

國立政治大學英國語文學系碩士班碩士論文

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一位台灣青年英語學習者的社群意識與學習自主之形成：

個案比較正規與非正規英語課室經驗

Formation of a Taiwanese Young Adult's Sense of Community and

Learner Agency:

A Case Study on the Comparison of Formal and Non-formal English

Classroom Experiences

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To Professor Chin-chi Chao

獻給我的恩師招靜琪教授



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國立政治大學英國語文學系碩士班

碩士論文提要

論文名稱：一位台灣青年英語學習者的社群意識與學習自主之形成：個案比較
正規與非正規英語課室經驗

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論文提要內容：

在東亞地區以英語為外語的環境中，非正規教育的存在已不容忽視。過去雖已有研究探討非正規教育之於正規教育的「影子教育」特性，在英語教學的領域中，仍少有研究從質性角度探討學習者在兩種教育環境中的學習經驗。因此，本研究透過 McMillan and Chavis (1986) 的社群意識 (SOC) 理論及 Larsen-Freeman (2019) 的複雜動態系統理論 (CDST)，首先探討一位台灣青年英語學習者在正規與非正規教育環境中社群意識的形成。接著，本研究進而探詢這些社群意識如何與他的英語學習者自主互動。資料來自兩階段的訪談，並採 Carspecken (1996) 的再建構分析法進行分析。研究結果顯示，從小學到高中階段，社群意識與學習者自主都呈現遞減的趨勢。然而，與學習者互動的老師及同學、背後的文化因子（如文憑主義），及學習者本身的學習環境（如私立學校）都有可能使社群意識與學習者自主呈現不同的風貌。本研究不僅分析理論架構中的元素如何互動，也透過此個案發現了兩個理論框架相關聯與互動的可能。此外，本文也針對正規與非正規教育的三種不同關係（互補、補充與平行）進行討論。在教學上，本研究建議為提升英語教室中學習者自主，透過更多實際使用英語的機會與更多同儕互動來建構英語學習的社群意識將帶來實質的幫助。

關鍵字：社群意識、學習者自主、正規教育、非正規教育



ABSTRACT

In EFL contexts such as those in East Asia, the presence of non-formal education (e.g., English private tutoring, or EPT) cannot be ignored. Prior studies have demonstrated the shadowing nature of non-formal education to formal education (e.g., mainstream schooling). However, in the field of TESOL, qualitative studies on learning experiences in both formal and non-formal educational contexts remain insufficient. Therefore, drawing on McMillan and Chavis's (1986) framework of a sense of community (SOC) and Larsen-Freeman's (2019) Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) of learner agency, this study first examines the SOC of a Taiwanese young adult in both formal and non-formal English learning contexts. Then, the study explores how the SOC interacts and shapes the learner's English learner agency. Data were collected from two phases of interviews and were analyzed by reconstructive analysis (Carspecken, 1996). Results showed that from the elementary school period to the senior high school period, while the trend of a diminishing SOC and learner agency was evident, the formation of SOC and learner agency remained complex according to how the learner interacted with teachers or peers, and how cultural backgrounds (i.e., credentialism) or studying contexts (i.e., private schools) may have had an underlying impact. Theoretically, such findings not only explained how the framework and their respective elements work but highlighted how the two theories can mutually relate to each other. Moreover, three kinds of dynamic relations (i.e., complementary, supplementary, and parallel) between formal and non-formal education were also depicted through analyzing the learner's experience. Pedagogically, this study suggests that to enhance learner agency in classrooms, the creation of English learning SOC through more English-use and peer engagement could be helpful.

Keywords: sense of community (SOC), learner agency, formal education, non-formal education



CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

English learning in East Asia takes place in both formal and non-formal education settings. According to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), formal education is defined as education that is “institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognised private bodies, and – in their totality – constitute the formal education system of a country” (ISCED, 2012, p. 11), while non-formal education is defined as education that is “institutionalised, intentional and planned by an education provider” (ISCED, 2012, p. 11), with the characteristics of being additional, alternative and/or complementary to formal education. In several highly competitive societies in East Asia like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Mainland China, some parents regard formal education provided by the government as insufficient (Bray, 2013). Thus, non-formal education has been an important part of student life in these settings for a long time, with an expansion in magnitude before the turn of the century (Bray, 2013; Kwo & Bray, 2014). Students in these places not only learn in formal educational environments but also tend to enroll in private tutoring (hereafter, PT), the most common form of non-formal education. Studies have shown that in the above-mentioned countries, more than half of the high school students have experienced some forms of PT (Bray & Lykins, 2012).

Considering the presumably complementary nature of formal and non-formal education, researchers have chosen different terms in illustrating their relationship. Marimuthu et al. (1991) described PT as “shadow education” in contrast to

mainstream schooling. From this so-called “neo-institutional perspective”, once formal education changes in one way, the shadow follows. Mori and Baker (2010), following the same line of research, adopted the term “symbiotic” to explain their interdependent relationship. On the other hand, Dawson (2010) found PT to be supportive of examinations and creating educational anxiety among parents in order to raise profit, thus highlighting the “parasitic” nature of PT. In his study on the comparison of formal education, or in his term “mass schooling”, and private tutoring in Japan, South Korea, and Cambodia, the issue of social inequality in education was raised. In the Taiwanese context, Jheng’s (2015) study of senior high school students described the relationship of formal and tutorial schools as “conflict”, owing to the fact that students tend to learn the same things twice in the two educational settings. Another study in Taiwan by Huang (2017) further examined the discrepancy of motivational selves between students attending and not attending English private tutoring (hereafter, EPT). This theory-based study also suggested the necessity to look into issues of formal and non-formal education from a qualitative lens.

These foregoing studies adopting historical, economic, or social perspectives in analyzing formal and non-formal education often leave the learning experiences and voices of learners unheard. However, several studies, taking place in either formal or non-formal education, have already suggested the importance of looking into students’ learning experience. For example, Block’s (2008) study analyzing the story of an EFL learner in a formal education classroom depicted how the English-mediated identity is developed. Yung’s (2015) Hong Kong study examined the students’ perceptions towards EPT and its relationship to academic performance. Another study of Yung (2019) portrayed L2 selves Hong Kong learners possessed in EPT through a qualitative view of the learners’ narratives. As these studies may suggest, it is of great

importance to understand the learning experiences of learners in classrooms of both formal and non-formal educational contexts, by either adopting or integrating qualitative research methods.

To the best knowledge of this researcher, discussion of English learning based on both formal and non-formal education in Taiwan remains insufficient, with only Huang's (2017) study as an exception (See a more detailed review in the next section). Even fewer attempts probed into the question based on analyses of learners' narratives, which are important for raising the learners' awareness of their orientations and exercises of agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019). Therefore, was the interest of the present study to see how the Taiwanese English learner's identity was constructed by his experiences in formal and non-formal education settings through time so that language educators of the two contexts could understand different situated experiences of learners and how they could adjust their pedagogy accordingly.

In order to examine the formal and non-formal learning experiences, this study focused on the *sense of community (SOC)* and *learner agency* of a Taiwanese learner under the two English contexts adopting McMillan and Chavis's (1986) SOC framework and Larsen-Freeman's (2019) Complex Dynamic Systems Theory. Both theoretical frameworks provided the guidelines for the interview questions and data analysis in order to identify the elements shaping the learner's construction of a sense of community and agency formation (See more details of the two frameworks in the next section). Through these two theoretical lenses, a micro image of the relationship between the participant and his learning environments and a macro image on the participant's learner agency were portrayed. Furthermore, the results depicted the participant's SOC and learner agency formation in different English learning settings and offered theoretical implications. The study also raised several suggestions to

English educators in both formal and non-formal education contexts in Taiwan.



CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This section first discusses the relationship between formal and non-formal education from both quantitative and qualitative lenses, then narrows down onto English formal and non-formal education in Taiwan. Next, the framework of McMillan and Chavis's (1986) sense of community (SOC) is reviewed, along with relevant studies adopting this framework. Last, in order to clarify how the issue of learner agency is discussed in the study, different views and theoretical lenses are examined, including Larsen-Freeman's (2019) Complex Dynamic System Theory (CDST).

The Relationship between Formal and Non-formal Education

Private tutoring (PT) as a type of non-formal education has been recognized as an emerging educational issue since the 1980s (Mori & Baker, 2010). Shadowing mainstream schooling, PT has been playing several complementary roles to its counterpart. Bray (1999) pointed out that it may affect the teaching and learning in mainstream schools. While such form of education may be beneficial to students functioning as either remedial education (de Silva, 1994) or as supplementary education (Bray, 2009), several negative impacts have been identified in literature. For instance, observing that students may have already learned what should be taught in school from PT institutes, teachers tend to teach with less effort (Bray, 1999). On the other hand, some students with PT experiences attended school classes with low motivation and attention (Hussein, 1987; Nanayakkara & Ranaweera, 1994). Another recurring theme that regards the social inequality brought about by PT has also been

demonstrated in several studies in the East Asian contexts (Chen & Hsieh, 2011; Lee, 2010; Yung, 2015). Past studies indicated that it is no longer acceptable to ignore the existence of these PT institutes, in terms of their effect on teachers and students, or their complementary role of mainstream schooling.

Earlier studies of formal and non-formal education mostly focused on academic achievements (Fergany, 1994; Liu, 2012; Sawada & Kobayashi, 1986) or on the opportunity of education (Bray, 1999; Chen & Hsieh, 2011; de Silva et al., 1991, 1994; Lee, 2010; Liu, 1998; Marimuthu et al., 1991). To probe into the question from a qualitative perspective, most effort has been done targeting only one form of education (Block, 2008; Lee, 2010; Yung, 2015; Yung, 2019). Few attempted to look at the issue inclusive of both forms from the learners' perspective except two studies: Zhan et al.'s (2013) Hong Kong study on students' perceptions towards two education forms and their educators (i.e., school teachers and tutors), and Kwo and Bray's (2014) study on the voices from Hong Kong students describing their learning orientations and comparing their educators at school and at tutoring. These studies demonstrated the necessity to pay attention to the voices of students, especially their perceptions about the learning environments. Before exploring the theoretical frameworks of this qualitative case study, it is essential to look closely into the formal and non-formal education of the English subject in the Taiwanese context.

English Formal and Non-formal Education in Taiwan

This study was conducted within the English formal and non-formal educational context in Taiwan, which belongs to the expanding circle of World Englishes (Kachru, 1992). Since 1968, English has gradually gained its importance in the Taiwanese formal education system from being an obligatory subject taught

mainly by grammar-translation methods in middle school to having systemized curricula that focused on communicative competence revised and operationalized in the early 1990s (Chen & Tsai, 2012). In 2001, English was officially introduced into elementary schools in Taiwan under the Grade 1-9 Coherent Curriculum. Most recently, the Master Framework for the 12-year Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines by the Ministry of Education (2018) was implemented, emphasizing the overall competence and lifelong learning spirit of students. English is currently taught from the second learning stage (Grade 3-4 in elementary school; around age 8-9) to the fifth learning stage (Grade 10-12 in senior high school; around age 17-18) in formal education in Taiwan. During this period of English learning, paper-and-pencil tests are the most frequently used method for assessing students' English proficiency (Yeh, 2000). Two major examinations take place in between the learning stages: the "Comprehensive Assessment Program for Junior High School Students" and the "General Scholastic Ability Test (GSAT)" for college entrance, both of which include English as a required subject.

As for non-formal education, according to the Management Information Systems of Short-term Cram Schools in Special Municipality and Other Cities in Taiwan (Ministry of Education, 2020), so far (May 1, 2020), there are 3733 foreign language instruction institutes in Taiwan, accounting for around one-fourths of the total PT institutes in Taiwan ($N = 17364$). Most of these PT institutes are EPT institutes established for academic purposes, with very few of them targeting languages like Japanese or other foreign languages. EPT in Taiwan comes in several forms, including those for young children before and during elementary school years, all-subject cram schools, and large cram schools for exam preparation.

To capture the relationship and interactions between formal and non-formal

education in Taiwan, a thorough search of the relevant literature yielded only Huang's (2017) study comparing the motivational selves between high school students who attended EPT and those who did not. The study revealed that students with additional EPT were more motivated to learn English, compared to students learning English only in mainstream classrooms. The latter group was found to have motivation that related more to fulfilling obligations and avoiding negative outcomes. Those students with tutoring experiences in Huang's (2017) study tend to view English as "a tool of communicative vital to personal achievement" (p. 22), thus regarding learning English as a "personal advancement" (p. 22). This questionnaire study also pointed out the need to examine the "complex reality of learning experiences from the eyes of learners" (Huang, 2017, p. 25), suggesting further research to investigate the interaction of accumulated experiences in both formal and non-formal education.

Sense of Community (SOC)

As one of the two theoretical frameworks adopted by the present study, a sense of community is defined as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 9). Originally focusing on neighborhood communities, this framework identifies four elements in the concept of SOC: *membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs*, and *shared emotional connection*. *Membership* refers mainly to the feeling of belonging within a certain boundary. It can be further separated into five attributes: *boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging and identification, personal investment*, and *a common symbol system*. These attributes do not function by themselves but rather operate together to form a sense of membership. Secondly,

influence denotes the two-way interaction of individuals influencing the community and vice versa. Under the influence of the community, the choice of showing *conformity* or *uniformity* will have an effect on the cohesiveness of the community. Thirdly, *integration and fulfillment of needs* can be considered the reinforcement a member needs to be in the community, such as the *status* of membership, the *competence* in the community, or the *shared values* of members. The last element is *shared emotional connection*, which indicates the shared history that members identify with each other. Within this element, seven features (i.e., *contact hypothesis*, *quality of interaction*, *closure to events*, *shared valent event hypothesis*, *investment*, *effect of honor and humiliation on community members*, and *spiritual bonds*) were raised.

Past studies have demonstrated the suitability using frameworks of SOC to discuss classroom interaction. For example, Solomon et al.'s (1996) study on 232 elementary classrooms showed that teachers' practices such as *elicitation of student thinking and expression of ideas* or *encouragement of cooperation* were related to students' behavior and their SOC. Townley et al.'s (2013) study of 53 undergraduate transfer students found that students who were more emotionally connected to the school environment perceived a stronger sense of support, and were thus more academically motivated. This study also investigated the discrepancy between the actual and ideal SOC, showing that the former remained significantly lower than the latter for these transfer students. The two studies thus support the present study in adopting the SOC framework for capturing the participant's SOC experiences in classrooms.

Though McMillan and Chavis's (1986) framework has been used to show how a learner perceives his relationship with the classroom community, it nonetheless

remains challenging to picture the learner's agency from a more macro perspective.

Thus, the theme of learner agency and its framework chosen for this study is elaborated below to find where agency is present and how it is exercised.

Learner Agency

Differing definitions have been raised to describe the idea of learner agency.

In the sociocultural view of learner agency, the term is often defined as “the socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). Duranti (2004), in the same line of research, proposed three properties of agency: *control over one's own behavior, producing actions that affect other entities as well as self; and producing actions that are the object of evaluation*. Gao (2010) also added that besides the capacity to act, the will of an agent is likewise important. It is evident that from the sociocultural view, learner agency should be coped with from both the socioculturally-mediated perspective as well as the intrapersonal perspective.

Though studies over time have attempted to assign definitions or properties to learner agency, it is nonetheless crucial to recognize the non-linear and complex nature of language learning and of learner agency through a qualitative lens. As Larsen-Freeman (2019) puts it, in discussing learner agency, “we will never be able to identify, let alone measure, all of the factors accurately. And even if we could, we would still be unable to predict the outcome of their combination” (p. 65). Hence, traditional models that wish to capture the linearity or causality of learner agency would require a more holistic view to showcase the dynamism of learner agency.

Recent studies have suggested that different learning contexts result in various situated circumstances, relations, and interactions that may shape a learner's agency. For example, Mercer's (2011) study found that learner agency involves the interaction

of parameters such as *self-concept*, *motivation*, *affect*, and *self-regulation*. In addition, the sociocultural, educational, family, classroom, and interactional contexts are all interconnected in formulating the learner's agency. Another study by Mercer (2012) further argued that learner agency is situated, multi-dimensional, dynamic, and complex. The participant's beliefs were also investigated to see what role it played in her agentic system, assigning an importance to the intrapersonal dimension of the concept. These ideas of complexity and dynamism also echo the Complexity Theory (CT) and Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) discussed in Larsen-Freeman's (1997, 2012) works. Of the twelve principles mentioned in her plenary address (2012) on the issue of CT and DST, *change* (i.e., the process of how parts of a system interact and shape its collective behavior), *emergence* (i.e., the complexity that originates from the interaction of elements), and *context* (i.e., the inclusion of contextual backgrounds as a part of the system) were assigned particular importance.

More recently, Larsen-Freeman (2019) discussed the Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) on agency, a transdisciplinary model encompassing multiple perspectives. In the CDST, seven characteristics were proposed in order to generate a holistic understanding of agency. First, *agency is relational*, which emphasizes the importance of the synergies of a person with the environment. Agency, under this characteristic, is not an innate property but rather a result of dynamic establishment or re-establishment from meaningful interaction (Buhrman & Di Paolo, 2017). Second, *agency is emergent*, in a sense that agency emerges upon "detecting spatiotemporal correlations between one's actions and its effects" (Larsen-Freeman, 2019, p. 65). Third, *agency is spatially and temporally situated*. Aside from the importance of spatial settings, regarding the temporal perspective, past experiences and future prospects are both involved in one's agency exercised in the present moment

(Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Mercer, 2012). Fourth, *agency can be achieved*. How an individual makes an effort in a specific context with particular resources available leads to different status of one's agency. Fifth, *agency changes through iteration and co-adaptation*, which refers to the iterated responses to a current situation or the co-adaptation to another system that may bring change to one's agency system. Sixth, *agency is multidimensional*. Larsen-Freeman (2019) regards this as a reminder to the intrapersonal factors (Mercer, 2012) such as emotions, beliefs, personality, and motivation. These facets of the inner self are all important in understanding how agency works. Last, agency is *heterarchical*. It is not in the form of hierarchy where one component can linearly influence another. Rather, it is multidirectional and decentralized, with all kinds of potentials existing between components.

Inspired by the above-mentioned authors, this researcher believes it is important to take two perspectives in understanding English classroom experiences. First, from a more micro view, both individual's behavior and role in the community through the lens of SOC; and second, from a more macro view, how one's learner agency is developed in the view of the CDST. This idea is in line with the Douglas Fir Group's (2016) notion of the multifaceted nature of language learning, in which language learning shapes and is shaped by both the learner's particular sociocultural communities and the learner's agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019). To be more specific, focusing on one Taiwanese English learner, this study explores the following research questions:

1. What is the participant's SOC like in formal and non-formal English classrooms through time?
2. By views of the CDST, how do the SOC's in the two educational contexts interact and shape the learner's agency?

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Research Design

This study follows the single-case study research method, which enables elaborations on the details and complexities of one participant (Duff, 2014). A case study is defined as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 12). Past studies on learner agency also adopted case study approaches. Varghese (2012) examined a Somali student’s own agency, her personal resources, and her self-efficacy against her status as being disadvantaged. Kanno and Harklau (2012) also highlighted U.S. post-secondary students’ agencies to get college admissions through case study approaches. Though case study methodology is often criticized for its lack of generalizability, it nonetheless renders possible contextualized understandings of specific phenomena (Mercer, 2011). In addition, Duff (2014) also proposed “analytic (theoretical) generalizations” instead of “statistical generalizations” that originate from other methodological traditions (p. 10). Thus, another main purpose for using a case study approach is this researcher’s intention to “shed empirical light about some theoretical concepts or principles” (Yin, 2014, p. 40). It is expected that by viewing the issue through a case study approach, a holistic understanding of the learner’s experiences can be obtained.

Participant

The participant of this study is one 19-year-old young adult, Lai (pseudonym),

who finished his GSAT in early 2019 and began his university studies in September, 2019. The reasons Lai was chosen for this study were three: First, he had complete experiences of English learning in both formal and non-formal education contexts throughout the 12 years of compulsory education (from age 6 to 18). Second, he was at the point of just graduating from high school (less than six months) during the first phase of interview. With fresh memory, he comprehensively recalled and articulated his experiences from elementary school to senior high school. Finally, Lai was formerly a student at the researcher's school club during his junior and senior high school period, and a rapport was built during that time.

Lai's formal education experience started in his first year of elementary school until his schooling in senior high school. Though the compulsory education that he received was supposed to begin English education when he was a third grader, his elementary school started teaching English when he was a first grader, helping students to develop entry-level basic English ability and become accustomed to the new language. Moving on to high school, he studied in the same junior and senior high school, with non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) giving the English classes. Lai is now studying in a university department which requires all courses to be lectured in English. Therefore, besides a required two-hour Freshman English course every week taught by a non-native English-speaking professor, throughout the five days of university classes, he is intensively involved in the use of English. The studying experiences before entering university were the main focus of data collection for the aspect of formal education, while his current experiences in university also added to the reflections on his past learning experiences.

As for Lai's non-formal education experiences, the study mainly focused on his experiences from elementary school to senior high school. Since the fifth year in

elementary school, Lai attended EPT with classes conducted by native English-speaking teachers (NESTs). During junior high school to his second year in senior high school, he switched to an EPT institute which he had classes with both NESTs and NNESTs. His last EPT experience came in when he acknowledged the threat of the GSAT exam, which pressured him to participate in a large exam-oriented EPT institution to boost his English grades. After the exam, he switched to the TOEIC preparation class of the same exam-oriented institution. Now, as his department in university is dedicated to prepare students with language competence, he does not participate in any additional English learning than what is already offered by the department. However, he still uses English frequently for communication with his foreign friends outside classrooms. His complete experience of English learning in both formal and non-formal educational contexts offered the potential of showing various SOC and demonstrating how one's learner agency can be formed in between the interacting SOC in the different learning contexts.

Data Collection

Data were collected from the semi-structured interviews conducted according to the interview protocols, which were designed based on the two theoretical frameworks adopted: a sense of community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986) and the Complex Dynamic Systems Theory of learner agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019). These interviews were conducted in two phases, with the first phase eliciting data to address the first research question regarding SOC and the second phase probing deeper into the issue of learner agency through the CDST. Details of the two phases of interviews are provided below.

The first phase.

The first phase of data collection focused on SOC and were conducted in early 2019 when the researcher had the opportunity to work with the participant intensively as his private one-on-one tutor. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to elicit comprehensive learning experiences of the participant. The first set of interview questions (See Appendix A, p. 77) were generated based on McMillan and Chavis's (1986) four elements of SOC (i.e., *membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs*, and *shared emotional connection*) in order to address the first research question. Two topic domains were probed into, with the first considering the participant's English learning experiences in formal education (i.e., elementary, junior high, and senior high school) and the second considering the participant's experiences in non-formal education (i.e., first, second, and third EPT institute). This way of grouping questions into topic domains was based on Carspecken's (1996) guidelines of interview protocols. Covert categories of the interview protocol were written corresponding to the four elements aforementioned to engender detailed information from the participant.

Of this first phase of data collection, two interviews were conducted. The first interview was conducted on April 4, 2019, which lasted for two hours in the afternoon in a café, with an additional hour of interview on the same date later after dinner. The second interview was conducted on May 4, 2019, for additional information after a preliminary analysis on the information the participant provided, lasting for around an hour. The interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis. In both of these interviews, the participant was interviewed in Chinese, the language he felt comfortable with. During the interview, the researcher and the participant were jointly engaged in the story-telling process, resulting in the "co-constructed" (Murray, 2009,

p. 59) nature of his experiences. This process of crystallization through emic and etic approaches contributed effectively to the multifaceted presentation of the data.

After a preliminary analysis of the data using the SOC framework, a general picture of the learner's experience and relation with the two English learning contexts were portrayed.

The second phase.

In order to address the second research question on learner agency, the second phase of interview was conducted in the same café on December 28, 2019, for also around three hours. Having started university with new English courses and learning experiences, the participant answered questions on learner agency while having further reflections on his previous English learning experiences. The interview questions were also developed following Carspecken's (1996) guidelines and were based on both the CDST framework as well as the analyzed data on SOC from the first phase of interview. (See Appendix B for the interview protocol of phase two, p. 83.) This phase of interview was also done in Chinese.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed consulting Carspecken's (1996) reconstructive analysis in order to unearth the underlying meanings of the socioculturally-shaped actions and values of the participant. For both phases of data collection, two stages of data analysis were carried out: preliminary and secondary reconstructive analysis. The preliminary reconstructive analysis included constructing the meaning field and validity horizon, which both aimed at eliciting and inferring the implicit meaning of the participant's utterances. When

generating the validity horizon, words of the participant were further examined by categorizing them into possible objective claims (i.e., statements that reveal objective facts or truth), subjective claims (i.e., statements that are characterized by privileged access on the part of the speaker), normative-evaluative claims (i.e., statements that involve position taking), and identity claims (i.e., statements that identifies who a person is) (Carspecken, 1996). By doing so, those taken-for-granted concepts were identified and thus aided this researcher to view the data more holistically. In the secondary reconstructive analysis, power and role analyses were conducted to probe deeper into the power relations and role sets in the data (Carspecken, 1996).

After the reconstructive analysis, data were coded and categorized. First, line-by-line coding was conducted to generate raw codes. Second, the raw codes were put into the sub-categories and categories based on McMillan and Chavis's (1986) SOC framework including the four aspects: *membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs*, and *shared emotional connection*. Analyzed data from the first phase of data collection, together with the CDST framework, were consulted to create the second set of interview questions addressing the issue of learner agency. Lastly, data from the semi-structured interviews in the second phase were put through a same process of a two-stage reconstructive analysis, coding, and categorization based on the seven characteristics of the CDST framework on learner agency. Possible themes then emerged from the combined two phases of data analysis procedures. Figure 1 below explains the entire procedure of data collection and analysis of the present study.

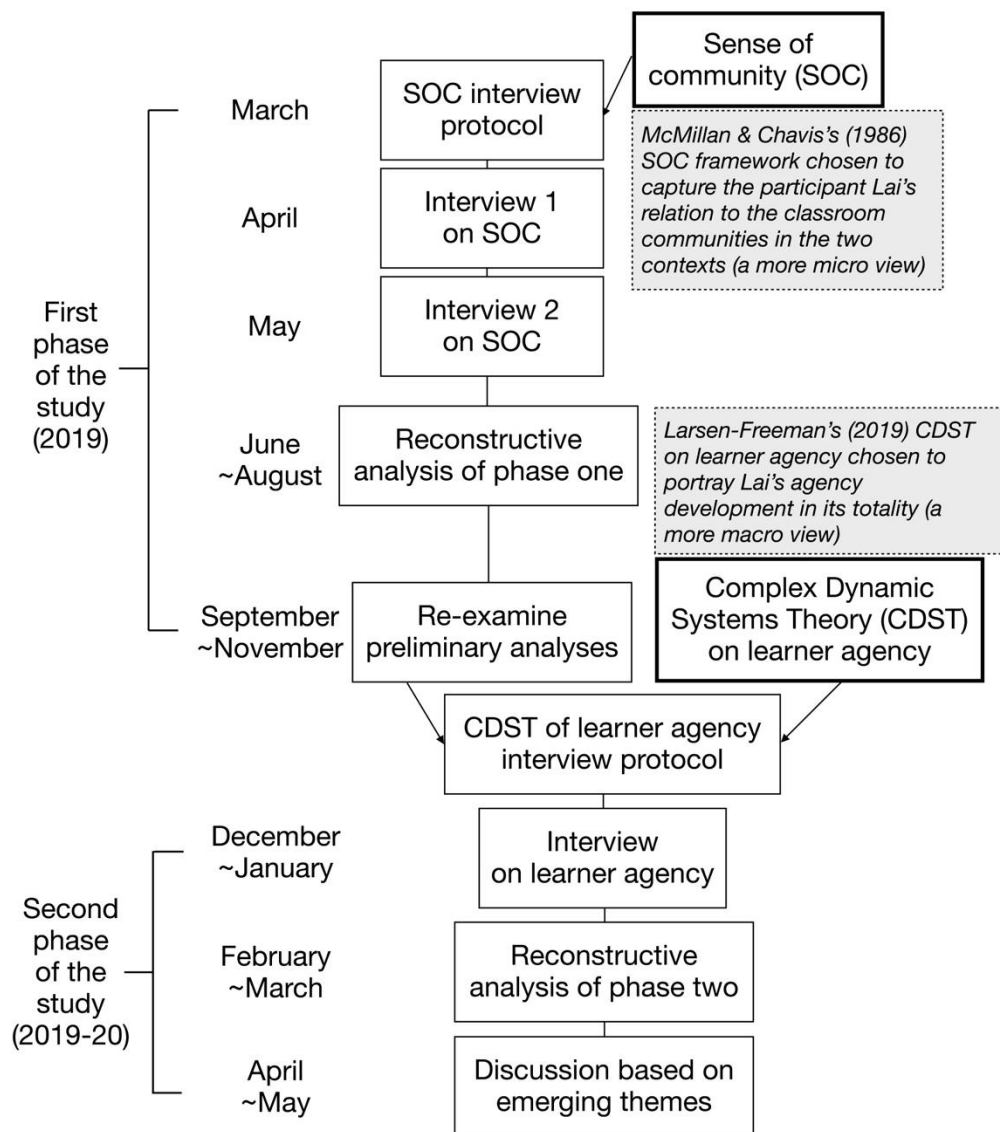


Fig. 1. Flow of data collection and data analysis

Trustworthiness

To guard the credibility and transferability of the present study, the following techniques were adopted according to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) principles.

Credibility.

Credibility of this study was secured through triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking. According to Stake (1995), triangulation can be achieved

“with multiple approaches within a single study” (p. 114). Thus, data were triangulated and crosschecked between semi-structured interviews and other inquiry results with the participant through LINE. Interview data from the two phases were constantly verified to avoid bias during interpretation. In addition, peer debriefing was also carried out to identify the researcher’s bias and clarify unclear interpretations during analysis. The peer debriefer of the study was a master’s student of TESOL in the same graduate program as the researcher, both having experiences in conducting qualitative studies. Starting from reviewing the interview protocols to discussing potential themes, the debriefer offered suggestions to the present study. Lastly, member checking was also conducted with the participant to ensure that the data collected be analyzed without misinterpretation.

Transferability.

Though a perceived limitation exists in terms of the “use” of small-scale qualitative studies, it is in fact due to the characteristics of being context-dependent and having a small sample size that renders possible the in-depth understanding of specific social phenomena (Flyvbjerg, 2004). To enhance the transferability of such context-dependent study of a small sample size, this researcher detailed the formal and non-formal education contexts in the participant’s different stages of learning. In so doing, this study made sure the thick descriptions could allow future researchers who are interested in the issue to make successful contextual transfers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316).

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Lai's English studying experiences in formal and non-formal education is presented below, starting from his elementary period (Grade 1 to 6), junior high school period (Grade 7 to 9) and then to his senior high school period (Grade 10 to 12). The stories are organized and reconfigured based on the data collected in the two phases of interviews. After the stories of formal and non-formal education in each period, a preliminary sectional discussion of the two theoretical frameworks based on Lai's stories are included to address the two research questions.

English Learning Experience in the Elementary School Period

In formal education.

"Stand up, attention, bow. Good morning, Ms. Lin." Every day in English class during elementary school years, Lai, as the class leader, was assigned to give the classroom commands in the beginning of the class. He recalled that due to the special experience of being the class leader throughout the six years in elementary school, his assigned role as the command giver in English class made him feel different from others. "It was the first time for me to speak English in class, and other classmates didn't get to do so" (Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04). Teachings of elementary school English teachers were still mostly done in Chinese, so the beginning commands became an important way of bringing everyone into this English learning context.

"Good morning, please sit down." As Lai recalled, they sat in their original rowed seats and took out their textbooks. The teacher's explanation of vocabulary and grammar usually took up most of the time. Sometimes, the teacher would ask questions, but not all students actively participated in answering the teacher's

questions. Lai was one of those who frequently answered the teachers' questions.

When asked about the reasons why, Lai said that:

I got interested in English after I participated in the English cram school in fifth and sixth grade. And probably because of the cram school experience, I had better performance than other classmates, and so I thought I knew the answers of the teacher's questions. Having such confidence, I chose to raise my hands [to answer].

(Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04)

Besides normal class lecturing, the teacher, if time allowed, would also engage students in English activities or games. During these instances, seats would be rearranged and students moved around to have fun. "I think when the seat arrangement changed, like sometimes we moved the tables and chairs away, the feeling of stiffness in class vanished. And for activities, once the teacher asked us to dance around ..."

(Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04). Lai felt relaxed and entertained during the English classes of elementary school.

One of his school English teachers also set up a point-rewarding mechanism, with which students could, at the end of a semester, use the points they earned to exchange gifts from the teacher. Due to this stimulus, Lai decided to be the helper of his English teacher and also participated actively during class interaction. He finally got the gift from the teacher:

L: Oh! I was the English teacher's helper during fifth and sixth grade.

R: Wow.

L: Because I think she..., perhaps I wanted those points. Because at that time, I exchanged the points I earned [with the teacher] for a quite famous book. It's a little boy's diary, and it is bilingual.

...

R: Oh, so the teacher's stimulus was quite good?

L: Yup.

R: Making you feel you want to engage in it. What about others? Did they also exchange for the rewards?

L: Yes, but I got the biggest reward. The teacher bought the gifts [using her own money].

(Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04)

*Note: L refers to the participant while R refers to the researcher in excerpts.

However, English classes at school lasted for only 40 minutes per class, and no more than two consecutive classes were arranged per day due to administrative constraints. Hence, Lai also expressed that though classes were entertaining, he felt that students did not identify themselves with the English class, sometimes feeling that it was just another class like that of other subjects. He expressed that most of the times in elementary English class, everyone was more or less “participating in the activities” rather than “learning English” when the teacher led them through activities, probably because the main language of communication between students were still Chinese instead of English.

Moreover, starting from third grade, English became a subject of midterm and final examinations. From that time on, he recalled that pressure began to fall on him and he even felt frustrated when he didn't receive good test results. He remembered

that once, after getting a bad grade from a midterm exam, his mom demanded him to copy the texts word for word from the textbook, hoping that he could remember what was in it. Though later on this method was proved useless, he had no idea how to improve his English and continued his learning following his school teacher. It was not until fifth grade when he entered the English-only EPT did he find out how different and effective English learning could be.

In non-formal education.

School ended at four, but starting from fifth grade in his elementary years, Lai had to leave early every school-day for the after-school EPT which was located an hour bus-ride from his school. Arriving at this EPT symbolized a complete switch of language: Chinese was not allowed for the duration of the three-hour English class. All of the teachers there were native English-speaking teachers (NESTs), so everything, including teachers' lectures, instructions, students' responses and requests, had to be in English. In both interviews, Lai expressed the difference he sensed comparing to the English class at school:

I think the different part was the environment. At school, we went to English class and felt that it was just an English class, but we didn't feel that everything has to be in English. But it became different in cram school. Entering it meant that, "Oh, I'm now in an English environment", and that only English was allowed.

(Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04)

This experience was initially quite frightening to Lai, expressing that he "did not even

know how to make a request for the bathroom” (Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04). He recalled that he was “completely ‘speechless’ during his first week [at the EPT]” (Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04), even if he had already learned some English at school. However, he sensed that this crisis acted as a positive stimulus for him, further motivating him to understand what others were saying and at least tried to say something. The English spoken by the teachers and some students was also regarded as a model by Lai to mimic.

In this mixed-age class, five to six students sat around the teacher. Class would normally start by checking the assignments, writing the diary of the day and discussing the diary with teachers and classmates. Then, the teacher would lecture based on the imported textbooks, covering various subjects such as mathematics, science, or language arts. During this part of lecture, Lai recalled that when the teachers asked questions, he and other elder classmates in class would feel that they should be able to answer the questions. At the end of each class, as Lai clearly remembers, there was a game time for them to practice what they learned.

In this EPT, students not only interacted with each other inside the classroom, but there were also chances for cross-class interaction. Sometimes, students from different classes would join and have fun during festivals or holidays (e.g., Christmas) or play board games. In Lai’s memory, though some of the games were difficult, the teachers still facilitated the students and insisted that they use English during the game. As no Chinese was allowed, Lai was forced to use all the English vocabulary words he had to say whatever he wanted to say. To reward students of good performance in study or activities, the teachers gave them tokens, which could then be used in “auctions.” In this event, teachers played the roles of auctioneers and students would go to different stands to spend their coins buying different gifts. This of course,

along with all the activities aforementioned, was also required to be done in English.

Lai discovered in this EPT that English could be learned in an interesting way even if it was never less challenging.

After two years of EPT experience, Lai felt that he became capable of speaking English to people fluently without having to think for a long time for grammatically-correct utterances.

L: How should I put it... After joining [this EPT] for half a year, I became more familiar with English.

R: So you think it was the EPT that made you become so?

L: Yeah yeah yeah. I became more familiar with English, and I was not afraid of English. I used to be afraid of English, yes.

(Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04)

He also made friends, “even using language that is not [his] mother tongue” (Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04), which he considered a valuable experience.

Preliminary Sectional Interpretation of the Elementary School Period

Sense of community.

Throughout Lai’s elementary school period, English learning experiences happened in both formal and non-formal educational contexts, with different SOC’s being constructed in both contexts respectively. In this primary stage of English learning, a stronger sense of *membership* was present in the EPT, as compared to the English learning experience at school. Data regarding the other three elements of

McMillan and Chavis's (1986) SOC framework (i.e., *influence, integration and fulfillment of needs*, and *shared emotional connection*) were also identified.

In the EPT, Lai felt a stronger SOC in terms of *membership*, as they had the *common symbol system* of using English as their means of communication. As Lai mentioned, he felt like being in an English environment as there was a complete switch of language to English when entering the EPT. This feeling of a complete environment shift can be related to the attribute *boundaries* in the SOC framework, as an English-speaking community is formed between Lai and his peers in this EPT. On the other hand, this did not happen at school, where teachers still used most of the time lecturing in Chinese. The fact of English being used in class was, to Lai, a major point in defining whether he felt with the community or not. Second, though Lai was initially frightened by the no-Chinese atmosphere in this EPT, his *emotional safety* gradually grew higher owing to both the teacher's guidance and the discovery that everyone also had to speak in English.

In addition to the attributes discussed in the original framework, the case of Lai revealed that the *duration of participation* seemed to play a significant role in the participant's feeling of having a *membership* in the English learning communities. In the English classes at school, Lai felt a lower *sense of belonging* due to the fragmented time of class. There were only four to five English classes per week, and each class lasted for 40 minutes, with no more than two consecutive classes arranged in a day (i.e., no more than 80 minutes of English learning). On the other hand, in EPT, Lai spent three whole hours, five days a week. It is then evinced that the *duration of participation* may lead to different feelings of belonging.

On the perspective of *influence*, Lai described that the English learning community in EPT created a positive influence on him, making him a motivated and

proficient learner. This influence seemed to be further exerted in his formal English class at school, in which he chose to actively answer the teacher's questions. Thus, from the perspective of the *integration and fulfillment of needs*, he also felt that he had a relatively higher *status* in class in terms of English, which is strengthened by his role of the class leader (assigned to say the English classroom commands) and of the English teacher's assistant. In the school English class, it seemed that *influence* was in the direction of the *community towards the individual* instead of the other way around, and such positive *influence* from the EPT provided the basis for his higher *status of membership* in the English learning community at school.

Lastly, the *shared emotional connection* in school remained in the stage of activities being "entertaining" only instead of being "English-related". It was revealed that school English teachers might want to make the English class become engaging, but English was sometimes left out, and students only sensed the entertainment of the games or activities. However, in EPT, everything, including lectures and activities, was done in English. Lai thus felt more engaged in using English when the teachers wanted to interact with students. The same happened with rewards: school teachers provided one-instance rewards (i.e., English books, candies) while EPT teachers involved English use and activities (i.e., auctions in English to exchange for rewards) even in the process of giving the rewards.

Learner agency.

In this primary period of English learning, Lai found that English could be used as a means to make friends in EPT, which was what he mentioned "a very cool thing" (Interview #1-1, 2019-04-04). At school, he also discovered that being able to speak more English made himself somewhat different from other classmates. By

speaking English, Lai found out that he was able to create the dynamics for change in his English communities. Though such an extent might not be as great as Kelso's (2018, in Larsen-Freeman, 2019) example of an infant's kicking causing the rattle's sound-making effects, Lai's experience undoubtedly accords with the CDST framework's (Larsen-Freeman, 2019) idea of the *emergent* aspect of agency: changes are brought about by learning and using English.

Second, it was also discovered that particularly in the English-only EPT where a strong SOC was present, Lai's agency during this period can be seen as *relational*. Starting from zero interaction between Lai and the environment, meaningful interactions were gradually established through the dynamics occurring in the EPT. The NESTs, their teaching activities, Lai's personal investments, and reactions from peers all acted as "internal factors" (as termed in the CDST framework by Larsen-Freeman, 2019) within his agency system. These factors interact and co-build a strong relationship between one another, therefore rendering possible a high-level learner agency. This did not seem to happen at school, for the separate time periods of English classes might have essentially restricted the possibility of such relationship establishment.

In addition, agency was also found to be *achievable*. Both at school and in EPT, Lai was motivated by the teachers' rewards, thus utilizing the resources available to gain better achievements. However, rewards from the school English teacher were only one-time stimulations, which were quite different from the rewards from EPT teachers that required students to use English to exchange. This explains Biesta and Tedder's (2007) idea, as mentioned in the CDST framework, of agency being "something one achieves *by means of* an environment, not simply *in* an environment" (Larsen-Freeman, 2019, p. 66). Agency can be achieved, as long as the

environment provides the suitable resources, which in this case of Lai would be the English speaking and using environment.

Lastly, in this period, evidence of the *multi-dimensional* nature of agency was also present, especially regarding the emotional perspective. In the beginning of Lai's English learning in the English-only EPT, he feared speaking up and even cried after class. However, his fear gradually faded out as he found that everyone also had to speak in English, and that the NESTs were really encouraging instead of threatening. It was thus clear that the learner agency in English class did not simply rely on the teaching activities or the materials, but the emotional aspect of the learner should also be taken care of. This was also mentioned in Mercer's (2012) study, where "intrapersonal factors" such as emotion or motivation were found to be significant in shaping the learner's agentic behaviors.

In sum, Lai's agency was stronger in EPT, as the environment created an English learning SOC, took care of his emotional needs, enabled confidence to grow, and made him discover the practical use of English. On the other hand, as school English classes seemed to lack chances of peer communication and longer consecutive time periods for English activities, Lai felt a lower SOC and exercised a weaker agency.

English Learning Experience in the Junior High School Period

In formal education.

There were three teachers (i.e., Amy, Chen, and Wang) during Lai's junior high school English learning experiences (J1 to J3), each responsible for one year of teaching. Amy taught Lai's class in J1. She was a devoted teacher who designed handouts and tried to lead classroom discussion. However, most of the students in

class chose not to cooperate with the teacher because they thought her English class was relaxing and could thus be treated with less attention. Lai also felt similarly with his classmates about Amy's English class being "just another class to be taken" which was "neither to be anticipated nor to be disliked" (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04). Amy, as described by Lai, often felt disappointed and sometimes even "pulled a long face staring at the students" (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04). Lai, nonetheless, was somehow different from other students. He seemed to be more willing to answer Amy's questions, but with surprising reasons:

R: So why did you choose to answer the teachers' questions?

L: Because I sat in the first row.

R: Oh, so it was like you have to...

L: I sat in the very first row. So sometimes she pointed at me, so then I tried my best to answer, but not volunteering to answer.

(Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04)

Lai recalled that Amy's English classes functioned mostly as relaxing breaks in the long periods of studying every day. He himself also had no study goals for Amy's class and relied merely on his prior knowledge established during his former English-only EPT learning.

Lai's second teacher, Chen, was a strict teacher who wanted students to study hard and pay attention in class. Hence, she transformed Lai's English classes from "relaxing breaks" into "intense lectures" (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04). However, such demanding style did not make students anyhow engaged. Lai mentioned that they "still didn't interact with the teacher because of her [serious] personality"

(Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04). Under this strictness, Lai remembered that there were no group activities, and much more pressure was felt in Chen's English class. The mode of teacher-student interaction also changed:

R: In Chen's class, did you contribute to the class or raise questions?

L: No.

R: Then would you answer [questions] upon the teacher's request?

L: Yes, because if I didn't answer I would be scolded.

R: Oh!

L: It was more like that. Probably she thought that "I've already lectured on that, why couldn't you answer?"

(Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04)

It can be sensed that Lai felt the pressure of not being able to answer Chen's questions. Answering thus became an act of passively avoiding punishment instead of actively expressing thoughts. As with tests, Lai expressed that "just don't get grades far below what-is-considered the standard. She more or less knew [what you can achieve].

Don't get forties or fifties if you usually score nineties" (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04).

It is evinced that English learning became closely connected to achieving good English grades. Such enforcement of this image will continue to appear from here on.

Wang was the last English teacher of Lai's junior high school stage. She was an even more traditional teacher than Chen, lecturing on grammar, vocabulary, and completely following the textbooks. Having already retired from a top-ranking high school in Taiwan, she was employed by Lai's school to teach gifted classes, aiming to duplicate successful learning models that she had achieved before. However, due to

the generation gap between the teacher and the students, neither did she arouse the students' learning interest nor did she boost the grades of the students. Lai recalled that he, along with many of his classmates, chose to sleep instead of to listen in class due to her boring teaching style. Facing this situation, Wang did not wake them up because she viewed their grades as their final achievements. As long as they could keep their grades at their "standard", paying attention in class or not became less important.

In the final discussion on his formal education in the junior high school period, Lai said that he still liked Amy the best. Though she attempted to create an English learning environment seemed to have failed, her teaching method was still preferred over Chen's traditional and Wang's cramming way of teaching which he really disliked.

L: Wang was a very spoon-feeding teacher. The kind of boring teachers, how to say...

R: Would she let you speak [English] in class?

L: I sort of forgot, but I think she didn't. And she would ask you to recite the texts to her, if you didn't get a good grade.

R: The most traditional teacher?

L: Yes, she had all kinds of traditional teaching methods you could think of.

(Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04)

He also sensed that from first to third grade, classmates began to study for themselves more than before due to pressures on grades. Pursuing good English grades thus became the ultimate goal for every student in the class. But for Lai

himself, he also recalled that during junior high school times, besides what happened during English class, two external factors interacted with his English studies: pressure for studying a lot of other subjects and the chances to play computer games. Lai mentioned that he was actually not as diligent as he was before in elementary school owing to these two additional factors. He admitted that school English classes gradually shaped the image that English was just a subject for examination, just like all other subjects.

In non-formal education.

As the previous cram school was only for elementary school students, Lai, as a junior high school student, decided to go to a new EPT in which he had one three-hour class on Saturday afternoons. The first half of the class was lectured by non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs), while the second half was taught by NESTs. NNESTs led discussions on news articles, reading articles, or movies. All materials were in English, but the teachers used Chinese as the instruction language. The second half of the class lectured by NESTs focused on one main article per week, accompanied with several other activities, such as group discussions or debates. The NESTs also taught students how to write English essays.

Lai's class were of six to eleven students. During class, sometimes the students were asked to read out loud the articles or readings from the textbooks:

I remember sometimes we read articles, we often read it together for the first time. Then, or maybe two in a group, and we took turns reading different paragraphs. Oh, and because it was [imported] textbooks, sometimes after

reading, or after listening, there would be questions asking you to “share with your partner.” We would then regroup ourselves for sharing.

(Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04).

Hence, a lot of discussion could be seen taking place in the three-hour session, and students were involved in the teacher’s activities. In addition, owing to the small class size, teachers were able to take care of the needs of individual students. Lai remembered that:

One of my foreign teachers was British. And once I participated in a Model United Nations (MUN) conference, [...] and because I represented the United Kingdom, so I think I asked him something on this. And I discovered that he also participated in this MUN event before. It was cool.

(Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04)

Lai expressed that aside from his NESTs, the director of this EPT, Kao, who is a Taiwanese NNEST, also had some influence on him. Kao often integrated a lot of ongoing issues from various topic domains into their learning materials, making him realize that “English is a medium to understand the world better” (Interview #2-2, 2019-12-28). This director was also previously the translator of a well-known multinational entertainment conglomerate, which made Lai view him as a role model to learn from. Hence, it is seen that teachers here in this EPT not only dealt with English in textbooks, but also discussed extra-curricular and real-life materials using English, which, as described by Lai, was quite different from what he got at school, where he “seldom followed international news” (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04).

Lai spent five years from Junior One (J1) class all the way to Senior Two (S2) class in this EPT, but he remembered that many classmates left during the years. He said probably “due to the coming exams”, and that this EPT “did not quite follow school curriculum, but focused more on extra-curricular materials” (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04). Nevertheless, Lai stayed for five years because he found this EPT helpful in “cultivating reading ability” and “accumulating vocabulary in a natural way” (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04). However, as pointed out in the previous section, Lai was somehow affected by the overall pressure of studying and henceforth lost the motivation “towards learning in general” (Interview #2-2, 2019-12-28), even though admitting that this EPT had many resources available.

Preliminary Sectional Interpretation of the Junior High School Period

Sense of community.

The SOC at school seemed to change dramatically when Lai went to junior high school. Initially in elementary school, the teacher attempted to switch seats, lead activities, or use English commands to create an English learning atmosphere. However, in junior high school, Lai, or even the teachers, became restricted by English grades. Everything from then on seemed to be closely connected to test performances instead of language performances.

Concerning the four elements of McMillan and Chavis’s (1986) SOC framework, Lai’s SOC at school during this period clearly lacked the positive signs of *membership* and *influence*. Only in the English classes during Grade 7 did Lai’s teacher, Amy, tried to create such an environment, but students, due to their perception of English as a test subject, decided to ignore the teacher, resulting in Amy’s failed attempt in leading meaningful classroom activities. Ironically also, was

that during Grade 9, students used the *common symbol system* of sleeping in class to resist listening to the teacher's lectures. Class during this period became unidirectional lecturing from the teacher to the students, which made it difficult for *influence* from the community to individuals or vice versa to occur. When discussing about whether students in class conformed to or challenged the teacher, Lai recalled that once his classmates handed in a blank quiz sheet to show her resistance to rote memorization of vocabulary. He felt strong resonance with her because he himself also disliked the traditional way of teaching and testing vocabulary items. The SOC formed during this period may have originated from the students' shared feelings of rejections to traditional ways of teaching and learning. Lai also expressed that in this stage at school, he felt more like striving for his own academic goals instead of learning English with others, which hints that *uniformity*, instead of *conformity*, is growing higher.

As for the *integration and fulfillment of needs*, Lai also hinted that he felt a low sense of these feelings. Being demotivated by the teachers' traditional teaching methods, Lai chose to study on his own and not to follow the teachers' suggested ways of studying. He expressed several times during the interviews that the teachers in this period were too "standardized" and "rigid" (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04; Interview #2-2, 2019-12-28). It should be noted, however, that Lai's dislike of the teachers remained in the aspects of the teaching method and not of the teachers themselves. The *shared emotional connection* was still strong between the teachers and the students. For instance, the *shared valent event* recalled by Lai was that Chen and Wang both rewarded them when they performed well: Chen prepared handmade bread and Wang bought pizza for them. However, interestingly, these rewards were completely unrelated to the English language, but instead entirely related to English

scores. As for interaction among students, none seemed to have taken place.

Things were quite different in the EPT. Teachers utilized chances to make students speak in English, creating the *sense of belonging* to the English discussion or debating classroom environment. It is worth noticing that one clear difference between his SOC in school and in EPT lay in whether the context could stay stable at a certain extent. More specifically, it became much more difficult for a SOC to form under the constant change of English teachers at school (i.e., they had a new teacher every single year), as compared to the stable teaching and learning mode achieved by the EPT, where Lai decided to stay for five years. The *boundary* was evidently clearer and more stable at the EPT than at school, thus securing the *sense of belonging* of Lai.

Moreover, being in this EPT also influenced him to constantly keep track of international news, which Lai felt profoundly an authentic use of English. As evidenced in the excerpt, the *influence* of the English learning SOC in this EPT clearly shaped his image of how English should be learned, thus leading him to question the traditional ways still adopted by school teachers. Though Lai did not explicitly challenge the teacher at this stage, such actions from other classmates were present.

The *integration and fulfillment of needs* revealed in Lai's junior high school EPT was shown in his satisfaction with the use of English to be informed of international affairs. Most of his understanding of the world, as pointed out by Lai, was built in EPT instead of in school English classes. After all, the school classes "only followed the textbooks" (Interview #1-2, 2019-04-04). Lai was somehow aware that perhaps it was due to the pressure of having to teach all the units in the book that obstructed teachers from providing extra information or authentic English use. Lastly, the overall *shared emotional connection* was still strong in this EPT, though not as

strong as it was in the previous EPT, as the *duration of participation* changed from five days a week to only one day a week. Lai felt motivated in going to the EPT, for teachers there offered a different English learning environment where students could interact with each other in the various activities arranged by the teacher. Even during summer vacation, he still went to the EPT every week when other classmates were out having fun. He affirmed the EPT as an emotionally safe and academically helpful institute for his learning during this period.

Learner agency.

During this period of English learning, Lai's experiences revealed clear differences in learner agency as compared to that in the previous learning stage. He felt English becoming a subject to be tested on exams rather than a language to be used for communication. He discovered that this change was particularly true in school English classes, where his three respective teachers from Grade 7-9 expressed growing concerns for students' English academic performances. In EPT, on the other hand, though preparation for tests also became one of the foci, teachers still provided the environment for him to engage in authentic use of the language (e.g., using English to learn from international news or to debate). This gap evidently reflected the *spatially situated* nature of agency as mentioned in the CDST framework (Larsen-Freeman, 2019). This contextual difference sensed here by Lai also resonates with Larsen-Freeman's (2015) earlier claim that second language "acquisition" should be termed as second language "development", as "acquisition" sounds finite and often neglects the ever-changing, dynamic, developmental nature of language. Lai's reflections on his English learning experiences in school and at EPT may suggest that he was actually acquiring English at school, while developing English in the EPT.

Aside from the *spatial situatedness* of agency, the *temporal situatedness* was also present in this period. In the previous elementary period of English learning, Lai sensed a strong SOC in terms of *membership* and *shared emotional connections* particularly in the English-only EPT, which further enabled *emergent* agentic behaviors. Coming to this junior high school stage, Lai's interactive responses to the present English learning environments were mostly based on his past experiences, as he made constant comparisons with previous learning experiences where he gained confidence and exercised much agency. For instance, he compared his time of participation in the EPTs of the two stages, claiming that the decrease of participation time might have made it harder for a SOC to be developed. Lai was also aware that teachers at school in junior high school were much more concerned with their English "scores" than with their English "proficiency", subsequently neglecting the importance of having English spoken or used in class and treating it as a subject that was not much different from others.

In addition to the *spatial and temporal situatedness* of Lai's learner agency, it is discovered likewise, as found in the elementary English learning experiences, that agency is *relational*. However, there seemed to be counter-evidence on this aspect during the junior high school period, especially regarding experiences in formal education. As mentioned in the previous section, it was hard for a strong SOC to hold at school as Lai had three different English teachers during this period. In a similar way, it was thus difficult for Lai's learner agency to sustain due to such instability of "internal factors" within the system. The CDST framework discussed by Buhrman and Di Paolo (2017, p. 216) had it that "[agency] derives from the ways in which we establish, lose, and re-establish meaningful interactions between ourselves and our environment." The school English teachers, playing the important role of a source of

knowledge and potential interlocutor in this scenario, seemed to have changed too quickly even before a new set of meaningful relation can be established, as three of his school English teachers showed different attitudes towards English and lectured quite differently. Aside from internal factors, “external factors” also seemed to have shaped the process of Lai’s agency development. Pressure from other exam subjects and the lure to play computer games in his leisure time both distracted his attention on studying English. These external factors also interacted with Lai’s “English” learner agency during this stressful period of junior high school learning, showing that it is nearly impossible to view agency as separable elements.

Lastly, counter-evidence also seemed to appear regarding the emotional aspect of Lai’s experience during Grade 7-9, which corresponds to the *multi-dimensional* nature of learner agency. In elementary school English classes, there were only around 20 students per class. However, in Lai’s junior high school English classes, there were more than 40 students for the teacher to take care of. On the other hand, in both EPTs, there were fewer than 20 students in class. This difference in the number of students reflected the fact that students’ individual needs and emotions might not have been well taken care of in school. For instance, Lai mentioned that he and some classmates decided to nap in class due to a dislike towards Wang’s traditional lectures. However, the teacher had no time and effort to deal with these uncooperative participants and therefore neglected their actions and emotions. However, the small number of students in the EPT enabled the teachers to conduct adaptive teaching. For instance, one of the teachers even took Lai’s own personal investment in Model United Nations as class material and discussed in detail with him and other students.

In sum, it can be observed that the overall SOC and learner agency during the junior high in school weakened, probably due to the shift of teaching goals of the

teachers (and of the school) to have students achieve academic excellence instead of to learn the language. After all, schools would like students to have good grades on entrance exams and enter prestigious senior high schools so that these junior high schools could also have good reputations. Both external (e.g., other subjects and computer games) and internal (e.g., teaching goals, number of students, frequency of changing teachers) factors were evinced to have interactions with the learner's agency system.

English Learning Experience in the Senior High School Period

In formal education.

Entering the senior high school stage, another English teacher, Yang, was in charge of Lai's English classes. Yang's English class still followed traditional teaching procedures, lecturing on vocabulary, grammar, and reading through the textbook units. As Lai recalled, she provided lots of supplementary information aside from the textbook material for students, probably due to the need of exam preparation. Lectures aside, no group work or team discussion were present in Yang's English class. Though the teacher acted as the sole source of knowledge, students sometimes still chose to engage in their own business in class instead of listening to the teacher. Lai recalled that he was also one of the students who did their own things during English class. Yang's usual reaction to the students' distraction was to accept the situation and continue with her lectures: "Sometimes she would say, 'Lai, take out your textbook'. But if you didn't turn to the pages, she did nothing" (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04). Sometimes during their third year of study (Grade 12), as time got closer and closer to the GSAT, Yang even accepted students to get up and walk around dealing with their own business.

However, it was not that students did not like her. Yang was a teacher who loved engaging in small talks in class with students. Due to the small talks and the emotionally comfortable atmosphere, Lai expressed that students actually liked the teacher. In contrast to the English teachers in junior high school, Yang was not at all boring, thus attracting more students' attention. Sometimes if time allowed, she would play movies or songs in class to claim that her English class was not confined only to textbooks but was instead a "diversified" English class. However, during this stage, especially starting from the second semester of Grade 11, English classes had to focus on what was going to be tested, as English is one of the main subjects to be tested on the GSAT. Furthermore, aside from vocabulary, grammar, and reading, English essay writing was also important for senior high school students. However, Lai expressed his discontent with how it was practiced, describing how his teacher asked them to prepare an English interview for college entrance:

L: Like this time the topic was stupid, we did it last week. The topic was "your English interview during college interviews", and you're required to memorize the sample. The person [in the sample] is called Mike Chen, and he wants to apply for the Department of Medicine.

(Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04)

Lai felt dissatisfied about being forced by Yang to memorize a sample interview script of another imagined person. Thus, he decided not to follow the teacher this time.

L: So I thought, since I needed to write my own, I decided to write my own draft. I wrote my own interview there.

R: It's so boring to memorize a sample like this.

L: Yeah, really boring.

(Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04)

Surprisingly, as mentioned by Lai, some classmates decided to also follow his way of writing essays instead of memorizing samples. They resisted the teacher's rules of the game, but they still got their scores. He also remembered that many times when he tried to understand the nuances between some vocabulary words, Yang only demanded him to use the particular word that she taught instead of explaining their differences. He understood this situation as the teacher "not fully understanding the words herself" (Interview #2-3, 2019-12-28).

During the discussion of this period of English class, Lai mentioned several times about the pressure of being reminded by the teacher that they were "senior high school students" (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04), meaning that they needed to be more diligent. Such reminder, he recalled, made him aware that he has the responsibility to study hard and reach a higher level of academic performance. He said that Yang also reminded him that "learning is necessary, but as long as you get a high score, it doesn't matter that much as to how you achieved such a goal" (Interview #2-3, 2019-12-28). "Intangible stress" and "competition" were frequently sensed during this period, causing everyone to study on their own pace towards respective goals. He felt that classmates "did their own things" in English class and "pursued personal growth in exam scores" (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04), instead of learning English together.

In non-formal education.

The EPT experience of Lai at this stage was quite different from that in the

previous two, as he solely had NNESTs as teachers and focused a lot more on school subject matters. Lai said that he changed to a new EPT in Grade 12 because “many classmates also went to this cram school, which sounded pretty good” (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04). By “good”, he further explained that after his experience in it, he found it “good in helping you get to a good university, but it may not be suitable for everyone” (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04). Every class of this EPT started first by a mock exam of the GSAT, writing the essay first for half an hour and leaving the remaining 50 minutes for multiple choice (MC) questions. The essays would be checked by teachers outside the classrooms during the 50 minutes while the students were working on MC questions. Then, after the test time, an answer book would be handed to all students, and the teachers would step onto the stage and provide “tons of supplementary knowledge for [students]” (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04). Class with a total of 300 to 500 students repeatedly went on like this every day, but Lai only had time to attend it once a week on Wednesday evening from 6:00 to 10:30 p.m. Every time before going to class, he remembered, he had to “take a deep breath” and “get under arms” (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04) for the battle ahead.

It was not only the content taught that created such tense he felt but the whole environment contributed to the anxiety. Lai said that nearly all students stayed at their seats during the entire four hours with high pressure, and when the restroom was necessary they “flew to the restroom” (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04), for fear that they might have missed something important that the teacher said. On the walls of the corridor to the restroom, posters of those who applied successfully to top universities were posted everywhere. All the students participating in that EPT were potential competitors in the GSAT exam, so no interaction was present since everyone strove for their own goals. Every week there would be a list of the top-200 scoring students

placed at the bulletin board. Lai recalled that he had been on it once, and it motivated him “because it was really hard to be on it, so when you worked hard and your name was on it, you would feel a sense of achievement, though [it happened to me] only once” (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04).

Even amid such tense atmosphere, Lai made some rather positive remarks on his teacher, Zhang, at this EPT. According to Lai, Zhang “memorized the past exam questions so clearly that he can tell you which question appeared in which exam [in which year]” (Interview #2-3, 2019-12-28). He also designed the mock exam questions all by himself, incorporating some current affairs in the news or social issues in the questions in order to make the test closer to real life. Lai was also impressed on the way Zhang taught English writing, comparing to what he felt at school:

It’s also about memorizing vocabulary, but I think his (Zhang’s) teaching is fun, and I think that ‘Wow, he can make an essay so elegant.’ I think what he wrote was elegant and brilliant, and not just memorizing vocabulary for filling blanks [in tests]: this word, this meaning, [choose] A, and then nothing. He tries to explain, very beautifully, the different strength of [different vocabulary] words.

(Interview #2-3, 2019-12-28)

When asked about whether the teacher’s high proficiency inspired Lai to learn English, Lai replied that “I only wanted to make the grades higher so that I can get onto the top-200 list” (Interview #1-3, 2019-04-04). During the second phase of interview of this study, when he had already begun his first semester in university, he told the researcher that he ended his studies at this EPT after high school graduation.

Preliminary Sectional Interpretation of the Senior High School Period

Sense of community.

The SOC in both formal and non-formal educational contexts seemed to have diminished or even disappeared during the senior high school period. Students endeavored for their individual goals, mostly grades, while teachers, under extreme pressure of putting their students into good universities, also strengthened the test-oriented nature of teaching and learning. It is revealed that from elementary school to junior and senior high school period, the role of academic performance or test grades became more and more prominent.

From the facet of *membership*, it is seen that though the teacher at school created an *emotionally safe* environment for students, that successful attempt was not connected to English, but instead was used for casual chitchatting. She also created a flexible physical space for students, allowing them to move around sometimes. However, such flexibility only stayed at the level of freedom of the physical body instead of being utilized for teaching purposes (e.g., group work or classroom discussion). Therefore, Lai and his classmates did not feel a *sense of belonging* to the English class and constantly ignored the teacher's progress of learning and focused on personal objectives. As for *influence*, patterns similar with the previous stage appeared. Lai's *uniformity* towards the conventional essay writing practice exemplified this influence. He considered the designated way of essay writing meaningless, and attempted to break the rules and try his own method of learning. His behavior also had an impact on other classmates as mentioned in the previous section. Lai successfully exerted his *influence* on his classmates in this perspective. This resistance and *uniformity* (instead of *conformity*) can also be viewed as a *common*

symbol system of students towards the unlikeable method.

For *integration and fulfillment of needs*, Lai also sensed that because of his essay writing technique, he perceived himself as having a higher achievement than some other classmates. However, even with classmates modelling his method, he still did not sense the SOC, perhaps because the effect was minimal, and most of the class members still focused merely on grades instead on English learning. The teacher, on the other hand, only relied on lectures to fulfill test-taking needs, and the constructive nature of an English learning environment was not created at all. Lastly, the *shared emotional connection* in the classroom remained superficial, i.e., only in terms of interpersonal harmony and not of English-related events or interactions. The teacher, Yang, seemed to have underutilized her easygoing personality and communicative capabilities with English teaching and learning. Students thus chose to invest on their own, resulting in minimum or no interaction in English classes at school.

The SOC portrayed in the EPT experience in this period, on the other hand, was a different image from that in formal education. In terms of *membership*, the *sense of belonging* remained low since everyone was learning for their own sake and people that surrounded Lai were all potential competitors. However, while *emotional safety* remained high at school, it was low in EPT due to the nervousness created by the people, the hallway, the top-200 list, and the tense atmosphere. In addition, the physical *boundaries* were more fixed, since the three to five hundred students had to sit in fixed rowed seats and listen to the teacher's instructions. Second, *influence* in this EPT seemed to remain unidirectional, as students *conformed* almost totally with the teacher. Hence, only the teacher, in this case the community leader, may have some *influence* on the individual learners listening to his lectures.

Third, the *integration and fulfillment of needs* were low. As Lai stated, he

went to this EPT only to learn how to do well on tests. Therefore, Lai sensed no need for integration and identifying himself as belonging or not belonging to this community. The mission in this EPT was only phased, and thus would terminate (and later on did terminate) after the GSAT. Lastly, though Lai personally liked the way the EPT teacher taught very much, due to the large class size, interaction became nearly impossible. They also did not have time for *valent events* of mutual contact, for everyone who attended that EPT had the common goal of boosting their own English grades. Interestingly, the EPT did use means to honor students (e.g., the top-200 list and the posters on the hallway), but Lai, though motivated, felt pressured upon seeing these stimuli.

In short, though the SOC might seem diminishing in senior high school based on the evidence discussed above, there seemed to be another type of SOC here, shaped by the dynamic interactions between the stressful environment and the self-consciousness of students. Though no clear physical interactions or meaningful English-related activities happened in class, Lai continued to work hard towards similar goals with all other students: pursuing high academic achievements of the English subject.

Learner agency.

In the senior high school period of English learning, results showed that Lai had to face the challenges ahead of him: the GSAT. In the previous section when the SOC in both contexts were discussed, the trend of a weakening SOC is clear, as English became merely a subject to be treated instead of a language to be used. Minimized interaction is described in his experiences, replaced by individual efforts to meet the academic goals. In such case, agency can again be seen as *relational*: It

appeared to be a “loss” of meaningful interactions with others instead of an “establishment” of such. From an ecological perspective, as discussed in the CDST framework (Larsen-Freeman, 2019), Lai’s learner agency is shaped by the altering of the affordance in his learning environments, both in formal and non-formal education. In formal education, teachers were under high pressure to get students well-prepared for the GSAT in order to enter good universities, resulting in the fact that all teaching and learning activities were purely related to test preparation. As for the non-formal education Lai attended in this period, it is in essence an exam-oriented EPT institution. Hence, the goals were not as those he attended previously, but were set to make students excellent test takers. In short, Lai thus perceived such contextual changes and gradually found no chance to establish meaningful relations with English learning, finally leading to a lowering learner agency.

Under this circumstance, the aspect of an *emergent* agency is again proved to be true but in a reversed way, i.e., agency is actually diminishing. As Lai discovered no more chances for the communicative functions of English to be performed, his perceptions of English as a subject deepened, making it harder for him to find the once emergent, change-bringing aspect of the English language.

Aside from these recurring perspectives of learner agency, in this period in formal education, Lai occasionally chose not to conform to the rules that he perceived as meaningless (e.g., not writing like the sample essay but instead creating his own) or tried to question deeper than what the teacher cared to answer in order to understand more about English (e.g., asking about the nuances of word usage). In terms of CDST approach, Lai’s attempt could be regarded as *co-adaptation* to the teacher’s rules and lectures. However, it is found that his teacher at school gave minimum responses to his inquiries or attempts. The significance of such interaction is that in order for

agency to form, it is not enough for the learner himself to be agentive, but the interlocutors (most frequently the English teacher) have to be responsive to the learner, which was in fact what Lai sensed the teacher in EPT was doing. Though also under exam-preparation pressures, the EPT teacher Zhang still tried to respond to Lai if he had questions. Hence, it can be concluded that though under similar exam pressure, it can still be of the teacher's personal will and effort to decide to be mutually interacting with the participant or not.

In sum, as the SOC's in both formal and non-formal education seemed to have diminished in the senior high school period, the learner agency during this stage experienced similar changes. The learner agency observed in formal education appeared to have reduced to an even larger extent than that in the exam-oriented non-formal EPT institution.

Lai's Final Remarks on his English Learning Journey

In the final part of the second phase of interview, the researcher asked Lai to describe what he thought about his overall English learning journey. He described that originally when entering the English-only EPT, he was extremely against it, but then he forced himself to get involved in the English speaking community and gradually gained interest. In junior high school, the curve of likeness towards English stayed roughly at the same level, with fluctuations owing to the coming and going of exams. As for later on in senior high school, he still tried to keep himself motivated watching English movies on his own. Finally, Lai mentioned that the most significant event of the whole journey was his active participation in his first EPT, where he conquered his fear and discovered the usefulness of English. The good teachers there also helped him a lot in bringing him into the world of English. Now as he studies in university,

he still misses the English-only EPT he attended in the elementary school period the most, for during that time, he was most confident and comfortable using English to learn and to communicate.



CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion and Implications

In this chapter, three major themes regarding the participant's 12-year English learning experiences in both formal and non-formal education are discussed. Such cross-sectional analyses aim to probe further into what lie behind these dynamic and contextual changes of SOC and learner agencies, as presented in the previous chapter.

Cross-sectional Analysis

I teach, therefore you learn: Unidirectional lecturing seems to dominate the English learning journey.

Through Lai's English learning experience in different stages and contexts, it is evident that teachers seem to be the most significant, or sometimes even the dominant, person in the English classrooms. Several times when asked about his own learning experience in either formal or non-formal education, Lai's direct responses was to describe who the teacher was and what kind of teacher he or she was. Despite such fact, his experiences still revealed different types of interaction between the teacher and the student. For instance, teachers in his first English-only EPT chose to teach in a rather interactive way, making Lai feel engaged in the high level of SOC and discovering the practical use of English. The fact that teachers sat alongside with students instead of standing in front at the podium also lessened Lai's fear of speaking English and fostered the growth of confidence. Lai's learner agency was also highest during the elementary school period in EPT, as meaningful interactions took place between teachers, peers, and himself through the authentic use of English. However, as shown in most episodes of his English classes (not only in formal education, but

also in non-formal contexts like his last exam-oriented EPT), most teachers opted for the traditional method of unidirectional lecturing using Chinese on the stage. Such a mode of lecturing clearly barred a high degree of English learning SOC to form between students, as minimum or even none interaction was allowed.

In addition, regarding the issue of *who* the teachers are, it can be found that in Lai's English learning experiences, both NESTs and NNESTs play a role. In the first English-only EPT, all of the teachers were NESTs, thus successfully creating an English-speaking community for Lai and enhancing his learner agency. However, as the two other stages of his experiences reveal, the existence of NESTs in the classroom may only account for one of the many elements that shaped his learning experience. For instance, at school during the first year of junior high school, his NEST Amy were not successful in creating an English learning environment, perhaps owing to the curriculum constraints. On the other hand, in his other EPT experiences, both native Taiwanese NNESTs, Kao and Zhang, used their own ways to make him engaged in English learning (e.g., integrating international news into curriculum or explaining the nuances of certain synonymic vocabulary). The fact that Lai viewed the two NNESTs as successful language learning models to imitate goes in line with previous studies that revealed having similar learning experiences and linguistic similarity with the learners could be advantageous (Ellis, 2002; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Ma, 2012). In short, it can only be said that though NESTs provide an image of a "standard" English learning environment, it still depends on how the teachers arrange their classroom activities and what kind of SOC is created between the teachers and students so that the learner may feel engaged and agentic.

Lastly, in most cases under the two types of contexts, it is found that unidirectional lecturing hinders the interactive contribution peers can create in Lai's

learning experiences. Under such lecturing mode, SOC remained low or superficial, as shown in Lai's high school experiences, and his learner agency also weakened. As seen particularly in formal education starting from junior high school, several teachers preferred a quiet classroom in order to lecture smoothly. The only few chances for Lai to speak English were when the teachers asked him to answer questions, which still neglected the interactive role of peers. Peer interaction only seems to take place in his first and second EPT experience, where teachers and peers were, to Lai, a more equal status and thus making him feel easier speaking up. From his final reflections, it can be observed that such an experience of speaking up was very important to him, not only opening the door to his English learning journey but also up to this date, was regarded as an exemplar for English learning experiences. Hence, through Lai's experiences, it seems that though teachers dominated his English learning journey, he still believed that a more interactive English-speaking environment, with a SOC created between the teachers, his peers and himself, was where he actually achieved agency through meaningful engagement using English.

Play hard, then work hard: English slowly fades out in English class as credentialism fades in.

In Lai's English learning experiences, the existence of English, or the frequency of English used in the classroom, gradually diminished through time. In the elementary school period EPT, teachers used a lot of English in class both for classroom instructions and for content materials. During this period of English learning, a strong SOC was established, which made Lai feel being an English learner like everybody else in the class. Hence, Lai felt very much engaged in this playful environment learning the "language".

However, later on when he entered junior high school, the intangible stress of exams grew larger. This can be clearly identified in the episodes starting from this period (junior high), especially in the formal education aspect of his English learning experience. As test pressure rose, teachers used more time lecturing on textbook units and making sure students comprehended correctly in order to get good grades. Thus, most of Lai's teachers, starting from junior high school, chose Chinese as the language of instruction to keep up with the teaching progress, subsequently neglecting the importance of a SOC in the classroom. Students, aside from having little English input, also had really few chances of English output, except when answering the teacher's questions. Nonetheless, as Lai recalled, if he answered the teacher's questions incorrectly, he would get scolded. Teachers in this period put strong emphasis only on whether students had good grades on tests, making the lectures very intense. In addition, in senior high school, Lai's teacher also cared only about the final results instead of how they learn English in class. In the EPT during this stage, Lai also mentioned the tense atmosphere of learning, as everyone sitting in the classroom were potential competitors instead of partners for the same entrance exam, the GSAT. Thus, it is clear that to Lai, English became a "subject" to be dealt with and not a "language" to be learned and used in real life anymore, and there was less SOC. This reflects on the previous issue of teachers dominating the English classrooms: the learner's will of learning English became replaced by the teacher's will of making them excellent English test takers, which also shows that the learner agency of individual learners was often disregarded.

Such a phenomenon can presumably be traced back to two underlying reasons. Firstly, there exists deep rooted credentialism in the Taiwanese learning environment. In fact, from one of the main proposals of the 1994 Educational Reform in Taiwan,

“universal establishment of high schools and universities”, it is clear that educational backgrounds are highly valued (Chan & Lin, 2015). However, since then, competition for university admission has only become fiercer, not less. Students are still pursuing high grades in order to enter well-known, high-ranking universities. This situation goes partly in line with Liu’s (2012) Taiwanese cram school study, which found that students purposefully attend after-school cram schools in pursuit of higher grades. However, in Lai’s experiences, not only did his non-formal education experiences in high school reflected such a phenomenon, but his English learning in formal education also valued academic achievements highly. Hence, a second potential reason needs to be discussed below.

Probing deeper into the nature of Lai’s formal education, the fact that Lai’s six years of high school studies happened in a private high school may have some significance. Recalling the Educational Reform in 1994, another result of it was the emergence of private schools, both secondary and tertiary. As the emergence of these private schools was subjected to the competitive game of social demand and supply, they need to think of ways to attract students to enroll. Recently, as the problem of a low fertility rate in Taiwan intensifies, private secondary schools begin to gain parents’ attention, for they often impose stricter rules to maintain students’ disciplines, set longer learning hours for students, and try to make students get into high-ranking universities. Therefore, such nature of private high schools under free market competition might explain why credentialism creeps in not only in non-formal education but also in its formal counterpart.

In sum, as time came closer to the GSAT, Lai’s teachers focused more and more on grades, and Lai also felt immense pressure in becoming a smart test taker. Under this circumstance, especially as Lai attended a private high school and later an

exam-oriented EPT, the pressure of credentialism loomed in and forcefully dispersed the English learning SOC's and the motivation of learning the English language. It is thus evinced that “play hard” in English might only be possible in the elementary school period, as the main goal during high school periods mostly shifted to “work hard”.

Studying knows no limit: The multiple relationships of formal and non-formal education revealed.

Though Lai's single-case experience might not be able to represent all school-aged English learners in the Taiwanese context, his English learning experience throughout the 12 years in both contexts may in fact shed some light on the relationship between different educational contexts. While Lai had continuously been studying under the “school + EPT” formula, the relationships between English formal and non-formal education did not always remain the same. Therefore, in this section, three types of relationship between the two educational contexts in Lai's English learning journey are identified and discussed. Table 1 below illustrates the three kinds of relationships and their linkage to the two theoretical frameworks based on the data and interpretations of the present study.

Table 1: Relationship between formal and non-formal education during the three periods and supporting details based on the SOC framework (McMillan & Chavis, 1986) and the CDST view of learner agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019)

Period of study	Relationship between formal (F) and non-formal (NF) education	Key interpretations of the two theoretical frameworks through Lai's English learning experiences		
		Sense of Community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986)	CDST view of learner agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019)	
Elementary school (Grade 1-6)	Formal and non-formal education are mutually supportive and complementary to each other	<p>Membership: Strong membership of English co-built through the common symbol system of English use and high emotional safety (F & NF)</p> <p>Influence: Community to individual (NF) and individual to community (F) both found</p> <p>Integration and fulfillment of needs: Higher status felt (F) as confidence was built (NF)</p> <p>Shared emotional connection: Both English-related rewards (NF) and non-English-related ones (F) took place</p>	<p>Agency is emergent: English found to be useful as it can be used to make friends (NF)</p> <p>Agency is relational: Teachers acted as important interlocutors with the learner and established meaningful relationships using English (F & NF)</p> <p>Agency can be achieved: An English speaking and using environment enabled the learner to achieve agency (NF)</p> <p>Agency is multi-dimensional: Intrapersonal aspect taken care of (NF)</p>	Agency is heterarchical: No single element seemed to gain priority over another, and different components interact with each other in a non-linear manner
Junior high school (Grade 7-9)	Formal education becomes the core while non-formal education becomes only supplementary	<p>Membership: Sense of belonging maintained via English discussion and debates (NF)</p> <p>Influence: Uniformity grew as the learner made efforts on individual goals (F)</p> <p>Integration and fulfillment of needs: International competence obtained in English-using environment (NF)</p> <p>Shared emotional connection: Shared valent events became unrelated to English use but only to English grades (F)</p>	<p>Agency is temporally situated: Interactive responses to the present contexts were based on past experiences (F & NF)</p> <p>Agency is spatially situated: Difference of developing English (NF) and acquiring English (F) felt</p> <p>Agency is relational: Frequent change of teachers blocked the establishment of meaningful relationships (F)</p> <p>Agency is multi-dimensional: Much more effort was devoted in instruction than in other aspects (F)</p>	

(continued)

Table 1 (cont.)

Period of study	Relationship between formal (F) and non-formal (NF) education	Key interpretations of the two theoretical frameworks through Lai's English learning experiences	
Senior high school (Grade 10-12)	Formal and non-formal education operates in a parallel way towards the same goal	Sense of Community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986)	CDST view of learner agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019)
		<p>Membership: Low sense of belonging and membership of English as learners worked on individual goals (F & NF)</p> <p>Influence: Unidirectional lecturing obstructed community influence to individuals or vice versa to happen (F & NF)</p> <p>Integration and fulfillment of needs: Only academic needs taken care of (F & NF)</p> <p>Shared emotional connection: Extremely low or even no interaction under exam-oriented learning (F & NF)</p>	<p>Agency is relational: Loss of meaningful interactions of English as affordance degraded (F & NF)</p> <p>Agency is emergent: Function of English limited as English became a subject (F & NF)</p> <p>Agency changes through iteration and co-adaptation: Minimum (F) and elaborate (NF) responses from teachers regarding learner's inquiries created different agentic behaviors</p>

In the elementary school period, teachers in both contexts took care of both the students' emotional and learning needs, thus creating a supportive English learning environment. Having confidence built in EPT, Lai found himself to be in a higher status in school, thus exerting influence in the school English classroom. Such a membership of an English-using community can be said to be co-built by the two contexts. Therefore, from a more holistic perspective, after learning at school, Lai's EPT scaffolds what was already established, and vice versa. Moreover, this string of learning process during this stage not only took care of the academic side but also ensured the development of the intrapersonal side (e.g., the emotional safety while learning the new language English). This kind of mutual supportiveness of the two educational contexts adds to the "symbiotic" nature of formal and non-formal education (Mori & Baker, 2010) discussed in past research, which then claimed only the mutual reliance of growth between formal and non-formal education from a neo-institutional viewpoint. In addition, Lai's experience in this primary period clearly shows that learner agency can be achieved once perceiving such mutually supportive environments and establishing meaningful relationships with teachers and peers.

In the junior high school period, the time spent in English formal education increased while in non-formal education, Lai participated in it only once a week. Aside from the difference in the duration of participation, formal education also seemed to have become the core of learning, due to an overall exam-oriented pursuit. His EPT during this stage acted as an "extra" opportunity of learning, which is different from the previous period when both contexts mutually support each other in multiple aspects. Though Lai clearly felt motivated and engaged in learning in this second EPT, he nonetheless had to face the reality of exam pressures, which forced him to position school English classes to a more central position in his life. Therefore,

the relationship between formal and non-formal education during this period can be viewed as EPT being “supplementary” to school English classes, which goes in line with Bray’s (2009) idea of non-formal education as supplementary. Additionally, while formal education gradually shaped Lai into a good English test-taker, non-formal education still endeavored to make English practically useful through the formation of SOC. Perceiving such spatial situatedness, Lai’s generally lowering learner agency during this period also seemed to have two diverted varieties under the two contexts, as have been discussed in the previous chapter.

The third kind of relationship between formal and non-formal education in Lai’s experience emerges in the senior high school period. Nearly no interaction existed between the two contexts except that they both had a common goal to boost the learners’ academic performances. English classes in both the school and the EPT worked towards the same goal but operated differently and independently. This is unlike the relationship in the first period, where the high learner agency shaped by the strong SOC in the EPT could have an impact on Lai’s learning in school. Moreover, as the pressure of credentialism reaches its peak due to the approach of the GSAT, the multi-dimensional nature of learning was simplified to focusing merely on English grades. Lai and his classmates in both contexts were not simply peers but also competitors, which indeed created a stressful atmosphere of learning. Such a relationship resembles “shadow education” mentioned by several past studies (Bray, 2009; Mori & Baker, 2010). However, Lai’s experience showed that the shadow of his EPT outgrew school English classes. As seen previously, Lai’s school English teacher explained little and focused much on grades, while his EPT teacher, though striving for the same goal of exam preparation for students, still tried to make him learn instead of just to memorize. Recalling Dawson’s (2010) claim that formal

education may ironically be ending up shadowing non-formal education, the present study evidenced through qualitative data that these possible relationships can exist under the term “shadow education”, regarding the role of the shadow and the object, and how the process of shadowing happens and changes.

Together we can learn so much: SOC's do interact and shape learner's agency.

Based on the foregoing examinations of the learner's SOC's and learner agency, the SOC's formed in the participant's English learning experience is mutually interactive with his learner agency. In the elementary school period in both contexts, for instance, the strong *membership* created within the communities and the bidirectional *influence* (i.e., community to individual and vice versa) reflected the *relational* and *achievable* aspect of learner agency of the CDST framework. Being a part of the English-using community (*membership*; *achievable*), Lai found English useful as meaningful relations were co-constructed between his teachers, peers, and himself (*influence*; *relational*). In junior high school formal education, as *shared emotional connections* became related with English grades instead of English use, the *multi-dimensional* nature of agency also degraded into only focusing on academic needs. On the other hand, Lai's agency of English was sustained by the SOC built in non-formal education, where teachers still utilized classroom discussion and activities. Lastly, in the senior high school period, community or peer *influence* became totally obstructed as teachers adopted an authoritative mode of lecturing. Thus, the *iteration and co-adaptation* aspect of agency was challenged while the *emergent* and *relational* features of agency faded.

Such significance of a SOC in classrooms were also found in Brown's (2009) study in self-instructional situations, where online learners discovered the helpfulness

of a SOC in enhancing learner's agency. In addition, Mercer's (2019) "relatedness" component of classroom engagement highlights the importance of a sense of belonging students need to have in classrooms and a positive classroom dynamic that should be fostered by teaching activities.

Theoretical Implications

Drawing on McMillan and Chavis's (1986) SOC framework from a micro point of view, this study found that the *duration of participation*, which was originally vaguely identified only in the attribute *shared emotional connection*, is indeed important in building the *membership* and *influence* of a learner's SOC. As from a more macro point of view, this study exemplified the possibility for different SOC's (e.g., the SOC's in the two educational contexts) to jointly interact and shape a learner's learner agency. Though the contexts might not have direct interactions, through the learner's experiences and changes, it is clearly seen that these SOC's in formal and non-formal education did have an impact on how the learner portrayed English learning and continued with his English learning journey.

Regarding the Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) framework of learner agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019), this study manifested the heterarchical and multi-dimensional nature through the participant's English learning experiences. No single element seemed to have dominating impact on the learner's agency formation. Rather, all aspects were found to be interrelated and inseparable from one another. For instance, the *achievability* of agency was related to the *relational* aspect, concerning the teachers, resources, and peers. Furthermore, these characteristics could also be connected to the *spatial and temporal situatedness* of agency. Moreover, the constantly changing nature of learner agency is also confirmed, which resonates past

studies which claimed that agency is not fixed but rather dynamic (Mercer, 2012).

Culturally contextualized conditions such as credentialism also evinced that within the learner's own agency system, there exist ideologies that may be operating.

It should also be added that although the framework aimed to be comprehensive, the definitions of individual elements nonetheless remained obscure to a certain extent. In such a case and through the examination of this study, qualitative data is shown to be significant as it brings meaningful substance into each element and renders possible dynamic reinterpretations. Pedagogical suggestions will be raised in the next chapter.





CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Summary of Major Findings

This qualitative case study investigated a Taiwanese learner's SOC and learner agency in both formal and non-formal education contexts throughout his 12 years of English learning experience. Regarding the first research question on a sense of community (SOC), it is seen that in the elementary school period of English learning, especially in the EPT, teachers seemed to be more capable and willing to create SOC in classrooms. However, as time passed by and the pressure of credentialism rose, from the junior high school to senior high school stages, teachers, particularly in formal education and the last exam-oriented EPT, chose to focus more on academic performances instead of creating a sense of an English learning community. Under such a change of goals and thus a SOC shift, the teachers' language of instruction, mode of lecturing, attitude towards the learner, and the overall interactions in English classes also altered subsequently, making the learner feel farther away from being an English learner. These SOC's furthermore shaped the learner's agentic behaviors in the different stages, which were addressed by answering the second research question.

For the second research question on learner agency, it is found that in the elementary school period, as SOC's are comparatively high in both contexts, the learner felt agentic and thus motivated and engaged in learning and using the language. In this period, English was not a test subject but rather a language for communication and making friends. In the junior high school period, his learner agency began to disappear as the SOC's in both contexts also lowered. The dropping frequency of communication via the language and the rising pressure of exams and

credentialism jointly contributed to such phenomenon. Nonetheless, situated differences were sensed between formal and non-formal education as teachers conducted classes differently. In the senior high school period, his learner agency reduced even more in formal education than in non-formal education, since little English-related interaction took place in between the teacher and the learner.

Lastly, it is also evidenced that through the participant's English learning experiences, a variety of relationships exist between the two educational contexts. The traditional binary of "formal education" and "non-formal education" from a pure social or neo-institutional view may have simplified the issue. The interactions that take place in between the two contexts should not be neglected or viewed as static. Rather, through a qualitative examination of the learning experiences of a learner, a more holistic image of such dynamism and complexity is portrayed.

Pedagogical Suggestions

Pedagogically, the results of this study suggested that in order to enhance learner agency in English classrooms, an environment of a high degree of SOC may be helpful. Recalling the high learner agency during the participant's early stage of English learning, it is suggested that teachers in both formal and non-formal education can organize a participatory environment to enable the formation of *membership* and enhance multidirectional *influence*. Under such an environment, all participants should *integrate and fulfill learning needs* while constructing positive *shared emotional connections* in order to facilitate agentic learning experiences. Echoing the three values of the 12-year Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines in Taiwan (2018), i.e., "spontaneity, interaction, and common good", the aforementioned suggestion appears to be a useful guideline for teachers to follow.

Addressing the aims of the new Curriculum Guidelines, it is also suggested that teachers utilize more cooperative learning approaches to engage peer communication and interaction in English, as an English-using environment was found to be essential to the learner's perceptions and thus learner agency of English. However, when encountering the realities and constraints caused by the entrance examination systems, it is likely that the high SOC learning environments and the highly agentic learners might not be able to appear, as was what happened during the later stages of the participant's experience. Facing such a situation, educators in both formal and non-formal education should take even more care of the subtle elements that are easily neglected during the fierce pursuit of academic excellence, such as the learners' emotions or motivations towards learning the language. Lastly, it is manifested in Lai's story that English learning SOC's could hardly be formed in large-sized classrooms. Therefore, corresponding to the low fertility rate in Taiwan, the "problem" of a smaller class size might alternatively become a chance for teachers to promote more frequent classroom interactions and develop English-using SOC's.

Lastly, scarce or even none interactions and understandings between the two education contexts were observed from the data of the present study. Therefore, this study also purports that, once the two educational contexts have a chance to recognize each other better (e.g., by sharing an education plan or schedule, or even better by keeping a profile of the learner), their teaching goals, classroom activities, or even materials can also become mutually supportive.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The current study aimed at providing a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of an English learner's learning experience in the Taiwanese formal and non-formal

educational contexts; however, several limitations need to be recognized. First, it should be noted that data in the current study comes from a single participant. Moreover, data were exclusively collected from the interviews with the participant. Although these interview data were collected over a long period of time and the researcher has made all efforts to derive useful insights and implications and to guard the trustworthiness of the study, future studies are suggested to collect data from multiple sources (e.g., written narratives, oral interviews with the participant and other important persons, classroom observations, or learning materials etc.). Teachers, peers, or parents might all provide useful information for crystallization. Secondly, learning experiences of more participants can also be included for potential opportunities of comparison and contrast in cross-case analyses.

Though generalizations may be difficult due to such contextualized nature of this study, future studies can continue exploring different aspects or themes observed in this study. Despite focusing entirely on learning performances, future studies are also encouraged to incorporate psychological aspects of learners in order to portray a more comprehensive view of English learning. In addition, through detailed descriptions of specific English learning contexts in both formal and non-formal education in this study, other spatial (e.g., private or public schools) or temporal (e.g., the tertiary stage) elements emerged and remained an interesting issue to be explored. Furthermore, studies can also investigate more specifically into how underlying cultural backgrounds or ideologies existing in the society might act upon the SOC and learner agencies of a learner.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol (the First Phase)

The following protocol is formulated by the framework of a sense of community by McMillan & Chavis (1986). Questions encompassed the four elements (i.e., *membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs*, and *shared emotional connection*) of the framework, hoping not only to obtain more detailed information on the four aspects, but to identify interaction between the elements and between the senses of community created in formal and non-formal educational contexts of the Taiwanese English learner. The two topic domains below capture formal and non-formal education experiences of English learning respectively.

Topic Domain One: English education in formal education (i.e., elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school)

Lead-off question:

我們就先從小學／國中／高中階段開始，可以請你回想並描述一下那時候課堂上英文課的狀況嗎？

[Covert categories: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection]

Follow-up questions:

1. General Background:

- 1.1. 英文老師都選什麼教材教呢？老師怎麼上課？同學跟你對老師的教學曾有什麼反應？
- 1.2. 英文老師授課的語言是中文還是英文？
- 1.3. 綜合在這個階段英文課上課的經驗，你最（不）喜歡英文課的什麼呢？
- 1.4. 你能回想在這個階段英語對當時的你來說是甚麼嗎？
- 1.5. 能不能用一句話形容在這個階段在學校學習英文的感覺？
- 1.6. 請問有沒有什麼是你還想跟我們分享的，或是你覺得很重要但是我們沒有問到的？

2. Membership:

- 2.1. 這個階段的英文課有分班上嗎？同學跟平常上課一樣嗎？英文課時的座位是如何安排的呢？(boundaries: physical)
- 2.2. 那在英文課的時候，你們會分小組嗎？跟小組同學感情如何？有沒有跟小組或很好的同學一起共事的經驗？(boundaries: emotional)
- 2.3. 你在上英文課時心情通常如何呢？那是否曾經有心情特別不一樣/波動的時候？是什麼狀況呢？(emotional safety)
- 2.4. 你自己覺得你是在班上的英文學習社群中嗎，無論是實體上或是

- 心情上？為什麼會有這樣的想法呢？(sense of belonging and identification)
- 2.5. 你可以分享看看，在上英文課時主動提問或付出努力的經驗嗎？那你覺得你提問或付出之後，對於自己在團隊中的角色有沒有不一樣的想法？(personal investment)
- 2.6. 你在上英文課時，跟同學有沒有一些默契或你們共用的語言？(common symbol system)
- 2.7. 跟上一個階段比起來，你覺得在組織情感或認同上，有增進或減少嗎？為什麼會這樣覺得？
3. Influence:
- 3.1. 你覺得這個階段的英語學習社群對你有什麼樣的影響？無論時老師、同學或教學內容，對你有什麼樣的影響？(community to individual)
- 3.2. 那回想你在這樣的團體影響之下，你通常都是符合規範還是挑戰體制，實際作為或心情上？(conformity/ uniformity)
- 3.3. 那你覺得你自己對這個英語學習社群有什麼樣的影響？(individual to community)
- 3.4. 跟上一個階段比起來，你覺得你對英語學習社群（或英語學習社群對你）的影響有什麼不同嗎？有變大或變小嗎？為什麼？
4. Integration and fulfillment of needs:
- 4.1. 作為這個英語學習群體的一份子，你有什麼感覺（歸屬感或疏離感）、對自己有什麼角色定位？為什麼？(status)
- 4.2. 在這個團體之內，有沒有競爭的關係？這樣的關係對你身為這個群體的一份子有什麼影響？(competence)
- 4.3. 你覺得這個階段的英語學習社群有達成你的需求嗎？是否有讓你更想成為這個群體的一份子，或是沒有？為什麼呢？(need fulfillment)
- 4.4. 跟上一個階段比起來，你認為自己是否有更想融入這個英語學習社群？為什麼會或不會呢？
5. Shared emotional connection:
- 5.1. 在這個學習階段的英語學習群體中，同學互動頻繁嗎？(contact hypothesis) 跟同學的這些互動中，有正向互動（如合作、良性競爭等）或是負面互動（如爭執、惡性競爭等）嗎？(quality of interaction)
- 5.2. 師生之間的互動又是如何進行呢？(quality of interaction)
- 5.3. 課堂間會一起完成一些任務嗎？(closure of events)
- 5.4. 有沒有跟課堂中的學習群體一起經歷過一些重大的事件或特別的體驗？(shared valent event hypothesis)
- 5.5. 你在課堂中或課後有沒有在學校的英文學習上有任何投入？(investment)

- 5.6. 你在學校的英文課堂有沒有被獎勵或懲罰的經驗？(effect of honor and humiliation on community members)
- 5.7. 對於這個階段的英文學習群體，你認為有沒有一種強烈的情感聯繫？(spiritual bond)
- 5.8. 跟上一個階段比起來，你覺得在英文課的互動或情感建立方面有什麼不同嗎？怎麼說？

Topic Domain Two: English education in non-formal education (i.e., the three different EPT institutes)

Lead-off question:

我們就先從第一個補習班開始談起，當初怎麼會去補這個補習班呢？

[Covert categories: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection]

Follow-up questions:

1. General Background:

- 1.1. 英文老師都選什麼教材教呢？老師怎麼上課？同學跟你對老師的教學曾有什麼反應？
- 1.2. 英文老師授課的語言是中文還是英文？
- 1.3. 綜合在這個階段英文課上課的經驗，你最（不）喜歡英文課的什麼呢？
- 1.4. 你能回想在這個階段英語對當時的你來說是甚麼嗎？
- 1.5. 你覺得在這階段的補習班上課，跟你在學校上課有什麼相同或不同的地方呢？
- 1.6. 能不能用一句話形容在這個階段在學校學習英文的感覺？
- 1.7. 請問有沒有什麼是你還想跟我們分享的，或是你覺得很重要但是我們沒有問到的？

2. Membership:

- 2.1. 這個階段的補習班英文課有分班上嗎？是按照什麼標準分班的呢？(boundaries: physical)
- 2.2. 那在英文課的時候，你們會分小組嗎？跟小組同學感情如何？有沒有跟小組或很好的同學一起共事的經驗？(boundaries: emotional)
- 2.3. 你在上英文課時心情通常如何呢？那是否曾經有心情特別不一樣/波動的時候？是什麼狀況呢？(emotional safety)
- 2.4. 你自己覺得你是在班上的英文學習社群中嗎，無論是實體上或是心情上？為什麼會有這樣的想法呢？(sense of belonging and identification)
- 2.5. 你可以分享看看，在上英文課時主動提問或付出努力的經驗嗎？

- 那你覺得你提問或付出之後，對於自己在團隊中的角色有沒有不一樣的想法？(personal investment)
- 2.6. 你在上英文課時，跟同學有沒有一些默契或你們共用的語言？(common symbol system)
- 2.7. 跟上一個階段比起來，你覺得在組織情感或認同上，有增進或減少嗎？為什麼會這樣覺得？
3. Influence:
- 3.1. 你覺得這個補習階段的英語學習社群對你有什麼樣的影響？無論時老師、同學或教學內容，對你有什麼樣的影響？(community to individual)
- 3.2. 那回想你在這樣的團體影響之下，你通常都是符合規範還是挑戰體制，實際作為或心情上？(conformity/ uniformity)
- 3.3. 那你覺得你自己對這個英語學習社群有什麼樣的影響？(individual to community)
- 3.4. 跟上一個階段比起來，你覺得你對英語學習社群（或英語學習社群對你）的影響有什麼不同嗎？有變大或變小嗎？為什麼？
4. Integration and fulfillment of needs:
- 4.1. 作為這個英語學習群體的一份子，你有什麼感覺（歸屬感或疏離感）、對自己有什麼角色定位？為什麼？(status)
- 4.2. 在這個團體之內，有沒有競爭的關係？這樣的關係對你身為這個群體的一份子有什麼影響？(competence)
- 4.3. 你覺得這個階段的英語學習社群有達成你的需求嗎？是否有讓你更想成為這個群體的一份子，或是沒有？為什麼呢？(need fulfillment)
- 4.4. 跟上一個階段比起來，你認為自己是否有更想融入這個英語學習社群？為什麼會或不會呢？
5. Shared emotional connection:
- 5.1. 在這個學習階段的英語學習群體中，同學互動頻繁嗎？(contact hypothesis) 跟同學的這些互動中，有正向互動（如合作、良性競爭等）或是負面互動（如爭執、惡性競爭等）嗎？(quality of interaction)
- 5.2. 師生之間的互動又是如何進行呢？(quality of interaction)
- 5.3. 課堂間會一起完成一些任務嗎？(closure of events)
- 5.4. 有沒有跟課堂中的學習群體一起經歷過一些重大的事件或特別的體驗？(shared valent event hypothesis)
- 5.5. 你在課堂中或課後有沒有在學校的英文學習上有任何投入？(investment)
- 5.6. 你在補習班的英文課堂有沒有被獎勵或懲罰的經驗？(effect of honor and humiliation on community members)
- 5.7. 對於這個階段的英文學習群體，你認為有沒有一種強烈的情感聯

繫？(spiritual bond)

- 5.8. 跟上一個階段比起來，你覺得在英文課的互動或情感建立方面有什麼不同嗎？怎麼說？





APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol (the Second Phase)

The following protocol is formulated by the CDST of learner agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019). Questions are designed surrounding the seven characteristics listed in the framework (i.e., *agency is relational*, *agency is emergent*, *agency is spatially and temporally situated*, *agency can be achieved*, *agency changes through iteration and co-adaptation*, *agency is multidimensional*, and *agency is heterarchical*). In addition, analyzed data from the first phase of data collection regarding the theme of SOC will be consulted. The two topic domains below capture formal and non-formal education experiences of English learning respectively.

Topic Domain One: Learner agency in formal education (i.e., elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school)

Lead-off question: 那我們這次訪談一樣先針對學校的英文學習經驗來談，想請你回想一下，你在學校的英文教室裡面，通常是什麼樣的角色呢？可以用些形容詞或一些角色定位來形容自己看看嗎？

[Covert categories: *agency is relational*, *agency is emergent*, *agency is spatially and temporally situated*, *agency can be achieved*, *agency changes through iteration and co-adaptation*, *agency is multidimensional*, and *agency is heterarchical*]

Follow-up questions:

1. Agency is relational:
 - 1.1. 可以請你分享看看，學校的英文學習環境裡面曾經有讓你想學英文的人或活動嗎？
 - 1.2. 這些人為何令你印象深刻，曾經發生過什麼樣有意義的事情或狀況呢？
 - 1.3. 這些活動為何令你印象深刻，可以談談這個活動的細節嗎？
2. Agency is emergent:
 - 2.1. 你在學校英文學習的經驗裡面，你曾經使用英文帶來什麼改變或創新？
 - 2.2. 那你在使用英文造成變化後，得到過什麼樣的回饋嗎？（鼓勵或挫折？）
3. Agency is spatially and temporally situated:
 - 3.1. 同樣在學校教育裡面，你從國小、國中到高中這些不同的老師與環境（教法）中，你覺得你對學英文有什麼不同的態度嗎？可以舉例說明嗎？(spatially situated)
 - 3.2. 回想過去學校英文學習裡面，可以分享看看你預想到未來英文使

- 用的機會，以使你產生學習英文的自主活動的經驗嗎？
(temporally situated: future imaginations)
- 3.3. 在學校英文課堂中，想請你分享看看當你遇到英文程度不如他人時，是怎麼樣讓自己改變、達成自己的目標？(temporally situated: stability of circumstances)
- 3.4. 不同學習階段的轉換之間（國小到國中、國中到高中），這樣的問題（程度落差／認知到彼此在英文上有差異）在哪些時候出現？
(temporally situated: a shift through time)
4. Agency can be achieved:
- 4.1. 在你的學校英文學習經驗中，有什麼樣的資源或環境讓你能夠學好英文？(available resources)
- 4.2. 想請你談談你利用這些資源或環境的經驗，例如參加一些活動／比賽、多向老師尋求協助，或其他經驗？(individual effort)
5. Agency changes through iteration and co-adaptation:
- 5.1. 你曾經在學習英文的過程中，做過哪些改變，讓你修正你的學習？
(change: iteration)
- 5.2. 從現在的角度回想起來呢，有哪些一直在修正的學習方式，才有現在學英文的你？(change: iteration)
- 5.3. 你跟老師或同學在英文課的互動中，通常是怎麼樣相互影響呢？老師影響你，你又影響老師？或是老師影響全班、全班影響老師？同學之間又有怎麼樣的互動呢？(change: co-adaptation)
6. Agency is multidimensional:
- 6.1. 在學校英文課中，想請你分享跟你很有情感聯繫的英文老師，談談你們之間發生過什麼有趣、記憶深刻的事情。這些經驗讓你想自主學習英文嗎？
- 6.2. 那反過來，曾經讓你不想學英文的又是哪些經驗呢？
7. Agency is heterarchical:
- 7.1. 你覺得從國小一路到國中，有什麼樣的轉變，就學校英文學習的狀況、態度或想法而言？
- 7.2. 那從國中到高中呢，有沒有什麼轉變，就學校英文學習的狀況、態度或想法？

Topic Domain Two: Learner agency in non-formal education (i.e., the three different EPT institutes)

Lead-off question: 那我們接著來看一下補習環境裡面的，從國小的補習班中，你通常都是什麼樣的角色呢？你覺得自己在上課時，像是怎麼樣的人？

[Covert categories: agency is relational, agency is emergent, agency is spatially and

temporally situated, agency can be achieved, agency changes through iteration and co-adaptation, agency is multidimensional, and agency is heterarchical]

Follow-up questions:

1. Agency is relational:
 - 1.1. 可以請你分享看看，補習班的英文學習環境裡面曾經有讓你想學英文的人或活動嗎？
 - 1.2. 這些人為何令你印象深刻，曾經發生過什麼樣有意義的事情或狀況呢？
 - 1.3. 這些活動為何令你印象深刻，可以談談這個活動的細節嗎？
2. Agency is emergent:
 - 2.1. 你在補習班英文學習的經驗裡面，你曾經使用英文帶來什麼改變或創新？
 - 2.2. 那你在使用英文造成變化後，得到過什麼樣的回饋嗎？（鼓勵或挫折？）
3. Agency is spatially and temporally situated:
 - 3.1. 同樣在補習教育裡面，你從全美語、半美語半升學，到全升學這些不同的老師與環境（教法）中，你覺得你對學英文有什麼不同的態度嗎？可以舉例說明嗎？(spatially situated)
 - 3.2. 回想過去補習英文學習裡面，可以分享看看你預想到未來英文使用的機會，以使你產生學習英文的自主活動的經驗嗎？(temporally situated: future imaginations)
 - 3.3. 在補習英文學習中，想請你分享看看當你遇到英文程度不如他人時，是怎麼樣讓自己改變、達成自己的目標？(temporally situated: stability of circumstances)
 - 3.4. 不同學習階段的轉換之間（國小到國中、國中到高中），在補習班中有沒有感受到這種問題？(temporally situated: a shift through time)
4. Agency can be achieved:
 - 4.1. 在你的補習英文學習經驗中，有什麼樣的資源或環境讓你能夠學好英文？(available resources)
 - 4.2. 想請你談談你利用這些資源或環境的經驗，例如參加一些活動／比賽、多向老師尋求協助，或其他經驗？(individual effort)
5. Agency changes through iteration and co-adaptation:
 - 5.1. 你曾經在學習英文的過程中，做過哪些改變，讓你修正你的學習？(change: iteration)
 - 5.2. 從現在的角度回想起來呢，有哪些一直在修正的學習方式，才有現在學英文的你？(change: iteration)
 - 5.3. 你跟老師或同學在英文課的互動中，通常是怎麼樣相互影響呢？老師影響你，你又影響老師？或是老師影響全班、全班影響老師？

同學之間又有怎麼樣的互動呢？(change: co-adaptation)

6. **Agency is multidimensional:**

6.1. 在補習班英文課中，想請你分享跟你很有情感聯繫的英文老師，談談你們之間發生過什麼有趣、記憶深刻的事情。這些經驗讓你想自主學習英文嗎？

6.2. 那反過來，曾經讓你不想學英文的又是哪些經驗呢？

7. **Agency is heterarchical:**

7.1. 你覺得從國小一路到國中，有什麼樣的轉變，就補習班英文學習的狀況、態度或想法而言？

7.2. 那從國中到高中呢，有沒有什麼轉變，就補習班英文學習的狀況、態度或想法？

