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**THE RESEARCH CULTURE IN AN
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
THAILAND UNIVERSITY CONTEXT**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the research culture of lecturers teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Thai higher education. In particular it explores how EFL lecturers get involved in the research process within their institutions. This investigation involved 19 lecturers from two different university settings in Thailand.

This study employed a qualitative case study approach and was conducted in four phases. In the first phase, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 13 EFL lecturers from one university. In the second phase, four case studies were selected from the original sample of 13 EFL lecturers. This focused on each lecturer's research knowledge, details of research experience, and factors influencing their research involvement. In the third phase, a focus group was held with six EFL lecturers from a second university. This looked at factors influencing their research involvement in that context. In addition, document analysis was employed in phases two and three to provide a profile of each university setting. The final phase utilised document analysis to broaden insights into the university research contexts of EFL lecturers.

The findings from this study revealed that the EFL lecturers' research involvement was influenced by a dynamic interaction between internal and external factors. The EFL lecturers each valued research differently. Time constraints, limited research funding and support were major factors affecting their research involvement. The study identified that the EFL research culture was not well developed and the EFL lecturers produced low research outcomes in terms of quantity and quality. The study also revealed that the status of the Thai EFL research culture was negatively impacted by priorities in the wider global research context.

The study suggests that the EFL lecturers need more encouragement and support to conduct research as a means of improving their teaching practice in order to enhance students' English proficiency. Enhancing the research culture may also increase EFL lecturers' professional status as well as maintaining and increasing the international reputation of the university. In addition, EFL lecturers, universities, the government, and policy makers need to take more responsibility in developing an effective research culture in this area due to its significance in the global economy.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"It is rather difficult to increase participation of staff [faculty] members in research. Research is still not understood by many of them as one of the basic activities of the university teacher. Due to general under funding of the universities..., the research/teaching load of some members of the staff [faculty] is not well balanced." (Hazelkorn, 2005, p. 65)

1.1 Introduction to the Study

The thesis reports on an investigation into the research culture of lecturers teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at the tertiary level in Thailand. In the literature, a research culture is defined as “shared values, assumptions, beliefs, rituals and other forms of behaviour whose central focus is the acceptance and recognition of research practice and output as valued, worthwhile and pre-eminent activity” (Evans, 2007, p. 2). As an EFL lecturer in a Thai university as well as an EFL learner, I am interested in how to improve the teaching and learning of the English language. However, my curiosity about improving teaching through research arose when I started work as an EFL lecturer in a Thai university. Being an EFL lecturer, I was expected to conduct research as part of my academic duties. Therefore, I became involved in three collaborative research projects at my institution (as a team member). All of these research projects were funded by the university and aimed to enhance students’ English proficiency. These research experiences made me believe that lecturers should conduct research in order to support our teaching.

I faced both frustrating and challenging obstacles while conducting research. It turned out that conducting research was not something between me and my students, but it involved many people within the university such as the head of department, research staff members, and even the Vice-President for research. My colleagues also faced similar as well as different tensions when they got involved in the research process.

Some of my colleagues did not want to conduct research. Some of them conducted research in order to meet the university requirement. Some of them did not apply their research results in their teaching. Even though we were required to undertake research, we produced low research productivity and none of my research or my colleagues' research was published.

Research can be either basic or applied and is found to be complex and controversial depending on how a university defines its own research focus (Holligan, Wilson, & Humes, 2011). However, governments and universities in many countries have raised the importance of research as a tool to promote social and economic development (Holligan, et al., 2011; Marginson, 2006). Research is now considered to be a key activity as well as a core mission of higher education worldwide (Boyer, 1990; Tynan & Garbett, 2007). The importance of a research culture to improve staff's research and publications performance within higher education, particularly in English-speaking countries has been noted in many places (Bland & Ruffin, 1992; Cheetham, 2007; Christie & Menter, 2009; Holligan, et al., 2011; Pratt, Margaritis, & Coy, 1999). However, as Hazelkorn (2005) argued in the excerpt quoted at the start of the chapter, research is not deeply rooted in higher education and that is reflected in the poor research performance of academic staff. Nonetheless, research is an accepted part of the role of academic staff in a university.

Hearing about other colleagues' research stories and considering my own research story as well as reviewing the current literature, therefore I decided to study the EFL research culture to gain a better understanding of how EFL lecturers get involved in the research process. The focus of this study is on EFL lecturers' beliefs about their involvement in research within Thai higher education institutions. This thesis also provides insights into key factors that influence the research culture of these EFL lecturers.

The following section explains the rationale and significance of the study. This is followed by some background on the research context. At the end of the chapter, an overview of the thesis will be provided.

1.2 Rationale and Significance of the Study

Research has become a basic task of academic staff within higher education worldwide since tenure and promotion is increasingly tied to research (Boyer, 1990; McRoy, Flanzer, & Zlotnik, 2012). Governments, Ministry of Education, and universities in many countries, including Thailand, place a particular emphasis on research in order to gain both national and international reputation (Marginson, 2006; MOE, 2005). In the area of English language teaching, English teaching staff are encouraged to improve and enhance their capacity in teaching through research (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). Similar to other international contexts, Thai EFL lecturers are expected to undertake research but there are few EFL research publications by Thai researchers at both national and international levels. This has been confirmed in all areas of Thai higher education institutions over the past 10 years (Kirtikara, 2001; MOE, 2005). Only a small number of faculty members have undertaken research and many research topics do not serve the country's interest. A study by Sinlarat (2004) found that more than half of the academic staff in Thai higher education institutions did not have any research publications and that few research articles were published in international journals. This highlights the importance of finding out more about the development of a research culture in the EFL context in Thai universities as English is considered to be a global language and plays a crucial role in a global economy (Crystal, 2003).

There has been a growing interest in the research culture of Thai academic staff due to the increasing demand for research productivity from higher education institutions at the national and international levels (Putwattana, 2002). However, studies by Panich (1999) as well as Putwattana (2006) suggest that the concept of a research culture discussed in Thai universities over the past 40 years had not been clear, and that the current university research culture did not provide appropriate support for research activities. Both Panich and Putwattana asserted that Thai academics could not produce research that responded to the needs of the country. While this study acknowledges that there are significant pieces of research investigating the research culture of academic staff in international university contexts, there is not much evidence about the growth of a research culture within Thai higher education institutions. While the Thai government promotes series of strategies to increase the performance of university staff and encourage them to conduct research, no research has investigated the research culture of

EFL lecturers in Thai universities. It is significant to focus on the research performance of Thai faculty staff teaching English as their research productivity can increase the international reputation of Thai universities. Therefore, this study adds to and extends the current literature by investigating the research culture of lecturers teaching English in an EFL context. The key participants are Thai lecturers teaching English from two comprehensive universities in the northern part of Thailand. These lecturers were required to conduct research as part of their three basic duties (teaching, research, and community service) as well as for academic promotion. In addition, research was regarded as a core mission of the two participating universities.

A key concern of this study is to explore EFL lecturers' beliefs about their involvement in the research process. As research plays a crucial role in higher education, understanding EFL lecturers' beliefs about their research involvement is vital since beliefs play an important part in the decision-making process and may influence EFL lecturers' action, selection, and decisions with regard to their research involvement (Woods, 1996). Lecturers conducting their own research also have the potential to enhance the professionalism of EFL teaching.

The study also focuses on identifying EFL lecturers' perceptions of factors that might influence their involvement in research. It is necessary to look deeply in order to identify the factors that influence EFL lecturers' inspiration and aspirations for conducting research. In this, the study may have implications for the broader international research contexts for EFL lecturers. It is intended that this study will provide more understanding of how EFL lecturers perceive research and what might assist them to get more involved in the research process within their institutions.

Ultimately, it is expected that this study will inform EFL lecturers, institutions, and educational policy makers in Thailand as well as in other EFL contexts about how to encourage greater research productivity by enhancing the research culture of EFL lecturers.

1.3 Research Context

The description of the research context is presented in three parts. The first part provides an overview of Thai higher education reforms. This is followed by the

discussion of the status of research in higher education. The last part focuses on the role of English as a foreign language including a policy regarding English curricula within the Thai university context.

Thai Higher Education Reform

Thai higher education institutions are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. Within the Ministry of Education, the Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC) is responsible for higher education service and provision. All Thai higher education institutions offer various degree programmes: associate degree programmes, undergraduate programmes, graduate programmes, and doctoral programmes. Thailand's long history of higher education can be traced back to the reign of King Rama V with the establishment of a law school in 1887 (Komolmas, 1999). However, significant changes in higher education began in 1981 (see Figure 1.1).

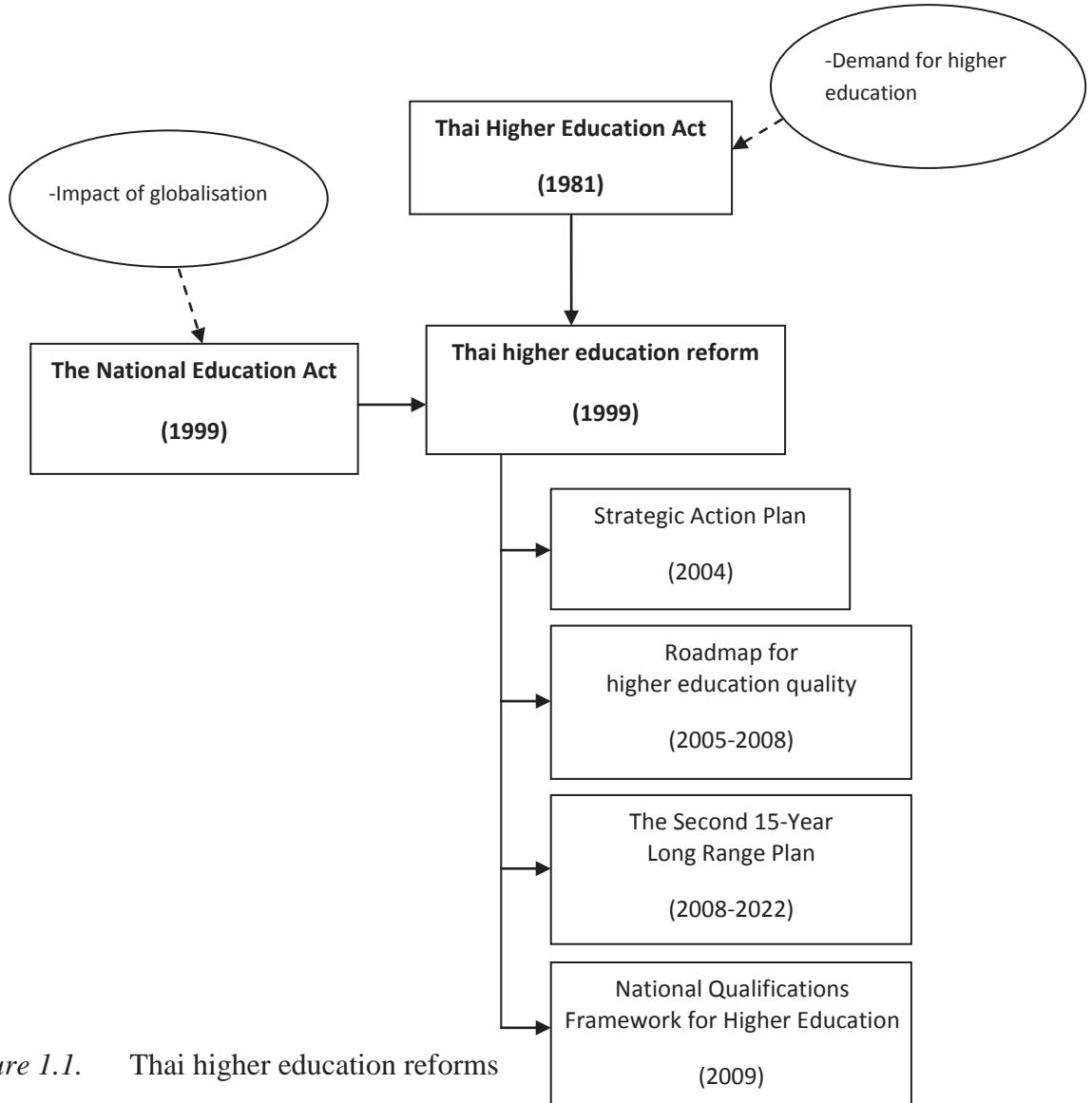


Figure 1.1. Thai higher education reforms

The Higher Education Institution Act was enacted in 1981 due to the increasing demands for tertiary education (World Bank, 2009). In addition, the increasing globalisation of technology also affected Thailand and led to changed needs for human resources with regard to knowledge, capabilities and characteristics. The major problems confronting higher education were identified by Kirtikara (2001) as redundancy, lack of direction, and low quality and efficiency. In addition, the production of knowledge (research) was low compared to other Asian countries. Todd (2001) has linked researching in Thailand to “rote learning, research shy academics and non-existent investment incentives”, indicating that “a quantum shift in attitudes is needed if Thailand is to improve on its current position propping up the bottom of the international creativity table” (p. 4). It was felt that higher education needed to be reformed in order to be able to compete with other international universities.

The first National Education Act, enacted in 1999, critically affected the higher education system. This was a significant reform because it provided a comprehensive vision for the higher education system. The new goals arising from higher education reform were to improve the overall quality of the Thai higher education system and enhance Thai higher education to be a mechanism empowering the country to transform into a knowledge-based society (Iamphak, 2009; Office of the Education Council, 2004b). This higher education reform was conducted in six areas: 1) the structure of the administrative and managerial system; 2) higher education financing; 3) manpower production and increased access to higher education; 4) teaching, learning, and research; 5) a system for the development of faculty staff and educational personnel; and 6) support for the participation of the private sector in the administration and management of higher education.

In 2004, the Ministry of Education announced a Strategic Action Plan to accelerate the reforms (MOE, 2004). This plan aimed to develop educational standards and increase national competitiveness in order to make Thai education equal to other developed countries. The strategic plan focused on increasing the capability of research at an international level. It also aimed to produce professional researchers; provide research resources; enhance cooperation with private sectors and encourage joint research projects for commercial purposes; and create research centres of excellence.

As part of the reform, the OHEC launched two higher education policy papers focusing on the quality issues of the Thai higher education system (OHEC, 2010). The first policy paper was the roadmap for higher education quality development from 2005 to 2008. This roadmap focused on improving the quality of graduates, faculty members, researchers, and education provision. The second policy paper was the Second 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education, effective from 2008 to 2022. This plan focused on staff development and significant activities, particularly strengthening the research capacity of academic staff in higher education. To support the implementation of the reforms, the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education was launched in 2009 (MOE, 2006a; OHEC, 2010). This framework provided guidance for staff and had a focus on academic research.

Since Thai higher education reform put an emphasis on staff research activity, faculty staff members were encouraged to conduct research to improve the quality of teaching. They were also required to change their roles from knowledge teaching to facilitating and encouraging learners in acquiring knowledge from a variety of sources (Anantrasirichai & Pitiyanuwat, 2002). Research was seen as a tool to enhance the knowledge of the community and increase national competitiveness (Office of the Education Council, 2004b). As a result, there was expected to be an increase in the status of research within higher education.

The Status of Research in Higher Education

Thailand has a long-term plan to increase the production of academic research in all disciplines within higher education institutions by both staff and students according to the paper on quality assurance of Thai higher education issued by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development, and the Office of the Higher Education Commission, Thailand (SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010). The emphasis on research within Thai universities can in fact be traced back to 1959 when the National Education Research Council was established and research grants were first given to university staff (Suwanwela, 2008). One of the major changes was seen in the early 1970s when research publication was included in the criteria for academic promotion (OHEC, 2010; Suwanwela, 2008). In 1993, three independent agencies were established to promote research production in

higher education in response to the 1992 Research Endowment Act. These three agencies, namely 1) the Thailand Research Fund; 2) the National Science and Technology Development Agency; and 3) the Health System Research Institute, are part of the government system. At present, the career path of academic staff is based on merit and academic performance in which research publication is one of core criteria to gain status as an assistant professor, associate professor, or professor.

The Thai government initiatives have raised the status of research and aimed to increase research production within higher education to enhance educational standards and national competitiveness (Iamphak, 2009; MOE, 2004). According to the executive report framework of the Second 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education (OHEC, 2008), Thai universities' rankings are below many universities in both the East Asian region and the world. The report indicates that Thai universities need to adjust their roles to be "social guardians, conscience drivers, wealth creation through research" and "national prime movers for competitiveness, with strong research bases" (p. 10). This reflects the notion that research in higher education is considered to be an activity that creates "a continuous thirst for [new] knowledge" (Sangnapaboworn, 2003, p. 6).

All higher education institutions now need to conduct research as part of their mission (OHEC, 2010). In this sense, Thai academic staff members are expected to produce and publish research while universities can "serve as the basis of a culture of research" (Altbach, 2004, p. 29). As a consequence, the Thailand National Research University Initiative was announced in 2009 to accelerate the Thai education reform in terms of research excellence aiming to promote Thailand to become ASEAN's Education and Research Hub (Iamphak, 2009). This initiative also classified universities in Thailand into four groups, namely research universities, comprehensive universities, liberal arts universities, and community colleges (OHEC, 2010).

In 2010, a Ministerial Regulation regarding System, Criteria, and Methods for Quality Assurance was issued (SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010). The Ministerial Regulation introduced three components for research success: 1) institutions need to have a research plan, a research system and mechanism, and resources that could enable the planned implementation; 2) faculty members need to integrate research with their teaching and learning, and their research must be allied with the other missions of their institutions; and 3) research outcomes must be of good quality, which means that they

generate benefits responding to the country's aims, and are published at both national and international levels. All Thai higher education institutions are required to implement these three components even though each may have a different research focus. In addition, the Thai Higher Education Development Plan (from 2012 to 2016) was issued to accelerate the research capacity of Thai higher education (OHEC, 2011). This plan mainly aimed to strengthen the research capacity of Thai academic staff.

It can be seen that the Thai government's plan for higher education places an importance on research, and encourages staff research productivity. However, the lack of research publications at both national and international levels is still a problem for Thai higher education. Chapter 4 (Section 4.4) provides a more detailed discussion of issues in respect of the higher education institutional categorisation and current research issues.

The Role of English in Higher Education

Thailand is a country with one official language, '*Thai*'. The status of the Thai language has prevailed even though there has been a discussion about making Thailand a bilingual (Thai and English) country due to the growing dominance of English. Thailand is proud of being a country that has never been colonised and having one official language represents "the concept of national stability" (Wiriyachitra, 2002, p. 4). However, Thailand and higher education cannot neglect the importance of English as a world language. English plays a crucial role in higher education worldwide and is used extensively as a medium in domains of communication (Hengsadeekul, Hengsadeekul, Koul, & Kaewkuekool, 2009). English is considered to be an important language for communication and has been taught as a foreign language within Thai higher education institutions. In addition, English has been used as a medium of instruction in some private universities in Thailand. W. Baker (2009) describes the status of English in Thailand as a de facto second language because it is used widely, particularly within business sectors. However, W. Baker notes that Thai people including Thai EFL teaching staff have inadequate level of proficiency in English.

English was introduced as a subject in Thai education over 100 years ago and the first English curriculum was written in 1890 (Darasawang, 2007; Khamkhien, 2010a).

English language education in Thailand has undergone radical change in the past 40 years. English had been taught as an elective language in Thai universities since 1977 while tertiary students were allowed to study any foreign languages for six credits as part of their general education programme (Foley, 2005).

Since 1995, English has been regarded as the primary foreign language in Thai education (MOE, 2006b). Similar to other developing countries, the role of English in Thai universities is important due to the internationalisation of higher education. English is now increasingly considered as an international language and is accorded the highest status and value in Thai education (Boonkit, 2002). English language is regarded as “the key to internationalise the higher education system and to keep up with international competition” (Chalapati, 2007, p. 33). However, it appears that the approach to English language teaching has not been promoted in a way that enhances students’ English proficiency as Wiriachitra (2002) noted in the excerpt below.

It can be said that up to now English language teaching in Thailand has not prepared Thais for the changing world. Thailand will lag behind in the competitive world of business, education, science and technology if the teaching and learning of English is not improved. (p. 1)

The quality of Thai higher education can be said to have low standards as graduates have a poor command of English language compared to other Asian countries such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore (Komolmas, 1999). Therefore, there have been continual attempts to revise English curricula in higher education. The major change came in 2000 when a policy on English Instruction of Liberal Education was implemented as part of the national education reform (Wongsothorn, Hiranburana, & Chinnawongs, 2002). The main aim of this new policy is to implement an English curriculum in all Thai universities (Foley, 2005).

According to the policy on English Instruction of Liberal Education, English has become a compulsory subject within Thai higher education institutions. It also identified that in Thai higher education institutions at least 12 credits of English language are required in each of the following courses: English, general English, and English for academic or specific purposes. This reform followed the trend in contemporary English language teaching by emphasising functional communication and the 4Cs: communication, culture, connection, and community (Nonkukhetkhong,

Baldauf Jr, & Moni, 2006; Wongsothorn, et al., 2002). Therefore, in most higher education institutions, students are required to complete at least two courses (six credits) in English or general English in their first year of study. The other six credits, focusing on English for academic or specific purposes, can be completed in the following year or later depending on each department's syllabus. This policy is implemented in most of Thai higher education institutions.

As English plays a major role in Thai universities, awareness of the need to increase the quality of English language education has been widespread (Nitungkorn, 2001). The majority of English language staff members in Thai higher education institutions are Thais. As they are non-native speakers of English, Thai students often have a poor command of English and the TOEFL scores of Thai students are among the lowest in Asian region (Educational Testing Services, 2009; Punthumasen, 2007). English teaching staff members therefore require continual professional development programmes to maintain and enhance their proficiency in teaching English.

One way to improve the quality of teaching within higher education institutions is to undertake research (Light, 2003). The literature indicates that teaching can be informed by research and this has been a discussion in the area of English language teaching worldwide (Cheetham, 2007; Houston, Ross, Robinson, & Malcolm, 2010; McDonough & McDonough, 1997). Also, the Thai higher education reform ultimately aimed to influence faculty staff to be more active in their teaching practice and become producers of knowledge rather than only the recipients of knowledge (Nonkukhetkhong, et al., 2006; Suwanwela, 2005). Professor Emeritus Somwung Pitiyanuwat, the former acting director of the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment asserted that improving teaching quality of English faculty members is necessary. He noted that these faculty members should be required to carry out research projects in order to improve and attain a high level in the teaching profession (Bangkok Post Learning, 2010). Thai universities also undertake research for the production of knowledge and as an educational tool (Suwanwela, 2008). The Thai government and universities place a particular emphasis on research by faculty staff as they can gain an international reputation by producing research and publications that meets international standards. This implies that EFL teaching staff should conduct research to support teaching and learning as well as to advance the status of the university.

There have been few studies concerning EFL learning and teaching published in English by Thai scholars at both national and international levels. This situation requires urgent attention as EFL lecturers' research productivity could improve English language teaching. There is also evidence in the literature indicating that the numbers of publications, particularly at the international level, can advance the economic and educational interests of Thailand (Iamphak, 2009; MOE, 2005; World Bank, 2009). It is therefore valuable to conduct this investigation on the EFL research culture to uncover the reality of how EFL lecturers become involved in the research process.

1.4 Thesis Overview

Chapter One has provided a background to the study, the research problem and the thesis objective. The contextual background also included information about higher education reforms and the changing role of research and English within the Thai tertiary context.

Chapter Two reviews the literature on key aspects associated with the research culture of academic staff in an EFL context. The research questions are provided at the end of this chapter.

Chapter Three discusses the methodological framework. This includes the rationale for selecting a qualitative case study research paradigm. This is followed by a description of the research design and procedures, an explanation of the data analysis and interpretations, ethical considerations, and the researcher's positioning.

Chapter Four presents the results from Phase Four which involved document analysis, to provide broader information about university research contexts in English-speaking countries and Asian countries including Thailand.

Chapter Five presents the findings from Phases One and Two, which included data from 13 participating EFL lecturers in the first participating university as well as document analysis.

Chapter Six presents the findings from Phase Three which was conducted with six focus group participants in the second participating university. This involved document analysis to provide a profile of the second university.

Chapter Seven presents the overall discussion of the investigation results in relation to the literature on higher education research culture.

Chapter Eight completes this thesis. This includes a summary of key findings, acknowledgement of the limitations of the study, as well as implications and recommendations for practice and policy. The thesis concludes with suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to present and discuss the literature relevant to the current study. Understanding lecturers' research practice requires investigation into various aspects of their research context. Faculty staff members are encouraged to enhance their teaching practice by being involved in the process of research in their universities. Five key areas of literature in both the international and Thai contexts with regard to the EFL context at the tertiary level are central to understanding the involvement with research of the academic staff members teaching English. These include the nature of research, the nature of university research, the aims and rationales for university research, university research quality, and the nature of the university research culture.

2.2 The Nature of Research

Research is a method of knowing and it is considered to be of more value than other types of knowing such as one's own experiences, traditions, or methods of intuition (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). Research is perceived as trustworthy because it is a method of inquiry which involves the systematic process of collecting and analysing data (McMillan, 2008; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; J. C. Richards & Schmidt, 2002). Mertler and Charles (2008) offer an interesting definition of research as "a careful, systematic, patient investigation undertaken to discover or establish facts and relationships" (pp. 5-6). This definition is considered to be useful and realistic as research is not a hurried process. It requires time and effort to provide verifiable facts in order to answer a problematic question. Therefore, research, in general, is based on a scientific approach in which researchers generate knowledge in a logical manner (R. B. Burns, 2000).

The primary purpose of conducting research is to produce new knowledge (Flick, 2011; Mertler & Charles, 2008). Researchers employ scientific methods to develop knowledge. Here, it is useful to refer back to John Dewey's theory of inquiry (1938). Dewey's view of inquiry can be summarised into five principles which parallel the procedure of undertaking research, namely: a) stating the problem and identifying the question; b) proposing a possible solution or hypothesis; c) gathering facts and information related to a problem; d) testing or proving ideas that represent possible solutions; and e) stating a summary with respect to the evidence by providing an answer to the question. Dewey's concept of inquiry can help researchers to think in a more productive way and many modern educators also support his view (e.g. McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Mertler & Charles, 2008).

Conducting research requires a systematic process. The National Research Council organised by the US. National Academy of Sciences (2002) has listed six principles for conducting and evaluating scientific inquiry including educational research, indicating that the research process should: a) pose significant questions that can be investigated empirically; b) link research to relevant theory or a conceptual framework; c) use methods that permit direct investigation of the research question; d) provide a coherent and explicit chain of reasoning; d) be able to be replicated with findings being generalised across studies; and e) be disseminated to encourage professional scrutiny and critique (pp. 3-5). However, this set of guidelines may not be possible to apply to all types of research in all fields, as the guidelines were set by an organisation whose primary focus is the community of science and technology. Educational research regarding EFL may follow a modified set of guidelines.

The field of educational research, including EFL research, combines a broad perspective of research activities employing various research methods. Research has been defined and conducted based on researchers' theoretical frameworks or paradigms (Mertens, 2005a). However, applying scientific knowledge to education does not mean that educational research is scientific (National Research Council, 2002). Educational research is not limited to the approaches used in science but it is shifting and involves interaction among institutions, communities, and families (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; National Research Council, 2002). For educational research to be scientific "the design must allow direct and empirical investigation of an important question, account for the context in which the study is carried out, align with a conceptual framework,

reflect careful and thorough reasoning, and disclose results to encourage debate in the scientific community” (National Research Council, 2002, p. 6). Therefore, educational research can be scientific when researchers focus on and include the above characteristics in their investigation.

In addition, articles written about educational research that are not scientific may fail to be selected for publication. This situation may occur because published research is required to be open for discussion and evaluation by members of the research community as well as allowing other researchers to evaluate the procedures and/or replicate the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, 2012).

2.3 The Nature of University Research

Research plays a major role in education, particularly in higher education institutions. As Cheetham (2007) points out, research is “a basis of how a university education works” (p. 3), and a basis of the support for the academic staff within a university. There is an increasing demand for university research and higher education institutions worldwide promote the research performance of their academic staff in order to strengthen their domestic and international reputation (Bai, Millwater, & Hudson, 2008). Significant aspects of university research internationally as well as relevant aspects of university EFL research in Thailand are now examined.

University Research and the International Context

Originally, teaching and service were the two main missions of universities while research was not (Etzkowitz, 2001; Jencks & Reisman, 2002). Research emerged later and became a part of the role of the academic staff (Etzkowitz, 1998; Holligan, et al., 2011). Ball (2007) notes that the research mission forms part of the objectives of a university. By this it is meant that universities use research to direct their academic focus in their respective fields. There is an increasing emphasis on research conducted at the university level, and faculty staff members are required to be the producers of knowledge. Blackburn, Bieber, Lawrence, and Trautvetter (1991) note that the

increasing demand for research productivity may be the result of the need to enhance universities' reputations, and to develop economic stability.

The literature indicates that research in universities can be either pure research or applied research and can use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methodologies (Hazelkorn, 2005; McMillan, 2008). Selecting a research approach depends on the goals of the research (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Johnson and Christensen identify five main objectives of research: a) exploration (attempting to generate ideas about phenomena); b) description (attempting to describe the characteristics of a phenomena); c) explanation (attempting to show how and why a phenomenon operates as it does); d) prediction (attempting to predict or forecast a phenomenon); and e) control or influence (attempting to apply research to make certain outcomes occur). Researchers design their research process in relation to the objective they would like to focus on and report, and in order to build on the work of other researchers.

Traditionally, university research was conducted in the form of pure research (Enders, 2005; M. D. Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Holligan, et al., 2011; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Pure research is undertaken to generate new knowledge by focusing on the development of theory and the discovery of fundamental knowledge (Burton & Bartlett, 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Pure research is usually conducted by employing an experimental method which is accepted as a rigorous method (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Many scholars such as M. D. Gall et al. (2007), Mertler and Charles (2008), or Wiersma and Jurs (2009) indicate that pure research is seldom conducted in education. The reason that pure research is not popular in education may come from the greater need for applied research that provides solutions for specific educational problems. Applied research, as opposed to pure research, is designed to provide solutions to problems (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). It is concerned with the application and development of research-based knowledge which contribute to the improvement of educational practice (M. D. Gall, et al., 2007; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Mertler & Charles, 2008; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). In fact, applied research employs similarly rigorous methods to pure research (Burton & Bartlett, 2009).

It has been said that applied research, in addition, is linked to government priorities since government tends to grant more funds to this type of research (Holligan, et al., 2011). The demands of knowledge application influence policy makers who are

considered as “the customer for research” to encourage higher education research that will provide solutions to problems (Kogan & Henkel, 2000, p. 30). Applied research can be conducted to promote economic development as it could be applied to a changing context, particularly globalisation (Andrews, 2001; Bai, et al., 2008; Holligan, et al., 2011; Miller, 2007). Globalisation, in this sense, refers to educational competition including commercial knowledge transfer which is related to local as well as international educational practices and national policies (Spring, 2008; Teichler, 2004). Several educators have discussed the importance of applied research and put primacy on the production of applied research in the field of education. Nisbet (1999) notes that good research should provide answers to problems and that answers potentially have implications for education policy. Burton and Bartlett (2009) as well as Johnson and Christensen (2012) also assert that applied research that promotes the improvement of education and is designed to focus on the changing context of education is attractive to politicians who want to implement policies.

At present, both pure research and applied research are normally conducted by researchers at the university level (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). However, some scholars in the field of education such as McMillan (2008) indicate that most current university research is classified as applied research while others such as Gibbons (1998), M. D. Gall et al. (2007), or Holligan et al. (2011) argue that pure research is considered to be one of the universities’ core values in which research is evaluated by the production of new knowledge. However, applied research plays a major role in the area of English language teaching. As McDonough and McDonough (1997) assert, researchers normally conduct applied research to provide solutions to language teaching problems as well as to develop knowledge and build theories for its particular problems. Furthermore, many scholars agree that while much recent language research has focused on applied linguistics in the areas of instruction including curriculum, testing, and policy researchers also tend to employ qualitative methods such as action research in English language teaching studies (A. Burns, 2005; Data, 2004; Pakir, 2010; K. Richards, 2009).

The literature shows that research in English language globally tends to focus on applied linguistics. However, EFL lecturers can also conduct research that relates to their experiences in the classroom (Crandall, 1993). In addition, there is a demand for English in the workplace which highlights the need for applied research that focuses on

the English language requirements of workers (Nunan, 2003). However, English language research trends in Southeast Asian countries appear to be concerned with wider issues. Pakir (2010), investigating English research trends in 10 Southeast Asian countries, found that recent research on English has focused on English language teaching including EFL pedagogy, applied linguistics, critical linguistics, discourse, lexicography, corpus studies, and sociolinguistics. Therefore, it could be said that English research has focused on a variety of areas but it is usually conducted in the form of applied research.

Due to the increasing need for staff research productivity, research is now regarded as a basic task of university faculty staff (Cheetham, 2007). In many countries, research is regarded as a part of the evaluation for tenure, promotion, or financial incentives within universities (Alexander, 2000; Allen & Shockley, 1996; Healey & Jenkins, 2002; Macfarlane, 2011). As research has become a basic task of academic staff members, they are also encouraged to conduct research based on national government policies which has been said to denigrate the field of educational inquiry in terms of research types, funding, and physical or financial support (Keeves, 1999; Teichler, 2004).

The research performance of universities is a critical measure for receiving government funding as well as for obtaining domestic prestige and international reputation (Bai, et al., 2008). Therefore, universities now seem to value research over teaching and service which have been the traditional duties of university staff members (Hemmings & Kay, 2009; Robertson & Bond, 2001). For example, China and Japan have initiated a policy to reinforce that their university staff members must increase their research productivity by counting their publications and the amount of research funding they have received (Arimoto, 2010; Lai, 2010). Research productivity (gauged by publications) has become a central indicator of university excellence (Harris, 2008).

The Focus and Status of EFL Research

Wang and Hill (2011) assert that there are more varieties of English of teaching and learning in the EFL settings to facilitate communication among non-English speaking countries. English is considered to be an international language while EFL teaching staff is expected to provide instruction that meet not only local needs but also global

needs (McKay, 2003). The literature indicates that recent research in the field of EFL teaching has focused on areas of instruction, curriculum design, methodology, materials development, language testing, and policy (Cheng, Watanabe, & Curtis, 2004; McKay, 2003; Pakir, 2010). This influences EFL lecturers to conduct research in the area that serves actual needs.

Pennington (1992) as well as Mestenhauser (1986) indicate that professionals gain status and rewards based on work and achievement. This means that university lecturers gain their academic status through research and publications. Furthermore, by involving research into their teaching practice, lecturers have an opportunity to increase their academic status (Ornstein, 1985). So it is important to pay attention to the professional lives of EFL teaching staff regarding their research involvement in the current enquiry.

There are some debates as to whether teaching staff in the EFL context achieve the full status of professionals. The literature shows that English teaching staff do not receive competitive salaries due to the fact that the field of English language teaching is not popular and outstanding compared to staff in the fields of technology and innovation (Pennington, 1990, 1992). Johnston (1997) conducted research by interviewing EFL teachers in Poland and found that an EFL teaching career was unstable and the status of EFL teacher professionals was limited. He notes that an EFL teaching career can be “an unstable, marginalised, and impermanent occupation” (p. 707). The study by Sifakis (2009) is also concerned with the professionalism of EFL teaching staff. Sifakis made an investigation into Greek EFL teaching staff and found out that EFL teaching staff seemed to have a lower professional status in comparison to staff teaching other subjects. He further noted that there was a demand for English but English did not have an official status in Greece. Therefore, Greek EFL teaching staff tended to have a lower status compared to staff teaching other subjects. Sifakis mentioned that it was important for EFL teaching staff in Greece to get involved in the research process to empower and advance their professional status. It can be seen that English teaching staff seem to have a lower status compared to those working in other fields. This situation is seen as similar to EFL lecturers in Thai universities.

In Thailand, the status of EFL research seems to be higher than research in other languages. English is being taught as a foreign language equal to French, German, Italian, Chinese, and Japanese but it is accorded the highest status and value (Boonkit,

2002). The majority of English teachers, including lecturers, are non-native speakers of English and the research capacity of lecturers teaching English is still limited (Igawa, 2008; MOE, 2005). The role of English in Thailand is as important as in any other developing country since English is used as the language of communication in the domain of international education (Wiriyachitra, 2002).

EFL research, however, still has a lower status compared to other research, particularly in the fields of science and technology despite the fact that the status of EFL research appears to be higher than other foreign language research in Thai universities. The annual budget report of the OHEC (2012b) confirms that the greatest amount of research budget is spent in the fields of science and technology including mathematics rather than in any other fields. EFL research is classified as a sub-section of educational research and it is not considered to be an important area to receive large funding from the national research fund (Office of National Research Council of Thailand, 2012). Much of the attention of university research has been focused on science, technology, and innovations which are seen to have a high performance in research outputs. Level of funding and support may affect EFL lecturers' levels of research involvement and the current enquiry may provide some insights into this issue.

University and EFL Research in Thailand

Similar to other international contexts, Thailand aims to increase their level of research development in a knowledge-based society. According to the Office of the Higher Education in Thailand (OHEC, 2010), a knowledge-based society consists of four components: a) human resource development, b) research and development, c) information infrastructure, and d) science, technology and innovation. This shows the value that higher education places on the need for research. All higher education institutions in Thailand are required to conduct research as part of their mission. Nakornthap (2008) notes that research is a significant educational tool for Thai educational development as it serves to create awareness among scholars about current educational conditions, devise solutions to educational problems, develop innovation in educational settings, initiate change through policy research, and enrich research-based learning within current educational conditions.

Thai higher education institutions place importance on both pure and applied research. According to the National Research Council of Thailand or NRCT (2012), current national policies on research effective from 2012 to 2016 have classified and promoted research productivity in both pure and applied research. However, it appears that the Thai government is now focusing on applied research rather than pure research. The overview report on national research by NRCT identifies that the Thai government grants more research funding for applied research projects than for pure research projects. To be more specific, in 2013, more than 3,000 applied research projects (87.13%) have received national research funding while only 659 pure research projects (12.87%) have been granted research funding (NRCT, 2012). The emphasis on applied research projects may come from the need to increase the amount of research and reduce the research cost, as pure research is expensive because it requires highly expert staff and highly sophisticated equipment compared to applied research (Gibbons, 1998).

The regional seminar report on human resource management for global competitiveness (Suwanawongse & Bovornsiri, 2005) also stresses the importance of research in the fields of technology and innovation. In addition, the Thai government has encouraged and promoted research centres to strengthen research within universities giving the priority to the science and technology fields (OHEC, 2010). Research in other areas, such as EFL research which is the focus of the current study, apparently receives less research funding than research in other fields despite its popularity as a language of communication in the domain of international education and its high status and value compared to other languages being taught in Thai higher education institutions (W. Baker, 2009; Boonkit, 2002; Wiriyachitra, 2002). Even though much of the attention regarding university research in Thailand has been focused on research in the fields of science and technology, other research areas (including EFL research) are also important as universities cannot achieve their missions by promoting only science and technology but also need to provide teaching and research that is relevant to local and global needs.

As mentioned earlier, the Thai government has promoted university research productivity in both pure and applied research. However, research projects conducted by Thai scholars on teaching English centre around a range of applied research strands similar to those in the international context noted earlier. Searching through the Thai Thesis Database (NSTDA, 2012), it can be seen that research studies conducted in areas

of English language teaching and EFL teaching can be summarised into five key areas which are language testing, methodology, curriculum design, material development, and English for Specific Purposes (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Examples of EFL Teaching Research Conducted in Thai Universities

Area	Research strands	Topic examples
ELT/EFL	Language testing	- A comparative study of the abilities in reading and writing in English of students
	Methodology	- Implementing PSQ5R to enhance reading comprehension
	Curriculum design	- The development of training curriculum for English teaching by using co-operative learning
	Material development	- The development of computer assisted language learning on English vocabulary
	ESP	- Integrating English content in an ecotourism management course
	(English for Specific Purpose)	

Note. Summarised data based on the Thai Thesis Database (NSTDA, 2012)

The above table shows that there is a range of interest in the area of teaching English language in Thailand. English language teaching scholars are required to serve the local and national demands for English skills (Khamkhien, 2010b). Sukamolson (2010) describes EFL research in Thai universities in terms of past, present, and future trends. In the past, EFL teaching research has focused on a quantitative approach in which researchers studied factors affecting teaching and learning processes with an emphasis on qualitative research. The most preferred types of research noted by Sukamolson are case study and classroom-based research, while the topics include learning strategies, autonomy, and language acquisition. Sukamolson mentions that EFL teaching research is now tending to focus on communication skills, including the use of technology tools such as web-based or other multi-media tools. The latest trend seems to fit with the previous literature noted by Winitchaikun, Wiriyachitra, and Chaikitmongkol (2002) as well as Darasawang (2007), who noted that English teaching staff members have started to study the communicative approach, looking at tasks such as Task-Based Language

Learning, Self-Access Learning, and E-Learning. This reflects how English is becoming increasingly important as a lingua franca for communication between countries (Djojonegoro, 2005).

Thai EFL Research

According to the Thai Higher Education Development Plan Volume 11 (OHEC, 2011), all Thai lecturers including Thai EFL lecturers are expected to conduct research. It is interesting to note that most of EFL teaching research projects conducted in Thai universities are master's degree theses (also see Table 2.1). This data is in accordance with the Thai Thesis Database (NSTDA, 2012) as well as the Digital Research Information Center of the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT, 2013), which show that research projects in the area of English language teaching were conducted by Thai students studied towards their master's degrees. As the majority of Thai academic staff teaching English in Thai higher education institutions held a master's degree (Thai's Higher Education for All, 2010), this confirms that they have conducted and completed a research project. However, publication is not a requirement for their master's degree in most of Thai higher education institutions. The reason for not including publication as part of the requirement for a master's degree is not clear and there is no discussion about this in the literature. A lack of publication from master's degree may explain why there are few EFL publications from Thai scholars (Kirtikara, 2001; MOE, 2005). In addition, a lack of PhD qualification within Thai higher education institutions may prevent academic staff in producing and publishing research in high quality journals (MOE, 2005). This may also limit a chance of EFL staff members in applying for and receiving external research funding, particularly from the government, which requires applicants to have PhD or international publications (TRF, 2011).

There is limited information about recent research trends in Thai literature. However, it appears there is low level of EFL research publications in Thai higher education institutions although EFL academic staff members are encouraged to conduct research. While international EFL research has focused on a variety of areas, the literature shows that recent research trend in the area of EFL in Thailand tends to focus on communicative approach and the use of technology (Bureau of International

Cooperation, 2010; Darasawang, 2007; Sukamolson, 2010; Winitchaikun, et al., 2002). Also, recent research conducted by Thai EFL scholars are practically oriented and there is an increase in involving technology as research tools (Darasawang, 2007; Jaroongkhongdach, Todd, Keyuravong, & Hall, 2011). In addition, research methodology used in English language teaching in Thailand is mixed and varied ranging from qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Forman, 2005; NRCT, 2013).

2.4 University Research Aim and Rationale

From the above literature on the international and Thai contexts, it can be seen that university research is considered as a crucial aspect of universities. At the same time, the university itself has become a direct actor in the process of economic development and has a specific duty to satisfy knowledge needs through teaching and research (Geuna, 2001). University research is conducted and used as a tool to increase the effectiveness of both institutions and their academic staff. The aim and rationale for university research, and in particular for EFL research in Thailand, are now discussed.

The Aim and Rationale of University Research

Due to globalisation, universities in many countries are required to compete in global markets in order to attract more international students to maximise economic returns (Alexander, 2000; Harris, 2008). Governments in countries, such as the United States, and the United Kingdom, as well as in Asian countries such as Thailand, view universities as vehicles to increase the number of highly educated and skilled workers which they view as a key component of their countries' economic growth (Alexander, 2000; Spring, 2008; Srisa-an, 2005; Teichler, 2004). Research is one of the major factors that can identify national strengths and weaknesses. As Marginson (2006) points out, the global hierarchy of nations is structured by a) the distribution of research capacity, b) the global advantage of English language, and c) the global dominance of the U.S. in higher education. Marginson also asserts that universities with a high ranking, especially those in the top 500 world universities, are in nations with a per capita gross domestic product higher than the global average. It can therefore be implied that national wealth and the research capacity of universities are related.

The literature suggests that research is accepted as a valuable source of knowledge and a key indicator of university performance, prestige, and reputation (e.g. Arimoto, 2009; Bai, et al., 2008). In fact, universities must increase their reputation and this can be done by providing quality teaching and producing research and publications to be able to attract more international students as well as producing highly qualified graduates (Harris, 2008). Research and publications, at the same time, can be used to improve teaching quality (Lagemann, 2000). Boyer (1990) as well as McDonough and McDonough (1997) emphasise the significance of publications as it is considered as a part of the validation process to measure research results in terms of quality and quantity. Universities worldwide are now facing global demands for research productivity, including publications, despite the increasing costs of university-based research and the reduction of government support (Geuna & Martin, 2003; Mohrman, Ma, & Baker, 2008).

As research publication is regarded as the primary criterion of a university's excellence, it has been suggested that publication in leading journals is seen as the most highly weighted indicator (Bloedel, 2001; Boyer, 1990). This means that research and publications, particularly at the international level, could raise the reputation of universities. Some universities have become founders of book publishing firms in order to publish their research work more widely and in real-time situations (Jarvis, 2001). For example, Cambridge University Press was founded in order to advance the university's knowledge and publish their scholars' research.

University research and publications are also considered as important criteria of the Academic Ranking of World Universities, which is also known as the Shanghai Jiao Tong ranking system (ARWU, 2012). This ranking system is accepted and employed widely as the most reliable and rigorous standard for the world's academic ranking system. It can therefore be said that research has a significant status in universities as a tool to increase a university's reputation at national and international levels. Therefore, the demands for faculty research publications have increased drastically (Mohrman, et al., 2008).

In addition, English has come to be regarded as "the only global language of research publication" (Marginson, 2007, p. 15). It is clear that English plays a major role in publications although staff research in the EFL context has tended to focus on the

influence of language testing on teaching and learning in the applied linguistics area (Cheng, et al., 2004). Nonetheless, involvement in research and publication has long been seen as an essential element for EFL lecturers (Pennington, 1992).

The Aim and Rationale of University EFL Research in Thailand

According to the regional seminar report on human resource management for global competitiveness (Suwanawongse & Bovornsiri, 2005), Thai higher education aims to reform teaching, and learning, including research. In terms of promoting research development, the Thai Ministry of Education supports higher education institutions in three ways. Firstly, it allocates budget for building the infrastructure necessary for research. Secondly, it aims to enhance educational quality to meet international standards so that higher education institutions can meet the requirement to produce quality research, which in turn creates a body of knowledge that serves the society's and country's needs. Finally, it supports both pure and applied research undertaken in higher education institutions and promotes the establishment of a research centre in each university.

In Thailand, universities and their academic staff are encouraged to conduct research; and a variety of Thai government organisations have boosted and coordinated the research of teaching personnel in areas of particular interest, including English language. These funding bodies include the Thailand Research Fund and the Thailand Development Research Institute. Research is a critical key that the Ministry of Education has focused on to enhance teaching and learning processes and encourage academic staff to explore their own practice.

Despite the growing importance of staff research productivity within the Thai tertiary context, the levels of research involvement of university staff members of each faculty are not equivalent. Intratat (2004) conducted a survey examining research issues of a total of 100 lecturers from eight faculties in King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (one of nine national research universities). This study showed that faculty staff, particularly in the fields of education and liberal arts, produced low research outputs compared to those teaching in the fields of science. Teaching workload was seen to be the most serious problem that affected their research involvement. However,

the study did not provide in-depth details such as participants' individual teaching expertise and research experiences, the average teaching workload the participants had, any in-depth explanation about specific problems or factors that affected staff conducting each type of research, including types of research funding, or their reasons for conducting research. Additional insights into these factors provided by the current study may provide more in-depth understanding of EFL lecturers' level of involvement in research.

Academic promotion also requires evidence of research for the production of knowledge (Suwanwela, 2008). Research is one of the main criteria for faculty staff to be appointed as assistant professor, associate professor, and professor (OHEC, 2007). Unlike the international context, however, research and publications are not part of the criteria for teaching staff in Thai higher education institutions to gain a tenured position. It could be said that this situation has progressively affected staff's research productivity. As Kirtikara (2001) points out, there are low research outputs by academic staff members in Thai universities. According to Kovilaikool, Suwankhetnikom, and Prachyapruit (2007) who conducted a case study research at the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University (one of nine national research universities in Thailand), less than 50% of faculty members undertook research. However, the study highlighted the development of a research culture in the faculty rather than gaining a deeper understanding of the individual staff research involvement. It may therefore be important to gain insights into how individual staff involves themselves in the research process, particularly in the EFL context which is the focus of the current study.

Higher education institutions in Thailand have been undergoing educational reform to strengthen their abilities in the global competition. The literature also identifies that most reported research outputs were made by only a few Thai universities (MOE, 2005). It appears that there are only nine out of 79 public universities that produce most of the research outputs. These nine universities are the national research universities which were selected based on their good records of research capability (OHEC, 2010). Overall, the total number of research outputs published by Thai scholars including EFL lecturers appears to be still low, although there is not enough information about EFL research focusing on language teaching and learning in Thai higher education institutions (Prapaisit de Segovia & Hardison, 2008).

Publications are seen as a barrier for Thai lecturers including EFL lecturers, especially if they want to publish in international journals. A search of university on-line databases including the database of the NRCT (2012) shows that research conducted by Thai scholars on teaching English is mostly conducted at the university level by either English lecturers or students studying a master's degree in areas of English such as Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, English as a Foreign Language, or Teaching English. Students' EFL research projects are mainly theses or independent study in partial fulfilment of the requirements for their master's degree. Most research (by both lecturers and students) is written in the Thai language and published in in-house university journals or university online databases.

It is interesting that most EFL teaching research projects are written in Thai although the research topic is English, so they cannot be published in international journals. This may come from the fact that English is not used extensively outside the EFL class. EFL lecturers have limited opportunities to develop their research skills in English as they get in touch with English only in university settings where the majority of academic staff members teaching English are Thais. As Wiriyachitra (2002) points out, Thai academic staff teaching English still face obstacles when conducting research such as insufficient English skills (in this case for international publications), a heavy teaching workload and inadequate research infrastructure.

In addition to having insufficient English skills, Thai lecturers teaching English also seem to have limited research knowledge. Syananondh and Wannaruk (1990) illustrated that EFL lecturers had limited research knowledge and little research experience. However, the study has concentrated on EFL lecturers' attitudes and knowledge concerning research methodology and statistics rather than investigating factors that could enhance the level of individual staff research capacity. Furthermore, the study did not include a discussion about the research culture of EFL lecturers which is the main focus of this current enquiry.

The situation that EFL lecturers in Thai universities had limited research knowledge has continued as can be seen in the study by Padgate and Syananondh (2006). They conducted a survey on the research status of 75 EFL lecturers in 23 public universities in Thailand. The study found that only 65% of the respondents had conducted research. Although it is acknowledged that the small sample size used may not be representative

of the population as a whole, the study showed that these EFL faculty staff had only an average level of research knowledge. This included research methodology and statistics for research. In addition, the three important reasons for conducting research were to fulfil their thirst of knowledge, to apply their research findings to their teaching, and to advance their academic status. Furthermore, these English lecturers lacked appropriate incentives including relevant facilities and infrastructures for conducting research. Although considerable research has been devoted to reasons for doing or not doing research, rather less attention has been paid to EFL lecturers' beliefs about their research involvement, their current teaching situations including workloads and factors in their work environment that may inhibit their research involvement or alternatively encourage them to conduct research. This is the focus of the current study.

2.5 University Research Quality

Quality is seen as an important element of research. Research, as a systematic process, has distinctive features which establish its credibility. Therefore, researchers must be concerned with research quality to ensure that research is systematic, testable, and logical (R. B. Burns, 2000). Broad descriptions of university research quality including the quality of research conducted in Thai higher education institutions are now discussed.

Research Quality in Higher Education

Research is considered to be the essence of higher education institutions so universities have to work hard to make sure that their research productivity meets academic standards (Jarvis, 2001). The concept of quality research was developed within a quantitative research tradition according to which research had been judged as to whether it demonstrated validity and reliability (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). Generally, the quality of research is defined by the degree to which it is empirical, systematic, valid, and reliable (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Researchers are required to ensure that their research results are rigorous, reasonable, and of quality. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) note that the design and procedures of research may be seen as a measurement of

the quality of research. Krathwohl (2009) asserts that researchers need to be concerned not only with research methods but also data collection and analysis including techniques that facilitate the research process and constitute good research.

The quality of university research is considered to be an important issue which means that academic staff members must be concerned about their research quality. Policy makers and practising educators, including the educational research community itself, are concerned to ensure that research generates useful and rigorous investigation by providing research data that are valid, reliable, and show value to other researchers as well as consumers of knowledge (Biesta, 2007; Lankshear & Knobel, 2004; Mertler & Charles, 2008).

The call for quality research outputs usually increases the role of research productivity within higher education institutions (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Hill & Haigh, 2011; Robertson & Bond, 2001). Therefore, a research assessment exercise is usually involved in universities' accreditation processes. In many countries, research assessments have been promoted to provide a systematic research process and ensure the quality of university research. For example, the UK shows its concern about the research quality of university staff by assessing and funding research through the 'Research Assessment Exercise' (RAE). This will be replaced by a new system, the 'Research Excellence Framework' (REF), in 2014 (REF, 2012). Australia also has a research assessment system called the 'Excellence in Research for Australia' (ERA) for assessing and funding research in order to promote the research capacity of university staff (ERA, 2011). In addition, New Zealand has promoted the 'Performance-Based Research Fund' (PBRF) to encourage and ensure the research excellence of university staff (PBRF, 2009). Furthermore, some Asian countries, such as Japan, have a third party evaluation system that gives funding to each higher education institution based on its achievement in teaching and research (Arimoto, 2010). It has been said that the quality of research can be determined by whether or not it establishes a systematic process of evaluation that is widely disseminated (McMillan, 2008). EFL research is not exempt from this quality feature.

Research Quality in Thai Higher Education including EFL Research

In Thailand, higher education institutions also focus on the quality of research and are concerned about the research process. The most outstanding policy on research quality for Thai higher education was started in 2009 which was considered to be “the year for the quality of Thai university education” (Iamphak, 2009, p. 7). This research policy, also known as the National Research University Initiative, was launched in 2009 aiming to achieve international standards of excellence. According to this initiative, universities are expected to play a vital role in producing research that responds to the country’s needs and improves Thailand’s competitiveness to help it become Asia’s education and research hub. This includes the development of a national research assessment exercise to ensure that university research is of quality. However, after three years the national research assessment system is still in the process of development.

In Thai universities, academic staff members, including EFL lecturers, are encouraged to produce quality research and their research must demonstrate a systematic approach (OHEC, 2010). However, the literature reveals that academic staff members do not receive continual development to enable them to produce quality research (Kirtikara, 2001; Sangnapaboworn, 2003; Svasti, 2011). Therefore, the staff development policies developed by the OHEC (2010) encourage universities to be the main agents to improve the quality of research and to strengthen the research capacity of staff members in their respective fields. Research is recognised as one of the learning processes in staff development (Sangnapaboworn, 2003). In addition, the OHEC also recommends that universities need to focus on their research productivity by emphasising the quality and effectiveness of research results. At the same time, faculty members are required to integrate research with their teaching practice and their research must respond to the university’s vision and missions. The OHEC also indicates that academic staff research outcomes must be of quality and benefit the country. It is recommended that staff disseminate their research findings at both national and international levels. Therefore, Thai higher education institutions have encouraged academic staff to publish their research findings to ensure that their research outcomes are of quality despite the fact that there is low level of Thai faculty staff research published in international journals.

In terms of the EFL context, Thai lecturers are required to conduct quality research and their research should meet the international standard. As Stotsky and Mall (2003) point

out, research in the area of English language teaching needs to be a “planned and methodical exploration of some aspects of language teaching and learning” (p. 134). However, EFL lecturers’ notion of quality research is believed to rely on the quantitative research tradition. Borg (2006b) ran a workshop in the UK with 29 experienced EFL teaching staff working in the UK and Europe. The workshop found that participants believed characteristics of good quality research related to objectivity, hypothesis testing, the control of variables, and the involvement of a large-scale sample. These four features fit within the norm of the quantitative research tradition. Similarly, Borg (2007) also conducted a survey of 50 English teaching staff at the university level in Turkey about their perception of quality research. The study found that participating staff defined quality research as having the same four features as those identified by the EFL teaching staff in the UK and Europe. Participating staff in the UK, Europe, and Turkey studies believed that research could be undertaken by employing only quantitative methods as these are accepted as reliable methods in scientific research. In addition, Borg (2008) surveyed 92 staff teaching English in the Netherlands regarding their research perspectives and found similar results about the characteristics of good quality research. The study showed that participants believed that research should meet scientific criteria. The research results also showed that participating English staff did not think that generalisation was a significant criterion of good quality research. However, Borg argued that good quality research did not have to be large-scale and quantitative but the researchers had to ensure that their research and its processes were systematic.

Although there is no literature about the quality of research among EFL lecturers in Thai universities, it could be said that Thai EFL lecturers may also believe that the quantitative method is the standard for quality research since Thai universities tend to promote research productivity and grant more research funding to staff in the fields of science than in other fields (OHEC, 2012b).

2.6 The Nature of University Research Culture

As there is a clear agreement in the literature about the *importance* of university research, it is significant to discuss and understand the *nature* of university research culture. In this section, aspects involved in university research cultures internationally and in Thailand are examined.

Building a Research Culture in Higher Education

The concept of a research culture in higher education is complex as faculties and departments have different research traditions (Holligan, et al., 2011). However, Deem and Lucas (2007) offer a useful definition of research cultures as “beliefs, rituals and values underpinning the pursuit of scientific capital” (p. 125). From this perspective, a research culture is related to the people within that culture. This fits with the concept of a research culture described by Cheetham (2007). He notes that “research is a learned behaviour” while “the research culture is the structure that gives that behaviour significance and that allows us to understand and evaluate the research activity” (p. 5). Similarly, Evans (2007) explains a research culture as “shared values, assumptions, beliefs, rituals and other forms of behaviour whose central focus is the acceptance and recognition of research practice and output as a valued, worthwhile and pre-eminent activity” (p. 2).

There is also a growing demand for research productivity within universities worldwide to meet the requirement of multiple sources such as funders (government or external agents), stakeholders, and international competition including the international ranking and status of universities (Bai, et al., 2008; Billot, 2011; Mintrom, 2008). This demand has caused a shift and led to the establishment and development of a stronger research culture within universities (Billot, 2011; Lawn, Deary, Bartholomew, & Brett, 2010).

In many countries universities have promoted strategies to enhance their research capacity such as access to internal funding, support from research mentors, and specific programmes to enhance research skills (Tynan & Garbett, 2007). Building a research culture requires systematic strategies and environmental factors that are seen to be important in stimulating and maintaining research productivity. Deem and Lucas (2007)

as well as Lawn et al. (2010) point out that strategies, such as standardising research procedures, research training courses for staff, or research funding opportunities, are crucial aspects in supporting a research culture within institutions.

Several studies have shown that environmental factors are the most important indicators of research productivity. For example, Bland and Ruffin (1992), Salazar-Clemeña and Almonte-Acosta (2007) as well as Bai and Hudson (2010) showed that environmental factors such as communication among researchers, a positive or negative atmosphere, could affect staff research productivity. These scholars stress the importance of environmental factors, pointing out that a research culture should consist of research resources, incentives, and support infrastructure such as a provision of a research unit, adequate research services, and facilities in different disciplines for the conduct of research. In addition, it has been suggested that leadership is one of the most crucial aspects of a research culture. The quality of leadership could encourage academic fellows to undertake quality research and increase staff research productivity (Hill & Haigh, 2011; Holligan, et al., 2011).

It can be said that research is a prominent aspect of universities where there is a widespread interest in building a systematic research culture among university staff members. At the same time, it has been said that university staff members need to be involved in research as one of their main duties due to the increasing emphasis on developing a research culture within higher education institutions (M. Baker, 2010). However, a research culture implies both pressure and support for faculty staff members (Billot, 2011). The impact of university research cultures has been explored by many research studies. Conducting research can benefit the quality of teaching but there may also be negative impacts for academic staff members who get involved in research (Healey & Jenkins, 2002). Many scholars mention the pressures faculty staff members encounter with their involvement in research where teaching and service are considered as regular duties. For example, Tynan and Garbett (2007) indicate that heavy administrative and teaching workloads affect both the physical and mental energy of staff members when developing their research projects. Harris (2008) also notes that faculty staff members are expected to provide excellence in teaching and service, so where research becomes more of a priority that puts pressure on faculty staff members, especially those who do not have much research experience.

It can be implied that there may be a negative relationship between research and teaching according to which academic staff members encounter a conflict of duties, especially in striking a balance between teaching and research. High teaching workloads and the demands of administrative roles (service) are seen as constraining factors for university staff members in undertaking a serious research project (Deem & Lucas, 2007). In particular, lecturers who are early career academics may primarily want to focus on teaching rather than on research (Deem & Lucas, 2007; Tynan & Garbett, 2007). Early career academic staff members often lack research networks and have low research credibility (Hemmings & Kay, 2009). In addition to a staff member's inexperience in research, younger staff members, who have less teaching experience, are also under pressure to adjust and balance their teaching workloads as well as carry on research projects including publication to meet the requirement of their institutions (Wood, 1990). It appears that the lack of research experience of academic staff members is one of the main factors for low research outputs (Hemmings & Kay, 2009).

University lecturers are under both internal and external pressures to strive for research excellence (Wood, 1990). In terms of psychological pressure, many studies suggest that lecturers have to change their beliefs about research and this compels them to change their work habits to produce research and publications (Allen & Shockley, 1996; Bai, et al., 2008; Houston, et al., 2010).

The literature illustrates that external pressures strongly influence staff research within a research culture. For example, academic staff members have to cope with external pressures which include time allocation, funding, or job security when they get involved in a research culture (Allen & Shockley, 1996; Billot, 2011). Wood (1990) also asserts that university staff members are under pressure to produce research publications to meet the requirements of appointment, promotion, and tenure within their institution.

At the same time, internal research funding is scarce, meaning that university staff members are forced to find external funding for their research projects (Bai, et al., 2008; Tynan & Garbett, 2007). Similarly, Blackburn et al. (1991) note that faculty staff members perceive pressures not only when conducting research but also when competing to obtain external research funding and publishing their research findings. Not only funding affects research productivity but pressures within the daily routine could also affect staff research.

In addition, time and resource constraints are found to be the major stresses for academic staff (Hill & Haigh, 2011; Wood, 1990). Swales (2004) identifies that extensive commuting time and problems of local travel are seen as obstacles to developing quality research projects. Access to research materials is found to be a key constraint that could limit lecturers from being research-engaged (Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2012).

It could be said that staff can be under pressure when they get involved in a research process within their research culture. However, a significant relationship has been found between a university research culture and the levels of EFL teaching staff conducting research. Borg (2007) carried out an investigation into the research engagement of 50 English teaching staff in Turkey and found that the research culture influenced the level of research involvement of staff teaching English. The findings showed three aspects that were seen to be important within the research culture: access to research publications, opportunities to learn about current research, and academic staff being expected by colleagues to engage in research. In addition, the study stressed time as the most influential factor. By this it is meant that the more a university research culture provides time for EFL teaching staff, the more their staff members carry out research.

Research Culture in Thai Higher Education Institutions

The concept of ‘research culture’ described by Thai scholars is quite similar to that used internationally. For example, Putwattana (2006) identifies a research culture as shared beliefs and attitudes towards the research of all people involved in the process of research. Kovilaikool et al. (2007) also define the concept of research culture in a similar way. They mention that a research culture involves shared attitudes, beliefs, and values of people in conducting research. So it can be implied that the Thai research culture fits with global perceptions, and has particular parallels with the international concept of a research culture defined by Evans (2007) as mentioned earlier.

Thai universities are in the process of developing a research culture. The Thai government including the Ministry of Education are implementing a research assessment process in order to promote the research capacity of university staff (SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010). Research is one of the key missions of Thai higher

education institutions. All Thai universities have research centres to promote the research excellence of staff and students. In addition, academic staff members undertake research as a performance requirement in addition to teaching and service (MOE, 2005). To improve the quality of the higher education system, promote quality assessment, and serve the emerging needs of the society and economy, the Thai government, through the Ministry of Education, has classified higher education institutions into four groups: a) research universities, b) comprehensive universities, c) liberal arts universities, and d) community colleges. The Ministry of Education has placed a special importance on research universities and nine public universities were chosen to be national research universities due to their good record of research outputs as mentioned in the previous section (also see Chapter 4).

Building a research culture in Thai universities is not new and Thai faculty staff members have a positive feeling about integrating research into their teaching practice. Tianpichet (1997) surveyed the faculty culture that existed in Thai higher education institutions of 1213 lecturers in four disciplines: biological science, science and technology, social science, and humanities. The study identified 12 faculty cultures in Thai universities: 1) academics and social service; 2) institutional attachment; 3) administrative-orientedness; 4) democratic; 5) faculty-students relatedness; 6) faculty relation-orientedness; 7) political and social mindedness; 8) religious affinity; 9) academic potential development; 10) professional attachment; 11) Thai culture preservation-mindedness; and 12) academic accomplishment orientedness. In Tianpichet's study, participants mentioned the importance of research and the research culture within two faculty cultures: the faculty culture of academic potential development, and the faculty culture of academic accomplishment orientedness. The study found that Thai academic staff believed that research could increase their professional knowledge and advance their academic status. At the same time, however, participants were concerned about enhancing their research culture as they usually participated in research activities including attending research seminars, being part of a research network, and conducting collaborative research. From Tianpichet's study, it could be said that faculty members believed a research culture was important and faculty staff members were concerned about their research productivity within their university research culture. However, the study did tend to give broad explanations upon all 12 faculty cultures found in higher education institutions. So this research

study is of limited value in providing a deeper understanding of the reasons for the level of individual academic staff members' research involvement.

Putwattana (2002) conducted a mixed methods investigation into the research culture within five public universities (four national research universities and one autonomous university under government supervision). The study was conducted with nine administrators and 1424 faculty staff in four disciplines: humanities, social science, biological science, and science and technology. Individual interviews were carried out with administrators and a questionnaire was used to collect data from faculty staff members. The study found that the current research culture was not appropriate for faculty members to produce quality research since most of them devoted their time to teaching and avoided undertaking research. Their research did not respond to the current needs and most of their research did not meet international standards. The study also found that universities lacked an effective research administration to enhance the research capacity of their staff. It seems that Thai universities promote standardised and effective strategies to enhance the research culture of Thai university staff members. However, the study suggested strategies in developing a research culture of Thai faculty staff only in two levels: the faculty level and the institutional level. Also, there is no discussion about the Thai government and its policy in the study which is seen to be a key factor in developing a research culture of Thai EFL lecturers. Therefore, the current study may provide insights into this area for developing an effective research culture. In addition, the current investigation may provide more in-depth understanding about EFL lecturers' research perceptions and their research culture by employing individual interviews and focus group interviews with EFL lecturers.

Na Wichian, Wongwanich, and Bowarnkitiwong (2009) also conducted a survey of 300 faculty members of the Pedagogy Departments from 16 public universities and found that the universities' support such as their research policy, data source, and research conducting equipment were correlated with the research productivity of the academic staff. However, the study found that the universities' support for research work was moderate as participating lecturers felt their universities did not provide enough research sources and equipment as well as lacking research policy. The study highlighted the faculty staff's thinking about researchership, research mind, volition control, and language ability as important factors influencing high research productivity. However, there has been no research into how the research culture for EFL

staff in higher education in Thailand might be enhanced. In addition, their research results relied on quantitative data and did not include in-depth information from faculty staff which is the focus of the current study.

Both Putwattana's and Na Wichian et al's research projects have discussed the importance of research and stressed the need to enhance research capacity through a research culture. However, the study by Putwattana (2002) suggested that staff's personal attitudes and value towards research were considered to be the most important factor that affected research productivity. Na Wichian et al. (2009), on the other hand, said that research competence may have more influence on research productivity than other factors. It has to be said that attitudes to and value that staff place on research may be key influences on their research productivity.

Both Putwattana's and Na Wichian et al's studies also noted that environmental factors such as research facility and infrastructure, or institutional support, could affect staff research productivity. Their findings seem to fit with a previous study by Pabhapote (1996). Pabhapote conducted an investigation of the factors related to the research productivity of 200 staff members from 11 faculties in Srinakarinwirot University (classified as a research university). The study found that environmental factors in the research culture, as well as staff personal characteristics positively correlated with the faculty staff's research productivity. The study concentrated on personal characteristics and environmental factors that related to the academic staff's research productivity, but excluded any other factors and did not mention beliefs and attitudes that might influence the level of individual staff research productivity within their research culture. Beliefs and attitudes about their research involvement are, however, likely to influence staff research productivity and the current study may provide some insights into this area.

Influences of Beliefs in the University Research Culture

It has been found that beliefs are likely to have an impact on the level of research involvement of faculty staff. As Pajares (1992) points out, attitudes and beliefs ultimately influence teaching staff's thoughts, decision-making, and behaviour in the educational context. Similarly, as Sikes (1992), Hollingsworth and Sockett (1994) as well as Timperley and Phillips (2003) indicate, beliefs encourage teachers' actions or

the ways they develop professional cultures, and this has to include the research culture in a university.

Beliefs play an important role in the research work of academic staff. Salazar-Clemeña and Almonte-Acosta (2007) assert that a strong belief in research endeavour is important in the development of a research culture. This means that high or low levels of EFL research outputs may be influenced by lecturers' beliefs towards their research. Therefore, it will be interesting to see how the beliefs of university lecturers teaching English in this study influence their involvement in the process of research.

Beliefs are considered to be one of the major components that influence research practice and form a research culture. Zeuli and Tiezzi (1993) showed that teaching staff members hold different beliefs towards research. For instance, some staff may find research irrelevant to their work while other teaching staff members feel research findings are useful and believe that research can illuminate their teaching practice. In addition, beliefs and the way lecturers get involved in research are seen to be related. As Duffee and Aikenhead (1992) points out, past experiences, current work situation, and vision, are seen as major components which contribute to a set of beliefs and values. This means that the level of research involvement of individual staff may be influenced by the different set of beliefs that each staff member holds. Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981) as well as Decker and Rimm-Kaufman (2008) also assert that years of experience in education programmes can influence beliefs. Therefore, it is significant for the current enquiry to study what factors may influence faculty staff members' beliefs towards their research practice which ultimately helps form a university research culture.

It is likely that a university research culture can be described as strong or weak depending on the beliefs, attitudes, and values that exist within it. For example, Pratt et al. (1999) made an investigation into the development of a research culture of the faculty staff members in the School of Management Studies at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. The study identified that beliefs held by staff influenced their attitudes and behaviours regarding their research involvement. In addition, Pratt et al. (1999) as well as Williams, Dobson, and Walters (1993) indicate five sets of beliefs that contribute to a culture in regard to research: the nature of the organisational environment; acceptable levels of organisational performance; what is necessary for the

organisation's success; the organisation itself; and work behaviour. The study also indicates that these five sets of beliefs have an impact towards the university research culture. However, neither study included any discussion about the beliefs of academic staff teaching English within a university research culture which is the focus of the current study.

It can be said that the beliefs teachers hold define the way they think and feel about their work which could influence their teaching practice and affect the way they conduct research. In the EFL university context, beliefs may influence the way lecturers act when they get involved in a research process such as how they choose the type of research method, how they conduct research and gain funding, or what factors they believe could enhance their research capacity.

Studies that have analysed the research culture of Thai academic staff stressed the importance of research culture in Thai higher education institutions. However, their research findings tended to rely on quantitative data rather than on providing deeper understanding of individual academic staff involvement in research within a research culture. In addition, there has been no discussion about the research culture of lecturers teaching English in terms of their beliefs and attitudes regarding their research involvement. While English plays a crucial part in higher education, there are few studies on this published by Thai scholars at the international level. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the research culture of faculty staff members teaching English in Thai higher education institutions including their beliefs, attitudes, and values about being involved in research activities within their institutions.

2.7 Summary

Research plays a significant role in higher education institutions. There are various types of research conducted in higher education institutions depending on the research traditions of the faculties within universities. University research can be either pure or applied research and can employ a range of methods such as quantitative, qualitative, or other methodologies. Even though pure research is considered to be the core focus of universities, there is an increasing demand for applied research, particularly in the field of education and including EFL research. Researchers are being encouraged to conduct

both pure and applied research as they are seen to be linked to government priorities and promote national economic development. Similarly, the Thai government and the universities have encouraged their academic staff to conduct both pure and applied research due to the low level of research outputs of faculty members. University staff members have an opportunity to apply for university research funding or apply for external funding granted by external agents such as government sectors. However, EFL research seems to have a low status as it receives less funding compared to research in other field, particularly research in the fields of science and technology,

Higher education institutions value research to strengthen their position and reputation (Alexander, 2000). University research, at the same time, has a significant impact on the national wealth as it can be used in terms of increasing a university's world ranking to attract more international students to study in the university. Therefore, research has a prominent position in the university and it is regarded as one of the key missions of universities worldwide as well as Thai universities. Academic staff members are required to conduct research as part of their duties. They are also encouraged to undertake research to meet the needs of the university which means that their research productivity must promote the university's reputation, and to meet the requirements of funders such as the university itself or external agents. It can be said that university research plays an important position not only in the university but also at the national and international levels, so academic staff members are encouraged to conduct research to meet the needs of university and global markets. The literature indicates that research is regarded as important to a university's mission and is part of academic duties as well as influencing individual academic promotions and their ability to gain tenured positions. However, research is not part of the criteria for a tenured position in Thai higher education institutions.

Universities in many countries including Thailand are concerned about the quality of staff research and staff members are required to conduct systematic research following the scientific inquiry process. Thailand is in the process of developing a national research assessment which emphasises the importance of research within higher education institutions. Thai faculty staff members are also encouraged to produce research and publish their findings at national and international levels to ensure the quality of research.

From the literature, it can be seen that higher education in Thailand and other countries places particular importance on research in the fields of technology and innovation. However, university research is also conducted in the field of education including EFL. In the EFL teaching context, the literature has shown that researchers are mainly interested in applied linguistics. The Thai government has promoted a staff development policy to encourage university lecturers including EFL lecturers to get involved in the research process. However, the research outputs of EFL lecturers are still lower than in other fields and this may be influenced by many factors such as their beliefs towards research, or their research environment and culture.

The growing demand for faculty staff research productivity has raised the importance of developing a research culture within universities worldwide. In Thailand, the government and universities have also encouraged their academic staff members to conduct research and promote a university research culture. It can be seen that Thai universities as well as faculty staff members are concerned about the academic staff research outputs and also about the research culture within their institutions.

As there is no evidence about a research culture among EFL lecturers in Thailand, focusing on and investigating the research culture including the beliefs and attitudes of EFL lecturers may identify their research practice within their research culture which is seen as an important factor in developing a supportive research culture and enhancing the research capacity of EFL lecturers in Thailand. Thus, the aim of this study is to investigate how the research culture is perceived by EFL lecturers in Thai universities.

In order to gain deeper understanding into the current enquiry, a number of sub-questions were generated to assist the main research question, “What is the research culture of EFL lecturers in Thai universities?”. These sub-questions are:

1. What are EFL lecturers' perceptions about the value of their research involvement?
2. What type of research do EFL lecturers prefer?
3. What are the factors influencing EFL lecturers' research involvement?
4. What is the position of EFL research in Thai and international contexts?

The main research question and sub-questions were developed to establish the boundaries of the study as well as to provide sufficient flexibility to investigate the current inquiry in a more in-depth way (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. vi). Research questions in a qualitative study focus on humans and their interaction in social settings including their personal view and aspects of their environment (Lichtman, 2006). Qualitative research questions are the guide to inquiry and are open to the research results in which researchers should not define and formulate research questions (Flick, 2002). Luttrell (2010) also asserts that qualitative research questions direct the way for researchers to move forward and importantly “questions typically evolve along the way” (p. 6). Therefore, the research questions presented in this study are the result of engagement with a variety of questions throughout the research process in which less important questions were excluded.

A qualitative research design was ultimately utilised in the current study as it was seen to be the most suitable design to answer the main research question and sub-questions. The rationale for the selection of a qualitative design and overall research methodology and procedure will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall approach and design of the investigation. This chapter is divided into two major parts: research methodology and research design. The first part of the chapter presents the qualitative research methodology for this investigation, drawing on the key characteristics of the qualitative research tradition. It also includes an explanation of the qualitative case study research approach used in this study.

The second part of this chapter describes the way in which the study was designed and undertaken. This part commences with an outline of the research schedule and the investigating procedures, beginning with the rationale for the selection of participants, and followed by the research procedure for each of the four phases of data collection. This is followed by a description of the processes used in analysing and interpreting the data. Next, a discussion of significant ethical issues involved in the study is presented. The researcher's positioning, both in individual interviews and in the focus group, is clarified at the end of the chapter.

3.2 The Qualitative Research Paradigm for the Study

In this investigation, the qualitative research tradition was selected as the most appropriate method to provide both an in-depth description and understanding of the research culture of lecturers teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) within Thai universities.

The decision was based on three key characteristics of the qualitative research approach that were seen as useful to the current study: qualitative research focuses on (1) understanding lived experiences and constructing the nature of reality; (2) gaining in-depth information; and (3) capturing the complexity of human phenomena and evolving understanding of contexts.

Understanding lived experiences and constructing the nature of reality

In order to investigate the research culture of EFL lecturers in Thai universities, it is significant to study the individuals' beliefs, perceptions and experiences that influence their involvement in research. This enquiry fits with the qualitative research tradition as qualitative research represents lived experiences "where individual belief and action intersect with culture" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 12).

The current study aimed to obtain in-depth data and present the real voices of EFL lecturers in Thai universities and their EFL university research contexts. The choice of a qualitative design is appropriate as qualitative research involves the study of things that exist but by no means changes anything by using artificial situations or experiences (Lichtman, 2006). It is concerned with individual life in immediate situations (Janesick, 2003). Viewpoints of the participants involved in the study were seen as important aspects and the researcher was concerned about accessing insights into participants' reality as discussed in Section 3.7 on respect for truth.

Gaining in-depth information

The current study aimed to gain in-depth information from EFL lecturers' perspectives, which fits with the major characteristics of qualitative research. Qualitative research is a naturalistic design aiming to provide in-depth information and understanding of human phenomena (R. B. Burns, 2000; Burton & Bartlett, 2009; McMillan, 2008; Punch, 2009). Qualitative researchers endeavour to study the inner experience of participants through or within their culture (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). These aspects are useful for this current study which investigates the perspectives of EFL lecturers with regard to their research involvement.

In contrast, quantitative research is not aimed to study participants' inner experiences (Mertens, 1998). While qualitative research is concerned with rich descriptions, quantitative research aims to study particularly cause and effect relationships (Kervin, Vialle, Herrington, & Okely, 2006), and to focus on measurable variables (Merriam, 1998; Steckler, McLeroy, Goodman, Bird, & McCormick, 1992). While the current study aimed to explore the research cultures of EFL lecturers in Thai universities,

qualitative research was thought to be a useful method as it helped the researcher to understand and interpret the experience of participants within their contexts.

Capturing the complexity of human phenomena and evolving understanding of contexts

The current study involved a number of participants within their university contexts as well as the wider international and Thai research contexts. It is significant for the researcher to evolve understanding of the complexities of these contexts and how factors within in this affect the research culture of EFL lecturers. Krathwohl (2009) asserts that qualitative research is suitable for investigating specific and complex phenomena about which there is little knowledge. In addition, researchers pay attention to the context based on the notion of “context sensitivity” (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009, p. 14), in which researchers concentrate on holistic interpretation of the total context within which physical and social actions occur (J. P. Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). There have been debates among scholars as to whether quantitative methods could provide a full understanding of human phenomena (de Landsheere, 1999; McMillan, 2008), since quantitative researchers are less interested in capturing participants’ perspectives and claim to remove themselves from the situations in which they undertake research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). However, it acknowledges that quantitative researchers cannot remove themselves from the data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; J. P. Gall, et al., 2005; Lichtman, 2013).

Qualitative research requires the researcher to stay in the setting to study the relationships within cultures and gain a ‘holistic’ overview of the context under study (Janesick, 2003; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, the researcher approached the two university settings under study in order to understand the institutional contexts of which participants were a part. In addition, by conducting this investigation, the researcher could not avoid intruding into some people’s lives which can bring forth some ethical issues involved in the study (see Section 3.7). This is the nature of the overall process of the current study. The researcher was the key instrument of a study that aims to gain in-depth understanding of the research context of EFL lecturers.

As this current investigation aimed to gain insights into how lecturers teaching English in Thai universities view their research culture, a qualitative research design was seen to

be best suited because it is designed to provide a meaningful understanding of people and their context. Qualitative researchers approach the context with the assumption that nothing is unimportant (McMillan, 2008). Therefore, in the current investigation, the researcher studied not only EFL lecturers' perspectives, but also the broader international and Thai contexts for EFL research.

3.3 The Case Study Research Approach

Within the broad qualitative research paradigm, a case study approach was chosen as the most suitable design to answer the research questions of the current study which aimed to gain in-depth insights into the research culture of Thai lecturers teaching English in a Thai university context. As Yin (2003) asserts, a case study is a strategy used to "contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social, political, and related phenomena"(p. 1) In this study, the researcher interacted with study participants in their real-life-contexts, and studied other related aspects in order to provide insights into the EFL research culture. This process provided rich and intensive analysis of the EFL research context while other designs, particularly those that are quantitative, may be more limited in focus (Merriam, 1998).

A case is a bounded system and a case serves as the unit of analysis in which the aspect of phenomenon (the focus) will be studied across one or more cases (M. D. Gall, et al., 2007; Yin, 2012). In this study, the phenomenon (the focus) was the research culture of EFL lecturers in a Thai university context. The researcher also chose to study several cases which occurred in a bounded context in order to gain a better understanding of the EFL research context under the study. Cases, in the current study, included two Thai university settings (Rak University and Jaidee University) and their EFL staff, as well as the wider Thai and international research cultures. By studying several cases, the researcher could gain an in-depth understanding of a case including the complexity of its natural context (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Punch, 2009). The bounded case study design of the current study is depicted in Figure 3.1.

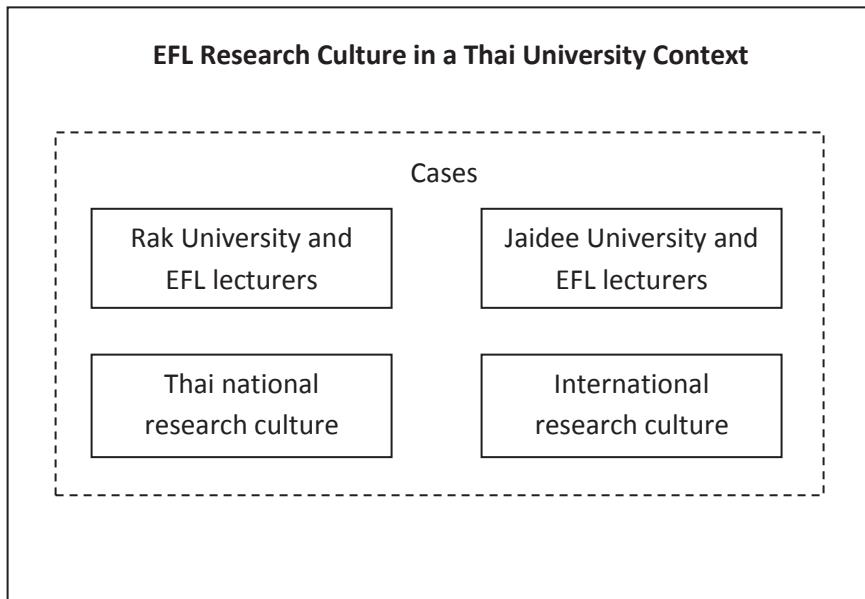


Figure 3.1 The bounded case study design

As shown in Figure 3.1, the focus of the study was on the EFL research culture in a Thai university context and the researcher chose to study specific cases in order to gain better understanding within it. In particular, this study firstly focused on studying a number of individual cases in-depth in one context (Rak University); then explored the same issues with a group in another context (Jaidee University); and finally broadened understanding of the links between the international and wider Thai research cultures. The current investigation not only aimed to explore individual participants perspectives towards their research involvement but also endeavoured to learn more about the broader context of the university research cultures of EFL lecturers in Thailand and internationally. The individual cases were chosen in order to gain a better understanding and provide a broader view of the EFL research culture of the current study as suggested by Berg (2009), R. B. Burns (2000), McDonough and McDonough (1997), Punch (2009), and Stake (1995, 2006).

In this study, the researcher looked at different cases in order to provide rich insights into the EFL research culture, not primarily to establish a generalisation through comparing cases. However, there is a possibility for cases to be included for comparative reasons which enhances the generalisability of the study (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). This was done in phase three. However, the researcher refined the case analysis

throughout the current study to enable generalisation to be progressively developed over time and interpretation to be modified along the way as recommended by Stake (1995).

Context is also important in a case study. Therefore, as suggested by Mertens (2005a), the researcher paid close attention to the types of information collected, including the nature of the cases, their historical background, and physical settings.

The overall framework of the research design is now explained below.

3.4The Research Schedule

Informed consent procedures with the universities and EFL lecturers began in the second semester of the Thai 2009 academic year (November, 2009). The data collection took place in 2010. The study involved four phases of data collection. Data from phases one, two, and three were collected from EFL lecturers using individual and focus group interview techniques as well as document analysis, while the data in phase four came from document analysis to broaden the case study context (see Table 3.1). A total of 19 participating lecturers teaching English from two Thai universities were involved in the first three phases of the study.

Phase	Approach	Time	Method	Number of Participants	Data Collection Focus	Procedures
(1) Rak University	Exploratory interviews	14-17 March 2010	Individual interview	13 Thai EFL lecturers	• Participants' work histories (teaching and research involvement)	• A sheet of 15 activities related to the domains of responsibility, expertise, and control • Vignettes about teacher researchers
	Four individual case studies	19-21 July 2010	Individual interview (+ document analysis)	4 Thai EFL lecturers selected from phase one	• Research knowledge • Detailed experiences in relation to teaching and research • Factors influencing teacher researchers' motivation	• Cards of qualitative and quantitative features • A chart of types of research • A diagram of views on teaching and research • New vignettes about teacher researchers
(3) Jaidee University	Focus group	22 October 2010	Focus group interview (+ document analysis)	1 (6 Thai EFL lecturers from a different university setting)	• Validation of data from phase one and phase two	• Research knowledge and experiences • Factors influencing teacher researchers' motivation in this context
(4) International and Thai contexts	Document analysis	September- October 2011	Document analysis	-	• The international research culture • The Thai research culture	-

Table 3.1

The Data Collection Schedule

To avoid disrupting participating EFL lecturers while they were teaching classes, individual and focus group interviews were conducted during the Thai semester breaks. The first phase explored 13 participants' work histories including their EFL teaching and research background. This phase was conducted during the semester break at the start of 2010. The second phase was conducted with a small sub-set of four participants from phase one to gain more in-depth insights into participants' perspectives. It was conducted during the first mid-semester break of the 2010 academic year. The third phase aimed to explore the beliefs of EFL lecturers about conducting research in a different context. This phase was conducted with six participants (EFL lecturers at another university) in a focus group which is an interview style designed for small groups with similar types of participants (Berg, 2009; Krueger, 2002). It was conducted during the first full semester break of the 2010 academic year. The last phase took place after initial data analysis of phases one to three, and focused on document analysis to broaden understanding of the research contexts in both international and Thai research cultures.

3.5 Investigating Procedures

In this investigation, the researcher used a variety of sources of data and multiple methods of data collection to enhance understanding of the case under study. This included the use of individual and focus group interviews as well as document analysis. Interview methods and analyses of documents and reports are common methods used in a case study (Benbasat, Goldstein, & Mead, 1987; McMillan, 2008; Punch, 2009; Stake, 2006). In phases one and two of the study, the researcher utilised individual interviews with the participating EFL lecturers in Rak University (pseudonym). In phase three, a focus group was selected as the main method to collect data from EFL lecturers in Jaidee University (pseudonym). To assist the researcher to understand the broader case study context, phase four was conducted entirely through document analysis. However, it should be noted that document analysis was also employed in the earlier phases to provide a profile of each university setting (information on the document analysis procedure is provided more fully in the section on Phase Four). These tools are described more fully in the four phases of data collection.

In this section, the criteria to select participants are described. Then the four phases of data collection are clarified.

Selection of Cases: General Criteria

The researcher identified general criteria to select participants and ask for their engagement including permission for collecting data from their universities. In this study, the researcher selected cases following a purposeful sampling process. In particular, the researcher selected cases “who are likely to be information-rich” (J. P. Gall, et al., 2005, p. 310).

The rationale behind the selection of the two universities and the EFL lecturers are now examined.

Selection of University Case Studies

The selection of the participating universities was made upon the availability and numbers of relevant participants in each university. The researcher made enquiries (through contact people) in three universities located in the northern part of Thailand, asking about the total number of staff teaching English, including the staff’s background in teaching and conducting research. It was found that the academic staff in two universities conducted research while the academic staff in the third university rarely conducted research. Therefore, the researcher selected the first two universities.

Even though the sample size in qualitative study is small, the researcher selected cases through purposeful sampling, with an intention of developing “deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied” (M. D. Gall, et al., 2007, p. 178). In the current study, the first two universities were selected to allow the researcher to obtain data needed to gain insights into the research culture of EFL lecturers in Thai universities. The literature suggests that the researcher should select participants that suit the aim of the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). As both universities had EFL lecturers who had experience in conducting research within their institutions, this aspect suited the purpose of the study and ensured that the researcher obtained data that could provide important

perspectives with regard to the research cultures in each of the contexts. Therefore, the two selected universities were approached and provided access for the researcher to collect data from their academic staff members.

The participating universities in phases one to three shared some similarities in terms of their status, missions and settings (see Chapter 5 and 6). Both of them were well-known public universities, and one of their core missions was research excellence. They both promoted themselves as comprehensive universities by providing study programmes in both postgraduate and undergraduate degree programmes in their respective fields such as biological science, humanities, and technologies (OHEC, 2010).

In phase four, the researcher studied research trends from English-speaking countries and non-English-speaking countries. The United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, and New Zealand were selected as representatives of English-speaking countries. China, Japan, and Thailand were selected as representatives of non-English-speaking countries. All of these countries were selected as they have promoted and focused on the importance of academic staff research, and building research cultures in higher educational institutions, and factors that are central to this study (see Chapter 4).

Selection of EFL Lecturer Case Studies

It was important for the researcher to carefully select participating EFL lecturers who were seen to aid the inquiry as “case study research is not sampling research” (Stake, 1995, p. 4). Stake (2006) as well as M. D. Gall et al. (2007) note that the major criteria to select cases are that cases should provide opportunities to learn about complexity and contexts. Thus the cases involved in this study were selected based on this suggestion. Using purposeful sampling, the researcher selected EFL lecturers who had experience in conducting research to participate in the current study. This selection ensured that the researcher could obtain useful data from the target group of participants who had specific knowledge with regard to their research involvement.

In order to obtain a deep understanding of the involvement with research of lecturers teaching English in Thailand, three general criteria were established for participating EFL lecturers. Firstly, it was decided that each participating EFL lecturer should have a

master's degree in English, have completed at least one independent research project or joint research project at their institution, and be available during the semester break. These criteria aimed to ensure that the researcher could obtain significant data relevant to the research questions. It was also important that the participating lecturers had a credible research background and knowledge. Therefore, all participants had to hold a master's degree. This qualification is held by the majority of EFL staff in Thai higher education institutions (Thai's Higher Education for All, 2010). Hence, participants were representative of the wider population of EFL lecturers in Thai universities. In studying a master's degree, they would have taken a course about research. This ensured that participating lecturers had previously studied research and its process and had enough research knowledge to carry out research at their own institution. Secondly, participating EFL lecturers had to have experience in conducting research at their institution, either individually or in a joint research project. In addition to the three general criteria for participant selection, there were also some specific criteria for participant selection in each phase. These will be explained in the next section.

The 19 EFL lecturers who took part in the study (including individual and focus group participants) had varying lengths of teaching experience (from four months to 15 years) as well as a range of research experience (having conducted from one to five research projects at their own universities).

Strategies and techniques used in qualitative research are flexible and researchers can develop and use a variety of tools to collect data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; J. P. Gall, et al., 2005). In the current study, the researcher developed specific tools to collect data. These tools were used to assist the interviews and to make sure that the researcher captured the participants' perspectives (with regard to their research involvement) accurately and effectively (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The procedures and the specific tools used in each phase of the data collection in this investigation will now be elaborated on in detail.

Phase One: Exploratory Interviews

During the first phase of the study, the major technique to gather data was semi-structured interviews. Two other tools were also employed in this phase to assist the

interviews. Interviewing is necessary in qualitative study as it enables the researcher “to enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton, 1990, p. 196), and to investigate past and present events including feelings and thoughts that cannot be accessed through other techniques such as observation (Merriam, 1998).

It was decided to utilise semi-structured individual interviews in the study as it allowed the researcher to control the direction of the interview, to have the flexibility to change the order of the research questions, and to have more chance to acquire extensive follow-up responses (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). By using a semi-structured interview format in this study, the researcher could therefore gain more in-depth information than by using a structured interview (Berg, 2009).

Each participant was interviewed one time in this phase. Participants were interviewed individually and could choose to be interviewed in English or in Thai. Only one participating lecturer in phase one chose to be interviewed in English, the other 12 participants chose to be interviewed in Thai. The interview questions focused on the participants’ work histories particularly their teaching and research involvement (see Appendix 1). The questions included two broad aspects: teaching background and first experience in conducting research. In particular, participants were asked about their length of teaching and details of their academic teaching workloads. Then participants were asked about their experience and role in conducting their first research including their opinion about a teacher researcher’s role. Asking about the participants’ work histories was important as it helped establish the context of the participants’ experience (Schuman, 1982; Seidman, 2006). In addition, although there were some predetermined questions, the researcher as an interviewer could still probe, and follow up on, clues and comments from the participants, and develop unanticipated lines of enquiry (Weir & Roberts, 1994).

There were two tools which assisted in the phase one interviews: a sheet of 15 activities related to beliefs, and vignettes.

A sheet of 15 activities related to beliefs

One tool employed in this phase was a sheet of 15 activities used to assist the semi-structured interviews. The researcher presented the participants with a sheet listing 15

activities related to the domains of responsibility, expertise, and control (see Appendix 2). This list was adapted from the three domains of activities that reflect teachers' beliefs as identified by Eisenhart, Shrum, Harding, and Cuthbert (1988). Nine items (items 1 to 6, 8, 10, and 15) fit with the domain in which teachers illustrate positive feelings about their professional activities. Four items (items 9, and 11 to 13) fit with the problematic domain in which teachers are not sure about their professional activities. The last two items (items 7 and 14) fit with the domain in which teachers express negative feelings about their professional activities.

The participants were asked to choose and explain five important activities from the list that illustrated their key area of responsibility as a teacher and a researcher. This process assisted the researcher to gain insights into the participants' perspectives about conducting research including their lecturers' role.

Vignettes

Six vignettes were used to further draw out participants' beliefs about and attitudes towards their research work. These vignettes were developed by adopting an idea from Zeuli and Tiezzi (1993) who designed vignettes about the influence of research. Their vignettes represented a way teachers can think about research's influence, or its lack of influence. In their vignettes, teachers did not conduct research by themselves. Each vignette used in the current study was adapted by focusing on the influence of research and how lecturers get involved in the research process. Each vignette represented a range of views of lecturers about their roles in conducting research; ranging from lecturers who conduct research to meet the university requirement to lecturers who conduct research as part of their teaching duties. Vignettes used in this study were piloted with Thai lecturers studying towards a PhD at a New Zealand university. These Thai lecturers shared some similarities with participants in the study in that they all had experience in conducting research at their universities in Thailand.

In the first phase of the study, each participant was asked to present his/her opinion on two vignettes. The researcher selected two vignettes that were most like the participant. The participant was asked to read each vignette and explain what they thought about the person in that vignette, whether it was similar or different to them and in what ways.

The vignettes were also translated into the Thai language for those participants who wanted to be interviewed in Thai. Most of the participants requested Thai vignettes, with only one participant choosing English vignettes. An example of one vignette employed in the study is shown below (see Appendix 3 for the full set of vignettes).

Lawan first conducted research when her colleagues asked her to join a project. Lawan saw that it would be easy for her to join that project rather than conducting research by herself because she did not have any experience in doing research. By joining in the project, she noticed that the research process is complicated and the researcher's job is to disseminate the finding. However, the joint project which took two years satisfied the research committee at her university. Lawan decided to undertake an individual project. She applied for research funding from the university and began to conduct research with her students from one class. Conducting her own project, Lawan could manage her time with the teaching load. The other four classes, which she was responsible for, were also taught based on the research process similar to the group of students chosen in the research. By doing this, she could save time in preparing the class lesson. She integrated her teaching with research as she felt this could improve her teaching and enhance the students' achievement.

The researcher took notes in addition to audio recording the interviews. In this phase, the researcher met the participants for the first time, so it was important to create trust and rapport between the researcher and the participants in order to obtain in-depth insights into the participants' views about conducting research (see Section 3.8 on establishing rapport). After transcribing and carrying out the initial analyses of transcribed data obtained from this phase, four participants were selected and invited to participate in the next phase of this investigation.

Phase Two: The Four Individual Case Studies

In phase two, the researcher employed semi-structured interviews as the major investigating tool. Four participants were selected from phase one to be re-interviewed in phase two. These four participants represented a range of views about conducting research, as identified in the first phase. The four participants who agreed to participate in the second phase were interviewed during the first mid-semester break of the 2010 academic year.

Semi-structured interviews were employed to broaden the researcher's understanding of the participants' perspectives. As in phase one, the use of semi-structured interviews in

this phase was seen as useful as it allowed the researcher to prepare predetermined questions based on preliminary data (phase one) and to probe to gain more in-depth information from participants, which could not be done through a structured interview (Berg, 2009). Also, as in phase one, the participants were interviewed individually. However, in this phase, all participants were interviewed in Thai since it was found that one participant in the previous phase could not explain his ideas effectively by using English. To avoid any misunderstanding, all four participants were interviewed in Thai and the interviews were later translated into English.

The second phase interview questions included three broad aspects: background of research knowledge, the details of research experience, and motivation in undertaking research. In particular, the questions in this phase focused on participants' research knowledge and skill, the details of their experience in conducting past and present research including their work situation, and factors that influenced their motivation as lecturers who undertake research (see Appendix 4). The use of these questions helped the researcher to draw out concrete details of the participants' research experience and perspectives. Seidman (2006) notes that interview questions focusing on participants' details of experience, participants' opinions could be built. This was seen to be useful in the current study as participants put their experience within the context of their work lives. Also, the questions allowed the four participants to reconstruct the details of their teaching and research experience within their university context and to reflect on the meaning of their experience (Schuman, 1982; Seidman, 2006).

Four specific tools also assisted in obtaining data from the four participants: a) cards showing quantitative and qualitative features; b) a chart of research types; c) a diagram of a continuum of feelings towards teaching and research; and d) a vignette. The four tools which assisted the interviews in phase two are described in detail below.

Cards showing quantitative and qualitative features

To assist the semi-structured interviews, the researcher also asked each participant to choose from cards consisting of qualitative and quantitative features (see Appendix 5). These cards were designed by the researcher to illustrate four key features: purpose, researcher role, data collection techniques, and types of analysis, of both qualitative and

quantitative research, which were introduced by McMillan and Schumacher (2010). Participants were asked to discuss their understanding about the research features represented in their selected cards. In this process, each participant had a chance to read each card and could ask for clarification from the researcher. While using this technique, the researcher further explained the features of the cards using Thai to facilitate the participants' discussion about their research knowledge. Then each participant selected any cards that they thought were the components of research they used, based on their understanding. This activity was useful as it helped the researcher to obtain the participants' background of research knowledge and to understand more about their research perceptions.

A chart of research types

The participants were also shown a chart consisting of various types of research in education and the features of each to further draw out their details of research experience. Each participant was asked to select and explain the types of research they preferred to conduct (see Appendix 6). This chart consisted of seven types of research in the field of education: 1) experimental research, 2) correlational research, 3) causal-comparative research, 4) survey research, 5) ethnographic research, 6) historical research, and 7) action research, which were introduced by Fraenkel and Wallen (2006). The participants were also allowed to add any additional types of research they were familiar with that were not illustrated in the chart. The use of this chart helped the researcher to obtain additional insights into participants' research experience and their background of research knowledge.

A diagram of a continuum of feelings towards teaching and research

Towards the end of the phase two interview, participants were shown a diagram of views on teaching and research that the researcher developed from data obtained in the earlier phase. The diagram was developed based on a diagram by Michelle Crabill and Gail V. Ritchie which illustrated that the roles of teacher and researcher are interrelated (cited in Lassonde, Ritchie, & Fox, 2007). From this diagram, a continuum of feelings about research and teaching was developed based on the 13 participants' ideas in phase

one. Participants, in the second phase, looked at the continuum and were asked to choose and explain which one (or more) best described the development of their feelings when they got involved in research (see Appendix 7).

This tool helped the participants discuss their attitudes about research and how their feelings about their roles as lecturers developed. In addition, this diagram helped update the participants' point of view about their research involvement which they had stated in phase one.

Vignette

Finally, one more vignette was used in addition to the interview questions about factors that influenced participants' motivation as lecturers who undertake research. The vignette represented one way that lecturers think about their role as teacher researchers. This vignette was adapted from responses to the six vignettes used in phase one. Participants were allowed to choose either an English or Thai version of the vignette. The use of the vignette assisted the researcher to gain more in-depth insights into participants' research perspectives and to find further factors that influenced their motivation in conducting research. The vignette employed in this phase is shown below.

Punna was a lecturer who was interested in conducting university classroom research aiming to improve teachers and students at the classroom level. Also, she wanted to conduct research because it was a part of academic promotion. However, due to her teaching workload, she found that it was difficult to conduct research effectively. Conducting research also affected her way of life. Punna felt that she would be able to conduct more effective research if she had a suitable teaching workload of between 12 and 15 hours per week. Nevertheless she could not reduce her teaching workload as it affected her monthly income. Through her research experience, she encountered many problems such as heavy teaching workload, or insufficient research funding. Moreover, the process of applying for research funding including permission to conduct research within her institution was complicated and took time.

ปั้นนาเป็นอาจารย์นักวิจัยที่มีความสนใจในงานวิจัยแบบขั้นเรียนซึ่งมีป้าหมายเพื่อพัฒนาการสอนและเพิ่มพูนศักดิภาพของนักศึกษา โดยอนุกฤษณ์ ไปจากความสนใจแล้วปั้นนาต้องการทำงานวิจัย เพราะถือเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการเลื่อนตำแหน่งในสถาบันที่สังกัดอยู่ อุ่งไร่คือปั้นนาพบว่าการรายงานสอนที่ได้รับนั้นค่อนข้างมากมาก ทำให้ขาดดือการพัฒนางานวิจัย ห้ามประสิตวิภาค และการเบ่งเวลาเพื่อทำงานวิจัยนั้นยังกระทบต่อการดำเนินเรื่องประจําวันของตนเองอีกด้วย ซึ่งจากฐานนี้ปั้นนาฝึกความคิดเห็นว่าการจะทำงานวิจัยให้ได้อุ่งไร่คือผู้ที่มีประสิตวิภาค นั้นการรายงานสอนที่ได้รับควรไม่มาก 12 ถึง 15 ชั่วโมง. ต่อสัปดาห์ อุ่งไร่คือปั้นนาไม่สามารถที่จะลดภาระงานสอนของตนลงได้เนื่องจากจะไปกระทบต่อรายได้ที่ได้รับจากการสอน ตลอดประสิตวิภาคการทำงานวิจัยนั้นปั้นนามักพบปัญหาซึ่งเกี่ยวเนื่องมาจากภาระงานสอนที่เบอะ และลงทุนสนับสนุนวิจัยที่ไม่เทียบพอด้วยความต้องการ อีกทั้งการขอทุนสนับสนุนงานวิจัยก็มีขั้นตอนที่ค่อนข้างอีกและใช้เวลานาน

Each interview took about one hour. All interviews were conducted in Thai, audio-recorded, and later translated into English. The researcher also took notes in addition to audio recording the data which helped inform the researcher's design of the subsequent interview (Seidman, 2006).

After finishing the second phase interviews, the researcher searched through the university website of the first university setting (Rak University) in order to gain better understanding of how the participants' research perspectives fitted within their university context. The researcher studied online documents related to the establishment of the university and the system and management of the university research centre. These documents provided background insights into the university and its research context. The use of documents and records is known to help the researcher gain insights into a research context (J. P. Gall, et al., 2005; M. D. Gall, et al., 2007).

Phase Three: The Focus Group

In phase three, the researcher employed a focus group interview as the major investigating tool to collect data. The use of a focus group is recognised as an effective tool in answering research questions (Crabtree, Yanoshik, Miller, & O'Connor, 1993). Many scholars agree that a focus group interview is also a strategy to cheaply and quickly collect data that are cumulative and elaborative from several people (Edmunds, 1999; Fontana & Frey, 2000; Lichtman, 2006; D. L. Morgan & Krueger, 1993; Punch, 2009). In addition, it is flexible in that the researcher can not only gain insights into a range of opinions from the participants, but they can also explore related but unanticipated topics that might arise during the interviews (Berg, 2009; D. L. Morgan & Krueger, 1993). It could be said that the focus group interview helped the researcher to quickly and effectively obtain a rich understanding about the research involvement of EFL lecturers in a different setting. This also helped provide a broader understanding of data gathered in the first university context.

To increase comparability, the focus group interview utilised the same interview questions as in phase two (see Appendix 4). The aims were firstly to get background information on their research knowledge and experiences, and secondly to explore factors that influenced their motivation as lecturers who conducted research in this

context. As in phase two, the researcher took notes in addition to audio-recording. The focus group interview took about one hour. It took place in Thai and the data was later translated into English. During the focus group interview, the researcher decided to use a whiteboard to record the key points. Information that was seen as useful during the focus group interview was written on the whiteboard and this also assisted in drawing out more details from the participants. Participants used that information written on the whiteboard to remember what they had previously mentioned as well as to expand their ideas within the focus group discussion. The whiteboard is seen as a useful tool to promote discussion and help the researcher to elicit more answers from focus group participants (Colucci, 2007; Krueger, 1988).

After finishing the focus group interview, the researcher employed document analysis to gain insights into the second university context (Jaidee University). As in phase two, the researcher also searched the Jaidee University website and studied online documents in order to provide a profile of the university and its research centre. The use of documents was seen as useful in the current study as it provided particular aspects of the university context and helped the researcher gain more understanding of the participants' perspectives and their involvement in the research process within their institution as supported by M. D. Gall et al. (2007).

Phase Four: Document Analysis

The last phase of the study was conducted to assist the researcher to understand how the case study context fitted with the broader research cultures in Thailand and internationally. The findings from this phase were reported at the first to provide a broader context for the research. The use of documents in this phase fits with the qualitative research tradition. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) note that documents are used extensively as part of qualitative case study as well as being a primary source of data. They identify that documents, as supplemental data, "fit the criteria of using data rich in description" (p. 64). The use of documents as another source of evidence in a case study allows a study to expand in a broader range of aspects and converging lines of inquiry (Yin, 2009).

Even though most case studies data usually comes from the cases being studied, the researchers can gather other data (Stake, 2006). McMillan (2008) asserts that documents are one of several methods of collecting data to verify or support data obtained from interviews. At the same time, studying documents requires the same analysis pattern as in interviewing which means that the researcher needs to have a systematic process and be open for unexpected issues that can emerge while reviewing documents (Stake, 1995).

There are several types of documents from which researchers can choose to fit their research studies. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) classify documents into three main types: personal documents (produced by individuals); official documents (produced by organisations such as government sectors); and popular culture documents (produced for commercial purposes). In this study, official documents were seen as the most relevant and useful as supplemental information for the case studies. Official documents included curriculum guides, journal articles, technical papers, statistics reports, and other written papers and reports as recommended by Mertler and Charles (2008). The researcher used all of these official documents. For example, the use of journal articles helped the researcher form a broader concept of research trends in different countries both in English-speaking countries and in non-English-speaking countries. These led to the selection of relevant online papers and reports related to each country, such as the research report and statistics in Thai higher education, the Education Act (New Zealand), and the higher education quality assurance in many countries.

Combining all relevant official documents helped the researcher gain insights into the international research culture, as documents provided rich data that provided a greater understanding of research contexts not only in Thailand but also in other countries.

3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretations

Mertler and Charles (2008) indicate that an analysis guide is important to ensure the quality of the data obtained. In this study, the qualitative data from transcripts and notes from a total of 13 EFL lecturers and the later focus group of six EFL lecturers as well as the data obtained from official documents were analysed for significant themes.

The researcher followed three steps of data analysis in phase one and phase two of the investigation. First, the researcher considered the case as a whole entity, looking at configurations, associations, causes, and effects within the case, and looking for underlying similarities and constant associations. Then the researcher looked at different cases and formed more general explanations (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 1984). Second, the researcher looked for themes that cut across cases in the same phase by determining cases that shared similarities and those that displayed differences (themes that were common to all participants and themes that were different), and noted these on meta-matrices, or master charts for assembling descriptive data from each of several cases in a standard format (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In addition, the researcher looked for unique themes that emerged from individual cases as cases were seen as unique as well as sharing some common factors (Stake, 1995). Finally, data analysed from each phase, as well as across phases were integrated through cross-case analysis in which the researcher looked for “a general explanation that fits each of the individual cases, even though the cases will vary in their details” (Yin, 1994, p. 112). This process helped the researcher in forming more general categories of how data might be related, as well as pinning down the specific features of individual case data. Cross-case analysis displays the common themes that cut across cases as well as presenting the unique vitality of each case and how the context influences cases’ experiences (Stake, 2006). Using cross-case analysis was seen as particularly useful for this research as this could enhance generalisability and deepen the understanding of and explanation for the qualitative data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The data from phase three was also analysed for significant themes. This data was utilised to validate findings in phase one and phase two, and to identify further factors that might be relevant.

The data from phase four, document analysis, was used to supplement and broaden the case study data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Yin, 2009). The researcher studied the research related information in each of seven countries in-depth and analysed it by looking for significant themes that indicated shared similarities and unique differences.

The researcher considered the quality of the analysed data at every step of the analysis, not just at the end of the data collection, but during and after each phase. In accordance with qualitative analysis, the researcher then interpreted the findings mainly from an

inductive point of view. As Bogdan and Biklen (2007) point out, qualitative researchers tend to analyse the data inductively. Hence the researcher generates concepts, frameworks, or theories from the understanding gained in the field rather than testing existing theory (Merriam, 1998). As this research aimed to gain insights into EFL lecturers' perspectives, an inductive approach was seen as useful. By following this approach, the researcher was open to new ways of understanding by collecting data without a predetermined hypothesis which may cause some bias (McMillan, 2008). However, many researchers acknowledge that no research is totally objective (Abma & Schwandt, 2005; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Tuckman & Harper, 2012). As the research was designed in a deductive way, which can influence the findings, the researcher therefore was mindful about how this might influence data analysis and interpretations in the study.

As case studies were developed by the researcher spending time personally in contact with cases (Stake, 2003), interpretation was based on the researcher's understanding of the participants' perspectives (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). To put it another way, tentative explanations about the EFL research culture in the Thai context were formed based on the researcher's growing understanding of EFL lecturers and their involvement in research. Therefore, the data, in this enquiry, was continuously interpreted as new insights arose. This process also helped validate interpretations of the study.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The ethical procedures for this study were approved (approval number 09/62) by the Massey Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC). In general, ethical considerations are relevant to any research study (Flick, 2011). The researcher should consider any issues involved as the research process itself may be a potential ethical problem (Cohen, et al., 2000; Punch, 2009). To avoid potential ethical problems, the study was designed to comply with five key ethical issues: informed consent, respect for privacy and confidentiality, avoidance of conflict of interest, respect for truth, and minimising harm (Bassey, 1999; Lichtman, 2006).

Informed Consent

The researcher obtained written consent from participants before conducting the research. Informed consent must indicate the research purpose and procedures including any negative consequences (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). In the first three phases of this study, permission was firstly obtained to carry out the research from people in positions of responsibility. The researcher sent a letter requesting access to the institutions where the participants worked (see Appendix 8A). After receiving approval to access the institutions, the researcher invited EFL lecturers to participate in the study. All EFL lecturers in both individual and focus group interviews were informed about the study, particularly their rights as participants, and each participant was invited to check his/her own transcript which the researcher sent back to them personally via e-mail. Each had the opportunity to consider allowing the data to be used by the researcher and had a right to reject any data that might harm their privacy. However, none of them rejected or changed any data. In addition, the participants were informed about the time involved and the data collecting techniques involved in the study. As Mertens (2005b) as well as Flick (2011) assert, the researcher should inform participants of the time demands the research could make on them and ensure that research procedures are reasonable. These details were included in the information sheet about the study, which was distributed to participants. Also, the participants had time to consider participation as they were asked to sign the attached consent form and return it in a stamped addressed envelope provided within seven days. All participating EFL lecturers completed consent forms which they returned to the researcher before the researcher began collecting data.

Samples of the relevant Information Sheets and Consent Forms are included in Appendices 8B to 8F.

Respect for Privacy and Confidentiality

Privacy was protected by ensuring confidentiality of the identities of the participants in the individual interviews and the focus group and their institutions. Confidentiality, in this sense, refers to “the researcher not disclosing the identity of the participants or indicating from whom the data were obtained” (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009, p. 438). Pseudonyms were used to protect institutional identities as well as participants.

Participants were advised that due to the small nature of educational communities, it was always possible that some people in similar settings may guess the identities of universities and participants. However, all steps were taken to avoid the inclusion of any specific information that might confirm these hypotheses. The researcher advised participants of this information in the information sheets of both institutions and participants.

All data was coded during the analysis and pseudonyms were used in writing up the final report. This process ensured participants could give in-depth information without harming their life or career. In addition, the data was stored in locked filing cabinets and E-data was password protected. The consent forms were also stored in a locked filing cabinet separately from the data. As the researcher collected data in Thailand, the consent forms were stored in the researcher's private office in Thailand while the data was stored in a locked-filing cabinet in New Zealand. Those transcribing audiotapes were required to sign an authority for the release of transcripts (see Appendix 8G). Focus group participants were required to sign a confidentiality agreement to keep confidential all information discussed in the focus group (see Appendix 8H).

Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest is one of the major ethical issues when planning and designing research. M. D. Gall et al. (2007) indicate that a conflict of interest may occur when the researcher has some financial advantages from research they conduct. In the current study, the researcher was not in a position to gain any financial incentives and was not teaching with any of the participating EFL lecturers or in a position of responsibility over them.

Traditionally, teachers and lecturers in Thailand are held in high respect by students, parents, and society. In addition, they are held in high respect according to their ages and teaching status among the teacher community at all levels. As there were senior and junior lecturers involved in this study, the researcher was aware of the respective status of each participant, particularly when arranging a time and place for individual interviews. As the participants were lecturers and had their private areas in the faculty

office, the interviews mostly took place in their office which allowed the participating lecturers and the researcher to have private conversations.

Respect for Truth

The researcher kept in mind the need for truthful and appropriate information and details in data collection, analysis, and the reporting of findings. Respect for truth is the essential ethical issue in this investigation. Data should be reported as obtained; the researcher should not suppress data or make any alterations (Mertler & Charles, 2008). This respect for truth is similar to the ethical guidelines of Bogdan and Biklen (2007). They note that whether or not the researcher is satisfied with their research results, the researcher must report what the data reveals.

Minimising Harm

The researcher respected the basic right of the participants, “not to be harmed in research” (Miller, 2007, p. 173). The researcher was also aware of any risk or harm that might occur during and after conducting the study. The two university settings in this study and their reputation were respected. Miles and Huberman (1994) note that qualitative research may have negative consequences for participants since it is not value-free. Participants must be protected from any harm and danger (McMillan, 2008). In this sense, the research should do no harm, either physical or emotional, to the participants (Berg, 2009; Flick, 2011). In this study, both individual and focus group interviews were conducted within the institutions where the participating EFL lecturers worked. The participants also chose time and place (within a university) for the interviews. This ensured that they were in a comfortable place and did not feel coerced to participate in a current study. The study involved activities (interviews) that were within the customary so there was no physical risk. In addition, interview questions used in both individual and focus group interviews did not involve any difficult questions that might embarrass or harm the participants. Finally, pseudonyms were used to protect both universities and participants’ identities.

3.8 Researcher Positioning

In a qualitative study, researchers play a significant role and are aware that they may influence the research and results since “research is a product of the values of researchers and cannot be independent of them” (Merriam, 1998, p. 11).

The researchers need to try to be unbiased and objective (Lichtman, 2010). Stake (1995) notes that case study researchers have various roles depending on their decisions upon which roles they would like to play. According to Stake, these roles may include researcher as observer, interviewer, teacher, evaluator, or interpreter. In addition, qualitative researchers have a role to obtain information directly from the participants (McMillan, 2008). As this study aims to investigate the research culture of particular cases or participants, the researcher had to adjust and balance her role to establish rapport, to respect, and to gain insights as well as to gain full understanding of the participants. Furthermore, the researcher needed to recognise that her own background and experience have an impact on research. As Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) explain, the researcher’s knowledge and background “influences the way knowledge is studied and interpreted” (p. 2), and affects the researcher’s motivation and expectations for their research. Therefore the researcher was concerned to maintain an empathetic position in both individual interviews and in the focus group as described below.

Positioning as an Interviewer

Interviewers “must be flexible, objective, empathic, persuasive, a good listener” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 652). Cohen, Lawrence, and Manion (2000) assert that the interviewer must be responsible for the dynamics of the situation to keep the interview going. This means that the interviewer must know when to probe a question and when to keep silent. In this study, the researcher positioned herself as an interviewer by creating an I-Thou relationship which is a shift from viewing the participants as objects described in the third person to someone “close to the interviewer, still separate, but a fellow person” (Seidman, 2006, p. 95). In this study, the researcher focused on developing this I-Thou relationship.

Seidman further indicates that the interviewer should keep the balance and allow enough distance for the participants to shape his or her responses as independently as possible. The researcher then paid attention to the interviewees' responses about his or her experience and preserved the autonomy of their responses as much as possible.

Positioning in the Focus Group

The role of the researcher changed in the focus group interview, to being less of an interviewer. Krueger and Casey (2000) describe a focus group as “a careful planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment” (p. 31). In this sense, the researcher has multiple duties in a focus group including facilitating, moderating, monitoring, and recording the group discussion (Punch, 2009). In this study, the researcher moved between these duties in order to facilitate interactions among participants.

First, the researcher took a role as the facilitator to open the group discussion and invite a wide range of commentary (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). During the focus group interview, the researcher also encouraged participants to speak freely and completely about their attitudes and opinions, but to stay on the topic (Berg, 2009).

Second, the researcher took a role as the moderator to balance the group discussion to ensure that other members of the group had a chance to speak out and to remind group participants of the questions. As Fontana and Frey (2000) point out, group interviewers' skills are required to be higher than those who are doing individual interviews as “group interviews may be dominated by one person” (p. 652). Also, Krueger (2002) describes a moderator as a skilful person in group discussions who uses predetermined topics and establishes an open environment. Therefore, the focus group in the current enquiry was guided by the researcher using predetermined questions and topics to keep the interview on track.

In a focus group, it is important that the researcher monitors time closely and does not exceed time limits (Simon, 1999). It was important that the researcher respected the time of the EFL lecturers involved in the focus group as they had other duties and had made plans for their time after finishing the group discussion. In this study, the

researcher monitored time closely and the focus group lasted for one hour as indicated in the focus group participants' information sheet.

At the same time, the researcher took responsibility for audio-recording and taking notes of the group discussion. Even though the group discussion was audio-recorded, notes were seen as useful as they were used as supplementary documentation of the discussion and as a backup in case the recording equipment failed (Mack, et al., 2005). In addition to note-taking, the researcher also wrote key information on a whiteboard to remind the participants of what they had discussed and to promote further discussion.

Establishing Rapport and Controlling Balance

Establishing rapport in both individual interviews and the focus group interview was necessary before starting to collect data as it helped the researcher to obtain as much information from participants as possible. Krathwohl (2009) points out, "no interview succeeds unless the interviewer builds a relationship with the respondent in which both are comfortable talking with one another" (p. 299). Having a good rapport with research participants can reduce any tensions and allow time to develop solutions that may occur in conducting research in real-life institutional settings (M. D. Gall, et al., 2007). The researcher should communicate warmth and empathy as these characteristics are the foundation of rapport (Merriam, 1998; Seidman, 2006). Therefore the researcher had to consider the teaching status and ages of the participants to maintain respect and meet cultural expectations. With consciousness of class and age, the participants are capable of reflecting information that is informative and compelling (Labov, 1977). In addition, Seidman (2006) asserts that the researcher, as an interviewer, must maintain a balance by respecting what the participant is saying and taking opportunities to ask further in-depth questions and gain insights into controversial topics that may arise during the interview.

In this investigation, all participants were Thai people and were lecturers teaching English language at their universities. The researcher had previously taught English at the tertiary level in Thailand for four years, and was aware that Thai lecturers teaching English at the tertiary level welcome the opportunity to discuss their ideas and experiences as teachers. The researcher built rapport and controlled the balance between

the researcher and the participants based on Thai cultural traditions. According to Thai tradition, academic status and age commands high respect. Therefore, the researcher acted in accordance with this tradition by giving high respect, paying attention, and behaving with good manners to participants throughout the process of this project. The Thai greeting “Wai” (a gesture of pressing the palms together in the position of a budding lotus at chest level, with the fingertips touching the tip of the nose.) is significant. There are three levels of ‘Wai’: (1) for the Buddha images or the monks, (2) for parents, teachers, senior relatives, and elderly, and (3) for respected persons of the same status (Kiengsiri, Bhinyoying, & Promathatavedi, 2007). The researcher showed respect by greeting as well as taking leave with an appropriate “Wai”. Also, the researcher gave priority to choosing a time and place for the individual interviews bearing in mind the ranking from high status lecturers to the youngest lecturers. In addition, refreshments were provided for all meetings. Small gifts were given to all participants after finishing the data collection process. Refreshments and small gifts, in Thai society, do not mean rewards or incentives, but they represent respect for participants and others who are involved in the study.

3.9 Summary

This chapter provides an overview of how the research methodology and design were influenced by the qualitative research tradition and the case study research approach. The research procedures involved four phases. The first three phases were conducted with participants who were lecturers teaching English in Thai universities while phase four utilised document analysis. Phases one to three, the data collection process, took place in three different periods over 2010. Phase one utilised individual interviews with 13 participants who were EFL lecturers in one university. Phase two utilised individual semi-structured interviews and was conducted with four participants from phase one. This included the use of document analysis to provide a profile of the first university setting. Phase three was conducted with six participants in another university and employed a focus group interview as well as document analysis to obtain data. In each individual phase, specific tools were used to draw out as much information as possible in order to answer the research questions. These included: a sheet of 15 activities related to beliefs; cards showing quantitative and qualitative features; a chart of research types;

a diagram of continuum of feelings towards teaching and research; and vignettes. These tools were developed and adjusted at each phase of the data collection processes. Phase four, document analysis, was conducted after the initial analysis of the first three phases. It studied research trends in seven countries to broaden the case study context.

Participants involved in this study were selected based on their involvement with research within their universities. Data obtained in each phase was analysed and interpreted. In addition, the study also involved taking ethical issues into consideration: informed consent, respect for privacy and confidentiality, avoidance of conflict of interest, respect for truth, and minimising harm. As this research employed both individual interviews and a focus group interview, the researcher also played different roles to maintain a critical balance and build a rapport between the researcher and the participants.

The research findings over the four phases of data collection will be reported in the next three chapters. Chapter 4 will report the findings obtained from document analysis of both international and Thai university research contexts. Chapter 5 will report the findings of phase one and phase two which were conducted with the EFL lecturers at Rak University. Chapter 6 will present the findings obtained from phase three which was conducted with the six focus group participants at Jaidee University.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERNATIONAL AND THAI

RESEARCH CULTURES

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a broader understanding of the international research culture in a range of higher educational settings and to discuss the place of the research culture of Thailand in terms of the international context. The key features of the research culture of relevant English-speaking countries and non-English-speaking countries are introduced as part of this discussion.

4.1 Introduction

Internationally research, particularly in higher education, has undergone radical change in the past thirty years (Allen & Shockley, 1996; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). In the past, research was regarded as a second aspect of academic work, the first being teaching. The literature suggests that university research productivity was limited to a smaller group of university researchers (Allen & Shockley, 1996). Academic staff members, particularly those who had a responsibility in teaching, were not required to be involved in the research process as researchers (Houston, et al., 2010). Research is now allied with teaching and has become a major aspect for evaluating academic and institutional excellence internationally (Harris, 2008; Healey, 2005).

Higher education institutions including universities and colleges have become a crucial link to future economic success (Alexander, 2000). Since higher education institutions are now regarded as an important component of the national economic investment strategy, they have to promote academic excellence in terms of quality and quantity of learning and research with regard to national and international needs. In addition, the international reputation of an institution tends to be established through its research (Marginson, 2006). Research, therefore, has become one of the key missions of higher education institutions. Academic staff members, particularly lecturers in universities,

are now required to engage in research (Hill & Haigh, 2011). They are encouraged to become productive researchers to meet the requirements of both national and international competition (Billot, 2011; Harris, 2008).

Changes in research requirements for university academics relate to the impact of globalisation and internationalisation and universities' shift towards being considered truly international institutions (Teichler, 2004). Marginson (2006) indicates that research and higher education are an integral part of nation-building. However, this occurs in a global context. Global status is judged by research capacity, and at the tertiary level research has become the primary focus in national strategies and associated programmes (Healey, 2005; Houston, et al., 2010; Marginson, 2006). Many countries, therefore, have strengthened their competitive positions by increasing their involvement in research through greater investment in higher education (Alexander, 2000). Globalisation and internationalisation are two terms often used in association with higher education. According to Teichler (2004), the term 'globalisation' is utilised when referring to competitive market steering, trans-national education, and commercial knowledge-transfer, while internationalisation refers to academic cooperation, academic knowledge transfer, and international education. Furthermore, intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations and the World Bank, have promoted global educational agendas focusing on human capital, economic development, and multiculturalism. These trends are transforming higher education throughout the world and urge national higher education policy makers to change the way tertiary institutions organise their business (Alexander, 2000; Leask, 2009; Spring, 2008).

There has been a significant shift in research culture at the tertiary level in countries such as in the United Kingdom (the UK), the United States of America (the U.S.), Australia, New Zealand, and in Asia. This shift has driven universities from being a part of the national structure to being international institutions by generating and transmitting knowledge "on [a] world scale" (Teichler, 2004, p. 8). To meet the demands of market and public interest at national and international levels, those countries and their institutions have developed their mission and policy statements to include research assessments in order to sustain and grow a productive high quality research culture. These changes have had an impact on staff development. Faculty staff members are encouraged to get involved in the research process.

As this study aims to broaden the understanding of the research culture of EFL lecturers at the tertiary level in Thailand, it is important to study the research culture in other contexts particularly English-speaking countries namely the UK, the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand and to contrast research trends there with countries in Asia including Thailand. These English-speaking nations have made changes in research activity and performance through their national and institutional policies in order to meet the demands of the market and public interest. Asian countries, at the same time, have promoted their research production to increase their institutions' international reputation. An overview of the research culture in English-speaking countries and Asian countries is given below.

4.2 English-Speaking Countries Research Trends

The United Kingdom

In the past decades, educational research in the United Kingdom (UK) has been criticised regarding the quality of research. Whitty (2006) described research in education at that time as lacking in rigour and not involving teachers, failing to produce cumulative research findings, and suffering from poor dissemination. As a result, the need to build an effective research capacity has been the central topic within UK education (Christie & Menter, 2009). As a result of an attempt to promote an effective research culture to raise the quality of academic staff research, at present, the UK is considered to be one of the strongest research bases in the world (SFC, 2011). In addition, 38 of the UK universities are listed in the world's top 500 universities (ARWU, 2012).

The primacy of research has an effect on the way academic staff members perform their research activity, as there is a relationship between research and employment promotion in the UK. Deem and Lucas (2007) identify that the relationship between research and teaching has become one of the key themes of the UK higher education policy and recent developments include research standards. Research on teaching and teacher education has become the focus in UK universities as academic staff or teacher education practitioners are encouraged to work and be involved in education research as teacher researchers (Houston, et al., 2010). According to the Higher Education Funding

Council for England (HEFCE, 2011), academic staff members need to undertake research to inform their practice. Academic performance is assessed by research outputs which mean that staff roles have changed to being active in research to extend their teaching knowledge and research capacity. Importantly, they have to conduct research to meet university expectations. The route to a full professorial position is based on research (Macfarlane, 2011). Academic staff members, therefore, need to undertake research to attain and retain their professional status. To boost research capacity and facilitate the carrying out of research by teaching staff members, UK universities normally provide support in the following ways (Houston, et al., 2010): providing research training to early career academic staff members; setting up long-term posts, either research or non-research posts; and providing tutors to reduce the teaching loads of faculty members who are going to conduct research. In addition, UK university research is supported by both institutional and government funding with grants as well as contracts (Geuna & Martin, 2003).

Even though the UK policy supports university staff members who conduct research, and despite research being one of the criteria for attaining academic status, there is a growing number of universities which are offering promotion to full professor on the basis of outstanding teaching and learning (Macfarlane, 2011). This means that academic staff members are eligible for promotion based either on research and scholarship, or on contributions based on achievements in teaching and learning. A teaching professorship has emerged as a new position. However, Macfarlane (2011) has argued that the status of a teaching professor seems to be lower than the status of a research professor. He identified that some professors felt uncomfortable becoming a professor because of teaching and learning achievements while the university promoted research excellence as one of their main missions. Those professors felt uncertain about their roles when joining research conversations among professors as they had completed only small research projects. From this, it can be inferred that the status of research is still seen as being higher than that of teaching.

There has been a requirement for research project management and standardised procedures related to research quality to contribute to the development of higher standards of institutional effectiveness (Cabral, Huet, & Elton, 2011; Lawn, et al., 2010; Partington & Brown, 1997). Furthermore, because the mission of the Higher Education Councils is to promote the quality and quantity of research, it has developed a system

for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. This system was originally known as the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), but recently it has been replaced by the Research Excellence Framework (REF). This change began as a result of the UK Government's intention to reform the framework for assessing and funding research and will be completed in 2014 (HEFCE, 2011; RAE, 2008). The primary focus of the RAE/REF is to produce assessment outcomes for each submission made by institutions and determine how funding streams are divided between universities. The RAE/REF aims to provide funding with a flexible funding stream to support and encourage universities' core activities of learning, research, and knowledge exchange. The assessment is made on the basis of academic staff submitting research outputs to a peer review panel. The RAE/REF will be undertaken by the four UK higher education funding bodies (RAE, 2008) which are:

- *The Higher Education Funding Council for England* is responsible for developing and sustaining a dynamic and internationally competitive research sector (HEFCE, 2011). The HEFCE (2011) has developed a funding system that allocates grants by reference to an assessment of research excellence and responds to new trends and developments in each of the research disciplines. At present, there are approximately 130 universities and higher education colleges under the jurisdiction of the HEFCE.
- *The Scottish Funding Council* is responsible for funding in learning and teaching including research in 37 colleges and 19 universities and higher education institutions (SFC, 2011, 2012). The SFC has also developed research pools to encourage collaboration of researchers across Scotland's universities (SFC, 2011).
- *The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales* aims "to promote internationally excellent higher education in Wales, for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy, in Wales and more widely" (HEFCW, 2012, para. 1). There are 11 institutions: 10 universities and the Open University. Research funding reinforces research excellence, so research funding will be distributed to institutions depending on the amount of high quality research undertaken in each institution (HEFCW, 2011, 2012).
- *The Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland* aims "to promote learning and skills, to prepare people for work and to support the

economy” (DEL, 2011, para. 1). Higher education in Northern Ireland consists of 10 institutions: four universities and six further and higher education colleges. The DEL’s plan is to increase the level of research development, creativity and innovation to boost the Northern Ireland economy (DEL, 2011).

It can be seen that all four funding bodies (for England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) share a similar purpose of promoting research excellence in higher education in the UK. The funding system of all four organisations is based on performance criteria and quality measures in teaching and research.

Research is a source of knowledge. At the same time, it is a measure of the excellence of each university. UK universities are ranked by the REF in the highest category for research outputs (publications). However, this measure of excellence puts pressure on some university staff members as they have to undertake research that may be time-consuming, such as large-scale research or research that could be eligible for the high-stakes of the REF. Houston et al. (2010) describe research in the university as: “having to be published; time-consuming; separate from other kinds of work; the product of those who identified themselves strongly as researchers; and produced in an environment full of such researchers” (p. 558).

There is a growing trend for tenured faculty staff members in UK universities to be appointed with doctoral degrees (Hill & Haigh, 2011). The proportion of PhD qualified staff increased from 48% in 2004-2005 to 50% in 2009-2010 (J. Morgan, 2011). Some universities have made PhDs a requirement of employment for all new academics. For example, academic staff members in City University London are expected not only to have a PhD but also to produce high quality research to gain a permanent position (J. Morgan, 2011). In addition, most academic staff members in this region indicate that their primary interest lies in research rather than in teaching (Locke & Bennion, 2011). Building research capacity has become a key focus for all four nations of the UK higher education.

The United States of America

The U.S. is one of the leading nations that promote academic research. The U.S. higher education has the highest research capacity in the world (Marginson, 2006). Compared to the UK, the U.S. is more advanced in the organisation of its research production in education (Lawn, et al., 2010; Marginson, 2006). The U.S. higher education system is seen to be diverse but can be classified into two broad types: public universities which are supported by the state government; and private universities which are supported by tuition fees and private donations (The US-UK Fulbright Commission, 2012). According to the digest of education statistics, 2011 (National Center of Education Statistics, 2012), there are 4,495 colleges and universities that award degrees. The development of research in the U.S. can be traced back to “the golden age of higher education” in the 1950s (Cross, 1996). Cross also mentions that academic staff, during this period, were said to give priority to research over teaching and gained tenure quickly while research grants were plentiful. The U.S. research funding was, however, stable only for the short period during the 1970s (Atkinson & Blanpied, 2008; Cross, 1996). A significant shift to drive research began again from the mid-1970s. As there was a concern about the quality of education, both teaching and learning appointments included a requirement for research (Alexander, 2000; Atkinson & Blanpied, 2008). The change in higher education has been quite progressive and there has been a further recent shift in the educational research culture.

U.S. universities have promoted research excellence as one core value to attract a large number of students worldwide (Marginson, 2006). According to the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU, 2012), there are 17 U.S. universities in the world's top 20 research universities. The ranking criteria are based on the quality of faculty, research outputs, quality of education, and performance of an institution. This implies that U.S. higher education outperforms all other countries in both research capacity and staff performance.

Teaching and research are considered to be dual roles for academic staff (Allen & Shockley, 1996). Allen and Shockley also assert that academic staff members are encouraged to collaborate with other scholars both inside and outside of their disciplines. Furthermore, they believe that the pressure of international competition has contributed to the change of research basis from individual research activities to a new

collaborative mode of knowledge production. Gibbons (1998) notes that international competition has changed the way teacher researchers and universities conduct research in many countries including the U.S., and that universities and firms are also working together to produce worthy research that meets the demands of the market.

Although the U.S. has strong research universities that attract international students, academic staff members still have to maintain their teaching quality as well as research quality to maintain and increase the university's reputation and to meet the requirements of universities. According to Eckel and King (2004), faculty responsibilities can be categorised into three basic tasks: teaching, research, and service to the campus and/or the community. Faculty staff members may devote their time to each basic task differently, depending upon the mission of their institution, their academic discipline, and career stage. Faculty staff members at community colleges spend more time on their teaching and service activities while staff members at research universities tend to spend most of their time in research. However, getting tenure, promotion, and a higher salary are based on research (Bai, et al., 2008; Tang & Chamberlain, 2003). Geiger (2004b) also asserts that faculty members are expected to have a PhD and commit themselves to advance and disseminate knowledge. For example, at Princeton University, one of the world's top ten research universities (ARWU, 2012), academic staff must have at least a PhD to be eligible for a tenured position. Importantly, they must conduct research and disseminate its findings. There are two types of positions: faculty positions and postdoctoral positions. The difference between these two positions is that postdoctoral positions offer the opportunity to pursue scholarly research, often with a lighter teaching load. Marginson (2006) describes the U.S. as the world market of elite universities with greater research performance. It can be said that research is the route to promotion and tenure which seems to increase the importance of research. Teaching, on the other hand, is the first priority of a teaching career but it is not a guarantee for a tenured staff position (Allen & Shockley, 1996).

Since the mid-1980s, there has been a change in the relationship between individual states and higher education. Similar to countries in the UK, each U.S. state operates its higher education research funding independently. Each state is responsible for governing its public colleges and universities (Eckel & King, 2004). Research funding is from subsidies paid by the state government and from revenue sources such as tuition and fee payments from students (Alexander, 2000; Eckel & King, 2004). Research is

seen to be a core mission of the U.S. higher education system and a huge market for researchers. For example, the University of Pennsylvania, one of the world's top 20 research universities (ARWU, 2012), receives millions of dollars in research grants as part of its annual expenditure.

It can be clearly seen that the prestigious top universities usually provide research funding for their academic staff members. Geiger (2004a) as well as Atkinson and Blanpied (2008), indicate that this kind of research funding is available through a competitive process and is from both the federal government and private organisations. Funding from the federal government and/or private sectors is awarded to individual university staff members. These agencies make their own decision about which research areas they want to support (Geiger, 2004a). That means that they have to compete with other members from both within their own institution and with other external institutions to get research funding. The criteria to assess the quality of research are determined through peer review judgements (Gibbons, 1998). This competition fosters the quality of research in universities and has made U.S. colleges and universities among the world's top research universities. Many universities also provide start-up funding for their academic staff members (mostly junior staff members) to conduct their first research; then they are forced to obtain research support for their next research projects from external agents such as a federal agency, or industry (Atkinson & Blanpied, 2008).

In the U.S. research context, research has become the number one priority as individual universities promote themselves as centres for research excellence in their particular areas. However, the literature shows that U.S. academic research in the fields of science has been considered to be the most outstanding area compared to other fields, as measured by publications, citations, and high achieving academic staff gaining international awards such as Nobel Prizes (Geiger, 2004a).

Australia

In Australia, the government supports high quality teaching and learning, as well as providing and improving resourcing for research production according to the Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations (DEEWR, 2009).

There is a call for academic staff members to be competitive, productive, and accountable, and Australian faculty staff members express a preference for research over teaching and service (Coates, Goedegebuure, Lee, & Meek, 2008; Hemmings & Kay, 2009). However, it has been said that the global position of Australia in research is not as strong as it is in teaching (Marginson, 2007). The government, therefore, is trying to boost the research capacity of higher education institutions. The government's policy for each Australian university is to be a comprehensive research university in its fields of study (Marginson, 2006). According to the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU, 2012), there are 19 Australian universities in the world's top 500 research universities.

Resourced through the Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations (DEEWR, 2009), the government gives funding to higher education to boost its capacity for teaching and learning, university research, and education and research infrastructure. At present, there are 39 Australian universities: 37 are public and two are private. There are five groups of research active universities in Australia (Marginson, 2006):

- The Sandstones or Group of Eight: prestige and old foundation universities
- The Gumtrees: the later established universities in each state prior to 1987
- The Unitechs: large institutes of technology which became universities from 1987
- The New Universities: other institutions that received university status after 1987. Some universities in this group may offer specialist or distance education programmes.
- Private Universities

According to Marginson (2006), the five groups of Australian universities have been divided by history and funding. He also asserts that the prestige universities (the Sandstones) tend to perform more independently and produce more quality research than the others. Moodie (2012), in addition, notes that the Sandstones universities have the biggest research budgets and income while the Gumtrees are comprised of universities with medium-sized research budgets and income. However, all groups promote their capacity in the research area and one of their major goals is to enhance research capacity, as noted below.

- In the Sandstones group, for example the University of Queensland, the aim is to achieve excellence in research and teaching and maintains a status as a leading research intensive university in Australia. The expertise of individual academic staff and their research strengths are promoted through the university website (<http://www.uq.edu.au/>).
- In the Gumtrees group, for example La Trobe University, the aim is to build research strength in key areas such as sciences, human communication, and health and society. The university provides a large amount of research funding for their staff to achieve maximum impact at both national and international levels (<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/>).
- In the Unitechs group, for example Curtin University of Technology, the aim is to build the strength and improve the quality and impact of both teaching and research especially in four areas: minerals and energy, ICT and emerging technologies, sustainable development, and health. Their main income is received through external research and development contracts (<http://www.curtin.edu.au/>).
- In the New Universities group, for example Southern Cross University, the aim is to produce research that meets the regional and global needs. The university focuses on promoting research in the areas of sciences, business, education, and tourism (<http://www.scu.edu.au/>).
- In the Private Universities group, for example the Australian Catholic University, their academic staff are encouraged to increase their research productivity in various ways. For example, the university provides a research support team for their academic staff to improve their research skills. At the same time, the university provides research funding to increase research outputs (<http://www.acu.edu.au/>).

Universities in Australia are now seeking to enhance their status in the field of global competition and turning to research as the source of their competitive advantage. To improve and promote research capacity, the government founded the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) Initiative to assess the research quality within Australia's higher education institutions using a combination of indicators and expert review. The system of ERA was developed based on the UK research assessment exercise or RAE (Brew & Lucas, 2009). The assessment of research quality within Australia's higher education institutions consists of three categories of indicators (Mahon, 2010):

- a) Research quality is considered based on ranked outlets, citation analysis, and peer review.
- b) Research volume and activity is considered based on total research outputs and research income.
- c) Applied research is considered based on research commercialisation and other applied measures

Leading universities attract both students and staff by their reputation (which is known through the research conducted by faculty staff). Faculty staff members, on the other hand, have to promote and increase their university's status, including their academic status, by conducting research. For example, at the University of Western Australia (one of the Sandstones or Group of Eight), the criteria for promotion of academic staff members is their achievement in research including publications as well as their experience and achievement in teaching (<http://www.uwa.edu.au/>). Academic staff members are expected not only to conduct research to gain academic status, but they must also develop their expertise in research to gain tenure (Hemmings & Kay, 2009).

It can be seen therefore that research plays an integral role for academic staff members in Australian universities. Research, furthermore, seems to be making a valuable contribution to success in terms of academic promotion and institutional reputation. These rewards, on the other hand, put pressure on faculty members as they have to undertake research and disseminate their research findings.

New Zealand

Building research capacity is one of New Zealand's key initiatives as in other countries, such as the UK, the U.S., or Australia. Some scholars such as Robertson and Bond (2001) argue that the role of research in New Zealand higher education is being destroyed because of legislative requirements, institutional change, and political uncertainty. However, the New Zealand government encourages tertiary education to produce high quality research. Under the Education Act 1989, the Ministry of Education issued a tertiary education strategy (from 2010 to 2015) which sets out the priorities for the higher education system including the strengthening of research outcomes (Ministry of Education, 2011). At present, there are eight universities across the country and five New Zealand universities are in the world's top 500 research universities (ARWU, 2012).

As research is regarded as one of the crucial elements of the nation's success, research centres have been set up in the government sector and in universities showing the government's emphasis on research (Ministry of Education, 2011). Under Section 162 of the Education Act 1989, New Zealand universities are required to meet international standards of research and teaching. Their research and teaching, furthermore, are interdependent so teaching is done by professionals who are active in advancing knowledge through research. New Zealand's higher education institutions are categorised by research-led teaching and research. University research is undertaken in a broad range of fields and has a link to external stakeholders such as industry, community or business. According to the Tertiary Education Commission (2009), all universities receive funding from the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF). The PBRF is a funding system that was set up in 2003 by the government to ensure that research excellence was promoted and rewarded; the primary aim is to promote the quality of research in the university sector (PBRF, 2012). The PBRF is similar to the REF of the UK and the ERA of Australia but the units for the assessment of research quality are individuals, not departments like the REF and the ERA. PBRF funding is allocated on the basis of the research performance of staff and each university overall, through the government's annual budget; the assessment is based on peer review of individual research portfolios (consisting of publications and other contributions to a research culture) by individual staff members (PBRF, 2012; Tertiary Education Commission, 2009).

New Zealand universities aim to promote a research environment and many universities rely on international standards in terms of staff recruitment, inter-university benchmarking, and university ranking systems (M. Baker, 2010). Lecturers are required to be professional and active in advancing their knowledge by conducting research (M. Baker, 2010; Billot, 2011; Hill & Haigh, 2011). However, Billot (2011) argues that the drive for more research productivity puts pressure on individual faculty staff members as they have to serve the university expectations not only as regards their teaching performance but also their research performance.

Since the government has promoted the PBRF, changes have occurred in the university recruitment process. Faculty staff members must undertake research and disseminate their findings to improve the PBRF scores (Gibson, Tressler, & Anderson, 2009). A study by Nakhaie (2007) indicates that publication rates are correlated with promotion, academic rank, and higher salary which suggests that external rewards tend to enhance the research capacity of faculty staff members. Tenured and well paid employment is based on research quality and peer-reviewed publications (M. Baker, 2010). Lecturers, particularly new lecturers know that research is an integral part of their role (Hill & Haigh, 2011). In some universities, one of the aims is to have more than 10% of the academic staff members as research leaders, and to increase the number of professors and associate professors within their faculties (Hill & Haigh, 2011). However, some universities in which academic staff members, in the past, focused on teaching, had to change their disciplines. For example, Billot (2011) studied the changing research context in one institution, a polytechnic, that later gained university status. Billot noted that many academic staff members had prioritised research to a greater extent since the institution had been shaped by the demands of the PBRF. Faculty staff members who did not conduct research were under pressure in this changing culture.

In addition to applying for and receiving PBRF rankings, lecturers are encouraged to apply for other funding. According to the Ministry of Education (2011), some sources of research funding for tertiary education established by the government include Ako Aotearoa, the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative, and the Marsden Fund. Some of these research funds are available to teaching staff and students as well as researchers. Some universities provide internal funding and also encourage their academic staff to apply for external research funding.

In New Zealand, research is accepted as being an integral part of universities and the role of academic staff members. Universities are promoting their research capacity in line with the global research trends. Lecturers are also expected to be professionals who can undertake and disseminate quality research, as well as teach.

4.3 Research Trends in China and Japan

As shown in the previous section, research has become a crucial mission in higher education in many English speaking countries. This trend is also evident in Asian countries such as China and Japan. China and Japan are central to this discussion as these two countries encourage the research productivity of their academic staff and have outstanding research outcomes at the international level.

China

The major educational reform of China began in 1985 and higher education is defined as “the most important apparatus for national development” (Lai, 2010, p. 89). Lai mentions that higher education is forced to perform to raise China’s international competitiveness. Consequently, the Chinese government has promoted research performance and strived for research excellence in higher education institutions. Since the mid 1990s, there have been discussions to introduce measures to enhance the quality of Chinese higher education (Pan, Li, & Chen, 2002). Project 211, which was initiated in 1995, aimed to develop and strengthen 100 universities in China to meet the international standards in the 21st century (Lai, 2010). In conjunction with Project 211, Project 985 was initiated in 1998 to develop and promote the top Chinese national universities as world class universities (Brandenburg & Zhu, 2007). According to the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU, 2012), China has 42 universities in the world’s top 500 universities.

In general, higher education institutions in China can be categorised into two groups: universities and colleges. Universities operate at the national level while colleges operate at the provincial level. These two types of higher education institutions offer both four-year degrees (bachelor’s degree) and higher qualifications (Bai & Hudson,

2010). The total number of higher education institutions in China is 3,559 (of these, 316 are classified as research institutes) according to the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2012). Research productivity is regarded as academic work in Chinese universities. The Chinese government has boosted research funds by more than 20% of the annual rate (Shi & Rao, 2010). The Chinese government has promoted research to raise their universities' international reputation. It is surprising that there is no national research assessment exercise in China while universities encourage their faculty staff members to undertake quality research that meets international standards. Research quality is assessed by publications. Research is categorised into two levels: national and provincial. Research that is published by core journals (national level) is regarded to be of a higher standard than research published in non-core journals at provincial level (Bai & Hudson, 2010; Lai, 2010). Faculty staff members are encouraged to publish their research at the national level as well as at the international level.

Lai (2010) describes three types of research normally conducted in Chinese universities:

- Applied research: this type of research is usually conducted in collaboration with business sectors.
- Policy research (sponsored by government sectors): this type of research is referred to as horizontal research. The objective of policy research is giving policy recommendations.
- National research (approved by the Ministry of Education): this type of research is regarded as being of the highest status and aims to increase the reputation of Chinese universities.

Academic staff members are given high internal and external motivations for conducting and disseminating research findings nationally or internationally. Internal motivation is driven by the fact that research productivity increases Chinese lecturers teaching effectiveness (Wei, Cheng, & Zhao, 2007). External motivation is seen in how the quantity of research and publications carry increased weight in promotion decisions. Lai (2010) describes how universities place importance on research published in national core journals. Moreover, the new employment reform in higher education requires lecturers to produce more research. This reform also introduced a new salary system which combines teaching hours, research funding received, and the number of

publications in national core journals. However, the amount of research funding received and the number of publications carry much more weight than teaching hours.

In the Chinese university context, research carries the highest status. Teaching academic staff members are encouraged to undertake and publish research in order to increase their academic status and salary as well as to raise the international status of Chinese universities as the world's top universities.

Japan

Higher education is the centre of knowledge for the Japanese nation. It plays a critical role in research which drives the nation's capacity (Bai, et al., 2008). Higher education in Japan has undergone radical change since the post-war era. There has been a shift of universities from being "knowledge communities into knowledge enterprises" as a result of market mechanisms which means that universities place importance on "the logic of business rather than on that of scholarship proper" (Arimoto, 2010, pp. S117-S118). Universities in Japan are required to become internationalised due to the increasing numbers of international students (Ogawa, 2007). Since the 1990s, several education reform bills have been enacted to deal with global competition and gain reputation due to the rise of research in higher education (Daizen & Yamanoi, 2008; Itoh, 2007). Japanese universities have been affected by international trends such as the need for research to gain higher status in the international context (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009). At present, there are 21 Japanese research universities in the world's top 500 research universities (ARWU, 2012).

According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology or MEXT (2009b), the total number of Japanese universities is 773. Japanese universities are divided into three types: national universities established by the Japanese government, public universities established by local public entities, and private universities established by educational corporations (MEXT, 2009a). Within these three groups there are research universities and non-research universities (Arimoto, 2009). Public universities with a background in research are considered more prestigious than non-research universities (Daizen & Yamanoi, 2008). The term 'research university' was introduced into Japanese higher education in the 1980s (Arimoto, 2007). Since

then, the number of research universities has been increasing and many universities are interested in enhancing their research function. The Japanese government has announced several policies for higher education, related to international competition in terms of enhancing academic research. This is similar to China's policies or Project 211 and Project 985 which were initiated to promote universities to be ranked among the top universities worldwide (Lai, 2010; Yamanoi, 2007). Research has become the priority of the Japanese educational reform. A policy regarding research, called 'the 21st Century COE (Centre of Excellence) Program', came into effect from 2002 to 2007, and a new programme called 'the Global COE Program', started in 2007 (Arimoto, 2007, 2009). The research policy aimed to construct research bases. In addition, research centres of excellence in various fields were set up to increase the international competitiveness in terms of research capacity (Arimoto, 2009).

Japanese research funding allocation is allied with a series of policies focusing on strengthening education and teaching. Higher education policies aim to promote competitive research funding. A research funding system or 'a third party evaluation system' is based on peer review (Arimoto, 2010). Funding is granted based on scholars' achievements in research, teaching, and service. This allocation system also determines the amount of funding allocated (every seven years) to each higher education institution on the basis of its achievement in research as well as teaching and service (Arimoto, 2010). Furthermore, universities with a high research achievement have a chance to get more funding from various national budgets such as the 21st Century COE Program and the Global COE Program. Generally, national universities produce more research and publish in more international academic journals than private universities (Arimoto, 2009, 2010). According to Arimoto (2010), the differences in the research capacity between national universities and private universities are related to the Japanese historical environment. He indicates that the Japanese government has continually supported and provided resources to national universities. At the same time, he says national universities respond well to the government policy by increasing their research productivity and publications at the international level. He also indicates that private universities gain less support than national universities in terms of research productivity and do not respond as well to the government policy as national universities. As national universities seem to accumulate more advantages than private universities,

Arimoto believes it is inevitable that they are superior to private universities in terms of research productivity and publications.

The Japanese government also focuses on encouraging academic staff to raise their research achievement as well as their teaching quality. Japanese academic staff members are expected to increase their knowledge. Their academic role involves creative academic work and academic productivity including research and publications, teaching, service, and administration (Arimoto, 2010; Daizen & Yamanoi, 2008). In most universities, teaching and research are considered as the major responsibilities of professionals. However, most Japanese faculty members illustrate their major interest is in research rather than in teaching (Daizen & Yamanoi, 2008). Daizen and Yamanoi also indicate that academic staff members in both research universities and non-research universities felt that their achievement in research was important for their faculty evaluation; research and publications were defined as “the prime academic pursuit for faculty” (p. 310); and faculties were required to conduct and publish their research findings in order to be eligible for tenure and academic promotion.

In the Japanese university context, there has been an increase in the number and size of research grants as well as the number of publications of faculty members; and research has become the first priority of professional work, while teaching appears to be the second priority of teaching staff members (Daizen & Yamanoi, 2008).

4.4 Thailand's Research Culture

Research is regarded as one of the key initiatives of the Thai government and the Thai higher education system as a result of the changes associated with increasing globalisation (MOE, 2004). In order to thrive in a competitive global arena and increase the research capacity of Thai universities and academic staff members, the Office of the Higher Education Commission under the supervision of the Ministry of Education has announced Thailand's Higher Education Development Plan, or the 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education to enhance the higher education institutions' competitiveness at international levels (OHEC, 2008, 2010). The First 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education was effective from 1990 to 2004. Then the long range plan was halted for two years due to the bureaucratic reform, national education, as well as the

restructuring of the Ministry of Education. The formulation of the new long range plan started in 2007. As a result, the present plan, or the Second 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education, is effective from 2008 to 2022. In particular, the second plan aims to attain competencies in five key areas: 1) teaching and learning excellence including excellence in academic and applied research; 2) equity in learning and fair accessibility to higher education for various groups and sections in society; 3) efficiency to respond to the country's needs by producing sufficient manpower in line with current development policies; 4) internationalisation of higher education by promoting academic exchange programmes and cooperating with other institutions in different countries; and 5) privatisation of higher education by enhancing institutional autonomy.

The Thai government encourages public universities to be autonomous to increase their efficiency. In this sense, the autonomous university should form a partnership with external agencies to gain external income. However, all autonomous universities (a total of 15 universities) still receive regular budget allocation from the government while they govern their overall administration and management systems (OHEC, 2010, 2012a).

In 2005, the Ministry of Education identified that Thai higher education had a low percentage of academic staff with PhDs. Moreover, it was found that there have been low research outputs from Thai universities, only a small number of faculty members have undertaken research and many research topics have not served the country's interests. The Ministry of Education (MOE, 2005) indicated that 80% to 90% of research projects were produced by the eight top universities in Thailand. The others, more than 100 universities, produced relatively few research projects. Therefore, all academic staff members are now encouraged to produce quality research and the criteria for promotion also includes research production and publications either at the national level or international level (MOE, 2005). However, research and publications are not part of the criteria for a tenured position and employment in Thai universities and colleges due to shortages of qualified academic staff (Bureau of International Cooperation, 2007). It appears that there may not be enough incentives and systems, including a lack of continual professional development, to encourage faculty staff members to carry out quality research in the Thai tertiary level (Sangnapaboworn, 2003).

No Thai universities have ever been listed in the top 500 universities in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU, 2011, 2012). It may be that Thai universities' research capacity, including the number of publications at an international level, gives them a low status internationally. To promote the research capacity of Thai higher education institutions, the recent long range plan also focuses on promoting faculty members' professional development by strengthening their research capacity including publications in international academic journals (MOE, 2005; SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010).

In 2009, the OHEC issued the National Research University Initiative which categorised higher education institutions into four groups (OHEC, 2010; SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010; Sombatsompop, et al., 2010). These groups are: research universities, which are the most prestigious, followed by comprehensive universities, liberal arts universities, and finally community colleges (see Figure 4.1).

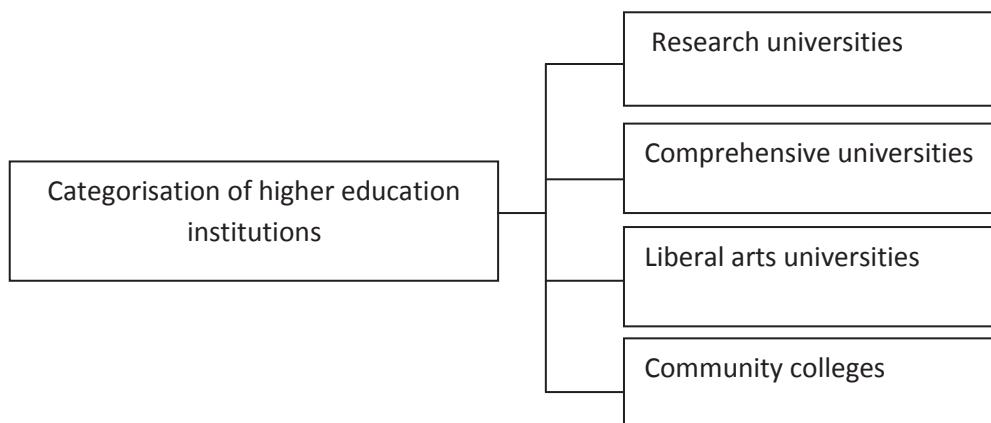


Figure 4.1. Categorisation of Thai higher education institutions

Each type of institution has a distinct mission and its goals have been designed to reflect its own strengths and aspirations (World Bank, 2009). The government, in addition, allocates budgets including research funding specific to each institutional tier according to which research universities gain additional and more research funding to increase their research capability. Under the Second 15-Year Long Range Plan (OHEC, 2010, pp. 1-2), each group of higher education institutions offer degrees as follows:

- *Research universities* offer postgraduate degree programmes, particularly doctorate degrees. They also focus on producing research, including post-doctoral research. It is expected that graduates from these universities will be the brainpowers who can lead national development. These universities play significant roles in developing and advancing the academic excellence of Thai higher education by generating a new body of knowledge and technology which responds to the country's needs. This type of university is located in big cities in different regions of Thailand.
- *Comprehensive universities* provide comprehensive study programmes of both postgraduate and undergraduate degree programmes in various fields, such as humanities, social sciences, biological science, and technology. These universities also aim to produce researchers and skilled/ professional workers. In addition, they play important roles in developing the manufacturing and service sectors. This type of university is located in both big and small cities all over the country.
- *Liberal arts universities* provide high quality bachelor's degree programmes for large scale business enterprises. This type of university may also offer postgraduate degree programmes. The main aim of these universities is to produce well-educated workforces for large scale business enterprises which are considered to be the most important driving force for national economic development. This type of university is also located in both big and small cities all over the country.
- *Community colleges* offer qualifications lower than bachelor's degrees: 2-year diploma programmes and short-term training courses. These colleges equip and retrain existing workforces with requisite skills and knowledge to add value to the manufacturing and service sectors. They play an important role in improving their communities, particularly in terms of life-long learning and local social and economic development. Community colleges are located in provincial or rural areas in Thailand.

The OHEC notes that there are problems as the quality of education does not conform to the set of standards in terms of the proportion of the number of full-time faculty members holding bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, and the proportion of the number of full-time faculty members holding academic titles (Assistant Professor,

Associate Professor, and Professor). The set of standards under the present long-range plan indicates that the proportion of academic staff with PhDs in each type of higher education institutions would be as follows:

- In a research university 100% of academic staff should hold PhDs
- In a comprehensive university 70% of academic staff should hold PhDs
- In a liberal arts university 50% of academic staff should hold PhDs
- In a community college 10% of academic staff should hold PhDs

The proportion of academic staff with PhDs is increasing but it still does not meet the long-range plan (MOE, 2005; Thai's Higher Education for All, 2010; World Bank, 2009). At present, there are 172 higher education institutions under the jurisdiction of the OHEC. Of these, 80 are public universities, 71 are private institutions, and a further 21 are community colleges (OHEC, 2012a). Among the 80 public universities, nine flagship public universities were chosen to be upgraded into ‘national research universities’ and have been receiving additional funding support from the government to fulfil their research mission. However, there is no information on the exact number of comprehensive universities and liberal arts universities as the OHEC is still in the process of promoting the new grouping standard to higher education institutions (Matichon, 2011).

Research excellence is one of the key missions for all four types of higher education institutions. Although three types of universities promote the research mission at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, all of them have agreed to promote research excellence to enhance the research capacity of academic staff members. Higher education institutions including their faculty staff members are also encouraged to conduct basic and applied research (Srisa-an, 2005). By so doing they will serve as research centres, or specialised research centres (Office of the Education Council, 2004b). To access the quality of research conducted by academic staff members within each university, a quality assurance system was announced for higher education in 2002 (SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010). This system is linked with the government’s national research budget allocation. In addition, the OHEC has identified three key indicators to assess the internal quality of research to ensure that research outcomes are of quality and respond to the country’s needs and meet the international standards (SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010, pp. 9-10). These indicators are described below.

- *Research or innovation development and mechanism*

Higher education institutions must manage research or innovation systematically and efficiently. This means that they have to identify research funding agencies and allocate research grants as well as build the capacity of researchers. They must also be able to support necessary resources such as funding and related equipment.

- *Knowledge management system for research and innovation*

The use of research results is important for all higher education institutions. The institutions, therefore, must have a system to support the collection and dissemination of research and innovation. In terms of sharing intellectual property from research and innovation, the institutions have to make sure that the knowledge disseminated is accurate, reliable, and up to date.

- *Supporting funding for research and innovation in proportion to the number of full-time faculty members and full-time researchers*

Funding for research and innovation is an important factor that can enhance the production of research and innovation. Therefore, the institutions must allocate a portion of their own budget as well as any funding from external sources to support the research outputs and innovative products of their institutions. In addition, the level of external research funding is a crucial indicator that illustrates the research capability of the institutions, particularly for research universities.

The system for research assessment has been implemented by the government but some universities and colleges have not encouraged to incorporate this system into their practice (SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010). It could therefore be said that there is no formal national research assessment exercise (like the REF in the UK) in Thai higher education system, and Thai universities and colleges do not place much importance on a national research system. Furthermore, Thai higher education is in the process of transforming and improving teaching and learning processes; therefore, higher education institutions are only using parts of the system for research assessment at present (OHEC, 2010; SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010).

4.5 Summary

Higher education plays a major role in building the research capacity of national and international research. Higher education institutions in English speaking countries such as the UK, the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand, as well as in Asian countries, like China, Japan, and Thailand, place importance on research and provide support and strategies in order to promote their academic staff members' research productivity in which research and publications are required as core criteria either to gain employment, tenure, or promotion (see Table 4.1). Research is considered an effective tool for global competition as the international reputation of higher education institutions is established by research. The increasing need for research in higher education influences each country to change, adapt, and promote national and institutional policies to meet the demands of the national and international markets and public interest.

Table 4.1

Research Features in English-Speaking Countries and Asian Countries

Features	UK	U.S.	Australia	New Zealand	China	Japan	Thailand
National Research assessment	Yes (RAE/REF)	Yes (Peer Review)	Yes (ERA)	Yes (PBRF)	No	Yes (3 rd Party Evaluation System)	In progress
Research funding allocation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emphasis on publication in international academic journals	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Mostly in national journals	Both national and international journals	In progress
Research as requirement of appointment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Criteria for tenure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Criteria for promotion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Research is a core value in universities internationally and many countries are promoting universities as the centre for the creation and dissemination of knowledge (Altbach, 2009). Governments increase their support and provide funding to university-

based research to boost research capacity as well as implement research assessment to ensure that academic staff members' research outcomes are of high quality. Research has become a crucial mission and has a strong position within higher education institutions worldwide. In many countries, faculty members have to change their roles to become more active in research while teaching becomes less important. In a world where research seems to be the primary resource of knowledge, they are expected to be producers of knowledge rather than merely the transmitters of the knowledge generated by professional researchers. By conducting research, academic staff members can advance their knowledge. At the same time, they can secure and advance their professional status as research productivity including publications are the major criteria to gain tenure and academic promotion.

In the Thai context, research is promoted as a core mission of higher education institutions and faculty staff members are encouraged to produce research and publications. However, research productivity and the publication rates of academic staff are still at a low level. The Thai government therefore encourages and provides budget allocation for the research production of academic staff members, and aims to develop a national research assessment exercise in order to increase research productivity and competitiveness at an international level. Nonetheless, some Thai universities and colleges are not ready to fully implement their research mission in accordance with the government's research policies. Compared to the English-speaking countries and Asian countries such as China and Japan, Thailand has different levels of research productivity and publications at the tertiary level. Thai higher education is in the process of building the research capacity of academic staff at both national and international levels.

CHAPTER FIVE

RAK UNIVERSITY

This chapter presents the findings from the first and the second phases of the investigation. It involves relevant data obtained from participating lecturers teaching English in the first university context, Rak University (pseudonym), as well as document analysis. The findings from this study are presented in three sections. The first part of this chapter begins with an introduction to Rak University. This provides background on the university context and its research centre where the participating lecturers are employed. The next part moves on to the 13 participants, lecturers at Rak University, focusing on data concerning their involvement in research. This phase provided preliminary data to inform the next phase of the study, the four individual case studies. Important themes, which emerged from each participant's experience and research involvement, are discussed.

5.1 Introduction to Rak University

Rak University is a comprehensive university located in the northern part of Thailand. Origins of Rak University can be traced back to the establishment of one historical university in Thailand which was originally formed through the amalgamation of two existing colleges and finally gained a university status. The foundational university comprised multiple campuses in different regions of Thailand and followed a multiple-campus system for several years, before each campus became an independent university. As independent universities, each campus now has its own budget and charter (see Figure 5.1).

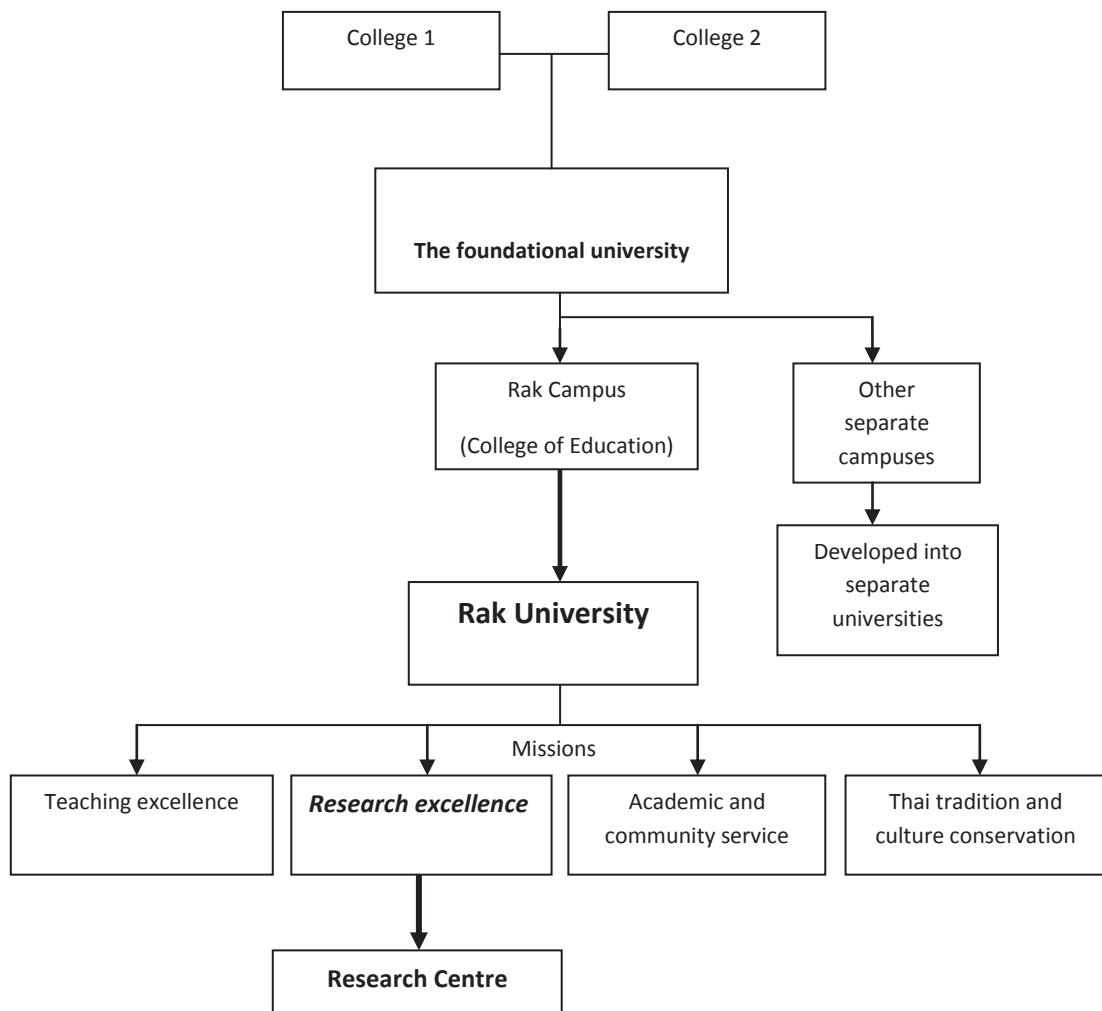


Figure 5.1. The overview of Rak University

The Establishment of Rak University

Rak University, the first research context, began as the Rak College of Education which was established to encourage teacher education. Rak College was included as a branch campus of the foundational university and it was later granted university status. As a branch campus, Rak campus offered degrees in various fields apart from teacher education. Finally, due to the growing numbers of staff and students and the readiness of the administration system, Rak campus gained independent status and became Rak University.

At the time of the study, Rak University was an institution producing graduates with a vast range of skills to meet the needs of local and global societies. The university

offered comprehensive study programmes in several fields of study such as social sciences, humanities, and technologies. The university also offered more than 150 study programmes in both undergraduate and postgraduate study. In addition, Rak University focused on producing researchers and skilled experts in a range of different workplaces.

Rak University set its goal to become a research-based university and to be one of the top ten Thai research universities in the near future. University policy was launched progressively to serve and achieve its vision and goal. The policy addressed four key strategies: a) teaching excellence, b) research excellence, c) academic and community service, and d) Thai tradition and culture conservation.

The University Research Centre

Rak University stipulated a policy focusing on research development and set up a university research centre to promote research excellence among academic staff members. In order to meet the university's strategies on research, the research centre was upgraded to faculty status. That meant the research centre had the ability to manage and administer its system effectively as the research centre had its own staff and budget, and this played a significant role in promoting and encouraging staff research at both national and international levels.

The Administration Structure of the Research Centre

The research centre fell under the supervision of the university council, the president and the vice president for research and international affairs. The director of the research centre and the research committee then took on the role of managing and promoting research development. The research centre comprised three main divisions: (1) administration, (2) research networking and partnership, and (3) public relations and publication (see Figure 5.2).

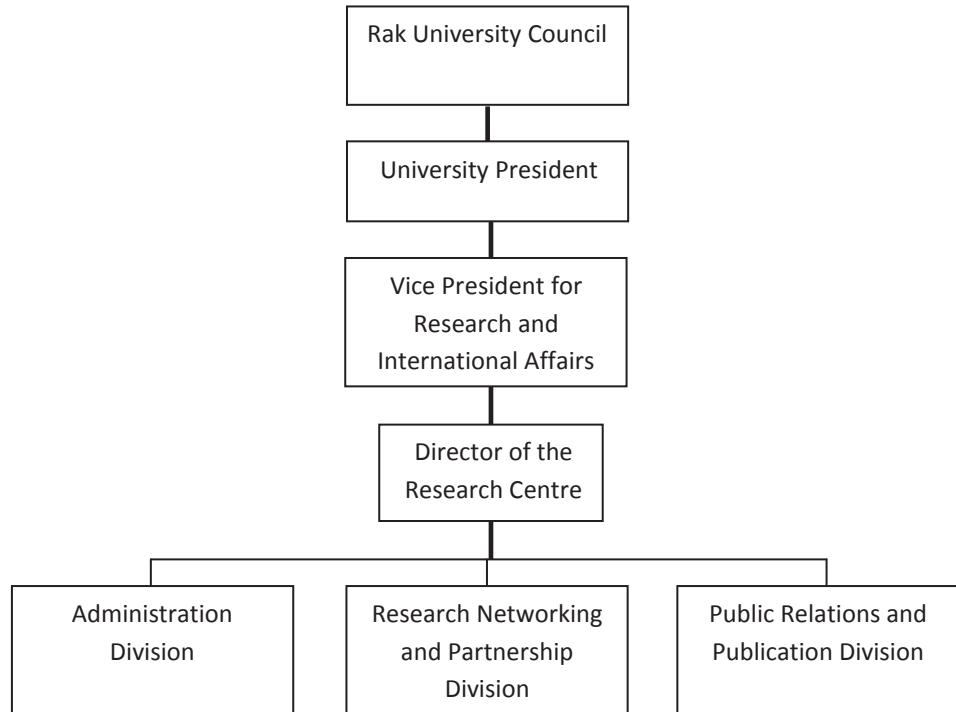


Figure 5.2. The administration structure of the research centre

At the time of the research, each division had its own duty and responsibilities as follows:

Administration division: staff members took responsibility for finance and accounting.

Research networking and partnership division: staff ensured that all research conducted by university staff members met all ethical and external requirements. They also worked together with other agencies to co-ordinate a plan for promoting research. Staff members in this division were academics who specialised in the field of education.

Public relations and publication division: staff took responsibility for promoting publications and hosting research seminars and conferences.

Each division consisted of five to eight staff members. Staff members in the research centre ranged in age from 25 to 40. They came from different parts of Thailand, both rural and urban areas.

Missions of the Research Centre

The university research centre had three missions. First, the research centre was to develop and promote its charter to become a research university. Second, the research

centre was to encourage academic staff research and promote this to the public at both national and international levels. Finally, the research centre was to promote innovative research and technology transfer. It aimed to foster linkages between the university and the rural communities in order to strengthen the capacity of the grass roots economy.

Support and funding

The research centre provided physical resources and support for academic staff members who wanted to carry out research. This support included research mentors, research seminars and workshops, research database support, publications, and research funding.

For research mentors, the research centre provided a list of senior academic staff members from different faculties who had experience in conducting research. These senior researchers would give suggestions about how to carry out research including giving recommendations about the way to write a research proposal to get internal research funding. The research centre, moreover, provided external researchers to work as research mentors.

Research seminars and workshops were provided to facilitate the carrying out of research by academic staff members. Research seminars would be held at both national and international levels. The purpose of hosting research seminars was to promote and develop the research capability of the university. The research centre also encouraged academic staff members to attend seminars with a cluster of external researchers. In addition, it was intended that research workshops would be provided for academic staff members, particularly for staff who were novice researchers. These workshops were intended to guide academic staff members about the process for research funding applications and the process for submitting their research findings.

The research centre, furthermore, supported a research database which linked to external research funding from government sectors, private business sectors, and relevant organisations. The research centre hoped that the research database could help form an alliance with outstanding organisations such as first-class universities. At the same time, the research database was used to gather data on research conducted by Rak academic staff members and external researchers. Moreover, the research centre

promoted publication of staff research and encouraged academic staff to publish their research findings in both national and international journals.

Research funding was another form of support that the research centre provided for academic staff members. Internal research funding was allocated by the university annually. The amount of research funding (numbers of projects and money) varied depending on research trends in each year. For example, 10,000 baht (approximately NZ\$400) research funding was regularly granted by the university to support research projects of individual academic staff members of Rak University. These were generally one year research projects in which the applicants had to carry out research with outcomes that were of quality, generated benefits, responded to the strategies of Rak University, and were widely publicised.

The overall criteria to apply and receive the university's research funding included:

- i) The applicants had to be academic staff members of Rak University.
- ii) The applicants had to submit a research proposal using a university format in accordance with human ethics form (provided by the research centre).
- iii) The applicants had to carry out the research projects by themselves.
- iv) The applicants had to finish their research project within one year after getting approval for conducting these (the applicants may ask for extension but no longer than two years).
- v) The applicants had to submit their research reports to the research centre and/or publish their research findings in either local or national journal, or present their research findings at a research conference.

Despite applying for and managing research funding from the university, the research centre encouraged academic staff members, particularly those who had a PhD degree, to apply for external research funding. The research centre managed and gave guidelines about the details of external research funding and updated this information through the university website and/or the research centre website.

5.2 The Exploratory Phase

The first exploratory stage of the study utilised individual interviews. Data was collected particularly with regard to participants' work histories and their teaching and research involvement during the semester break at the start of 2010 (March 2010). Thirteen academic staff members at Rak University agreed to participate in this initial phase.

In referencing quoted passages from participants, 'P' refers to 'the First Phase Participants' while the use of number 1 to 13' refers to 'Participant No. 1 to 13'. To help locate references within transcribed interview data, the number of the interview (e.g. 1) is provided, followed by the page number of the relevant transcription. For example, (P2 interview 1:7) refers to Participant No. 2's interview data in the first phase of the study, and can be found on page 7 of the interview transcript. The key findings from this phase will now be elaborated on in detail below.

Key Characteristics of the Participants

Education Background and Teaching Experience

All 13 participants in the initial phase of the study were full-time academic staff teaching English in the English Division, Faculty of Humanities at Rak University. The 13 participants consisted of eight females and five males. They ranged in age from 25 to 40. Ten participants held master's degrees in English (literature/ or linguistics) while the other three participants held master's degrees in Teaching English. Participants had from one year to 13 years teaching experience at Rak University.

Being lecturers teaching English at Rak University, participants had two main tasks: a) academic tasks including teaching and research, and b) academic service tasks including community service.

First Research Experience

Among the initial 13 participants, 10 participants had been awarded master's degrees by thesis while the other three participants had been awarded master's degrees by

independent study. They had conducted various kinds of research for their master's degrees namely qualitative, experimental, ethnographic, and case study research. However, most of the participants explained that they felt inexperienced when undertaking their research projects in order to complete their master's degree study. For example, one participant mentioned: "I felt like I was a student learning to do research" (P1 interview 1:5), or "At that time I was frustrated because I did not know about a research process. I did not know how to write a research proposal. I felt like I did a report, not a thesis" (P4 interview 1:2). Another participant stated in a similar way: "I thought it [research] was complicated. I did not understand why I had to review the literature...it was overwhelming" (P7 interview 1:4). The other participant noted: "I was not confident in doing it [research]. It was hard to apply theory to practice. For me, a research process was similar to a copy and paste process" (P3 interview 1:2).

All 13 participants submitted their research findings to the university. It was found that six participants published their research in local journals. The rest of the participants did not publish their findings in any journal as publication was not part of the requirement for their master's degrees. Even though most of the first phase participants believed they gained more understanding about the research process after finishing their master's degrees, some of them mentioned that they still needed additional research support when they conducted their next research. For example, one said: "I need some research guidelines" (P6 interview 1:3).

Beliefs in Conducting Research

In the individual interview, each participant described their beliefs in relation to their teaching and research practice. Participants were asked to describe their general idea about how research related to teaching, followed by their own point of view towards their teaching and research practice in the present day. Their shared ideas about teaching and research are summarised below.

- Four participants (P2, P3, P5, and P13) believed that lecturers who have teaching experience will be able to conduct research more effectively. Some participants seemed to believe that only senior lecturers conducted collaborative research as they were expert in undertaking it. For example, one participant stated: "It is

obvious that senior lecturers could conduct research and apply their research to their teaching practice effectively. They could conduct collaborative research while junior lecturers were not interested in doing it" (P2 interview 1:6).

- Three participants (P8, P11, and P12) mentioned that if lecturers are forced to conduct research, it is possible that research may not be of good quality. One explained: "Some people [EFL lecturers] conduct research only to meet the requirement of the university. So they do not care about the quality of research they conduct" (P12 interview 1:6).
- Twelve participating EFL lecturers (all except P5) felt that research work can be of poor quality due to the time constraints. For example, one participating EFL lecturer explained: "Doing research requires time. As I have a heavy teaching workload and have little time for research, my research is not of good quality" (P7 interview 1:6). Similarly, another participant stated: "Time is a crucial factor. I think I cannot produce good quality research if I have 24 hours teaching per week" (P11 interview 1:8).
- Three participants (P9, P12, and P13) believed that lecturers should conduct research with different subject areas of students. One participant mentioned: "I think research should be conducted with various groups of students. So we can test, compare, adjust, and develop our teaching practice in order to promote students' learning achievement" (P13 interview 1:6-7).
- Two participating EFL lecturers (P1 and P6) felt that lecturers prefer informal research to improve students' achievements rather than formal research which aims to meet the requirement of the university. One participant explained: "Teaching is like research. However, it is not necessary to publish our research findings. I am concerned whether I can solve the problem in my classroom rather than publishing my results" (P1 interview 1:5).
- Six participants (P4, P5, P6, P9, P10, and P12) believed that teachers including lecturers are researchers. One participant noted: "Being teachers [lecturers] is like

researchers. It is our duty to enhance our professional knowledge and this can be done through research” (P4 interview 1:6). Similarly, another participant mentioned: “Teachers [lecturers] must be researchers as we can improve our teaching practice and enhance students’ achievement by conducting research” (P9 interview 1:7).

Drawing on their different views towards their teaching and research, participants’ beliefs were classified into three different groups: (1) research is different from teaching; (2) teaching is a priority; and (3) research is a big part of teaching.

View 1: Research is different from teaching

Two participating EFL lecturers (P3 and P8) believed that research was different from teaching. They indicated that they wanted to focus on teaching. Research, on the other hand, was not currently part of their teaching. It is likely that they promoted themselves as consumers of research knowledge rather than producers of knowledge, as one participant noted: “I do not want to undertake research. If I want to learn something new, I prefer to read from books or research journals” (P8 interview 1:3). Another participant stated: “Teaching is not related to research. If you want to do research, you must be researchers, not teachers [lecturers]” (P3 interview 1:6).

View 2: Teaching is a priority.

A further group of EFL lecturers believed that teaching was a priority. Five participants represented this view (P1, P2, P4, P6, and P7). Although these five participating EFL lecturers wanted to devote their time to teaching, they were also interested in conducting research, especially action research to enhance their students’ achievement. For example, one noted: “I am interested in doing research that can improve my teaching and promote students’ outcomes, such as action research” [P6 interview 1:6]. Another EFL lecturer mentioned: “Teaching is my main duty as a lecturer. However, I want to do action research because it can enhance my students’ achievement” (P7 interview 1:3).

View 3: Research is a big part of teaching.

A final group of EFL lecturers believed that research was a big part of teaching. Six participating EFL lecturers (P5, P9, P10, P11, P12, and P13) represented this view. These participants felt that by conducting research, they could gain insights into their teaching practice and become effective teacher researchers. For instance, one EFL lecturer stated: “It is necessary that lecturers are able to teach and to do research. Research can illuminate our teaching practice and we can use it as a tool to solve our classroom problems” (P5 interview 1:5). One participating lecturer noted: “It is our job to conduct research to increase our professional knowledge” (P9 interview 1:7). The other participant also noted: “Research is an integral part of teaching and lecturers should continue conducting and producing quality research” (P12 interview 1:8).

These three different views are depicted in Figure 5.3, showing varying degrees of separation or affinity between research and teaching.

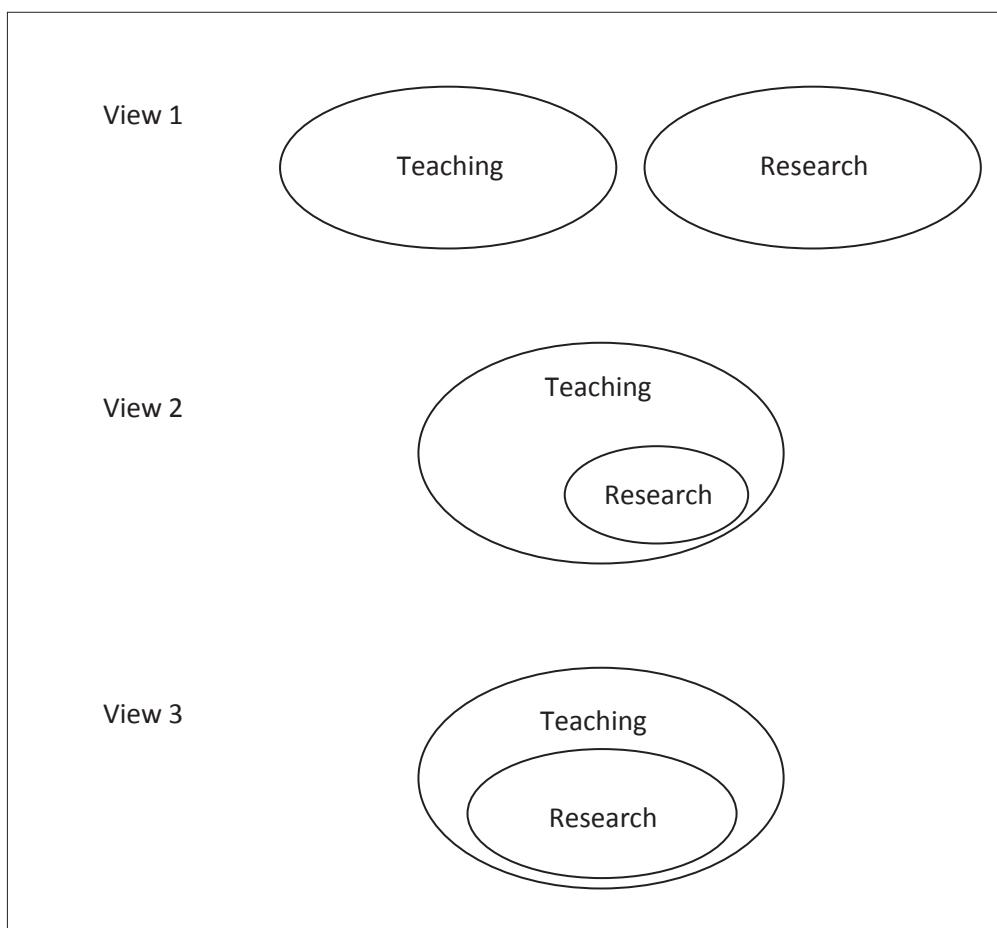


Figure 5.3. Views on teaching and research

Tensions in Conducting Research as well as Teaching

In the interview, most of the participants described their tensions about conducting research as well as lectures. The teaching workload seemed to cause most of this tension as all 13 participants had at least 21 hours teaching per week (see Figure 5.4). Even for those participants who wanted to conduct research (as it could promote their teaching and gain a job promotion), spoke about how the heavy teaching workload affected their time for conducting it. For example, one EFL lecturer noted: “A teaching workload affects me a lot. I cannot devote my time to do research because I have to prepare and teach many classes in each semester” (P12 interview 1:4).

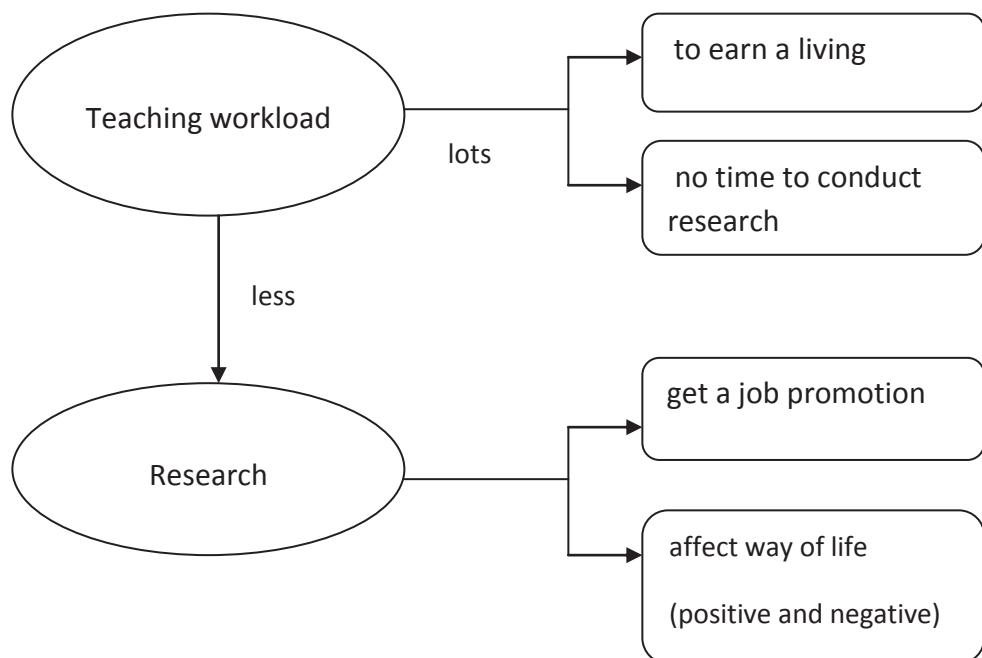


Figure 5.4. Tensions in conducting research

While a teaching workload influenced lecturers’ time in conducting research, two participants noted that they did not want to reduce their teaching workload as it might affect their living income, as one noted: “I cannot reduce my teaching workload as it is the main source of my income” (P1 interview 1:9). They mentioned that the heavier their teaching workload the more income they would earn. That indicates that participants, at the time of the study, earned their living by teaching while research was conducted as an additional part (unpaid) of their academic duties. They explained that

they gained little financial incentive from research compared to their incentives from teaching.

Most of the participants asserted that it was difficult for them to focus on research and make a balance between teaching and research. One lecturer explained: “Most of us [EFL lecturers] have heavy teaching workloads. We do not have enough time to do research” (P8 interview 1:4). It appears that the participants’ current teaching situation did not facilitate them to undertake research. Furthermore, some participants did not view research as a regular activity of lecturers. For example, one mentioned: “Sometimes I have to teach from the morning until evening so I am tired and do not want to do an extra work [research]” (P2 interview 1:4).

Due to the heavy teaching workloads, four participants mentioned a need for a lighter teaching workload ranging between 12 and 15 hours per week so that they could have more time to focus on their research projects. Moreover, these participating EFL lecturers believed that they could advance their professional status through research. For instance, one participant noted: “I am thinking about promotion. I think I can produce research that meets the university requirement to gain a promotion [as an assistant professor] if I have an average 12 hours teaching per week” (P11 interview 1:8). However, it seems impossible for all participating EFL lecturers to have a lighter teaching workload. One participant stated: “Even those who got doctorate degrees have heavy teaching workloads” (P2 interview 1:7). That means the averaging teaching workload of EFL staff at Rak University was greater than 15 hours per week.

In addition, some participating EFL lecturers indicated that research affected their way of lives. In particular, two participants mentioned that conducting research changed their lives in a positive way: “Since the university requires us to do research, I feel that I become more energetic and be ready to learn something new by conducting my own research” (P4 interview 1:5), and “I am open-minded and want to share what I have done with other lecturers” (P9 interview 1:8). On the other hand, one lecturer argued that his personal time was affected as he had to spend time on research apart from teaching, “I have to reduce my relaxed time to do research. I do not have time for myself” (P3 interview 1:7). It is likely that this participant (P3) could not balance his time (both professional and personal) to fit his role as a lecturer.

Summary

This phase reports on participants' opinions towards the concept of research as well as their own beliefs towards their teaching and research practice, and how they got involved in research. It also identified participants' tensions when conducting research. It can be said that the major cause of this tension appeared to be a heavy teaching workload. The individual interview data illustrated three major views towards teaching and research: (1) research is different from teaching; (2) teaching is a priority; and (3) research is a big part of teaching.

In order to gain more in-depth insights into their experience as teacher researchers regarding the research questions, four participants from this initial phase were invited to participate in the second phase of the study. These four participants were selected to represent three different views (see Figure 5.3). From those available in each group of beliefs, P8 was selected as a representative of the first group of beliefs: research is different from teaching. P1 was selected as a representative of the second belief: teaching is a priority. For the last group of belief (research is a big part of teaching), two participants (P5 and P10) were included as the researcher was particularly interested in this view. These four case studies are now examined in-depth.

5.3 The Four Individual Case Studies

The four case studies were conducted during the first mid-semester break of the 2010 academic year. In this section, each participant's story is revealed focusing firstly on their research experience, then their beliefs, and finally their perceptions. In referencing quoted passages from each participant, 'M' refers to Mint, 'P' refers to 'Pim', 'V' refers to 'Vit', and 'R' refers to 'Rin' while the use of 'I' refers to the interviewer. All names are pseudonyms. To help locate references within transcribed interview data, the number of the interview (e.g. 1) is provided, followed by the page number of the relevant transcription. For example, (M interview 1:10) refers to Mint's interview data in the second phase of the study, and can be found on page 10 of the interview transcript.

Case Study: Mint

Teaching Background

Mint, a junior faculty staff member, was born in 1982, a daughter of a teacher in Thailand. As a daughter of a teacher, Mint wanted to be a teacher and desired to be a university lecturer. She had been interested in learning English since she was young. So she planned her way of life and chose to study language at high school in order to become an English teacher. After studying in the Faculty of Humanities with English as a major at another university, she gained her first teaching position at Rak University in the northern part of Thailand. During her time at Rak University, she received a scholarship to study a master's degree in linguistics at one well-known university. While she was studying a master's degree, she also taught at this university.

When interviewed, Mint had been working at Rak University for four years. She had an average of 30 hours teaching workload per week. In the first semester of the 2010 academic year she had about 31 hours of teaching per week. Each year Mint was responsible for carrying out her duties as a lecturer, advising the first year students, and being a project manager for the annual English festival. These duties were counted as part of the criteria for a job promotion. It is very common that faculty staff in Thailand must take responsibility to do other work, not only teaching, and Mint agreed to do so even though some duties did not exactly relate to her job as a lecturer. As a junior lecturer, Mint had a limited choice of courses. She taught fundamental courses for first year students and specific courses such as a writing course for senior students which varied depending on each academic year. Mint was concerned about her teaching workload as she was responsible for at least seven classes in each semester. Moreover, the number of students in each class was around 70 people although she stated that it was difficult to teach English language with a large group of students.

Research Experience and Perceptions

Research Experience at Rak University

Mint began an independent research project when she started working at Rak University. Her first research was a descriptive study focusing on English literature

which she conducted before she studied a master's degree. Mint completed five individual research projects at this university. The other four research projects were completed after studying her master's degree. The purpose of conducting her first project was to publish. However, she felt that her research was not of a high enough quality to publish when she finished her project. Anyway, as academic staff members in this university were encouraged to conduct research, she submitted her research finding to the research centre. She explained this in the excerpt below.

M: My intention when working in this university is to publish my research. However, my first research was not good enough as I found 'weaknesses' in my research so I did not publish and did not apply for research support from the university. [Note that the word 'weaknesses' is from her feeling so she could not find the evidence to support her justification]

I: In the case that you published, would you be able to apply for further funding?

M: Yes, sure because the university has support for staff who can publish their research nationally or internationally. It is a funding for research presentation [at a conference]. (M interview 1:11)

Conducting research was part of Mint's job and the university supported all academic staff to conduct research. The faculty to which she belonged also set the criteria that academic staff members must undertake research. As Mint noted: "We have heard since starting work that unless we do research we may lose our job" (M interview 1:12).

Mint mentioned that research projects that many junior academic staff members had to undertake in the first two years of their employment were not about quality. In addition, she described that the university research centre was not strict about the research quality. What they needed was just a piece of research which could be a research proposal or a research article.

For junior staff, we have to do research in the first two years of our employment, it is a condition, but one piece of research is enough. On the other hand, other senior lecturers may or may not do research depending on their own conditions.
(M interview 1:9)

Quantitative vs Qualitative

All of Mint's research took the form of mini individual research projects. Mint pointed out, they did not take much time and she could handle them in the time given. With Mint's enthusiasm in conducting research, she completed more research projects than other participants involved in this phase.

I have done five research projects which employed different methods including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approach but mostly my research employed a qualitative approach. For me, research is a work that you will conduct when you have two factors. First, when you don't believe the findings of previous research, you will do research. Second, when you find that no one has ever conducted that topic before, you begin to do research. (M interview 1:5)

Mint stated that the survey method she employed for her study was chosen based on which method seemed to be most effective to obtain data. However, she acknowledged that a qualitative approach would be more useful to get in-depth data.

From my experience, I feel that a qualitative approach is a kind of descriptive work which provides more in-depth information than quantitative research. I will use tools and techniques that are appropriate for collecting data such as questionnaires for a survey research project. (M interview 1:6)

Mint explained her research projects employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, but she focused on conducting two types of research which were survey research and linguistic analysis. She noted that:

I prefer to conduct survey research and linguistic analysis because I feel confident to do these two types of research and I have done these types of research before. ...I think doing each one seems to be easy and I could handle the factors that may occur. I feel expert when doing them. (M interview 1:6)

Even though Mint mentioned her experience in undertaking both qualitative and quantitative research, she did not have much research experience. She was confused when asked about each research type and the method for conducting survey research. Moreover, the reason why she chose to conduct research seemed to focus on replicating other research projects. Mint further explained that she would choose a research type

that seemed to be easy to handle, particularly when she had not much time due to her teaching workload. She stated: “Um... when I had too much teaching workload, I would do survey research because it did not take much time and the tool was a questionnaire with which it was easy to collect data” (M interview 1:6).

Despite her focus on survey methods, Mint noted that she was interested in conducting other types of research, especially experimental research in order to enhance her students’ outcomes.

M: I think experimental research is a research that would be appropriate for the classroom as we test and find answers to see which one is suitable for students.

I: How about other research types?

M: I would like to try to conduct other research types but I am not ready to do that. I think I do not have enough knowledge. (M interview 1:7)

In Mint’s view experimental research would be suitable for the university classroom, but she explained that ‘there is no perfect method’. When asked if she was interested in undertaking action research with her students, she responded: “I do not have enough knowledge about this type of research” (M interview 1:7).

Moreover, she noted that she decided to choose her research topics based on her own interest and mostly her topics were new investigations which no one had ever conducted before.

Tensions in Conducting Research

As research was counted as part of academic promotion and the university encouraged all academic staff to conduct research, Mint began to conduct research and integrate research into her work life. However, Mint indicated some tensions in undertaking research with such as a heavy teaching workload that affected her ability to complete research in the allowed time. She noted that she needed to carefully organise her work to make sure that she could finish her research on time.

I: Could you tell me about your challenges in conducting research?

M: Sure... The first thing is my teaching workload. I have a ton of teaching, about 31 hours per week. Moreover, I have to spend time moving from building to building to teach students. It is a waste of time. (M interview 1:8)

Mint stated that teaching workload and needing to move between buildings to teach were the major problems that she had encountered. She also explained that she had to manage her time carefully, to try to keep her mind and focus on research. However, she noted there was a problem with sourcing relevant literature, "Sometimes I cannot access specific websites, or the library [the university library] did not have enough books in the linguistics area" (M interview 1:11). Even though Mint used the university internet, she could not access some specific websites because the university had not applied to be a member of those websites. Further some websites required fees for accessing these which she did not want to pay.

Mint also asserted that a heavy teaching workload affected other staff members in her faculty, leaving them with less time to conduct research. Nevertheless, she explained that there were some lecturers who avoided doing research and wanted to have extra teaching to gain more income, "other staff may think that extra teaching [more than 15 hours per week] will bring more money but for me teaching incentives are not reasonable with the workloads that we have" (M interview 1:8).

Funding and support

Mint thought that her research interest was different from other lecturers because she could not find someone who was interested in the same area as her. So all of the research projects she completed were individual research, not collaborative research. At the time of the study, the criteria to be eligible to apply for and receive research funding specified that research needed to be individual. So lecturers who expected to undertake research were likely to prefer to conduct individual research rather than collaborative research.

Even though Mint could not find colleagues who were interested in the same area and could not conduct collaborative research with her colleagues, she explained that collaboration from colleagues and staff was one of the crucial factors that could drive academic staff to conduct research efficiently.

M: I cannot find anyone in my faculty who is interested in my research area. Nevertheless, my colleagues helped me a lot when I was doing my own research. Like when I needed an editor to read my research, I asked my friends or colleagues to do that.

I: How about the research centre, do they provide staff for editing?

M: Not really, they provide research consultants. I mean they gave me a list of research consultants that I can go and ask for help. (M interview 1:13)

These research consultants were university lecturers who had long experience in conducting research and had been formally appointed to be research consultants. Nevertheless, she did not consult with a research consultant. As Mint herself noted: “They are senior lecturers so I feel reluctant to contact them. Instead I ask my colleagues to help as I feel comfortable with them” (M interview 1:13).

Also, Mint was willing to help others to conduct research. When asked how she could help other faculty staff members who want to conduct research, she stated that she could give them suggestions. As she explained: “You know...it is difficult to find someone who focuses on the same interest. So I think I can help others by giving them suggestions. But I cannot help them more than this because we have different interests in research” (M interview 1:14).

Despite the importance of collaboration from colleagues, Mint still noted that she required a variety of services from the university and its research centre. She thought these resources could motivate academic staff to conduct and continue to do research. She felt that teaching workload and academic staff welfare were important factors that influenced academic staff’s motivation in conducting research. As she described it:

I think if the university could provide a suitable teaching workload for academic staff, they would have more energy to do research. Besides, academic staff welfare such as a living place [a flat for university staff] is one of the factors that motivate us to conduct research. I mean a living place should have a good environment, be commodious, comfortable, and be able to facilitate faculty staff who do research. (M interview 1:15)

Furthermore, she mentioned that the process of applying for presentation funding was ‘discouraging’,

I feel unsure when I apply to present abroad because I have to advance my money for presenting such items as the registration fee. If my research is not published, I cannot get the funding from the university which means I cannot get a refund for what I have paid in advance for the presentation. It really discourages me. (M interview 1:10)

Mint identified that the process of applying for funding for presenting abroad was that applicants must have a confirmation letter to present their findings from the conference and their research must be published. In the meantime, academic staff had to pay for their own expenses if they wanted to present their findings overseas.

Mint also stated that there were some problems about the research payment as this process required academic staff to have receipts showing how much money they used for the project. She described that: “In reality, we cannot get receipts on everything we spent. If the research centre could adjust this rule, it would be useful” (M interview 1:15).

There are some faculty members who want to teach lots to earn their living. Mint suggested that the university together with the research centre should consider the way to ease those academic staff members by enabling them to do research with fewer tensions. As she noted:

Some lecturers teach a lot because they need money so I think an effective research process is important. If they can provide a systematic research process which clearly explains the process of doing research and has a fast and sufficient payment of research funding, this will encourage lecturers to do more research.... And good services from research staff are also important. (M interview 1:15)

Rewards in Conducting Research

Despite her tensions in conducting research, Mint noted that undertaking research “brings happiness into my life” (M interview 1:9). Undertaking research also brought

her rewards, prestige, and money. Furthermore, it brought her the opportunity to go abroad. In her university, academic staff members could apply for funding for conducting research as well as for presenting their research nationally and internationally.

Moreover, if her research was of good quality, she would be able to be promoted to an assistant professor which would bring her prestige and money as well. In Thai universities, academic staff can be promoted to an assistant professor by conducting quality research. These academic staff who have been named as an assistant professor had extra money for their position every month. Mint noted that some faculty members undertook research in order to be promoted and earn more money. However, some staff, particularly senior lecturers, who had less teaching workload compared with other junior lecturers (like Mint) did not want to conduct research.

As she directly gained advantages from conducting her own research, Mint stated that her research also gave indirect advantages to her students, her faculty, and the university. The amount of research conducted by academic staff members in each faculty could increase points attributed to the faculty which turned into faculty budget received from the university. This budget would be used to support students in their faculty for items such as student loans or budget for students' activities.

M: My research will benefit my students in the way that my faculty can get more support from the university from the amount of research we have conducted. As a result, we can get a larger budget to spend on students' activities including student loans.

I: What about the university?

M: The amount of research will increase KPIs [Key Performance Indicators] of the university. And when it increases, it will bring more funding to the university. This will help the university to have more facilities for both lecturers and students. (M interview 1:11-12)

Mint suggested that lecturers should take much greater account of research and produce more quality research to enhance the university's reputation in order to gain more support to facilitate lecturers and students.

Mint's Role and Identity

In common with all junior lecturers in this university, Mint promoted herself as a teacher researcher to meet the university requirement. It can be said that the university's requirement motivated Mint to conduct research and become a teacher researcher. However, her initial motivation seemed to derive from her experience when she studied her master's degree. Mint explained that studying a master's degree helped her to understand the process of research. Moreover, she felt that she gained more competence in a wide range of research skills. She noted that:

My motivation to become a teacher researcher is from the university's rules that require academic staff members to conduct research. At the same time, my chance to study a master's degree while working also inspires me to do research. It makes me feel that research is a part of my life. (M interview 1:12)

Mint asserted that motivating faculty members to conduct research required collaboration within the university to create an environment of research and learning. Importantly, faculty members themselves must be willing to undertake research to enhance their professional competence and be a producer of knowledge. As she noted: "In my opinion, lecturers will do research or not depending on their own interest. However, lecturers who are assistant professors must do research every two years in order to maintain and increase their professional status" (M interview 1:9).

In Mint's context, research is regarded as a 'useful and valuable' thing. She explained that research became a part of her life and being a teacher researcher helped her to be open-minded and be a self-sufficient person.

I feel that research has changed my life. By doing research, I am aware of the environment and the surrounding people. I gain new knowledge from the research I have done. ... I am open-minded, happy, and completely willing to do research. (M interview 1:11)

Despite the fact that the process of applying for presentation funding was too complicated, Mint expected her work to be published in order to be eligible to apply for presentation funding. As Mint herself stated:

I hope that my research will be completed and published. It is good for me if I can publish my research. It means that my work is of good quality and I can apply for further funding for presentation as well. (M interview 1:11)

Mint received special support from her faculty to present her findings abroad (not from the university research centre) which led her to be more confident in conducting research in this university. When asked if there was any change to her role as a university lecturer, she noted that she integrated research into her work.

M: Yes, sure. I called myself a teacher researcher, not just a teacher. I mean I can teach and know how to teach.... And I can do research.

I: So you mean that research is part of your work?

M: Yes. And I devote my time to doing research as this university is a research university. (M interview 1:2)

Mint noted that her life and the way she thought about herself had changed since she became a teacher researcher. Her experience in research seemed to adjust her life in a positive way. She mentioned that her demands on herself to do something ‘useful’ were increasing.

Since I began my research, I have spent most of my time on reading. I have decreased my time watching television and avoid watching soap opera programmes. I think if we want good output [good research], we have to put good input into it. This means we should focus on something useful. So I think research helps me adjust myself to intellectual pursuits. (M interview 1:11)

Mint focused on quality in her research but it emerged that she felt the opposite way to her teaching task.

Research is very important. Doing research is my priority even it cannot replace teaching but it is more important than teaching. ...Teaching needs less quality. I mean I may not have to prepare for teaching, just teach and do not think whether I teach well enough. But research is a must and I have to do it best. (M interview 1:4)

From the above statement, it seems that the perception that teaching needs less quality may come from junior lecturers' teaching responsibility. They taught multiple classes of the same courses particularly fundamental courses which required simple teaching (Basic English). Furthermore, they had to teach large groups of students (about 70 people) which seemed to make it difficult to motivate students in learning English.

Research, the First Priority

Mint recalled that when she graduated with her bachelor's degree and did not start a job as a faculty member at Rak University, she thought that research and teaching were closely related. However, after she had become a lecturer and a teacher researcher, she reported that "research is a big part of teaching" (M interview 1:13). She asserted that research was about 70% of teaching. This increase in positive feeling about research took about two years to develop after she started her work. Mint's motivation for conducting research and her view on research appeared to affect her opinion about the difference between a teacher and a teacher researcher. As Mint herself noted:

I think being a teacher researcher is higher than being a teacher. A teacher is the one who provides knowledge for students and this must be in-depth knowledge so if we do research [be a teacher researcher], we will have that knowledge to teach students. It seems like we are a primary source. (M interview 1:12)

Mint described that she saw her role as a teacher researcher as being more valuable as she could acquire in-depth knowledge through her research. She also noted that "I can answer questions with true and precise answers" (M interview 1:12). Mint's role as a teacher researcher seemed to work quite well as she explained: "I understand what I have to do" (M interview 1:13). Furthermore, she stated that being a teacher researcher in this university could enhance her professional advancement. She noted that:

If I continue to do research, one day I will get a promotion to be an assistant professor. And I can further my study and become a doctor. I think I will always be a teacher researcher who places importance on research. (M interview 1:14)

Summary

Mint was selected to participate in the second phase as she fitted in the third group according to Figure 5.3. She believed that conducting research was the best way to promote and increase her professional competence as an academic staff member. Her inspiration to become a teacher researcher came from her experience in conducting her master's degree research project. At the same time, as a junior academic staff member, Mint had to conduct research to meet the university requirement. While Mint's case illustrates the tensions of faculty staff in undertaking research, she also appeared to have a high level of motivation to undertake research. She presented herself as an active researcher and focused on her research production and quality. Following the interview for phase one of the study, Mint had become even more convinced that research was a big element of teaching.

Case Study: Pim

Teaching Background

Pim was born in 1980, the second child in a teacher's family. Therefore, she was familiar with the teachers' community in her hometown which led her to study in an education area with Teaching English as a major at the university. During her study, she became a private tutor teaching English to school students for 10 years. After Pim graduated with her bachelor's degree, she decided to study for a master's degree in the Faculty of Education at the same university with Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) as a major. After studying her master's degree, Pim went to the U.S. to work for one year and took a short course in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). When she went back to Thailand, she applied to be an academic staff member at Rak University.

When interviewed, Pim had been working for Rak University for nearly five years. She had an average of 27 hours teaching workload per week or about nine classes per week. As is normal for junior faculty members, Pim taught fundamental courses (Basic English) for first year students and some specific courses for senior students such as writing courses. Specific courses were varied depending on each academic year. For

fundamental courses, there were around 70 students in each class. Pim was also responsible for academic duties such as doing course moderation each semester and being an advisor for the students' club for which she had to do extracurricular activities with students two times per semester. These duties were counted as part of the criteria for a job promotion. At the time of the study, Pim was taking a sabbatical to further her PhD study at Rak University.

Pim was different from other participants in the in-depth case studies as she was the only one who had been to work and study (a short course) in the U.S. She also had a strong background in Teaching English as she was a private tutor for school students. Furthermore, she had studied for a bachelor's degree and a master's degree with Teaching English as a major.

Research Experience and Perceptions

First Research Experience

Before working in this university, Pim had experience in undertaking research when she studied a master's degree. She completed an individual quantitative research project for a thesis as partial fulfilment of the requirements for her master's degree. This research was experimental research in which Pim used one technique to improve the listening skills of high school students.

Research Experience at Rak University

Pim began her second research project when she started working at Rak University. As the university required academic staff to conduct one research project in the first two years of their employment, Pim completed a collaborative research project with two other colleagues. This research was survey research which aimed to explore the needs of students in a learning process. The research employed a quantitative approach using questionnaires to obtain data. The purpose of conducting this research was to meet the university requirement. Pim and her research team did not apply for university research funding. She noted that: "We did not apply for research funding. We only submitted a summary of our research finding to the research centre" (P interview 1:7). When asked

why she did not apply for the university research funding, she responded: “If we apply for research funding, we have to submit a full paper of our research to the university research centre which I did not want to do at that time” (P interview 1:7).

Pim explained that the university and the research centre provided research funding for academic staff members. It also provided research consultation staff while her faculty (the Faculty of Humanities) provided staff to facilitate lecturers in conducting research such as assisting with statistical analysis if lecturers asked for help. Even though the university provided this support, she felt that it was not enough especially with regard to the amount of research funding, as she noted: “We used our own money to run our research project. If we apply for funding, I do not think it will cover all of our research costs” (P interview 1:9).

At the time of the study, Pim had completed one collaborative research project at Rak University. She stated that she wanted to conduct some qualitative research projects. However, she did not have experience in undertaking this type of research. Her master’s degree research and her collaborative research were both quantitative which she thought (at the time she conducted these two pieces of research) was easier to handle. As Pim noted: “I did survey research because it was easy to collect data by using questionnaires because I did not have enough time and did not have enough knowledge in doing other types of research” (P interview 1:3).

Collaborative Research

Pim did not want to apply for research funding at that time. So she felt that undertaking a collaborative research project was better than conducting an individual research project from the point of view that she could share research costs with her colleagues. Pim explained that her collaborative research was conducted to obtain data which could be used as a base for further study. She explained that her research findings were analysed and reported including research implications which other researchers could use in further research. For Pim, research was complex, as she described: “Research is complex work for which researchers need to read a lot. It is a work from which the researchers elucidate viewpoints and know when to remove themselves from the data and when to get close to the data” (P interview 1:7).

Pim mentioned that after completing her collaborative research, she had a chance to attend research seminars (organised by external agencies) which increased her research competence. At the same time, she had more experience in teaching which inspired her to conduct research in order to enhance her teaching practice and students' outcomes. Pim stated that she was interested in conducting qualitative research rather than quantitative research, "I like qualitative research because its method, evaluation and analysis help the researcher to gain insight into factors which we cannot obtain from quantitative research" (P interview 1:8).

Other Types of Research

Pim also stated that she would like to conduct ethnographic research as she thought it would help her to gain insights into students' problems. She noted that:

I want to conduct qualitative research especially ethnographic research because I feel that this research could answer questions in the educational field. Personally, I feel that it is the ultimate research type. I think if we conduct ethnographic research, it will help us to understand our students better than ever. However, this type of research takes time and there are few people [in my university] doing it. (P interview 1:8)

Her words indicate a perception that ethnographic research required a deeper level of research understanding than of other research types. When asked why she was not interested in other types of qualitative research, Pim responded:

I think other types of qualitative research would provide answers for research questions but not cover all the details we would like to know. I think ethnographic research is more interesting and I guess it will give me a lot more details. (P interview 1:8)

Pim asserted that if she had a chance to conduct research in the near future, she would do some ethnographic research. However, she was also interested in action research.

I think action research is suitable for university teaching because the situation in a classroom is changeable and groups of students are varied and change each year. I never meet the same group of students. ...I cannot wait for research

results, because I cannot apply them to the same group of students. Research should do longitudinal research with the same group of students. (P interview 1:8)

The above passages tended to indicate that Mint fully understood the importance of action research which aimed to resolve specific problems or particular issues within its context. In this sense, Mint believed that each group of students required specific actions and plans to solve classroom learning issues; so longitudinal action research would be difficult to conduct. Despite her interest in undertaking action research, Pim mentioned that it was difficult to conduct action research with a big group of students as she taught a class with approximately 70 students.

Tensions in Conducting Research

When engaging in her collaborative research at Rak University, Pim expressed her tensions in undertaking research. She encountered a problem in collecting data as her collaborative research required thousands of questionnaires to be returned from all first year students at her university. However, with the help from other staff in the faculty, Pim and her research team finally obtained enough questionnaires from first year students and completed their research successfully. She noted that:

I felt I could not physically challenge how many questionnaires I could get back from students because I did not distribute and collect all questionnaires by myself. ...I asked other lecturers to distribute and collect questionnaires for me if I did not teach that group of students. (P interview 1:9)

Despite tension from collecting data, Pim also had a heavy teaching workload which led her to conduct collaborative research rather than individual research. Pim noted that:

Primarily I wanted to undertake individual research. However, I had lots of classes to teach and lots of students in each class. So I did not have enough time to run my research individually. Therefore, I decided to conduct collaborative research with my colleagues who were interested in the same topic as me. (P interview 1:5)

While doing her collaborative research, Pim admitted that she felt pressured doing research and felt exhausted due to the need to balance research and responsibility to do teaching.

At that time...I felt tired doing research when I had a heavy teaching workload. I felt that I should only teach students as I was a teacher, not a researcher. Teachers should not do research and whoever wants to do research should be a researcher, not a teacher like me. (P interview 1:6)

Pim's Conundrum

Pim was concerned about the teaching workload as this tension also affected many junior lecturers in her faculty. Some of them avoided conducting research. She mentioned that junior lecturers had to teach to earn a living as teaching incentives were higher than research incentives.

P: Junior lecturers want to earn a living by teaching because they cannot gain enough money from doing research.

I: How about doing a big research project which has a huge research funding?

P: It is available for senior lecturers. We [junior lecturers] have no power, no name to apply for that kind of funding. We have only one solution ... that is to teach... teach lots to get money. (P interview 1:6)

As she and her team did not want to apply for research funding, Pim stated that she needed to spend her own money to undertake this research: "I have a problem with money to conduct this research because I did not apply for research funding. If I had applied for funding, it would have saved me a lot as I could have reduced my expenses" (P interview 1:9).

Pim also felt that she needed to earn a living by teaching as she could not apply for big research funding even though she wanted to. She noted that: "I am nobody. I have not had experience in conducting a big research project. So I do not think I can apply for big research funding... this is a big problem" (P interview 1:9).

University Pressure

Pim indicated that lecturers received extra money when they taught a class with a large group of students. That meant lecturers, particularly junior English lecturers, wanted to have more classes to earn a living. Even though the university policy seemed to encourage all academic staff to conduct research, research incentives (financial incentives) were not enough to attract some academic staff members to conduct research. Moreover, some junior academic staff members felt depressed as they had to teach lots to earn a living and at the same time, they had to conduct research to meet the university requirement.

They said that they support us to conduct research. But...at the same time, they reduce our teaching incentives. I think others feel depressed as well. Can you imagine! Nobody wants to do research when we need money to earn our living.
(P interview 1:13)

Pim explained that the university tried to decrease teaching incentives per class and she felt that this affected her involvement in research. Pim asserted that if teaching incentives for teaching big classes were still the same, faculty members would be willing to conduct more research. In addition, she felt that the university provided less support for English lecturers who would like to conduct research compared with those who were in science fields.

I think the university does not support us [faculty staff teaching English] even though they said they want us to conduct research....They provide less and limited funding for us. Moreover, it seems like they want us to do research by receiving support from external research agents ...which is difficult for us as those types of funding are mostly available for people who work in the science field. (P interview 1:12)

Rewards in Conducting Research

Pim explained that research could enhance both lecturers and students' capacity. As Pim integrated research into her work and personal life, she gained advantages from her own research experience whereas students and the university gained benefits from her

research as well. Through research, Pim gained in-depth knowledge about that topic. Furthermore, she thought that her collaborative research findings could reflect students' problems and raise awareness about students' learning. The university, in contrast, aimed to increase the number of research projects. Pim explained that research outcomes could increase the level of the university's reputation and increase support (money) from government sectors and external research agents.

P: Doing research helps me gain insights into the topic that I really want to know.... And I think that my research would reflect students' problems in learning English which will lead others to consider how to enhance students' outcomes.

I: What about your university? How did your research benefit your university?

P: For this university...they emphasise the importance of research. So the university gains advantages from the numbers of research reports that academic staff conducted... Besides, they will get more money from the amount of research conducted by university staff.

I: Where does that money come from?

P: From government and others who want our research findings. (P interview 1:11)

This data illustrated that in order to receive more support from the government, the university must increase Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and numbers of research reports were one of the main factors that could increase KPI points. Pim also asserted that lecturers should produce and publish their research in order to improve their teaching and learning.

Even though Pim could not earn money by conducting research at present, she felt that research could bring her rewards, particularly through knowledge and prestige. Later, it could bring her more money. She explained this in the excerpt below.

I think doing research will bring me rewards into my life. If I can accumulate my experience in doing research, it will bring me more knowledge, more prestige, and more money. But... there is a problem... if we want to do research to gain those rewards, we need to know what research focus we prefer to pursue and

know our own strength because we need to spend our whole lives to deal with it.
(P interview 1:10)

Pim's Role and Identity

As all junior academic staff in this university were required to conduct at least one piece of research, either individual or collaborative, in their first two years of their employment, Pim conducted and completed her research to meet the university requirement.

For my first research, I just wanted to complete it and submit the findings to the university research centre. As it is the university requirement that academic staff must conduct research, I did really want to complete it...want to stop people asking for my research outcomes. (P interview 1:10)

From this statement, it can be implied that asking people to do something repeatedly could bring a significant result. In this case, the surrounding environment, particularly colleagues, forced Pim to conduct research even though she did not want. It is likely that this situation was good for Pim as she could complete her first research project.

Even though Pim only expected her collaborative research to be completed at that time, she expected to do better for her next research project. Students' outcomes were the focus of her next research project.

My expectation in doing my next research project is I will do research in the topic that I really want to. I hope that one day I will understand and answer why students are not successful in learning English language. (P interview 1:10)

Pim mentioned that her first motivation to become a teacher researcher was to meet the university requirement. After she had completed her collaborative research and had more experience in teaching, she became aware of the importance of research. Now she really would like to undertake research as a teacher researcher. It can be said that Pim's motivation has changed from external to internal when she became a faculty member and completed her first research project.

P: At first, it is the university requirement that I have to conduct research. But now I feel that my motivation to conduct research comes from my own interest. I want to conduct research that I feel is useful and directly related to my interest... Anyway, I cannot do the research that I really want to do at this moment.

I: You mean ethnographic research?

P: Yes. It takes time. I do not have enough time. (P interview 1:11)

Even though Pim had a heavy teaching workload, she felt that research was a part of her work life. She asserted that *lecturers must conduct research*. Pim also stated that academic staff members had a moral duty to maintain and develop their professional competence through conducting research. Pim felt that undertaking research was important for all lecturers as it was a part of their work life. Pim noted: “I think research is a half of my life. If we are doing this [we can] be a university lecturer. It is a part of our job because faculty members must be allied with research” (P interview 1:10).

Pim indicated that, when she was studying a bachelor’s and a master’s degree, she thought that research was not related to teaching. Even though she had a chance to try out her teaching with high school students (a course requirement for her master’s degree study), Pim did not think that research was part of teaching. At that time, she did not feel that teachers should conduct research. However, being a lecturer at the university level motivated her to undertake research. As Pim herself noted: “I think research is important for me as a university staff member. I did not think that other teachers should conduct research. I mean I did not see any importance in research if I was a high school teacher” (P interview 1:12).

Pim stated that not only did she view research as part of teaching and involve research into her life when she started her work as a faculty member, but she also placed an importance on publication. She mentioned: “Doing research and disseminating research results is a must for me as a lecturer...not just because I am working in this university, a research university...but because I feel that research is my opportunity to speak out as a scholar” (P interview 1:12).

At the time of the study, Rak University was a comprehensive university and had set its goal to be a research university and to be one of the top ten research universities in Thailand. Rules and regulations were being introduced to promote and develop research

among students and university staff. In addition, the university supported students, lecturers, and academic staff to disseminate their research nationally and internationally.

Pim mentioned that she would like to conduct research work and reduce her teaching workload when she became a senior lecturer (after finishing her PhD). Being a senior lecturer, Pim would get more salary and be able to reduce her teaching workload to conduct research. She emphasised that undertaking research could enhance her professional competence and promote students' learning. Moreover, she felt that she could have more time for her family if she conducted research and had a standard teaching workload (12 hours per week).

If I finish my PhD and become a senior faculty member, I would like to focus on research and reduce my teaching workload... I mean I will do more research than teaching because research is important and I can gain lots from it. I think I can do research at home, not just at the university like teaching. Then, I will have more time for my family. (P interview 1:13)

Pim was concerned about her role as a teacher researcher. She wanted to devote her time to conduct as much research work as possible. Also, she stated that she was willing to help other staff who would like to conduct research: "I can give them a suggestion if they ask. I cannot do more than this as I have no authority to change anything. I am too young to do that" (P interview 1:14).

Quality Research

Pim stated that she wanted to conduct research as it was the best way to gain insights into teaching practice and enhance students' outcomes. Also, she felt that faculty members' intrinsic interest in undertaking research was the main factor that could drive them to continue to conduct their quality research.

Research must be allied with quality. So lecturers must be concerned about the value of research. If they understand the research and its process, they will know that lecturers who do not do research could not improve and enhance their teaching practice. (P interview 1:14)

Pim indicated that some faculty members tended to avoid conducting research or sometimes did research only to meet the university requirement rather than to enhance their teaching practice. Academic staff members who were forced to conduct research tended to produce lower quality research. Lecturers themselves needed to be aware that research could increase their professional competence. She noted that:

The most important thing that could motivate academic staff to conduct quality research is their self awareness about research benefits... If they are forced to do research by university policy, there will be nothing... just a piece of paper poor or no quality. (P interview 1:14)

Pim asserted that intrinsic motivation was crucial. Extrinsic motivation such as the research environment, colleagues, policy of the university, or financial incentives could not motivate academic staff members to conduct quality research.

Summary

Pim was selected to participate in this phase as she fitted in the second group according to Figure 5.3. She initially indicated that she believed that lecturers should focus on teaching while research can be used as a supplement data for teaching. However, when interviewed in the second phase, her view had changed slightly to being more active in research and this fitted more closely with the third view on Figure 5.3 in which research was a big part of teaching. In Pim's context, research was a part of her work life. By conducting research, she could develop her professional competence. At the same time, it could promote her professional status to become a senior lecturer and earn more money in the long term. Even though she encountered problems in undertaking research such as having less time to conduct research or gaining few research incentives, she felt that research was crucial to her work as a faculty member. Importantly, gaining new knowledge from undertaking research seemed to motivate Pim to conduct research and made her want to disseminate her findings as a teacher researcher.

Case Study: Vit

Teaching Background

Vit was born in 1974. Vit chose to be a teacher as he felt it was appropriate to his way of life because he loved reading and wanted to share his knowledge. After Vit graduated with his bachelor's degree in English, he applied to be a university staff member and got a scholarship to study in the U.S. for a master's degree in the area of Education. After Vit graduated with his master's degree, he went back to Thailand and studied for his second master's degree in the Faculty of Humanities with English as a major. After studying his master's degree in English, he was appointed to work as a faculty staff member teaching English in a university located in the northern part of Thailand. After teaching in that university for 6 years, he applied to work as a faculty member teaching English at Rak University.

When interviewed, Vit had been working for Rak University for nearly 5 years. He had an average of 21 hours teaching per week. As a faculty member, he took responsibility for teaching English, being an advisor for English major students, and doing community service (teaching school students one time per semester). These duties, including undertaking research, would be counted as a part of the criteria for promotion. In the first semester of the 2010 academic year, Vit had 18 hours teaching per week.

Vit was better qualified and also had greater teaching experience than the other participants in the second phase. He had two master's degrees from two different countries, the U.S. and Thailand, compared to the one master's degree of the others. Vit had a workload averaging 21 hours per week while the other participants had an average of between 27 and 30 hours per week. In addition, after teaching for six years at one university, he had now moved to a second university whereas the other participants had only taught at one university. Furthermore, Vit believed that he would soon be named as an assistant professor.

Research Experience and Perceptions

First Research Experience

Vit had experience in undertaking research when he studied his first master's degree. However, his first research project did not focus on the area of English language. His research in English was conducted when he studied his second master's degree with English as a major. These two research projects were theses presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for his master's degree.

Research Experience at Rak University

Vit began his third research project when starting work at his current university. He stated that the university required faculty staff to undertake one research project in the first two years of their employment. Since research was counted as a part of the criteria for a job promotion, he completed an individual case study research project to meet the requirements. He noted: "We have to do research. It is the university requirement" (V interview 1:1).

In fact, Vit indicated that he did not conduct research only because it was a part of his academic duties. Even though the university and the faculty tended to force staff to undertake research, he did not need to be pressured into doing it as he noted: "I think other staff would tell you that we have to do research in order to meet the university requirement.... I think we have no choice but I am more than willing to do it" (V interview 1:2).

Research Funding

Vit's third research project, case study research, was supported in full by the university research centre. This full research funding covered all research costs and he stated that this research required very little money. He noted: "Doing research in this field [English] does not require much money. I spent money on research carefully and reasonably" (V interview 1:11). His case study research project was about the perceptions of lecturers at the tertiary level, and used interviews and observation as

tools for collecting data. This research project was accepted for publication in an international journal. His goal in conducting this case study research was to promote his professional status. Vit mentioned: “It is going to be a part of my professional advancement as an assistant professor” (V interview 1:2).

Vit explained that the university and its research centre encouraged their academic staff members to conduct research. They provided both funding and support to facilitate staff research. For example, they provided research mentors and research workshops for staff who were interested in undertaking research. Those research mentors were senior university staff members from different faculties who were expert in doing research.

Vit’s case study research was a research project that he called “perfect” (V interview 1:11). By this he meant that he planned his research process carefully and he did not encounter any serious problems while conducting it. Vit noted: “I knew everything about my research [case study research]. I can do it quickly without any problems” (V interview 1:11).

According to Vit, the research funding seemed to be enough for running his research project. He was different from the other participants because he did not require much money for his research. Vit viewed himself as the main instrument for his research. It is not surprising that Vit did not spend much money as the university provided materials such as paper and stationery, library service, and the internet for all university staff members who wanted to conduct research. Therefore, he did not complain about the amount of research funding he got when undertaking his research projects.

Despite his claim of being expert in undertaking case study research, Vit mentioned that he was worried about his next research project (experimental research) as he needed to deal with statistics. Therefore, he stated that he would ask others to help him if he had a problem with statistics. Vit explained: “I feel that I am not proficient at statistics. I do not know everything about this research. I think I will ask others to do it [statistics] for me” (V interview 1:12). In fact, the Faculty of Humanities (Vit’s faculty) provided staff in areas such as assisting with statistical analysis to facilitate lecturers in conducting research.

At the time of the study, Vit was preparing to conduct a quantitative research project for which he had applied for full research funding from the university. It seemed that Vit

was prepared to step outside his comfort zone to learn new things by conducting quantitative research. The project was experimental research in which Vit planned to compare two methods of treatment and control groups. The aim of the research was to develop the university students' communication skills. When asked why he chose to conduct an experimental research project, he responded: "I applied for the research funding which stipulates that I have to undertake university classroom research. ... I decided to do an experimental research project because it is a type of classroom research" (V interview 1:10).

According to Vit, research was "the study used to answer questions. By undertaking this, researchers require scientific methods including those concerning validity and reliability of data" (V interview 1:11). Vit was concerned about his research process. He stated that he had considered any unexpected outcomes that might occur throughout the time he undertook research. Vit explained: "I will improve and develop my research. Anyway, I designed my research [experimental research] to be as flexible as possible so that I can improve and develop my research more effectively" (V interview 1:11).

Quantitative Research

Vit stated that he was interested in some types of quantitative research such as survey. Therefore, he had studied and read many books and articles about survey research which he thought he could do more efficiently than other research types. He stated that "I am interested in doing survey research because it is easy to collect data by using questionnaires. ...and I have read a lot about this type of research. I think I can do it" (V interview 1:10).

Qualitative Research

Vit explained that he was more familiar with qualitative methods than quantitative methods: "Personally, I understand qualitative methods. When I read some qualitative research, I feel no doubt about it. ...However, I have a problem with quantitative methods especially statistics. I do not understand it" (V interview 1:10).

Vit also described that qualitative research was appropriate for the English language teaching and learning in Thailand. He asserted: “Qualitative research is suitable for lecturers who would like to conduct research about English language. However, quantitative research requires a statistical technique which is complex for me” (V interview 1:10).

Despite feelings that the statistics required for quantitative research was difficult, Vit illustrated his interest in undertaking survey research which employed quantitative methods and required statistical knowledge. In fact, his research knowledge seemed to be quite restricted. For example, when asked if he was interested in other types of research such as action research, he stated: “I do not want to do action research because I do not have enough knowledge about it” (V interview 1:10).

Also, Vit asserted that he did not want to do ethnographic research because he thought it “takes so much time” (V interview 1:9). He explained that he would like to do any type of research which he understood completely. In addition, Vit noted that he always tended to conduct research on the same research topic of English communication skills. When asked why he chose to conduct research in the same area, he responded that it was efficient to do so:

I am interested in this topic [English communication skills] as it relates to my work as a lecturer. So I try to focus on one topic and continue to do the same topic with different types of research in order to save time for reviewing literature. (V interview 1:10)

Rising above Tensions

Vit explained that he did not have a problem with the time allowed for completing research. Many junior faculty members, on the other hand, stated that their major tension in conducting research was a heavy teaching workload which reduced the energy to engage with their research. Vit mentioned that he did not feel that his teaching workload was a research obstacle.

V: Many lecturers, especially junior lecturers, complain about their teaching workload. They said they do not have enough time to undertake research.

I: Do you feel the same way?

V: Definitely not. In my opinion, every faculty staff takes responsibility for teaching equally. It depends on how they feel and think about their teaching workload. Some of them always complain about their heavy teaching workload and avoid doing research. But... when they get a lighter teaching workload, they feel displeased because they cannot get the extra money from teaching. If the university did not require staff to do research, I am sure they would not do it. (V interview 1:11-12)

Despite the heavy teaching workload affecting the university staff members in conducting research, they had to carry out other academic duties such as doing course moderations or being an advisor which took them at least 3 hours per week more. Vit stated that he could handle it.

V: My boss [the head of department] encourages me to do research. So when I start doing my research, she will not assign me extra work to do.

I: But you take responsibility for being an advisor for English major students.

V: Yes, but I do not have to do course moderations. (V interview 1:1)

Vit mentioned that it depended on faculty staff's responsibility to do or not to do research. He felt that some lecturers did not tell the truth as to why they did not want to undertake research. Vit seemed to believe that some lecturers, particularly junior lecturers, had less responsibility for their academic duties as most of them avoided undertaking research and tried to use their heavy teaching workload as an excuse. However, Vit's teaching workload was less than the other participants who were interviewed in the second phase of the research. He had an average of 21 teaching hours per week which seemed to give him more time to conduct research than the other case studies participants.

Rewards: Research, a Key to Success

While some faculty staff in the university felt that research affected their way of life, Vit did not think research was an obstacle to his daily life. Furthermore, Vit asserted that

conducting research could bring him money and prestige. Most importantly, he felt that the research he conducted could promote his academic status to that of a scholar. Vit indicated: “For me, research gives me professional advancement and academic acceptance. It brings me honour as I want to be seen as a scholar” (V interview 1:12).

Vit seemed to be correct about his view on research. By doing this quality case study research project, it was likely that Vit would soon be named as an assistant professor. From this promotion, he could get more money and prestige. In Thailand, university staff members who have a master’s degree can improve their teaching status by conducting quality research. In general, the process for applying for academic promotion (assistant professor) comprises three criteria: a) having teaching experience in the present university (five years teaching experience is required), b) producing course books, and c) carrying out a research project including publication. Vit explained that his research was accepted for publication in an international journal which assured his job promotion to an assistant professor.

Vit explained that he did research to meet the university requirements and to promote his professional status. Therefore, he expected to complete and to publish his research. He mentioned that publication meant acceptance from other scholars.

Someone told me that if research is published, we do not have to pay attention to others no matter whether they believe in our research findings or not. It means we gain acceptance by publication. Also, I think I can gain respect by doing research. (V interview 1:13)

Vit explained that he viewed research as a part of teaching when he started his work as a university staff member. Vit’s role as a teacher researcher seemed to work well because he did a good job by publishing his research in an international journal and he gained further career opportunities. He noted: “I got a chance to go abroad on a staff exchange programme. This programme aims to promote the professional development of the university staff” (V interview 1:9).

Vit placed importance on research. Moreover, he seemed to believe that research should be conducted on a regular basis by university staff members. Vit mentioned: “We [faculty staff] should have research skills and conduct research regularly. We should

know how to manage our time to make a balance between teaching and doing research” (V interview 1:3).

Vit stated that teaching was his priority. At the same time, he integrated research into his work life. As a teacher researcher in this university, Vit felt research was part of his workload: “Research is a part of my work... about 30%. Teaching is my priority and research is a tool to support and enhance my teaching practice” (V interview 1:13).

For Vit, research must be allied with teaching. He indicated that his research was a crucial part of his academic duties. Also, it gave him success in promoting his higher academic status. Furthermore, he thought that his research findings gave benefit to the university and to students indirectly. The university could gain more funding points from the number of research projects that the university staff members conducted and from the number of staff who had academic status as an assistant professor, an associate professor, or a full professor. Vit noted: “It is acknowledged that the university will gain more points if we have research or academic status” (V interview 1:13). As mentioned earlier, Rak University had set its goal to be one of the top ten research universities in Thailand. Therefore, the number of research projects and the number of staff who have academic status could increase the reputation of the university.

For his next research (experimental research), Vit felt that the upcoming findings of his research could not give much benefit to students as his research was not designed to focus on information to change conditions in a particular situation as action research does. Therefore, he felt that it would not promote students’ outcomes as effectively as action research.

My research [experimental research] aims to promote students’ communication skills. However, it is not action research so it is hard to say that it directly promotes students’ learning outcomes. Students will get benefit from my research ...but not much compared with action research. (V interview 1:13)

According to Vit, research was a crucial factor for his job as a teacher researcher. It promoted his professional status. It also helped him increase his professional competence so that he became a more effective teacher researcher.

Vit's Role and Identity

Mixed Feeling about Research

Vit explained that he loved learning and found that learning from undertaking research could support his thirst for knowledge. Furthermore, he gained new knowledge and increased his professional competence. He asserted that doing research was the best way to acquire knowledge.

I love learning and I like doing research because I can gain knowledge and find the right answers through it. Besides, I chose to be a lecturer because I believe that I will get a job promotion by doing things I like such as research. (V interview 1:14)

Despite Vit's intrinsic motivation, he asserted that extrinsic motivation such as support from research mentors was useful as it could support teaching staff members to undertake research more easily. Other extrinsic motivation such as research incentives could not motivate academic staff to undertake research as they can earn a living by teaching. In addition, a strict policy about staff research could drive staff to conduct research, but it was not a positive reinforcement. In fact, university staff members may conduct research to meet the university requirements but this may not promote their own professional competence. By conducting research, Vit indicated that he was more open-minded and ready to teach and do research as a teacher researcher: "I can accept any consequence derived from my research, no matter how good or bad it is. As teacher researchers, we should be open to comment" (V interview 1:5).

Also, Vit seemed to be confident that he could be an effective faculty member by conducting research. He noted: "If we would like to be an effective lecturer, we have to do research. So we can find our own problems and find the solutions for those problems we encounter in everyday life" (V interview 1:3).

Vit felt that being a teacher researcher was regarded more highly than being only a teacher. In addition, he seemed to be proud about his role as a teacher researcher. Vit noted: "Personally I love reading. I read a lot of research. It seems like I collect something useful. I feel smarter and very academic when I work as a teacher researcher" (V interview 1:14).

Furthermore, Vit stated that he was very keen on research, particularly qualitative research. He mentioned that his thirst for knowledge was his main motivation to become a teacher researcher. Vit's future goal is to be an effective teacher researcher in the current university. As Vit believed he would soon be named as an assistant professor, his future goal was to continue conducting research in order to gain a higher status and to be promoted to an associate professor. As he mentioned, "I want to be an associate professor who focuses on research" (V interview 1:15).

As a teacher researcher, Vit was also willing to help other lecturers who were interested in undertaking research. However, he stated that he could only give suggestions about research, but could not help them with other things such as teaching workload.

V: I can give them suggestions. Anyway, I think I cannot change rules or anything.

I: If you were an associate professor, could you do that?

V: I think I could not. ...I want to be an associate professor and work in the research field, not administration. (V interview 1:15)

Quality or Quantity

Vit mentioned that other lecturers, particularly some junior lecturers in this university were not interested in conducting research. Even though the university encouraged university staff to produce more research, these junior lecturers seemed to avoid doing it or continuing it. Vit explained that if the university and the research centre wanted more research from staff, they should force these junior lecturers to do research.

They [junior lecturers] avoid doing research. So the way to influence these people to conduct research is to force them. Like when they studied for a master's degree, they were forced to do research in order to graduate. So I think they should be forced to do research. (V interview 1:15)

Vit, on the other hand, stated that if lecturers were forced to do research, they might not produce quality research, especially those who had a heavy teaching workload and wanted to teach to earn a living: "Yes. They will do research but I am not sure whether

they can conduct quality research or not" (V interview 1:15). Furthermore, Vit explained that the motivation to conduct quality research should come from academic staff members' own intention: "If it is from their [academic staff] own interest, they will be more concerned about research quality" (V interview 1:15).

Summary

When interviewed in the first and the second phase, Vit clearly showed that research was a big part of his teaching profession. In Vit's context, research was a tool to gain new knowledge, increase professional competence, and promote his professional status. Vit was eager to learn new things by conducting other types of research. It can be said that he conducted research not only to meet the university requirements, but also to meet his own requirements; fulfilling his thirst for knowledge and gaining promotion, and ultimately academic status.

He took care with every step of his research as he did not want to encounter any problems. In addition, reading a lot of research articles was good preparation for undertaking his research project. Research was a part of his life as a teacher researcher. Gaining promotion seemed to be the important factor that motivated him to continue to conduct research and be an active teacher researcher. Vit's case illustrated the belief that conducting quality research could develop a staff member's professional competence and gain a job promotion. Following the interview for phase one of the study, Vit had continued to view research as a big part of teaching according to Figure 5.3.

Case Study: Rin

Teaching Background

Rin was born in 1981. She was interested in learning English language which initially influenced her decision to study for her bachelor's degree with English as a major. After graduating with her bachelor's degree in English, Rin decided to be an English lecturer at the university level. Therefore, she studied for a master's degree with Teaching

English as a major. After Rin graduated with her master's degree, she applied to be a faculty member teaching English at Rak University.

When interviewed, Rin had been working for Rak University for nearly five years. She generally had an average of 21 hours teaching per week. As a university staff member working in the Faculty of Humanities, Rin took responsibility for teaching English to major and non-major students, being an advisor for English major students and for the English club, being an annual English festival project manager, and doing community service (teaching school students one time per semester). In the first semester of the 2010 academic year, Rin had had 30 hours teaching per week. So her teaching workload was similar to the other participants (except Vit).

In addition to the above duties Rin had to conduct an individual or joint research project to be considered for promotion. Despite the requirement that forced academic staff members to conduct research, the university also encouraged their academic staff to carry out research by giving them support such as research funding and a research preparation course was provided for amateur researchers who did not have experience in conducting research.

Research Experience and Perceptions

First Research Experience

Rin first carried out research when she studied for her bachelor's degree. This research was a kind of mini research project. Her second research project was conducted when she studied for a master's degree in Teaching English. The resulting thesis was presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for her master's degree.

Rin was different from the other case studies participants as she had her first experience of conducting research when studying for her bachelor's degree. Both her bachelor's and master's research projects examined areas of language analysis.

Research Experience at Rak University

Rin's third research project was conducted when starting work at Rak University. Rin mentioned that she did not know initially about the university policy that required academic staff members to conduct one research project in the first two years of their employment. She noted: "I did not know about this requirement. When I applied to work in this university, I did not think that I would have to do research" (R interview 1:13). However, Rin later understood this requirement. Therefore, she conducted one individual research project to meet the university requirement. This research project was a study about university students' effectiveness. It was conducted with first year students and used questionnaires for collecting data. Rin did not apply for university research funding for this research project. Furthermore, she did not publish her research findings, merely submitting them to the university research centre. As Rin herself mentioned: "I did not apply for research funding. I used my own money" (R interview 1:7). Furthermore, when asked if she wanted to publish this research, she responded: "I have not decided yet" (R interview 1:7).

Rin explained that she did not encounter any serious problems with her research project because her research project was "simple". She asked other university lecturers to distribute her questionnaires as she needed hundreds of questionnaires from students. Like Vit, Rin was not competent in statistics, so she asked others to do the statistical analysis. Therefore, she had no difficulty completing her research project on time. She explained: "I am not knowledgeable about statistics, so I hired a specialist to do it" (R interview 1:9).

At the time of the study, Rin was preparing to conduct a collaborative research project with her colleagues. For this new research project, Rin and her colleagues planned to investigate English major students. This time she planned to apply for university research funding. She stated that the aim of this research project was to increase her knowledge as a faculty member: "I will conduct a qualitative research project with my colleagues. We have the same research interest. Most of all, I want to increase my knowledge" (R interview 1:11). Rin, in addition, noted that collaboration between teaching staff members within the faculty could encourage EFL lecturers to undertake research.

If we do not have time to do our own research project, we can ask other lecturers who have the same idea about research topics to carry out a joint project. I think asking others to do a joint research project could save time and we can complete our project more quickly than doing it individually. (R interview 1:11)

Despite the collaboration between teaching staff members encouraging the research environment, Rin stated that the support from the university and its research centre could motivate academic staff members to conduct more research. This support included a systematic application process, funding, and research incentives.

R: I think the university should help lecturers to do research. The application process must be fast. Research funding must be flexible... And they should provide incentives for lecturers who conduct research.

I: Could you describe what you mean by the flexible research funding?

R: Um...at present they need receipts for every single thing we use. You know... it is hard to provide those receipts. We cannot get the real research funding because we do not have receipts to show what we spent on conducting research. They need to rethink this rule if they want us to do research. (R interview 1:15)

Rin mentioned that appropriate support from the university could help academic staff members to feel more enthusiastic about conducting research. In addition, Rin asserted that lecturers' own reason for conducting research was crucial. Intrinsic motivation, particularly academic staff members' eagerness to promote their professional development, could drive them to continue to do research.

Rin appeared to be interested in conducting any type of research. She noted: "Through research, I want to know and find appropriate teaching methods that could improve and increase students' learning proficiency" (R interview 1:11).

Quantitative Research

Rin's first work research project gave her experience in undertaking quantitative research. However, she realised that quantitative tools such as questionnaires could not be used to draw in-depth details from participating students and explained: "I think data

obtained from quantitative research is not enough. If we use questionnaires to collect data, students cannot give their whole opinion through this" (R interview 1:7).

Rin stated that quantitative research methods may be a good choice for academic staff members who wanted to conduct research with a large group of students, such as groups of first year students (approximately 50 to 70 students in each class). Other senior students' groups (second to fourth year students) were smaller, ranging between 20 and 30 students in each class. As Rin had experience in teaching students from first year to fourth year, she felt that some types of quantitative research, such as correlational research, was suitable for use with first year students. When asked why she thought this type of research was appropriate for first year students, she responded that time was a key factor: "I think correlational research can be conducted more easily as we use statistical techniques to analyse data. So it can save time if we conduct it with large groups of students like first year students [around 50 to 70 students in each class]" (R interview 1:8).

Rin was also interested in undertaking experimental research. However, Rin did not have experience in conducting this type of research so she was not sure whether this type of research could promote students' outcomes. She noted: "I am afraid that my students will get nothing from me if I cannot gain control over the treatment and control groups" (R interview 1:8).

Qualitative Research

Rin's upcoming collaborative research project was to be qualitative. She mentioned that qualitative methods could help lecturers gain insights into teaching and learning: "I think qualitative research methods could help me to obtain in-depth data. It will help me know what students think and how much they gain from my teaching" (R interview 1:7).

Rin also stated that a qualitative method could elicit participants' insider views. However, the researchers were close to the data, which she thought could affect the research findings in terms of bias. Rin showed uncertainty about the qualitative research paradigm. She indicated: "In my opinion, the researcher should be removed from the

data to avoid bias. However, it is unavoidable. We have to immerse ourselves in that context in order to obtain as much data as possible" (R interview 1:8).

It appeared that Rin was interested in conducting qualitative research and aimed to enhance students' learning capacity.

R: I want to do research about teaching techniques which can promote students' proficiency.

I: What type of research do you think is suitable?

R: I think action research. However, this type of research should be conducted with senior students [second to fourth year students] because they have more responsibility and know what they should focus on. By using action research to promote their learning outcomes, I am sure they will get something useful. (R interview 1:8)

Rin thought that students should be involved in the research process. When asked why she felt action research should not be conducted with first year students, she stated: "I think they have less responsibility and do not know what they have to do and what they can get from the research which lecturers conduct. Action research may be not suitable for them" (R interview 1:8). Rin further explained that it was a class discipline issue because there were lots of first year students in each class. However, it was likely that Rin did not see action research as being linked to lecturers' change (improving her teaching practice). She seemed to view research from an applied linguistics perspective, with it being oriented around student factors in language learning.

Tensions between Teaching and Research

It appeared that Rin did not experience any tensions in undertaking research as she did not encounter any serious problems. On the other hand, some academic staff members mentioned that a heavy teaching workload affected the time they had available for conducting research. Moreover, research incentives were meagre and affected their daily lives negatively. Rin stated that she agreed with the idea that the teaching workload could discourage lecturers from conducting research: "Yes, a heavy teaching

workload is a big problem for many lecturers who want to do research. They feel tired and do not want to do extra work like doing research" (R interview 1:2).

While other case studies in the phase mentioned about the importance of incentives for their research involvement, Rin did not feel that incentives (either teaching incentives or research incentives) made any difference to her. She noted: "Money is not my problem. I do not think it can affect me when undertaking research" (R interview 1:9).

When asked if teaching staff members produced quality research if they were forced to conduct research when they had a heavy teaching workload, she answered: "It depends on the individual. If they pay attention and intend to do research, I am sure their research will be of good quality" (R interview 1:5).

Rin believed that the major cause of tension in conducting research was a heavy teaching workload even though she did not experience this problem. Rin also explained that some academic staff members had a problem when they applied for research funding from the university research centre. The application process for research funding took time and often needed to be followed up quickly.

I have heard that some lecturers wait for the research funding approval for several months. Sometimes, they get approval without notification. Staff at the research centre do not tell them that they have already got approval. Then when they find out that their research has been approved, they have to rush to finish the project on time. They have little time available to complete their research projects because of the late notification from the research centre. (R interview 1:14-15)

In addition, Rin mentioned that both she and other academic staff members felt stressed when carrying out research. This made her feel displeased about the university's policy which seemed to be a hindrance rather than a help in carrying out research.

The Status of Research on Teaching English

Rin mentioned that conducting research in the field of English did not effectively promote the professional advancement of academic staff teaching English unlike those who were in the science field: "I think we have less opportunity to be rewarded with

professional advancement. Our research [in the English field] is not strong enough compared with research in the science field" (R interview 1:9).

When asked in what ways her research findings could benefit the university, Rin illustrated that the university did not utilise any research findings producing by lecturers teaching English.

R: I never think about how my research findings could benefit the university. If they think it is good, they may use it. But... at the present, they are not interested in research conducted by us [the Faculty of Humanities]. Our research projects are not important and do not have benefit for the university.

I: But the university encourages all academic staff to do research, is that right?

R: Yes, but I feel that the university does not pay attention in this area [English]. It seems like the university wants to focus on the science area. (R interview 1:11)

Rin also explained that the amount of research funding the university allowed for each research project in the science area was greater than for those in the English field: "The amount of money [research funding] is not the same. We get less than those who conduct research in science" (R interview 1:11). In addition, she mentioned that there was a lot of external research funding available in the science area compared to the field of English: "It is difficult to find external research funding in the English area. On the other hand, the faculty [Faculty of Humanities] can provide a little money if we need more money to finish our research projects" (R interview 1:11). Rin seemed to believe that the amount of research funding for each project in different areas should be the same. She focused only on the amount of research rather than on real research costs. In reality, however, it was hard to compare the amount of research funding between research in the science area and research in the English teaching area because these two areas of research used different tools and required different amounts of money.

Rewards: Research, a Professional Development

Research was part of Rin's work as a faculty member. She explained that academic staff should conduct research to gain new knowledge: "We teach what we know and we will

gain experience through teaching. But we do not get any new input. Undertaking research could help us to increase our knowledge" (R interview 1:12). She also mentioned that up-to-date information in the educational field was important for academic staff members, so carrying out research was one of the best choices for university lecturers who wanted to increase their professional competence. In addition, she suggested other ways to increase knowledge such as attending seminars or reading educational journals.

Despite the need for new knowledge, Rin mentioned that she did not have any outstanding expectations when carrying out research. Rin noted: "Actually, I do not expect any outcomes from my research project. I did it because the university requires me to" (R interview 1:10). However, Rin explained that the research topic was up to her: "although I have to do research, I can choose a topic that I am interested in. I do what I want and I do not expect good responses from others" (R interview 1:10).

Rin mentioned that her research gave direct benefits to her. She noted that: "Doing research is like guidance that we use to improve our teaching. Do it, apply it to our own classroom and finally adjust teaching on the basis of findings to suit our teaching" (R interview 1:7). Furthermore, Rin explained that she would like to conduct research because she felt that research, particularly action research, could promote students' outcomes. At the same time it could help her to know which techniques were appropriate to use with each group of students.

Rin's Role and Identity

As the university encouraged academic staff to conduct research, Rin noted that the university requirement was the prime factor that drove her to carry out her first research project: "I think most lecturers do research to meet the university requirements. They urge us to do research and we must do it" (R interview 1:4). When asked if she thought about being promoted by conducting research, she responded: "I do not think about promotion. It is not my goal at this moment" (R interview 1:16).

It can be said that the university requirements motivated Rin to conduct her first research project. However, Rin later felt that research was a part of her teaching work which led her to continue carrying out research. She explained that "I feel that doing

research is one of my duties. Even though I did my first research project to meet the university requirements, now I want to do it because it is a part of my job" (R interview 1:10).

Rin stated that she liked to undertake research as it promoted her professional development. Rin mentioned that she felt that research was becoming more important for her work: "I thought it [research] was 30% of my work. Now I think research is 50% of my workload" (R interview 1:12). Rin's feelings about the importance of research had changed after she finished her first research project. However, Rin noted that she could not integrate research into her work as much as she wanted to. At present, research was not her priority and she noted: "I want to do more research than this, but I cannot because my teaching job is more important" (R interview 1:12). Even though she felt research was half of her work, she could do it for only 30% of her time and teaching was still her priority. She pointed out: "Yes, we must do research to increase our own knowledge. But if I have to choose which thing is more important between teaching and research, teaching must come first because I am a teacher" (R interview 1:12).

Rin preferred to refer to herself as a teacher rather than a teacher researcher as she did not do research regularly like other lecturers in the current university. She stated that she applied to be a university staff member and her main duty was teaching English.

R: I do not see myself as a teacher researcher. I am a teacher and I love teaching. My job is to teach...I must teach them and make sure that they will understand what I teach. What they get from me should be something useful which they can use in their real life situations.

I: What about research?

R: I will do research when I think I have nothing to teach my students and I do not have a chance to do outside study. Doing research can increase my knowledge. (R interview 1:15-16)

However, Rin mentioned that research did not fit well into her role as she had a heavy teaching workload and she felt that she could not conduct research as part of her daily routine.

I cannot do research as a routine. I cannot do it every day. Sometimes I feel tired from teaching and I do not want to do anything. I need a rest. And at that time, research will be left behind until I feel better, then I do it again. (R interview 1:14)

Rin mentioned that she was not at the stage of viewing research as a big part of her teaching job. However, she hoped that she could integrate research into her role as a teacher researcher soon. Rin planned to study for a PhD degree and seemed to believe that she could integrate research into her work life more easily when she graduated. When asked why she felt that PhD study could change her role to that of a teacher researcher, Rin responded: "I think it is a requirement of people who have a PhD degree. You must do research and you will be forced to do research" (R interview 1:13). However, at the time of the study, Rin conducted research in order to meet the university requirement.

Summary

Rin was selected to participate in the second phase as she fitted in the first group according to Figure 5.3. However, following the interview for phase one of the study, Rin's research perspective had changed to fit more closely with the second group of beliefs: teaching is a priority. By conducting research, Rin expected that she would gain new knowledge from research and gain insights into her teaching practice. Rin seemed to believe that action research would be suitable for university classroom teaching because it was designed to promote and develop teaching and learning processes. She also mentioned that she was interested in carrying out action research but most of all she wanted to conduct any type of research that could promote positive outcomes for students.

For Rin, research was part of her work as an academic staff member. She felt that undertaking research could increase her knowledge and promote students' outcomes. However, Rin indicated that she was not a teacher researcher who carried out research regularly and she did not want to refer to herself as a teacher researcher. Even though Rin believed that research was a part of her teaching job, she did not view research as a big part of her work as the other three cases did. Rin wanted to devote her time to

teaching. She concluded that she conducted research when she had free time or when she needed new knowledge.

CHAPTER SIX

JAIDEE UNIVERSITY

This chapter describes the fieldwork findings from the third phase of the investigation. The findings are drawn from the focus group interview of six participating lecturers teaching English at Jaidee University (pseudonym) as well as document analysis. The chapter begins with an overview of Jaidee University, followed by a description of the management of the university research centre. Finally, the focus group findings are presented.

6.1 Introduction to Jaidee University

Jaidee University is a well-known public university located in the north of Thailand. This university was officially granted university status in the 21st century. However, the historical background of Jaidee University can be traced back to a vocational institute in the 1950s (see Figure 6.1).

Jaidee University emerged from the integration of more than 20 technical colleges, under one vocational institute. This vocational institute, at that time, comprised multiple campuses and Jaidee University was considered as one of these campuses. Later, the vocational institute was renamed Jaidee Institute. Jaidee Institute consisted of multiple campuses in different regions of Thailand. The institute held a key role in offering educational programmes focusing on science and technology including producing research and innovation, and promoting the national arts and culture. Jaidee Institute, in addition, offered two levels of educational programmes in various fields: diploma programmes in vocational education and bachelor's degree programmes.

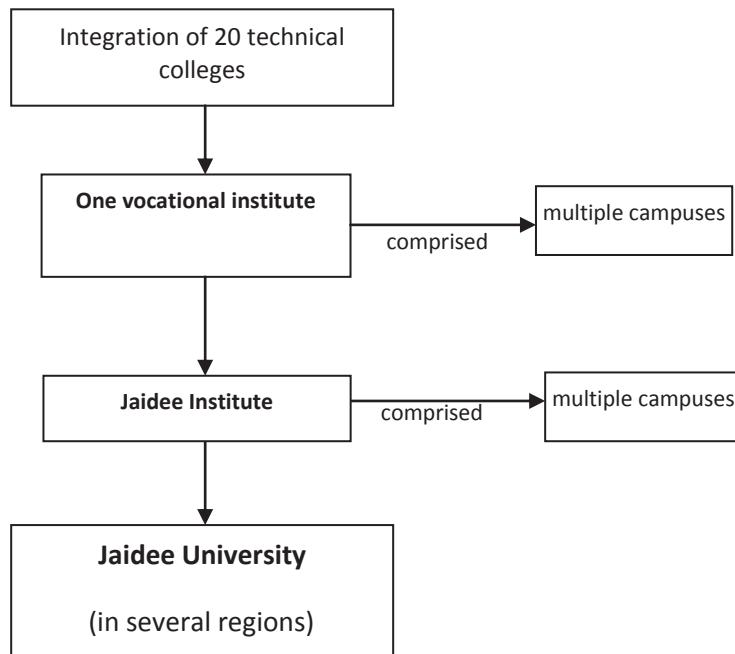


Figure 6.1. The establishment of Jaidee University

In order to serve the needs of people nationwide and to meet international standards, Jaidee Institute developed its administration and educational management. It was granted university status. Campuses in the same region were formed and Jaidee Institute became an independent university. Jaidee University consisted of several regional universities. Each of these regional universities had different numbers of campuses. Even though each regional university shared the name of Jaidee University, each university was an independent university and had its own budget and charter. This phase of the study was conducted in one campus of Jaidee University in the northern part of Thailand.

The Overview of Jaidee University

Jaidee University promoted itself as a comprehensive university. This type of university provides comprehensive study programmes in respective fields. At the time of the study, Jaidee University aimed to offer effective educational programmes focusing on science and technology at both diploma level programmes and bachelor's degree programmes that maintained the original purpose of Jaidee Institute. However, it was

found that a large number of students enrolled and an average number of graduates in the field of arts and business were more than the number of students and graduates in the field of science.

In order to become a leading university and reach international standards, Jaidee University had set its goals and structure systematically. The university comprised several campuses located in different provinces in the north of Thailand. The university had four faculties and one college. Jaidee University offered degree and diploma programmes in various fields depending on the speciality of each campus such as humanities, technologies, and engineering. In addition, in order to enhance the university capability, vocational degree programmes were offered in the field of technology. Jaidee University offered degrees in business, art and architecture, and liberal arts in order to serve the needs of society, especially the needs of northern business and community.

As a new independent university, Jaidee University had its own charter and administration which were under the supervision of the University Council. It had its own president, vice presidents, and assistants to the president to manage the university. Similar to Rak University, Jaidee University had four aspects to its mission: teaching, research, provision of academic services to society, and promotion of Thai arts and cultures.

At the time of the study, Jaidee University was committed to be a leading comprehensive university in Thailand. This meant that Jaidee University had to be capable of providing comprehensive study programmes of both postgraduate and undergraduate degree programmes, particularly in the fields of science and technology. However, there were only undergraduate and vocational degree programmes offered at Jaidee University.

The University Research Centre

Jaidee University promoted academic excellence through research and innovation by setting up the university research centre which was responsible for supporting academic staff members as well as students to produce quality research in order to generate benefits responding to the country's strategies. At the time of the study, the research

centre was a relatively new organisation which had only been established in the past five years.

The Administration Structure of the Research Centre

There were two levels in the administration structure of the Jaidee University research centre (see Figure 6.2). The first level was the university administration structure under the supervision of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, with the Director, the Deputy Director, and the Research Committee then acting to manage and promote research development. They worked together and took responsibility for setting research plans and policy. There were three of research committees: an administrative research committee, a research networking and partnership committee, and a committee for research and development. The second level was the administration structure within the research centre which was under the supervision of the director and the deputy director. There were three main administrative staff members taking responsibility for managing works related to research to which the director and the deputy director of the research centre assigned them. These were the only administrative staff working full time in this research centre.

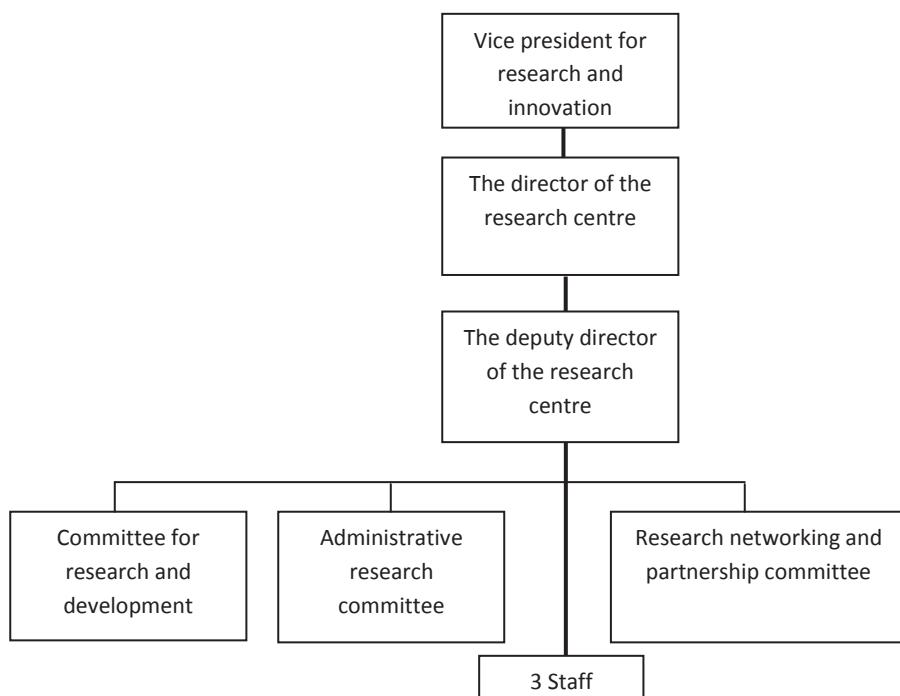


Figure 6.2. The administration structure of the research centre

The research centre itself was a small organisation. The research committee was appointed annually. Furthermore it is worth noting that the research committee, the director, and the deputy director were all lecturers, so they did not work full time for the research centre.

Support and Funding

The research centre provided support for academic staff members who wanted to undertake research. This included research database support, research funding, as well as funding for presentations and publications. The university, in addition, provided physical resources such as stationery, computers, and internet access. Academic staff members could get these physical resources at their workplace.

The research centre provided a research database which linked to internal and external research funding from government sectors, private business sectors, and relevant organisations. The research database was used to gather information on research projects conducted by university staff members. However, the research database indicated only a few EFL research articles had been completed by academic staff members of Jaidee University.

Internal research funding was provided by the research centre and allocated by the university annually. The amount of research funding varied depending on the nature of the projects that applicants applied for. Also, the university indicated that the internal research funding could be located at four different levels as follows:

- i) Less than 100,000 baht funding (approximately NZ\$4,000)
- ii) 100,000 to 500,000 baht funding (approximately NZ\$4,000 to 20,000)
- iii) 500,000 to 1,000,000 baht funding (approximately NZ\$20,000 to 40,000)
- iv) More than 1,000,000 baht funding (approximately more than NZ\$40,000)

The university, in addition, established criteria for staff to apply for and receive internal research funding. These criteria included five aspects:

- i) The applicants had to be academic staff members of Jaidee University.
- ii) The applicants had to submit a research proposal including an estimated budget for carrying out the project.
- iii) If the applicants apply for research funding to carry out a collaborative research project, the applicants must indicate the team leader who takes responsibility for managing the research funding.
- iv) The applicants must finish their research project within one year after getting approval for conducting these. The applicants may ask for an extension but no longer than two years.
- v) The applicants must submit their research report to the research centre.

Apart from applying for and receiving research funding to undertake their research projects, academic staff members could apply for funding for presenting their research findings at both national and international levels. In addition, academic staff members would get incentives of 1,000 baht (approximately NZ\$40) for presenting their research findings at either national or international level.

The research centre, furthermore, provided financial support for which academic staff members could apply if they wanted to publish their research. Apart from receiving funding for publication, academic staff members would get financial incentives. For example, they would receive 3,000 baht (approximately NZ\$120) for publishing their research findings in a national journal, or 5,000 baht (approximately NZ\$200) for publishing their research in an international journal.

6.2 Focus group at Jaidee University

The focus group data was gathered in order to gain a better understanding of the research culture of Thai lecturers teaching English at the tertiary level in Thailand. This focus group was conducted during the first full semester break of the 2010 academic year with six lecturers who were teaching English at Jaidee University. All of the participants were full-time academic staff members in the English Division, Faculty of

Liberal Arts. In the English Division, the total number of lecturers was 16. There was limited availability of faculty members teaching English due to the semester break, but six lecturers agreed to be focus group participants. These six lecturers consisted of four females and two males. They ranged in age from 29 to 40 years. Four participants held master's degrees in Teaching English while the other two participants held master's degrees in English. The group had between four months and 15 years teaching experience before working in the current university. Half of the participants had teaching experience as lecturers at the university level while the other three participants had experience in teaching as English tutors at private language institutions (offering English courses for students at all levels). Their teaching experience at the current university ranged from one year to seven years.

Research Experience at Jaidee University

The six focus group participants were selected based on their research experience at their institution. These participants had experience in conducting research since they had studied for their master's degree. After their master's research, they also had experience in conducting research, applying for and receiving internal research funding at their current institution, Jaidee University. All of them had completed at least one research project (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1

Research Experience of the Focus Group Participants

Research Experience		Participants					
		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
Complete	Collaborative projects	2	2	1	1	1	2
	Individual project	-	-	-	-	1	-
In progress	Collaborative projects	1	1	1	1	1	1
Preparation (next semester)	Collaborative projects	1	1	1	1	1	1

As can be seen from the table, the six participants had experience in conducting collaborative research projects. All of them had completed at least one collaborative research project at their institution. Only one participant had completed both individual

and collaborative research projects. Their roles in conducting collaborative research projects varied. Three participants had been a team leader while the others had been a team member. At the time of the focus group discussion, all focus group participants were undertaking collaborative research projects. In addition, they had all planned additional collaborative research projects for the second semester of the 2010 academic year.

As this phase was a focus group consisting of six participating lecturers with whom the researcher was not familiar, it was often hard to identify individual participants on the audio recording. Therefore, in referencing quoted passages from participants, 'FG' refers to 'Focus Group Participants', then the page of the focus group transcript is placed at the end of each focus group interview reference. For example, (FG:9) refers to focus group interview data located on p. 9 of the transcription. In addition, the use of 'I' refers to the interviewer.

Importance of Research

When interviewed, the participants stated that they had conducted research in order to gain new knowledge, improve teaching practice and professional development, and/or enhance students' outcomes. Five participants mentioned about the advantages of conducting their own research, particularly for their job as lecturers.

I do research to explore things that I can use to enhance students' outcomes. At the same time, it promotes me as a researcher. (FG:5)

I think doing research helps me gain insights into problems.... By doing research, we can develop a handbook of our teaching practice. (FG:6)

Yes [responded to above statement]. It is a task of lecturers to promote their teaching practice in everyday life. (FG:6)

I think it [research] can improve my teaching practice because doing research could help us to gain insights into students' problems as well as our teaching problems. (FG:6)

It is the way to increase knowledge and explore new things. (FG:6)

Types of Research that Gained Funding

Most of the research projects that the participants completed were collaborative research. When asked why they chose to conduct collaborative research, one replied: “It can save us time and we can share responsibility in doing research” (FG:11).

All projects that the six participants had completed and were undertaking were supported by the university’s internal research funding. A condition of receiving internal funding was that participants had to conduct either collaborative research or individual research projects focusing on students. Two participants mentioned that their criteria for selecting the type of research they did came from this university rule. One participant indicated: “The university specifies that we have to do [university] action research” (FG:6), and a second replied “It is easy to get approval if we conduct research focusing on students’ outcomes” (FG:7).

Even though they believed that they were forced to conduct action research, all participants noted that they preferred to do this type of research. For example, one said: “If we have a chance to choose the type of research, we still choose action research because we can do research while we are teaching. As a lecturer, doing action research is appropriate as it can promote students’ outcomes” (FG:7).

Two participants also wanted to undertake research in the field of English that was associated with the community. One stated: “Sometimes we want to do research with other groups of people such as people in the community but...” (FG:7). Another participant then responded: “We do not have time. So doing action research is manageable and suitable with our time” (FG:7).

These two participants felt that being a lecturer limited their opportunity to carry out research with other groups of people outside the university. As their environment was the university classroom, their research had to relate to their teaching practice and students.

As lecturers at Jaidee University, participants knew that the university had research funding support and all of the faculty members in the English Division had experience in applying for and receiving university research funding. When asked why they applied for university research funding, one participating lecturer responded: “They [the

university] want us to conduct research so we apply for university research funding. They [the university] have to support us to do research" (FG:8).

The participants illustrated that they were not interested in applying for the external research funding from the government sectors or from other research agents even though the university encouraged them to do that. One explained: "I have no idea about it. My research focuses on students studying at this university so I do not think that I will apply for external research funding" (FG:14). Another participant then asserted: "I want to but when I think about time to write a research proposal... How can I find time to do it?" (FG:14).

Participants explained that there were two types of internal research funding: a) internal funding from the general university budget, and b) internal funding from the research allocation received from the government. When asked about the difference between the two internal funding sources, one participant noted:

The difference between these two internal funding sources is the process to receive academic points. If we apply for internal funding from the research allocation received from the government, we have to inform the university academic sector that we are going to conduct research as a part of our academic duties. Otherwise we will lose the academic points of our research workload. (FG:15)

This participant asserted that this was just the notification step that was required when applying for internal funding from the university. Jaidee University offered a range of internal research funding from less than 100,000 baht up to 1,000,000 baht (approximately NZ\$4,000 up to NZ\$40,000). However, the actual amount of internal research funding that the participants were granted did not exceed 100,000 baht. For big research projects (over 100,000 baht), the university encouraged their staff to apply for external research funding. When asked about the average research funding that they received from the university, it was mentioned that it was between 4,000 and 25,000 baht (approximately NZ\$160 to 1,000) depending on the length of each project: "For some projects we got 4,000 baht [approximately NZ\$160] but this was for one month projects. For one year projects, we have to estimate the total budget when we apply for the research funding" (FG:11).

I wondered why there was a one month research project as it seemed impossible to undertake research within a month. I asked participants to explain about their one month research projects including the purpose, methodology, and research process. One participant then answered: “The university asked us to do that. It was an urgent mission and we could not avoid it” (FG:11). Another participant also noted that “We have to do it, must submit research findings to the university within a month so we used our old research project and recreated it by changing the group of participants [students]” (FG:11). The participants appeared to have shared the same topic. One participant added that his research was quite similar to another lecturer who had to conduct this urgent research, stating: “My research was 98% similar to another lecturer. You can see it page by page” (FG:11).

Two participants mentioned that the urgent research projects were used to increase the KPIs to support the university performance. One participant indicated that “The KPIs of the university dropped. So they forced us to do research to gain points back” (FG:10-11).

As participants mentioned about KPIs, I asked them whether these KPIs were important to them and in what way. One responded: “If the university has good KPIs, the university survives [maintains its reputation] which means we survive” (FG:12). This statement showed that participants were aware of the importance of research outputs in terms of its benefit towards the university’s reputation.

Quality Research?

The information that participants explained led me to ask them about the quality of their one month research projects. The participants stated that it was poor quality research. For example, one focus group participant mentioned: “Doing and completing research within one month. How can we do it?” (FG:11). One participant noted that research was a long process and said: “Doing research needs time and careful process but there is nothing in this project” (FG:11). Therefore, it seemed that all participants were concerned about their research quality and felt that if they were forced to complete research in a short time it could affect their quality. One focus group participant

expressed: "Where is the quality of my research? Yes, it has some but how much?" (FG:11).

The participants mentioned that their short research projects were of poor quality in terms of dissemination but still had quality in terms of increasing their research knowledge. It was explained that conducting this sort of short research encouraged them to read: "It forced me to read as much as I can. As I have to complete this research on time, I have to read and find something that I can use" (FG:13).

All participants felt that their research projects were not good and not in-depth because they did not build on their previous research findings in their next research. At the same time, participants were not interested in building a new research project on an old project as they felt their previous research was not of good enough quality to further the study. Participants also mentioned funding was one of the factors influencing their research quality. It was explained that a greater amount of funding could support them to conduct quality research. They felt that good quality research required a lot of money.

I think the university should grant us more research funding if they want quality research. This quality research means research that can be published internationally. If we get more money it means we can do it with a large scale sample. (FG:8)

Yes because we want to do it with other groups of participants, not only students in this university so we need more money to support us. (FG:8)

I think so, too. The university should grant us more funding for quality research. ...We need support in the case that we go out to collect data. We may have to hire other people to collect data if we use questionnaires. (FG:8)

It seemed that participants aligned quality research with the numbers of participants and amount of research funding. They believed that good quality research was something that they could conduct outside their classroom and their own students may not be their target groups. Participant felt that their research was not of good quality and indicated the university funding system did not provide enough support. One participant noted: "It seems that the university wants only research. We cannot conduct quality research" (FG:13). This implied that the focus group participants defined quality research as a big research funding project which had a variety and large numbers of target groups,

particularly people outside the university. They believed that if they conduct this kind of research, it could be of quality and their findings could be published at the international level. It seemed that participants believed that their teaching workload and funding system created their largest tensions in conducting research, particularly if it was to be quality research.

Tensions in Conducting Research

Participants, in fact, mentioned that their research projects, both the one month project and one year project, were not of good quality. Therefore, they did not expect to publish their research in any journals. When asked why they felt their research was not of good quality, two participants responded: “We have heavy... heavy teaching workloads. We do not have enough time to focus on our research projects. We have to teach at least 24 hours per week” (FG:13), and including preparation “Teaching takes 90% of our time” (FG:13).

Heavy Teaching Workload

The participants described their workload as averaging between 24 and 28 hours per week. In addition, they had other academic duties, such as doing community service and managing English projects assigned by the head of faculty. Working at Jaidee University, academic staff members had two main workloads: a) academic tasks including teaching and research and innovation, and b) academic service including community service, preservation of national cultural values and the environment. Even though the university identified a minimum teaching workload of 45% out of the total academic workload, many academic staff members, judging on those who were focus group participants, had a teaching workload of 90% to 96%. This heavy teaching workload, some participants explained, affected the quality of their research work, as seen in the following examples:

It is really tough. We need to teach and do other academic duties. Moreover, we must spend time to prepare teaching lessons, marking papers, testing and

preparing exams... and the university has lots of activities that we have to attend. (FG:10)

Sometimes we need time to revise the lesson ...but (FG:10)

We have to leave it and do another job. So we do not have enough time to focus on research. (FG:10)

We do not have time to do research as we want. (FG:15)

We do not have enough time to do and prepare research materials and go to the library. (FG:15)

Due to the heavy teaching workload, one participant also noted that if she was at home, she wanted to relax and did not want to undertake research. Consequently, she did not exert herself on research as she stated: "It is sure that I do not want to do anything after a long day of teaching. I want to relax" (FG:8).

Nature of Course Taught

There were large numbers of students studying English, and the participating lecturers had compulsory courses to teach. These compulsory courses were Basic English courses for first year students. The focus group participants felt that it was difficult to get these learners to participate in research that they wanted to conduct or to apply the findings to their teaching. For example, one focus group participant noted:

I cannot conduct research as I want because I do not get the target groups. For example, I wanted to do experimental research about the reading skills of third year students, but I did not get my target groups. So when I try my method with other groups of students, it failed because my research and methods did not match the students. (FG:8)

This participant was interested in improving students' reading skills using an experimental research method. However, she was assigned to teach other English courses, not a reading class. It was also difficult for her to be assigned to teach a reading course as this course was usually taught by the same senior lecturer. This situation was normal for most academic staff in this university. As they had to teach a large number

of students each year, the head of English division divided classes between individual staff members to make sure that each of the faculty staff had an equal number of classes to teach. It appeared that this participant was not in a position to choose the courses and groups of students which whom she would like to conduct research. As the current teaching situation of this participant did not allow her to conduct research that suited her own interests, this finally affected her involvement in research.

Other participants also felt that the limited range of courses that they taught affected the quality of their research and their ability to undertake research effectively. They had to teach by using course books and their research therefore had to be adapted to these course books. Therefore, they could only conduct what they called *simple research, and not in-depth research*. Furthermore, the participants noted that after they completed their research and submitted their findings to the university research centre, their research ended. They did not further their research or apply their research findings with different groups of students. As one focus group participant said, “We submit it. Then we start new research with a new topic” (FG:11).

Not Enough Funding

Despite conducting at least one very short research project, participants indicated that they also undertook a one-year project in which they were allowed more time to prepare and submit their findings to the university research centre. Academic staff members who applied for this research had to estimate their research budget for the research centre to approve. However, some participants explained that they did not get their estimated budget. One stated: “We get approval to do research but never get the amount of funding that we asked for. They [the research centre] always cut back our money. We got less than we expected” (FG:14).

Even though the amount of research funding lecturers received was enough to run and complete their research projects, it seemed emotional as they felt they did not get what they wanted. Participants felt that the university should give them the exact funding that they asked for as it made them feel happy and enthusiastic when conducting research. For example, one participant mentioned: “It [money] is important for us” (FG:14).

Financial Incentives as another Tension

Participants indicated that faculty staff members who undertook research would get extra financial incentives from the university. However, staff members who were eligible to get these incentives had to conduct a new research project within one academic year. One focus group participant explained: “We must do a new research project to get incentives each year” (FG:10).

These incentives seemed to be a positive reinforcement. All participants agreed that they conducted research annually in order to get these extra incentives. It was stated: “Yes, if we want more money [extra incentives], we have to do research and we have to finish it within a year” (FG:10).

All participants stated that they wanted these extra incentives. Therefore, they could not undertake longitudinal research or extend their one-year research project as it could affect their money. It was mentioned: “Doing research could increase our knowledge. Lecturers need to do research. But it should come from our own desire, not because of the university policy. If our research has been restricted by time, our research will lack quality” (FG:15).

Despite providing funding for staff who conducted research and giving incentives, the university also supported academic staff members by granting funding for presenting research findings at both national and international levels. However, two focus group participants stated that the criteria to get funding for presentation seemed to be unclear and the process to get funding was complicated, as shown below.

FG: Our paper was accepted to present at the conference abroad. But the university and the research centre did not grant presentation funding to us.

I: Did they explain why they could not give you any funding?

FG: For me, they said that I could not go because I had been working here for only one semester. ... You will be allowed to go abroad with university support if you work for more than one year.

FG: They were not interested in our research. Finally, they allowed us to go with no funding. So we did not go.

FG: They said the paper did not meet the criteria of the university to get funding.
... I think they [the university research centre] do not have research specialists in the field of my research so they could not consider my research efficiently.
(FG:9)

According to the statement above, the assessment of research funding applications was made by specialists in different research areas including English teaching experts. Therefore, this participant's funding application might have been rejected for other reasons. However, the two participants in the excerpt above felt that the university did not pay attention to their research. If they wanted to present their research findings abroad, they had to use their own money and had to give credits to the university in a research paper. When asked if this situation decreased their motivation to continue to conduct research, one participant responded: "We need effective support from the university. It must be clear. At present, I will not apply for funding for presentation as it seems difficult and hard to get" (FG:11).

Other participants then asserted that the funding process was complicated. On the other hand, they preferred to present their findings as posters rather than giving oral presentations. For example,

I did not expect to present my research findings. But... if I have a chance to present my findings, I want to do a poster presentation because my research is so simple. It is not an in-depth research project so I am afraid that I cannot answer questions if it is an oral presentation. (FG:11)

If we can do it [presenting research findings], it will be good. But we have to make sure that our research is of good quality. (FG:11)

Rewards in Conducting Research

Participants seemed to be eager to conduct good quality research as they thought it could increase their professional practice. However, participants mentioned that the crucial factors that motivated them to carry out research came from the rewards they could gain. One participant stated: "We will get incentives [money] and that is what we

really want” (FG:14-15). Another participant asserted: “Yes but we also get knowledge when we are doing it [research]” (FG:15).

By conducting research, they could increase their own KPIs to meet the university requirements and be eligible for receiving incentives. When asked if they thought they could get professional advancement by conducting research, responses varied: “Never”, “We did it to meet the university requirement, increase our KPIs to receive incentives”, or “Our research is not so good that we should think about it [promotion]” (FG:10).

All participants explained that they did not think of conducting research to promote their professional advancement. Although, according to the university rule, conducting a quality research project and publishing it were counted as part of the criteria to get a job promotion to assistant professor, academic staff members holding master’s degree must work for the university at least five years. Therefore, most of the focus group participants did not meet this requirement and could not conduct research to get a job promotion. Only one participant was eligible to undertake research in order to get promotion, but this required planning as she said: “I will do it but this must be planned carefully. At present, my research and my next research projects are not good enough to think about promotion” (FG:10).

The participant above noted that she would not think about incentives if she wanted to get promotion. She felt that her professional advancement had to be allied with the quality of her research project rather than money. Other participants agreed with this statement even though they did not intend to conduct research to get promotion.

Role Conflict

As participants mentioned their tensions, rewards, and quality of their research, I wondered about their roles as it seemed that they had to undertake research in order to meet the university requirement to get incentives rather than to get promotion or increase their professional development. When asked how they viewed research with their teaching, one participant responded: “I think research is a part of my teaching job” (FG:13).

The participants' present roles were to teach and their research was undertaken to meet the university requirement. Their teaching workload took 90% of their time which means that they had only 10% left to conduct research. Some participants explained: "It seems that we are forced to take responsibility for teaching, not for doing research" (FG:14), or "We want to do as much research as we can but...in reality we cannot" (FG:14).

All of the focus group participants stated that they wanted to be teacher researchers and devote their time to research. The participants, on the other hand, noted that research projects that they conducted looked like a report rather than a complete research book. They expressed dissatisfaction with their research. Even though they felt that research was important to their job as lecturers, they believed their research did not fit comfortably into their present role. One participant noted: "We cannot call ourselves teacher researchers" (FG:13). Another then further stated: "At present, research is a small part of our teaching job" (FG:13).

The participants, on the other hand, explained that they did not feel that they were forced to undertake research. They described how they conducted research *before* the university set the criteria that academic staff members must conduct research to meet the university requirement (be eligible to get incentives). Afterwards, all participants continued to conduct research. For example, one participant stated: "We do research as usual. No matter whether the university requires us to do it or not, we will do research" (FG:16). Then another participating lecturer asserted: "Yes we will do it but we will feel happier if the university did not set the criteria that we have to conduct new research each year to get incentives" (FG:16).

The participants mentioned that they had a strong desire to conduct research and their research was concerned with students' outcomes. They noted that they had teachers' ethics so they placed an importance on teaching and wanted to use research as a tool to support their teaching practice. Participants believed that their research must be a useful tool that could support their teaching and course books, particularly when they conducted research with first year students who were enrolled for Basic English and were forced to use a course book.

The focus group discussion illustrated how participants had to find a balance between teaching and conducting research. They felt conflicted about their role. Even though

they were willing to undertake research as they believed it was part of their duties as a lecturer, they encountered many tensions which affected their research quality and prevented them from becoming effective teacher researchers. Participants listed potential factors that they thought could promote and support them to conduct research more effectively and become active teacher researchers, and one participating lecturer noted: “The most important thing is time. We need more time to do research” (FG:16).

However, these participants had a heavy teaching workload. When asked about a suitable teaching workload that could facilitate them to undertake their research projects, all participants stated the same way. For example, one participant indicated: “I think 12 to 15 hours per week...or 18 hours maximum” (FG:11). Another participating lecturer agreed and mentioned: “If they could reduce our teaching workload, it would be great” (FG:14).

Another factor that represented in role conflict was the university internal research funding. All participants believed that the university should provide more funding as this could help them to conduct more quality research. For example, one participant mentioned: “It [money] will help us to undertake a more quality research project” (FG:14). One participating lecturer noted: “Some special conditions could drive us to conduct more research. If the university increases our salary or gives us more money, it could make me feel happy to conduct research” (FG:14).

When participants were asked about the possibility of reducing their teaching workload, they explained that it was difficult as the university lacked lecturers in the field of English language teaching. They further described how the university itself did not have a policy to reduce the teaching workload even though some academic staff members were granted external research funding to conduct a massive research project. When asked about the solution for those academic staff members, one participant responded: “They cancelled the class because they were not allowed to reduce their teaching workload. That is not good for students” (FG:14). Hence, conducting larger research projects compromised participants’ teaching role and identity.

The above statement implies that having a suitable teaching workload or enabling academic staff members to reduce their teaching workload could facilitate them in undertaking research. The participants stated that they needed flexible rules and policy such as rules to reduce their teaching workload or rules about working time as some of

them could not present their research findings abroad because they were new lecturers. It could be said that flexible rules and policy could maintain and enhance staff research quality and teaching quality.

From the interview, it was understood that the university provided an online search engine but not many participants knew about it. One participant explained that “we have the research database but few people know” (FG:14). Even though the participants mentioned that an effective research database could enhance their research capacity, they had never used the university research database.

Summary

According to the focus group participants, they had experience in conducting research from when they studied their master’s degree. Importantly, they first began to conduct work research when they became faculty members of Jaidee University. Due to their heavy teaching workload, however, participants preferred to undertake collaborative research. In addition, they continued to conduct research to meet the university requirement, and particularly to be eligible to gain financial incentives.

Participants encountered many tensions including the time allowed to conduct research, the process of applying for presentation funding, and their role as lecturers. A heavy teaching workload seemed to be their major tension which is seen as an unsolvable problem due to teaching staff shortages in their university. These tensions affected their research quality as well as their attitude towards their teaching and research. Participants seemed to be concerned about their role as teacher researchers and asked for more support from their university as they wanted to produce good quality research. In this sense, money and support to conduct large-scale research, particularly with people outside the university were seen to be key factors in their ideal concept of good quality research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to reflect on key aspects of the findings as these relate to the research questions and the main aim of the study which is to investigate the research culture of Thai lecturers who are teaching English in Thai universities. In this chapter, responses to the research questions below are described.

1. What are EFL lecturers' perceptions about the value of their research involvement?
2. What type of research do EFL lecturers prefer?
3. What are the factors influencing EFL lecturers' research involvement?
4. What is the position of EFL research in Thai and international contexts?
5. What is the research culture of EFL lecturers in Thai universities?

The discussion includes the specific context as well as the broader international context to gain a better understanding of the research culture in an EFL context in Thai universities. The discussion begins with a focus on the first three research questions which are mainly based on findings obtained from the Thai context. Following this there is discussion of the Thai EFL research and the broader international research context, which addresses the last two research questions. The key findings associated with each research question will now be discussed in detail.

7.2 Perceptions about the Value of Research Involvement

A great deal of the interview time was spent discussing participants' feelings when they get involved in a research process within their institution. Two sets of perceptions about

the value of research emerged: perceptions about the value of research as a part of lecturers' jobs; and perceptions about the quality of the research.

Value of Research

It is clear that all university contexts put a high value on research while academic staff members are encouraged to produce and publish research at both national and international levels. It is interesting to note that only one out of the 19 EFL participating lecturers from two universities indicated that he did not want to conduct research because he felt research was not part of teaching. However, the rest of the participants believed that research was an important part of their job as lecturers, although they exhibited different beliefs about how they view research and the time they spent on their research. In this study, the participating EFL lecturers' feeling about the value of research involvement can be categorised into two aspects (see Figure 7.1).

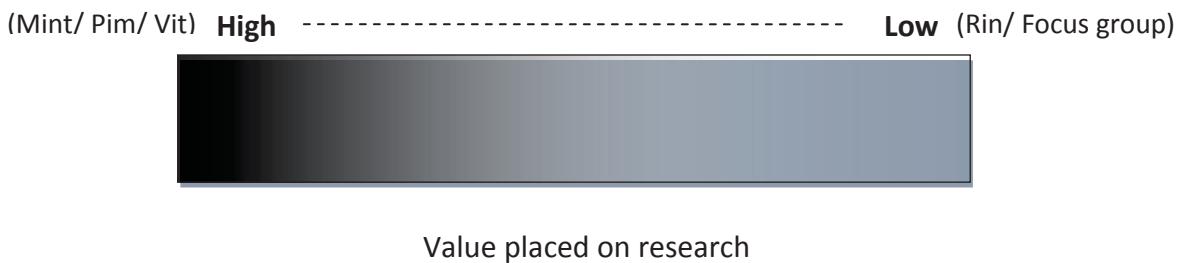


Figure 7.1. Value of research involvement

Research Highly Valued

Six out of thirteen participants at Rak University mentioned that research was crucial for their teaching practice and they wanted to become a teacher researcher. This kind of belief is clearly illustrated in the cases of Mint, Pim, and Vit. These three participants placed high value on research and believed that lecturers should spend most of their time on research rather than teaching. Vit was also interested in gaining academic status (assistant professor) as a result of producing quality research that met the international standard (publishing in an international journal). These three participants illustrated strong beliefs that research was a large part of their job as lecturers but only two of them

(Mint and Vit) were concerned about the importance of research to advance their academic status.

Despite a favourable view of research, it is interesting to note that Mint was the only lecturer who mentioned that teaching needed less quality. She commented that she did not have to spend her time preparing and being concerned about her teaching quality. This implies that there was no teaching assessment in her faculty and she did not have to worry whether or not she provided good quality teaching. For Mint, research appeared to have more value in the university than any other duties. This reflects a point made by Boyer (1990) who claims that research and publication is considered to be more popular and important than teaching and service within higher education institutions because these activities are prioritised for evaluation. In addition, there is no widely accepted method for evaluating teaching quality within higher education (Altbach, 2006). This may explain why Mint appeared to ignore her teaching responsibility. She was aware of the value of research and spent her time producing and increasing her research productivity. However, Mint's feeling towards teaching is not a good sign for teaching and educational processes because research should be done to increase the knowledge of lecturers and to improve their teaching practice. As Cheetham (2007) notes, "it [research] should be the fundamental support of our teaching" (p. 3).

Research Lowly Valued

Even though the data suggests that EFL lecturers needed more time to conduct research, some of the participating EFL lecturers presented a strong belief that research was less important than teaching. This was clearly illustrated in both Rin's case and the focus group participants. Research, in their perception, should be conducted to increase their professional competence, not to advance academic status. For instance, Rin stated that research was not a big part of her teaching job and she wanted to undertake research only when she needed new knowledge to enhance her students' learning outcomes. This is supported by Timperley and Phillips (2003) who asserted that teachers need to understand the nature of the task and develop their skills through different ways of teaching which may include research. One focus group participant also mentioned that research was just a small component of her job as a lecturer at Jaidee University.

Indeed, the focus group participants in general indicated that they did not think about their career advancement as their current research did not meet the standard in terms of its quality.

It is interesting to note that each of the views above tends to be clustered around particular participants that had a similar educational background. For the first view (research is a priority) Mint, Pim and Vit had a similar educational background. Both Mint and Vit had obtained master's degrees with *linguistics or literature* as a major, while Pim and Vit had also studied in the U.S. after they had obtained their master's degrees. Participants who had low value for research had a different educational background. Rin and the focus group participants had all studied for a master's degree with *teaching English* as a major. This implies that the nature of lecturers' educational backgrounds had an impact on their beliefs. As Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981) assert, the time teachers spend as students at the university shapes their beliefs and influences their teaching in their own classroom. It seems that the educational background of participants in this study could have affected the way they thought and felt about their research work, and whether research or teaching was a priority.

Quality of Research

During the interviews, lecturers' perceptions of the characteristics of quality research emerged. In particular, several participants stressed the importance in conducting quantitative research to increase the quality of research. For example, Rin expressed her view that the quality of research should come from procedures that control for bias. In addition, one focus group participant defined quality research as large scale research that received a large amount of money and involved many participants. Good quality research in their minds therefore appeared to relate to quantitative research, objectivity, a large-scale sample, and a large amount of research funding. This situation is in line with the studies by McDonough and McDonough (1997), and Borg (2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2008) who found that the notion of quality research by English teaching staff, in both English-speaking countries and in non-English-speaking countries, relied on the quantitative research tradition which is related to "objectivity, hypothesis testing, the control of variables, and the involvement of a large-scale sample" (Borg, 2007, p. 743).

It could therefore be said that the participants' perceived concept of quality research was perhaps influenced by international standards.

In addition to the emphasis on quantitative research that emerged, participants also mentioned that publications were one of the key criteria for quality research. This reflects the finding that research publications are considered to be one of the international standard criteria to gain promotion (see Chapter 4). For example, in English-speaking countries (the UK, the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand) as well as in non-English-speaking countries (China, Japan, and Thailand), research publications are important for faculty evaluation and promotion decisions within higher education institutions.

Generally, participating EFL lecturers agreed that publications were important to the research process. It may be possible to say that EFL lecturers were concerned about their research quality and believed that they should produce quality research by employing quantitative methods and disseminating their research findings. However, only Vit published his research findings in an international journal. Other participants appeared to not be able to publish their research findings. For example, Mint had not been able to produce research that met international standards despite her desire to publish research in international journals. It is somewhat surprising that she had completed five research projects but none of them was published even in local journals. Furthermore, none of the focus group participants had published their research in any local or international journals. Two focus group participants mentioned that their research was not in-depth and of good quality. However, it is also possible that participants had insufficient English skills, particularly for international publications. As Wiriachitra (2002) notes, Thai people have below average English language competency. This may include EFL lecturers in the current study although they used English only in their classrooms.

Another possible explanation for the lack of research publication may be the lack of an advanced degree (PhD). All of the participating EFL staff, including the participating lecturers of both Rak University and Jaidee University, had master's degrees in the area of English or Teaching English (see Section 3.5 on selection of EFL lecturer case studies). These findings seem to accord with a study by Pabhapote (1996) who found that those Thai academic staff across a range of faculties in Srinakharinwirot University

(Prasarnmit Campus) who had a PhD produced more research publications than faculty staff who held only master's or bachelor's degrees. However, according to the OHEC, the majority of Thai academic staff members across faculties, including EFL lecturers in most of the Thai higher education institutions, have only master's degrees (58%) and only 30% of academic staff have PhDs (Thai's Higher Education for All, 2010). Therefore, it is possible that the lack of a PhD degree may affect the level of research publications of not only EFL lecturers in this study, but also other EFL lecturers and academic staff across faculties in other Thai higher education institutions.

7.3 Types of Research Preferred

In this study, it was found that as participating EFL lecturers conducted research individually or collaboratively, they had some understanding of the nature of research. However, their research was limited in terms of variety. Lecturers' clear understanding about the research they conducted is necessary as it could help them to think about and conduct research in a productive way (Mertler & Charles, 2008).

The research types that participants had conducted included linguistic analysis (Mint), survey research (Mint/ Pim/ Rin), case study (Vit), experimental research (Vit), and action research (focus group participants). The types of research that each participating EFL lecturer preferred to conduct were also different (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1

Types of Research Preferred

Participants	<i>Survey research</i>	<i>Experimental research</i>	<i>Action research</i>	<i>Ethnographic research</i>
Mint	✓	✓		
Pim	✓		✓	✓
Vit	✓	✓		
Rin	✓		✓	
Focus group			✓	

Table 7.1 illustrates that there were four types of research that participants were interested in undertaking. These included survey research, experimental research, action research, and ethnographic research. However, quantitative survey research was the favoured type of research among EFL lecturers in the current enquiry. The reasons given for this are explained below.

Reasons for Choosing Survey Research

It appears that most of the participants preferred to conduct quantitative survey research since they believed they understood and knew how to conduct this sort of research. For example, Mint preferred to undertake survey research as she felt expert in doing it and she believed that in survey research it was easier to collect data which saved time. Pim and Rin also chose to conduct survey research for their first research project at Rak University for the same reason. Similarly, Vit was interested in conducting survey research as he thought it was easy to collect the data and he could ask others to do the statistics for him. Their reasons for conducting survey research contradict the findings of McMillan and Schumacher (2010) and Schutt (1996) that survey research is popular in the field of education for three main reasons: versatility, efficiency, and generalisability. It seems that some participants (Mint, Pim, Vit, and Rin) selected survey research as an easy method without being concerned about the other characteristics of survey research. On the other hand, it is possible that these participants may have found survey research responded to particular researchable problems in their current teaching situations.

In addition, the nature of the course taught and the numbers of students in the class may have been important factors affecting participants' decision to choose survey research. The data illustrated that participating lecturers had only a few courses in which they could conduct their research. Participants had always taught the same subject in each semester, and they had a large number of students to teach in each class. For example, Mint and Pim usually taught fundamental courses for first year students with around 70 students in each class. They therefore conducted survey research as they thought it was easy to handle and saved time. Focus group participants also reported having taught a limited number of courses. One focus group participant explained that she could not conduct research with the target group because she was not assigned to teach that

course. Away to relevant classes was said to limit their choice of research topic and method.

Interest in Experimental and Action Research

Despite the popularity of survey research, some EFL lecturers also showed an interest in conducting experimental research and action research. For example, Mint indicated her interest in conducting experimental research. Vit also believed that experimental research was a suitable method that could promote students' outcomes and, at the time of the interview, he had begun to conduct experimental research.

Pim, Rin, and the focus group participants also stated that action research was a useful method to conduct research with their students. Furthermore, all focus group participants noted that their university encouraged staff to conduct action research. All focus group participants in the current enquiry agreed that English teaching staff should conduct action research to promote students' outcomes. As Brumfit and Mitchell (1990), McDonough and McDonough (1997), and A. Burns (2005) point out, teachers should devote their time to action research because it helps teachers gain insights into their practice and promotes the development of teachers' critical awareness. By doing action research, publication may be the outcome but not necessarily. In the current enquiry, focus group participants reported that they were required to submit the report of their findings to the university research centre, but were not required to publish.

Even though participants were interested in conducting action research, only the focus group participants had experience in doing it. The data revealed that EFL lecturers at Rak University did not conduct action research, and two participants at this university (Mint and Vit) stated that they did not have enough knowledge to employ action research in their teaching practice. It is likely that lecturers' perceptions about types of research were limited.

A lack of research knowledge is seen to be a common problem among teaching staff in the EFL contexts. For example, the study by Borg and Alshumaimeri (2012) found that university staff in Saudi Arabia lacked research knowledge which negatively affected their research involvement. Similarly, findings from the studies by Bai, Millwater, and

Hudson (2012) as well as Bai and Hudson (2010) found that Chinese staff teaching English had limited research knowledge which prevented them from gaining in-depth data from their research studies.

It seems that some participants (Mint and Vit) were unsure about conducting different research types such as action research while the focus group participants elected to conduct only simple research. It is likely that the focus group participants tended to conduct research that was easy to handle in terms of literature review, data collection and analysis. For example, two focus group participants shared the same research topic and research processes. The key difference between their research projects was the group of student participants.

The participants in the current study appeared to conduct their first research or continue their next research projects by employing methods that they found easy and that fitted their current working situation. However, they also indicated that they wanted to step outside their comfort zone by conducting a different method to improve their next research projects. For example, Vit began to conduct experimental research even though he appeared to have more understanding of and would prefer to conduct qualitative research.

Attitudes to Qualitative Research

Even though each participant had different experiences in conducting research, they all agreed that a qualitative approach was the most suitable method for English language teaching. They indicated that qualitative research helped the researcher to gain in-depth data from the students and to improve students' learning outcomes. Participants made several comments about the types of qualitative research. For example, Pim noted that qualitative research, particularly ethnographic research, could help her to understand why students were not successful in learning English. It is interesting to note that Pim highlighted the importance of ethnographic research to improve her students' achievements even though she felt this type of research required more time than other types of research. However, it is likely that Pim did not have any real interest in conducting research. Her only research project (survey) was conducted to meet the university requirement. This finding is consistent with the study by Putwattana (2002),

who found that university staff personal attitudes had a significant impact on research productivity. Putwattana noted that Thai academic staff members were not interested in conducting serious research. Therefore their research outcomes did not meet the needs of actual users.

In addition, Rin felt that qualitative research could help her to gain insights into her teaching practice. However, Rin also understood that data obtained from qualitative research should be controlled for bias. This shows her knowledge of how qualitative researchers need to get involved in the context to obtain more in-depth data as recommended by McMillan and Schumacher (2010). Alternatively, it could also indicate that Rin understood the limitations of quantitative and qualitative research.

7.4 Factors Influencing Research Involvement

During the interviews, it was found that participating EFL lecturers were under pressure to conduct research, but they were also supported when they got involved in the research process. Therefore, it appears that the level of research involvement of the participating lecturers was influenced by factors that arose both from within the lecturers themselves and from the university.

Factors at the EFL lecturer Level

Two key factors influencing the EFL lecturers' research involvement at a personal/professional level related to time and the EFL lecturers' perceptions of whether research was a desirable activity.

Research Requires Time

Eighteen participants (all except Vit) raised the issue of time as the most influential factor that caused difficulties when they got involved in the research process. The general view of participants in the current study from both participating universities was

that because they had to carry out heavy teaching workloads, they had less time to conduct research. Their teaching workloads varied between 21 and 31 hours per week. Comments about the teaching workload were made several times by participating lecturers, except for Vit who had a lighter teaching workload averaging 21 hours per week compared to other participants. It is interesting to note that of all the participants in this study, Vit was the only one that could reduce his service workloads as his head of department encouraged him to conduct research.

According to most of the participants, research was considered to be a difficult task as it involved time. Participants from both Rak University and Jaidee University mentioned that they had less time to conduct research, and heavy teaching workloads affected both the physical and mental energy of staff members. All focus group participants indicated that their teaching workload took 90% of their academic time. Furthermore, EFL lecturers' academic role (in both participating universities) included community service of around three hours per week. The heavy teaching responsibilities may be explained by the fact that Jaidee University lacked sufficient numbers of staff teaching English. It appeared that all participants could not build on their research findings from their last piece of research due to time constraints. These results are in agreement with the study by Intratrat (2004), Deem and Lucas (2007), and Houston et al. (2010), who asserted that teaching workload was the most significant factor that prevented academic staff from undertaking a serious research project.

Research as a Desirable Activity

In addition to the influence of time on participating EFL lecturers' research involvement, it was found that their involvement in the research process within their universities was influenced by their perceived concept of research as a desirable activity.

There were three beliefs that motivated the EFL lecturers in this study to not only begin but also to continue to conduct research. These beliefs were that research is part of a lecturer's duty; to gain professional and financial incentives; and to increase their professional knowledge. Each of these factors will be described in the sections below.

Lecturers' Duty

Understanding the lecturer's role was seen as the crucial factor that inspired all participants to get involved in the research process. All participants knew that research was considered as one of the three duties (teaching/ research/ service) required of their position as lecturers. According to the continuum identified in the exploratory stage at Rak University (see Chapter 5, Figure 5.3), it can be seen that EFL lecturers at Rak University were progressively developing themselves to become lecturers who conducted research as a part of their academic duties. Even Pim and Rin, who conducted their first research to meet the university requirement, explicitly stated that a lecturer must be allied with research. Also, the focus group participants at Jaidee University noted research was a part of lecturer's duty together with teaching and community service duties.

It is possible to say that the understanding that research was part of their duties drove all participants to conduct and complete at least one research project at their institution. This finding seems to be contrary to a previous survey study by Padgate and Syananondh (2006), who found that only 65% of EFL lecturers in 23 Thai public universities had conducted any research. The change may be the result of the 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education in Thailand which aims to promote greater competency in research. At the time of the study, the Second 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education (from 2008 to 2022) appears to have been effective since all academic staff in the study had been encouraged to begin conducting research.

By conducting research, each of the individual interview participants stated that their role had changed. Participants felt their position was higher than teaching staff members who did not focus on research. In a sense, this is a role that most of the EFL lecturers involved in the current study idealistically aspired to. Mint's case demonstrates how lecturers think about their distinctive role when research is their priority. It is interesting to note that Mint contributed her own time to get involved in the research process. She reduced her leisure time and read articles relevant to her research. Mint noted that she was happy to be a lecturer who devoted her time to carry out research. Mint's positive feeling towards her research involvement showed that she was concerned about the advantages of research to herself and society. These findings are supported by Fraenkel

and Wallen (1993) who suggested that research is the most valuable method of knowing, and that this can be used to serve the society's and the country's needs.

The focus group participants, on the other hand, found it hard to undertake more research. Even though they conducted research and believed it was an important part of their work, they could not devote their time to research. As one focus group participant noted, she had a large teaching workload; she therefore wanted to relax after teaching rather than conducting research.

Financial and Professional Incentives

It was found that there were two types of incentives (financial and professional) that motivated participants in the current study to conduct research. It appeared that participants at Rak University were encouraged to conduct research in order to gain professional incentives while participants at Jaidee University were motivated to conduct research to gain both financial and professional incentives (see Figure 7.2).

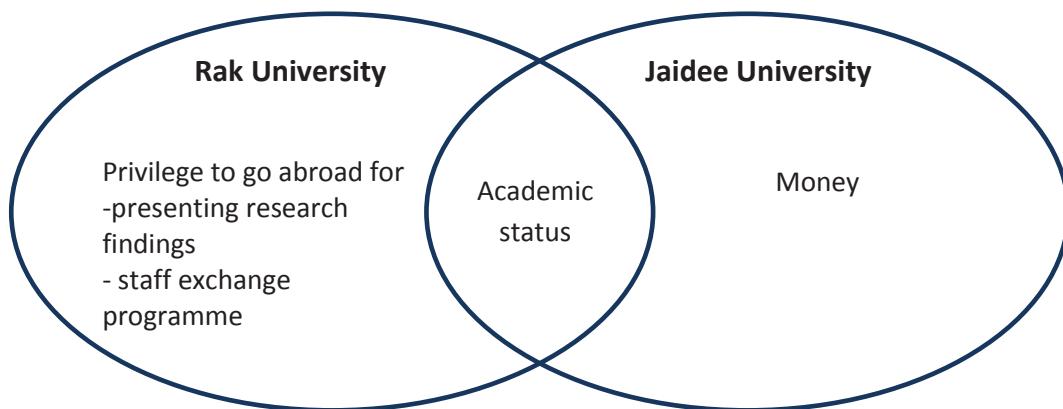


Figure 7.2. Research incentives for EFL lecturers

It can be seen that there were no extra financial incentives for those who undertook research at Rak University in which Pim noted that she could gain financial incentives by teaching. This may explain why some participating EFL lecturers at Rak University mentioned that some lecturers wanted to focus only on teaching because that is what brought them financial incentives. As Pim asserted, junior lecturers at her university earned a living by teaching since the research incentive was not sufficient to encourage them to conduct research. This appears to contradict the situation in some countries with

a high amount of international research publications. For example, Chinese academic staff members were likely to focus on research work as it could bring them more money than teaching (see Section 4.3 on research trends in China). This was due to the salary system in which the amount of research funding and the quantity of publications carry much more weight than teaching hours.

Despite the general tendency, two participants at Rak University (Mint and Vit) indicated that they could gain other professional incentives by conducting quality research. Mint stated that she could apply for funding to present her research abroad which challenged her to continue conducting research. Vit also mentioned that he got the opportunity to go abroad by conducting research. Furthermore, Vit mentioned he was rewarded with a staff exchange programme abroad because he published his research in an international journal. As research and publications are the key indicators to increase the reputation of the university (Bai, et al., 2008), staff with a high research performance like Vit may be given the privilege of going abroad to advance their professional knowledge. Pim and Rin, on the other hand, did not mention any professional incentive. It is possible that they were perhaps not aware of this incentive.

In this study, professional incentives also include academic status. To be eligible for promotion, lecturers in all areas in any Thai higher education institutions who have a master's degree must work in the current institution for five years and produce good quality research that meets the criteria set by the Thai Ministry of Education (OHEC, 2010; Ramasutra & Rohitsathian, 2012). Participants at both Rak University and Jaidee University mentioned their aspirations to become a lecturer with academic status. For example, Mint and Vit, who were confident and showed strong motivation to conduct research, believed that research was a direct pathway to gaining higher status for their lecturing career. In particular, Vit had a strong belief that research was an effective tool to advance his academic status and to gain academic acceptance and respect from other scholars. During the interview, Vit was confident that research could improve his academic status whereas Mint, who also conducted research to increase her professional status, could not produce adequate research to meet the criteria for academic promotion. However, they both mentioned the importance of research for their academic position and believed that they could be promoted by continuing to conduct research at their institution. In addition, one focus group participant indicated that she was interesting in conducting and publishing research to gain academic status. The other focus group

participants also agreed that they could advance their status by conducting research. At the time of the study, however, Vit was the only lecturer who expected to soon be named as an assistant professor as he had undertaken and published research which met the criteria for academic status.

In contrast to the other participants, Rin stated that it was hard to be rewarded with professional status as she felt that research in the field of English was not strong compared to research in the fields of science and technology. For Rin, research was not challenging in terms of a tool to advance her professional status. Overall, the findings appear to indicate that most participating EFL lecturers (except Vit) were not able to conduct research that would advance their academic status. Their previous and recent research projects were simple, not sufficiently in-depth, and unsuitable for publication in any national and international journals. As one focus group participant mentioned, she did not expect her research to be published as it was so simple and not in-depth. Furthermore, there were replication studies in the research project of one focus group participant who mentioned that his research was nearly the same as a colleague's research. This issue would be likely to limit his chance of publishing research findings and advancing his academic status.

It can be said that the more powerful incentive was money, and that is most clearly illustrated in the focus group participants. The findings show that, staff at Jaidee University had to conduct at least one new research project each year to be eligible for extra financial incentives. It is interesting that one focus group participant completed his first research project (collaborative research) within the first four months of his employment. This situation is seen as normal in universities worldwide where academic staff members conduct research to gain financial incentives (Alexander, 2000; Allen & Shockley, 1996; Healey & Jenkins, 2002; Macfarlane, 2011).

At the time of the study, all focus group participants were conducting their second or third research projects. However, it was found that the level of individual research involvement of focus group participants was higher than that for participants at Rak University. At Rak University, only two participants (Pim and Rin) had completed just one piece of research and had not yet started their next research projects. Based on the focus group findings, it is possible that financial incentives may be a positive factor that could increase the level of research productivity of EFL staff. Certainly, participating

EFL staff members at Jaidee University seem to have responded to this incentive. Another possible explanation for the higher level of research productivity may be related to the short research projects (one month research) that the focus group participants at Jaidee University were required to conduct.

Professional Knowledge

It appears that all participants understood that research was significant and desirable because it could illuminate their teaching practice and increase their knowledge. They stressed the importance of research and expressed their strong beliefs that research should be conducted to increase their professional knowledge. Zeuli and Tiezzi (1993) suggest that this kind of belief is held by people who view research as challenging or what Bland and Ruffin (1992) called “the intrinsic pleasures of challenging work” (p. 392). This is clearly demonstrated in the cases of Pim and Rin who wanted to conduct research that aimed to increase and develop new knowledge in order to improve her teaching practice. It therefore seems likely that EFL lecturers in the current study understood the core value of research. As Mertler and Charles (2008) as well as Flick (2011) note, research is conducted to develop new knowledge.

Even though participants tended to believe that the research they conducted could increase their knowledge and benefit their students, their universities and the society, it seems that their research mainly benefited themselves and the universities as none of the participants’ completed research projects specifically to promote and enhance students’ achievement. It is likely therefore that participants conducted research to fulfil their intrinsic motivation. For example, Mint noted that her research was conducted merely to advance her professional knowledge, particularly her linguistic competence. However, she did not mention that her research would improve her students’ learning outcomes. She also asserted that she would prefer to conduct any research that could increase her knowledge. It is possible to say that Mint neglected her teaching duty as she did not want to apply her research findings in her teaching practice. The lecturers’ data appears to reflect the literature that indicates research tends to be professionally valued over teaching (Hemmings & Kay, 2009).

It is possible that extrinsic motivation also influenced the EFL lecturers in the current study to conduct research. It appears that participating EFL lecturers in the current study conducted research not only to meet the university requirement, but also to gain a higher position and incentives. These findings concur with studies by Tianpichet (1997) as well as Bai et al. (2008) which found that that lecturers, including Thai lecturers, wanted to get involved in the research process as they felt this could increase their professional status and knowledge. These studies indicated that research had become a valuable source for gaining an appointment and a job promotion within higher education institutions worldwide. However, while Bai et al. also found that research productivity could secure a professional position, in the current study it appears that research was not considered as a part of a tenured position within the two Thai participating universities.

Factors from the University Policy and Agenda

The two participating universities appeared to place less emphasis on EFL research. Instead, they promoted their research vision and mission by putting an emphasis on the fields of science and technology. These emphases appear to have a major impact on EFL lecturers' research involvement as well as on the research culture. Universities' policies and agenda impact on the allocation of research benefits and incentives, and research funding and support, which are key factors identified in the current study.

University Research Vision and Mission

As noted in Section 4.4, there are four types of higher education institutions in Thailand: research universities, comprehensive universities, liberal arts universities, and community colleges. At the time of the study, the two participating universities promoted themselves as comprehensive universities and both wanted to become leading universities in Thailand. However, Rak University had set its goal to become a leading research university while Jaidee University aimed to be a leading comprehensive university. To achieve their research goals, the universities in the current study, therefore, had their own research policies and strategies. To become a leading university in Thailand, Rak University and Jaidee University had to have good research records by

delivering high quality research and publications (SEAMEO RIHED & OHEC, 2010), which could increase the reputation of their universities.

In terms of the research mission, the participating universities had to increase their KPIs by encouraging their academic staff members to produce research and publications (Kanjanapanyakom, 2011). Participating EFL lecturers from both universities stated that their research could increase the KPIs of the universities. For example, Mint noted that her research could increase the KPIs of the university which finally affected the amount of funding received from the government. The focus group participants at Jaidee University also indicated the importance of their research contribution towards the university's KPIs.

It is likely that the neither Rak University nor Jaidee University valued EFL research as they wanted only an increase in the *amount* of research but seemed to neglect the research *quality* and publications. Two participants at Rak University (Mint and Rin) did not feel that their research could have a direct impact on students' learning achievements, as they were expected to conduct research to meet the university requirement. It is interesting that EFL lecturers at Jaidee University were also required to conduct a one month research project to increase the university's KPIs. One focus group participant described this as an "urgent mission" (FG: 11). It may be that the university gained great benefit from these one month research projects so EFL lecturers were under pressure to do them. Furthermore, the focus group participants reported that they felt ashamed about their research findings as these did not create new knowledge. One focus group participant admitted that she was afraid about whether or not she could answer questions if someone asked about her research, which seems to contradict the findings of Hollingsworth and Sockett (1994) that teaching staff come to trust their own abilities by conducting research. This focus group participant felt unsure about her research. She was also not expected to present her research findings, as Jaidee University did not require EFL staff to disseminate their research findings.

University Policy for EFL Lecturers

During the interviews, university policies were discussed. A key finding was that the university policy affected participants' beliefs and their practices within their

institutions. Even though the two universities had slightly different research policies, neither of them required EFL lecturers to publish their research findings.

Participants from both universities encountered different workloads which appeared to indicate that their three basic duties (teaching, research, and service) were not assigned equal merit. Although participants said they had a heavy teaching workload, they still had to meet the university's demand for research productivity as well as community service. To increase the research productivity, participating EFL lecturers at Rak University were expected to conduct research within the first two years of their employment. In contrast to Rak University, Jaidee University did not have this requirement. EFL lecturers at Jaidee University were employed without any specific research requirement, but they were encouraged to conduct research for a financial bonus (see Figure 7.3). The difference between the policies of the two universities may be due to the different expectations. For example, Rak University aimed to become a leading research university, as opposed to Jaidee University which aimed to become a leading comprehensive university.

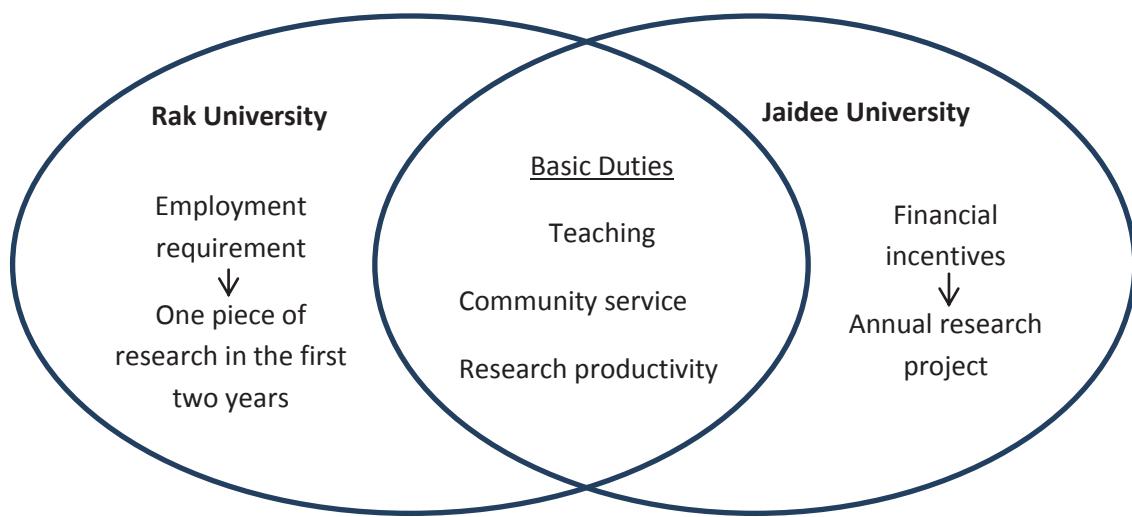


Figure 7.3. The two universities policies

Participants from Rak University were expected to conduct research as part of their employment which led them to have different beliefs about research. For example, Mint, Pim and Vit knew about the policy which required them to conduct research as part of their employment. On the other hand, Rin at first believed that research was not part of her job as a lecturer. This may have come from her misunderstanding about her duty as she felt that she applied to work as an English teacher. However, she finally

understood this requirement and conducted research. This implies that there was some uncertainty about the university's research policy at Rak University. Each lecturer was not similarly informed about the details of their duty as lecturers. This could frustrate some lecturers (like Rin) if they thought they were employed in a teaching-dominated university position. Rin insisted that she wanted to be a teacher rather than a teacher researcher. In addition, the findings show that some EFL lecturers were allowed to work without conducting research as part of their employment. This also implies that the research policy was not implemented effectively and research was not the real criteria to gain appointment at Rak University. However, it was impossible for Rin and other EFL lecturers at Rak University to focus only on teaching as the university had set its goal to be a research university and the university demand for research productivity was progressively increasing. This is similar to the Chinese EFL context. The study of Bai et al. (2012) found that teaching performance was not part of the assessment of the EFL Chinese academics' performance in a teaching and research institute, while research "is the only thing that counts" (p. 99).

All focus group participants, on the other hand, were informed that they could gain financial incentives if they conducted research annually which was reflected in their similar points of view towards research. As they were not required to conduct research as part of their employment, all focus group participants mentioned that most of their time was spent on teaching, which they felt was the most important duty of lecturers at Jaidee University. Research, in their view, was seen as an additional tool to enhance their teaching practice and their students' learning outcomes unlike lecturers at Rak University. Therefore, their previous research projects were centred around teaching and learning. In addition, the focus group participants were encouraged to conduct action research as a requirement for university research funding. It could be said that the research policy of Jaidee University wanted staff to conduct research so it provided financial incentives which encouraged and attracted staff to undertake research.

In addition, it is noticeable that neither university required EFL lecturers to disseminate their findings. Even though research publications are seen to be important criteria to meet the requirements of appointment in higher education institutions in many countries (Wood, 1990), the participating lecturers were not required to publish their research but merely submitted their research findings, either a summary (for those who did not apply for university research funding) or a full research report (for those who received

university research funding), to the university research centre. This implies that the two universities did not have a policy of requiring EFL research publications, and it turned out that only one research publication had been produced by one participating EFL lecturer (Vit). These findings are consistent with the study of Na Wichian et al. (2009) which found that the lack of institutional research policy was associated with the low research productivity of Thai faculty staff of the pedagogy departments which tended to produce few research projects.

It is possible that the two participating universities did not expect research publications from EFL lecturers as their research mission tended to promote research in the fields of science and technology. However, this may also be the result of the lack of a national research assessment exercise in Thailand. Having a national research assessment exercise could drive academic staff to conduct and increase their research publications at both local and international levels. For example, the UK, the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and Japan have their own research assessment exercise which has required university staff to conduct and publish research. The data shows that these countries gained an international reputation and the number of research publications is their key to success. Only China did not promote a national research assessment exercise, but its international reputation was higher than Thailand, perhaps because each Chinese university assessed the research excellence of their academic staff by their publications. In contrast, EFL lecturers' performance in both participating universities was assessed by research productivity, or the number of research projects conducted, but not the quality of staff research publications.

Research Funding and Support

During the interviews, feelings of unease and unfairness were expressed when the issue of university funding and support for research was discussed. At the time of the study, the research funding of the two universities was different. Rak University provided research funding only for individual research projects while Jaidee University granted research funding for both individual and collaborative research projects.

Limited Research Funding

The data suggests that research funding, including funding for presenting research results, was controlled by the university research centre. All participating EFL lecturers were required to submit a research proposal and relevant documents to this centre in order to apply for university research funding. However, participants, particularly at Rak University, seemed to feel less concerned about applying for research and/or presentation funding.

Three participants at Rak University (Mint, Pim, Rin) did not apply for university research funding, particularly for their first research project. They appeared to be reluctant to apply for university research funding including funding for presentation and provided different reasons for their decisions about this. Mint explained that the process to apply for presentation funding was discouraging as it required many official documents and took time to complete the process. Mint noted that it was not easy to apply for presentation funding, especially when applying to present research findings abroad. Another EFL lecturer, Pim, pointed out that she found the research funding process difficult as the university research centre required applicants to submit a full research paper after finishing the research. Pim therefore conducted research at her own cost. By using her own money, Pim only needed to submit a summary of her research findings rather than a complete research report and no further publication was required.

Min, Pim, and Rin all mentioned that the Rak University research funding was not sufficient. For example, Rin felt that EFL lecturers were not treated as equals in terms of the amount of research funding available compared to lecturers in other fields. Rin indicated that the amount of research funding for EFL research and in the field of humanities at her institution was smaller than for those who conducted research in the fields of science and technology. The situation of limited research funding as mentioned by participants seems to be similar to other international contexts. As Boyer (1990) points out, research funding is more limited for those who work in the field of humanities and arts.

In contrast to other participants at Rak University, Vit pointed out that the research funding he received was sufficient as the university and his faculty provided materials and services for people who wanted to undertake research. Vit also noted that research in the English area did not require much money, as he preferred to conduct qualitative

research. Vit believed this could reduce the research cost (but not the time) as compared to others who conducted survey research. This may explain why Vit was happy with the amount of research funding he received. However, at the time of the interview, Vit had just begun conducting his first quantitative research project, so it was possible that he may have encountered an issue with insufficient research funding like the other participating EFL lecturers at Rak University.

Similar to the participants at Rak University, all the focus group participants at Jaidee University asserted that their university research funding was not sufficient. In addition, they felt frustrated as the university research centre always cut down their research funding. It can be suggested that the current research funding of Jaidee University may relate to Jaidee University's expectation to become a leading comprehensive university, particularly in the fields of science and technology as mentioned earlier. EFL research, therefore, was not funded in a way that met the need of the EFL lecturers in this study.

While research was regarded as challenging work, the feeling among participants was that there was insufficient research funding, and that seemed to be linked to a drop in the level of the participants' involvement in research. As Blackburn et al. (1991) have pointed out, the amount of research funding received could affect faculty staff, especially when publishing their research findings. The majority of the participants in the current study did not publish their findings at the international level (or even in the local journals).

Both universities granted funding only for a one year research project. This reflects the reality in Thai higher education institutions where EFL lecturers are not encouraged to conduct larger studies. This is in line with the speech of Professor Dr. Channarong Pornrungroj, the director of the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment in Thailand (ONESQA, 2012). He indicated that Thai higher education lacks longitudinal studies in all areas, as current research funding means that the researcher has to conduct and complete research within a year. This may explain further why some participating EFL lecturers chose to conduct survey research (Mint, Pim, and Rin). They felt that with survey research it was easy to collect data and save time so that they could complete their research within a year.

The Necessity of Support

It is interesting to note that the universities' support, such as infrastructure, research mentors, research seminars, and research databases, was not seen to relate to the level of the individual research involvement of the EFL lecturers in this study. During the interviews, the necessity of this support emerged. Further discussion of these factors follows.

Research Support and Infrastructure

The data suggests that both universities provided support and infrastructure for lecturers who wanted to undertake research. These resources included library resources, stationery, computer and internet access. However, it was found that research support and infrastructure had a minor impact on the EFL participants, even though the significance of infrastructure is generally thought to promote high levels of research productivity and assist in achieving the university research mission (Mohrman, et al., 2008).

Only one participant (Mint) mentioned a problem with the library service, but it did not have an impact on her involvement in research as Mint was able to conduct five research projects within four years. The results of this study do not support some previous literature (e.g. Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2012) which indicates that access to the library is considered to be a major constraint limiting lecturers' research involvement. However, library resources may support EFL lecturers in publishing their research findings as the number of library books in a higher education institution has been linked to the high level of staff research output (Bland & Ruffin, 1992).

All of the other participants, besides Mint, mentioned that resources and systems were not the major obstacle to their involvement in research. It is interesting to note too that none of the focus group participants reported encountering any problems regarding the Jaidee University infrastructure. Infrastructure did not seem to affect their research productivity, but what they were concerned about was gaining adequate research funding to drive their research projects. One focus group participant noted that money was the most important factor influencing her involvement in the research process. This statement contradicts the findings of Wood (1990), Hill and Haigh (2011), as well as Borg and Alshumaimeri (2012) who claimed that resources and infrastructure are found

to be the major constraints for university staff members who conduct research. There may be two explanations for why infrastructure was not considered as the key issue affecting EFL lecturers' research productivity. On one hand, EFL lecturers might not see how infrastructure could support their research involvement. On the other hand, it is possible that the infrastructure that the two participating universities provided met the needs of the EFL lecturers.

Research Mentors, Seminars, and Databases

Another important finding in this current enquiry is that participants appeared to overlook the importance of research mentors and research seminars and did not show a need for research databases. None of the EFL lecturers in the study consulted research mentors. In fact, Mint noted she felt reluctant to consult with research mentors as they were senior lecturers.

It is also interesting that participating EFL lecturers at Rak University did not take part in the research seminars which were provided for early career academic staff. For example, Vit mentioned that the university provided research workshops for academic staff. However, he did not make an effort to attend any workshops. Similar to the participants at Rak University, the focus group participants at Jaidee University also did not mention a need for research workshops.

Furthermore, no participants at either Rak University or Jaidee University mentioned a need for research databases. Both universities provided research databases which were linked to both internal and external research funding from government and private sectors. While the research databases of the two participating universities appeared to gather data on research projects conducted by their academic staff, only the research database at Rak University provided access to research articles conducted by external researchers. On the other hand, the research database at Jaidee University was not widely introduced to academic staff. One focus group participant noted that few Jaidee University staff knew that it existed.

Tynan and Garbett (2007) suggest that support from research mentors, and specific research programmes are considered to be crucial factors to enhance research skills. Therefore, without support from research mentors as well as specific programmes, participants may lack understanding about the research process (as shown in this study)

and this would have impacted on their ability to choose, conduct, and apply suitable types of research as well as to disseminate their research findings.

The Research Centre Service

The findings appear to imply that all participants involved in the study accessed the research centres only when applying for research funding. The research centres were likely to be the place for EFL lecturers to apply for research funding rather than developing the level of their research knowledge. Furthermore, most of the participants (except Vit) were not satisfied with the work of their university research centres. They felt they did not get good support from the research centre. For example, Mint mentioned that the process of applying to present research abroad was not clear and she felt reluctant to apply for it. In addition, two focus group participants did not get approval to present their research abroad. They claimed that the university research centre did not pay attention to their research.

Despite factors involving lecturers and universities, it was also found that global factors influenced the level of the research involvement of EFL lecturers in the current study. These factors, which were seen to affect the position of EFL research in both Thai and international contexts, will be discussed in the next section.

7.5 The Position of EFL Research

During the interviews, the position of EFL research emerged as a key theme. It was found that several key aspects appeared to influence the status of EFL in the Thai and international contexts: internal and external research funding, political tensions surrounding a national language policy, and research publication requirements. These factors are discussed now.

Internal Research Funding

It appears that EFL lecturers were expected to conduct research although they had not been given any directions to disseminate their research findings from their institutions or from the government. EFL research was not regarded as the primary focus of the two

participating universities despite the popularity and importance of English as a compulsory subject within these institutions as well as its role as a language for communication between nations.

It was found that there was only one source of research funding available for participating EFL lecturers who wanted to conduct research. This was internal research funding. Seventeen out of nineteen research participants had applied for internal research funding. The other two EFL lecturers (Pim and Rin) did not have experience in applying for either internal or external research funding. It is clear that universities played a key role as the main funding source for EFL lecturers. All of the participants asserted that they could apply for only internal research funding as they did not see any possibilities for gaining external research funding.

The focus group participants felt that the university did not pay attention to their research productivity as they were expected to conduct research for which there were few research grants available. All of the focus group participants stated that the university gave them less research funding than they applied for. This may imply that neither Rak University nor Jaidee University expected quality EFL research outputs.

The internal research funding at Rak University also seemed to prevent EFL lecturers from conducting collaborative research. At the time of the study, Rak University granted only individual research funding. This could explain why Pim and Rin did not want to apply for university research funding. They chose to conduct collaborative research rather than individual research to share the research cost and save time as they had heavy teaching workloads ranging from 27 to 30 hours per week. In addition, the cases of Pim and Rin reflect that the university research grants did not suit the high teaching workloads of EFL lecturers. These grants only provided research costs, rather than teaching release. The focus group participants also faced similar problems. They chose to conduct collaborative research to save time, even though Jaidee University granted both individual and collaborative research funding.

The Availability of External Research Funding

One important finding was that the international trend of emphasising research in the fields of science and technology seemed to limit the status of EFL research in terms of obtaining external research funding. It was found that higher education institutions in both English and non-English-speaking countries expected their academic staff to apply for external research funding which helped increase the production of publications, as well as the local and international reputation of universities and their countries. However, EFL research was not funded well as it did not make the same amount of money as scientific research.

Similar to other developing countries, the Thai government focuses on research that yields the highest economic returns. The Thai Ministry of Education emphasises the importance of basic and applied research in the fields of science, and encourages academic staff to conduct research in the fields of science to serve the needs of the industrial and business sectors. The production of research in the fields of science and technology is therefore a priority for Thailand. It is also regarded as the main focus of the country's research policy (Office of National Research Council of Thailand, 2012; OHEC, 2012b). It may be possible that the Thai government expected EFL lecturers to give lectures to students rather than being research producers. It is also clear that EFL research is not an area of interest for the private sectors that are considered to be the main external funders. Due to the fact that EFL research is not funded by external agents (private sectors), the government research funding for EFL research is also limited. This is confirmed by the study of Mohrman et al. (2008) who indicate that financial support for non-science fields in developing countries is low compared to the increasing need for research productivity. The way in which Thai government research funding is prioritised appears to facilitate research in the fields of science and technology rather than in other fields.

Finding external research funding was seen to be an impossible task for all of the participants. For example, Pim mentioned that external research funding was mostly available for those who worked in the fields of science and technology. In addition, all of the focus group participants agreed that government research funding required time and effort, and they believed they did not have sufficient ideas and time to develop a proposal to apply for it.

It is unfortunate that there appeared to be no opportunity for EFL lecturers in the current study to apply for external research funding. According to the Thailand Research Fund (TRF, 2011), all types of research grants are available for researchers who have a Ph.D. degree or a good record of international publications (at least two to three international publications in the past five years). None of the participating EFL lecturers in the study met the criteria for these external research grants. All of them had only master's degrees. Even Vit, who was seen to be the best qualified lecturer among all the participants, was not eligible to apply for these research grants as he had only one publication in an international journal. It seems to be very hard to reach the bar to be eligible for external research funding at this moment.

It is difficult to explain why the government research funding is not available for researchers who have a master's degree, but it might be related to the low percentage of PhD staff in Thai universities (MOE, 2005; Thai's Higher Education for All, 2010). The government's Thailand Research Fund may be set up to increase the proportion of academic staff with PhDs rather than supporting staff with a master's degree who had never or seldom published.

Furthermore, it appears that conducting government research projects could be beyond the participants' capacity due to their overloaded teaching condition. As Duffee and Aikenhead (1992) as well as Sikes (1992) suggest, the current teaching situation imposes constraints on teachers' actions or behaviours in practice. In this case, their current work situations affected EFL lecturers' beliefs about and their individual level of research involvement. It decreased their motivation in finding and applying for external research funding. However, it is possible that EFL lecturers used time as an excuse for not doing something they thought was complicated and difficult like applying for external research funding. This is in accordance with Lortie's (1975) finding that teachers often avoid learning something new, and do not tend to adopt new practices unless they are quite sure they can make them work. Even though the research participants were university lecturers, they appeared to have a similar reaction to change and unfamiliar challenges as teachers. For example, Pim believed that external research funding, particularly from the government sectors, was available for experienced and well known researchers. As EFL lecturers seem to define the application process for external funding as difficult and none of them have experience in doing it, it is possible

that they did not want to apply for any external research funding. However, Pim's statement about external research funding being only available for experienced researchers may reflect the real research funding situation not only in Thailand but also in the international contexts. As Tynan and Garbett (2007) mention, external research funding seems to be reserved for experienced researchers. This appears to indicate that novice researchers like the EFL lecturers in this study must initially conduct research and increase their research skills within their own context (universities). They also need to be concerned about the importance of disseminating their findings internationally, to gain credibility if they want to apply for external research grants. However, only Vit in the current study seemed to be aware of this.

Political Tensions around a National Language Policy

The low status of EFL research may be linked to the political uncertainty in Thailand, and it is possible that these political tensions disrupt the development of research in the English language teaching field. Recent political uncertainty, for example five governments with eight ministers of education within six years (from 2006 to 2012), may cause disruption to policy related to English language due to new governments and ministers being appointed. For example, there is no clear research policy on language even though there has been a discussion about the national language policy since 2008. Professor Dr. Udom Warotamasikkhadit, the president of the National Language Policy Committee (ISARA, 2012), has noted that the Thai government seems to pay little attention to the creation of a national language policy.

At the time of the study, Thailand was in the process of drafting a national language policy. The lack of a national language policy may be one of the factors affecting the development of the research in the area of English language teaching in Thailand. Thailand was among the bottom five countries with poor English skills compared to the other 53 countries where English is not a native language (Anderson, 2012). This appears to indicate that the past and present English language teaching in Thailand is not effective and the level of English language proficiency of Thai people is still low.

In the international context, Marginson (2007) points out that, as English is the language for publication, English-speaking nations have an advantage. The data shows that English-speaking countries have strong research bases and their researchers have gained an international reputation as they could produce and publish research without any difficulties in using English. However, other non-English-speaking countries such as China and Japan have good records of research among world universities. China has 42 universities while Japan has 21 universities in the world's top 500 universities in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3). The outstanding research records of these two countries may be the result of having a national language policy which emphasises the importance of English. For example, China has implemented language policies which promote the importance of English. Hu (2005) noted that this was related to "a desire to catch up with developed countries" (p. 12). Japan has also considered English as a language for international communication and given English official status declaring this language is "an instrument for furthering commercial and national competitiveness" (Hagerman, 2009, p. 56).

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Thai higher education institutions could not produce sufficient international research publications to be listed in the top 500 universities in the Academic Ranking of World Universities. Without a national language policy, Thailand may lose its direction in promoting English to meet international standards and needs. This may explain why Thailand has weaker research records overall compared to other world universities. English language teaching in Thailand is not the focus of the country even though EFL research can be an important tool to improve the English language proficiency of Thai people.

Recently, the Minister of Education introduced new directions for teaching and research in Thailand (MOE, 2012). These directions require English teaching staff at all levels to provide instruction to improve and enhance students' outcomes. However, it is too early to say how effective these new directions will be, or their full implications. In addition, the ongoing possibility of changing the Minister of Education may again affect any policies related to English language teaching in Thailand.

Research Publication as a University Requirement

The data in Chapter 4 revealed that research is defined as the primacy for higher education institutions in both English and non-English-speaking countries. Therefore, a university research culture has become a key discussion within higher education institutions worldwide.

Research cultures in English-speaking countries (e.g. the UK, the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand) and non-English-speaking countries (e.g. China and Japan) emphasise the importance of research as a requirement for employment, tenure, and promotion. It appears that research and international publications are the first priority of faculty members in international universities. However, research was not considered as one of the major criteria for a tenured position in either Rak University or Jaidee University. A similar situation exists in all Thai higher education institutions due to a shortage of qualified staff in many areas including English teaching (MOE, 2012). This finding is in agreement with the report of the Office of the Education Council (2004a) which showed that Thai academic staff were not interested in conducting research because research was not required for employment or tenure. It is possible that the level of research and publications of EFL lecturers may not increase since they are able to secure their jobs without having any publications.

It is interesting to note that higher education institutions, particularly in English-speaking countries, have made PhDs a requirement for employment at the tertiary level. Consequently, academic staff in these English-speaking countries have produced high quality research outputs resulting in universities in these countries being listed in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2). The expectation may be that staff holding a PhD are able to produce higher level research publications because they have worked in-depth and developed their skills as researchers while they studied in a PhD programme in their respective fields. In contrast to the international context, Thai higher education institutions, including the two participating universities, tend to have a low percentage of PhD staff in all areas. In Chapter 4, it is indicated that a comprehensive university such as Rak University and Jaidee University should have 70% of academic staff with PhDs; but the majority of EFL staff of both universities, as mentioned earlier, held only master's degrees. This may explain why most of the participating EFL lecturers (except Vit) could not produce research that met

international standards. Nine out of thirteen of the participating EFL lecturers from Rak University mentioned that they felt inexperienced when conducting their master's degree projects and their research projects were not in-depth. It is likely that having a master's degree does not ensure that EFL lecturers develop enough research skills to conduct and disseminate research findings in a way that meets international standards.

7.6 The Research Culture of EFL Lecturers in Thai Universities

The research culture of EFL lecturers in Thai universities in this study was found to be a consequence of international and Thai research contexts. However, as a part of a global research context, the study found that EFL lecturers did not consider their university research culture to be as strong and effective as research in other fields. This is illustrated in Figure 7.4, and explained further below.

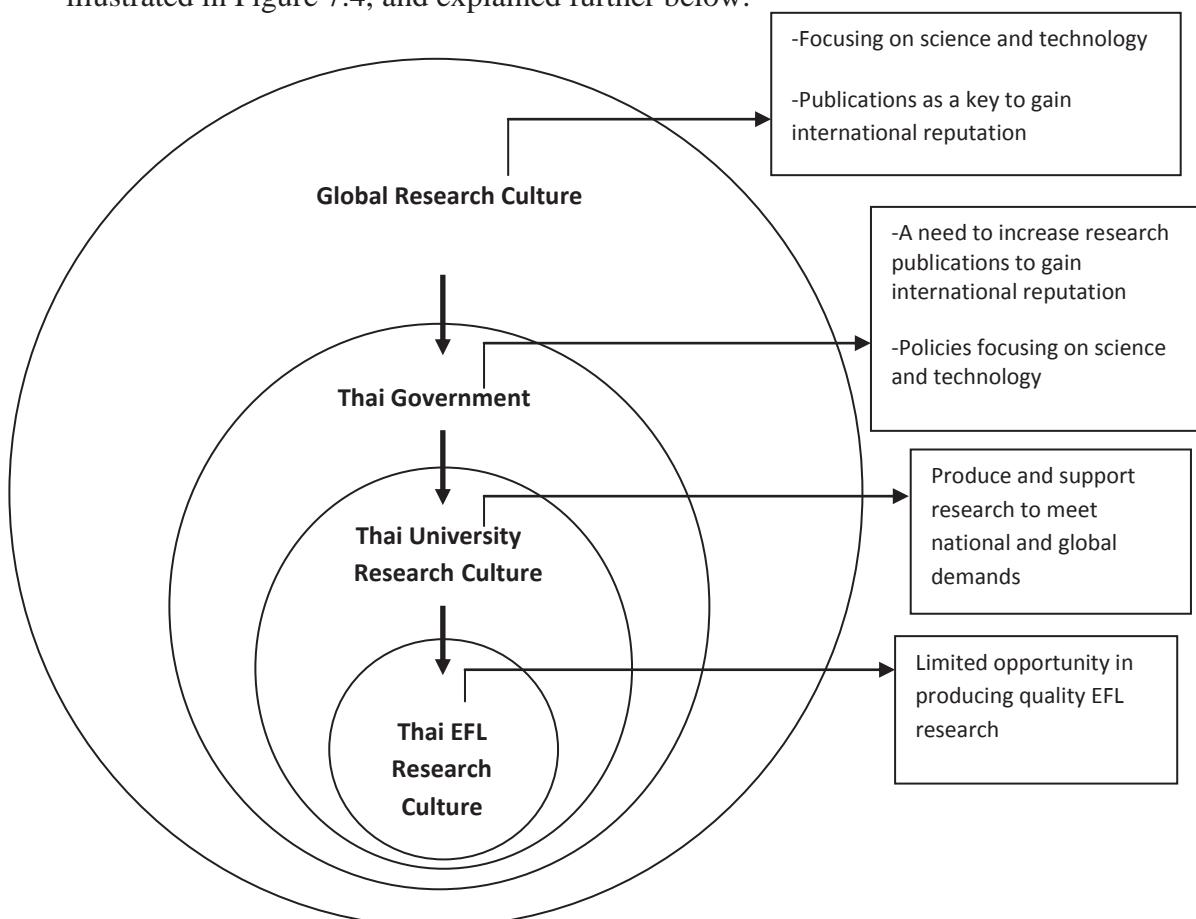


Figure 7.4. The EFL research culture

The data from Chapter 4 clearly indicates that higher education in English-speaking countries as well as in non-English-speaking countries influences national and university research policies that are linked to meeting global demands. It appears that universities worldwide focus on developing their mission and policy statements to sustain and grow a productive, high quality research culture. This is influenced by the impact of globalisation and internationalisation according to which the international research reputation of higher education institutions is accorded. As Teichler (2004) asserts, higher education institutions are required to transmit knowledge not only within their local context, but also in the international context. International universities therefore emphasise research productivity, particularly in the fields of science, and invest money to strengthen both their research capacity and quality in order to increase their international status. This funding is also used to create research assessments as universities compete to gain a higher reputation not just in their own countries, but also in comparison with other international universities. As Hazelkorn (2009) noted, “It’s a reputation race/game, and in this – research is sexy. [University] Reputation, unfortunately, is always based on research and research attracts the best talent” (p. 1). So the best universities get the best staff which therefore retains and enhances their reputations.

It was found that the international perspective of a university research culture affects the way the Thai government and policy makers direct the universities’ business in Thailand. This means that Thai universities encourage and support academic staff to conduct and publish research in the field of science and technology to increase their reputation nationally and internationally. This led to nine universities being selected to be national research universities which would boost research capacity of higher education institutions so that they were able to compete with other international universities as indicated in Chapter 4. In addition, there is evidence in the literature that the Thai government has paid much more attention to basic and applied research in science and technology than in EFL. Professor Dr. Wichit Srisa-an, the former Minister of Education in Thailand (Srisa-an, 2005), has noted that Thai higher education is concerned with global competitiveness and aims to produce and strengthen research that creates new knowledge, innovations, and technologies.

It is possible to say that the two participating universities in the current study were part of the building of the nation which means that they have to operate their universities to meet the demands of the country. It is clear that Thailand wants to increase the production of science and technology. This is reflected in the previous literature that indicates that the Thai government grants a major amount of research funding to the fields of science (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3). At the same time, it is likely that universities that aim to increase their research productivity in the fields of science will receive greater support from the government. Therefore, it is likely that the two universities would focus on research in the fields of science in order to increase the capacity of the universities as well as the country.

The EFL research culture, although part of the university, appears to suffer from the focus on science. For example, two focus group participants mentioned that they wanted to undertake research with participants outside their university classroom context but the university required them to conduct research only with students in their universities, which limited their chance to pursue and increase their pedagogical knowledge (Zeuli & Tiezzi, 1993).

The findings appear to indicate that the research culture of EFL lecturers in Thai universities was not productive, even though the university research environment (research infrastructure, research mentors, research seminars, and research databases) appears to be supportive and available for all EFL staff. A lack of time was the most influential factor affecting EFL lecturers' research productivity. This is a similar finding to that of Pratt et al. (1999) who found that staff feeling there was a lack of time for research was a critical factor that negatively influenced their involvement within a research culture.

One reason for the lack of time that emerged from the study was that time for research was not built into EFL lecturers' workloads, as all of the participants had only teaching and community service timetabled. As a consequence, EFL lecturers had to conduct research in their own time. For example, Mint spent more time on research by reducing her time for relaxation. Another finding was that some EFL lecturers (such as Pim, Rin, and one of the focus group participants) did not make research part of their daily routine. This appears to imply that EFL lecturers had to manage their research time to suit their timetable and daily life, and may explain why the research and publication

productivity of EFL lecturers seems to be very low despite their view that research was important to their work life.

Participating EFL lecturers rarely published their research findings in any journals. This is in line with a study by Jaroongkhongdach, Todd, Keyurawong, and Hall (2012) who found that Thai university staff in the area of English language teaching produced only a small number of research publications, with a total of just 578 articles from 2000 to 2010 (28 articles published in international journals and around 550 articles published in local journals or conference proceedings). This situation is seen as common across faculties in most of the Thai higher education institutions except for national research universities which have better research records (Kirtikara, 2001; MOE, 2005; OHEC, 2010).

The majority of participants in the current study had completed only one research project. Furthermore, the quality of the research by those participants who had conducted more than one research project was generally considered to be poor, which is clearly illustrated in the focus group data. All focus group participants had conducted at least two research projects. However, they conducted research to meet the university requirement rather than to meet international standards. Therefore they could not present or publish their research findings at either national or international levels. This is similar to the findings of Intratat (2004) as well as Kovilaikool et al. (2007) which indicated that Thai lecturers, particularly in the fields of education and liberal arts, produced low research outputs. In this study, it is clear that the research capacity of Thai EFL lecturers is limited. It is interesting to note that this situation seems to be common in other EFL contexts. For example, a study by Bai et al. (2012) illustrated that the research capacity of Chinese TEFL academics was weak, and they viewed teaching as their priority. However, they were employed firstly as teachers, not lecturers like the EFL participants in the current study.

Perceptions about Research and Publication

Another key concern of the findings is that participating EFL lecturers seem to neglect the process of research activity. Even though they believed that research should be 30% to 50% of their job as a lecturer, they did not disseminate their research findings. EFL

lecturers tended to believe that informal research with no publications was a suitable method to enhance students' learning outcomes. During the first phase interviews, some participating EFL lecturers at Rak University indicated that they wanted to conduct only informal research. This view appears to affect the level of research publications in EFL contexts as well as the research community, as research needs to be published in order to disseminate the results which may contribute to the sum of knowledge (Boyer, 1990; McDonough & McDonough, 1997). The lack of research dissemination may imply that EFL lecturers did not understand that the purpose of conducting research is to generate new knowledge and make this available to other people. There is also a misunderstanding about the rationale for research publication among the participating EFL lecturers. For instance, Vit argued that he did not have to pay attention to others' reviews after his research was published. This view contradicts a general guideline of the research process provided by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT, 1998) as well as the U.S. National Research Council (2002) which indicates that research should be published to encourage academic debate. It is likely that the EFL lecturers in the study were not aware of the importance of publication when they got involved in the research process.

Another possible explanation for neglecting to publish their research findings may be the English language proficiency of EFL lecturers. As English is the language of academic journals internationally (Swales, 2004), EFL lecturers in the current study may have encountered some publishing difficulties due to their insufficient English language skill (Wiriyachitra, 2002), and their lack of confidence in using English.

The results of this study showed that most of the participants had some problems in using English and some participants appeared to lack confidence in using English during the interviews. This may explain why they did not publish their findings in either local or international publications. During the first phase interviews at Rak University, participants were allowed to choose to be interviewed either in Thai or in English. Twelve out of the thirteen participants chose to be interviewed in Thai as they felt more confident in using this language. Only Vit, who published his research findings in an international journal, chose to be interviewed in English. In addition, it emerged that all participants were not familiar with some English words used in research and needed some explanations from the researcher. As participants' English was not good enough to

explain their beliefs and understanding about their research involvement, participants therefore were interviewed in Thai in the second and third phase interviews (see Section 3.5 on Phase two and Phase Three). It may be prevalent that EFL lecturers in Thailand encounter some English language problems as they generally have limited opportunities for using English in the Thai context.

Without publications, participating EFL lecturers may miss the opportunity to receive the increased salary they wish for. The research participants stressed a need to earn more money. For example, Pim mentioned that EFL staff tended to teach to earn a living. All of the focus group participants also mentioned their desire to get more money. However, the data appears to indicate that EFL lecturers often neglected to recognise the fact that academic staff in all areas can make more money by advancing their academic status through research. Participants gave several excuses for not advancing their academic status. For example, Pim and Rin wanted to have a PhD before applying for promotion. On the other hand, one focus group participant mentioned that she wanted to relax after spending time with a heavy teaching workload. In Thai higher education institutions, academic staff members will receive a higher monthly salary if they have an academic ranking of assistant professor or higher. However, without publication, this desire would not be fulfilled since publication is one of the major criteria to be promoted to an assistant professor, or associate professor, or a full professor (OHEC, 2007).

It is likely that money would be a powerful incentive for the EFL lecturers in the study to get involved in the research process. However, this is not a good sign for English language teaching. As Brett (1997) notes, such perception could destroy the quality of research as “the quality of our research as academics depends on the quality of our thought” (p. 20).

A Lack of Communication

The findings in this study suggest there is a lack of communication about a Thai EFL research culture, among lecturers, between lecturers and leaders within the university, and between lecturers, research mentors and their research centre. It was found that participating EFL lecturers did not share their research issues with other colleagues.

They seemed to struggle to find a research topic that suited their interest and met their expectation. This is clearly illustrated in the case of Mint who expected to publish research but could not do it. Exchanging information and discussing how to publish research with other colleagues like Vit who was successful in publishing research in an international journal may have been useful. As Bland and Ruffin (1992) point out, communication among colleagues is the key to success in maintaining and advancing staff research performance. By discussing concerns with other colleagues, EFL lecturers like Mint may come to understand and know more about how to publish research in an international journal.

The findings also show that EFL lecturers at Rak University may have been able to reduce their academic workloads if they wanted to conduct research. For instance, Vit mentioned that he was not assigned to do some service and administrative duties as his head of department encouraged him to undertake research. It may be that other participating EFL lecturers like Mint, Pim, and Rin did not discuss their concerns about the time constraints in conducting research with their head of department in order to reduce other academic workloads. By not communicating with the leader, EFL lecturers were not able to find additional time for research.

The low research publications within the Thai EFL research culture may also be the result of the lack of communication with people working for a university research centre. For example, Mint noted that she did not want to consult about her research with research mentors as they were senior lecturers with academic status. In fact, she preferred to ask for help from her colleagues with whom she felt familiar. It is possible that this gap between lecturers and research mentors is due to Thai tradition and culture. Thai lecturers (research mentors) with academic status and greater age are held in high respect (see Chapter 3, Section 3.7 and 3.8). This may explain why Mint felt reluctant to ask for help from research mentors. However, there is a probability of increased research success by EFL staff if they receive advice from research mentors. A study by Tianpichet (1997) suggested that a mentoring programme was necessary in enhancing the research competence of faculty staff.

Some EFL lecturers, on the other hand, may also tend to overlook seeking help from research mentors. For example, Vit did not consult about his work with any research mentors. Even though he seemed to believe that research mentors could support staff

who would like to undertake research, he had never consulted with any research mentors. It is interesting to note that Vit appeared to be confident to conduct his own research and tended to believe that he was an expert in doing it. However, during the second phase interviews, Vit seemed to be confused about features of both quantitative and qualitative research types. This suggests that Vit did not truly understand research, even qualitative research which he mentioned he understood clearly. It is likely that participants did not feel that a research mentor was a crucial factor that could enhance their research skills. All participants at Rak University, in addition, believed that the level of teaching experience each lecturer had could affect their level of research involvement. They mentioned that lecturers who had more teaching experience might be able to conduct research more effectively. This belief seems to support the finding of Wood (1990) who indicates that academic staff members who have less teaching experience are under more pressure when they are required to get involved in the research process. In this case, younger staff members face new challenges since they have to carry heavy teaching loads and to publish research in order to establish and increase their professional credibility within their institution.

Although EFL lecturers at Jaidee University had greater research involvement, it was interesting that the participating EFL lecturers from the two universities generally illustrated a low level of research productivity despite the fact that their teaching experiences were different. A possible explanation for this might be that the participating EFL lecturers did not conduct research that they could apply to their teaching practice.

Finally, it is possible that the participating EFL lecturers did not communicate with a research centre and discuss the research application process. As mentioned earlier, participating EFL lecturers only contacted a research centre when they wanted money to run their research projects. At the same time, they wanted the application process for both research and presentation funding to be easy and encouraging. For example, two focus group participants at Jaidee University did not receive research grants when they applied for research presentation funding as their research did not meet the criteria of the university. However, this situation might not have happened if they had made prior contact with a research centre, asked for their recommendations and clarified the process for applying for presentation funding.

7.7 Summary

Research has a major impact on higher education institutions. It is considered as a tool to construct new knowledge and increase the reputation of universities worldwide. Building a research culture for academic staff has therefore become a focus of higher education institutions as it can influence the level of research and publications. A research culture involves beliefs, values, and behaviours, and all of these influenced the research involvement of the EFL lecturers in the study.

It appears that the EFL lecturers from both universities experienced the same teaching conditions. They had a heavy teaching workload ranging from 21 to 31 hours per week. This led some participants to believe that teaching was the most important task for their job as lecturers. Although other participants felt research was also a large part of their teaching duty, time seems to have been a critical issue that affected views on actually conducting research. EFL lecturers found the research task was particularly difficult as well as challenging when they had to spend most of their time on teaching.

The level of research knowledge held by EFL lecturers is also important as it is reflected in the way they undertake research. Participants could conduct only a limited range of research types and could not undertake in-depth studies. It appears that EFL lecturers believed quantitative research was the most appropriate method to use to ensure that their research was of good quality, especially quantitative research that involved a large-scale sample. In addition, all of the EFL lecturers in this study found that publications could confirm their research quality, although most of them had not been able to produce research for publication.

It appears that there were both positive and negative factors influencing EFL lecturers to get involved in the research process. These factors were seen to relate to EFL lecturers' research perceptions, university policy and agenda, and global research contexts. It was found that EFL lecturers perceived that research was part of their duty as lecturers. Furthermore, they could gain money, go abroad, gain academic status, and increase their knowledge through conducting and disseminating research.

Despite EFL lecturers' perception of research as a desirable activity, research was considered to be an essential component and one of the major university missions. Furthermore, research was used to increase the KPIs of the universities and was a means

to maintain and increase their reputation as they aimed to be one of the leading universities in Thailand.

The two participating universities in this study provided facilities to assist in increasing the research productivity of their academic staff. These facilities included research funding, infrastructures, research mentors, research seminars, and research databases. However, it was found that the availability of research funding was a factor that significantly influenced EFL lecturers' involvement in research. Most of the EFL lecturers believed that the university provided insufficient research funding. It could be said that the research centres in neither university responded to the needs of the EFL lecturers. This reality appears to parallel previous literature which indicated that Thai universities give priority to research in the fields of technology and science. This is also similar to findings in other international university research contexts.

In addition, EFL lecturers were not encouraged to disseminate their research findings. Publication was seen as something irrelevant to their research involvement. The universities expected only a quantity of small pieces of research from EFL lecturers. EFL research therefore appeared to be a focus of neither the universities nor the country. While there is an increasing demand for research publications in the science fields at the national and international levels, EFL research, on the other hand, is considered as a less important area of research within higher education institutions in general, not just in Thailand. Hence, EFL lecturers found it was hard to find external research funding either from government or private sectors.

As a consequence of scientific research being favoured by governments and universities worldwide, the EFL research culture in the current Thai context has not developed to be robust and effective. The current study found that the level of research and publications of the participating EFL lecturers was low. There is also evidence showing that the Thai lecturers had poor English skills which could disrupt the production of research publications needed to gain an international reputation. This finding also suggests that giving lectures is not enough to improve students' English learning. Therefore, it is important that the Thai government and universities, and other EFL contexts that have similar English problems emphasise research and publication in the area of English language teaching as this can introduce new ways of teaching and learning to improve and enhance students' achievements to meet international standards. The implications of

the study, and recommendations for changes that could enhance and promote EFL lecturers' research capacity and the research culture, are provided in the final chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

Research plays a major role in higher education institutions worldwide. Academic staff members are expected to conduct research because it is part of their duties as well as being part of the university's core mission. Therefore, there is an increasing demand for research productivity which increases the importance of a research culture within higher education institutions worldwide (M. Baker, 2010). This study found that EFL lecturers were encouraged to conduct research and they perceived research as part of their academic duties. However, the current study also revealed that EFL research was not regarded as the focus of the university. Therefore, tensions emerged as EFL lecturers had limited access to research funding, resulting in less motivation to pursue research, limited opportunities to publish findings, and limited chances to explore and implement different types of research to increase their research and professional knowledge.

This study has provided new insights into the involvement in the research process of EFL lecturers. The research culture was investigated of Thai university lecturers teaching English from two universities in Thailand. In addition, the study provided a broad understanding of Thai and international university research cultures. Insights were also provided into how institutions can increase EFL lecturers' research productivity including publications that meet international standards in order to gain their national and international reputation. Therefore, the findings will support those who want to develop and improve the EFL research culture within higher education institutions.

The chapter begins with an overview of the study, followed by a summary of its limitations. Following this, implications and recommendations for practice and policy are outlined. The chapter ends with suggestions for future research and the researcher's final comments.

8.2 Summary of Key Findings

Cheetham (2007) states that research is a learned behaviour while the research culture is the structure that lights up the significance of that behaviour. Within a research culture, research practice and output is considered to be a pre-eminent activity where there are leadership and management initiatives designed to facilitate staff who want to conduct research (Evans, 2007; Holligan, et al., 2011). In general, a research culture is created by the people within that culture.

The study utilised a qualitative case study that took place in four phases. The first three phases investigated the research involvement of EFL lecturers within two different institutions while the last phase employed document analysis to broaden understanding into the research culture in both the Thai and international university contexts. The first two phases involved 13 EFL lecturers from Rak University while the third phase was conducted with six focus group participants from Jaidee University. Document analysis was also employed in phases two and three to provide a background of each university setting involved in the study. The fourth and final phase focused on the research cultures of lecturers in English-speaking countries (the UK, the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand) and non-English-speaking countries (Japan, China, and Thailand).

In studying the university research culture of EFL lecturers in Thai universities, it was found that research was considered to be a prominent aspect for both universities and academic staff, due to the increasing demands of academic research productivity. This investigation into university research culture has also identified the key factors influencing staff involvement in the research process.

Evidence from the case studies shows that EFL lecturers had some shared perceptions of their research involvement. Time was considered to be an important factor that affected their research involvement as EFL lecturers were overloaded with other responsibilities, particularly teaching duties which ultimately reduced their research time. Participating EFL lecturers indicated that they did not have enough time to undertake the research that they wanted to produce. This issue was seen to affect their research productivity in terms of quality and types of research. However, most retained positive attitudes towards their research activity. In general, research was regarded as a

major part of their academic duties despite the fact that research did not fit comfortably into their role as lecturers.

In addition, most of the participating EFL lecturers perceived research as a desirable activity to gain professional and financial incentives, and ultimately to gain professional knowledge. These factors were seen as influential in motivating staff to conduct research while other factors, such as university policies and the demands for research productivity, were further important motivators. The EFL lecturers' perceptions also appeared to influence both quality and quantity of research that they conducted.

It was found that the majority of participating EFL lecturers could not produce research that met international standards. It is clear that they did not expect any outstanding outcomes from their research other than to meet the requirement of the university. In addition, their research projects were considered to be of poor quality as they did not spend much time and effort in the research process due to time constraints. As a result, EFL lecturers preferred to conduct survey research as a means of saving time rather than increasing their pedagogical knowledge. In addition, poor quality research had become a solution to their time constraints. It is likely that their research perceptions were limited as they did not conduct research in order to increase their knowledge, which also limited their chances to get involved in the wider research community.

The findings revealed that there were some tensions surrounding qualitative and quantitative research methods. It appears that qualitative research was regarded as the most appropriate method for English language teaching whereas the quantitative method was seen as significant to ensure the quality of research. The study also showed that most of the participants tended to conduct quantitative research if they wanted to increase their professional status.

Despite EFL lecturers' mixed perceptions about preferred types of research, it was found that there were some further tensions around conducting research that was eligible for university research funding. Even though participating EFL lecturers were allowed to conduct either individual or collaborative research projects, research funding was not granted in a way that met their current needs.

The findings also show that there was only a one-year research funding available at both universities as well as at the national level. This meant that EFL lecturers did not have

an opportunity to pursue their knowledge of their students' learning by conducting a longitudinal study. This situation seems to be due to the increasing demands for staff research productivity rather than research quality. In the Thai government's desire to increase international reputation of universities, the numbers of research and publications were the core criteria.

The findings revealed that participating EFL lecturers from both universities produced few research publications even though all Thai academic staff members were encouraged to publish their research findings. Their research activity did not include publications as the two participating universities did not require EFL lecturers to publish their research findings either at the national or international levels. This would indicate that EFL lecturers may not gain the academic status they desired since research publication is considered to be one of the core criteria. In addition, the lack of staff holding PhD qualifications in the EFL area of both universities was found to be one of the crucial factors in the lack of quality and professional knowledge of research.

Compared to other English-speaking countries, the research productivity of Thai EFL lecturers was low as they produced few international publications (see Chapter 7). Furthermore, Thailand lacked a national research assessment exercise such as REF (UK), ERA (Australia), or PBRF (New Zealand) or effective research policies to increase the research and publications of academic staff. This particularly affected those who worked in the field of English language teaching. It seems that both the Thai government and the universities place less emphasis on EFL research. At the same time, the low status of EFL research is seen to be a result of the global demands for research in the fields of science.

Conducting research in the EFL context is favoured by neither the universities nor the government in terms of the amount of research funding received and opportunities to apply for external research funding. However, Thai people still have a problem in using English, indicating that the current English language teaching needs to be improved. An emphasis on EFL research is needed to enhance English proficiency of Thai people to meet international standards. By conducting EFL research, lecturers may be able to find a way to improve their teaching practice and enhance students' achievement in order to communicate with other countries by using English effectively.

In particular, this research illustrates how EFL lecturers perceived research which constituted the research culture within their institutions. However, by studying the research culture of these EFL lecturers, it was found that the research culture was influenced not only by EFL lecturers' perspectives within the context, but also by external impacts. Therefore, a critical finding in this study was that the development of the EFL research culture was influenced by three broad aspects, including factors at the EFL lecturers' level; factors from the university policy and agenda; and factors from the global research trends. In particular, the latter appeared to influence the Thai government and Thai universities to direct their research mission. These factors suggest there is dynamic interaction between the internal and external perspectives of the EFL lecturers' involvement in the research process within Thai universities.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the small sample size in phases one to three, the findings from this study might not represent the voice of all EFL lecturers and their research culture within all Thai universities. In addition, as participants were from two comprehensive universities, they may not represent the diversity of EFL lecturers from other types of higher education institutions in Thailand. However, the study also included document analysis to broaden Thai and international university research cultures which added insights into the participants' research perspectives.

8.3 Implications and Recommendations for Practice and Policy

The current study reflects the realities of EFL lecturers' research involvement within Thai higher education institutions and their research culture, as well as a broad understanding of Thai and international university research cultures. The findings of this study have a number of important implications and recommendations for EFL lecturers, for teaching and learning in higher education, and for universities as well as policy makers that wish to enhance the research capacity of EFL lecturers. These implications and recommendations are outlined below.

Implications and Recommendations for EFL lecturers

It was found that EFL lecturers in this study encountered significant individual problems when they got involved in the research process. Limited research knowledge and a lack of awareness about the significance of publication were identified as obstacles to quality research. Even though participants considered themselves as lecturers who conduct research as part of their duty, and they had a strong belief in the research endeavour, they did not conduct quality in-depth research. This consequently limited their research knowledge, and also affected their beliefs about presenting and publishing their research findings. Furthermore, the current study found that participants felt they were not able to increase their research knowledge by conducting in-depth research due to their heavy teaching workload.

It is likely that most of the participants (except Vit) preferred to conduct research in their comfort zone. This means that they conducted research that they found easy and manageable to meet the requirement of the university. All participants perceived that they were able to conduct research without publications because their institution did not require academic staff to disseminate findings as part of their involvement in research. For example, the focus group participants believed that poor quality research was acceptable in their university as they were required to complete some research projects within a month. All of these issues encouraged them to continue to limit themselves to survey research and neglect the dissemination process.

EFL lecturers in the current study were also found to be less likely to take part in professional development activities specifically to increase their research skills. The study found that participating universities provided various types of support to enhance the research skills of academic staff. These included research mentors, research seminars, and research databases. However, it is not likely that the level of research productivity of EFL lecturers would be improved unless they changed their behaviour, for example consulting with research mentors. It has been shown that this change in behaviour requires a change in staff's beliefs (Pratt, et al., 1999; Williams, et al., 1993). However, it is important that EFL lecturers get involved in these research programmes provided by the universities to help increase their research knowledge and their interest in employing new methods in their research practice.

It appears that EFL lecturers were not able to disseminate their research findings due to their limited research knowledge. Furthermore, the participants (except Vit) did not have experience in using English for publications. Even though participants could be expected to have good English, being English lecturers, participants still did not expect their research to be published in international journals. At the same time, participants were not interested in publishing their research in any local journals. This also implies that these EFL lecturers were not aware of the significance of publications in the research process.

It is unlikely that the present situation will be improved if participants continue to conduct research that they feel is easy in terms of collecting data in ways that save time, and avoid undertaking in-depth research and disseminating their findings. The results of this study suggest that EFL lecturers were not encouraged to challenge themselves by publishing their research findings. Without publications, the status of EFL lecturers will not improve and they will not be able to be promoted as professionals and gain a higher income. Lecturers may need to become more aware about the value of research publication. However, this depends on their current working situation. As Duffee and Aikenhead (1992) as well as Sikes (1992) suggest, working conditions affect the way teachers act and what they are able to do, and their decisions about whether to do or not to do research. However, including research publication is a crucial component in their long-term research involvement.

As EFL lecturers, academic staff are expected to maintain and increase their own proficiency in the English language in order to provide first class instruction to their students while keeping up with a growing list of demands (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Peyton, 1997). However, EFL lecturers in this study believed they could not implement their research findings in their teaching practice, which implied that their research was not of good quality. McDonough and McDonough (1997) note that the researchers are required to produce good quality research by ensuring that their research findings can be used “either in the future in the immediate context, or applied to other contexts” since “research can put new perspectives on to old situations” (p. 67).

EFL lecturers’ research productivity could be said to benefit them professionally as well as their universities, but students were not seen to gain any advantages from research, particularly in terms of improving their English language skills. Even though all of the

focus group participants stated that their research focused on students' achievement, their research results were of poor quality and they responded they could not apply their research results to enhance teaching and learning practices. Their research was limited by time constraints which affected the overall process of their research.

It seems that there is a need to encourage EFL lecturers to conduct research that aims to advance the teaching and learning processes. The participating EFL lecturers also mentioned the importance of research that would improve their teaching practice. It therefore may be useful to introduce action research as an alternative choice to conduct with students in a university classroom context. Using action research as a method of investigating aspects of practice, EFL lecturers can bring their own story to life. Such a study can lead to open-ended outcomes. It also enables lecturers to engage more closely with their university classroom practice and enhances teaching staff's own insights into their teaching practice within their institutions (A. Burns, 1999). Students, at the same time, have more active roles in the research process. It is likely that employing action research into teaching practice can maximise the production of beneficial change within their context (Berg, 2009).

In light of the findings from the study, it is recommended that EFL lecturers:

- 1) build up research skills by attending research programmes and seminars provided by universities and external agents including overseas research programmes;
- 2) create a positive attitude to engage in research mentoring;
- 3) establish a research community within the department by sharing, discussing, and collaborating on research projects with other colleagues including those who successfully obtained external research funding;
- 4) advance their degrees (to have PhD) to be eligible to apply for external research funding;
- 5) conduct in-depth research;
- 6) try different types of research methods to increase research knowledge (get out of your comfort zone);
- 7) apply research findings to teaching practice by focusing on improving students' achievement;

- 8) encourage student participation in the research process through conducting action research;
- 9) increase their level of English proficiency, particularly English for publication; and
- 10) ensure that research conducted is published.

Implications and Recommendations for Universities

In the two participating universities, research was considered to be a core mission that could maintain and increase the reputation of the universities. There was a wide range of policies aiming to increase the academic staff research productivity. These included allocation of research duty, a reward system, and the establishment of the research centre. However, it appears that EFL lecturers lacked positive reinforcement from the universities.

It was found that EFL lecturers had to cope with time allocation for their three basic duties (teaching, research, and community service). It appears that EFL lecturers had less time to conduct research while they were assigned to spend most of their time teaching. It can be argued that time constraints, particularly for teaching and research, were affected by the university's policy framework. The research concurs with Holligan et al. (2011), in suggesting that a formal policy increases staff's motivation to balance teaching and research duties, especially when staff have only a short time to conduct research.

As the research capabilities of EFL lecturers were clearly limited by their teaching duty, increasing research time or reducing the teaching workload may increase research productivity. A study by Pratt et al. (1999) introduced a research day although the teaching workload was unchanged. They mentioned that participants showed positive research progress when they were allowed to have one day each week to devote to research (free of teaching commitments). However, increasing research time without reducing teaching loads may not respond to the needs of participating EFL lecturers and it may require changing the nature of academic staff workloads. It was found that EFL lecturers needed much lighter teaching loads. On the other hand, it may need a massive change in university policy and strategy to reduce teaching loads due to the lack of qualified EFL lecturers within the participating universities.

The results of this study suggest that each university had its own specific reward system for their academic staff who conducted research. It is interesting to note that Rak University rewarded their staff with a professional development programme rather than rewarding them with financial incentives like Jaidee University. It was also found that lecturers at Rak University received a professional reward when they published their research findings. On the other hand, the reward system at Jaidee University which provided financial incentives seemed to be an extremely successful method of motivating EFL lecturers to continue to conduct research. At the time of the study, all of the focus group participants at Jaidee University were conducting their second or third research projects and preparing to undertake their next research projects. However, this did not include a requirement for research publications. As most of the participants mentioned a need for financial incentives when producing research, combining two reward systems may be useful to increase not only the numbers of research projects but also the numbers of publications.

It is therefore recommended that the participating universities:

- 1) ensure manageable and equitable workloads for EFL lecturers. In the case of staff shortage, ensure that all EFL lecturers have an exact research timeframe apart from their teaching timeframe or establish a timeframe for particular research projects;
- 2) create a reward system that includes both financial and professional incentives;
- 3) encourage and support staff to have PhD in order to increase their research skills and be eligible to apply for external research funding;
- 4) ensure that the university research centre provides sufficient support for EFL lecturers, particularly support for disseminating research findings;
- 5) provide a research proposal writing workshop to assist EFL lecturers in applying for external research funding.
- 6) increase the performance of staff working in a university research centre and consider whether more research centre staff may be needed to communicate with people in the university research culture;
- 7) increase internal research funding by supporting those who want to conduct research with a large sample group;
- 8) remove university restrictions by supporting those who want to present their research findings abroad;

- 9) promote a research community of EFL lecturers within universities;
- 10) support professional networking between and among higher education institutions to encourage collaborative research; and
- 11) create an in-house journal and/or an international journal to support staff research publication.

Implications and Recommendations for Policy Makers

The findings from this study suggest that there is a lack of policy strategies in both participating universities in promoting EFL research productivity and publications at both local and international levels. This lack of strategic policies affected the level and quality of EFL research publications. These findings concur with the descriptive study by Putwattana (2002) who found that the research culture of faculty staff in four disciplines from 16 public universities did not support staff to conduct quality research. The current study also indicates that the lack of effective research strategies is due to the vision and mission of the two universities which focuses on promoting research in the fields of science and technology.

Professional development programmes specifically for EFL lecturers and an allocation system for research excellence should be promoted in order to support collaboration as well as competition between individual EFL staff and universities with regard to research and publications. These policies have been successful in other EFL contexts such as China and Japan as indicated in Chapter 4. In addition, policy makers may need to consider research and publications as one of the criteria to gain a tenured position. However, it is important that policy makers also provide sufficient time for lecturers and universities to adjust to these changes.

In addition, the study found that Thailand did not have a national research assessment exercise. The lack of a national research assessment exercise may have affected the level of research productivity, particularly the level of research publications at the international level. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Thai universities have never been listed in the top 500 universities in the Academic Ranking of World Universities, where international publication is one of core criteria (ARWU, 2011, 2012). It is interesting that academic staff, particularly in English-speaking countries where a national research

assessment exercise was promoted, produced high quality research outputs and gained a high international reputation. This implies that having a research assessment exercise can improve the quality and quantity of research since academic staff members are required to produce and publish research findings that meet international standards.

To promote EFL research and the research culture in Thailand and in other EFL contexts, policy makers need to introduce specific structures that enhance this. As Hazelkorn (2005) points out, a research culture is “the result of an on-going series of strategic policies and actions that seek to develop, underpin and build. It is not without its challenges especially in terms of institutions where research is relatively new or fragile” (p. 65). Therefore, it is recommended that policy makers in Thailand:

- 1) establish a system to make each individual lecturer accountable for publishing;
- 2) initiate research benefits to encourage and attract academic staff to conduct and publish research;
- 3) establish a human ethics committee to meet international standards; and
- 4) develop a Research Assessment Exercise for assessing the university research capacity and reviewing the quality and quantity of publications and presentations.

8.4 Suggestions for Future Research

The case study research approach was an effective methodology to assist the researcher to understand and capture the complexity of EFL lecturers and their context within natural settings as well as to gain better understanding of a broader context.

Understanding EFL lecturers' research perspectives was not limited only to the results of semi-structured interviews in both individual and focus group interviews but a wider perspective was also developed from the use of document analysis. Furthermore, a variety of research tools was developed to assist the interviews. For example, the use of vignettes helped further draw out the EFL lecturers' points of view. These helped increase understanding of how EFL lecturers got involved in the research process within their institution. The use of cards showing quantitative and qualitative features also helped the researcher to gain understanding of participants' background of research

knowledge. Past research investigating the EFL research culture relied on quantitative data which did not present the real voices of EFL lecturers; it is therefore recommended that through the use of a qualitative case study, data integration, and a variety of tools, the research culture of EFL lecturers can be better clarified. Future research may be needed to study a wider sample of EFL lecturers in order to verify the findings from this study and broaden understanding into the university research culture of EFL lecturers within a range of higher education institutions. Future study could involve more EFL lecturers from different types of universities. This would broaden discussion about EFL lecturers' research perspectives in relation to a research culture and increase the possibility of generalisation.

Future research focusing on EFL lecturers who have international research publications (like Vit) might be useful. In particular, it may reveal other key factors influencing EFL lecturers in conducting and disseminating research. A longitudinal study could also provide more information about the research culture of EFL lecturers in higher education institutions.

8.5 Final Comments

This study began with my curiosity to gain a better understanding of the EFL research culture in Thai universities. I believe that teaching can be informed by research and EFL lecturers can advance their academic status by providing good teaching and producing good quality research. In this sense, teaching and research are of equal merit. While research plays a major role in Thai higher education, the term 'research culture' is seen to be a new aspect in the EFL context within Thai universities. This study therefore has helped me to gain in-depth insights into how to enhance the Thai EFL university research culture as well as broadening my understanding of global research trends and how these factors affect research in the area of English language teaching.

This study has shown that, as occurs globally, research appears to be valued over teaching (and of course to any other duties) in higher education institutions. Thai EFL lecturers face many pressures when they get involved in the research process, especially if the research environment appears to limit their research capacity. An understanding of the university research culture may provide new ways to enhance the research capacity

of the EFL lecturers while the EFL lecturers may become more aware of how research they conduct can bring either success or failure in their professional lives and also make a difference to EFL learners, the institution's quality as well as the status of the Thai economy in the global context.

It is clear that the EFL research culture is complex and involves many more aspects than I expected. As an EFL lecturer, I have gained a greater awareness of the research process and its quality. Each unique case involved in the study reminds me that research should be conducted not only to improve teaching quality, but also to enhance the university reputation as well as meeting the national and international standards. Most importantly, EFL lecturers should continue learning, whether by conducting research or studying other sources of knowledge to advance their understanding of English language teaching. Education is a lifelong process, as His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand stated in a royal address on 20 April in 1978:

Even those with doctoral degrees have to study further.

Education is endless.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Interview Questions (Phase One)

Could you please tell me about your teaching background?

- How long have you been teaching?
- How much teaching workload do you have per week?
- What are your academic duties and responsibilities?
- Are there any community service duties and what do you do?

Could you please tell me about your first experience about doing research?

- When did you conduct that research?
- What was your goal in conducting that research?
- What kind of research and its purpose did you conduct?
- How did you report the findings?
- How did you feel about your first research and also your role as researcher?
- What do you think are the most important things in the area of responsibility as a teacher researcher?

Appendix 2**A Sheet of 15 Activities Related to Beliefs**

Question: Which things are the most important for your work as a teacher/a researcher?
(Please rank five important things, with 1 is being most important)

List	Teacher	Researcher
1. Encouraging positive classroom environments		
2. Doing research		
3. Developing and using my own material		
4. Assigning appropriate activities for students		
5. Teaching activities		
6. Planning for class i.e. books, lesson plan, tests		
7. Pursuing topics in depth		
8. Attending professional training or seminars		
9. Using a required text		
10. Selecting and revising materials		
11. Sharing and cooperating with other teachers and colleagues		
12. Receiving support from the university i.e. to develop new materials, to conduct research or other extra works		
13. Testing students' competencies		
14. Grading students' work		
15. Developing curricula or tests		

Story 1: Lawan

Lawan first conducted research when her colleagues asked her to join a project. Lawan saw that it would be easy for her to join that project rather than conducting research by herself because she did not have any experience in doing research. By joining in the project, she noticed that the research process was complicated and the researcher's job was to disseminate the finding. However, the joint project which took two years satisfied the research committee at her university. Lawan decided to undertake an individual project. She applied for research funding from the university and began to conduct research with her students from one class. Conducting her own project, Lawan could manage her time with the teaching load. The other four classes, which she was responsible for, were also taught based on the research process similar to the group of students chosen in the research. By doing this, she could save time in preparing the class lesson. She integrated her teaching with research as she felt they could improve her teaching and enhance the students' achievement.

ลาวัลย์เริ่มต้นทำงานวิจัยครั้งแรกเมื่อเพื่อนร่วมงานชวนให้เข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย ลาวัลย์พบว่าการทำงานวิจัยแบบกลุ่มช่วยให้เชื่อเข้าใจระบบการทำงานวิจัยซึ่งเป็นการทำงานที่ซับซ้อนและหน้าที่ของนักวิจัยคือต้องเผยแพร่ผลการวิจัย การร่วมทำงานวิจัยครั้งนั้นประสบความสำเร็จด้วยดี โดยใช้ระยะเวลาดำเนินการประมาณสองปี ลาวัลย์จึงตัดสินใจทำการวิจัยเดี่ยวในชั้นเรียน โดยขอรับทุนช่วยวิจัยจากทางมหาวิทยาลัย ถึงแม้ว่าลาวัลย์เลือกกลุ่มตัวอย่างเพียงแค่ห้องเดียวจากจำนวนห้องเดียวในเรียน แต่เชื่อได้ปรับใช้กระบวนการในการวิจัยควบคู่ไปกับการทำสอนให้แก่นักศึกษาทั้งสี่ห้องเรียน ซึ่งการทำซ้ำนี้ช่วยให้ลาวัลย์สามารถจัดการเวลาในการสอนได้ดีขึ้น อีกทั้งยังช่วยประหยัดเวลาในการเตรียมการสอน ซึ่งลาวัลย์เชื่อว่าการทำงานวิจัยควบคู่ไปกับการสอนช่วยพัฒนาการสอน และส่งเสริมทักษะให้แก่นักเรียน

Story 2: Sasi

Sasi was a teacher researcher conducting research for the university and the research department. She was an experienced lecturer who conducted research at a university level and a national level. As she had been working for a research department in that university, Sasi needed to conduct research at least one project per academic year. Consequently, she completed both individual projects and joint projects in both qualitative and quantitative designs. Sasi felt research was equally significant as teaching. Sasi conducted research focusing on students' problems. She believed that teachers should conduct research as a part of their job. She also encouraged new staff to do research. Sometimes, she invited other teachers to observe her class as she felt it would help her to improve her teaching. Sasi was always energetic and preferred to conduct research. As an experienced lecturer, Sasi could manage her time in conducting research effectively.

ศศิที่ทำการสอนควบคู่ไปกับการเป็นนักวิจัยในศูนย์วิจัยของมหาวิทยาลัย ในแต่ละปีศศิจะทำงานวิจัยอย่างน้อยหนึ่งเรื่องซึ่งถือเป็นข้อกำหนดของศูนย์วิจัย ศศิถือเป็นผู้เชี่ยวชาญทั้งทางด้านการสอนและงานวิจัยเชิงปริมาณและเชิงคุณภาพซึ่งทำให้ในระดับมหาวิทยาลัยและระดับชาติ ศศิเชื่อว่างานสอนและงานวิจัยนั้นมีความสำคัญเท่าเทียมกัน และอาจารย์ควรทำงานวิจัยควบคู่ไปกับการสอน ศศิจะสนับสนุนาอาจารย์รุ่นใหม่ให้ทำวิจัย บางครั้ง教授จะเชิญอาจารย์ให้เข้ามาสังเกตการณ์สอนในชั้นเรียนเพื่อพัฒนาการสอนของตนเอง ศศิถือเป็นอาจารย์ที่กระตือรือร้นและเชี่ยวชาญในการทำงานวิจัยซึ่งทำให้สามารถจัดการงานสอนควบคู่ไปกับการทำงานวิจัยได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ

Story 3: Nat

Four years ago, Nat was a new teacher and was assigned to teach four classes for the first semester. However, Nat found half of students from one class failed the exam. Nat thought there was something wrong about her teaching. She decided to do need analysis of all her classes. At the beginning of the second semester, Nat began to conduct research which was designed based on the need analysis. Two classes out of four were chosen for this research. She allowed her research to be flexible as much as possible. She also developed classroom materials to suit students' needs in accordance with improving her teaching techniques to solve students' problems throughout the process. At the end of the second semester, she found that students' English proficiency met the criteria. Nat believed that doing research at the university classroom level could help her students because it was designed to solve a particular problem. Nat continued to conduct this type of research as she felt it was useful and could promote her professional development. Therefore, she was confident to conduct research and eager to disseminate to others.

ณัฐ ได้เข้าบรรจุเป็นอาจารย์มีอีปีที่แล้ว โดยรับผิดชอบงานสอนนักศึกษารวมทั้งหมวดสื่อห้องเรียน อย่างไรก็ตาม นักศึกษาจำนวนครึ่งหนึ่งสอบตกในภาคการศึกษาแรก ณัฐจึงตัดสินใจทำการวิจัยในภาคการศึกษาที่สองโดย สอนถามความคิดเห็นและความต้องการในการปรับปรุงการเรียนจากนักศึกษาในภาคการศึกษาที่หนึ่งนำมา ประกอบการออกแบบงานวิจัย กลุ่มตัวอย่างในงานวิจัยคือนักศึกษากลุ่มเดิมจากสองห้องเรียน นอกจากนี้ณัฐยังได้ ออกแบบบัญชีของการเรียนให้สอดคล้องกับความต้องการของนักศึกษา รวมทั้งปรับปรุงการสอนของตนเอง โดยการทำ วิจัยครั้งนี้พบว่า นักศึกษารามารถสอบผ่านตามเกณฑ์ที่ได้กำหนดไว้ ณัฐเชื่อว่า การทำวิจัยในชั้นเรียนนั้นช่วย แก้ปัญหาในการเรียนของนักศึกษาได้ ณัฐเลือกทำงานวิจัยในชั้นเรียนเรื่อยมา ซึ่งณัฐเห็นว่า มีประโยชน์และช่วย พัฒนาศักยภาพของตนเอง โดยในปัจจุบันณัฐมีความมั่นใจในการทำงานวิจัยและพร้อมที่จะเผยแพร่ผลงานวิจัยให้แก่ ผู้ที่สนใจ

Story 4: Panawan

Panawan was an English lecturers working at a public university for seven years. At first, she conducted research as it was a university requirement. She chose to conduct experimental research at a classroom level and applied for a university research funding. Her first research was successful and the finding matched the research hypothesis. Panawan felt that conducting research would enhance her capacity as a teacher and also a researcher. She completed three individual research projects which the third project was an important one. By submitting the third research project, she met the university requirement and qualified as an assistant professor. She continued to conduct research in the following year and applied for research funding from the university. This time, she undertook a collaborative research which was supported by the group of lecturers from the same university. The large amount of funding was granted and other staff agreed to collaborate in this research. She planned to disseminate research findings through the university website and a local journal.

พนาวนสอนภาษาอังกฤษในมหาวิทยาลัยรัฐมาเจ็ดปี เธอทำงานวิจัยควบคู่ไปกับการสอนเพื่อให้ผ่านเกณฑ์ที่มหาวิทยาลัยวางไว้ โดยงานวิจัยครั้งแรกนั้นเป็นงานวิจัยเชิงทดลองซึ่งได้รับเงินสนับสนุนในการทำงานวิจัยจากทางมหาวิทยาลัย งานวิจัยในครั้งนั้นประสบผลสำเร็จด้วยดี พนาวนเชื่อว่าการทำงานวิจัยช่วยส่งเสริมศักยภาพในการเป็นครูนักวิจัย พนาวนได้เลื่อนขึ้นเป็นผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์จากผลการทำงานวิจัยอย่างต่อเนื่อง ซึ่งงานวิจัยครั้งล่าสุดพนาวนเลือกทำงานวิจัยกลุ่มร่วมกับอาจารย์ในสถาบันเดียวกันโดยได้รับเงินสนับสนุนจำนวนมากจากมหาวิทยาลัย ทั้งนี้ พนาวนได้วางแผนที่จะเผยแพร่ผลงานวิจัยสู่สาธารณะผ่านทางเว็บไซต์มหาวิทยาลัยและวารสารท้องถิ่น

Story 5: Sanit

Sanit, a hard-working lecturer, had an average of teaching workload between 20-24 hours per week. She had an experience in conducting a classroom research individually and within a group. Sanit preferred to conduct an experimental research which she could follow the research process and could prepare materials before the time the research was undertaken. Even though Sanit could prepare materials used in research, she found that it was difficult to conduct research effectively due to her heavy teaching workload. She did not have enough time to revise and write the report of her research. In addition, she must complete the research process and submit its report to the university on schedule. She sometimes wanted to stop conducting research and focused only on teaching. However, research was important as it was a part of academic promotion. Sanit believed research was a tool for teaching but admitted that it was hard to conduct an effective research.

-sanit มีภาระงานสอนเฉลี่ย 20-24 ชั่วโมงต่อสัปดาห์ และทำงานสอนควบคู่ไปกับงานวิจัยทั้งแบบเดี่ยวและแบบกลุ่ม โดย sanit เลือกที่จะทำงานวิจัยในรูปแบบการทดลองซึ่งช่วยให้เธอสามารถจัดเตรียมการสอนได้ในระยะเวลาที่กำหนด เนื่องจากภาระงานสอนที่ค่อนข้างมาก sanit มักจะประสบปัญหารခ่องเวลาในการเขียนรายงานผลงานวิจัยซึ่งมีไม่เพียงพอ โดยการทำางานวิจัยนั้นจะต้องทำให้เสร็จสิ้นตามแผนงานที่กำหนดตามที่ได้ยื่นต่อมหาวิทยาลัย มีหลายครั้งที่ sanit ต้องการเลิกทำงานวิจัยและทุ่มให้กับการสอนเพียงอย่างเดียว อย่างไรก็ตาม sanit ไม่สามารถหลีกเลี่ยงการทำางานวิจัยได้ เพราะมหาวิทยาลัยที่เรอทำงานอยู่นั้นได้กำหนดให้อาจารย์ทุกคนทำงานวิจัยอย่างต่อเนื่อง โดยถือเป็นเกณฑ์ในการเลื่อนขั้นตำแหน่ง เมื่อว่า sanit มองว่าการทำงานวิจัยถือเป็นเครื่องมือหนึ่งที่ช่วยพัฒนาการเรียนการสอน แต่ด้วยภาระงานสอนที่มากนั้นทำให้ยากต่อการพัฒนางานวิจัยให้มีประสิทธิภาพ

Story 6: Tasana

Tasana, a young university lecturer, made a decision to conduct research when she attended the seminar about classroom research. She applied for research funding from her university. Tasana chose to conduct action research and planned to submit the research report to the university within a year. The research participants were students from English department. She carefully designed the research process and prepared the materials which were appropriate to students' needs. Tasana then undertook research and strictly followed the plan. During the process, she asked students to evaluate research tools and she found that most of students did not like reading materials which she designed for this group of students. However, she did not change anything and ignored this problem because she thought those materials were suitable for students' achievement. Tasana later disseminated her finding and planned to conduct the next research using the same tools, particularly reading materials that she developed.

ทัศนาเริ่มทำงานวิจัยครั้งแรกภายหลังจากที่เข้ารับการอบรมเรื่องการทำวิจัยในชั้นเรียน เชอได้รับทุนสนับสนุนการทำวิจัยจากมหาวิทยาลัย ทัศนาเลือกทำการวิจัยเชิงปฏิบัติการ โดยวางแผนที่จะเสริมสร้างกระบวนการวิจัยพร้อมทั้งส่งรายงานการวิจัยภายในหนึ่งปี ทัศนาออกแบบกระบวนการวิจัยพร้อมทั้งพัฒนาเครื่องมือให้ตรงกับความต้องการของนักศึกษาภาควิชาภาษาอังกฤษซึ่งเป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่าง ทัศนาดำเนินการวิจัยอย่างเคร่งครัด พร้อมทั้งให้นักศึกษาประเมินเครื่องมือในการวิจัยควบคู่กัน ซึ่งจากการประเมินพบว่า�ักศึกษามีไม่ชอบเอกสารประกอบการอ่าน อ่านไร้ความตื่นเต้น ทัศนาไม่ได้ปรับปรุงเอกสารประกอบการอ่านดังกล่าว เนื่องจากเชอเห็นว่าเหมาะสมสมต่อนักศึกษา และยังคงให้นักศึกษาใช้อเอกสารดังกล่าว ทัศนาเผยแพร่วิจัยเมื่อเสร็จสิ้น พร้อมทั้งวางแผนดำเนินงานวิจัยครั้งต่อไปโดยใช้เครื่องมือเดิมซึ่งรวมถึงเอกสารประกอบการอ่านที่เชอพัฒนาขึ้นด้วย

Appendix 4**Interview Questions (Phase Two and Phase Three)**

- What your experience spent on research?
- What kinds of research support are available at your institution? (Do you still feel that way?)
- How could you define research?
- What type of research do you prefer to conduct & why? (Do you still feel that way?)
- Are there any challenges in conducting research?/ How do you overcome that challenges?
- Are there any rewards that influence you in conducting research?
- What are your expectations in doing research?
- Do you feel as research is part of your job or else?
- To what extent does the research benefits your capacity, your students, and your institution?
- What was your motivation for becoming a teacher researcher?/ and to continue to do research?
- How do you see your role as a teacher researcher?
- How does research fit into your role at the university?
- How do you see yourself in the next 15 years?
- Are there any factors influencing teacher researchers' motivation? e.g. from peers

Appendix 5

Cards Showing Qualitative and Quantitative Features

Purpose	Researcher role	Type of analysis
To provide answer to empirical questions	The researchers distance themselves from the people and social phenomenon. They are removed from the data.	Numerical estimation including statistical techniques Technology as instrument
To generate measures that are reliable, generalisable, and unbiased		
Looks for correlational relationships or other statistically significant relationship		
Purpose	Researcher role	Type of analysis
To elucidate various viewpoints on important issues	The researchers immerse themselves in a culture They are close to the data	Narrative description Constant comparison Self as instrument
To elicit an insider's view from the group understanding	Telephone interview	Taking life histories
Attempts to understand processes; looks at who, what, why, how	Questionnaire	Interview key person
	Multiple scales	Analysing existing documents
	Use high-tech instruments	Other

Types of Research

Action Research

Not concerned with generalizations to other settings
Focus on information to change conditions in a particular situation (may use all the above methods)

Causal Comparative Research

Intended to establish cause and effect but cannot assign subjects to treatment/control
Limited interpretations (could be common cause for both cause and effect...stress causes smoking and cancer)
Used for identifying possible causes; similar to correlation

Correlational Research

Looks at existing relationships between 2 or more variables to make better predictions

Ethnographic research

In depth research to answer WHY questions
Some is historical (biography, phenomenology, case study, grounded theory)

Experimental

Researcher tries different treatments (*independent variable*) to see their effects (*dependent variable*)
In simple experiments compare 2 methods and try to control all *extraneous variables* that might affect outcome
Need control over assignment to treatment and control groups (to make sure they are equivalent)

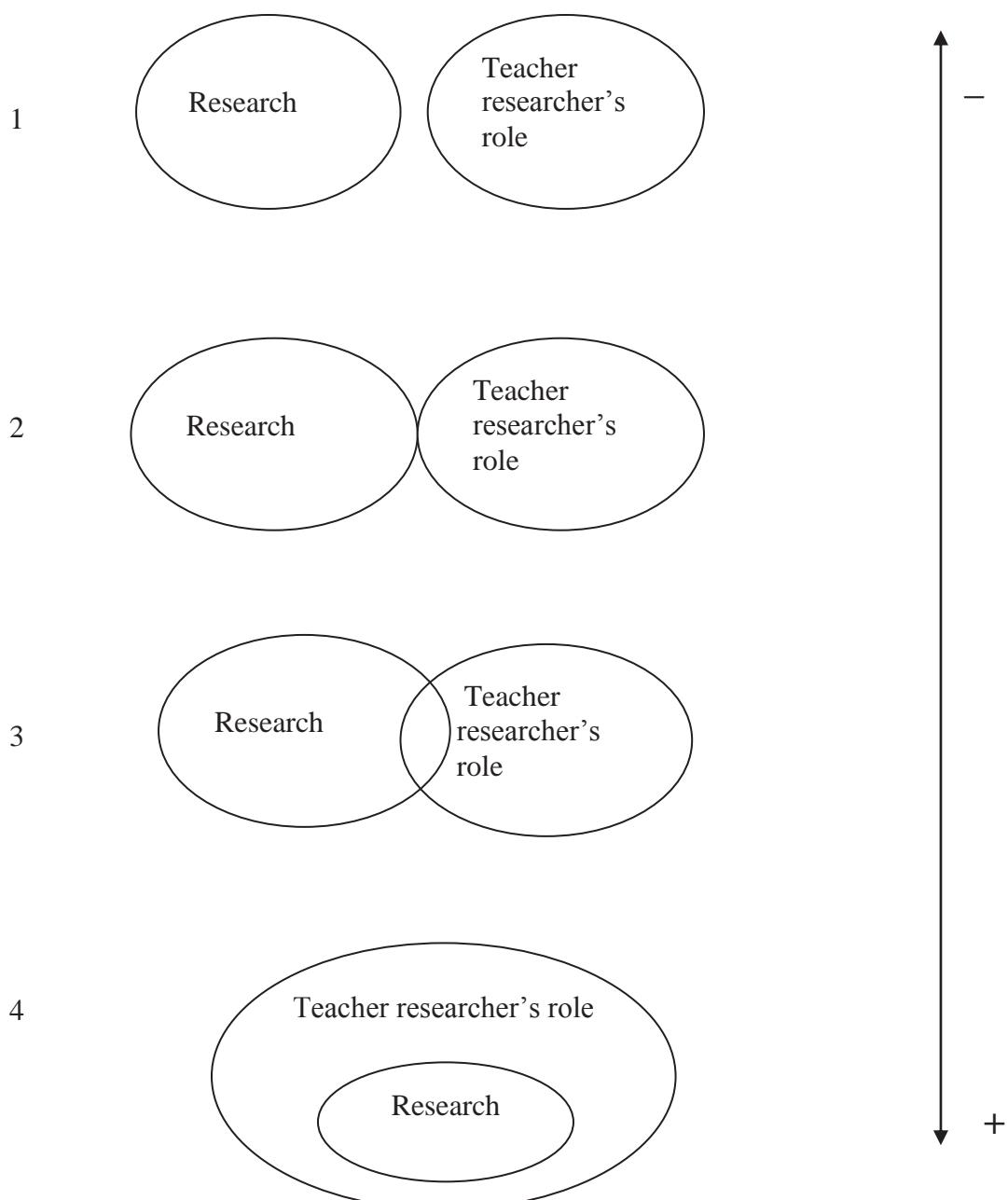
Historical Research

Study past, often using existing documents, to reconstruct what happened
Establishing truth of documents is essential

Survey Research

Determine/describe characteristics of a group
Descriptive survey in writing or by interview
Provides lots of information from large samples
Three main problems: clarity of questions, honesty of respondents, return rates

Other ex. Case study, mixed-method

Appendix 7**A Diagram of a Continuum of Feelings towards Teaching and Research**



SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand
T 64 6 356 9059
F 64 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz

Dear President,

My name is Parussaya Kiatkheeree. I am studying for a PhD (Education) at Massey University, New Zealand. **I am writing to ask you for your approval to carry out my research in the English Department.** The title of my research project is “The Research Culture in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Thailand Classroom Context”. The aim of my study is to investigate the research culture in the EFL classroom context in Thailand. Fifteen teachers would be involved in this study. I would be working with the participating teachers in the following ways:

Project Procedures

The research will be carried out in three phases involving individual interviews and focus groups. **I would like to invite your staff to participate in the first and second phases which involve individual interviews.** This will take about one hour of participants’ time.

Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Participants will have the opportunity to check the transcripts.

All data generated will be securely stored for a period of five years, and it will then be destroyed.

Participant’s Rights

Participants would have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study up until one week after transcripts have been returned to the researcher;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that their names will not be used unless they give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

Project Contacts

If you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact:

The researcher: Parussaya Kiatkheeree

(Ph. +642102528041 (NZ), +66897572993 (Thailand), Email parussaya@yahoo.com)

or

Chief Supervisor: Dr. Penny Haworth at Massey University College of Education, Palmerston North

(Ph. +64 6 356 9099 extn 8869, Email P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz)

Co-Supervisor: Dr. Kathleen Vossler at Massey University College of Education, Palmerston North

(Ph. +64 6 356 9099 extn 8823, Email K.R.Vossler@massey.ac.nz)

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 09/62. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x 6929, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

If you wish for the English Department to participate in this study, please sign and return the attached Consent Form.

Sincerely yours,
Parussaya Kiatkheeree



Appendix 8B**Institution Consent Form****Massey University**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Te Kupenga o Te MataurangaSCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand
T 64 6 356 9059
F 64 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz**The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context****INSTITUTION CONSENT FORM**

I have read the Letter Requesting Access to an Institution and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I give consent to this research to be carried out at English Department.

Signature:**Date:****Full Name - printed**

Appendix 8C Participant Information Sheet



SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand
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F 64 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz

Participant Information Sheet (Phase One) (Individual)

Project Title: **The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context**

My name is Parussaya Kiatkheeree. I am a PhD student at Massey University. I would like to invite you to take part in phase one of my study on “The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context”. This study is supervised by Dr. Penny Haworth (Senior Lecturer, Massey University College of Education), and Dr. Kathleen Vossler (Academic Director, Massey University College of Education).

The aim of this study is to investigate the research culture in the EFL university classroom context in Thailand. The main research question is “What are the beliefs of teachers about doing research?” The target group is Thai teacher researchers teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from two universities.

Project Procedures

The study will be carried out in three phases involving individual interviews and focus groups. The first phase utilises individual interviews with fifteen participants from the same university. The second phase will be conducted with four participants from phase one who have a range of ideas about conducting research. The last phase includes focus groups and will be conducted with six participants at another university. **You are being invited to participate in the Phase One individual interviews.**

The interviews will take place in a private space at the university where you work and will be conducted out of work time. A time that is mutually convenient for each participant and the researcher will be negotiated.

Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Participants will have the opportunity to check the transcripts.

The total time for participation in phase one is not expected to exceed two hours. (The individual interview will take up to one hour. The expected time for reading and checking the transcripts is no more than one hour, but you may take a longer or shorter time if you wish).

Following completion of the thesis, findings from the study may be presented at conferences and/or in academic publications.



Participants' identities will remain confidential to the researcher. All data will be coded during the analysis and pseudonyms will be used in writing up the final report.

Every care will be taken to protect the identity of the participating institutions and teachers in reports, presentations and publications on the study. However, it is possible that others within similar educational contexts may be able to identify participants.

All data generated will be securely stored for a period of five years, and it will then be destroyed.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study up until one week after transcripts have been returned to the researcher;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded (A summary will be sent by e-mail to all participants).

Project Contacts

If you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact:

The researcher: Parussaya Kiatkheeree

(Ph. +642102528041 (NZ), +66897572993 (Thailand), Email parussaya@yahoo.com)

or

Chief Supervisor: Dr. Penny Haworth at Massey University College of Education, Palmerston North

(Ph. +64 6 356 9099 extn 8869, Email P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz)

Co-Supervisor: Dr. Kathleen Vossler at Massey University College of Education, Palmerston North

(Ph. +64 6 356 9099 extn 8823, Email K.R.Vossler@massey.ac.nz)

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 09/62. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x 6929, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

If you agree to participate in this study, please sign the attached Consent Form and return it in a stamped addressed envelope provided within seven days.

Thank you

Parussaya Kiatkheeree



Appendix 8D**Participant Consent Form**

SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand
T 64 6 356 9099
F 64 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz

The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context**PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (Phase One) - INDIVIDUAL**

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

I agree to the interview being audio taped.

I would like to have a summary of the findings from the research. Yes/ No

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

.....

If you wish to receive a summary of the study after it is completed, please provide your email address below.

E-mail address

.....

If you agree to participate in this study, please return the signed Consent Form in a stamped addressed envelope provided within seven days.



**Focus Group Participant Information Sheet****Project Title:****The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context**

My name is Parussaya Kiatkheeree. I am a PhD student at Massey University. I would like to invite you to take part in the final phase of my study on “The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context”. This study is supervised by Dr. Penny Haworth (Senior Lecturer, Massey University College of Education), and Dr. Kathleen Vossler (Academic Director, Massey University College of Education).

The aim of this study is to investigate the research culture in the EFL university classroom context in Thailand. The main research question is “What are the beliefs of teachers about doing research?” The target group is Thai teacher researchers teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from two universities.

Project Procedures

The study will be carried out in three phases. Phase one and two involved individual interviews. **You are being invited to participate in the last phase which involves one focus group.** The total time anticipated for participation in this phase is two hours. (The focus group will take up to one hour. The expected time for reading the transcripts should be no more than one hour, but you may of course take a shorter or longer time if you wish).

The focus groups will take place in a private space within the university where you work and will be conducted out of work time in the semester break.

The researcher will use both audio recording and note taking for the focus groups. The focus group participants’ ideas will also be summarised on a large sheet of paper during the discussions.

Focus groups will be audio recorded and transcribed. Participants will have the opportunity to check and amend any of their own words in the transcripts.

Following completion of the thesis, findings from the study may be presented at conferences and/or in academic publications.



Individual participants involved in focus groups will not be identified. Every care will be taken to protect the identity of the participating institutions and teachers in reports, presentations and publications on the study. However, it is possible that others within similar educational contexts may be able to identify participants.

All data generated will be securely stored for a period of five years, and it will then be destroyed.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study up until one week after transcripts have been returned to the researcher;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded (A summary will be sent by post to all participants).

Project Contacts

If you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact:

The researcher: Parussaya Kiatkheeree

(Ph. +642102528041 (NZ), +66897572993 (Thailand), Email parussaya@yahoo.com)

or

Chief Supervisor: Dr. Penny Haworth at Massey University College of Education, Palmerston North

(Ph. +64 6 356 9099 extn 8869, Email P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz)

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(Ph. +64 6 356 9099 extn 8823, Email K.R.Vossler@massey.ac.nz)

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 09/62. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x 6929, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

If you agree to participate in this study, please sign the attached Consent Form.

Thank you

Parussaya Kiatkheeree





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The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

I agree not to disclose anything discussed in the Focus Group.

I would like to have a summary of the findings from the research. Yes/ No

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

.....

.....

If you wish to receive a summary of the study after it is completed, please provide your email address below.

E-mail address

.....

If you agree to participate in this study, please return the signed Consent Form in a stamped addressed envelope provided within seven days.



Appendix 8G**Authority for the Release of Transcripts**

SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North 4442
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T 64 6 356 9099
F 64 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz

The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context**AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS**

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature:**Date:****Full Name - printed**

**Massey University**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Te Kupenga o Te MataurangaSCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand
T 64 6 356 9059
F 64 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz**The Research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context****FOCUS GROUP CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

I (Full Name - printed)

agree to keep confidential all information concerning the project **"The research Culture in an EFL Thailand Classroom Context"**.

I will not retain or copy any information involving the project.

Signature:**Date:**

.....

