordinates with limited rights. Instead, their role is the same; what has changed is their position at the moment of arguing with the head of the department. Hence the use of *position* captures the *dynamic nature* of social action.

The distribution of rights and duties is not equal across contexts and time as roles and positions are sometimes interrelated. While roles can be viewed as the basis of positions (Depperman, 2015), positions can crystalize into roles and vice versa across contexts and time (Henriksen, 2008). To illustrate, the role of a manager is assigned by a company or institution. When a manager calls a staff meeting, s/he can claim the right to talk and the duty to lead the meeting according to her/his assigned role. During the meeting, the manager can take up the lead position in the meeting by asking for group opinions or choose to listen to comments from her/his staff. In fact, s/he is still a manager, but there are times when s/he needs to position her/himself and others in different ways to run the meeting. In another situation, when members of staff have a meeting, one of them may claim the right to talk more often than the others and lead the group discussion. Over time, that member of staff may select or be assigned the role of group leader by the others, thus gaining new rights and duties to perform. Position is crystalized into role in this case. This point could be helpful for further discussion of the theory when the same positioning recurs across contexts and time.

As positioning theory focuses on meaningful actions at a given moment, positioning theorists use the term *pre-positioning* when they discuss the fixed status assigned to people with recognized rights and duties in a social context (Harré, 2012). In the extent of this thesis, I use *assigned relations* for the fixed status of students in group work which is assigned by an instructor with the specific rights and duties to take charge in a group discussion and *ascribed relations* for the changed status.

2.3.2 Key Concepts of Positioning and the Application to EAL Classrooms

In addition to rights and duties, positioning theory offers several key concepts to understand positioning in different situations: the positioning triangle provides a basic

understanding of what constitutes the theory, the types and modes of positioning, the hierarchy of moral orders and variations in positioning. These concepts are crucial for explaining and discussing why students' relations are constituted and change in EAL classrooms.

Positioning triangle

Investigation of positioning focuses on the dynamic nature of social action in different situations, and to capture that nature, a *positioning triangle* (or triangles) is proposed (Langenhove & Harré, 1999; Harré and Moghaddam, 2003). The three elements of the positioning triangle are helpful for understanding how rights and duties are distributed (see Figures 2.3). The interrelated elements are called *position(s)*, *storyline(s)* and *act interpretations t interpretations*.

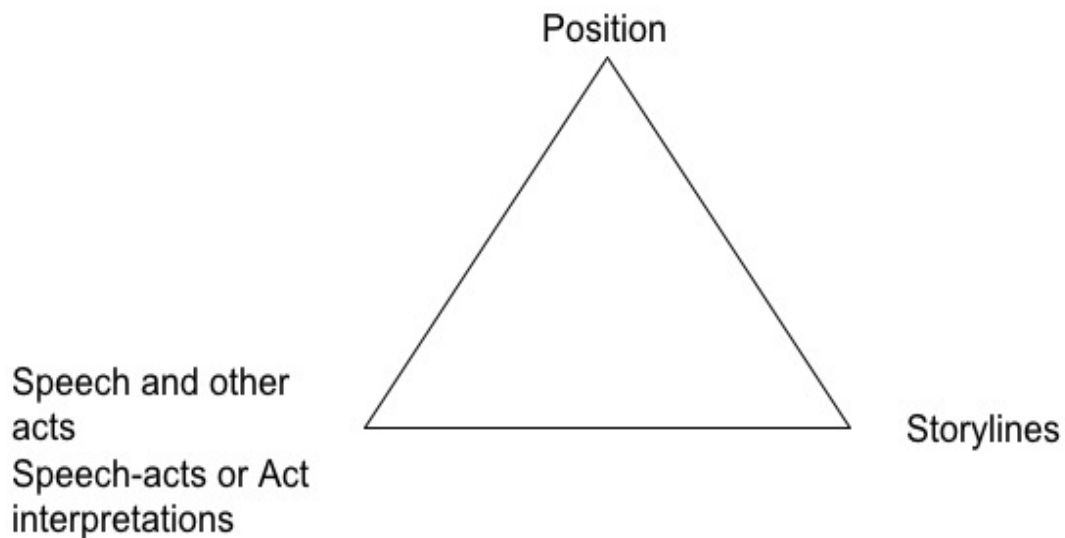


Figure 2.3: The Positioning Triangle

The three elements are interrelated. If one of the elements changes, the others change simultaneously. In the following section, I focus on the interconnectedness of all the elements as it is this that makes positioning a dynamic and cyclical process.

A position is “a cluster of short-term disputable rights, obligations and duties.” (Harré, 2012, p. 193). The word ‘disputable’ suggests that a position can be contested, accepted or rejected by other people during communication. A position is also ephemeral as it is dynamic in nature. It exists at the moment of a social episode, such as a discussion or meeting, and changes when other components (storylines and act

interpretations) of positioning alter. In the most recent advances of the theory, the concepts of rights and duties are added, as in “beliefs about the rights and duties of individuals in specific moments and social and material conditions” (Harré, 2015a). Positioning, therefore, focuses on a specific time and context.

A storyline is “a loose cluster of narrative conventions” (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003). People need storylines to position themselves or reposition themselves to claim rights in an ongoing conversation. Storylines are drawn from the history and background of the speakers, as well as reconstructed in ongoing conversations, connecting the past with the present and the future (Hirvonen, 2016; Slocum & Langenhove, 2003). They are used to provide clues or backgrounds for positioning at a given moment and from that moment on. For example, if one needs to position oneself as an expert in a group to claim the right to make a point, one needs to use a narrative or present one’s background to the group to make the others ‘interpret’ that one is an expert on the topic. In this way, storylines provide context for positioning (Slocum and Langanhove, 2004). The effective use of storylines leads other people in the group to accept the position that aligns with those storylines. While positions are fixed at a particular moment in talk, storylines allow more positions to emerge across contexts and time. In other words, changing positions over time is made possible by changing storylines.

Positions and storylines can be contested or rejected (Moghaddam, Henley and Harré, 2003). How people accept or reject the positioning of others is accomplished through actions and acts in the component of act interpretation. An action is defined as “a meaningful, intended performance, i.e. speech or gesture” while an act is “the social meaning of an action” (Harré, 2015a, p. 196–198). The distinction between act and action helps to explain a situation whereby a speaker claims that what s/he said was meaningful and intended, but what the others ‘interpreted’ is not aligned with her/his intention. For instance, a person intending to position her/himself as an expert uses narration to create a storyline that helps with expert positioning, but the others reject it as his storyline does not align with what s/he intended to say, or the language used in positioning does not align with an expert position. This misalignment between action and act contributes to the acceptance or rejection of a position and/or storyline.

Positioning theorists claim that the positioning of self and others is a *discursive practice* affected by two kinds of force: *social forces* and *illocutionary force*. The actions for performing duties are *social forces*, which are socially significant in a given situation (Harré & Moghaddam 2003, pp. 5–6). Language used to perform duties must conform to the rights attached to the position in order to be accepted by others. Discursive practices that are meaningful to those who position themselves or are positioned by the others are governed by *illocutionary force* and *prelocutionary effect* (Harré and Langenhove, 1999). Any actions that people take create a range of social meanings or positioning acts, and those acts have the possibility to change the ongoing storyline. Illocutionary force is a performative action, such as a question, command or comment. The prelocutionary effect is a response to illocutionary force, such as an answer, denial or counter-argument. These forces shape storylines and positions and are also shaped by them. Act interpretations in the positioning triangle suggest how rights and duties are distributed unequally between people through language.

The positioning triangle, which explains the non-static nature of positioning, will be used to investigate dynamics of relations in EAL classrooms to understand the range of positions used to complete group work, the storylines that affect positioning and the use of language to build or maintain those positions. Descriptions of the elements of the positioning triangle provide more insights into changes to those relations over time and across contexts.

Modes of positioning

Positioning is a bi-directional social process. When people position themselves (*reflexive positioning*), others are positioned simultaneously (*interactive positioning*). Within the positioning of *self and others*, dichotomies of positioning may occur (Harré & Langenhove, 1999). Those dichotomies, such as expert/novice, experienced/inexperienced or master/servant can be accepted, rejected or changed, informing the dynamics of positioning. As noted earlier, people do not always accept how they are positioned by others, and may reject one another's positioning and negotiate to reclaim rights and duties for themselves. Different kinds of positioning that can be accepted or rejected by others are *modes of positioning*. Langenhove & Harré (1999) categorize a range of modes, but this review focuses on those that are relevant to this thesis.

Tacit and intentional positioning modes explain people's purpose in positioning. Unintentional or unconscious positioning of self through talk or act is accomplished tacitly. People perform a task in response to their rights and duties. In contrast, in some situations, they are more aware of their positioning of self and others to claim additional sets of rights and duties that are *intentional*. Intentional positioning has four subcategories: 1) deliberate self-positioning; 2) forced self-positioning; 3) deliberate positioning of others; and 4) forced positioning of others (Langenhove Harré, 1999, p. 24). People may claim the right to talk, referring to their point of view or experience to express whom they are to others during *deliberate positioning of oneself and others*. They may position themselves and others using the rights and duties given by the organization or authority in the *forced positioning of the self and others*. People position themselves in an ongoing conversation (as deliberation), relying on their pre-positioning, such as leader of the group, assigned by the institution. The shift from tacit to intentional positioning suggests that positioning is dynamic and context-dependent. Tacit positioning can be investigated through students' language, but intentional positioning can be examined from their interview data. In this thesis, modes of positioning will be used to discuss how positioning and language use affect the dynamics of relations.

Hierarchy of moral orders

The hierarchy of moral orders elaborates on the places where people gain access to the rights in a larger context. Moral orders are defined as:

All thoughts, display of emotions, social action in and among groups of people [that] occur within shared systems of belief about the moral standards in use in a community and about the distribution of rights and duties to think, speak, and act in certain ways.

(Harré, 2012, p. 266)

In this definition, moral orders are both people's beliefs *in* and understandings *of* rights and duties. In order to gain access to the rights and duties provided in moral orders, people need to understand that those orders are *hierarchical*. People cannot gain access to all levels of moral orders to position themselves and others in all situations. Legitimacy in positioning depends on the ability to gain access to the higher or lower

moral orders that govern people's acts (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003). Higher moral orders provide more access to rights and duties than do lower ones. The hierarchy of moral orders is arranged from the highest to lowest levels: *cultural, legal, institutional, conversational* and *personal* (Langenhove, 2015). This hierarchy is distinctive across contexts and provides different sets of rights and duties. People can claim rights and duties recognized within their community at a conversational or institutional level, such as speaking on behalf of victims or government units. In another context, such as in a court of law, people need the right to speak and perform their duties at the legal level. When they gain access to rights and attempt to perform their duties, other people can accept or reject their positioning, as it may not conform to the local moral order that others constitute or hold on to at that moment.

Applying the moral order to explain hierarchy in the EAL context needs details about the social backgrounds of students, the assigned relations in the task, the ascribed relations in ongoing group discussions and what level of moral order students place themselves in. More insights into why relations occur in the EAL classroom.

Three variations in positioning

A range of attributes affects how individuals access rights and duties. Those attributes are called variations in positioning: *capacity* or *mastery of techniques*, *willingness* or *intention*, and *powers* (Langenhove and Harré, 1999, p. 30). This concept of variations attempts to explain why the positioning of an individual is often accepted or rejected by other people.

These variations play a role while individuals are positioning or repositioning themselves and others. First, individuals who have *capacity* or *mastery of techniques* in the narrative are successful at positioning as their positioning is accepted by others. Some people change positions easily, using language to create narratives or convincing others of their positioning, while others have more difficulty. Second, *willingness* or *intention* means one's readiness to position or be positioned by others. Positioning is not always intentional. People may not fully understand the implications of storylines, pay attention to others' storylines or even attempt to resist them (Davies and Harré, 1999). Although people may intend to position themselves and others during ongoing conversations, their intended positioning might not conform to storylines which are constructed before those conversations. For instance, when a person intends to position

her/himself as an expert, s/he needs to support her/his intention with evidence or reasons or refer to her/his successful experience at that moment of talking. If s/he fails to do so, s/he might be positioned as a novice by others. Capacity or mastery of techniques and willingness are individual characteristics, but *powers* are socially negotiated. In a situation where people can perform duties that others cannot, or manage a situation that others cannot, they have power in positioning (Harré, 2012b). Power in positioning refers to the ability to claim the rights and duties of individuals in ongoing group conversations.

In this thesis, the first two variations will be used to explain and discuss why some students can position themselves as they intended to do in group work, claiming more rights to act and speak and duties to perform than others. The third variation, powers, will be investigated not only as the individual's ability to act or speak as a product, but also as a process (Bloome et al., 2005). The exercise of power in positioning will explain its impact on relations between students in more depth.

Key concepts in positioning entail the distribution of rights and duties. While the positioning triangle is a starting point to understand what makes positioning dynamic, modes of positioning, the hierarchy of moral orders and variations in positioning explain a specific situation when actions and the social meaning of positioning do not align. Applying these key concepts to the thesis will bring more depth to the investigation of students' relations. In this thesis, I apply positioning to investigate dynamics of students' relations, corresponding to the distribution of rights and duties. As positioning is a social, non-static process in an ongoing conversation, it will potentially explain how changes in positioning across time impact students' relations and how language is used in positioning provides more insights into language learning.

2.3.3 Implications of Positioning Theory across Disciplines

Positioning theory has been widely used in many disciplines, such as intercultural politics (Moghaddam, Harré & Lee, 2008; Slocum and Langenhove, 2004), business studies (Bisel and Barge, 2011; Clifton, 2014; Hirvonen, 2016) and applied linguistics and education (Arkoudis, 2005; Anderson, 2009; Herbel-Eisenmann et al., 2015; Kayi-Aydar, 2015, Kayi-Aydar, 2018). The section that follows examines the implications of positioning theory to illustrate how positioning is used across disciplines and discuss

the arguments made by different researchers, including classroom-based scholars. At the end of the section, the implications of the theory for this thesis are explained.

Positioning to investigate social problems in the workplace

Positioning is a method for analyzing social phenomena or issues of interest, such as conflicts or disputes within and between groups of people. Positioning analysis has been used to investigate social issues, identify conflicts and find solutions to problems in the workplace.

Positioning of power has been investigated to identify conflicts between groups, such as who has power in positioning. For instance, Harré and Slocum (2003) started analyzing conflicts and disputes in the Georgetown University community by examining the storylines of disputes involving students, parents and the administration through narratives in documents, news sources, group conversations and the perceptions of people in interviews related to those conflicts. They identified how people position themselves during a social event involving conflict and found that conflicts were caused by the administration team positioning themselves as 'parents' and treating students as their 'children'. This positioning was rejected by the students, resulting in conflicts and disputes. Positioning analysis in this case helped to identify what caused conflicts and disputes among people in the same community and how they responded to that conflict.

Storylines and how they are told affect positioning and its consequences for people's relations in the workplace. The significance of storylines is highlighted in the work of Bisel and Barge (2011) and Clifton (2014), who conducted research on employees' building storylines to investigate the experience of changes and leadership in business meetings, respectively. Bisel and Barge (2011) investigated how company employees' identities and relationships were affected by messages from middle managers about how organizational changes caused commotion in the workplace. From collected storylines, such as employee interviews, researchers' observation notes and newspaper articles about the company, Bisel and Barge found that employees took up different positions in response to the change messages they received from managers. By arranging storylines into timelines to examine the consequences of positioning across time, the researchers found that employees' positioning could be classified into four types of experience (violation, recitation, habituation and reservation), suggesting

that they had different act interpretations of the message. This social phenomenon contrasts with the work of Clifton (2014), in which storylines facilitated the positioning of leadership. In Clifton's research, a manager used storylines to position herself as a leader who use ventriloquism through the use of pronouns, which helped her to claim rights from the conversational moral order. The manager's positioning was not contested, as no employees rejected her position or storylines. Clifton claimed that small stories emerging from the positioning process facilitated the positioning of leader in that workplace.

Storylines change over time as people may adjust, add or change them in line with the moral order they adhere to. Institutional and conversational moral orders affected positioning in the joint decision-making of the management team in one organization (Hirvonen, 2016). By analyzing the transcripts of management board meetings, Hirvonen found that management team members created and changed storylines several times to position themselves as experts before making joint decisions. In the positioning of expert/expert, the team not only used storylines from their assigned pre-position in the company, but also storylines derived from the ongoing conversation, providing opportunities for everyone in the team to position themselves as experts before making decisions. Changes of storylines in positioning impact the positioning process and create the dynamics in positioning.

The literature on positioning theory in the workplace suggests that the analysis of positioning contributes to the solution of social issues. Positioning theory can also be approached from different angles in the positioning triangle, providing researchers with alternatives for applying the theory to their disciplines.

Positioning in classroom research

Several classroom researchers (Martin-Beltrán, 2010; Pinnow & Chval, 2015; Young & Tedick, 2016) have applied the concept of positioning in different dimensions, i.e. the influence of topics in language learning on positioning (such as language competency and proficiency), or positioning to participate in a group. For instance, Martin-Beltrán (2010) investigated how a teacher and students constructed and perceived English proficiency and how those perceptions were reflected through positioning in an English-Spanish immersion programme. A range of positionings emerged, i.e. members/non-members of social groups, participants/non-participants,

expert/novice, and legitimate contributors/non-ratified participants. Spanish students who were positioned as non-members or non-participants lost their opportunities to learn English in that class, as they perceived themselves as not proficient enough in the language, but they repositioned themselves as informants and translators in a Spanish class. Opportunities for language learning in the work of Martin-Beltrán were affected by the positioning of the self and others. Positioning changes were raised in her work, but the distribution of rights and duties are understated. The following section explores how positioning is applied to classroom research and further discusses how students' relationships also play a role in positioning.

Positions ascribed in ongoing group conversation by students are not consistent across groups. In the work of Young and Tedick (2016), the categorization of high school students in homogeneous and heterogeneous groups into higher and lower levels of language proficiency in a two-way immersion classroom context changed in collaborative dialogues. A student who was positioned as 'capable' performed the task by co-constructing meaning using peer scaffolding in her friends' group but struggled in the heterogeneous group (or a group consisting of friends and non-friends) and was positioned as a novice. Another student who was positioned as lower proficient questioned and repeated peer responses in the heterogeneous group and took up more positions and opportunities to participate. Prepositioning students by their proficiency level did not always provide them with opportunities to participate. Positioning that occurs during ongoing conversations within certain relationships, i.e. friendships, is closely related to opportunities for participation.

Although the positioning of students by English proficiency may help a teacher with her/his teaching and learning management, it hinders opportunities for positioning. Reichert and Liebscher (2012) claimed that the fixed status of students, labelled by the teacher before performing a task, as good-expert or poor-novice is unrealistic because learners reposition themselves as both expert and novice constantly during interactions. In their research on a word search activity, they found that relations between German students influenced how students positioned themselves as novice-expert. When students who were labelled as highly proficient did not conform to their positioning of expert, their friends who were novices interrupted and took up the expert position to

help them maintain the expert position, re-constructing relations of expert/expert. The positional change in Reichert and Liebscher's research suggests that students' relations also help them take up another position overlapping with the existing one.

In a recent study, Pinnow and Chval (2015) examined how rights and duties were distributed by learners in their group interactions. A challenging experience occurs when students contested each other's positioning affected how they used language and participated in pair work over a period of three years. They found that the development of their competency or how they used language to achieve their purpose was inextricably intertwined with positioning. When learners faced new interlocutors, they needed to understand how to position themselves towards one another and interact with them through previous knowledge and experience they had learned from pair work. It was at this point that positioning seemed to affect the learners' ability to interact. From their perspective, learners' positioning influences that ability, both developing and demonstrating it. Hence the positioning experiences and relations of L2 learners may enhance their opportunities for language learning.

Students' act interpretations in group work affect their positioning and group participation. Although they have the ability to use language to act and speak in the group, their positioning may not be accepted as intended. Two talkative students in an ESL classroom took many turns in group work, but group members positioned them differently in the work of Kayi-Aydar (2014). While the talkative ones were doing group work on the same task, one student was marginalized in the group discussion, while the other was still accepted as a group member. It appeared that the talkative student who positioned himself as a teacher, using commands and assertive linguistic choices to hold the floor in the group discussion, had good relationships with other group members, while the other talkative student was considered an outsider because their classmates thought him arrogant. Kayi-Aydar argued that students' talkative and teacher-like positions are partly influenced by the relations of students in the group, not only how they position themselves as individuals. This research illustrates that dynamics are crucial in positioning, providing or hindering students' opportunities to interact in the group.

As reviewed in the current section, when positioning theory is applied to education and applied linguistics, it is quite clear that students' relations evolve in positioning. The links between students' relations in positioning will provide more understanding of relations in the education and applied linguistic fields and contribute to expanding opportunities for language learning. However, the aforementioned researchers do not sufficiently explain how and why students position themselves and others to peers or non-peers in sufficient detail. Although the principle of positioning focuses on how rights and duties are not equally distributed (Harre & Langenhove, 1999; Harre, 2012; Kayi-Aydar & Miller, 2018), this issue has not been sufficiently stressed in existing classroom research. The current thesis will thus focus on the (re)distribution of rights and duties to highlight the dynamics of relations.

Positioning, which is bound to social perspectives and is a social phenomenon, not only helps researchers to identify how people act and react differently to ongoing social events, but also provides a thick description of how and why their rights and duties are distributed through language. This advantage of analyzing students' interaction, together with the analysis of positioning, offers an alternative approach to investigating the dynamics of relations in EAL classrooms for three reasons. First, it helps to explain the non-static nature of student relations through changes in positioning. Then, it elaborates on students' rights and duties assigned by the teacher and those that are distributed between students in pair or group work. Unequal distribution of rights and duties potentially explains a range of positions that affect their language use. Lastly, the expanded concept of context with storylines contributes to a better understanding of the significance of students' backgrounds, which affects students' positioning across contexts and time.

Applying positioning theory to fields other than social psychology requires adaptation. For instance, Depperman (2015) and Herbel-Eisenmann et al. (2015) raised the issues of storylines and sources from which people draw to position each other, but this key concept is not clearly elaborated in their reconstructions, whether from the researcher's perspective or from that of the speakers themselves. In mathematics, the concepts of positioning/positions and storylines have been revised by complementing them with Lemke's (2000) notion of timescale (Herbel-Eisenmann et al., 2015). As

researchers argued that the concept of storylines is insufficiently explained, they proposed the concept of *scales* to focus on what role communication acts play in developing positioning and storylines. Scales, ranging from utterance (words) to exchange (dialogues, interpersonal relations), episode (thematic) and so on, are claimed to help researchers interpret positioning acts and better explain social phenomena with relevance to positions/positioning and storylines. These scholars claim that adding scales helps researchers to elaborate on positioning/positions and storylines, understand the resources of positioning and make warranted claims regarding the implications of findings. This example of theoretical adaptation helps me to reconstruct storylines within the context of an EAL classroom and understand how storylines can help to elaborate the context for positioning from within group discussions to beyond the classroom. Detailed descriptions of storylines help me to explain how student relations expand across contexts and time.

The link between positioning and opportunities for language learning must be established as positioning theory does not look at details of language in its analysis (Arkoudis, 2005; Kayi-Aydar, 2018). Language in positioning theory is viewed and used by positioning theorists as a discursive tool to examine concepts, metaphors, similes or tropes to identify the distribution of rights and duties (Slocum and Langanhove, 2004, p. 241). It is vital for EAL classroom research to explain and discuss what and how language is used in positioning from the language learning perspective. As the focus of this thesis is on the consequences of dynamics of relations for the opportunities for language learning, language choices will be analyzed to locate those opportunities. Insight from the analysis of language used for positioning will be useful for a better understanding of students' relations, which are placed in the classroom learning environment that facilitates their language learning.

This section has reviewed the key concepts associated with positioning theory and its implications for different disciplines, which are specifically connected to students' dynamics of relations. The theory helps me to link student positioning to their relations in group work. How they position themselves within the same or different group work in positioning potentially elaborates on the impact of dynamics of relations on opportunities for language learning.

2.4 Framework and Research Questions

The impact on the opportunities for language learning of MA-EAL dynamics of students' relations will be investigated through interaction and positioning in the classroom. The sociocultural perspective and interaction in the DFG framework will be used to explore students' relations with detailed descriptions of student backgrounds. Changes in positioning will also tracked to address dynamics of relations. In sum, this thesis investigates students' relations over time and responds to three research questions (RQs):

RQ 1: How do MA-EAL students in an English-mediated course in Thailand position themselves and others in group discussions?

RQ 2: How do the dynamics of their positioning evolve over time?

RQ 3: How do those dynamics impact opportunities for language learning?

Research Questions 1 and 2 focus on identifying students positioning and their relations over time and across contexts, respectively, while Question 3 discusses the implications of the previous questions. Addressing these questions will contribute to a better understanding of students' relations in EAL classrooms. The implications based on a discussion of these questions will ultimately offer more insights into peer interaction, classroom research and the language learning environment in which student relations are considered as a central issue in further studies.

3 Research Methodology

This chapter describes and explains my methodology for researching the dynamics of students' relations within the EAL classroom. The rationale for selecting a classroom case study precedes the description of the research context and participants. This is followed by a detailed description of the data collection and data analysis methods. The final part of the chapter explains how the data collection and analysis methods permitted exploration of the research questions.

3.1 A Classroom Case Study of the Dynamics of Students' Relations in an EAL Classroom

To better understand the dynamics of students' relations in group discussions in an EAL classroom, an in-depth description of students' interaction with each other and within group discussion is needed to explain and discuss those dynamics. This section explains and discusses a case study and how it contributes to the detailed description of interaction, followed by a justification for using a classroom as a case.

A 'case' in this thesis means the target EAL classroom where dynamics of students' relations were active and were created in interactions in small group work in a classroom. A case study was selected for two main reasons. Firstly, case studies provide understanding of individual experiences, issues, and insights within a specific linguistic, social or educational context (Duff, 2014). Context is the most powerful determinant and is important for explaining social phenomena (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2013). In particular, when the context changes over time (i.e. students

participating in different group discussions), it is essential to thoroughly explain how that changing context influences individual experiences or social phenomena. Case studies examine a bounded system of individuals and their contexts (Hood, 2009). Hood's expansive definition of context highlighted the significance of contexts which were bound to the changes of students' relations. Detailed descriptions of context illuminate the impact of the dynamics of students' relations. Case studies allow researchers to understand the experiences, behaviors and processes of a bounded system (Duff and Anderson, 2015). The current research investigates students' experiences and behaviors through group discussions in interviews to understand how and why those experiences or behaviors are connected, and how those changing experiences and behaviors constitute dynamics of relations. Second, case studies, which provide substantial descriptions of individuals, also include perspectives from participants and observers (Duff, 2008). These perspectives are useful to explain and discuss why individuals react to others in different ways. The current study collected perspectives on how and what focal students think about their interaction in group discussions and how they reflect on the task in their interview data in combination with critical observation notes to provide rich data sources to explain interpersonal relations. Whole-class and small group observations were used in this case study of the classroom.

This longitudinal case study of the classroom offers greater understanding of changes in students' relations. Case studies also provide an understanding of one exemplar of one thing over a period of time as an in-depth description of a social phenomenon (Nunan and Bailey, 2009; Yin, 2011). This methodology was selected in an effort to attain a full understanding of the dynamics of students' relations over time. With regards to the time period, the data collection took place over a 15-week period, with particular attention paid to consecutive 8-week group discussions and six focal students.

With its in-depth explanation and discussion of students' interactions in a case study of the classroom, this thesis will ultimately provide insights into dynamics of students' relations that may potentially influence their opportunities for language use and, in turn, language learning.

3.2 Research Contexts and Participants

This study explains how and why students' relations are negotiated in group discussions and change over time and across contexts. The dynamics of student relations are investigated by means of focal students and other students in a classroom throughout a period of data collection. The focus is on interaction between students in group discussions which were *not* supervised by the teacher, i.e. in a context without the teacher's presence. Group discussions then became the initial/major sources of data for examining student-student interaction.

Peers and *non-peers* are two categories referred to throughout the remainder of this PhD research project. The definition of peer in the thesis differs from that in peer interaction research as it focuses on the relationships negotiated between peers and other dimensions of relationships such as familiarity and group cohesion. To identify who were peers or non-peers, I drew on the interviews with the selected focal students and classroom observations. I use peers to refer to those who knew each other before taking the class and who socialized outside class. I use non-peers to refer to students who did not know each other before attending the class and whose interactions with classmates were limited almost exclusively to course-related matters. Although the definition of peers in this analysis differs from the use of peers in peer interaction research, this distinction is important for understanding the dynamics between peers and between peers and non-peers.

The following sections give a description of the research context, the participants in the study, and the classroom activities.

3.2.1 Research Context: Research Site and Classroom Practices

The research project was carried out at a university in Bangkok, Thailand, on a postgraduate level compulsory course in an English Language Teaching (ELT) programme. The MA in ELT is a part-time master's course and classes convened at the weekend. Classes are conducted in English. Each class is scheduled for three hours weekly over a 16-week semester. The students in this programme are typically Thai and non-Thai, and include office workers, teachers and educators, amongst others.

I selected this research site for two reasons. First, the class provided opportunities for Thai and non-Thai students to discuss topics in groups without teacher interference,

a scenario I wanted to observe. Also, I knew the course instructor, so authorization and consent for the research were relatively straightforward to obtain from the university concerned. The following subsections describe the research context.

I had the choice of two classes to conduct my research and chose a Saturday morning class with 29 students, for three reasons. First, I had met some of the students on an orientation trip before the course began. This helped with recruiting participants. Second, the Saturday class was convenient for reflecting on what I observed in class. I spent my Saturday mornings observing the class and reviewed the morning session's events (both video and audio recordings) on Saturday afternoons. I could schedule interviews with the participants either late the same afternoon or on Sunday. Lastly, this Saturday class had a greater mix of ages, genders and nationalities in comparison to the Sunday class.

Seating arrangements

The seating arrangements in the classroom changed over time according to the activities. The beginning of class had a theatre setting with armchairs facing the whiteboard, leaving an aisle in the middle. Figure 3.1 shows the seating arrangement for lectures.

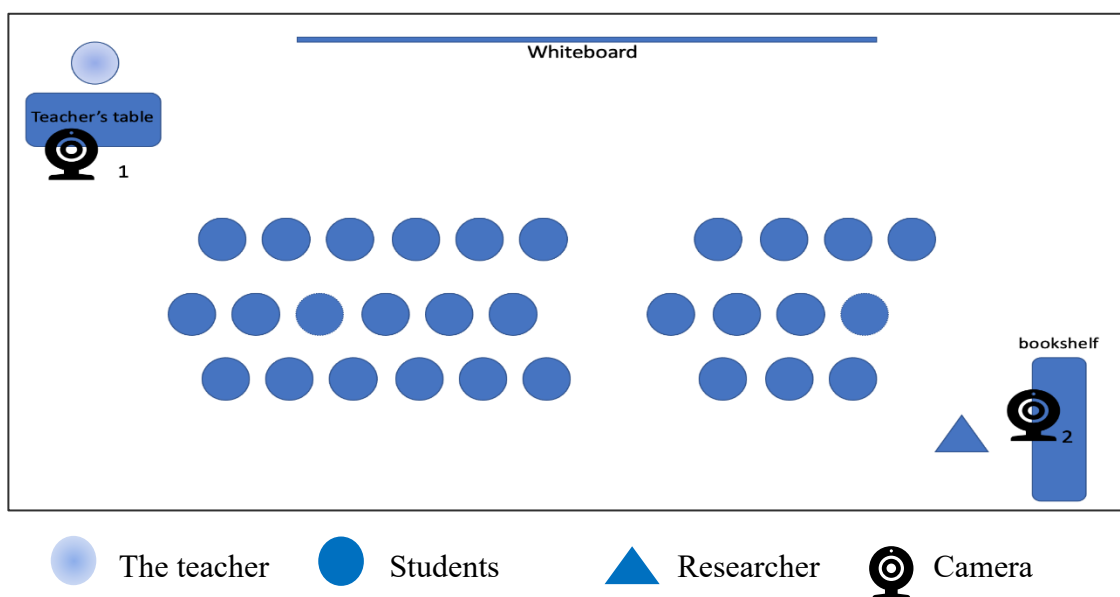


Figure 3.1: Seating Arrangement for Lectures

The seating changed to closed circles in which students conducted group discussions. Peers moved their seats to form a small circle near each other, and non-peers joined a group available to them. The seating arrangements took the same pattern during the group discussion activity period. However, the numbers of group members were not always equal because group leaders could not participate in the same group and non-peers sat in different groups each week. Figure 3.2 illustrates the seating arrangements for group discussions in one week.

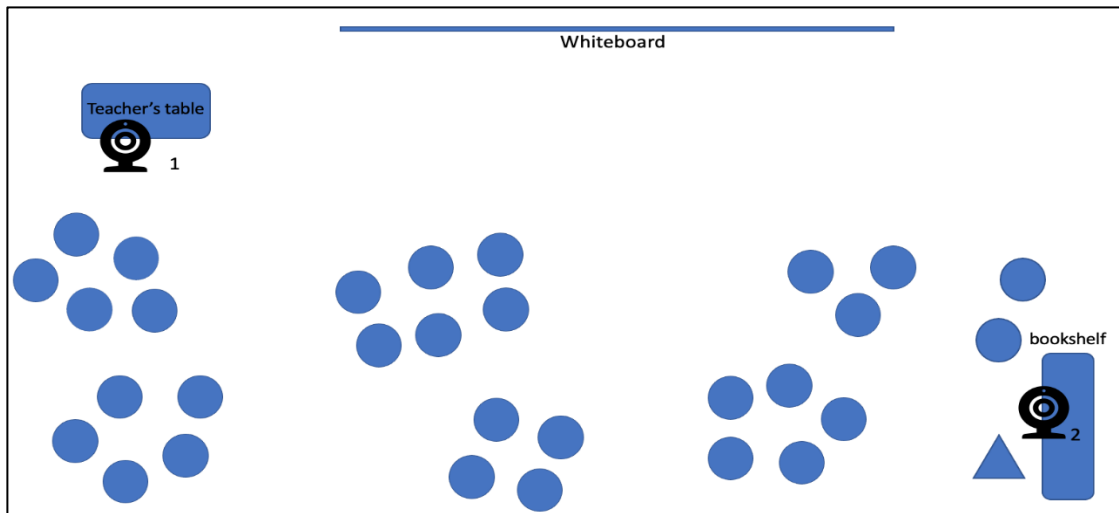


Figure 3.2: Seating Arrangement for Group Discussions

After the group discussion ended, the seating became a semi-circle, where the instructor could deliver his lecture. The seating arrangements allowed peers to sit next to and interact with each other throughout the course of the class. Figure 3.3 illustrates the seating arrangements after group discussions.

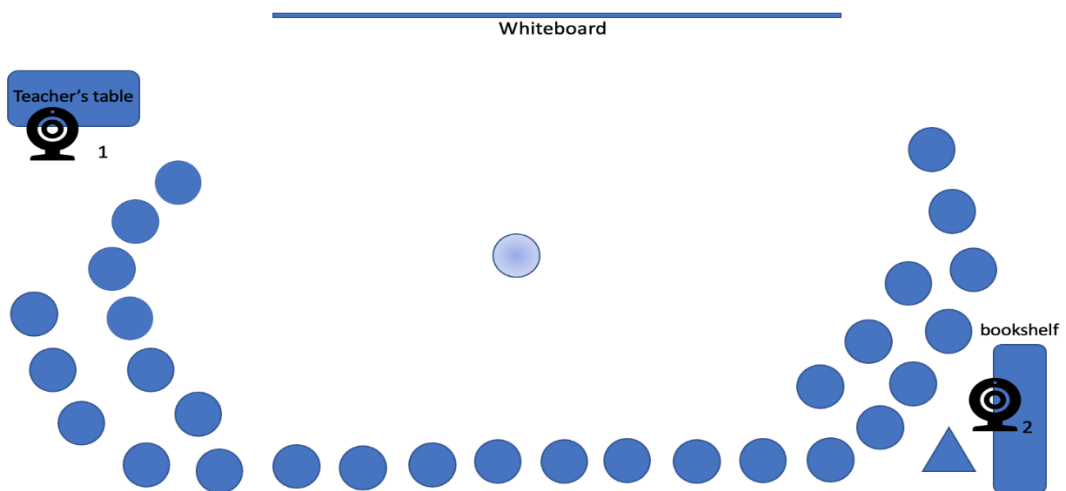


Figure 3.3: Seating Arrangement after Group Discussions

Three types of seating arrangement offer choices for students for negotiating relations with different classmates in the class. Transitions of seating from theatre type to closed circles changed the contexts, which potentially explains how students' relations are negotiated and how those relations changed over time.

3.2.2 Participants

The students in the class consisted of schoolteachers, office workers and recent graduates. Their ages ranged from 23 to 40 years old. There were seven males and 22 females in the class. Two males were non-Thai, i.e. Filipino and Chinese. I wanted to see how these nationality and gender differences were involved in the students' negotiation of interpersonal dynamics.

A bachelor's degree in any field was a prerequisite for enrolling on the programme and appropriate English proficiency was assessed using a test administered by the university: a TOEFL score of 79/550 or an IELTS score of 6.5. Students could also enter if they had an English language admission test to the program and an interview.

I selected four Thai female and two non-Thai male students were then recruited as focal participants in Week 3, the first week in which students participated in group discussions. These were students to whom I would pay particular attention when conducting my in-depth data analysis of their interactions. The criteria for selecting these students were: a) their consent to the research; b) their interaction in the class; and c) the manageable size of data. First, they consented to share personal information and experiences in the class with me. Second, each of them had different interactions in the classroom, which was a factor I wished to observe. Finally, the number of observed students was manageable. Over 180 minutes of class, I was able to observe their interactions in detail. In the first two weeks of the class, I observed and took notes on classroom activities, as well as students' interactions with their classmates and the instructor. The instructor was also included as a focal participant as he assigned the tasks and was present during class interaction. The focal students' social backgrounds are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Profiles of focal students

Name	Age	Nationality/ Gender	Educational background	Teaching experience
Grace	25	Thai female	Bachelor's degree in English business communication degree (international programme)	Some teaching experience in a Thai school
Simon	30	Filipino male	Diploma in teaching English (online course)	Nine years of teaching experience in a Thai secondary school and a university
Pam	34	Thai female	Master's degree in accounting	Some teaching experience in a Thai school
Cheng	33	Chinese male	Bachelor's degree in English and literature	Some experience in preparing students for university in tutoring schools
Fon	28	Thai female	Bachelor's degree in English teaching	Five years of teaching experience in primary and vocational schools
Film	34	Thai female	Degree in English studies	More than ten years' experience in teaching English to international students from pre-school to high school

These six students had different social backgrounds and working experiences, something which was useful for analyzing the interpersonal resources they deployed and how those resources impacted their relations. These students also maintained a range of relations with their peers and non-peers in the class and thus provided depth and breadth for classroom interaction. One focal student, Pam, was absent from the class in Week 10 and attended no more classes in the rest of the semester. I decided not to recruit another focal participant so late in the course, but I did include her in my detailed analysis. Table 3.2 outlines the groups that included focal students across the eight weeks of group discussions.

Table 3.2: Participation of focal students in group discussions

Focal students	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10
Grace Weeks 3, 7*	Lux Jib Nim Film Pam	Lux Num* Simon	Lux* Cheng	<i>absent</i>	Lux Jib Film	<i>absent</i>	Lux* Other	Lux Jib* Film Cheng
Cheng Weeks 4, 8*	Paul*	Jib Nim	Grace Lux*	Simon Num Ploy* Aek	Simon* James Num	Lux Jib Nim	Jib Nim	Grace Lux Jib* Film
Simon Weeks 3, 7*	James Ploy Aek	Grace Lux Num*	James* Paul Ploy Aek	Cheng Num Ploy* Aek	James Cheng Num	James Num* Ploy Aek	<i>absent</i>	James Kate*
Film Weeks 4, 8*	Grace *Lux Jib Nim Pam	Tim Dany	Sunny Fair Beauty	Ploy Kate	Grace* Lux Jib	Kate Fair Beauty	<i>absent</i>	Cheng Grace Lux Jib*
Fon Weeks 3, 10*	Tim Rose	Rose Pim	Tim Num Rose	Tim Rose	<i>absent</i>	Tim Rose	Rose Dany	Tim Rose Dany
Pam Weeks 4, 8*	Grace *Lux Jib Nim Film	Mary Dew Peach	Mary Dew Peach	Lux Jib*	<i>absent</i>	Mary Dew Paul	Num James *	<i>absent</i>

Note: **Bold** focal students
 * assigned as a chapter leader
absent a focal student was absent from the class on that day.

Focal participants participated in group discussions in different ways. For instance, while Grace, Simon and Fon often joined their peers, Cheng, Film and Pam joined their non-peers. These two types of participation suggested the influence of relations on their decisions as to whom they preferred to talk to or work with in group discussions. This information is useful for the analysis and discussion of the dynamics of students' relations

Classroom activities

A range of teaching and learning activities provided opportunities to observe different types of interactions. The instructor explained that he saw himself as a facilitator of learning and wanted to create a relaxed learning environment and manage activities, not simply function as a ‘knowledge-provider’. He called students by their nicknames, believing that would make him more approachable, and students did the same, making nickname use a common practice in the class. Attendance was mandatory and marks were deducted for lateness and absenteeism. The following table lists the activities that the instructor designed to manage his classroom. Each activity structured interaction differently and potentially contributed to the dynamics of students’ relations. Table 3.3 outlines those activities.

Table 3.3: List of activities (designed by the instructor)

Activity	Description	Frequency
1. Lecture	The instructor reviews textbook chapters and recaps key terms and concepts frequently used in second language acquisition. Students are encouraged to ask questions for extra participation points.	Weekly, Weeks 1–14
2. Group discussion	The students, in groups of 5–6, review each chapter then write three questions to be discussed in the class for 30-minutes.	Weekly, Weeks 3–10
3. Q&A	The instructor reads aloud, corrects and comments on questions from each discussion group then returns questions to each chapter leader.	Weekly, Weeks 3-10
4. Chapter leader’s quizzes	Chapter leaders from all the groups meet and create a quiz, based on questions discussed in the class. Chapter leaders administer, grade and submit results to the instructor. This activity occurred outside class time.	Weekly, Weeks 4–11
5. Group presentations	Students form their own groups and create a class presentation, following steps provided by the instructor.	Weekly, Weeks 12-15

Lecture

Lectures lasted between 130 and 150 minutes, with shorter lectures in the weeks where group discussions took place. The key concepts for each week's lesson were written on the board. There was no lecture in the last two weeks of the course.

Group discussions

Group discussions were designed to help students, particularly those who were working full-time and had less time to study the chapter before a lecture. These discussions were also intended to increase their sense of personal responsibility for their learning. This activity was the primary site for data collection.

The topics discussed were taken from the course textbook, which was divided into eight chapters. Each group discussion focused on one chapter, and each student led two group discussions. The students leading the discussion were referred to as the *chapter leader*. As well as managing a discussion, chapter leaders created a quiz from each week's discussion. Two topics were assigned to chapter leaders. What and how to run a group discussion was explained in the first two weeks of the course. Students created their own groups and there was some continuity in group members from week to week. However, a group could have only one chapter leader, which resulted in disruption and reconfiguration of groups throughout the course. Chapter leaders and group members were expected to review the chapter content before the lecture. By the end of the discussion, each group had to agree on three questions derived from the week's topic and group discussions and then submit them to the instructor to check, prior to the question time activity.

The instructor expressly allowed both English and Thai to be spoken in discussion groups since it was an SLA course, not a language class course. In the classes that I observed, two discussion groups used more Thai than English, while the other groups – those with non-Thai members - used English almost exclusively. During group discussions, the instructor left the class and came back when it had finished, with the instructor saying he had learned from experience that his presence in the classroom increased students' apprehension. Students started the discussion as soon as they arrived at class, unless the instructor had some announcements to make at the beginning.

Although the students were free to join any chapter leader to form a group, they usually joined their peers. Peers easily formed discussion groups. They were often sitting near each other at the beginning of class, and those who came late to class quickly joined them. Non-peers lacked these advantages. Table 3.4 illustrates the possible combinations of groups.

Table 3.4: Possible combinations of group discussions

Chapter Leader	Members
Peer	Peers + non-peers
Peer	Peers
Non-peer	Peers
Non-peer*	Non-peers*

**Not found in the observed classroom*

Over the course of the class, no groups formed with all non-peers, and all groups had at least two peers. The different group combinations are useful for investigating how students make choices for joining groups and interacting with peers and non-peers.

Q&A

Q&A involved interaction between the instructor and his students. The instructor gave feedback on the questions obtained from each discussion group, including grammatical corrections and conceptual issues. Chapter leaders used the feedback to construct quizzes.

Chapter leaders' quizzes

Chapter leaders worked together to create a take-home quiz on each week's discussion topic. After chapter leaders had created a quiz and got their classmates completed it, they collected the quizzes, scored and returned to the classmates the following week. Chapter leaders communicated online and outside the classroom to write the quizzes. Each student in the class participated in writing a quiz twice during the 16-week course.

Group presentation

Group presentations were set at the end of the course. Topics were set by the instructor, but students formed their own groups. Topics related to language teaching methods and requirements for the presentations were described in the course outline: an introduction, a video presentation on teaching methods, a Q&A on the method, reflections on the method, a conclusion and comments on the methodology. Each presentation lasted approximately 50 minutes

3.3 Data Collection

I chose classroom observations and interviews as data-collection methods in this study to gain in-depth descriptive information about students' interactions in an EAL classroom. I also collected documents related to the group discussions, which were my main source of data to ascertain whether there was any additional information that could be used for the data analysis. Lastly, I used audio-visual and digital materials, i.e. audio- and video-recordings, to capture the classroom and interviews. All data, including typed handwritten notes, were digitally stored and encrypted on a password-protected hard drive. The data-collection period was 15 weeks because the teaching plan was rescheduled (see Appendix 1 for a detailed overview of the data-collection process). Plans for classroom observations and recording the interaction, interview schedules, and the collection of related documents were also prepared in advance.

The following section describes how I collected the data using classroom observations and interviews. I also explain how documents were collected and how ethical consent was obtained.

3.3.1 Classroom Observation

Classroom observations allow researchers to have first-hand experience with participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As a participant-observer, I followed interactions that were meaningful to my research topic. These interactions in group discussions became a topic in the interviews.

I started the observation as an attendee at a program orientation event which occurred off campus two weeks before the class started. Although the two-day and one-

night orientation was not compulsory, the programme director encouraged the students to attend as he claimed it was an opportunity to meet and get to know each other through a range of activities, such as informal academic conversations, social events and teambuilding. Three of my focal participants, Grace, Fon and Simon, joined in the activities, and all of them sat in class nearby to students whom they knew from the orientation and whom they saw as peers later in the interviews.

During classroom observations, I changed from attendee to participant-as-observer stance (Merriam, 2009) because all the participants recognized me from the orientation and knew what I was doing in the class. During observations, I took notes and reflected on verbal descriptions of the context, direct quotations and my own comments as an observer.

The focus during observations was on the students' interactions with the instructor and with each other. I noted a particular point in minutes for each transition between activities so that I could cross-reference my notes with the audio and video transcript. My observation notes covered the broad topics outlined below.

Management of classroom activities

Classroom activities involved students interacting with the instructor and with their peers. I noted the participants' turn-taking, changes in topic, and the management and performance of tasks.

Non-verbal observations

Non-verbal observations included seating arrangements, facial expressions and body language between the students and the instructor.

Reflective comments

Throughout the observations, I noted down my reflections on noteworthy student interactions. Students' group discussions and their interactions with each other were audio- and video-recorded. The recording instruments included an audio recorder for each focal student, and two cameras set up at the front and back of the classroom. The focal students preferred not to carry the recorders during breaks, so private conversations outside the classroom were not included in the data. The details of recorded group discussions are as follows.

Group-discussion conversations (audio)

For Weeks Three to Ten, a 3-hour audio-recording included casual talk before class, group discussions, lecture time, a 20-minute break and 5-minute conversations after class.

Classroom interactions (video and audio)

Recording started 10 minutes before class and finished five minutes after the class was dismissed. Thus, the videos cover the entire length of the class, including group discussions, instructor-student interactions, break-time moments in the classroom, group presentations and post-class interactions.

3.3.2 Interviews

Interviews were conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' opinions, beliefs, attitudes or experiences (Kapsler, 2015). The interviews aimed to get those descriptions from the participants' perspectives. Interviews are particularly useful for addressing how and why students act and use language to position themselves in a particular situation. Conducting interviews also aims to gather a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of other people and their meaning-making of those experiences (Seidman, 2013). In my thesis, those stories are necessary to examine contexts and reconstruct storylines to explain how and whether students position themselves and others consistently with their storylines.

The interviews, scheduled at the convenience of the participants, were conducted in Thai and English, depending on the participants' preferences. The interview questions focused on how they built and maintained their relationships inside and outside the classroom, and how those relationships potentially affected their English use. I constructed semi-structured interview schedules in line with the research questions to use as guides (see Appendix 5). I also used major topics from the group discussions to prompt the interviewees during the interviews.

I introduced myself as a lecturer-researcher conducting research, but I also positioned myself as an alumnus of the programme, having studied the same course. I conducted two types of interviews.

Individual interviews

Thirty-minute semi-structured interviews were scheduled with focal students at three points throughout the data-collection period. The purpose of the interview was to understand the students' views of relationships in group discussions, how those relations played a role in group participation, and how they named and recognized those relations. I interviewed the instructor twice, once at the beginning and once at the end of the course. The interviews with all of the focal participants were rescheduled many times. The interview and prompt questions were not always covered because of cancellations, delays to the interviews and limited time given by the participants. After the interviews, I contacted them online to obtain any missing information.

Semi-structured group interviews

Thirty-minute group interviews were conducted at the beginning and end of the course. The focal participants decided who would join their group interviews, which made the number in each group interview differ. These interviews aimed to determine students' relations in the group in comparison with my observation notes and individual interviews. The differences between the three sets of data were useful for data triangulation and justification of students' relations.

3.3.3 Documents

The following public online social media texts related to their MA studies were collected.

LINE messaging conversations (Online texts)

The LINE messaging application is an instant messenger application that all of the students used to communicate with each other. Students created one main group for the classroom to which everyone had access to, and other sub-groups for assignments and close peers with restricted group membership. I joined the online classroom and assignment groups three weeks after their creation.

Other documents

These documents included materials shared between classmates during classroom small-group discussions, out-of-class materials, e-mails, a course outline and teaching materials.

3.3.4 Ethical Consent

First, ethical approval was given by both the target institution and Lancaster University, in the UK. Then, prior to data collection, ethical consent was requested from each volunteer in the EAL classroom. Next, all participants read a Participant Information Sheet to review their ethical rights and signed a Consent Form (see Appendices 3 and 4) to allow data collection in the second week of the programme. As an alumnus of the ELT programme and a lecturer at the institution, I was granted permission from the institution and approval from the course instructor.

3.4 Data Analysis Method

Data analysis began while I was observing the class and interviewing focal students. I took notes on the main events or points using my research questions as a guide and grouped them in themes in weekly research reports. By reading through the interview data, group discussions, presentation scripts and observation notes many times, I began to see patterns relevant to my research questions. I coded the data for positioning and analyzed the language used in those acts. Audio transcriptions and translation conventions used for the data analysis are explained in Appendix 2. The following sections explain how I coded for positions and analyzed positioning in group discussions and across data sources.

3.4.1 Coding for Positions in an EAL Classroom

Coding in this thesis was not only used to reduce the large amount of audio-/video-recording data to a smaller, manageable size for further analysis, but also to interpret the meaning of each positioning for further analysis of patterns, categorization and other analytic purposes (Saldaña, 2016). The data were classified using a range of codes (a word, or a short phrase), which helped to make sense of how students gained access to rights and performed duties with respect to positions they had taken up.

As coding is a systematic way to organize data, codified data allow the arrangement of positioning acts into a systematic order. This process allows the data to be divided, grouped or categorized into meaningful chunks and to develop explanations (Grbich, 2013). A systematic coding scheme was established in two steps - inductive

and deductive - to organize segments of similar or related text to help with interpretation.

Inductive, or bottom-up, coding allows codes to emerge from the data, which were mainly from group discussions and interview transcripts, while deductive, or top-down, interpretation is driven by theory or the previous literature (Dixon-Woods et al., 2005; Gilgun, 2011; Yin, 2009). Since not all data can be used in a qualitative study, researchers need to ‘winnow’ (or aggregate) the data (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). I focused on interactions which emerged and affected students’ positioning acts over time, yet I also included interactions that were associated with the coding descriptions in the previous literature. This was done to justify and improve the precision of coding for relations. The two types of coding were applied as follows.

Inductive coding

Inductive coding, or labelling interaction which emerged from the collected data, was firstly used to capture actions which specifically occurred in group discussions. This bottom-up approach starts by investigating repeated ideas in the data, which are grouped to become codes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). When there were inconsistencies in actions, I used the coding schemes from the reviewed literature as a guide for justification.

Deductive coding

Code schemes from the previous literature were used as a guide to investigate how interactions are classified into meaningful positioning. An initial set of codes was derived from classroom-based literature focusing on students’ interactions and analyzing positioning acts (Martin-Beltran et al., 2016; Mendez and Garcia, 2011; Hinger, 2006; Storch, 2013; Kobayashi, 2013; Nicholas, 2015; Brooks, 2013; Jakonen and Morton, 2015; Thonus, 2008; Kontio, 2017). Then, the codes were applied to the data with computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (NVivo). The data were interpreted and labelled with words or phrases used to define interactions from the previous literature on classroom-based research (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.1: Coding guide from previous literature

Theme	Definitions of Codes	Referential Researchers
Solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirm/recognize shared or common experiences or feelings • recognize shared experiences and shared identities • affirm peers' perceptions of their experiences • acknowledge common struggles as language learners who make mistakes • seeking to "even out" differences together 	<p>Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016)</p> <p>Méndez and Garcia (2012)</p>
Group cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive/negative statements about a group member's or group's ability to perform well • mutual support and help among learners • allow learners to participate actively and of their own choice in classroom tasks • repeat and elaborate on each other's utterances 	<p>Hinger (2006)</p> <p>Storch (2013)</p>

Table 3.5: Coding guide from previous literature (Cont.)

Theme	Definitions of Codes	Referential Researchers
Peer support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate task definition and teacher expectations • Engage in collaborative dialogue to finish a writing task • Rehearse and perform peer coaching • Wait to provide peer opportunities to complete sentences • Prompt peers by repeating words • Offer a clear example of peers co-constructing a story to continue the task at hand • Jointly attempt to work out English grammar by using meta-talk (talk about language) • Further demonstrate the way meta-talk is used to consider the target language and to complete the task • Provide a next turn repair initiator, recasting the speaker's utterances • Provides further evidence of the participants adapting their assistance to the needs of their interlocutor 	Kobayashi (2003); Nicholas (2016)
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show encouragement or positive feedback • Recognize linguistics or academic expertise • Encourage partners to continue speaking • Allow partners to continue or take turns • Help a peer finish his/her sentences by offering word choices, repairing syntax or recasting 	Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016)

Table 3.5: Coding guide from previous literature (Cont.)

Theme	Definitions of Codes	Referential Researchers
Impatience and lack of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not allow partner to talk • Make fun of partner speaking L2 • Express a lack of awareness of partner's • Contribution • Disrespect peer's linguistic resources 	Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016)
Encouragement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give direct praise • Give group reinforcement 	Brooks (2013)
Knowledgeability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the topic as knowers • Ask for more information about the topic as unknowers 	Jakonen and Morton (2015)
Social inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions about interlocutors' experiences and identities to situate peer institutional (school) and social context (beyond school) • Ask about age, graduating class, family, • Ethnicity, heritage, membership or affinity • With academic or extra-curricular activities or favorite pastimes, often to seek common experience 	Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016)
Playfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show a degree of familiarity/intimacy with classmates in terms of address, ellipsis, contractions, colloquial language, L1, laughter, teasing, jokes, humor in talk. 	Thompson (2014) Thonus (2008) Kontio (2017)

The two approaches were applied in multiple ways throughout the coding processes of the thesis, specifically, in modifying or recoding processes where justification of the codes was needed. These mixed inductive-deductive steps assisted in the interpretation and classification of codes into ‘themes’ for further analysis.

The coding process for students’ interactions was adapted from Saldaña’s guidance for qualitative researchers (Saldaña, 2016). Coding has hierarchy as code and subcodes. For instance, within the code ‘Solidarity’, subcodes of recognizing shared experience and acknowledging struggles could emerge. The coding method captured both key social interactions and the subjective qualities of human experience, e.g. emotions, values and so on. The coding of group-discussion transcripts focused on student relations that are negotiated during group discussions. Video transcripts were also referenced to support the coding in case the audio scripts were unclear or needed more visual interpretation. Observation notes and interview scripts were finally coded to identify significant student backgrounds that were related to the ongoing interaction during group discussions. The coding process was divided into three cycles, as sketched below.

First coding cycle

The first coding cycle focused on finding student relations that emerged from the data to address or were associated with those outlined in Table 1. Subcodes may consist of a small number of turns or a longer exchange according to relations. Labelling of subcodes was adopted/adapted from words or phrases from the students’ interview transcripts, such as *dominating the talk*. When interaction was not addressed by students, I consulted the codes from the reviewed literature as my guide. Observation notes and interview scripts were also coded. This coding not only addressed student positioning acts, but also suggested how rights and duties were distributed.

Second coding cycle

The second coding cycle classified subcodes and their contents into different categories. This cycle involved the organization of subcodes within specific contexts of the current thesis. For example, subcodes *encouraging peers to speak* and *giving peers reinforcement* were placed in the same code - Peer Support - since encouraging and reinforcing acts were negotiated between peers, not non-peers. More details could be

added and categorized as sub-categories when there were important differences between focal student positioning acts over time and across contexts.

Third coding cycle

The third coding cycle focused on reviewing codes and subcodes, preparing arguments for the analysis of students' positioning. This included editing and re-coding to determine consistency for each level of the codes and their subcodes to ensure that each one identified changes in interaction, which was useful for the analysis of relations. Table 3.6 illustrates the coding descriptions from the previous literature and the reviewed codes for this thesis.

Table 3.2: Reviews of coding descriptions

Codes from previous literatures	Reviewed/ added codes	Definitions
Solidarity, group cohesion	Task Solidarity	Students accepted the right of the chapter leader.
Peer Support, Support, Impatience or lack of support and Encouragement	Individual Support	The right was given to one student/peer in each positioning act.
Knowledgeability	Expertise	Students gained a new right by showing their knowledge of a topic.
-	Power	Students challenged or rejected a position assigned or taken up during group discussion by taking more conversation turns.
Social enquiry and Playfulness	Negotiation of Social Distance	Peers and non-peers in group discussions gained access to this right by reducing or extending social distance.

These reviewed coding descriptions were based on interactions that emerged from group discussions and prepared for an analysis of how and why student relations were negotiated in positioning.

3.4.2 Investigating Student Positioning

My analysis of positioning was adapted from the analysis of positioning in positioning theory. The adaptation of the analysis is needed as the thesis focuses on individuals' interaction, which occurs between two or more individuals not just an action of an

individual. Positioning researchers are attentive to management of *actions* or any intentional activities and how those actions constitute a position of an individual and its consequence on the others (Harré and Slocum, 2003; Harré, Moghaddam, Cairnie, Rothbart & Sabat, 2009). Three categories of actions include actions that one has done, is doing or will do; those which one is permitted, allowed or encouraged to do; and those which one is physically and temperamentally capable of doing (Harré and Slocum, 2003, p. 125). When people engage in performing these three categories of actions, they (re)distribute rights and duties (Harré et al., 2009). Actions which are performed by individuals are interpreted by another person with whom they engage. One positioning and its consequence is addressed and explained in each investigation. In this thesis, actions between two individuals were investigated by means of the positioning of self and others. Two positions are consistently addressed throughout the thesis, such as expert/novice or dominant/passive, to highlight the students' relations rather than one-sided action.

After student interactions had been categorized in codes and subcodes, I analyzed students' positioning. The analysis of positioning was divided into three phases.

Phase 1: Selecting data for investigating student language use

I triangulated data sources to select data for the justification of each positioning. The data selected for the analysis of positioning had to be located in more than one source of data. For example, positioning that illustrated support in the code of Individual Support that emerged in group discussion transcripts had also to be present in observation notes and/or cross-referenced with interview scripts. This triangulation of the data helped to justify the social meaning of positioning (positioning act) and to discuss the findings in relation to the previous literature.

I also used the analysis of interaction and positioning from previous classroom-based literature to help me decide how to divide the data into extracts. Table 3.7 illustrates how different researchers have divided their data and carried out their analysis.

Table 3.3: Analysis of interaction and positioning from previous literature

Extraction	Steps	Researchers
Social discursive moves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify Language Related Episodes (LREs). - Identify social discursive moves that are related to and triggered LREs. - Analyze and explain moves that commonly occurred throughout interactions, facilitated or co-occurred with LREs in themes, such as social enquiry, support or solidarity. 	Martin-Beltran et al. (2016)
Word search sequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on an expert-novice model in word search (knower/unknower) and select 3 word-search sequences - Identify positions in conversations. - Analyze what and how language was used to build a sequence and enact the positioning of an expert. 	Reichert and Liebscher (2012)
Episodes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Divide significantly interactive episodes that could capture the positioning of students. - Analyze positioning acts and elaborate them with storylines as shapers. 	Pinnow and Chval (2015)

Although extracting data for analysis as *moves* could indicate how the students' language was shaped by social interactions, the foci of previous research were not the same as in my thesis. First, to identify social discursive moves, it is necessary to identify LREs and explain how they affect students' language used for talking about linguistic features. This is not the focus of my thesis, which aims to investigate the dynamics of students' relations that affect their opportunities for language learning, not their use of English to help them learn the language. Secondly, dividing the data into *sequences* could not fully apply here since I did not investigate a sequence, but rather any positions that emerged from the data over time. Sequencing may be helpful for analyzing expert/novice positioning at one moment, but not for covering other points of time. Therefore, I decided to divide the data for detailed language analysis into significantly

interactive *Episodes* as these could capture students' positioning and elaborate the positioning in each episode with storylines. Tracking the episode in which the same positions recur over time could illustrate changes in positioning and answer the research questions concerning the dynamics of the interpersonal relations.

Each episode that I extracted from the group discussions for positioning analysis had to illustrate changes in positioning and address the positioning between focal students and other students. Positioning one episode had to be addressed or cross-referenced with observation notes or interview data. Episodes which included these characteristics were selected for the analysis of positioning.

Excerpts, or extracts from the interview scripts in both Thai and English, were also used for understanding the background of positioning or interaction in the episode. Presenting interview data in the excerpt after the episode was useful for discussing students' storylines, which was helpful for the analysis of positioning.

Phase 2: Investigating student positioning through language within an episode

The second step of investigating positioning began after the episodes were divided and selected. I closely investigated each episode according to the following steps:

Identify positioning and positional changes

Positions in each episode were identified by actions that two or more students took to claim rights and perform duties. The identification of those actions was used to explain students' relations in group discussions. I focused on changes in positioning as they illustrated the dynamics of relations. This step listed the positions that emerged in group discussions.

Explain changes in positioning with storylines

The moment-to-moment context could be used to explain how and why students took up the position but could not explain why those positions changed, such as from chapter leader to encouraging student. I explained those changes with storylines related to positioning episodes, drawing from the interview data and/or observation notes. Storylines not only informed why students changed positions, but were also used to explain why certain discourses, such as commands or

questions, were provided for or restricted to students. This step also led to a further discussion of students' opportunities for language learning.

Phase 3: Investigating positioning over time

Student positionings over time were identified and explained by focusing on the same positioning episode of individual students at different points in time. Indeed, this phrase aims to track changes in student relations in response to the research question on how the students' positions changed over time. The analysis of positioning over time was divided into four steps.

Select focal students for tracking positional changes over time

To track changes of positioning over time and in depth, I selected two focal Thai students whose positionings recurred at different points of time. The re-positionings of these two explained how rights and duties were unequally and differently distributed at different times. The two focal students also had different relations with their peers and non-peers. One of the two focal students gained access to the right to speak and act and provided herself with opportunities to use English, while the other did not claim that right. Positioning analysis of the two students explains how and why the relations which were negotiated over time did not provide equal opportunities to them.

Select episodes for investigating student positioning over time

I investigated student positioning over time by comparing the episodes where the same positioning act recurred at different points in time. For instance, the episode which illustrated the positioning of supportive peers in Week 4 was compared to that positioning in Week 8 to identify similarities or differences in how positions and language used in positioning changed. The investigation of positioning within the same positioning over time could potentially provide insights into the impact of the dynamics of students' relations on their opportunities for language learning.

Examine how rights and duties were (re)distributed over time

While the moment-to-moment context helped to examine how and why students positioned themselves and others within an episode, storylines were helpful to explain why students maintained or changed their positions across episodes. This explanation was used to support the dynamics of positioning and relations that expanded across time and affected how students used language in positioning.

Analysis of positioning, such as chapter leader/group member or powerful/submissive, indicate how rights and duties which were assigned or (re)negotiated affected students' relations and the dynamics of relations. Pre-positioning could restrict someone's rights and duties assigned to them, or the rights and duties assigned to someone could restrict pre-positioning (Harré et al., 2009, p.10). These acts can be challenged or rejected over time through (re)positioning of the self and others. In group discussions, the chapter leader or group members may not perform their duties as assigned by the task or may be challenged by other group members, leading to changes in positioning. Changing positions requires access to new rights and duties, from which students could draw conversational or personal moral orders (during the task) instead of institutional moral orders (assigned rights and duties from the instructor). For instance, students gained access to the right to support or encourage their peers to talk in the group and interrupt the chapter leader who was assigned to talk. I focused on the moments when students took up other positions and created opportunities for themselves or others to act or talk in group discussions as the dynamics of relations. Close investigation of those dynamics could inform how and why the distribution of rights and duties created opportunities for student participation in group work.

Identify language used for positioning

As language is used by people as a tool to mediate the positioning they have or want to achieve, and to accept or reject others' positioning, tracking changes in language used for positioning contributes to identifying opportunities for language development. Close investigation of language used for positioning over time will help me discuss the research question on how opportunities for language learning are provided in student positioning over time. Interactions such as turn-taking, checking for confirmation, giving feedback or recasts were addressed to

identify what and how student positioning was achieved through language. Evident phrases or clauses that students used to claim rights and perform duties were also identified. Within an episode, the language used for positioning varied in each discussion group. Additionally, this identification was helpful for explaining how language evolved over time. Indeed, this step aims to eventually elaborate on language to locate the opportunities for language learning.

This research methodology chapter has explained the rationale for selecting a case study classroom, the research context and participants, the data collection methods and the data analysis methodology. The investigation of interaction for positioning will be divided into two chapters. Chapter 4 will focus on analyzing student positioning within an episode to explain how students' relations are negotiated, providing opportunities to interact in group discussions. Chapter 5 will analyze positioning of two focal students across time with a focus on the dynamics of students' relations as they contribute to opportunities to use English, and in turn, to language learning.

4 Positioning in Group Discussions

This chapter investigates students' interaction for positioning in order to explain and discuss students' relations during group discussions. The chapter starts with two pre-positionings that affected how students oriented themselves in group discussions throughout the length of the course. These pre-positionings are investigated through storylines reconstructed from observation notes and interview scripts. Following that, I apply positioning analysis to explore a range of positions and explain how rights and duties were distributed among students through their language use. The chapter closes with the implications of students' dynamics in group discussions of three focal students for a detailed investigation of their language use. These implications will be used for a discussion of dynamics of students' relations across contexts and time in Chapter 5 and explanation of students' opportunities for language learning in Chapter 6.

4.1 Pre-positioning and Named Relations in Group Discussions

Pre-positioning in this chapter is used to explain how students oriented themselves to each other and distributed rights and duties *before* group discussions. The relations in pre-positioning could be both assigned (e.g. chapter leader/ group members), and ascribed (peers/ non-peers). The first section analyzes and discusses how pre-positioning play a role during group discussion.

Pre-positioning of students assigned by the instructor which primarily aims to help with teaching the course limits students' rights and duties. The instructor expected students to maintain the position of chapter leaders/group members as explained in the course outline. The chapter leaders had the right to talk and manage group discussions study, with the duty to explain the lesson to their group members. The purposes of pre-positioning are stated in Excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1 Instructor pre-positioning students for group discussions

Interviewer: Why did you decide to choose a group discussion with a chapter leader and group member for your class?

Instructor: As you know, some of the students are full-time employees during the week somewhere else. They may not have enough time to complete all the readings. When they come back to class on Saturday morning, we need to discuss what the reading was all about. If the students did not have time to read the unit or chapter, they won't be able to make any contribution their understanding.

(Instructor's Interview – transcribed from English, Week 5)

From the instructor's viewpoint, chapter leaders were expected to take responsibility for completion of the task, not their group members, and in doing so they had more opportunities for using English than the others. In Excerpt 1, the instructor's purpose of pre-positioning was to help the students study the lesson before an in-class discussion and lecture. The instructor assigned the right and duties to the chapter leaders to explain the lesson. This provided them with opportunities to speak and act in group discussions, while restricting those opportunities for group members who would listen and respond to their leaders' talk.

Although the instructor of the course had explicitly assigned the positions, including rights and duties for completing group discussions in class, and had written them up in the course outline, not all focal students followed this pre-positioning. Rather, they had their own ways of managing group discussion. From observation notes and interview scripts, pre-positioning and positioning constituted assigned and ascribed relations. The following section elaborates these two kinds of relations which emerged

from positionings and storylines overarching students' backgrounds in excerpts from interview scripts and episodes from group discussions.

4.1.1 Pre-positioning and Storylines

Assigned relations construed in the instructor's pre-positioning refers to the chapter leaders/group members whose rights and duties were assigned by the instructor. The focal students accepted this set of relations by describing and explaining the content, or "doing the talk", in group discussions. The different responses to the rights and responsibilities of the assigned relations created two storylines and affected how students used language in groups.

Storyline 1 Chapter leaders had the right to engage in group discussions.

I was thinking like, ok, it's my responsibility to share with my classmates. Ok, I have a presentation to make. I have to modify it. I have to simplify it for better understanding. Sometimes the terminology is not so clear to me, then I want to explain to them, so I have to like take down notes. And when I, this is my principle, if I'm tasked to do a presentation, I want to do like, to have a connection to my audience. So if you want to have a connection, you just don't look at the book all the time, and read in front of them. So, eye contact is a way of like you can just use this as a guide to to to facilitate with your group.

(Simon's First Interview – transcribed from English, Week 5)

The first storyline shows the full rights and responsibilities of the chapter leaders, who were required to manage group discussion. Simon was one of the non-Thai students in the class; he followed the classroom instruction and course outline in order to complete the group discussion activity. During the first time as a group leader, he prepared a handout (he referred to this as a *guide* in Storyline 1) for other classmates who participated in his discussion group. While explaining the lesson point by point, as listed in his handout, he also paid attention to the time spent on each step of the discussion. Whenever the group members gave their opinions on his handout, he would stop them and bring them back to the topic. His pre-positioning of chapter leader was aligned with the rights and duties indicated in the course outline and the instructor's directions and seemed to impact his group members' relations.

To take up the position assigned by the instructor, students had to prepare themselves for their own understanding of the lesson, how to deliver the content of the lesson, and how they would use language to communicate before the group discussion started. When the discussion started, students would speak and act on what they had planned to claim the rights as assigned by the instructor. The focal students whose storylines were in line with Simon were Grace, Fon and Pam. These students followed the instructions and steps of how to oversee a group discussion as written in the course outline.

4.1.2 Social Dimensions Affecting Positioning

Three social dimensions, i.e. group cohesion, familiarity and social hierarchies, which were involved in positioning during group discussions impacted the instructor's assignment of rights and duties. While the rights and duties of the chapter leader given to students limited their opportunities to act and speak in group discussions, students' ascribed relations provided them with more opportunities. The following storylines from the three focal students indicate that the three social dimensions which constituted ascribed relations of เพื่อน (*Pheuan* – loosely translated as 'peers or friends'), พี่ (*Phii* - loosely translated as 'seniors'), and น้อง (*Nong* - loosely translated as 'junior') affected group discussion. The following section discusses how these dimensions influenced positioning during group discussions in Section 4.2.

The group cohesion had evidently been affected group formation. From the observation notes, students were sitting next to their classmates whom they had known since the orientation event before the semester started, remained in the same places in class, and participated in the same group discussions throughout the length of the course. Storyline 2 explains how group cohesion affected the group formation.

Storyline 2 Group Cohesion and Familiarity facilitated the group formation

ถามว่าสนิทกันแล้วมีผลยังไงต่อความสัมพันธ์นะเธอ เอาจริงๆ นะ อย่างเช่น พวกที่สนิทกัน หรือไม่มีเพื่อนเขาก็จับกลุ่มด้วยกัน โดยส่วนตัวคิดว่าไม่อยากจะอยู่กลุ่มเดียวซ้ำๆ ไปตลอด อยากเรียนรู้วิธีการทำงานกับเพื่อนคนอื่นๆ ในห้องบ้าง

How does familiarity with the group affect relationships? Honestly, for example, those (classmates) who are familiar with each other will definitely

have a discussion group. But personally, I don't want to stay in the same group all the time. I want to explore how to work with different groups of classmates.

(Film's Second Interview – translated from Thai, Week 15)

The influence of familiarity between students on their participation in the group was also clear. One of the focal students, Film, participated in a different group discussion each week. She changed her location in class each week and did not talk with nearby classmates during class time, except when discussion was required. From the interview data, she did not have peers in class, so she had to find classmates who were non-peers and available to her to form a discussion group.

From Storyline 2, familiarity between students also impacted group formation. In Film's opinion, students who were *Pheuan* could easily form groups. The relations of peers were negotiated before a group discussion, dividing students who joined the same groups into *peers* and *non-peers*. However, it was her preference not always to participate in the same group but to work with different classmates each week. She did not act as a peer to other students as she did not exploit familiarity to form a group. Familiarity with peers was an alternative way for students to build up and coexisted with the pre-positioning of the chapter leader. This means the positioning of peers was optional, providing unequal opportunities to interact and participate in groups.

As group cohesion tied students and their peers together, both outside and inside the classroom, peers spent more time talking with each other than with other classmates. One focal student's peer group clearly stated that they spent more time with peers and helped each other with their project in every class than with non-peers. Storyline 3 explains how cohesion affected Grace and her peers.

Storyline 3 Group cohesion promoted students' collaborative learning.

ผู้สัมภาษณ์	พวกเราคิดว่าความสัมพันธ์ของกลุ่มเพื่อนมีผลต่อการทำงานกลุ่มยังไงบ้าง
เกรซ	โอ เมื่อวานนี้เองค่ะ เราช่วยกันแก้งานเดียวกัน
ลักษณะ	ถึงแม้จะไม่ใช่งานกลุ่มแต่เราก็ช่วยกันตรวจ เราช่วยกันทั้งงานเดี่ยวและงานกลุ่มค่ะ
นุ่น	ถ้าเป็นเรื่องความถูกต้องของภาษาเราต้องการเพื่อนช่วยเราคิด
จ๊อบ	มันไม่ใช่การแข่งขันเรียนนะคะ แต่มันเป็นการช่วยเหลือกันมากกว่า

Interviewer: How do you think the relations in your peer group affected how you work as a group?

Grace: Oh, it was yesterday. We helped each other fix individual assignments.

Lux: Although it's not group work, we helped each other to check (the language). We helped each other in both individual and group projects.

Nim: If it's about the accuracy of language, we need Pheuan to help with our thinking.

Jib: It's not a competition. In fact, it's learning assistance.

(Grace's Group Interview – translated from Thai, Week 5)

The group cohesion of peers promoted collaborative learning and provided opportunities for peers to help each other. Grace and her three peers had known each other since the orientation session and sat next to each other in class in every course for which they enrolled. They formed a discussion group easily and immediately after the instructor's assignment. They communicated with each other both inside and outside the classroom via instant messenger. With this cohesiveness of peers, they had opportunities to speak in their peer group rather than in non-peer groups. From Storyline 3, Grace and her peers stated that peer assistance was necessary when they worked together on group or individual work. In the group discussion, this cohesion provided opportunities for Grace as a group leader and her peers as group members to help each other manage the discussion (see Section 4.2). Group cohesion of peers evidently promotes assistance between peers.

Thai social hierarchy also gave students less freedom and fewer choices to preposition each other in a classroom where ages are different. Addressing other students by Thai kin terms (*Phii* and *Nong*) both identified a hierarchy of social status and signified the influence of Thai social hierarchy. When Thai students addressed other classmates who were older than themselves as *Phii*, it confirmed their place in a larger social hierarchy, and as *Nong* in a smaller place. Storyline 4 illustrates how this social hierarchy impacted on how rights and duties were distributed in group discussions.

Rights and duties were granted to older students in the class as a priority. In Storyline 4, Film called another student *Nong* and herself *Phii*. The social hierarchy of senior and junior affected how they worked as a group. Film reported that she was given priority to choose what sub-task she would do for the group. In other words, she was allowed to select first, as she was older than the others. From the observation notes, the junior students in some groups in which Film participated showed respect to Film and let her speak first. The social hierarchy affected students' positioning in terms of the rights to act and duties, which were not equally distributed, and the dynamics between them.

Storyline 4 Thai social hierarchy influenced rights and duties in group discussion.

เวลาเราแบ่งงานกันย่อยๆ น้องก็จะให้พี่ฟิล์มเลือกก่อนว่าจะทำอันไหน

We divide a task into sub-tasks, but Nong would let Phii Film choose what to do first...

(Film's Second Interview – translated from Thai, Week 15)

4.1.3 Alignment of Pre-positioning

The pre-positionings of group leader/ group members was not always aligned with the purpose of the instructor's group discussions, which affected the redistribution of rights and duties. Instead of giving the right to chapter leaders to talk, group members were required to contribute to group discussions. Storyline 5 shows the re-distribution of rights and duties from Cheng, one of the focal participants, who did not follow the instructor's pre-positioning.

Storyline 5 Classmates had equal rights and duties to contribute to group discussions.

1. จ๊อบ Chapter leader คนอื่น ๆ จะ พูดในสิ่งที่ตัวเองอ่านมา แต่แบบของแข็งนี้ คือ เหมือนมา discuss ในสิ่งที่อ่านมาแชร์ความคิดกัน แชร์ความคิดกันตามที่เข้าใจ หัวข้อที่ได้รับมอบหมายมา
2. นุ่ม เล่าต้องการความเห็นจากทุกคน

3. จีบ มากกว่าอ่านแล้วก็มาเล่าสู่กันฟัง
1. Jib: Other chapter leaders will talk about whatever they have read. But Cheng's leading style is like discussing what you have read, sharing ideas. Sharing what you have understood from the topic.
2. Nim: He wants responses and opinions from everyone.
3. Jib: Rather than reading and re-telling.

(Grace's First Group Interview – translated from Thai, Week 5)

Contributions to group discussions provided opportunities to act and speak for both group leaders and members. From Storyline 5, Cheng rejected the instructor's distribution of the rights and duties of chapter leaders and re-distributed those rights and duties to classmates who participated in his discussion group. From the observation notes, he was the only focal student who asked the most questions and had the longest conversations with the instructor and other classmates after the group discussion as stated in Storyline 6.

Storyline 6 The redistribution of rights and duties provided opportunities for classmates to talk in group discussions.

Interviewer: Why did you ask a lot of questions in class?

Cheng: This is a postgraduate programme. Back in China we call it a research programme. I think it's supposed to be based on research, rather than reading the book, going through it and memorizing. It is not a one-on-one class and I cannot say that I can please everyone or my questions will be of interest to everyone. But it should find some common interest and be very much related to the chapter or the content of the lecture, and I have to make sure that my language is clearly understood. It's highly understandable. I do not use complicated structures or words, and everyone can understand my questions. Maybe it's just my own belief. But in this way, we can have interactions between teacher and students, and students and students.

(Cheng's Interview – transcribed from English, Week 5)

Social background of students was also drawn as interpersonal resources to help with positioning. In Storyline 6, when Cheng was a chapter leader, he pre-positioned all of his group members as discussion members and distributed the rights and duties for them to talk and respond to him. This positioning was in contrast to the instructor's assignment, yet it gave more opportunities to use English for discussing the topic to his group members.

4.1.4 Pre-positioning, Positioning and Local Moral Orders

A range of pre-positionings was negotiated at multiple levels of local moral orders. Those moral orders for the aforementioned pre-positionings were drawn from four levels: institutional, personal, cultural and conversational. Students negotiated the pre-positioning of chapter leaders/group members at the institutional level as those rights and duties were assigned by the instructor. Those who pre-positioned themselves and others within this moral order restricted the rights and duties to manage group discussions to themselves. However, the local moral orders of pre-positionings that created ascribed relations varied. Some focal students pre-positioned themselves and others with reference to the relations of their peers according to a personal moral order, while others pre-positioned others and were pre-positioned within the social hierarchy according to a cultural moral order. Indeed, only one focal student's pre-positioning was negotiated at this cultural level at the point of group discussion. These different moral orders affected students' unequal opportunities to act and speak in group discussions.

The aforementioned sub-sections have explained social dimensions, storylines and storylines used in positioning throughout the group discussion activity. The following section will address and explain how pre-positionings and the overarching storylines influence the dynamics in group discussions and, in turn, create unequal opportunities for language learning.

4.2 Positioning and Dynamics of Students' Relations in Group Discussions

This section focuses on changes in position during group discussions of focal students to explain why and how rights and duties were distributed and how relations were negotiated and affected their opportunities to interact and participate in groups. Based

on the criteria for selecting data sets for analysis (see Section 3.3.1), five codes will be organized and explained as themes of students' relations emerged from coding student interactions in group discussions: *Task Solidarity, Individual Support, Expertise, Power, and the Negotiation of Social Distance*. The sub-sections that follow explain the arguments/points with references to Storylines 1–6 and provide examples from group discussions in 'Episodes'. Students' language choices used for positioning are also discussed.

4.2.1 Maintaining the Assigned Relations

Task Solidarity refers to cooperation between students to complete a task. This theme was evident in a situation when a chapter leader and his/her group members cooperated to complete sub-tasks by discussing the topic and formulating three questions based on the discussion.

The rights and duties in the theme Task Solidarity were distributed to the chapter leaders, as assigned by the instructor. The chapter leaders contributed to group discussions with *social* and *academic commitment*. While social commitment was the cooperation of students to work on a task, academic commitment revolved around checking comprehension of the topic discussed to complete the task.

Social Commitment

This type of commitment was used to ensure that the discussion would proceed and meet the goal of the task. Social commitment was demonstrated by *managing the task and taking responsibility for it*. The following instances illustrate how students used language to engage in these actions as social commitment.

Episode 1 Positioning of task manager

1. Film: Do we need to go through all of them[↑]? Each group? [↑]
2. Grace: Yeah. We have to go through all of them. Erm...so let's see. The overall... This is the title second language learning. So it's gonna be about (0.2) the proCESS and characteristics and something.>Let's start with the characteristics and then go to conditions and then< (0.3) > Erm...how they produced things

in stages of something and yeah their vocabulary< then (0.3)

SEQUENCES

(Grace's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 3)

Social commitment was achieved with a request for confirmation and a long response. Group members used the request as a prompt for the chapter leader to manage the task. In Episode 1, Grace managed the task when Film asked for confirmation on the instructions for the task. The question was used to ensure that the group discussed the topic and formulated three questions within the time constraint. Grace started the discussion and continued talking on each topic in the textbook. While others were skimming through their textbooks and looking for the topics described by Grace, Film, expressing her concern about the time constraint, then asked, *Do we need to go through all of them? Each group?* (Turn 1). Grace spontaneously responded to Film by saying, *Yeah. We have to go through all of them*, and advanced the group discussion by giving an outline of the discussed chapter (Turn 2). In the sequence of steps for managing the task, group members and the chapter leader cooperated to build task solidarity. Asking questions and responses with explanations were two kinds of language use in this case.

The rights and duties of the chapter leader in managing the task were maintained and distributed through the positioning of the *task manager* and *followers*. In this case, Grace claimed the rights of chapter leader by positioning herself as a person who managed the task and other group members as followers.

Storyline 1 was used in this Episode to highlight the assigned relations of chapter leader to carry out the group discussion (See Section 4.1.1). The group members accepted that Grace had the right to talk and direct the group discussion. Opportunities to use language were provided for Grace and restricted to the others in the discussion group.

Another important kind of social commitment that students had undertaken in positioning during group discussions was taking responsibility for completion of the task. Chapter leaders performed this duty assigned by two actions: *giving directions* and *reminding group members of their task responsibility*. Chapter leaders guided their group members through the discussion and prompted them when they found that their group members were not performing the task. In other words, they upheld the duty of

chapter leaders responsible for completion of the task. Episode 1 also illustrates the place of this responsibility.

Giving directions was a right restricted to the chapter leaders, which provided opportunities to give commands in English. As a chapter leader, in order to give directions for the discussion to her group members, Grace started her sentences with, *Let's see* and *Let's start with...* (Episode 1, Turn 2) while explaining the outline of her talk based on the textbook. It was Grace's responsibility to include everyone as group members and give directions to other students for completion of the task. Grace's use of *Let's see* and *Let's start with...* (Turn 2) as commands helped her with the positioning of *task manager* and maintained the relations of chapter leader/group members.

Reminding the classmates about the task was an action that enhanced the right of the chapter reader for completion of that task. Although this action was not explicitly addressed in the instructions for group discussion, the group leader took this action to manage the task and build up Task Solidarity. Episode 2 illustrated how the chapter leader reminded others about the task by implicitly expressing her members' responsibilities.

Episode 2 Positioning of task reminder

1. Grace: In development (0.3) Have you [reed? ↑ Have you read? ↑
2. Film: (H) <Of course, we↑ have↓>]
3. Jib: [Yeah]
4. Grace: Yeah, right?↑ And then in that sequences, we're gonna separate...

(Grace's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 3)

Asking questions was the language used as a reminder of the responsibility for the task. The function of questioning shifted to reminding about the group member's responsibility so as to build up Task Solidarity. In Episode 2, Grace reminded her group members of their responsibility to the group, taking up the position of a *task reminder*. While giving directions to group members, Grace looked at Film, who had just stopped skimming through the textbook. Grace paused and asked her, *Have you..., have you read?* (Episode 2, Turn 1), implicitly reminding her that it was the responsibility of all

group members to read the textbook before the discussion. Film's and Jib's responses to the reminder showed their responsibility to the group (Turns 2–3). The question-answer turns signified a transition to new positions taken up by Grace and her group members. When responsibility to the group was acknowledged, Grace advanced the discussion (Turn 4). In this way, the positioning of group members as a *task reminder* and *followers* was identified as a social commitment to complete the task and, in turn, for group members to accept the rights and duties and maintain the assigned relations of the chapter leader/group members.

Academic Commitment

Unlike social commitment, academic commitment refers to understanding the topic discussed. As the focal students referred to, reflected on, or commented on the textbook's content, they claimed the rights and duties of the pre-positioning of the chapter leader in task solidarity through academic commitment. Chapter leaders ensured group members understood the topic via two actions: *checking* and *assessing group comprehension*. Each focal student had different ways to use language to advance the discussion with or without others' comprehension of their explanation.

Students made use of Thai to better understand the English content. Shifting English to Thai in this episode affected how L1 was used to communicate by the students to position themselves in the group discussion. Thai EAL students used English and/or Thai to check comprehension since the teacher allowed the use of Thai for discussions. However, only one of the focal students, Fon, often used both English and Thai to check her group members' comprehension. Episode 3 shows how the two languages were used for better understanding of the discussion.

Episode 3 Positioning of comprehension checker

1. Fon: When they know the the pattern that that very different they will aware in... in study second language (0.3) so they may change something in the pattern.

(0.3) Understand↑? เข้าใจไหมปะ

(You understand, don't you)

2. Tim: เข้าใจ (Understand)

3. Fon อิม เหมือนกับว่ารู้ว่าสิ่งที่เราเรียนมันเป็นสิ่งใหม่ แล้วเราก็รู้ว่ามันแตกต่างจากภาษาเรา ดังนั้นอาจจะมีการปรับเปลี่ยนอะไรไปบ้าง เปลี่ยนคำพูดเวลาเราพูดบางภาษา (like we know that what we learn is a new language and we also know that it is different from our language. So, there could be some changes or words when we speak another language) Something like that. I think you should see example. You will (h) you will understand clearly.

(Fon Group Discussion – transcribed from English/ translated from Thai, Week 3)

An explicit and reduced form of yes-no questions in Thai and English was used for checking comprehension and claiming the rights of the chapter leader. The use of comprehension checking questions was essential for resolving one's own and others' uncertainty and to show the academic commitment of the chapter leader. In Episode 3, Fon checked her group members' comprehension by using basic yes-no questions in English and Thai after she had seen that Tim was looking at the textbook with no notable verbal, facial or gestural response. She paused twice (Turn 1) while looking at Tim, then she directly checked his comprehension, using both English and Thai, by saying *Understand? เข้าใจไหมปะ (You understand, don't you)* (Turn 1). Tim responded with a short clause in Thai in a low tone (Turn 2), which was not sufficient for Fon to advance the discussion. Fon then rechecked by translating her comments from English into Thai (Turn 3). In the Thai version, she did not check her peers' comprehension. Fon positioned herself as a *comprehension checker* to check comprehension and others as *responders*. Although this positioning limited Fon's opportunities for using English, it helped her to maintain the rights and perform the duties of a chapter leader.

Ascribed relations of peers also affected students' academic commitment and their use of L1. Some focal students, e.g. Fon, found they needed to use Thai to aid them and their peers' comprehension of the lesson. Excerpt 2 explains why and how Fon used Thai to build academic commitment in Task Solidarity.

Excerpt 2 Use of Thai for comprehension check

บางหัวข้อก็ใช้ภาษาง่ายต่อการเข้าใจ บางทีก็อ่านจากโน้ตที่เตรียมมาบ้าง แต่เวลาอ่านจากโน้ต หรือว่าอธิบายให้เพื่อน ๆ ฟัง คู่เคียง ๆ กัน หนูก็เลยเปลี่ยนเป็นภาษาไทย อธิบายเป็นภาษาไทย

แล้วก็ยกตัวอย่างเป็นภาษาไทย เพื่อนบอก *Okay, I see* แต่ก็ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษพูดกับเพื่อน
คนอื่นในวิชาอื่น เวลาที่ไม่ได้อยู่กลุ่มเดียวกันกับเพื่อน

For some topics, I used simple (English) language for easy understanding. I referred to my short notes. But when I read from the notes or explained the topics to them, they looked confused. So I changed to Thai. When I explained and gave examples in Thai, my friends said okay, I see (in English). But I use English to speak with other students in another course when I am not in the same group with my Pheuan.

(Fon's Interview – translated from Thai, Week 6)

The ascribed relations of peers provided and restricted opportunities for using English between peers. In Excerpt 2, Fon explained why she needed Thai to aid others and herself. Fon simplified her explanation to her group members to assist with comprehension, but she noticed that her group members did not understand her explanation. Thus, she changed to Thai to re-explain the topic with examples. In this case, the opportunities for using English were restricted as she stated that Thai was helpful for checking comprehension and explaining the lesson to her peers. However, those opportunities were provided for her when she participated in the same group with non-peers. Using Thai with peers was necessary for maintaining task solidarity and fulfilling her academic commitment to peers.

The use of Thai for building up academic commitment provided unequal opportunities for language learning among the focal students and their peers in this thesis. Not every focal student, however, used Thai with peers in group discussions. While using Thai was optional for Fon, Grace did not use Thai to check her peers' comprehension during group discussions. Grace and her peers used English to explain and discuss the topic with or without another classmate participating in their group discussion. From their group interview, they claimed that it was not difficult for them to comprehend the lesson. Instead, using English in the discussion provided them with opportunities to practise English in class time.

Another action that showed academic commitment was *assessing group comprehension*. Chapter leaders regularly assessed group members' responses, not only with simple and short compliments such as *good, great, or perfect*, but also by creating

a classic Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) sequence. Cheng was particularly known for this practice. Excerpt 3 shows how Cheng built up academic commitment with the need for responses from his group members.

Excerpt 3 The need for responses from group members

1. จีบ Chapter leader คนอื่น ๆ จะพูดในสิ่งที่ตัวเองอ่านมา แต่แบบของเขานี้คือเหมือนมา discuss ในสิ่งที่อ่านมาแชร์ความคิดกัน แชร์ความคิดกันตามที่เข้าใจหัวข้อที่ได้รับมอบหมายมา
 2. นีม ต้องการความเห็นจากทุกคน
 3. จีบ มากกว่าอ่านแล้วก็มาเล่าสู่กันฟัง
1. Jib: Other chapter leaders will talk about whatever they have read. But Cheng's leading style is like discussing what you had read, sharing ideas. Sharing what you have understood from the topic.
2. Nim: He wants responses and opinions from everyone.
3. Jib: Rather than reading and re-telling.

(Grace's First Group Interview – translated from Thai, Week 5)

The rights and duties of chapter leaders were redistributed to group members when responses were needed in group discussions. In Excerpt 3, Jib and Nim confirmed the need to respond. Jib contrasted Cheng's pre-positioning of chapter leader with other classmates who took up the same position, stating that Cheng was different in that he preferred his group members to talk and give responses. Thus, not only the leader's academic commitment but how he exercised that commitment influenced the dynamics of relations of the group members and their opportunities for using English. This distribution of right and duties is illustrated in Episode 4.

Episode 4 Positioning of assessor

1. Cheng: How do you correct the errors or you correct the mistakes?
2. Jib: I think Er:: at first its's the same thing but it's not.=
3. Lux: =Mistake is it about is something about the action[↑] and error is something about about the knowledge that you input. I'm not sure (h)
4. Cheng: WOW. Very profound. OK, GOOD. Yeah, you're right.

Actions like handwriting and careless. Yeah. And errors about erm knowledge and also about the distinct. It's normally called the bi the difference between the two languages and the target language and the first language, right? ↑ Yeah, I think that's a good idea.

(Cheng Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 8)

The positioning of *assessors* and use of the IRE pattern helped chapter leaders to build up academic commitment in Task Solidarity. In Episode 4, Cheng asked a question that required responses from his group members. This question served as a request for contributions to the group discussion. In the previous conversations with Jib and Lux, Cheng had been explaining the differences between mistakes and errors as a chapter leader. Then, he used a question to exercise the rights and duties of an assessor, by asking his group members *How to do you correct the errors or you correct the mistakes?* (Turn 1). He was assessing their understanding of what had been said. Jib and Lux responded (Turns 2 and 3), and while neither group member gave precisely correct answers to his question, Cheng complimented Lux with, *Very profound. OK, good* (Turn 4). Each affirmation performed a different function. The first went to the content, while the second to Lux. The third assessment, *Yeah, I think that's a good idea*, appreciated Lux's contribution. Cheng took up an *assessor* position to support the group's comprehension from the *assessed students* in the group. Cheng claimed the right to assess group members in his duties of assessor, while maintaining his duties of chapter leader.

Chapter leaders positioned themselves in academic commitment in different ways. While Fon used Thai and English to make a contribution to the task (Episode 3), Cheng redistributed rights and duties to his group members as a request for their contributions (Episode 4). Students in Cheng's group had more opportunities for sharing opinions in English, not only because he was a non-Thai student, but also his demand and assessment of their comprehension, which evidently increased their language use.

Students' exercising of rights and duties in social and academic commitment in Task Solidarity created unequal opportunities for using English. Students who were positioned as task manager, task reminder, comprehension checker and assessor were

able to use questions or commands to maintain the assigned relations of chapter leaders/ group members and provide themselves with opportunities for using English. In contrast, students who negotiated the ascribed relations of peers to claim the rights and duties of chapter leaders lost those opportunities. The choices of negotiating between the two kinds of relations shaped and were shaped by their language use, depending on how individuals exercised the rights and duties of those positions that emerged during group discussions. Positioning in Task Solidarity revealed that multiple positioning occurred and overlapped positions between the pre-positioning of chapter leaders and peers when students contributed to the task.

4.2.2 Assisting Individual Students to Maintain their Duties

Individual Support is defined as the assistance provided to an individual student during group discussions. Group members gave assistance to chapter leaders when a discussion was delayed or could not proceed. The right to assist chapter leaders was not distributed to them by the assigned relations, so students negotiated ascribed relations by repositioning the self and others within a personal moral order (before a group discussion), or a conversational moral order (during a group discussion) to claim that right.

The rights and duties in Individual Support were redistributed in two actions: giving *encouragement* and *reinforcement*. I explain these two with example episodes and interview data, discuss why and how they shape and are shaped by language, and discuss the dynamics of relations impact on opportunities for using English at the end of this section.

Giving encouragement

Encouragement emerged when students helped an individual group member to talk about a topic. Giving encouragement was accomplished via two actions: *requesting clarification* and *giving supportive responses*. These two actions helped either a group leader or a group member to take more turns in the group discussion, re-distributing the right to an individual.

Requesting clarification was used between peers to help with maintaining the pre-positioning of chapter leaders. The language used for requesting clarification was a

question and a command. Episode 5 illustrates how Grace regained the right to continue talking from the positioning of help seeker.

Episode 5 Positioning of help seeker

1. Grace: I think it's gonna be benefit because you're gonna. You're brand or have the three have the or >I don't know<
2. Jib: What? Say it.
3. Group: (h)
4. Grace: You know what the overall thing it's going to be in the book.
(0.5) OK. Let me catch my breath again and (0.7) So here they said about cognitive maturity and matter linguistics together...
(Grace Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 3)

Re-positioning of peers in group discussions provided chapter leaders with opportunities to take more turns and maintain their duties. Students used a question and a request for clarification to redistribute the right to their peer, who was a chapter leader. In Episode 5, Grace had introduced the topic of learning language but had difficulty elaborating it (Turn 1). The statement *I don't know* (Turn 1) marked her seeking help from her peers, positioning herself as a *help seeker*. However, Grace's positioning was rejected as Jib did not help her explain the lesson. Instead, Jib requested clarification and commanded Grace by saying, *What? Say it* (Turn 2). Jib positioned herself as neither a group member nor a help giver, but as *an encouraging peer*, who gave the right to take more turns to Grace. The group laughed as another group member did not assume the right to command the chapter leader (Turn 3). Jib granted Grace the right to take the next turn to perform her duty. This encouragement in individual support showed that the re-positioning of peer students influenced their opportunities for using more English.

The reason that re-positioning of peers emerged in Episode 5 was the peers' familiarity. In Excerpt 3, Grace explains the importance of familiarity in comprehension and the freedom to speak about her familiarity with peers.

Excerpt 4 Familiarity and support

ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างเพื่อนน่าจะทำให้พูดมากขึ้น เพราะว่าหนูคิดว่าเค้าเข้าใจหนู ดังนั้นไม่ว่า หนูจะพูดอะไรเค้าก็จะเข้าใจทันที เพราะฉะนั้นก็เลยพูดแสดงความคิดเห็นได้เต็มที่ “I think it should be like this” “I want this” นี่ก็คือ support

Familiarity between Pheuan probably makes me talk more because I think they understand me. So, whatever I say, they get it right away. So, I can freely express my ideas. “I think it should be like this”, “I want this”. I think this is “support”.

(Grace's First Group Interview – translated from Thai, Week 10)

To others, giving a command to chapter leaders may violate the right, but not in the relations between peers. Peers took more turns in group discussions as they were familiar with each other and had more freedom to talk. While this re-positioning of peers was emerging, the duty of chapter leaders was facilitated. Grace reclaimed the right to talk in the group with encouragement from her peers. Excerpt 3 was in line with Storyline 3 where Grace's peers helped each other both inside and outside the classroom (see Section 4.1.2). The increased amount of language use that emerged with the support of peers and peer assistance in the form of encouragement provided opportunities for using more English.

Chapter leaders' duties could also be facilitated by non-peers through giving supportive responses, completing, restating or agreeing with another's statement. These actions of encouragement were evident when a chapter leader had difficulty explaining a topic. Episode 6 illustrates how encouragement was negotiated with non-peer students.

Episode 6 Positioning of help seeker/encouraging non-peers

1. Kate: The main point of this proposal is ah:: (0.3) when you teach language to the students, you should know the developmental features (0.3) You should teach them Er::m orderly (0.5) Cause like (0.3) we learn (h)
2. Simon: From simple to complicated one. Right? ↑

3. Kate: Yes. (0.3) If you didn't teach the first stage, you should teach the first stage first and [then] teach the second stage.
4. James: Teach them in order.

(Simon's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 9)

Non-peers also helped their chapter leader to perform their duty to complete the task. In Episode 6, Kate, a chapter leader, was explaining one of the teaching concepts, “teach what is teachable”. During her explanation, Simon probably found it difficult to understand as she paused five times and left two statements incomplete, *Cause like* and *We learn* (Turn 1). Simon then took the next turn and completed her sentence with, *From simple to complicated one*, adding a clarification marker, *Right?* (Turn 2). This supportive response to Kate, positioning him as an *encouraging speaker*, was simultaneously positioning Kate as a *help seeker*. James also took a subsequent turn and recast Kate's, *Teach the first stage first and [then] teach the second stage* (Turn 3) with, *Teach them in order* (Turn 4). This instance is also an example of positioning others with an act interpretation. Although Kate had not positioned herself as a help seeker, it was interpreted and positioned as such by Simon and James. The positioning of others enabled students to take up more positions in the discussion, enhancing opportunities for language use.

Students took up those positions by changing their language choice to requesting clarification with a request and a command, and giving supportive responses, respectively. Longer speech turns were given even more to peers as they claimed the right to talk from their familiarity and dynamics of peers. Non-peers took turns to request clarification and to recast what other non-peers stated when their chapter leader needed support. Opportunities for language use were provided for both chapter leaders and/or group members when they encouraged one another.

Giving Reinforcement

Reinforcement occurred between peers and non-peers. Students helped their peers to continue talking or arguing with non-peers. Peers interrupted non-peers who did not give responses that supported their peers. Reinforcement required coordination among peers, so it emerged in the group formed by peers with non-peers as outsiders of the peer group. As non-peers did not have the familiarity and cohesion that peers did, they

did not have the right to position themselves peers and perform the duties of peers, i.e. helping one another to talk. An evident instance of giving reinforcement emerged in the group discussion where Grace and her peers participated in the same group with Cheng, who was their non-peer. Episode 7 shows how Grace and her peers coordinated to give reinforcement as a positioning in Individual Support.

Episode 7 Positioning of a reinforcing peer

1. Cheng: The teacher explains in in in THAI, and the students answer in Thai. Then you you continue to speak THAI. Students continue to speak THAI. The WHOLE thing become the Thai programme. (0.3) You got what I am saying].
(put a left hand towards Lux)
2. Lux: So just like just some kind of vocabulary, right ? or=
3. Cheng: =Well, I think it it depends on how you do it.=
4. Lux: I mean [I mean like
5. Cheng: It depends on] the amount of the Thai usage and also [you have to make sure that in what circum<

(Lux was looking at Grace and Jib back and forth. She said something to Jib.)

6. Grace: >And and<] พูดไปเลย เต็มที่ (Say it out. Do your best.)

(While talking, Grace raises her left hand and waves as soon as Lux turns to her.)

7. Lux: And just like some words that we cannot explain in English.

(Grace's group discussion – transcribed from English, Week 10)

Interruptions in English and commands in Thai were used to give reinforcement between peers and a non-peer. Students used English statements to stop their non-peer's talk and Thai commands as reinforcement for their peer to continue talking in group discussions. In Episode 7, Lux, a chapter leader, was explaining about Thai students learning English. In turn, Cheng asserted that Thai teachers who explained English chapters in Thai would turn an English class into a Thai class (Turn 1). He changed the topic from students learning English to Thai teachers teaching English and positioned himself as a non-Thai speaker. When Lux attempted to respond that Thai EAL teachers used Thai to explain vocabulary (Turn 2), Cheng interrupted with a response that did

not align with Lux (Turn 3). When Lux attempted to clarify (Turn 4), Cheng again interrupted to continue his explanation (Turn 5). This positioning act was interpreted as that of a *non-encouraging speaker* as his interruptions did not facilitate Lux's pre-positioning of a chapter leader and her duty to explain the topic. Lux then turned to Grace and Jib for help, positioning herself as a *help seeker* and talking to her peers in a soft voice. Having noticed Lux's apparent distress, Grace raised her hand, waved to Lux and stated, พูดไปเลย เต็มที่ >And and< Say it out. Do your best, in Thai (Turn 6). She interrupted Cheng's talk to explain Lux's previous statement and positioned herself as a *reinforcing peer*. These Thai sentences were comprehensible only among the three peers as Cheng was not Thai. The following communication between peers and the reinforcement provided Lux with the next turn (Turn 7). Lux reclaimed her right to speak as a chapter leader with a pre-positioning act of a peer and the positioning of an encouraging peer. Students not only offered encouragement, but also negotiated reinforcement when their peers were not fully supported by non-peers.

This instance of reinforcement is a vivid example of relations between peers and non-peers significantly affecting students' opportunities for using English over time. The emergence of the dynamics in Episode 7 was a recurring form of positioning over time in the same group discussion. From the observation notes, Cheng had been continuously non-supportive and had interrupted Lux five times before Episode 7. Although Grace had not responded verbally, she had been watching the dynamics between Lux and Cheng. Thus, she was ready to respond when Lux looked at her with an appeal. She began in Thai, which was comprehensible only to her peers, and used an expression พูดไปเลย เต็มที่ (Say it out. Do your best) (Turn 6) that was informal and typically used with peers. Grace claimed the right of peers to take up a supportive peer position, allowing herself and Lux to take turns in the group discussion. The dynamics between Grace, her peers and Cheng that recurred across this context will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

Positioning oneself and others in encouragement and reinforcement in Individual Support provided opportunities for using English in different ways. In instances of encouragement, students helped one another to perform duties as chapter leaders by requesting clarification and giving supportive responses (Episodes 5–6). In instances of reinforcement, peers coordinated and claimed the right to talk from non-peers before

helping their peers to continue talking (Episode 7). Rights and duties in individual support were distributed to group members within personal and conversational local moral orders. Students claimed rights in positioning themselves as help seekers, encouraging speakers or encouraging peers to help chapter leaders who did not or could not perform their duty of completing a task. The dynamics between peers and non-peers which are created in a range of positionings influence their opportunities for using English.

4.2.3 Opportunities for Using English through Expert/Novice Relations

Expertise refers to an individual's ability to explain or elaborate in English a topic or lesson. The terms *expert* and *novice* in the theme Expertise applied to the positioning during group discussions were from my own perspective. These two named relations were used to provide the social meaning of students' academic connections in group discussions, which is in line with the previous literature review. Regarding this definition, all chapter leaders were pre-positioned as experts by the instructor as they had the right to talk and manage group discussions, while their group members were positioned as novices, constituting the relations of expert/novice. Expert chapter leaders were able to "teach" lessons to their novice group members, who were not expected to read the lesson in advance. However, this set of relations was not static, but changed across time.

This section addresses two sub-themes of Expertise: *Knowledge and Opinions*. While some students refer to knowledge from the textbook to claim the rights of experts, other students draw on personal opinions. At the end of this section, the link between positioning in Expertise and opportunities for using English is discussed.

Knowledge

Knowledge refers to episodes where students who have the ability to deliver content related to a topic or lesson claim the rights of experts. Chapter leaders claim the rights of experts by referring to part of the textbook and recasting it to others in the group in English. Extract 8 shows how Simon used language to position himself as an expert in Knowledge.

Episode 8 Positioning of expert/novice

1. Simon: For example like teacher instructs, asks the question this is what they call IRE Initiation Response Evaluation from the page 126. Yeah, this one. Number five. (points to the item in the textbook)
2. Num: (reading) Hello, how are you? I'm fine. Thank you. Correct or not? (h)
3. Simon: So, that's good, right? (h) The teacher evaluates students' responses.

(Simon Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 7)

Positioning as an expert in Knowledge requires a reference to the textbook. This referencing was used by chapter leaders who had the duty to study the textbook prior to discussions. In Extract 8, Simon, a chapter leader, explained the interaction between teachers and students with reference to the term 'IRE' by pointing to the page number in the textbook (Turn 1), claiming the right of an expert. Num, who had not studied this part in the textbook before, started reading the example of IRE (Turn 2). Simon recast the topic for others (Turn 3) to maintain his expert position and simultaneously positioned Num and others as *novices*. Simon's ability to refer to the textbook and recast what was stated in the lesson helped him position himself as an expert in Knowledge. Students who are able to take up the position of expert make changes to their language use to deliver English content. In Excerpt 5, Simon found that he had to modify, simplify and explain the content in English for group members. This required making content comprehensible to others in addition to using language in positioning.

Excerpt 5 Changes in language use for expert positioning

- Simon: I have a presentation to make. I have to modify it. I have to simplify it for better understanding. Sometimes the terminology is not so clear to me, then I want to explain to them, so I have to take down notes.

(Simon's First Interview – transcribed from English, Week 4)

A chapter leader's inability to refer to or explain a topic in the textbook, however, restricted positioning as an expert. Chapter leaders who could not explain a topic lost their right to position themselves as experts since they could not perform duties consistent with their position. Episode 9 illustrates Fon's inability to position herself as an expert.

Episode 9 Positioning of novice/novice

1. Fon: I (h) cannot explain you in this idea. I TRY. I TRY.
I try to understand but I'm confused at (0.3). I think we should skip it.
2. Rose: Uh huh skip it (h)
3. Fon: Okay. Next topic is about...

(Fon's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 3)

Positioning as a novice that emerged with the inability to explain a lesson affected the completion of a group discussion. In Episode 9, Fon, a chapter leader, stated that she could not explain and suggested that the group skip the topic (Turn 1). She was unable to perform her duties of chapter leader and expert, positioning herself as a novice. Responding to Fon's positioning, Rose neither showed an ability to refer to the textbook, nor did she give an opinion on the topic (Turn 2). Neither student claimed the right of experts, instead accepting novice positioning. Fon and her peers lost opportunities for using English in this episode.

The relations of peers did not play a part in these two instances of knowledge (Episodes 8 and 9). In Episode 8, Simon did not help his peer, Num, to explain the lesson but instead positioned him as novice. Simon claimed the right to position himself as an expert from the institutional and conversational moral order as he was a chapter leader who had studied the textbook before group discussion. In Episode 9, Fon failed to position herself as an expert as she did not claim the right from either institutional or conversational moral orders. Her peer did not help her to continue the talk within the personal moral order (i.e. positioning as an encouraging peer). Although Fon categorized Rose as peer, she was not assisted when she failed to perform the duty of a chapter leader. Thus, the negotiation of an expert position relies on the ability to

comprehend and explain a lesson. Students who do not have this ability will lose their opportunities to use English in this category.

Opinions

Giving opinions on topics without referring to the textbook showed students' ability to deliver content in their own words from their own perspectives or experience. I selected the episodes in which students discussed a topic based on the textbook and took more turns to give opinions on that topic.

Positioning as expert/expert in *Opinions* emerged when group members gave their opinions on a topic to a chapter leader, providing themselves with the right to talk in group discussions. This positioning extended the discussion and was restrained by the pre-positioning of chapter leaders. Episode 10 illustrates how Cheng and Simon positioned themselves as experts.

Episode 10 Positioning as expert/expert

- Cheng: WHAT about errors? Are you talking about the grammar to call errors? or what a choice or manner ah social (0.5) or the manner talking something ah=
- Simon: =It should be like the mix of every[thing
- Cheng: Everything so] even I believe that even natural acquisition still (0.3) can be taught in in the Erm what you're gonna call it. Feedback and errors, like the the words kinds of insulting, impolite=
- Simon: =Uh huh. Yeah. It could be anything that cultural thing as well. Okay. Guys. We have five minutes left. Let's move on to the next topic.

(Simon Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 7)

Different language choices are used in positioning as an expert in *Opinions*. In Episode 10 Cheng requested clarification from Simon, a chapter leader, and gave his opinions on the topic with statements. Cheng asked questions about the errors that

second language learners make in a natural setting (Turn 1), and Simon responded to Cheng's statement with, *It should be like the mix of everything* (Turn 2). Instead of encouraging Simon to continue talking, Cheng changed the topic to language acquisition, positioning himself as an expert by interrupting Simon (Turn 3). Simon responded to Cheng with another statement to show his opinion, positioning himself as an expert as well (Turn 4). Positioning as *expert/expert* in this instance suggested that both students had the ability to give opinions on the topic. While Cheng claimed this right in positioning as an expert and interrupted the discussion, Simon reclaimed the right of chapter leader position. When group members contested their group leader's position with different language choices to give opinions, they gained more opportunities for using language by positioning as experts.

Thai was also used in the positioning move from novice to expert in *Opinions* when students could not explain a topic in English. This language shift for positioning was found in Fon's group discussion with her peers continuing to talk when the positioning of expert/chapter leader failed. Episode 11 shows a language shift from English to Thai to facilitate a positioning move from novice to expert.

Episode 11 Positioning move from novice to expert

1. Fon: In this textbook I I try to understand interlanguage but but but I can't I can't get it (0.3) so I try I TRY to search in the internet about interlanguage to give more another informa information (look up the note)
2. Rose: Uh, แบบ (it's like) ผู้เรียนมีแนวโน้มที่จะสร้างความผิดกับ ภาษาที่หนึ่งใช่ปะ (isn't it?)
3. Fon: Sorry?
4. Rose: แบบว่าผู้เรียน อ่า เรียนภาษาที่สองใช่ปะ แล้วเขาทำผิดพลาดเพราะว่า attern นะ มันต่างจากภาษาแรกไง (It's like learners Ah learn the second language, isn't it. And then they made errors because patterns are different from the first language.)
5. Fon: Uh depends on the first language pattern from their background they can be eh the incorrect second second language, right? So oh so you find the fossilization. Fossil is something something

wrong. ยึดติดกับภาษาแรกแล้วก็พูดผิด (stick to the first language and make errors)

(Fon's Group Discussion – transcribed from English/ translated from Thai, Week 3)

The positioning of novice/expert changed over time. Episode 11, adjacent to Episode 9, also showed Rose's and Fon's re-positioning from novice to expert by giving opinions in both English and Thai. As a chapter leader, Fon stated that she could not explain the topic despite all her efforts (Turn 1), positioning herself as a novice. Rose, one of her peers, took the next turn to give an opinion on second language learners (Turn 2), repositioning herself as an *expert* when her peer could not explain the topic. After Fon requested clarification, Rose continued talking in Thai to maintain her expert position (Turn 3). Meanwhile, acknowledging her peer's positioning as an expert, Fon changed the topic from "error" to "fossilization" (Turn 5) so as to link the opinions to the lesson. She introduced a new topic by giving her opinion, repositioning herself from novice to expert. The positioning shifts not only helped Fon to claim the right of an expert, but also helped her to perform the duties of a chapter leader.

The positioning moves from novice to expert emerged within the personal moral order, i.e. the pre-positioning of peers. In Episode 11, the Thai that Rose used is not a formal register, as seen in the particles *ใช่ปะ*, *แบบว่า* and *ไง* (Turns 2 and 4). These particles suggest familiarity between peers. Although both students lost their opportunities to use English, this positioning move was necessary in this situation as it helped the students continue the talk in a group discussion.

Changes in positioning in Expertise that created dynamics of relations evidently offered and hindered students' opportunities for using English. Students claimed the right to position or reposition themselves as experts with language choices to question, interrupt and explain topics in Thai. While experts who had the ability to give opinions in English gained opportunities for using English, those who used Thai in positioning lost those opportunities.

4.2.4 Unequal Power Negotiation between Peers and Non-peers

Power in a group discussion refers to students' capability to allocate turns in talk to themselves. Despite being granted the rights and duties from the pre-positioning of the

chapter leader and group members, students did not always perform their duties in a way consistent with those positions. While some students demonstrated the capacity to allocate turns to themselves, others did not take turns. This section explains how students exercised power through the distribution of rights and duties by turn-taking.

Two kinds of power negotiations emerged from group discussions: *Domination* and *Control*. When students allocated more or longer turns to themselves to convince others of their statements, they demonstrated their domination over others or limited others' turns by taking control over other's behavior and topics. I explain these two kinds of exercising of power with instances from group discussions and interviews. Language choices used for the negotiation of power are also discussed. At the end of this section, the link between power and opportunities for using English is made.

Domination

Domination is the exercise of power to convince others of their statements by *repeating* or *expanding* the discussed topics more than once, or making more than 10 statements in one speech turn. The students performed these actions to claim the right to be positioned as *dominant speakers*.

Power in domination was exercised through frequent and lengthy turns, distinguishing between positioning as expert and dominant speakers. While experts claimed the right to explain or clarify topics in a short turn or two, dominant speakers continued taking more and/or lengthier turns to make others believe what they had stated.

The positioning of dominant speakers depended on students' capability to use language to interrupt an ongoing conversation and reject the pre-positioning of the chapter leader/group members. Episode 12 illustrates how Cheng and Lux positioned themselves as dominant speakers

Episode 12 Positioning of dominant/dominant speakers

1. Lux: I think English is like I think it's like memorize and like learning and everything [uh so if some vocabulary that we have it=
2. Grace: =You have to memorize first and then you understand it]=
3. Cheng: =Yeah then you practise and you use it or you call it inTERNALIZE internalize, so you get it internalized means it becomes part of your body. You're not going to lose it.
4. Lux: But we cannot do it with language. We we cannot internalize.
5. Cheng: NO, we can. We CAN.
6. Lux: But it's very difficult. It means it has to be like in the same level of the native, so I think even though now nowadays you can speak it very well but it's not internalized. If=
7. Cheng =You CAN internalize it.

(Grace's Group Discussion - transcribed from English, Week 10)

Students interrupted the ongoing conversation, re-positioning themselves as dominant speakers by changing the language choices from talking about the lesson to engaging people in communication to claim the right to talk. They used the pronouns *We* and *You* to include everyone in the group on their side to contest each other's positioning of experts. In Episode 12, Grace and Cheng interrupted Lux, a chapter leader, in an attempt to add more information to Lux's statement. Grace summarized what Lux stated and positioned herself as an expert, while Cheng raised a new topic of internalization and consistently repeated it, positioning himself as a dominant speaker (Turn 3, 5 and 7). Lux rejected Cheng's positioning and continued repeating her disagreement (Turns 4 and 6). She not only claimed the right to speak as a chapter leader, but also took up the position of a dominant speaker. The exercise of power between the two provided opportunities for both students to use language showing disagreement. In *Domination*, the rights and duties were distributed to students who repeated their disagreement throughout the group discussion.

From the students' perspective, positioning in *Domination* was different in terms of right and duties. The exercise of power can be viewed as positioning as a dominating

speaker or researcher. Excerpt 6 shows Grace's perspective on Cheng's exercising of power, while Excerpt 7 shows Cheng's perspective on his positioning.

Excerpt 6 Exercising power for positioning as a dominant speaker

เวลา *discuss* กับซึ่ง ต้องใส่ความคิดเยอะ ๆ เวลาเค้าเริ่ม *dominant* หนูก็ว่า *Hey, this dominating. It should not be like that.*

Grace: If I discuss with Cheng, we must bring a lot of thoughts with a lot of reasons. When he becomes a “dominant” person (of the topic), I think, hey, this is “dominating”. It should not be like that.

(Grace's second interview – translated from Thai, Week 9)

Excerpt 7 Exercising power for positioning as a researcher

Cheng: This is a postgraduate programme. I think it's supposed to be based on research rather than reading the book, going through it and memorizing. It is not one-on-one class. I cannot please everyone or my question would be interested by everyone. But it should meet a common interest and very much related to the chapter or the content of the lecture.

(Cheng's First Interview – transcribed from English, Week 8)

Positioning as a dominant speaker affects how students take turns in group discussions. In Excerpt 6, Grace stated that Cheng taking frequent and long turns in group discussions was a dominating action. Grace used the two English words *dominant* and *dominating* to describe Cheng's positioning. Grace stated that she had to give reasons in her talk when Cheng interrupted the discussion, claiming the right to talk in the group discussion.

While taking more turns and interruptions were viewed as dominating actions by Grace, Cheng viewed those actions as positioning as a researcher. In Excerpt 6, taking more turns referred to discussing the lesson between postgraduate students as Cheng believed that his talk would meet others' interests and cover the discussed topic. He positioned himself and others as *researchers* with high capability to allocate turns for themselves, claiming the right to discuss the topic. Thus, group members who take turns in group discussions do not dominate the conversation from his perspective.

The different perspectives on exercising power as regards the positioning of dominant speaker and researcher often created dynamics of relations in Power between Grace, her peers, and Cheng, and those dynamics also affected the group discussions. Whenever Cheng interrupted Lux in the group discussion in Week 10, Grace and Lux instantly interrupted him and took more turns to show disagreement with his statements. These dynamics recurring across time and contexts will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

The right to take a long turn and interrupt a group discussion is granted when the chapter leader cannot explain the topic. Episode 13 shows how Cheng claimed the right to talk in a group discussion by taking a long turn, positioning himself as a dominant speaker and the chapter leader as a submissive listener.

Episode 13 Positioning of dominant speaker/submissive listener

1. Ploy: What is UG? What is UG? I forgot ah UG.
2. Cheng: Sorry? ↑
3. Ploy: Universal Grammar. ↑
4. Cheng: Universal Grammar. ↓
5. Num: It's something in our brain, right?
6. Cheng: Something in our brain to understand how how to construct language. Universal Universal grammar is Erm is what Erm Erm Chomsky based his theory on ah his theory and hypothesis and research on, he believes that everyone has that it's kind like a gift you know. ...
(7 more sentences)

(Cheng Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 6)

Dominating the group discussion differs from supporting the chapter leader in that it does not provide the chapter leader with more opportunities to talk. Any students who can explain the discussed topic are granted the right to take a long turn as the topic is understandable. In Episode 13, Cheng took a long turn responding to a question about the term Universal Grammar (UG), positioning himself as a dominating speaker as Ploy, the group leader, admitted that she had forgotten the meaning of the term (Turn 1). After Cheng had requested clarification of UG, Ploy told him the full name of the term (Turns 2 and 3). This short exchange showed that Ploy could not perform her duty as chapter

leader. Num took a turn to give an opinion and stated that universal grammar was something about the brain (Turn 5). In the next turn, Cheng expanded Num's statement, *Something in our brain to understand how how to construct language* (Turn 6), claiming the right to positioning as a dominant speaker. During his long turn, Ploy and Num were positioned as *submissive listeners*, as they did not interrupt.

The exercise of power in *Domination* significantly affected opportunities for using language in terms of the type and amount of language use. Students used language for explaining, rejecting, exemplifying and so on to show disagreement, claiming the right of dominant speaker (Episode 12). Those who were capable of taking longer turns provided themselves with opportunities for using English in group discussions (Episode 13). On the other hand, those who were not capable of taking turns lost those opportunities.

The positioning of dominant/dominant speakers and dominant/submissive listeners is negotiated in the conversational moral order as those positions emerged incidentally during group discussions. The rights granted through positioning as a dominant speaker rely on individual students' capacity to use language to provide themselves with more opportunities for using English.

Control

Power in *Control* refers to students' capability to direct others' behavior or the topic in the group. The right through positioning to take control is granted to students who are capable of "taking control" over other students and reassigning duties to them. Two actions of control were found in the data, *giving discipline* and *challenging*. When students asked other students in the group to act or strategically convinced others to agree with their statement, they were taking control of the discussion.

Disciplines are sets of actions that students in the group were asked to do when they did not perform their duties assigned via pre-positioning acts. Only one instance of giving discipline was evident when one of the focal students, Film, was a chapter leader. Episode 14 shows how Film took control over other group members through positioning as a commander.

Episode 14 Positioning of commander/follower

1. Film: ...There are about one two three four five short opinions (0.2) short opinions from another five people who's ah (0.2) talking about how vocabulary is ah (0.2) effect to second language learners, right? If you have a look (0.2) *Phii* Tim maybe this gonna help you. Can you read from however (0.2) however page sixty-four? ↑However there are some problems.
2. Tim: However, there are some problems (reading)

(Film Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 4)

Positioning as a commander affects the distribution of rights and duties in group discussions. In Episode 14, Film took control of the discussion by giving commands to two classmates, Tim and Dany, as a set of disciplines. Before this situation, Tim had admitted that he had not read the textbook before the discussion, leaving him unable to claim the right to discuss the topic. When Film noticed that Tim and Dany did not respond to her comprehension check using *Right?* (Turn 1), she commanded Tim to read that section aloud, positioning herself as a commander. Film had Tim and Dany read another section three times in later turns throughout the course of the discussion. After each reading, she took a long turn to explain the same chapter again in detail, positioning herself as a dominant speaker. The right to speak in a group discussion is restricted for students who did not perform their duties according to pre-positioning of group members.

The positioning of commander occurs in the cultural moral order. Use of the Thai kinship term *พี่* (*Phii – elder*) suggested a Thai social hierarchy was involved in the exercise of power in *Control*. From the observation notes, Film called herself *Phii* and was called *Phii Film* (elder sister Film) by other students in the class, including Tim and Dany. Film was given priority to talk or act in the group as she was categorized as the elder in the class (Storyline 4). In Episode 14, Film addressed Tim as *Phii Tim*, before asking him to read the textbook, leveraging his status to an elder position, attempting to grant him the right to take the next turn. However, Film, the elder, was still in control of the discussion by asking him to read. In Excerpt 7, the reason why Film exercised power in *Control* was because her group members failed to perform the

duties of group members as she noticed their unmarked textbook pages. Film had to take control of the discussion to advance the group discussion and thus perform the duty of a chapter leader and so took up the position of commander.

Excerpt 8 Power in control: opinions on giving disciplines

รู้สึกเหมือนพูดอยู่คนเดียวแล้วก็ต้อง *control* กลุ่มที่มีสมาชิกอยู่สองคน น้อง (ทิมและแดนนี่) ไม่ได้
อ่านมาก่อนจะมา *discuss* กัน เพราะเค้าคิดว่าตัวเองไม่ใช่ *chapter leader* ครั้งนี้ พอเห็นว่าไม่
มีรอยขีดเขียนอะไรเลยในหนังสือก็เลยมั่นใจว่า ไม่ได้อ่านมาแน่นอน (h) ก็เลยเปลี่ยนวิธีมาเป็น
พูดคนเดียวทั้งหมดแล้วให้น้องอ่านออกเสียง คือต้องการ *reactions* บ้าง

It's just like I talked alone, taking control of the group of two members. Nong (Tim and Dany) did not read before the discussion, as they might have thought they were not chapter leaders this time. When I noticed that there were no marks on their textbook pages, I was sure that they had not read (h). I changed the method to do most of the talk and have them read aloud. I needed their reactions.

(Film's Second Interview – translated from Thai, Week 15)

Power of chapter leader can be challenged through a shift in positioning. Students who had the capacity to take turns in group discussions could challenge others to take control of the topic by asking a series of questions around the topic to other students and seek agreement with their point. Episode 15 shows how Grace took control of the topic by challenging Num, a chapter leader.

Episode 15 Positioning of challenger/challenged speaker

1. Num: So in Thai we have to use elaborate explanation for that word WHOSE. OK↑?=
2. Grace: =So this (0.3) Does this reLATE to the error analysis where they tend to avoid? >We don't know when we when they tend to avoid using the sentence that they they are not. IS it (0.3) Do you think IS it related to that? ↑
3. Num: YEH, you're right that we have to use the error analysis to (0.3) pinpoint the the (0.2) thing we need to improve on the students.

(Grace's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 4)

Positioning as a challenger enables students to indirectly control the group discussion through their language use. Before Episode 15, Num had explained the relative pronoun *whose* by asking Grace and Lux about the difficulty of teaching this grammatical item. In Episode 15, Num took one more turn to check comprehension (Turn 1), maintaining his positioning as chapter leader. Grace started asking Num a series of questions about the connection between the current topic and the previous one (Turn 2). In fact, Grace was convincing Num that there was a connection between the two topics, claiming the right in the positioning of *challenger*. She rejected Num's pre-positioning as chapter leader and positioned him as *a challenged speaker* who accepted her statement (Turn 3). Students who are capable of challenging others by asking questions have the right to talk in group discussions.

When power is exercised through positioning in *Domination* and *Control*, the rights and duties of chapter leader and group members are redistributed through the allocation of conversation turns. Group members who are capable of taking more and longer turns in group discussions reposition themselves as dominant speaker, commander or challenger, gaining opportunities for using language to disagree, elaborate on the topic, and assert points. On the other hand, students who lack those capacities are positioned as submissive listeners, losing opportunities to use English in group discussions. Power exercised through the capacity of turn-taking provided greater opportunities to interact.

4.2.5 Redistributing Rights and Duties between Non-peers

The negotiation of social distance in this thesis refers to the remoteness between non-peers which affected how rights and duties were distributed. Peers are close to each other as they have familiarity and group cohesion, providing them with language choices that show how close they are. Non-peers also negotiate social distance to create familiarity and cohesion by changing their language choices to get closer to other non-peers.

Two kinds of negotiation of social distance emerged in group discussions: *Proximity* and *Affiliation*. I will focus on the negotiation of social distance between non-peers in these two sub-themes as it evidently affects their language use and positioning that change the students' relations.

Proximity

Proximity refers not only to closeness in distance (e.g. sitting next to each other) between peers, but also means an attempt at social closeness between non-peers during group discussions. Non-peers use casual language, gestural and facial expressions to get closer together before taking up a new position.

Non-peers negotiate social distance in *Proximity* to resolve a struggle in a group discussion. A struggle in group discussion means a long pause during a conversation. The group leader could ask questions to exchange personal information with group members, positioning self and others as social enquirer and informants. Episode 16 shows an attempt to reduce social distance in *Proximity* between non-peers.

Episode 16 Positioning of social enquirer/informant

1. Cheng: Make sure that everyone is talking. Make sure that we have ideas. You don't think like yea I'm the leader I should educate to you and give you ideas.
2. Ploy: Thank you. (20 secs.) How many years? How many years have you taught?
3. Num: Ah I teach I've taught for about two years. Two or three.
4. Ploy: Do you want to change your job?
5. Num: (0.3) Maybe
6. Cheng: What about you? What do you do?
7. Ploy: Ah we provide like intensive English programme to the school around Thailand Aha. Like we outsource of the school. If you if you come to join us, I will send you somewhere like...

(Cheng's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 6)

Non-peers resolved struggles in group discussions by redistributing rights and duties to all group members. No empirical evidence from group discussions showed that peers resolved a struggle in this way. In Episode 16, Cheng, Ploy and Num were non-peers and participated in the same group discussion for the first time. After Cheng had made a comment on the duties of a chapter leader from his perspective (Turn 1), Ploy, the chapter leader, thanked Cheng. There was a silence for 20 seconds afterwards, with everyone skimming through their textbook. This long pause signalled a struggle in

group discussion. Instead of moving onto the next topic, Ploy made an enquiry about her non-peers, positioning herself as a *social enquirer* and others as *informants* (Turn 4). Cheng also joined this enquiry by asking Ploy about her job (Turn 10). Indeed, Ploy redistributed the right to talk to all members by changing the topic to living and working in Thailand. Three of them continued this exchange for 12 minutes, sharing working experience, their expectations of studying on the MA program, and talking about their companies' co-workers and the chapter leader's assignments, among other things. This positioning shows that non-peers also need social inquiry for closer social distance.

Positioning in the proximity of non-peers occurred in the conversational moral order as it depended on the situation and the decisions of the speakers in group discussions. From Episode 16, the chapter leader decided to change the topic, which was not relevant to the task, and invited everyone in the group to join her conversation. Although the positioning in *Proximity* between non-peers limited their opportunities for using English to complete the task, it was required to resolve the struggle. The social enquiry exchange also provided them with opportunities to use English in real-life situations.

Affiliation

Affiliation refers to an attempt to become part of the discussion. Students started another topic to get closer to one another and back to the group discussion topic. The negotiation of social distance in *Affiliation* was evident when students used humor to redirect a digression in the discussion.

Affiliation has two sub-themes: *Playfulness* and *Language Play*. Both sub-themes evidently emerged in those instances where students used humor to create a digression and then perform the act of affiliation.

Playfulness was a demonstration of humor that made all the students share laughter. Students "played" with others in the discussion group by using statements to tease others or make fun of their statements. When they acknowledged that their playfulness created digression, they attempted to build affiliation to be part of the discussion by repositioning themselves from *playful* to *non-playful* speakers. In other words, *Playfulness* signalled affiliation. A positioning act in *Playfulness* between peers and non-peers is illustrated in Episode 17.

Episode 17 Positioning of playful/non-playful speakers

1. Num: There's another idea that loyalty to the first language may hinder the desire or the motivation to study English (0.2) Er for example in Thai if you speak English like (0.2) fluently (0.2) clearly (0.2) what comment we'll get from others?
2. Grace: [Perfect.
3. Lux: Negative กระแฉะ] (*Kradae* - Pretentious)
4. Simon: Yeah. (h)
5. Num: กระแฉะ right?
6. Simon: (h) not bad.
7. Num: Oh. You you you know the word. You look at the word as positive.=
8. Grace: =NO (h) IT CAN'T BE. REALLY?↑=
(Waving hands and shaking her head from left to right.)
9. All: (h)
10. Simon: Actually the same thing it's not only in Thai. Even back home, you know, if you're speaking like ah if you follow the American accent, if you speak like that you know, you will be outcast.

(Grace and Simon Group Discussion – transcribed from English Week 4)

Statements are used for explaining and narrating to resolve a digression and perform a positioning act in *Affiliation*. Rights and duties were redistributed to those who were able to use language for negotiating positions of playful/non-playful speakers in *Playfulness*. In Episode 17, after Num, the chapter leader, had asked his group members what comments Thai students speaking “good” English would receive from other Thais (Turn 1), Grace, Lux and Simon gave different opinions in reply to his question. While Grace stated that good English speakers would get positive comments (Turn 2), Lux disagreed and said that Thais who were speaking English perfectly would get a negative comment, such as กระแฉะ (meaning ‘pretentious’) (Turn 3). Simon laughed after he heard this Thai word (Turn 4) and teased that the meaning of the word was *not bad* (Turn 6), positioning himself as a *playful speaker*. Simon teased other students about the meaning of the Thai word, creating a digression in the group. Num was

surprised at Simon's understanding of this Thai word (Turn 7). Grace interjected in a loud, high tone of voice with *NO (h) IT CAN'T BE. REALLY?* with laughter, head and hand movements (Turn 8), showing emotional disagreement. Grace's action was also that of a playful speaker as all students joined in the laughter in the next turn (Turn 9). A digression occurred, and the discussion stopped. Simon then changed the topic from the situation in Thai language classrooms to those at home (the Philippines) based on the same concept of the Thai word. In this way, he was claiming the right to reposition himself from playful to non-playful speaker by sharing lived experiences and building *Affiliation* to be part of the group discussion. When students demonstrated *Affiliation* in *playfulness*, they provided themselves with more opportunities to use language to redirect a digression.

Language play was a demonstration of humor through an invented word which made others laugh. When students "played" with language, they created a digression, changing the topic from that of the lesson. Those who were able to use language to redirect a digression from *Language Play* could provide themselves with more opportunities for using English.

Students created a digression when they played with language, but not everyone shared in the laughter, positioning themselves and others as humorous/non-humorous speakers. An instance of this positioning is illustrated in Episode 18.

Episode 18 Positioning of humorous/ non-humorous speakers

1. James: >EVEN native speakers FIND themselves, you KNOW, HAVE Difficulty in MAKING themselves UNDERSTOOD.<
But other people=
2. Cheng: =Maybe they find themselves OVERnative (h)
3. Simon: (h) That's crazy. OVERnative. Over is bad. I don't know such a thing, man[↑]. (h)
4. James: >It's about CONTEXT. It's not about native speakers. It's about context<
5. Simon: [(h)
6. Cheng: (h) °so true°.]
7. Simon: Hey guys so next characteristic is number five. Variety of language and and discourse types.

(Cheng and Simon Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 7)

The digression in the group discussion created in the positioning of a humorous speaker was resolved by a positioning act within the discussion and the pre-positioning of chapter leader. In Episode 18, James stated that native speakers of English did not always communicate well in their L1 (Turn 1). Cheng interrupted James with his invented word *overnative*, saying, *Maybe they find themselves OVERnative* (Turn 2), demonstrating *Language Play*. Simon laughed and assessed Cheng's statement (Turn 3). Cheng's language play involved Simon in laughter, creating a sense of humor between the two students, positioning himself as a *humorous speaker*. However, James rejected Cheng's positioning as he did not join in the laughter but changed the topic to "context" (Turn 4). James' rejection made Cheng and Simon laugh again. As Cheng's *Language Play* did not make all his peers laugh, it created a digression. While James redirected the digression by showing disagreement with Cheng's statement in the position of a *non-humorous speaker*, Simon rebuilt *Affiliation* by re-directing a digression to the next topic as a chapter leader. *Affiliation* was restored when the demonstration of humor in language play was not effective.

Positioning in *Playfulness* and *Language Play* from the example episodes occurred in different local moral orders. In Episode 16, Simon's positioning as a non-playful speaker occurred in the cultural moral order, granting him the right to compare two cultures, the Philippines and Thailand, and redirect a digression. However, James's and Simon's positioning as non-humorous speakers occurred within a conversational and institutional moral order respectively, as James rejected the emerging positioning of humorous speaker by showing disagreement and Simon redirected a digression to the group discussion topic by leading group members to the next topic of the lesson. The negotiation of positioning in different local moral orders created dynamics between peers and non-peers who wanted to be part of the group discussion, providing them with unequal opportunities for using English.

This section on positioning analysis has explained how dynamics of students' relations were negotiated through positioning in five themes, providing them with a range of opportunities for using English. In task solidarity, the pre-positioning of chapter leader and group members appeared to influence opportunities for using language to complete the task, while in individual support, the positioning of peers evidently affected students' positioning and opportunities for using English. In

expertise, individual abilities to use language were significant as students used English to make their points, and not every student was capable of doing so. Positioning in power highlighted students' capacity to allocate longer and lengthier turns for elaborating their statements, increasing the amount of language use. Additionally, positioning in expertise and power was often contested, providing even more opportunities for language learning to students who had the ability and capacity to use language to interrupt, show disagreement and so on. The last theme, social distance, identified non-peers' increased or decreased social distance between each other, which affected their opportunities to interact and use language.

4.3 Dynamics of Students' Relations in Positioning and Opportunities for Language Learning

This section discusses the characteristics of positioning in five themes, which provided unequal opportunities for language use or, in turn, language learning. It is followed by the characteristics of positioning which explain those dynamics in group discussion.

The changes in relations between students emerged in two kinds: *assigned and ascribed relations*. While some students accepted the pre-positioning of chapter leader/group members and follow the assigned rights and duties to complete the task (assigned relations), other students positioned self and others which digressed from the instructions to achieve their purposes of communication (ascribed relations). These two relations created unequal opportunities for language learning. The ascribed relations, such as in the positioning of helpseeker/ encouraging peers, allowed students to use language to request more information or recast, while those of expert/novice allowed them to elaborate on the discussed point.

Students' relations in group discussion are not static as positioning changes over time. Positions not only *overlap* with one another but are *fluid* and negotiated in *multiple directions* across time. The overlapping, fluidity and multi-directionality of positioning illustrate how students' relations change. These characteristics contribute to a range of language choices students used for positioning. I summarize the positionings in group discussions from Section 4.2 in Table 4.1 and explain the implications with the following points in detail.

Table 4.1: Summary of positionings and language use in group discussions

Episode	Position	Focal student	Language choice	Purpose of language use
<i>Task Solidarity</i>				
1	Task manager/follower	Grace	Statement	To explain the point
2	Task reminder/follower	Grace	Question/ statement	To clarify information
3	Comprehension checker/respondent	Fon	Statement in English and Thai	To check comprehension
4	Assessor/assessed speaker	Cheng	Question/ statement	To request more information/to give compliments
<i>Individual Support</i>				
5	Help seeker/encouraging peer	Grace/ Jib	Statement/ command	To request more information
6	Help seeker/encouraging non-peer	Simon/ Ploy/ James	Statement	To recast unclear statements
7	Help seeker/reinforcing peer	Grace/ Lux	Statement/ command	To interrupt a speaker/to reinforce a peer in talk
<i>Expertise</i>				
8	Expert/novice	Simon/ Num	Statement	To explain and elaborate on a point
9	Novice/novice	Fon/ Tim	Statement	To disclaim/reject a point
10	Expert/expert	Cheng/ Simon	Display question/ statement	To explain and elaborate on a point
11	Novice to expert	Fon	Statement in English and Thai	To clarify and explain a point

Table 4.1: Summary of positionings and language use in group discussions (Cont.)

Episode	Position	Focal student	Language choice	Purpose of language use
<i>Power</i>				
12	Dominant/dominant	Cheng/ Lux	Statement	To explain and elaborate on a point with frequent turns
13	Dominant/submissive	Cheng/ Ploy/ Num	Question/ Statement	To elaborate on a point with long turns
14	Commander/ follower	Film/ Tim	Command/ statement	To control the discussion and explain a point
15	Challenger/ challenged speaker	Grace/ Num	Statement/ display questions	To explain and take control of the topic
<i>Social Distance</i>				
16	Social enquirer/ informant	Cheng/ Ploy/ Num	Statement	To reduce social distance, to resolve a struggle
17	Playful/ non-playful speaker	Simon/ Grace	Statement	To redirect the topic
18	Humorous/non-humorous speaker	Simon/ Cheng/ James	Statement	To show disagreement

4.3.1 Language Choices Changed with Overlap and Fluidity of Positioning

While overlapping positions mean students locate themselves and are simultaneously located by others in group discussions, fluid positioning means different positions are taken up by students over time. These two characteristics of positioning can be achieved through using language choices to change the purpose of talk, such as using questions to assess one's comprehension of the discussed topic. The following section explains how language is used in positioning that suggest these two characteristics.

Overlaps in positioning occur when the rights and duties of chapter leader/group members do not conform to the ongoing discussion. The limitation of the rights and duties of group members assigned by the task instructions do not allow students to act or speak in the discussion, so they take up another position while maintaining the assigned position to talk or act. The positioning of chapter leader, which overlaps with emerging positions, can be achieved through questions and statements. For instance, Grace's positioning as chapter leader overlapped with task manager as she needed to remind her group members of their prior duties (Episode 2); Cheng took up a chapter leader position, overlapping with that of an assessor, to assess his group members' comprehension (Episode 4); Simon took up both chapter leader and expert positioning to explain the topic to his group members (Episode 8); and Film took control of the group discussion through positioning as chapter leader and commander (Episode 14). All of these focal students took more than one position at a time to accommodate their new rights and duties as the existing rights and duties from the pre-positioning act of the chapter leader did not allow them to act and talk. Overlaps in positioning allow students to claim other rights and perform duties through their language use.

An instance of overlapping positioning which influences students' language use is also found at the moment when students simultaneously position themselves as peers, chapter leader/group members by changing the purpose of language choices (command and statement). This instance can evidently be seen in the theme of Individual Support, in which students help their peers to continue speaking in group discussions. From Episode 5, Grace used a statement to request information, positioning others as informants, but Jib rejected that positioning by using a command as an encouraging peer/group member to help Grace continue her explanation. Jib changed the purpose of a command to provide Grace with an opportunity to talk and explain the topic. From Episode 7, Grace positioned herself as a reinforcing peer/group member to interrupt Cheng and allow Lux to take up the position of a reinforced peer and chapter leader by changing the purpose of the statement to interruption and reinforcement. The positioning of a peer overlapping with a group member provides more opportunities for using language in group discussions.

Regarding the fluidity of positioning, re-positionings within an episode are empirical evidence. Throughout the positioning analysis section, students used

questions, statements and commands for different purposes to reposition themselves from chapter leader/group member to another emerging positioning within a group discussion. Evident examples of fluid positioning within an episode are Cheng's repositioning from assessor to expert by using a statement to give a compliment and explain the topic (Episode 4); Grace from help seeker to expert by changing the purpose of a statement from requesting information to explaining the topic (Episode 5); Fon from novice to expert by using statements in both Thai and English to regain the right of chapter leader by attempting to explain the topic (Episode 11); and Simon from playful to non-playful speaker (Episode 17), and from humorous to non-humorous speaker (Episode 18), by using statements to redirect the topic and reposition himself as a chapter leader, respectively. The fluidity of positioning emerges when students change their position to claim the new right which is not given to them in the pre-positioning.

Overlaps and fluidity in positioning increase students' language use in both turn-taking and language choices. Re-positionings provided students with opportunities for using language selected from available language choices, i.e. statement (to inform), command (to order someone to do something) and question (to request information) for different purposes, such as using a statement for recasting (Episode 6), a question for reminding about a task (Episode 2), and a command for encouraging peers (Episode 5). Although the students had limited sets of language choices, fluid and overlapping positioning enabled them to use language for various purposes.

4.3.2 The Multi-directionality of Positioning and Opportunities for Using Language

In group discussions, students' positioning was negotiated in multiple directions. I have labelled these directions of positioning as *above*, *inside* and *outside*. The direction *above* was the impact of task instructions on positioning; *inside* was individual students' purposes to relate to themselves and others in the group; and *outside* was the relations of peers that influenced positioning. I will explain how and why students position themselves and others in multiple directions and discuss to what extent these directions provide students with opportunities for using language.

The above directions of positioning were mainly established in the theme *Task Solidarity* as the goal of learning activities in the EAL classroom was to complete the task, and students followed the task instructions. They re-positioned themselves back to the pre-positioning of chapter leader and group members to claim the right to manage, remind about the task, check comprehension and assess statements (Episodes 1, 2, 3 and 4). This direction of positioning provided a limited range of language use for students as they mainly explained or rephrased the lesson in English in the discussion. From my observation notes, some chapter leaders even read out the notes to their group members and had already prepared three questions, which were to be discussed among group members. Students who positioned themselves in this direction lost opportunities for using English to discuss topics beyond the task.

Re-positionings during group discussions occurred in the inside direction. Although students were pre-positioned as chapter leaders and group members, they had choices to claim rights and perform duties in other positionings for their own purposes. While some chapter leaders took up a task manager position to explain the chapters as described in the task instructions, others claimed the right for a range of positionings. For instance, Grace, as a chapter leader, focused on explaining the lesson to make her group members understand the chapters (Episodes 1 and 2), but Cheng preferred discussing and asking for opinions from his group members (Episode 4). The different purposes that students had in the group within the same assigned position created unequal opportunities for using language in group discussions. Students in Cheng's group felt that they were required to give opinions for completion of the task, so they took turns, providing themselves with opportunities to share opinions (Episode 4). In other words, different act interpretations of the positioning of chapter leader played a part in this direction.

The inside direction of positioning also relied on the ability to express knowledge based on the textbook, opinions or experience in English and individual purposes in positioning. In the theme of *Expertise*, students who had those abilities claimed the right for positioning as experts to explain the topic or content to other students, exchange opinions or share experiences (Episode 10) to other students who did not demonstrate those abilities and were positioned as novices (Episodes 8 and 10). Experts evidently provided themselves with more opportunities for using language than novices. In the

theme of *Power*, students had individual purposes in positioning. For example, Cheng positioned himself as an expert and took turns to explain his own statements (Episodes 12), while Lux's turn-taking was to give reasons and respond to Cheng's statements (Episode 12). By convincing each other of their statements, students took more and/or longer turns to repeat and expand their statements by positioning as dominant speakers (Episode 13). Dominant students provide themselves with opportunities for using language, taking more turns, but limited those opportunities to other students. Indeed, individual capacity of using language for positioning in Expertise and Power is a major concern of the inside direction.

The inside direction of positioning includes situational and unplanned positioning acts in the theme of *Affiliation*. When a digression emerged from positioning with humor in *Playfulness* or *Language Play*, students re-positioned themselves to create *Affiliation*. For example, Simon re-positioned himself by sharing information about language learning in the Philippines (Episode 17). His positioning act aimed to redirect the digression to the ongoing topic, providing himself with opportunities for sharing information. Situational and unplanned positioning acts also occurred in the theme of the *Social Distance*, in which Ploy, a chapter leader, could not resolve the struggle and repositioned herself as a social enquirer, asking personal questions of her group members (Episode 16). Although the ongoing topic in social enquiry was not related to the group discussion task, it provided Ploy with opportunities to ask questions. The inside direction of positioning, caused by the purposes of individual students, increased their opportunities for using language.

The outside direction of positioning is the impact of the relations of peers on positioning in all themes, but most evidently in *Individual Support*. Peers had clear purposes to give supportive responses in discussions as encouragement. They assisted one another to continue talking with familiarity and group cohesion. The familiarity between peers helped peers take turns in the group (Episode 5) and resolved the interruptions of non-peers (Episode 7). For non-peers, the positioning of encouraging non-peers emerged to help their non-peers maintain the positioning of chapter leader (Episode 6). The outside direction of positioning offers students a wide range of using language choices for their purposes of communication.

From the outside direction of positioning, the relations of peers also affected the inclusion/exclusion of students in the discussion. Peers excluded non-peers who disagreed with them. In Episode 7, Grace excluded Cheng from the discussion by saying a Thai sentence to interrupt his talk and at the same time to reinforce Lux to continue making her point. Grace repositioned herself as a reinforcing peer and included Lux into the discussion. Cheng, who had interrupted Lux's talk and did not comprehend Grace's statement lost his opportunities to interact, though he had the capacity to make his point. The positioning of peers provided more opportunities for peers to interrupt non-peers and take turns in group discussions.

Thai social hierarchy influenced positioning from the outside direction. This occurred when the pre-positioning of group members and the duties assigned to that position were rejected, and the chapter leader took control of the group discussion with the positioning of a commander. In Episode 14, Film claimed the right of a commander to ask other students to read the book chapter and re-explain the content, and took even longer turns. This positioning limited the opportunities of followers, but provided greater opportunities for a commander with rights and duties.

The multi-directionality of positioning in group discussions demonstrated the nuances of students' positioning in group discussions. Although the instructor assigned the rights to act and speak and duties to perform, the students claimed other rights and performed new duties consistent with their new positions taken up in group discussions over time, following their purposes of talk. As students positioned themselves in multiple directions over time, they provided themselves with opportunities for language use in contexts, which is, in turn, language learning. I will discuss how those opportunities created in group discussions are associated with language learning in Chapter 6.

This chapter has explained how rights and duties were distributed through students' language use and positioning in five themes. It has also identified how students' relations in group discussions changed over time. These dynamics impact students' language use. Although students had a limited set of language options as of the basic statement-question-command structure, those choices were used for a range of purposes in positioning. Overlaps, fluidity and multi-directionality of positioning were addressed as contributions to more opportunities for students to interact and to use

language for positioning. These characteristics of positioning suggest the non-static students' relations in the EAL classroom context.

5 Dynamics of Students' Relations Across Contexts

This chapter investigates students' dynamics of students' relations, with a focus on the changes in their positioning and the English language used for positioning between selected focal students and their peers/non-peers in different time periods. I investigated and compared students' positioning in group discussions on the same themes recurring over time and which contributed to their use of English in another group discussion and in group presentations in the later weeks of the course. I start the chapter by investigating the purposes of using English that influences the dynamics and reconstructing storylines from observation notes and excerpts from the interview scripts of each focal student to establish the overarching social backgrounds to their positioning. This is followed by a comparison of changes in English use occurring over two different time periods. The chapter ends with the implications of the dynamics of students' relations for the opportunities to use English and language learning.

5.1 Purposes of Using English and Dynamics of Students' Relations

I found that the three focal students, namely Grace, Cheng and Fon, and their peers had their own purposes for using English with their peers and non-peers. From the interview data and my observation notes, these purposes affected their dynamics with peers and non-peers in different ways. The following points, which explain and discuss students'

purposes for using English in an EAL classroom, are used to reconstruct the storyline of each focal student.

The dynamics between peers in group discussions facilitated their use of English to achieve those purposes over time. The students used more English to act and speak with their peers in group discussions and other classroom contexts. A good example is from Grace's perspective. Grace and her peers were comfortable communicating in English either among themselves or with non-peers in class. Excerpt 1 illustrates how Grace and her peers used English with each other.

Excerpt 1 English as a normal practice in an EAL classroom

- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ตั้งเกตุว่าพวกเราจะพูดภาษาอังกฤษตลอดเลยเวลา group discussions แต่ อาจารย์ก็ให้พูดภาษาไทยได้นี้ครับ ทำไมหรือ
- เกรซ: ก็มันเป็นหลักสูตรภาษาอังกฤษ แล้วเราก็อยากฝึกด้วยคะ ฝึกอธิบายเนื้อหายาก ๆ เป็นภาษาอังกฤษ
- จิบ: ใช่มั้ยคะ เราอยากฝึกพูดภาษาอังกฤษใน class แล้วเนื้อหาที่ไม่ได้ยากมากขนาดจะอธิบายเป็นภาษาอังกฤษได้ จริง ๆ ก็คืออยากฝึกคะ
- เกรซ: ดันเทอมจะแค่ basics เป็นไงมาไง กินข้าวอะไรอย่างนี้ ไม่ค่อยมีอะไรมาก แต่พอปลายเทอม เรามี material ในตัว รับผิดชอบเยอะ เพราะฉะนั้นเวลาเล่นมุกกันก็จะแบบเอาเชื่อมโยงเนื้อหาการเรียนมาแล้วก็มาคุยกันแล้วก็จะปรึกษาเรื่องเฮ้ย คิดว่าอย่างไรเป็นยังไงเราว่าอย่างไรดีมั้ง จะประมาณนี้คะ เวลาพูดภาษาอังกฤษด้วยกันก็จะสบายใจขึ้นเรื่อย ๆ ไม่ต้องคิดอะไรเพราะสนิทกันมากขึ้น
- Interviewer: You speak English all the time during group discussions, although the instructor allows Thai in a discussion. Why?
- Grace: It's an English programme. And we want to practise speaking, and explaining difficult lessons, in English.
- Jib: Yes. We want to practise speaking English in class. The content of the lesson is not too difficult to explain in English. We want to practise.
- Interviewer: What's the difference between the beginning of the semester and the end in terms of using English?
- Grace: At the beginning we just talk about the basics, but by the end of the semester we have materials in our head (lessons), so we can link the lesson to our talk. Sometimes we do it for fun. We can discuss the lesson. The more we use English with each other, the more comfortable we are. There's nothing to worry

about, because we're close to each other.

(Grace's Group Interview – translated from Thai)

From Excerpt 1 and my observation notes, I reconstructed the storyline of Grace and her peers in terms of their English use.

Storyline 1 English practitioners

The need to practise English in class influenced peers' positioning vis-à-vis English practitioners. In Excerpt 1, Grace and her peers viewed the use of English as a normal practice, so they always used English in group discussions each week. English became their only means for completing group discussions. Their familiarity and group cohesion even promoted the use of English, as they were comfortable speaking English with one another. Whenever they participated in the same group discussion, they were encouraged to use English to explain, discuss and make points. They claimed that their use of English increased over time, from the beginning of the class towards the end. The use of English depended on the dynamics between their peers.

The purpose of using English between non-peers is for academic achievement. This purpose was addressed by Cheng, a non-Thai student. Cheng used English for completing a group discussion task and expected that it could benefit his teaching practice.

Excerpt 2 illustrates Cheng's purpose for using English for teaching practice. From my observation notes and Excerpt 2, I reconstructed Cheng's storyline below.

Excerpt 2 The use of English for teaching practice

Interviewer: How do you prepare yourself for being a chapter leader?

Cheng: How do I prepare myself for being a chapter leader? I read the book and associate the chapter with teaching practices and find out the main issues, the main content. And by reading the book, also surfing the Internet, and making sure that that question would be of great significance my team, and them interested in it. How can we apply this to our teaching practice.

Interviewer: So, you focus on teaching practice?

Cheng: We're supposed to have a sense of familiarity with the key

concepts after reading the book and the mainstream contemporary teaching field. We should be able to demonstrate an ability to incorporate this chapter of knowledge into our teaching practice, too.

(Cheng's Second Interview – transcribed from English, Week 8)

Storyline 2: English-teaching practitioners

The use of English in an EAL classroom contributes to the positioning of an English-teaching practitioner. As Cheng linked the group discussion task to real-world teaching practice, he expected every student (*We* in Excerpt 2) who joined his group discussion to show some ability to discuss the chapters of the Second Language Acquisition course in English. From his perspective, students in the class should develop the ability to apply knowledge in their teaching careers. Cheng stated that English was a means for teaching practice, so he used English for more than just as delivery of the course content. The purpose of using English to position others as English-teaching practitioners affected how Cheng conducted a group discussion and affected the classmates who participated in his group.

The reason I did not use Cheng's group interview to create his storyline was his isolation from the group. Cheng did not participate in the group discussion with his peers as often as Grace and Fon did. He sat in different locations near the group discussions he joined each week. In fact, Cheng's peers, namely Simon and James, often came late to class when they were not chapter leaders, so Cheng formed group discussions on his own or joined with Grace and her peers. Simon also stated that Cheng became his peer in the second group interview (Week 15), so I could not assess their relations as peers for my close investigation of positioning.

The last purpose for using English in the EAL classroom was that English is an optional language. This purpose originated from the instruction in group discussions that allowed students to use Thai. I found this instruction evidently impacted on the English use of Fon and her peers. Excerpt 3 shows Fon's and her peers' perspectives on using English.

Excerpt 3 English as a noncompulsory language in class

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอยู่ในกลุ่มมีการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษอย่างไรบ้าง

- ฝน: ถ้าอยู่ในกลุ่มเพื่อนที่เป็น discussion เราก็จะคุยนอกเรื่องบ้างที่ไม่ใช่เรื่องเรียน กับคนอื่นก็คุยในสิ่งที่เราต้องการ มันเป็นความสัมพันธ์ที่แตกต่างกัน
- ทิม: ส่วนมากใช้ภาษาไทยในการ discuss เพราะมันง่ายกว่า มันเข้าใจดีกว่า ภาษาอังกฤษใช้เฉพาะถ้าอาจารย์บอกให้ใช้ในคลาสก็ใช้ ใช้ในการเรียนเท่านั้น
- โรส: เวลาพูดภาษาอังกฤษในคลาสนี้ต้องนึกก่อน จะช้ากว่าพูดภาษาไทย ถ้าเป็นคลาส SLA กลุ่มก็พยายามพูด
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แต่อาจารย์ก็อนุญาตให้พูดไทยได้นี่นา
- ฝน: ใช่ มีส่วน ยินดีเลย แต่ถ้าบังคับเลยว่า you must speak English only ok I try to speak English (หัวเราะ).
- Interviewer: When you're in a group discussion, how do you use English?
- Fon: If we're in the same group discussion, we will talk off-topic sometimes. We talk only what we need to talk with other classmates. It's a different kind of familiarity.
- Tim: We used Thai for discussion most of the time because it's easier and more understandable. We use English only when the instructor told us to do so. Only for studies.
- Rose: When I speak English in class, I need to think about how I will say it. It's slower than speaking Thai. If it's in the SLA class, I'll try to speak (English).
- Interviewer: But the instructor allowed you to use Thai.
- Fon: Yes, it is. I'm pleased with that. But if it's a compulsory that you must speak English only ok I try to speak English.(h)

(Fon's Third Group Interview – translated from Thai, Week 12)

Storyline 3: Thai speakers in the English classroom

The use of English relies on peers' perspectives. In Excerpt 2, Fon and her peers used English to fulfil the task instructions rather than for practice. The sense of non-compulsion affected the dynamics between Fon and her peers, as they were the only group in class who often used Thai to explain lessons. In Week 3, Fon, as chapter leader, used English throughout the discussion, with some Thai to clarify her explanations. However, in later weeks, she fell silent when her peers started using Thai throughout the discussion. Although Fon attempted to use English when she again took up a chapter leader position in Week 10, her peers responded in Thai. The dynamics between peers limited the positioning of English speakers, allowing them to maintain the positioning of Thai speakers in the case of Fon and her peers.

The three focal students had their own storylines for positioning themselves and others, and those storylines shaped their positioning throughout the length of the course.

With these storylines, they claimed the right to speak English or Thai in group discussions with peers/non-peers in different time periods. I will use these storylines to explain how and why the three focal students' dynamics affected their English use across contexts in the next section.

5.2 Changes in Students' Language Use across Contexts

Student dynamics that emerged in positioning in group discussions expanded across contexts. Those dynamics affected how focal students varied their language choices, i.e. statement, question and command, with each other in different contexts. This section examines the English used in the themes of Task Solidarity, Individual Support and Expertise in two different time periods, as positionings in these themes evidently provide opportunities for using English to the focal students, their peers and non-peers. At the end of this section, I explain and discuss the impact of those dynamics on their opportunities for using English. I selected episodes where the same positioning recurred at two points in time. I investigated changes in their language choices, reactions and responses to their peers and non-peers. Table 5.1 illustrates the focal students and their peers and the investigated time points.

Table 5.1: Selected weeks for investigating interpersonal dynamics

Focal students	Selected weeks
Grace and her peers	Week 3, Week 7
Grace, her peers and Cheng	Week 5, Week 10, Week 13
Fon and her peers	Week 3, Week 10

These selected weeks illustrate the changes in English use from my perspective. Although those changes were not addressed in student interviews, or they seemed not to be significant to the students, they evidently illustrate how students used English and provided themselves with opportunities for using English. The sections that follow explain, investigate and discuss English use.

5.2.1 Consistent Use of English and the Positions Taken up in Group Discussions

Statements and questions in English are used by the focal students not only to give or ask for information, but also to resolve disagreements and request more information from peers. The uses of these two language choices are affected by the dynamics of peers and the purposes of language use over time. I explain these two usages with episodes from Grace's group discussions in Weeks 3 and 7, respectively.

Short statements are used to resolve disagreements between peers

Disagreements between peers occur when they do not agree with each other's statements. Peers have two choices to resolve a disagreement: ignore it or elaborate their statement. Episode 1 shows how Grace ignored a disagreement with her with a short statement.

Episode 1 Use of short statements to ignore disagreement between peers

1. Grace: AND you can go back to complete the questionnaire that he used to test us on what language is learned whether through imitation. So it's not mainly imitation, right? It is. We can (0.3). We can develop or=
2. Jib: =For me it's mainly through imitation (h) Imitate first.
3. Grace: Yeah but it's not it's not say. (points to the questionnaire) It's not say imitate first but mainly imitation, right?
4. Jib: (reading the questionnaire) Ah mainly.=
5. Grace: =It's not that MAIN.
6. Jib: Uh huh.
7. Grace: OK (0.3) AND this is (0.3) the next one in the (inaudible) the second language learners. Erm (0.3) Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

(Grace's Group Discussion transcribed from English, Week 3)

Peers may resolve disagreements in group discussions with short statements. In Episode 1, Grace, positioning herself as chapter leader/task reminder, stated that a questionnaire on the SLA coursebook did not suggest that language was learned by imitation (Turn 1). However, Jib gave an opinion as an expert, disagreeing that she learned English by imitation (Turn 2). Grace rejected Jib's statement immediately by pointing to the coursebook and asking for confirmation with, *Right?* to Jib (Turn 3), with self-confirmation as in *It's not that MAIN* (Turn 5). As Jib followed her gesture,

Grace resolved the disagreement by using a short statement to redirect the topic and reclaim the right of chapter leader in the next turn (Turn 7). The disagreement in an expert/expert positioning is ignored and resolved quickly with repositioning as a chapter leader/group member.

Although peers resolved disagreements by ignoring them at the beginning of the course, they paid more attention to disagreements and elaborated their statements to explain points and resolve disagreements in later weeks of group discussion. Episode 2 shows the place of elaborated statements in Week 7.

**Episode 2 Use of elaborated statements to resolve disagreements
between peers**

1. Jib: So a LOT of schools in Thailand I think it's teacher-centred.
2. Grace: And grammatical rules
3. Jib: Right. (0.3) And how can we set the natural setting like that?
4. Grace: Immersive programme มั้ง คิดว่า (Perhaps. I think.). It's one way to help. We can implement it at school, and everything is in English.
5. Jib: I think it's for international schools.
6. Grace: No. Even, even the cafeteria should be selling things in English, right?
7. Jib: (h)
8. Grace: So it should be a normal school to do something like that, otherwise you have to be at the theatre or you have to watch movies all the time and not leave the room, right? (0.8) But I suggest students should, should go abroad at least once or twice. They're gonna find something more because it's a. It's a
9. Jib: I understand. Students will learn a lot from study abroad. Not many students have opportunities like that.

(Grace's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 7)

Peers use elaborated statements to resolve their disagreements. In Episode 2, after Grace and Jib stated that schools in Thailand were teacher-centered (Turns 1-2), Jib asked a question that raised a disagreement in later turns (Turn 3). When Grace gave her opinion on how to provide a natural setting that promotes English-speaking in schools, positioning herself as an expert (Turn 4), Jib argued that that setting was for international schools (Turn 5). A disagreement occurred as Grace rejected Jib's statement with one short statement and then elaborated it in later turns (Turns 6 and 8),

paying more attention to the disagreement and attempting to explain why she rejected it. Jib also responded to Grace with a statement that was in line with what Grace said in the previous turn (Turn 9). The positioning of expert/expert in this episode provided Grace and Jib with even more opportunities for using English.

The use of longer, more elaborated statements in one conversational turn, comparing Week 5 and Week 10 within the same positioning of expert/expert, is in line with Storyline 1 (see Section 5.1). As Grace and her peers were comfortable speaking English with each other over time, they made elaborated statements to give their opinions and resolve disagreements between them instead of using short ones. The dynamics between peers impact the evolution of English use across time.

Statements and questions are used to request more information

Requesting information specifically means the use of statements and questions as disclaimers for not being responsible for explaining a lesson. The purpose of using this disclaimer changed across time when comparing Week 3 with Week 7. A disclaimer

Episode 3 Use of questions and statements as a disclaimer

1. Grace: I don't know what is it? COGNITIVE material to.
2. Jib: (Look at the textbook) In the glossary they say that it's the ability of children ability to solve the problem, start to solve the problem
3. Nim: Solve the problem.
4. Grace: What do you guys think? I don't know.
5. Lux: About what?
6. Grace: Cognitive maturity
7. Lux: Uh, I think I think just as the same as Jib said.
8. Grace: AH::.
9. Lux: Maybe the sense of knowing better, like right or wrong, in terms of the language.
10. Grace: Ah:: good good

(Grace's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 3)

occurs when peers need more explanation of a topic. Episode 3 shows the place of statements and questions as a disclaimer used for requesting information.

A disclaimer which is used for rejecting the pre-positioning act of a chapter leader occurs when the focal student cannot explain the lesson to peers. In Episode 3, Grace used the disclaimer *I don't know* and two questions *What is it?* And *What do you guys think?* to request more information from her peers, repositioning herself from chapter leader to help-seeker (Turns 1 and 4). Jib, Nim and Lux took turns with different responses, positioning themselves as supportive peers. Jib responded with an answer, followed by Nim's supportive response (Turns 2 and 3). Lux asked for more information by asking for clarification (Turn 5). After Grace repeated the topic to her, Lux took the next turns to express her opinion (Turns 7 and 9). Lux's opinions were responded to with compliments from Grace (Turn 10). The use of statements and questions as a disclaimer provided opportunities for Jib, Nim and Lux to expand their contributions to the discussion.

In the first individual interview, Grace stated that she did not prepare for the group discussion as expected. When I asked about the disclaimer that she used in Episode 3, she said she did not know about the topic. The individual interview in excerpt 4 shows Grace's intention to use a disclaimer to encourage peers to contribute to the task.

Excerpt 4 Use of a disclaimer to encourage peers to talk

รู้สึกว่าเป็นเพื่อนอาจจะรู้มากกว่าหนู อย่างจิบเนี่ย เวลาเค้าพูด (0.3) หรือเวลาเค้าอ่านมาก่อนเนี่ย เค้าก็จะมีความคิดดีๆ เสมอ แบบนี้มั้ง แบบนั้นดีมั้ง อะรู้งี้ละ ทำไมไม่ถึงพูด *I don't know* เทรอ ก็เพราะอยากให้เขาพูด แสดงความคิดออกมาว่า เฮ้ย *I don't know, but if you know, you tell me* มันเหมือน share กัน

I feel that Phuean might know more (about the lesson) than me. Jib, for example, when she talked (0.3) when she had read before class, she would give me some good thoughts. Let's try doing this and that. The reason I said I don't know was that I would like to encourage her. Hey, I don't know, but if you know, you tell me. It's like sharing (ideas).

(Grace's First Interview - translated from Thai, Week 5)

Across time, a disclaimer changes as students changed how they encourage each other to speak. Grace's use of disclaimer disappeared in Week 7. Episode 4 illustrates how Grace encouraged Jib to give her opinion by using statements instead of a disclaimer.

Episode 4 Use of statements to recast

1. Grace: Yeah but when they go back home so (0.3) we have to teach them to (0.3) to have ah to have fun in learning so they can=
2. Jib: =They have motivation.=
3. Grace: They can SEIZE. Yeah. Acquire for themselves the language, right?
4. Jib: Not just teachers.

(Grace's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 7)

A change in the purpose of language choice allows peers to reposition self and others, claiming the new right to act and speak. In Episode 4 and Excerpt 4, Grace and her peer changed their language choice and recast each other's turn. Although their statements were not fully linked to each other as in, *so they can* (Turn 1) and *They have motivation* (Turn 2); *Acquire for themselves the language, right?* (Turn 3) and *Not just teachers* (Turn 4), they made themselves understood to each other by recasting what the other had said in the previous turn. This is the place where students develop how to recast their peers' statement so as to contribute to the task and encourage each other to speak instead of using a disclaimer in Episode 3.

Although the rights and duties of chapter leader and group members are not distributed equally in group discussions, the dynamics between peers emerged in the overlapped positioning of peers allow them to reposition themselves and redistribute those rights and duties. Those dynamics helped Grace and her peers resolve disagreements (Episodes 1 and 2), encouraged peers to perform the duties of a chapter leader (Episodes 3 and 4) and provided them with more opportunities for using English.

5.2.2 Dynamics of Relations between Peers and Non-peers Promote Intensive Uses of Language Choices

Dynamics of relations between peers and non-peers evidently affect their language choices. Focal students used a range of language choices for different purposes to maintain positioning across contexts and time, resulting in more frequent and longer conversation turns. This section investigates the dynamics between Grace and her peers with Cheng, followed by a discussion of opportunities for using English.

Use of intensive statements to show disagreements between peers and non-peers

Intensive statements refer to frequent turns and longer statements used in conversation. I adopted the word “intensive” from Grace’s interview when she talked about her non-peers. For the duration of the group discussion, Grace and her peers resolved disagreements with short statements, so they did not apply intensive statements. However, when they participated in the same group discussion with Cheng, they used more intensive statements to interrupt him. Episode 5 illustrates how Grace used intensive statements.

Episode 5 Use of statements to show disagreement between peers and non-peer

1. Cheng: It gets to your point ah how erm ah what you're trying to impose on the student's brain. And you think ok it's a grammar ah the vocabulary. So I think it's good like error corrections.
2. Grace: Oh no yeah
3. Cheng: You think that error correction is to correct their you ok=
4. Grace: =No no my point is that teachers if they ask more questions to the students that give their answers, they're trying to make their students think more and go further than the answers
5. Lux: But I think it depends on the students

Episode 5 Use of statements to show disagreement between peers and non-peer (cont.)

6. Grace: Maybe.
7. Lux: Because some students just want a compliment. Some students want to learn more so
8. Cheng: But most of the time I think after they gave answers they are expecting=
9. Grace: =Yeah yeah but is it good like that for they're just giving their answers for getting praise but not the learning process for further learning or something.

(Grace's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 5)

Peers use statements to give their opinions, positioning themselves as experts and limiting non-peers' conversational turns. In Episode 5, Grace, Cheng and Lux were discussing the correction of grammatical errors. Although Cheng referred to Grace's point that teachers corrected students' grammar (Turns 1 and 3), Grace used a negation to reject his reference (Turn 2), following by intensive statements to clarify her point that teachers attempt to make students think (Turn 4). Both of them positioned themselves as experts, giving their opinions to explain their points. When Lux disagreed with Grace (Turn 5), Grace used a very short turn to mitigate that agreement with *Maybe* (Turn 6), providing Lux with the next turn to explain her point (Turn 7). However, when Cheng interrupted Lux (Turn 8), Grace maintained her position as an expert by using intense statements (Turn 9). The differences in language choices used between peers and non-peers show that the dynamics between peers and non-peers influence the use of English.

Disagreement between non-peers were not often resolved in group discussions. The interruptions in Episode 5 continued until Lux, a chapter leader, changed the topic. The dynamics between Grace and Cheng then recurred in another time period. Episode 6 illustrated Grace's and Cheng's positioning of experts and their use of English to show disagreement.

Episode 6 Use of intense statements to interrupt non-peers

1. Cheng: If you master something, you cannot forget it.
2. Grace: Really?↑
3. Cheng: Yeah, like swimming. You cannot forget to swim.
We cannot forget to swim.
4. Grace: But we're gonna at first very first after two years or
three you have to face the moment of struggling in very first
first hour something like
that but then your memory gonna come back
5. Cheng: Yeah. If you really have if you have really mastered
it, you will not forget it. Let's imagine that in particular the
teacher guides you step by step by step.
6. Grace: So it's not the thing you're meaning. It's not the thing
that that we've acquired, right? ↑

(Grace's Group Discussion, Week 10)

Dynamics of students' relations recurred across contexts and influenced their positioning and English use. In Episode 6, Grace, her peers and Cheng compared the mastery of language with another skill. Cheng stated that people do not forget to do something when they have mastered it (Turn 1). Grace interrupted by requesting confirmation of his statement with *Really?* (Turn 2). After Cheng confirmed his statement (Turn 3), Grace repositioned herself as an expert to show disagreement by using longer statements and more turns (Turns 4 and 6). These interruptions and intensive statements were similar to those in Week 5 in the positioning of an expert (Episode 5). It is clear that their dynamics influenced how they disagreed in group discussions across time.

The dynamics between Grace, her peers and Cheng were evidently recognized in Grace's individual and group interviews. Excerpt 5 illustrates Grace's use of English with Cheng.

Excerpt 5 Grace's use of English with Cheng

เวลาหนูคุยกับ Cheng นี่ต้อง *bring a lot of thoughts* แล้วก็ีเหตุผลเยอะๆ ... เวลาเขาเข้าใจ *point* หนูผิด หนูก็จะให้เหตุผลแล้วบอกเค้าว่า *Hey, you. No. What I had explained was like this and that* ก็คือต้อง *support* คึ้วย *idea* เยอะๆ เวลาพูดกับเค้าต้องให้เหตุผลเยอะๆ เพื่อ *bend* ความคิดเค้า

If I discuss with Cheng, I have to bring a lot of thoughts with a lot of reasons ... When he misunderstood my point, I gave reasons and told him "Hey, you. No. What I had explained was like this and that." I need supportive ideas and more explanation to talk with him because I need a lot of reasons to "bend" his ideas towards mine.

(Grace's Second Interview – translated from Thai, Week 10)

The dynamics between non-peers offered opportunities to explain their points with supporting detail. In Excerpt 5, Grace not only used English to clarify her point, but she also had a purpose: to convince him to accept her positioning as expert with more elaborated turns to disagree and reject his expert position.

The dynamics between peers and non-peers influenced the English use of all peers in the group discussion. Grace's peers felt the need to use English for more explanation with Cheng than with Grace. Excerpt 6 shows how Grace's peers used English to talk to Cheng.

Excerpt 6 Changes to language choices between peers and non-peers

- จิบ คือเราต้องพูดภาษาอังกฤษมากขึ้น สื่อสารมากขึ้น บางทีเราก็ไม่รู้ว่าจะทำอะไร หรือเค้าเองก็ไม่ว่าเราพูดถึงอะไร เราต้องพูดมากขึ้นแล้วก็ =
- ลักษณะ =อธิบายมากขึ้น=
- จิบ =อธิบายมากขึ้นเพื่อให้เขาเข้าใจเรา
1. Jib: We need to speak more English, have more communication. Sometimes, we don't know what he means, and he doesn't get what we talk about. We have to speak more and=
 2. Lux: =Explain more.=
 3. Jib: =Explain more to make him understand us.

(Grace's Second Group Interview – translated from Thai, Week 12)

Although Grace and her peers used English in group discussions, they felt their English use was different when talking to Cheng, who was a non-peer. Grace and her

peers needed to use English with Cheng not only to communicate with him, but also for his comprehension of their points. The dynamics between Grace's peers and Cheng provided them with more opportunities to use English.

Use of English to coordinate and resolve conflicts

Conflict in this thesis means a prolonged disagreement that divides students into two opposing sides. A conflict occurs when a disagreement between peers and non-peers is not resolved within a short time. Peers coordinate with each other to disagree with non-peers to resolve conflict. Episode 7 (adjacent to Episode 6) shows how a conflict occurred and was resolved between Grace, her peers and Cheng in a group discussion.

Episode 7 Peers' coordination to resolve conflicts with non-peers

1. Grace: I don't think that if we master something, we're going to have it forever, right? I don't think that. I don't think that.
2. Jib: I agree with you Grace.
3. Cheng: =No no no it should.
4. Jib, Grace: Really? ↑
5. Cheng: Yeah, memo memorize is one thing [or learning is one thing. Acquire is something [really different.
6. Grace: Buzz (loud, incomprehensible sound)]
7. Jib: NO. ↑]
8. Lux: No↑, but I think English is like I think it's like memorize and like learning and everything uh so if some vocabulary, that we have it.
9. Grace: You have to memorize first and then you understand it.

(Grace's Group Discussion – transcribed from English, Week 10)

Peers coordinated to resolve a conflict with non-peers by using English to agree with peers, reject the position of non-peers, disagree with non-peers and recast the statement. In Episode 7, Grace disagreed with Cheng's contention that mastery of language is the same as that of another skill by using negation and repetition, as in *I don't think it. I don't think it.* (Turn 1). Jib took the following turn to show that she agreed with Grace, positioning herself as an agreeing peer (Turn 2). Cheng continued to reject Grace's statement (Turn 3), followed by Grace and Jib's request for

confirmation *Really?* (Turn 4). This rejection of an expert position sparked a conflict. Cheng took one more turn to explain his point (Turn 5), and Grace spoke, barely inaudibly, to show her disagreement while seeking assistance from her peers (Turn 6). Jib and Lux responded to Grace's positioning act of help-seeker differently. While Jib used a short negation to reject Cheng's statement with *No* (Turn 7), Lux elaborated on Grace's point that English required memorization (Turn 8). Grace then recast Lux's statement to make a point: *You have to memorize first and then you understand it.* (Turn 9) Grace, Jib and Lux positioned themselves as coordinating peers to disagree with Cheng and resolve the conflict in the group discussion. The group positioning of coordinating peers was negotiated to resolve the conflict between peers and non-peer.

The dynamics between peers and non-peers expand cross contexts. Episode 8 illustrates a recurrence of peers' coordination in a classroom presentation where Cheng was pre-positioned as a presenter and Grace as one of the audience.

Episode 8 Recurrence of peers' coordination to show disagreement with non-peers

1. Cheng: I'm worried about some teaching methods that require IQ. This one I think it has it is a complicated way that stupid student cannot=
2. Grace: =Oh. It's it's not the IQ I think.
3. Lux: It's not the IQ.
4. Grace: It's not the IQ. It requires a background knowledge of the (0.3) thing.
5. Lux: Of the target language.
6. Grace: It's not that
7. Cheng: Look at this instruction. Look at this instruction. Very complex. I think also it's kind of cognitive. It's very cognitive. So, it's more about how you understand. You have ideas. You have background knowledge and even words already in your mind. And just encourage you to use it. Erm, and the last one I think ah we have a lady. She pointed out that if you move, migrate to

Episode 8 Recurrence of peers' coordination to show disagreement with non-peers (cont.)

another country, you might know a lot of words but you're not brave enough to speak out or express yourself. This is a better way to encourage you to speak out. Yeah. What is this? What is that? Kind of like. Yeah.

(Cheng's Classroom Presentation – transcribed from English, Week 13)

The language used for peers' coordination in the classroom presentation was more elaborated than that in group discussions. Negation, repetition and sentence completion were also used to show disagreement between peers and non-peers. In Episode 8, the dynamics between Grace and Cheng affected how they disagreed on the topic of Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and language learning. Cheng, the presenter in front of the class, stated that students needed to have a high IQ to interpret complicated instructions (Turn 1). Grace interrupted him (Turn 2) and gave new information about background knowledge to elaborate and reposition herself as a disagreeing non-peer and expert (Turn 4). This interruption also provided the next turn for Lux, who repeated and completed Grace's statement (Turns 3 and 5). Grace and Lux coordinated to disagree with Cheng on behalf of their group by using negations and statements. After the interruption, Cheng used commands to make his point and took a long turn to elaborate on the complexity of the task in an attempt to disprove Grace's statement (Turn 7). The language used for disagreement in the classroom presentation followed the same pattern as that used in Grace's small group discussions with Cheng. The dynamics between peers and non-peers influenced how students negotiated conflict across contexts as students used the same intensive statements for positioning themselves as agreeing and disagreeing peers and non-peers.

The changing context from small group discussion to classroom presentation affected students' positioning. Peers created a private space to position as coordinating peers. Episode 9 shows the private space between Grace and her peers that influenced their English use in the following turns.

Episode 9 Recurrence of peers' coordination to resolve conflict with non-peers

1. Grace: ° But if you have nothing to say ° (Talks to Lux and Jib)
2. Jib: ° Uh huh° มั่ว (mess up)
3. Grace: ° Uh. มั่ว° (mess up)
4. Cheng: And what else have you observed? She observed that instruction is complex. I observed that instruction is cognitive. So what else have you observed? (Looking away from Grace)
5. Jib: Like we said earlier, the students who is ah attend this class have a very good background knowledge of the target language, so that's why they ah can [can answer
6. Grace: Yeah, say something from the the<
7. Jib: If you. If the students can erm don't have the background knowledge of the target language, they cannot [answer. And they will keep silent
8. Grace: Uh participate in the<]
9. Cheng: Right. Yeah. The students might keep silent. True.

(Cheng's Classroom Presentation – transcribed from English, Week 13)

Peers create a private space to coordinate and position themselves as coordinating peers overlapping with disagreeing non-peers to disagree with non-peers during the classroom presentation. In Episode 9, a private space between Grace and her peers provided opportunities to disprove Cheng's statement. This private space was the moment when Grace talked to her peers in a soft voice, critiquing and evaluating Cheng's statement in Thai as มั่ว (*Mua* - translated as mess up), positioning themselves as disagreeing non-peers (Turns 1–3). When Cheng requested responses from other students in the class with questions, Jib interrupted him with new information about learner's background knowledge, as agreed with Grace in the private space (Turn 5), and took another turn to explain her point (Turn 7). Grace continued supporting Jib with statements (Turns 6 and 8). The use of the subject "we" (Turn 5) signalled coordination and a contribution to the disagreement from her peers. Cheng finally approved Grace and her peers' statements, and the conflict was resolved (Turn 9). The positioning acts

of peers, coordinating peers, disagreeing non-peers, supporting peers and experts overlapped. Peers have a private space to themselves. In that private space, they coordinate to disagree with non-peers.

The right and duties of peers and non-peers are even more unequally distributed over time. Students allow their peers to take turns to explain their points with minimal disagreement between them (Episode 5). However, the dynamics change when disagreement and conflict with non-peers occur. Peers use more interruptions, negations, assertions and recasts to coordinate and resolve disagreements and conflicts with non-peers across contexts (Episodes 6–9). Both peers and non-peers gain more opportunities to use English for a range of purposes.

The dynamics between Grace, her peers and Cheng, which influenced their English use, are in line with Storylines 1 and 2. Grace and her peers were positioned as English practitioners as they used English in group discussions with each other and negotiated disagreements and conflicts with non-peers. Cheng also gained opportunities for using English as an English-teaching practitioner as students who participated in his group used more English statements to explain and discuss the topic in group discussions. Those dynamics provided opportunities for using English across contexts.

5.2.3 Dynamics of Relations between Peers Limit the Opportunities for Using English

Dynamics of relations between peers in each group discussion do not all align. While the dynamics of Grace and her peers provided them with more opportunities for using English, the dynamics between Fon and her peers limited their English use. This section investigates how and why their dynamics did not facilitate those opportunities across contexts.

Statements in both English and Thai are used to check comprehension.

When comprehension is the priority for task contribution, students used both Thai and English in group discussions. Fon was the only focal student who often checked her peers' comprehension with Thai and English questions, often positioning herself as a comprehension checker as well as a group leader. When there was no response from her peers, she would continue checking her peers' comprehension with questions. Episode

10 illustrates how Fon's positioning of comprehension checker influenced language use in the group discussion.

Episode 10 Comprehension check in both English and Thai

1. Fon: Learner learner already know the other language they have the different pattern when they want to learn second language or other language they they have already know (0.2) what they study what they are going to study it has different pattern SO so so when they know the the pattern that that very different they will aware in in study second language (0.3) so they may change something in the pattern (0.3) Understand? เข้าใจใช้ปะ
2. Tim: เข้าใจ (understood)
3. Fon: อืม เหมือนกับว่ารู้แล้วว่าสิ่งที่เราเรียนมันจะ มันเป็นเรื่องใหม่อะ แล้วเรารู้ว่ามันต่างจากภาษาเราก็คงเลยแบบอาจจะมีการปรับ คำโน้นคำนี้เวลาเราจะพูดภาษานั้นภาษานี้จะใช้อย่างนี้ เอ่อ ซึ่ง
(Erm, it's like when we know what we learn is a new thing, and also different from our language, we might modify some words when we speak that language)
This is the develop erm the sequence of development the firstly is grammatical morpheme morpheme is like -ing -ed -s.

(Fon's Group Discussion – transcribed from English/translated from Thai, Week 3)

The use of English and Thai to claim the rights of expert and comprehension checker affects students' language use. In Episode 10, Fon attempted to explain the lesson in English, but she often hesitated by repeating words, such as *learner, they, so, in, the* (Turn 1). To check whether her peers understood what she said, Fon repositioned herself as a comprehension checker, overlapping with the positioning act of an expert. When she used Thai to check her peers' comprehension, they answered in Thai (Turn 2). Fon continued using Thai to summarize her own English statements and to maintain her positioning as expert (Turn 3). After Fon started using Thai, her peers responded in Thai throughout the rest of this group discussion, creating

interpersonal dynamics between Fon and her peers who used Thai to contribute to the discussion, thus limiting their opportunities for using English in the EAL classroom.

English is not only used as a compulsory practice (Storyline 3), but also with non-peers in the EAL classroom. Excerpt 7 shows Fon's opinion on using English with non-peers in the EAL classroom.

Excerpt 7 Awareness of using English with non-peers

- ผู้สัมภาษณ์ มีความเห็นอย่างไรบ้างกับการพูดภาษาอังกฤษในชั้นเรียน
- ฝน ถึงแม้ในคลาสจะใช้ภาษาอังกฤษแต่พอเป็นกลุ่มตัวเองมันจะมีความ aware น้อยกว่า เวลาคุยกับคนที่เราไม่สนิทนะอะ aware ในเรื่อง คำที่ใช้ ประโยคที่ใช้ grammar แล้วก็แบบ Thai accent ไปเลย คือบางทีถ้าแบบ บางทีเห็นกลุ่มอื่น อู๊ยย พูดคล่องจังเลย ดูเก่ง แล้วถ้าเราต้องไปคุยภาษาอังกฤษกับเค้าจริงๆ ก็อาจจะแบบ (0.8) ปรับภาษาเราให้มันตามเค้านิดนึงอะอะ เหมือนกับว่าชั้นต้องพูดให้ถูกนะ สำเนียงที่ใช้ก็ให้มันดูดีนิดนึง ด้วยความที่เรามองว่าเค้าเป็นคนแปลกหน้า มีความสัมพันธ์กับเราน้อยอะอะ เลยแบบเหมือนมันจะ formal กว่า ในขณะที่คุยกับคนที่สนิท ไทยบ้าง อังกฤษบ้างผสมกัน
- Interviewer What do you think about speaking English in class?
- Fon Although in class I used English, I had less awareness to use English with peers than with other unfamiliar classmates. I'm aware of words, sentences, grammar and a Thai accent. When I saw some classmates speaking English so fluently, they looked smart. And if I have to talk with them, I feel like (0.8) adjusting my English to theirs. I need to speak English accurately with a good accent because they are strangers with less familiarity. It seems more "formal" than talking with familiar peers, using both Thai and English.

(Fon's Individual Interview – translated from Thai, Week 5)

English is used with unfamiliar non-peers for the positioning act of "formal" English speakers. From Excerpt 7, Fon stated that she used Thai to claim the right of a peer, while using English with non-peers who were speaking English fluently. She needed to reposition herself as an English speaker by adjusting her English to have more accuracy and a better accent to talk to them. Fon and her peers agreed that Thai could be used in group discussions to help them with comprehension (Storyline 3),

and English was used with non-peers to help Fon with the positioning of English speaker.

Peers use Thai to maintain their positions of comprehension checkers across contexts. Episode 11 illustrates Fon's use of Thai mixed with English to explain the lesson content in Week 8 (three weeks later).

Episode 11 Recurrence of comprehension checks in Thai

1. Fon: And the last Ethnography อันนี้ ethnography คืออะไร มีสาม study เหมือนกัน ดู definition ก่อนก็คือเป็น a way of observing teaching เป็นการ observing teaching and learning in ESL or EFL class ก็แล้วแต่ ปรากฏ without a sense of predetermined category (explain ethnography) คล้าย ๆ observe ในห้องนี่ จะนั่งเขียนๆ ใน classroom หรือ participate ด้วยก็ได้ อันนี้คือลักษณะของ ethnology ethnography. SO the first study of this ก็คือ Are you with me STUDENTS? Are you with ME?
2. Rose: (h) Are you with me?
3. Tim: (h) Oh. Yes. Yes. Yes.
4. Fon: อู๋ เหมือนคุณอะ เหมือนกลัวเลย เออคุณจริงอะ ขอโทษค่ะ (h)
(Oops! Sounds like scolding at you, sorry (h))
5. Rose: OK. Ok
6. Tim: It's ok.
7. Jun: ดีมากเลย (Applause) (Very good)

(Fon's Group Discussion – transcribed from English/ translated from Thai, Week 8)

The language use in group discussions changed from using Thai explanations to supplement English to using Thai mixed with English in the positioning of comprehension checker across contexts. In Episode 11, Fon used Thai mixed with English instead of using English and restated it in Thai (Week 3). Her use of English significantly reduced. Fon maintained her positioning act of comprehension checker with a language play, creating laughter in the next turns, as *Are you with me STUDENTS?* (Turn 1) to get a response from her peers. After that, Rose and Tim responded to her in English (Turns 2 and 3), Fon apologized that her language play was not polite in this situation as it sounded like she was scolding someone (Turn 4). Her apology was accepted in later turns (Turns 5 and 6). In fact, Fon did not receive any

response from her peers to her lengthy turn, so she repositioned herself as a playful peer to get their attention. However, Jun complimented Fon on her explanation, as in *Very good* (Turn 7), making Fon's positioning act of comprehension checker through the use of mixed language appropriate for her peers. The dynamics between Fon and her peers were clearly negotiated through Thai, not English. In other words, those dynamics did not promote English use in their group discussions.

The awareness of not using English with peers in the EAL classroom affects students' English improvement. Excerpt 8 shows Fon's perspective on not using English with peers.

Excerpt 8 Awareness of opportunities for language learning

ผู้สัมภาษณ์ ภาษาอังกฤษที่ใช้มีการเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างไรบ้าง
 ฟน ภาษาอังกฤษเปลี่ยนน้อย หนูไม่พัฒนาตัวเองด้วยแหละ ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษน้อย
 คือสารน้อย เพราะเราไม่ค่อยได้พูด เหมือนว่าได้พูดอีกทีก็ค่อนข้าง
 นั้นไปเลย พยายามว่าจะทำยังไงดี หลังจาก group discussion เวลาคุยก็คุย
 ภาษาไทย ทั้งในห้องและนอกห้อง ที่ไม่อยากพูดเพราะว่ายังมีความ aware
 อยู่อะ มันยังไม่ลดลง มันเป็นเรื่องที่น่ากลัวว่าทำไมตัวเองยังมีความ aware อยู่
 คือพูดแล้วมัน เหมือนมันคิดภาษาไม่ออก มันจะพูดว่ายังไงมันจะใช้ยังไง จะ
 บอกยังไง ลึกลับยังไงให้เข้าใจ มันต้องคิดเยอะ พอคิดเยอะก็บอกว่าจะได้แค่คำ
 โย้ย ไม่พูดดีกว่า เวลา discuss กับเพื่อนนอกห้องก็เป็นภาษาไทย

Interviewer: How did your English change over time?

Fon: My English changed a little. I did not practise it, I was using less English for communication because I didn't speak much. I used English in classroom presentations and group discussions only. I used Thai both in and outside class. I'm wondering why I am (not) aware of using English. It's like when I speak English, I cannot instantly know what to say, how to talk, or how to communicate in English. I need to work it out word by word. And I feel like using Thai when I discuss with my peers is better.

(Fon's Individual Interview – translated from Thai, Week 14)

Although Fon was aware of using English in an EAL class, she did not use English with peers due to familiarity. In Excerpt 8, Fon stated that her English did not improve as a result of not using English. Thai was her main language used to negotiate relations with peers, and English was used for non-peers. Fon spent most of her time speaking

Thai with her peers both inside and outside the classroom, losing opportunities for using English.

The dynamics in group discussions between peers and their use of English of the three focal students were evidently distinctive. The focal students who negotiated and maintained the positionings of English practitioners and English-teaching practitioners used English for a wider range of purposes and more intensive than those who positioned themselves as Thai speakers in an EAL classroom. The dynamics in group discussions between peers provided each focal student with unequal opportunities for using English with peers and non-peers across contexts.

5.3 Implications of Dynamics of Students' Relations for Opportunities for Using English

This section addresses and discusses the implications of dynamics between students that impact on their language use, specifically English, from the aspect of positioning theory. The four implications that follow explain how and why those dynamics affect and are affected by positioning.

5.3.1 Dynamics between Peers Increase their Opportunities for Using English when they Maintain their Positioning across Contexts

Students not only use language to complete tasks consistent with the pre-positioning of chapter leader/group members and peers; they also negotiate other positionings during group discussions. This overlapping nature of positioning provides them with opportunities for using English for a wide range of purposes. In this chapter, peers positioned themselves as experts, followers, agreeing peers, disagreeing peers or supportive peers, and so on, in addition to the pre-positioning of chapter leader/group members to complete group discussions, ignore and resolve disagreements through short statements and questions (Episodes 1 and 3). Those overlapping positions of focal students expanded across contexts, providing the students with such opportunities.

Positionings between peers and non-peers were maintained in different time periods, providing even more opportunities for using English. The focal students maintained the same positioning with peers through elaborate/longer statements (Episodes 2 and 4). They also maintained positioning with non-peers by coordinating

to show disagreement and resolve conflicts with non-peers in a coordinated manner (Episodes 5–8). The consistent positioning of peers agreeing and disagreeing with non-peers created dynamics between peers, increasing their English use with each other across contexts.

5.3.2 Dynamics between Peers and Non-peers Affect Changes in their English Use

The dynamics between peers and non-peers evidently influenced the focal students' use of English, as they changed their language choices for positioning across contexts. Each focal student used English to help them successfully position themselves in different ways. While Grace and her peers used extended and elaborated statements to position/reposition themselves with each other over time, Fon and her peers used less English and more Thai to help them with positioning. Changes in students' language choices evolved over time and across contexts, causing them to gain or lose opportunities for using English.

Peers and non-peers varied their language choices in English with different people in communication. Two focal students, Grace and Fon, recognized how to talk to peers and non-peers. Grace's use of English outside class changed from basic conversations with her peers to lesson-related topics over time (Excerpt 1), and from short statements with peers to elaborate and longer statements with non-peers (Excerpt 5). Fon used more English with non-peers as she acknowledged that English was a "formal" language used to position herself as an English speaker to talk to them, while Thai was the language used for the positioning of peers (Excerpt 8). These focal students varied their language choices to talk to peers and non-peers. The dynamics between peers and non-peers influenced students' use of English, not only about what to say, but also how to talk to different people when communicating.

5.3.3 Students' Capacity to Use Language for Positioning Offers a Range of Opportunities for Using English

The capacity or ability to use language for positioning varies. In this chapter, Grace, her peers and Cheng were able to use English to position themselves and achieve the purposes of explaining the topic, showing agreement/disagreement and resolving disagreements or conflicts, whereas Fon and her peers needed Thai to help them achieve

the same purpose of explaining the topic. The distinctive capacities of using English between Grace, Fon and Cheng suggested that these students did not have equal access to the right of positioning. As the right was not equally accessed, students who had more capacity for using English could perform their duties better than students who lacked that capacity.

The capacity for positioning as an expert is not associated with proficiency. It is the ability to use English as the only means in positioning. Among the three focal students, Fon stated that her English ability did not improve over time (Excerpt 8). It is not inferred that her proficiency was at a low level as she made changes to her English when talking to non-peers. In fact, Fon and her peers lacked the capacity to use English to position themselves as experts when they communicated with their peers. The dynamics between peers influenced the capacity for positioning and English use, not their English proficiency in this sense.

5.3.4 The Local Moral Orders Influence Dynamics between Peers

Three levels of local moral orders, namely personal, conversational and institutional, affected how the three focal students positioned themselves with their peers and non-peers across contexts. Grace claimed the right to position herself and her peers at a personal level, using English to resolve disagreements and encourage peers to continue talking. They also positioned themselves at the conversational level with Cheng, gaining more access to the right to take up more positions in all time periods. However, Fon and her peers often claimed the right to position at the institutional level. Their positionings were limited to chapter leaders and group members across contexts. As Fon did not participate in the same group discussions with non-peers for the duration of the course, she could not take up other positions that would facilitate her English use. Students lost opportunities to use English when they relied on the institutional level of the moral order.

The institutional level of the moral order, or the instructions for conducting group discussions, was not fully recognized and followed by all focal students. Fon and her peers fully recognized that group discussions advanced when they used either English or Thai to help them comprehend the topic, as the instructor allowed Thai for group discussions (Excerpt 3); however, Grace and Cheng had their own interpretations. Grace

and her peers agreed that English was the only means of completing the task (Excerpt 1), and Cheng stated that group discussion was the place for positioning himself as an English-teaching practitioner (Excerpt 2). The personal and conversational levels of the moral order played a major part for Grace and Cheng, as they gained access to the right to position from these two sources. Those students who accessed the right from the institutional moral order as a single source lost opportunity for using English in this EAL classroom.

This chapter has investigated three focal students' and their peers' positioning in two different time periods to identify the impact of dynamics on their opportunities for using English across contexts. The students who gained those opportunities used English to take up the positions of English practitioner and English-teaching practitioner, which overlapped with the pre-positioning of chapter leader/group members, peers and other emerging positions during group discussions. Those who lost the opportunities used both English and Thai to position themselves and their peers as Thai speakers in an EAL classroom, overlapping with positions of chapter leaders/group members and comprehension checkers. The reasons for using English only or English mixed with Thai relied on the dynamics of peers who agreed to use English or Thai to complete group discussions and the choices to participate in group discussions with peers/non-peers or peers.

6 Discussion

Gaining access to the rights to act and speak requires language. Students' positions and positioning across contexts and time impact their opportunities for language learning. For this reason, how students position self and others is of interest to the language education community. This chapter draws out key points regarding the dynamics of relations in group discussions of the EAL classroom in this thesis, at the same time discussing the larger implications for the field. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section discusses the findings in relation to the previous research on peer interaction by problematizing the concept of peer and further discussing the evolution of positioning over time and characterizing students' positioning. This is followed by a discussion of positioning and opportunities for language learning. This chapter suggests the implications for pedagogy in teaching and methodological contribution to the field.

6.1 Students' Positioning and its Evolution in Group Discussions

The positioning of MA-EAL students is dynamic and changes over time, ranging from chapter leader/group member, assigned by the task instruction, to other emerging positions in group discussions. This section discusses the problem of the concept of "peer", the evolution of the dynamics from students' positioning over time, the characteristics of positioning that impact their positioning with the previous research in peer interaction.

6.1.1 The Problem with the Concept “Peer”

Students must locate themselves within group discussions, and one positioning that affects how they act and speak is their positioning of peer. However, this position is not always consistent with how it has been described in the previous research. The assumption of “peer” in peer interaction research is problematic as it only indicates students’ working in groups without the teacher’s presence. In this thesis, it was found that the positioning of *Pheuan* (loosely translated as “peer” or “friend”), which was derived from the students’ interviews, suggested that the concept of peer varied and was not aligned across focal students. While non-Thai students defined it as classmates to whom they need to give supportive responses in group discussions, Thai students used the term for those who always participated in the same discussion group and who assisted each other to talk in class. Even between two focal Thai students, the definitions of “peer” were not identical. While one focal student recognized that peers give assistance by using English to encourage and support each other to continue speaking, the other did not provide assistance in the positioning but focused on the rights and duties which were assigned by the task instruction (§4.1.2, Storyline 3; §4.2.2 Episode 5; Excerpt 3, Episode 7, §4.1.2, Storyline 5).

The concept of peer in the previous research has overlooked how students resolve struggles in the positioning of peers and non-peers. In the first place, assistance is offered to less capable peers by more capable peers. Although this implication is in line with the assistance in the sociocultural perspective stated by Lantolf and Thorne (2006), within this EAL context, the positioning of capable peers was significant when students offered assistance or resolved struggles in group discussions. Those struggles, which restricted them from talking, were resolved by their encouragement of one another to continue talking (§4.2.2, Episode 5), disapproval of non-peer’s points (§4.2.2, Episode 7) and attempt to elaborate on the lesson (§4.2.4, Episode 13). These resolutions involved students’ repositioning from chapter leader or group member to peers who sought help and who were able to show their opinions respectively. Without the capacity of students’ (re)positioning and the dynamics of peers, resolution or assistance did not occur. This implication is consistent with the argument of Swain and Lapkin (2002) in that the status of a capable learner is not static and is open to challenge over time. In this case, when the position of chapter leader was challenged by group members, students repositioned themselves to peers before providing assistance.

Affiliation, or the act of becoming part of the group, helps to resolve digression between peers and non-peers, and humor is used to achieve that affiliation. While Thonus (2008) found that effective communication between student tutors and tutees was reached when humor and joint laughter were constituted, the current research found that joint laughter signalled an attempt to manage affiliation and simultaneously redirect digression through repositioning. While in the work of Shively (2013) and Kontio (2017), students used teasing and jokes to coordinate in group work, in the current study students supported their peers to speak in the group by taking up the position of playful speaker (§4.2.5, Episode 17), creating jokes and laughter. When students laughed at a digression, their social distance was reduced, and affiliation was built. As digression was situational and unplanned, students who were able to draw knowledge, opinion or experience took turns and became part of the group. The consequences of joint laughter in group discussions suggest the dynamics of group discussions change according to situation and provide more opportunities for using English.

Resolving struggles, which can also be done through making social inquiry, e.g. experience, identities and personal background, between non-peers concurs with the work of Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016), whose students made social enquiries to make themselves feel they were part of group work. In my research, non-peers needed the positioning of social inquirer to socially get closer to each other by using different kinds of questions and extended turns to resolve struggles when the chapter leader could not continue managing the group discussion. In other words, their dynamics changed from completing the task to exchanging personal information in order to resolve the struggle. This implication also reflects the significance of relations in cooperative learning in the work of Ning (2010), who claims that students' relations affect the effectiveness of group work and language learning.

Regarding the positioning of non-peers, resolving struggles is associated with Thai social hierarchy. This positioning has a reversed effect on how rights are distributed. For instance, a focal student who positioned herself as an elder exercised power through commands, asking the younger ones to read aloud the textbook content (§4.2.4, Episode 14). This action did not allow them to speak. Instead, it prevented them from participating in the discussion. The unequal power was exercised in this instance to resolve the struggle of group discussion. This implication expands the statement of

Philp et al. (2013), who state that power between students is equal when their status is equal. Power, on the other hand, is not equal when their status is hierarchically ordered. From the sociocultural perspective, this social hierarchy also resonates in the finding of Howard (2010), who found that older students took control of the younger ones through commands, and the young students showed respect or politeness to them by following their commands. Regarding the implication of Thai social hierarchy in this thesis, asymmetric relations were also found between adult students. From positioning theory perspective, I argue that two local moral orders involved in the rights to positioning of elder/younger are cultural and institutional moral orders. The elder student claimed the right to command from her seniority and the assigned position of chapter leader, and the younger ones did not challenge this positioning. According to positioning theory, the rights claimed from the cultural moral order are greater and restrict those from the lower levels, i.e. the institutional level, and took precedence over the conversational level (van Langenhove, 2015). The younger students could not reposition themselves or reject the positioning of the elder in this case. The concept of non-peer should be addressed in peer interaction research as it also affected students' opportunities to interact and their language use for positioning.

The resolutions of struggles between peers and non-peers create a “comfortable” learning environment. This implication affirms the work of Pickett and Fraser (2010), and Shernoff et al. (2017), who state that cohesiveness, involvement, task orientation, cooperation, motivational support and supportive relationships which are negotiated in the class facilitate the students' collaboration. Students engaged more in the collaborative work and stated that they were “comfortable” working together. However, in this thesis, the facilitative environment also appeared when students disagreed or struggled with group discussions. For instance, students cooperated to help the chapter leader by recasting the discussed topic for clarification (§4.2.2, Episode 6), performed the duty of chapter leader to overcome struggles (§4.2.4, Episode 13), or shifted topic from academic to personal information to resolve struggles (§4.2.5, Episode 16). Positioning that helps students to resolve struggles and create this learning environment is often related to peer and non-peer's dynamics.

Previous research on peer interaction overlooked the impact of familiarity and group cohesion, which characterize how peers interact with each other. These two

characteristics found in this thesis showed similarities with but also differences from *positive companionship* (Davies, 2005) and *cohesive group* (Leslie, 2015). Davies claims that the negotiation of positive companionship helps to boost the confidence of female students. Davies' students took longer turns in talk to express their ideas and watched their language to avoid disagreements and maintain companionship. Familiarity between peers in my research made them feel "comfortable" using more English and interrupting each other during the discussion (§5.1, Excerpt 1). They also managed with the disagreement by ignoring it or resolved it in a few turns to maintain group cohesion (§5.2.1, Episodes 1 and 2). When they interrupted non-peers to give turns to their peers as a reinforcement to resolve disagreements (§5.2.2, Episode 5), familiarity helped them to interrupt without any peer rejection. As they coordinated to disprove non-peer's points, they were maintaining the cohesiveness of peers. From these instances, familiarity and group cohesion affect the different dynamics between peers and non-peers.

Familiarity between peers provides a "comfortable-to-speak" environment for them, but not for non-peers. Regarding the production of language in a cohesive group, Leslie (2015) claims that students in a cohesive group increased language production and higher participation. Students in a cohesive group who were silent changed to more talkative when the group struggled with the task or with reaching the Zone of Interaction Transition (ZIT). However, in this thesis, familiarity and group cohesion did not always contribute to confidence or increased use of English. One focal student, Grace, stated that her familiarity with peers increased over time, providing more opportunities for improving her confidence in speaking English (§5.1, Excerpt 1). On the other hand, another focal student, Fon, who also had familiarity and cohesiveness with her peers, did not gain those opportunities as her peers used more Thai in the group discussion to aid their comprehension of the lesson over time.

Both familiarity and unfamiliarity between students increase opportunities for using more English. This implication complemented the degree of familiarity that influences students' formal/informal linguistic choices in Thompson (2014) and Coffin et al. (2012), who claim that students use informal language to reduce social distance. *Pheuan* in this thesis interrupted, asserted points and used formal and informal languages to negotiate relationships. Even between peers and non-peers, their

unfamiliarity suggested opportunities for using English. One focal student, Fon, who always participated in the same group with peers, stated that she used English with non-peers who were not familiar, and Thai with peers over time (§5.1, Excerpt 3). The use of formal language in this case aimed at repositioning oneself as English speaker with good accents, providing opportunities to use formal language in discussions, i.e. SLA terms. Another focal student, Cheng, used informal language to respond to the social inquiry with non-peers to negotiate social distance when his chapter leader struggled (§4.2.4, Episode 16). This range of dynamics and formal/informal language use between non-peers showed that unfamiliarity also provide students with the opportunities to interact. Familiarity and group cohesion are, therefore, the characteristics that must be expanded to elaborate the understanding of peer interaction.

The dynamics of students' negotiation for cohesion expands the characteristics of group cohesion stated by Hinger (2006), who found that group cohesion allows learners to actively participate in the task. In my research, cohesion needed to be built within the positioning of peers during group discussions by using questions to ask for clarification and commanding their peers to continue talking or take more turns to disagree with non-peers. Without these negotiations for maintaining such cohesion, students could not position themselves and others as peers and lost their opportunities to interact.

From the implications of positioning in group discussions, I suggest that the concept of peer is derived from students' perspective from the interview as it reveals the characteristics (herein familiarity and group cohesion) and the dynamics that impact students' opportunities to interact in the context where students take control of their own learning.

6.1.2 Evolution of Students' Positioning Over Time

The dynamics of students' positioning evolve over time, so a single snapshot of interaction is insufficient for understanding either these dynamics or their effect on students' opportunities to interact. The patterns of dyadic interaction, which reduce the relations into a single pair in one snapshot, e.g. expert/novice, risk overlooking the dynamics of students' relations. For instance, positioning of expert/ novice could be reversed when the expert students sought assistance from their peers by repositioning themselves as novice, or could evolve when students repositioned themselves from

novice to expert to help others continue talking. These flexible positionings that emerged from the data indicate that students' positionings are dynamic.

The dynamic evolution of students' positioning is not aligned with Storch's classification of fixed interaction patterns, such as expert/novice or dominant/dominant (Storch, 2013). It also questions the work of Leiser (2004); and Storch and Aldosari (2013), who argue that grouping students with a mixed proficiency was effective only if they cooperated to work. Regarding the implications of students' positioning, more flexible positionings were found. For instance, in the theme *Power*, the dominant position was often contested between peers and non-peers, and among non-peers (§4.2.4, Episodes 12 and 13). When students' positioning of dominant was contested by non-peers, students who were peers interrupted non-peers and helped their peers to maintain their position as dominant speakers. Positionings emerging in this situation ranged from dominant/dominant to dominant/help seeker and supportive peers. The changes of positioning indicate that positionings are not static but change over time. This evolution of positioning did not involve their proficiency since no positioning of proficient students was found during group discussions. The opportunities to interact rely on the dynamic evolution of students' positioning.

The evolution of positioning over time contributes to more opportunities to interact. This implication asserts the shift between the positions of unknowers to knowers to solve the problems in the group task in the work of Jakonen and Morton (2015); and Lee (2016) from peers to inactive and active tutees to participate in group consultation task are in line with the changes in positions to overcome struggles in this thesis. A range of positionings evolved from the position of chapter leader/group members to emerging positions, i.e. novice to expert (§4.2.3, Episode 11), dominant speaker/submissive listener (§4.2.4, Episode 13), commander/follower (§4.2.4, Episode 14), and inquirer/informant (§4.2.5, Episode 16). Students who positioned themselves as dominant speaker or commander took more turns in group discussions than those who were positioned as inquirers and informants. These evolutions indicate that their opportunities to interact increase over time.

The evolution of students' positioning increases the opportunities to cooperate between students. This point is aligned with the finding of Young and Tedick (2016), who found that students changed their positions between expert and novice or vice versa

to adjust themselves in different social contexts. These changes created more collaborative dialogues between students. In my thesis, the dynamics of students' discussions often promoted their cooperation. Students who repositioned themselves to experts in the group engaged more in group discussions. Those dynamics between them either facilitated or limited their contribution to the group discussion and language production. Students who were able to reposition themselves as experts were more cooperative and produced more language to engage in the group discussions where their peers participated than those who did not change their positioning and participated in the group with non-peers (§4.2.3, Episode 8 - 10). The dynamics play a vital role in students' cooperation for group work and language production.

The evolution of students' positioning affirms the work of Watanabe and Swain (2009), who investigated students' language production based on an interactive pattern of proficiency as expert and passive as non-collaborative. Watanabe and Swain found that students who had high proficiency did not always engage in collaborative dialogues with less proficient students. Although proficiency was not stated across the interview data, observation notes or did not emerge in group discussions, the evolution of positionings, such as from the positioning of novice to expert, help seeker to expert, peer to encouraging peer, provided opportunities to interact and use more English. Disagreements, interruptions, digressions between peers and non-peers clearly showed that those opportunities could be achieved without collaboration.

Although a single snapshot of interaction describes how students socially connect themselves to each other to provide themselves with the opportunities to interact, it cannot explain how students gain more opportunities over time. In this thesis, some focal students did not have those opportunities in one instance of positioning, but later in the discussion they repositioned and provided themselves with those opportunities. For other focal students, on the other hand, opportunities declined over time while the discussion was advancing. This can imply that dynamics between peers must be investigated in different time periods for the understanding of those opportunities.

6.1.3 Characteristics of Students' Positioning

The dynamics of students' positioning are characterized by fluidity, overlaps and multi-directionality as students reposition themselves over time. For instance, a student who

was positioned as a chapter leader often took up more than one position over time. Chapter leaders who had the ability to deliver lessons in English could also reposition themselves as peers when they participated in the same group with their peers and distributed the right to act and speak to themselves and their peers, while the others followed the task instructions, explaining the lesson by themselves without any distribution. These three characteristics of students' positioning suggest a complex positioning process that provides students with unequal opportunities to interact.

The fluidity of positioning in this thesis is also in line with the fluid positioning of expert stated by Reichert and Liebscher (2012), who argue that the expert positioning that emerges in group work is not static. Students can situationally re-position themselves to expert on the task instructions, social context and personal backgrounds. My finding also asserts that those changes were closely related to their positioning of *Pheuan*, which overlapped with the position of expert or novice as expert/novice (§4.2.3, Episode 8), novice/novice (§4.2.3, Episode 9), expert/expert (§4.2.3, Episode 10), or novice to expert (§4.2.3, Episode 11). While students positioning as experts showed their opinions when they explained their point, and novices listened to them with minimal responses, positioning as *Pheuan*/experts allowed the others to speak, repositioning themselves from expert to novice. Another instance was a change from novice to expert which occurred when *Pheuan* attempted to overcome struggles in group discussions. The dynamics in the positioning of *Pheuan* facilitate their opportunities to interact.

Less fluidity occurs when a students' positioning becomes consistent over time. The recurring position of *Pheuan* evidently showed that time has an effect on positioning as positioning is fluid at a specific point in time but becomes more static when students' dynamics are strengthened (§5.2.2, Episode 5 - 9). Positioning becomes less fluid when peers and non-peers disagree. The positionings, which could have ranged from novice/expert, knowledge giver/knowledge provider, knower/unknower, are restricted to agreeing peers and disagreeing non-peers over time and across contexts, i.e. group discussions and classroom presentations (§5.2.2, Episodes 5, 7, 8 and 9). This lower level of fluidity grants the right for peers to interrupt, show disagreement and at the same time limits the right to speak of non-peers. The recurrences of the dynamics that are linked to the simultaneous change in positioning between peers and non-peers

in this case suggest the impact of fluidity on the positioning and the distribution of right and provide/restrict opportunities to interact. This finding is in line with the crystallization of position into “role” in Henriksen (2008). The positioning of peers is the one that evidently becomes static over time and across contexts, providing opportunities to interact for peers but restricting those opportunities for non-peers.

No evidence was found that non-peers reposition themselves into peers. The focal students positioned their classmates as their peers and non-peers at the beginning of the course and maintained those positions throughout the length of the course. Thus, the positioning of peer overlapped with another position when students continued to support each other to speak or cooperated with each other to disagree with non-peers across contexts and time. The rights and duties of peers were also unequally distributed between peers and with non-peers. In this EAL classroom, students who were peers had more opportunities to interact in group discussions than non-peers. This implication provides understanding of why interaction in each group discussion is not all aligned or manipulated by the task instructions.

The overlapping characteristic of positioning expands the work of Lee, who uses the dichotomy of active/passive to explain students’ social interactions by categorizing students into active, inactive and passive (Lee, 2016) and found that active and inactive students who were peers simultaneously changed their relations to tutor and tutees and participated more in writing activities. In my research, students simultaneously took up multiple positions or re-positioned themselves for different purposes over time. For example, chapter leaders who gave opinions or shared experiences related to the topic as experts also positioned themselves as supportive peers to help their group members to talk in group discussions. The dynamics of students’ positioning impacted their opportunities to interact.

The dynamics of students’ discussions are linked to the multi-directionality of positioning. While students positioned themselves as assigned by the task instructions or as peers, they were simultaneously positioned by the others. This implication is in line with Méndez and García, who focus on the behavior of peers and non-peers that might lead to success in a task through solidarity or working as a group (Méndez & García, 2012). Spanish students in their class took the side of their peers to interrupt non-peers and give the floor to peers. In this thesis, those dynamics of group discussions

between peers and non-peers were also found to provide reinforcement (§4.2.2, Episode 7). A student interrupted a non-peer to give her peer the next turn and reclaim the right of chapter leader to advance the discussion. In this case, the student positioned herself as a reinforcing peer who was encouraging her peer to speak; an interrupter who prevented a non-peer's talk; and a group member who followed the chapter leader. The student positioned herself by claiming the right from three directions: positioning of *Pheuan*, purpose to interruption, and task instruction. This overlapping positioning was needed to help the student to succeed in claiming the right to act and speak and perform more duties in group discussions in accordance with the multiple positions they took up. While taking up those positions, the student was positioned by others as peers or non-peers. Whether those positions were accepted or rejected by the others depended on whether or not how she acted or spoke was consistent with those positions. Task solidarity occurred when all positionings were accepted. Although those positionings were rejected, she would negotiate or get peer assistance. The multi-directionality of positioning suggests that the success of group discussions in English rely on the extent to which the dynamics of positioning are negotiated between students.

6.2 Positioning and Opportunities for Language Learning

The opportunities for using English and the opportunities to interact in groups which occur in students' positioning are associated with students' preparation for the class and their beliefs about their duties and language used in positioning. This section focuses on the impact of students' dynamics, their beliefs on group discussions, and positioning in multilingual contexts in relation to the opportunities for language learning.

6.2.1 Students' Preparation for the Class

Students' preparation for the class intersects with the rules assigned by the teacher, which extend or limit their opportunities for language use. This section discusses the impact of the distribution of rights and duties which are assigned before or outside the ongoing discussion.

The rights to act and speak in group discussions are not equally distributed as not all students follow the rules assigned by the teacher. Three major positionings that impact how students interact were found: English practitioners, English-teaching

practitioners and Thai speakers in the English classroom. English practitioners and English-teaching practitioners have more rights to act and speak more English than Thai speakers in the English classroom (§5.1, Excerpt 1-3; §5.2.3, Excerpt 8, Episode 10, 11). These positionings impact the dynamics of students' group discussions. To illustrate this point, pre-positioning in group discussions from three focal students, Grace, Fon, and Cheng are used. Grace and her peers, who agreed to use English as practitioners, consistently used English during group discussions since they stated that using English could help them improve. Cheng, on the other hand, rejected the rules set by the teacher and treated the discussion as an exchange of knowledge between English-teaching practitioners in which everyone must contribute to the discussion by showing their opinions. However, such commitments were not made between Fon and her peers, who positioned themselves as Thai speakers. Instead, they followed the rules without committing to using English and focused on the comprehension of the lesson by using Thai. These unequal distributions of rights and duties between students evidently impacted their opportunities for using English, and in turn, language learning.

The act interpretations or the comprehensions of positioning made before the discussion resulted in students interacting differently with peers and non-peers. This implication added more social dimension to the work of Kayi-Aydar (2014), who found that two students who were talkative and dominating the group were positioned differently. Kayi-Aydar claimed that the classmates who participated in the same group with the two students assigned different positions to them, providing different opportunities to interact. In my thesis, students positioned non-peers who disagreed with their viewpoint as the positionings of dominant speakers and English-teaching practitioners (§5.1, Excerpts 1 and 2). This mismatched interpretation of positioning resulted in changing dynamics. While peers limited the rights to speak of dominating non-peers, non-peers provided themselves with opportunities to use more English for discussion. The students provided themselves with opportunities to interact and use English to negotiate the distinctive positionings.

Language used in positioning by students has also been prepared prior to group discussions. The evident language use prepared outside the group discussion gives more reasons and supporting detail to counter a disagreeing non-peer's argument through frequent and extended turns (§5.1, Excerpt 1-3). This preparation of using language to

disagree with non-peers also occurred during class in a “private space” between peers. For instance, before students interrupted non-peers presenting the topic in front of class, they created a private space where they sought agreement to hold the conversation before passing the turns to peers and disprove a non-peer’s point (§5.2.2, Episode 8-9). This finding of a private space concurs with the work of Batstone and Philp (2013), who state that students create this space to resolve a problem with language before moving to the “public space” (i.e. the classroom). However, in this thesis, the students used the private space to prepare for using language with non-peers. The dynamics of group discussions transferred across contexts and impacted their opportunities for language learning. This transferral of dynamics provides more understanding of how those opportunities are provided for students.

The prepared language used during group discussions was also found in the interpersonal cues of Haworth (2000), who noted that students develop interpersonal cues with friends in a group by taking extended turns with varied linguistic choices. The evident interpersonal cues in my research were short statements used between students to assign who would talk and what to say when more contribution to the discussion is required. These cues, i.e. a disclaimer (such as *I don't know*), a question as a request for information (such as *What is it?*) (§5.2.1 Episodes 3 - 4), or a command to request for clarification (such as *What? Say it*) (§4.2.2, Episode 5) provided students with more turns to continue talking and explaining their point and positioning of novice or information seekers. However, these cues were not found in peers and non-peers’ interaction. When non-peers interrupted the group discussion and were likely to take control of the discussion, peers cooperated to allocate the turns to themselves and their peers. Students “planned” to restrict non-peers’ turns and allocated the turns to their peers (§5.2.2, Excerpts 5-6) since they had recognized how non-peers reacted to them by interrupting and so took a long turn in the previous time of interaction. By using statements to give reasons and explain the topic, peers cooperated to interrupt, re-allocate turns, assist each other to talk, and to resolve conflicts (§5.2.2, Episodes 5-7). Another cue was using Thai sentences to reposition themselves and exclude non-Thai students from group discussions. This cue, i.e. *เอาเลย เต็มที่* (loosely translated as *Do your best*), which was comprehensible only among Thai peers, allowed them to give reinforcement to a disagreement with a non-Thai student. The last cue was created in a

private Thai conversation between peers who cooperated and agreed to make an argument to a non-peer in the classroom presentation context (§5.2.2, Episode 9). Dynamics between peers and non-peers negotiated through those cues provide greater rights and duties for peers to continue speaking and taking more turns but restrict those rights for non-peers.

6.2.2 Students' Beliefs about their Duties and Language Used in Positioning

Students' beliefs about their duties as learners and as peers shape who they are to each other in the instances and over the duration of the course, affecting their opportunities for using language and language learning over time.

The beliefs of using English affected how students perform their duties which were in consistent with their positions. Two commitments between peers found in the positioning of English practitioners or Thai speakers in English classrooms indicate their beliefs in using English (§5.1, Excerpts 1 and 3). One focal student, Grace, and her peers completed a task by speaking English throughout a group discussion to practice English (§4.2.3, Excerpt 4). According to the group interview data, and their dynamics of group discussions across time, their English changed from short, fewer turns to longer and more frequent turns to show agreement and disagreement with the lesson (§5.2, Episodes 1 - 4). On the other hand, in the other case, Fon and her peers used Thai to help with their comprehension of the lesson (§5.2.3, Episode 11). The quantity of their English evidently reduced over time as her peers agreed that Thai made the lesson more comprehensible to them. The distinctive dynamics between these two focal students and their peers show that students' beliefs in using English affect their opportunities for language learning.

Students' belief that using Thai to aid their comprehension of English lessons clearly limits their opportunities for language learning, although it helps them to position themselves as Thai speakers in an EAL classroom and to maintain group cohesion. In this thesis, only one focal student and her peers used Thai to explain the topic throughout the length of the course as they stated that using Thai to explain the lessons was easier than English for all the group's members (§5.1, Excerpt 3). This became a common practice of the group whose chapter leader was not capable of

explaining the lessons in English. To become part of that group, Thai was needed to explain the lesson and position themselves as Thai speakers. The decreased opportunities that resulted from this practice are in line with the work of Bernales (2016), who found the norms of classroom speaking behavior and L2 demands influenced students' group participation. In this research, although a focal student attempted to use English in response to a Thai explanation of the lesson, her *Pheuan* did not accept the positioning of English speaker (§4.2.3, Episode 11). Instead, the insistence on using Thai prevented her and the others from performing their duties. The teacher's instructions, allowing students to use Thai in discussions, and the common practice of her group (at a meso level in the transdisciplinary framework for SLA, Douglas Fir Group (2016)) affected these students' use of English (at a micro level) in this case. This practice confirms that dynamics are involved in students' language learning in a multilingual context.

Assistance provided to one another to talk in group discussions is one of the duties of *Pheuan* in my thesis, which is in line with students' assistance behavior in the work of Kobayashi (2003) in that *Pheuan* in my research and peers in Kobayashi's helped each other to prepare for the discussion before and during group discussions. This assistance was not seen among the students in the work of Nicholas (2016), who allowed time for their peers to correct their language and complete the sentence. *Pheuan* in my research encouraged each other, using commands or asking for clarification (§5.2.1, Episodes 1 and 2). While McCarthy (2003) found that overlaps and interruptions are used to create listenership and to prevent communication breakdown between speakers, those features were used by my students in the opposite way. In my thesis, overlaps and interruptions were evidently used when students assisted each other to continue their talk or coordinated with their peers and disagree with non-peers in the positions of agreeing peers and disagreeing non-peers. These different duties in assistances provided students with opportunities for language learning through a range of language use.

While students in the work of Nassaji (2013), Nicholas (2016), and Mennim (2012) changed their positions to assist each other for grammar use, correcting grammar was not the duty of students in the current research. All the students in my research encouraged their classmates to talk and perform the duties of chapter leader, reinforced them to elaborate their point to non-peers or assisted each other to perform the assigned

duty of chapter leader and resolve struggles in group discussions without correcting grammar in the positioning of grammar corrector or language watcher. The academic levels of students may affect how they help each other with grammar in EAL classrooms. Adult learners in the EAL classroom in the current study seemed to focus less on grammatical errors than those in the context of high school students. Instead, the postgraduate students in my research could potentially learn how English is used to shape who they are to each other, providing them with opportunities for language learning.

When English is constantly used in positioning over time, students gain more opportunities for learning how to use English for different purposes in talk, i.e. explaining, discussing and disagreeing. Most significantly, students not only change their language in positioning themselves and others, but also consider what and how language is used with whom they communicate. Opportunities for learning language, in this sense, are provided for students to use English to position themselves and others across contexts and time. Within this regard, it can be implied that the dynamics of students' positioning could be involved in the development of interactional competency. According to Walsh's proposal of interactional competency achievement, students who are able to take more turns, hold the conversation and pass the turn to others achieve that competency (Walsh, 2011). In this thesis, the students who could perform the duties of peers and allocate turns to themselves and make an argument and disprove non-peers' points in the positioning of peers developed interactional competency.

6.2.3 Positioning in Sociocultural Perspective

Positioning self and others in the classroom enhanced multilingual contexts. An American instructor, two non-Thai students, the regulation of English-medium instruction, and a range of positionings occurs in group discussions contributed to the multilingual repertoire in the class. Even with the group discussion without non-Thai students, English and Thai were still used for making meaning and positioning. While the minimal use of Thai helped students with the positioning of English practitioners, the use of Thai helped them to solve problems and resolve struggles. This finding is in line with the enactment of relationships that shape how people talk and act towards each other in multilingual contexts (DFG, 2016). In this thesis's EAL classroom, positioning

enacted the students' relationships through the language used for positioning. The dynamics of students' positionings and relations construed in those positionings provide more opportunities for using language. Over time, the changing contexts provide even more opportunities for learning (Duff, 2019). Students' re-positionings across time indicate that learning takes place as the opportunities to interact and participate in groups increase.

The sociocultural backgrounds of students influence positioning and how students are socially connected. In the thesis, storylines, or students' narratives for positioning were used, not only knowledge or content from the lessons learned. A range of positioning built or maintained over time and across contexts indicated that social activities were mediated to make sense of themselves and the ongoing task, i.e. group discussions. What students learned from (re)positioning was how to use language for negotiating relationships while engaging in group discussions.

Assistance or problem-solving activities in adult learners are associated with the social dimensions of familiarity and group cohesion. Unlike the mental development of the child which requires help and guidance from adults or more capable peers (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1981), the adult learners in this thesis positioned themselves and others to help or cooperate to solve problems or struggles. Those learners who had familiarity and cohesion with peers assisted or got assisted from peers from those who were non-peers. However, the decision for assistance or cooperation also depends on individual differences. Students had choices to accept or reject the positioning or storylines when the other students were non-peers. While some students in the thesis helped non-peers to resolve struggles, other non-peers used the right assigned by the task or social hierarchy to give commands and request cooperation. This finding suggests that relationships and more social dimensions impact the opportunities to use language, and in turn, language learning.

Nationality was used for building storylines in positioning, but it did not play a significant role in arguments or disagreements between students. No evidence was found in any positioning episodes and interview scripts indicating that nationality impacted how students position themselves and others in this thesis. For instance, Grace and her peers did not see Cheng or Simon as non-Thais, but the classmates who were dominating the class or had teaching experience.

This chapter has discussed the dynamics of MA-EAL students' positioning of themselves and others during group discussions on an English medium course of Thai university SLA course with classroom research on peer interaction. It has also discussed how positioning evolved through students' language use and classroom learning environments. Lastly, opportunities for using English and language learning through positionings have been discussed. The discussed implications suggest where the current study can contribute to the field, one of the issues to be discussed in the next, and final chapter.

7 Conclusion

This thesis, entitled “The implications of dynamic of students’ positioning and interpersonal relations for opportunities for language learning in an MA-EAL classroom in Thailand”, has greatly contributed to the understated yet significant area of interpersonal relations among students. Aiming to explore students’ relations in more depth, the thesis focused on the dynamics of their positioning in group discussions in response to three research questions devised to drive exploration of the students’ dynamics in group discussions, the evolution of those dynamics, and the impact of those dynamics on their opportunities for language learning. The sections that follow conclude, argue, and set out the study’s contributions to the field, specifically EAL classroom teaching practice, as well as making some suggestions for further research in the field.

7.1 Conclusion of Analysis of Positioning in an EAL Classroom Context

Positioning Theory has been applied for the investigation of students’ interaction in the field of language education and teaching English as an Additional Language (EAL), but the key subject of the distribution of rights and duties is absent from the previous literature. Foregrounding this concept has highlighted how students’ relations are negotiated through positioning, and the evolution of positioning indicates the changes in relations. The methodology for data collection was a classroom case study, which provided a detailed explanation of how students positioned themselves and others in

group discussions, such as chapter leader/group members, or peers/non-peers in the EAL classroom. The analysis of positioning revealed that those positions evolved over time as the rights and duties which allowed students to act and speak in group discussions were not equally distributed. While some focal students claimed the right assigned by the task's instructions, the others drew on interpersonal resources to gain access to another set of rights. At this point, *Pheuan* (loosely translated as *peer* or *friend*) in this thesis was a significant positioning as students who had *Pheuan* had more rights to act and speak. This implication problematizes the concept of peer in peer interaction research and argues that the concept must be derived from students' perspectives and how it is enacted is also a major point that peer interaction researchers need to consider when investigating relations between peers.

7.1.1 Dynamics of Students' Positioning in Group Discussions

Classifying the positionings into the five different themes - Task Solidarity, Individual Support, Expertise, Power and Social Distance - that emerged from the data and with reference to the existing literature helped to provide an understanding of the characteristics of positioning, i.e. fluidity, overlap and multi-directionality. The positioning of peer evidently characterized other positionings. For instance, in Task Solidarity, social commitment emerged in the group formed with peers allowed students to reposition themselves into peer and chapter leader simultaneously to manage the group discussion. In Individual Support, encouragement and reinforcement were negotiated by peers to help them continue speaking, disagree with non-peers and resolve struggles. In Expertise, giving opinions was allowed for peers to show their expertise of the discussed topic. Power was exercised through the Thai social hierarchy of elder peers restricting the right to act or speak of younger ones. In Social Distance, proximity and affinity were negotiated by peers and non-peers to resolve struggles and redirect the digression to the discussed topic. *Pheuan* in this thesis was the crucial positioning that affected students' dynamics and in turn their opportunities for using English.

Students' positioning in group discussions was also negotiated in multi-directions: task instructions (above), purposes in positioning (inside) and the relations of peers (outside). Additionally, while students positioned others, they were positioned simultaneously. This multi-directionality allowed students who were chapter leaders to reposition themselves as peers or another position that helped them speak in group

discussions, creating different dynamics in each discussion. While the assigned positions of chapter leader/group members provided a limited set of rights for them, students claimed more rights from their purposes in positioning and the relations of peers to perform more duties, such as requesting more information, interrupting non-peers and reinforcing a peer in talk to be consistent with their positioning. These duties were prepared before participating in group discussions, so they knew what and how to talk between peers and non-peers. The dynamics of group discussions provided more opportunities for peers to interact in group discussions.

Regarding the levels of local moral orders, positionings in group discussions were involved in several moral orders, ranging from personal, conversational, and institutional to cultural. Students gained access to the rights at the personal level for the positioning of peers and non-peers; conversational for task manager and followers; institutional for chapter leader and group members; and cultural for elder students and younger ones. These moral orders co-existed and were intertwined, suggesting that students' dynamics of positioning are negotiated across contexts.

Disagreement between students was an evident illustration of different dynamics between peers and non-peers and the impact on opportunities to interact. The disagreements found in students' group discussions were resolved differently between peers and non-peers. In this thesis, peers disagreed with the textbook content, not one another's statements, and this disagreement was resolved by referring to the source of knowledge and finding a consensus between peers. On the other hand, disagreements between peers and non-peers were resolved by discussing, arguing and disagreeing. These resolutions of disagreement suggested that students' positionings promoted more opportunities to interact than those of peers. As the positioning of peers and non-peers became less fluid over time, i.e. shifting between agreeing peers and disagreeing non-peers, those opportunities were provided even more to them.

7.1.2 Evolution of Positioning and Language Use across Contexts and Time

As positioning theory focuses on analyzing a social phenomenon through positioning, the ability and capacity for using language in positioning is not stressed. To apply positioning theory to the EAL classroom context, the analysis of positioning through

language use was then highlighted to elaborate on how positioning evolves across contexts and time. The language choices, i.e. statements, questions and commands, used to explain interactions and classroom learning environments as contexts helped to identify how positionings evolved. However, it is necessary to expand the context involved in analyzing language use from moment-to-moment to across contexts in order to capture the dynamics of positioning. Storyline, one of the components in the positioning triangle, was re-constructed to broaden the scope of language use-in-context across time. Students' positionings and their language used in positioning in the same theme over time were investigated along with the main storyline of each focal student bringing more understanding of the evolution of positioning.

The evolution of positioning was investigated through elaborated and longer conversational turns in group discussions. Those changes were more evident when positionings were contested, as in forms of disagreement or struggles. In this thesis, disagreement between students occurred when they were challenged or disproved of one another's positionings and storylines. Students who had abilities to use language in positioning re-positioned themselves to make their points or coordinate with peers and disagree with non-peers, while those who did not have those abilities struggled and avoided disagreements. The contest of positioning changed the dynamic relations and provided unequal opportunities for using English.

Positionings and language used by students were prepared before group discussions. In this thesis, two kinds of language use that impacted the dynamics were found: frequent/elaborated turns and using of Thai. From the interview data, a focal student prepared to use statements to provide more reasons and elaborate his or her points to disagreeing non-peers with whom they had interacted earlier. During the discussion, the student supported or coordinated with other peers, interrupting, contradicting, or disagreeing with non-peers. The preparation for the class provided them with more opportunities for using language and interaction. However, in another instance students had agreed to use Thai to help with their comprehension of the lesson before the ensuing group discussion. The positioning with Thai clearly limited their English use and opportunities for using English over time. Both instances were supported by the storylines from the interview data, indicating that the dynamics of such positionings were maintained and recurred throughout the length of the course.

Languages, i.e. English and Thai, are necessary for positioning of self and others to different degrees. While using English in group discussions was helpful for one focal student to maintain familiarity and group cohesion between peers, Thai was the main language for the other one. Students who used English in discussions and to maintain their relations of peers provided themselves with more opportunities for language learning than those who did not. Although using Thai in an EAL class will clearly limit students' opportunities for language learning, both English and Thai were required for maintaining those relations as well as facilitating how they worked together.

This thesis has addressed, explored, and investigated students' relations by investigating the dynamics of their positioning. Those dynamics, which changed or were maintained over time, provided unequal opportunities for students to learn how to use language for a variety of purposes in consistency with the positions they took up.

7.2 Contributions

The implications of the thesis expand our understanding of the impact of students' relations in EAL contexts. Teachers who are aware of the significance of relations can apply these implications as guidelines for their pedagogical and methodological designs in a number of ways, outlined below.

7.2.1 Pedagogical Contributions

The implications of students' positioning suggest how the tasks which are assigned by the teacher will be managed by students. While the teacher's rules are set to achieve the teaching goals, students do not always follow those rules. The dynamics of positioning in group work, for example group discussions, are significantly involved in the effectiveness of cooperative/collaborative teaching and learning activities as students' changing dynamics impact their opportunities to interact. In the classroom context of the thesis, discussion groups were formed voluntarily with peers who mainly positioned themselves and others to complete the task. This kind of group formation provides opportunities through the positioning of chapter leader/members, which overlap with the position of peers. Dynamics of students' group discussions with peers in the group help students to take more turns and use more English in the task. However, those dynamics and opportunities are not always aligned across discussion groups. While

some peers provide themselves with those opportunities, others might create a common practice such as using Thai, which restricts opportunities to use English. The teacher needs to observe whether the dynamics in a group facilitate or hinder those opportunities and should reform the group over time if their dynamics limit those opportunities.

Familiarity and group cohesion between students should be considered to optimize the benefits of relations for completing a task. Although students in the class are not all related as peers, the need for being part of a group that reduces social distance needs to be established. The implication from the findings reveals that familiarity and group cohesion among students increase language production and interaction in group discussions formed with non-peers. Teachers can provide activities that familiarize students with one another in the event that they do not know one another before the group task so as to avoid struggles during the task. Establishing relations between students will potentially play a part when students resolve struggles or conflicts.

The implications of students' dynamic positionings help the teacher to design or adjust instructions for learning English in content-based teaching. As the rules for completing the task set by the teacher are not always followed by students, those rules can be set and agreed on by students themselves in advance. For instance, when the teacher learns that a disagreement between students increases the opportunities for using English to contradict one another, the design of the task should focus on not only the comprehension of chapters, but also how students can mitigate or negotiate the disagreement. From my perspective, the content-based learning classroom should also focus on how use of English as language use and delivery of content are interrelated. The teacher needs to set the scene whereby the opportunities for language learning are provided in the light of students' dynamics.

Task design that contributes to the significance of positioning will provide opportunities to interact. Task instructions should allow students to take up different positions. From the positioning analysis, task instructions that assign static positions, i.e. chapter leader/group member, limit opportunities to interact as the rights to act and speak are not equally distributed. The task should be designed to allow students to reposition themselves, change their dynamics and redistribute those opportunities to all students. In other words, it should be flexible enough to strike a balance between

positioning and allowing opportunities for language development both inside and outside the task to emerge in group work.

In adult EAL classes, the teacher might explicitly raise awareness of the dynamics that facilitate students' learning by asking students to reflect on how changes in dynamics impact their interaction and language use. Students should be able to identify moments that help them to communicate more effectively. This reflection will potentially provide more understanding of how relations and language are closely connected and how the management of those dynamics helps them achieve the goal of communication.

7.2.2 Methodological Contributions

The analysis of positioning has been used to investigate social interaction in the classroom for a decade. However, scant previous research has stressed students' rights and duties to explain dynamics of their relations. In order to advance the theory applied to the fields of language education and applied linguistics, this thesis has highlighted the distribution of rights and duties between students and the data-driven coding process.

The distribution of rights and duties is suitable for explaining dynamics of relations of group discussions in an EAL classroom in terms of the opportunities to interact and the dynamics of students' positioning. Firstly, the distribution of rights and duties provides opportunities to interact in pair/group work. While students have a limited set of rights assigned by the teacher to perform duties in group work, they claim the new rights to themselves or the others to reposition themselves out of the assigned positions from the task instructions, for example from group members to encouraging peers, and achieve the purposes in talk. The repositioning affects the dynamics of group discussions as the new sets of rights and duties performed in consistency with the positions that students take up contribute to increasing opportunities to interact. Additionally, from the positioning perspective, students are not viewed as English learners in a language classroom prior to group discussions but as individuals who locate themselves in the ongoing group conversation. Within this frame, the fluidity, overlaps and multi-directionality emerge to characterize the dynamics of positioning. While the fixed statuses in dyadic interaction cannot fully explain those dynamics,

students' non-static, overlapping positions which are negotiated in multi-directions contributes to more understanding of students' dynamics to the field. The opportunities to interact are provided for students when they claim new rights and perform their duties by changing positions. Students' use of language in positioning changes in line with their dynamics over time. The opportunities for language learning are then associated with the changing dynamics as students use language throughout their positioning.

The precision of categorizing students' relations can be improved with the positioning descriptions emerging from the data as these descriptions help to capture the non-static characteristics of students' positioning across contexts and time. Instead of using a static set of dyadic interaction of novice/expert in a single snapshot, for example, this data-driven coding for positioning captured the positioning of novice/expert, novice/novice, expert/expert and novice to expert which emerged in the same instance over time, suggesting the dynamics of students' positioning. These dynamics not only emerge in classroom group discussions, but they also expand beyond the class. Thus, it is a risk to investigate them from the researchers' perspectives. To understand a full description of those dynamics from students' perspectives, the storylines which relate students to one another are drawn and triangulated with the group discussion transcription and observation notes. The descriptions of students' positioning and the dynamics, therefore, are aligned with students' judgment and the researcher's justification.

7.3 Limitations of the Study

This study has two limitations regarding full access to data outside classroom and time constraints. The study of students' relations in the language classroom requires a specific context and relevant data from inside and outside the classroom to gain a comprehensive insight into opportunities for language learning. Although I was able to access the online public group of the classroom, I was not permitted to access the private group of peers. This private group was significant as regards the relations built in the classroom and maintained outside it. From the interview data, a focal student, i.e. Grace, told me that she used this private group to talk about homework and assignments, including experiences they had in class time. Access to this data could reveal the dynamics of relations through language use built in the class and maintained across time and online spaces. The online data that I could collect from the public group only

covered information that contributed to relations in a broad sense, for example traffic problems, changes in the timetable, or exam dates, so I decided to omit the online data as it could not be triangulated with the other sources of data.

Time constraints for the interview sessions affected the details of interaction observed in the classroom. The time the students had for the interview sessions did not follow the pre-planned schedule as I could interview them at lunch time or after class in the afternoon, which was sometimes for less than 20 minutes. Students also rescheduled the interview sessions, which affected the time intervals for the interviews, so they could not remember the details of what they did in class when I gave them prompts for their group interaction.

7.4 Suggestions for Future Research

This thesis has approached dynamics students' relations in EAL classrooms by investigating students' positioning of self and others in group discussions across contexts and time and proposed that the dynamics of students' positioning should be more focused. Students not only complete a group task, but they also position themselves and others to achieve specific purposes of communication. The dynamics of those positionings should also be considered for better understanding of how relations are negotiated. As the nature of positionings is fluid, overlapping with one another multi-directionally, the analysis of positioning can capture those dynamics through the coding for themes that emerge from the data as it will reflect the actual relations from students' perspectives.

To advance the analysis of positioning in applied linguistics and language education, more analysis of language use contributing to teaching pedagogy is suggested. While the previous research on positioning in social psychology has focused on the causes and consequences of this social phenomenon by investigating the rights and duties distributed among people in social groups through language, my thesis has investigated those characteristics to locate the opportunities for language learning through the language used in positioning. This analysis of positioning, with a full explanation of the rights and duties, contributes insights into how and why the dynamics of positioning provide or hinder those opportunities. It also suggests that there are more

layers of relations negotiated in group discussions and an EAL classroom which need further exploration.

This thesis has investigated students' positioning from social perspectives, but in fact, two aspects of relations in specific contexts need to be considered: the focus on dynamics and the type of course. The students approached the tasks, i.e. a group discussion and a group presentation, in different ways. While the students prepared for the task individually as chapter leaders for the eight-week group discussion task, they prepared for the group presentation as a group. Working as a group outside the classroom created different dynamics, which transferred across contexts into the class, providing the students with opportunities to interact with classmates and within group discussions. Therefore, shifting the focus from the task to the dynamics that impact the task types will potentially provide insights into the impacts of relations and reveal how the opportunities for language learning over time are achieved. In addition, this EAL classroom was a content-based classroom and the focus was on the content of SLA, so opportunities for English development may not be clearly recognized by students. It would be interesting to investigate students' dynamics in other classrooms where English is taught with the focus on linguistic studies or skill development. When the goal of the class is to improve their English, students might be more aware of using English in the class and the dynamics of positioning might vary from the current research.

The topic of interpersonal relationships is the elephant in the room. We, as language educators, know it exists, but we fail to give it the attention it warrants. More research on students' dynamics of positioning should be promoted in all classes where English is used as a medium. Students need to know how those dynamics contribute to their language use and how to manipulate those dynamics for more effective communication or the completion of tasks. In that way, insights into dynamics will contribute greatly and eventually to the field of language teaching and learning.

8 References

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Appendix 1: Data Collection Schedule

Date	Data Collection	Data	Length	Frequency
August 2015	Observation of orientation	-	-	August 8th, 2015
22 August to 5 December 2015	Classroom observation	- video- and audio records - observation notes	- 45 hours - 30 pages	Weekly for 15 weeks
22 August to 5 December 2015	Recording of classroom conversation	Audio records of focal participants in small group discussions and the classroom activities	21 hours	Weekly for 15 weeks
August to December 2015	Semi-structured interviews	Audio-recorded interviews with focal participants	3.30 hours	Monthly for 4 months
August to December 2015	Semi-structured group interviews	Audio-recorded interviews with focal participants' peer groups	3 hours	Twice: once at the beginning and once at the end of the course
August to December 2015	Semi-structured interviews	Audio-recorded interview with instructor	1 hour	Twice: once at the beginning and once at the end of the course
August to December 2015	Documents	- students' self-generated materials for small group discussion - e-mails - online text messages from LINE messaging tool	- 5 sheets - 5 e-mails - 4,635 lines	Throughout the data collection period

Appendix 2: Transcription Conventions

Symbol	Meaning
[Word	Overlap Word]
=	No break between sentences
(0.3)	Pause in seconds
(.)	interval for 10 seconds
<u>Word</u>	Stress or pitch
↑	High pitch
↓	Low pitch
WORD	Loud sounds
::	Prolonged sounds
◦Word◦	Softer sounds
<Word	Hurry start
Word<	Stop suddenly
>Word<	Speed up
<Word>	Slow down
(h)	Laughter
(word)	Transcriber's description

Reference:

Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. H. Lerner (Ed). *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation* (pp. 13-31). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Translation from Thai to English

The translation in this thesis is used to provide background information of the interactions and establish the students' storylines which are used for their positioning. Baker's approach to translation equivalence (Baker, 1992) is adopted for translating Thai to English. This approach helps me to convey the meaning in Thai to English with the closest meaning to the original text. Indeed, it is a word-for-word translation with some changes in grammatical features to make the texts comprehensible in English, for example adding an English subject pronoun which was dropped in Thai utterances. Indeed, the translated texts will help the readers to understand what speakers mean in English and how those texts in the Excerpts or Episodes are related to their positioning.

Reference:

Baker, M. (1992). *In other words: A coursebook on translation*. London: Routledge.

Appendix 3: Semi-Structured Interview Schedules

Semi-structured Interview Guides (individual)

Interview Guide 1: Students*

Sessions	Questions (Thai / English)
August – December 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you tell me about your interpersonal relations between you and your small group members? 2. How would you describe your interpersonal relations with your group members? 3. How would the interpersonal relations between you, your friends and the instructor impact your interactions with your group? 4. How would the interpersonal relations between you, your friends and the instructor impact your English use? 5. How is the interpersonal relationship (between you and your friends) different in classroom and beyond? 6. How do you feel about classroom-based activities? How do those feelings affect the interpersonal relations? 7. (Give an example from classroom) 8. How would the interpersonal relations between you, your friends and the instructor impact your learning and language development?

*Interviews will be conducted in Thai and English depending on the participants' preferences.

Interview Guide 2: The instructor**

Sessions	Questions (Thai / English)
August – December 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Can you tell me about your relations between you and your students?2. How would you describe your interpersonal relations with your students?3. How would the interpersonal relations between you and your students impact your interactions with them?4. How would the interpersonal relations between you and your students impact their English use?5. How do the interpersonal relations between you and your students different in classroom and beyond?6. How do you feel about classroom-based activities? How do those feelings affect the interpersonal relations? (Give an example from classroom)7. How would the interpersonal relations between you and your students impact their learning and language development?

**The interview will be conducted in English.

Interview Guide 3: Group of students

Sessions	Questions (Thai / English)
August – December 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you tell me about your interpersonal relations between group members? 2. How do the interpersonal relations between you, your friends and the instructor impact your interactions within your group? 3. How do the interpersonal relations (between your group and the instructor) impact your English use in each group? 4. How are the interpersonal relations (between you and your group members) different in classroom and beyond? 5. How do you feel about classroom-based activities? How do those feelings affect the interpersonal relations? (Give an example from classroom) 6. How do the interpersonal relationships in your group impact your learning and language development?

*Interviews will be conducted in Thai and English depending on the participants' preferences.

Appendix 4: Information Sheets and Consent Form



Participant information sheet (for students)

Title: A Study of EAL Postgraduate Students' Negotiation of Interpersonal Relations and the Implications for English Development

Researcher: Mr. Chongrak Sitthirak

You are invited to join in the research study "A Study of EAL Postgraduate Students' Negotiation of Interpersonal Relations and the Implications for English Development". Please take the time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you wish to participate.

What is the purpose of this study?

I am carrying out this study as part of my Doctoral studies in the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University in Great Britain. The purpose of this study is to explore how students negotiate interpersonal relations with peers and their teacher, how those interpersonal relations evolve and change over time and implications for students' English development.

What does the study entail?

I will be video- and audio- recording classroom interactions, interviewing students, the teacher, and observing classes.

Why have I been invited?

I have approached you because I am exploring how students negotiate interpersonal relations with peers and the teacher in classroom-related activities.

What will happen if I take part?

If you decided to take part, then:

- Your classroom group discussions will be video- and/or audio-recorded during each of your Second Language Acquisition classes (16 times x 180 minutes each).
- You may be asked to share public posts from social media such as Facebook that are related to your studies in the MA-TEFL program.
- You may be one of a small group of participants who will be interviewed each month for four months to gather opinions about classroom participation and classroom-related activities. The interview with you and your small group members with whom you work during the course will also be conducted twice, one at the beginning and one at the end of the course.

What are the possible benefits from taking part?

Taking part in the research project will provide you opportunity to reflect on your own experiences of learning English and may provide you with useful professional insights for improving teaching and learning English as an additional language.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

It is unlikely that there will be any major disadvantages to taking part in this research.

What will happen if I decide not to take part or if I don't want to carry on with the study?

If you decide not to take part in this study, this will not affect your studies or the way you are assessed on your course. As well, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time and you do not have to give a reason. If you withdraw while data is being collected or within 2 months of data collection finishing, I will not use any of the information that you provided. If you withdraw later, I will use the information you shared with me for my study.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

Any identifying information, such as names and personal characteristics, will be anonymized in the PhD thesis and any other publications or presentations. The data I collect will be kept securely. Any paper-based data will be kept in a locked cupboard. Electronic data will be stored on a password protected computer and files will be encrypted. Data collected using non-encrypted audio-recorders and video cameras will be transferred to the password protected computer within 24 hours of being collected and encrypted, and the files will be erased from the recorder and/or camera.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the study will be used for academic research and teaching purposes only. This will include my PhD thesis and other publications such as, journal articles. I am also planning to present the results of my study at academic conferences.

What if there is a problem?

If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact myself or my supervisor, Dr. Diane Potts, E-mail: d.j.potts@lancaster.ac.uk, Phone: +44 1524 592434; or Head of Linguistics and English Language Department, Prof. Elena Semino, at e.semino@lancaster.ac.uk or by phone on +44(0)1524 594176

Further information and contact details

Mr. Chongrak Sitthirak E-mail: c.sitthirak@lancaster.ac.uk Phone (Language Institute, Thammasat University): +662 613-3101-3.

Thank you for considering your participation in this project.

I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in my study.

Participant information sheet (for the instructor)

Title: A Study of EAL Postgraduate Students' Negotiation of Interpersonal Relations and the Implications for English Development

Researcher: Mr. Chongrak Sitthirak

You are invited to join in the research study "A Study of EAL Postgraduate Students' Negotiation of Interpersonal Relations and the Implications for English Development". Please take the time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you wish to participate.

What is the purpose of this study?

I am carrying out this study as part of my Doctoral studies in the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University in Great Britain. The purpose of this study is to explore how students negotiate interpersonal relations with peers and their teacher, how those interpersonal relations evolve and change over time and implications for students' English development.

What does the study entail?

I will be video- and audio- recording classroom interactions, interviewing students teachers and perhaps others they consult about their studies, and observing classes.

Why have I been invited?

I have approached you because I am exploring how students use linguistic resources while negotiating interpersonal relations among peers and the teacher in class. I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in my study.

What will happen if I take part?

If you decided to take part, this would involve the following:

- Your students' group discussions and yourself will be video- and audio recorded during each of your Second Language Acquisition classes (16 times x 180 minutes each).
- You will be interviewed to gather your opinions about your teaching experience and opinions on students' participation in classroom. Two interviews will be conducted, one at the beginning and one at the end of the course.

What are the possible benefits from taking part?

Taking part in the research project will provide you to reflect on your own experiences of teaching English and may provide you with useful professional insights for improving teaching and learning English as an additional language.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

It is unlikely that there will be any major disadvantages to taking part in this research.

What will happen if I decide not to take part or if I don't want to carry on with the study?

If you decide not to take part in this study, this will not affect your continued employment at the Language Institute of Thammasat University. As well, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time and you do not have to give a reason. If you withdraw while data is being collected or within 2 months of data collection finishing, I will not use any of the information that you provided. If you withdraw later, I will use the information you shared with me for my study.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

Any identifying information, such as names and personal characteristics, will be anonymised in the PhD thesis and any other publications or presentations. The data I collect will be kept securely. Any paper-based data will be kept in a locked cupboard. Electronic data will be stored on a password protected computer and files will be encrypted. Data collected using non-encrypted audio-recorders and video cameras will be transferred to the password protected computer within 24 hours of being collected and encrypted, and the files will be erased from the recorder and/or camera.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the study will be used for academic research and teaching purposes only. This will include my PhD thesis and other publications such as, journal articles. I am also planning to present the results of my study at academic conferences.

What if there is a problem?

If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact myself or my supervisor, Dr. Diane Potts, E-mail: d.j.potts@lancaster.ac.uk, Phone: +44 1524 592434; or Head of Linguistics and English Language Department, Prof. Elena Semino, at e.semino@lancaster.ac.uk or by phone on +44(0)1524 594176

Further information and contact details

Mr. Chongrak Sitthirak E-mail: c.sitthirak@lancaster.ac.uk Phone (Language Institute, Thammasat University): +662 613-3101-3.

Thank you for considering your participation in this project.

I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in my study.

Consent Form

Project title: A case study of the MA-TEFL classroom students negotiating interpersonal relations across contexts.

I have read and had explained to me by Mr. Chongrak Sitthirak the information sheet relating to this project.

I have had explained to me the purposes of the project and what will be required of me, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to the arrangements described in the information sheet in so far as they relate to my participation.

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the project any time, but no longer than 2 months after its completion. If I withdraw after this period, the information I have provided will be used for the project.

I understand that all data collected will be anonymized and that my identity will not be revealed at any point.

I have received a copy of this consent form and of the accompanying information sheet.

Name:

Signed:

Date: