



**Promoting Interaction:  
English Language Education and Cultural  
Exchange Program for Rural School  
Children in Thailand**



*Alyssa Hargraves, Jesse Herrera, Gabriella Serrati, Connie Tran, Thomas Watson*



February 29, 2008

# Worcester Polytechnic Institute Promoting Interaction: English Language Education and Cultural Exchange Program for Rural School Children in Thailand

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Alyssa Hargraves, Jesse Herrera, Gabriella Serrati, Connie Tran, Thomas Watson

---

This report represents the work of one or more WPI undergraduate students submitted to the faculty as evidence of completion of a degree requirement. WPI routinely publishes these reports on its web site without editorial or peer review

---

## **ABSTRACT**

The Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, an agency under Thailand's Bureau of the Royal Household, aims to improve children's living standards through educational programs. The goal of this project, sponsored by the Office, was to develop, test, evaluate, and recommend new and sustainable teaching techniques to improve the educational impact of the existing English as a Foreign Language curriculum in rural Thailand. We implemented and evaluated three programs: interactive teaching techniques for the classroom, a cultural exchange fair, and teacher training. We then provided recommendations to facilitate the sustainability and transferability of the programs.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to this report:

Office of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, Bureau of the Royal Household, Suan Chitralada, Bangkok, Thailand for sponsoring our project

Chulalongkorn University for supplying us with the necessary materials and contacts to perform our project

Our liaisons for providing the necessary resources for our project's completion

Aphisit Phungporn

Assistant Director, Office of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects

Assistant Professor M.L. Siripastr Jayanta

Department of Chemistry, Chulalongkorn University

Associate Professor Supawan Tantayanon

Department of Chemistry, Chulalongkorn University

Prapatsorn Kosulwat for the facilitation of communication between the Office and Sakon Nakhon

Aacaan Srisawhang Kumsangaim for facilitating our field work

Teachers of Phon Pang School for working with us during our fieldwork

Junjiraporn Tuninard and her students for their help throughout our Cultural Exchange Fair

Professors Demetry, Krueger, Robertson, and Vaz for all of their guidance

Christine Drew, Manager of Instruction and Outreach at Library Services, for her helpful information on researching skills

We could not have completed our report without your help. Thank you!

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globalization has increased the interdependence of regions around the world. However, while opportunities offered by globalization can be large, some people do not benefit from globalization, and in some cases, are harmed by it. In Thailand in particular, globalization has resulted in a division of wealth in which the poorer classes, generally found in the rural regions, are being left behind (Krongkaew et al., 2006). Sakon Nakhon province is an example of such a region. While some other areas of Thailand are making huge leaps in technology and infrastructure, this poorer area cannot afford such luxuries. The result is a less developed region in which people have fewer opportunities available and a lower quality of life.

The Thai government and various non-governmental organizations have made efforts to address the development of Thailand's poor regions through English language education. As English emerges as the global language, English fluency is becoming increasingly important. With this in mind, the Thai government has introduced English education into the national curriculum (Mackenzie, 2007). However, the quality and effectiveness of the English programs vary by region.

The Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects contributes to poverty eradication, education, and English education improvement in Thailand's rural regions. One of the Princess's Office's main objectives is to empower and improve children's standard of living through educational programs (Office of HRH, 2003). More specifically, the Princess's Office aims to improve the effectiveness of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum in Thailand's rural areas. Through increased English fluency, the Princess's Office hopes to bring new opportunities to the rural regions that may ultimately improve the people's standard of living.

### Our Goal

Through working with The Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, we aimed to improve the existing EFL curriculum to create a more effective program for the impoverished region of Sakon Nakhon. More specifically, we wished to **develop, test, evaluate, and recommend new and sustainable teaching techniques to improve the existing English as a foreign language curriculum in rural Thailand**. To accomplish these goals, we followed three objectives:

- Determine criteria for activities for students' in-classroom lessons, for a cultural exchange fair, and the teacher training programs at Phon Pang School, in the Kusuman District of Sakon Nakhon
- Select, implement, evaluate, and refine activities for the lessons, exchange fair, and for teacher training programs.
- Promote the sustainability of the program and devise a means of replicating the activities in other rural schools in Thailand.

## **Methodology**

First, we determined criteria to select the activities for three programs: in class lessons, a cultural fair, and teacher training. To accomplish this objective, we examined the role English plays in the lives of the students, the existing English as a Foreign Language curriculum and resources, and recommendations from experts and journals. Ultimately, we decided that the activities in the classroom, the cultural exchange fair, and the teacher training programs should follow certain criteria.

Using the criteria, we selected and implemented interactive learning activities. We then observed these activities to note successes and failures. When possible, we refined and retested them.

Lastly, we worked to maintain the sustainability and replicability of the programs. To accomplish this, we met daily with the teachers of Phon Pang to talk about interactive activities and how to find ideas for new ones. These activities are an alternative to traditional teaching methodologies and give students more practice and keep them engaged. We also talked to the teachers about continuing weekly meetings. We hope that the teachers will be able to meet on their own to share ideas on new interactive lessons. Additionally, we wrote a manual including a description of the classroom activities, teacher training advice, and self-research recommendations for teachers. We hope to share this manual with other schools in rural Thailand with the hope that the English program can be improved in regions of Thailand similar to Sakon Nakhon.

## **Findings**

Through implementing our interactive classroom activities, cultural exchange fair, and teacher training program, we came to several conclusions. The findings that we came up with can be divided into three main sections: needs assessment and development of criteria for choosing interactive activities and teacher training, the evaluation of activities, and the planning for continuation and extension of interactive activities and teacher training to other schools in rural Thailand.

### ***Needs Assessment and Development of Criteria for Choosing Interactive Activities and Teacher Training***

To develop appropriate criteria for the in-class activities, cultural fair, and teacher training, we began by assessing the need for English education and the current English as a Foreign Language curriculum at Phon Pang School. In doing so, we found many significant pieces of information:

The material in the textbooks seemed too advanced for the English skill level of the students.

The school did not provide students with English instruction outside of the classroom in the form of study groups or extrahelp.

Teachers and students had difficulty with pronunciation of specific English sounds.

Teachers and students lacked confidence in speaking English because it is a very difficult language and they are not experts.  
Few students at Phon Pang School had English textbooks for English classes.  
English lessons in the existing English program used few materials.  
Students seemed more motivated to study subjects other than English.

### *Criteria for Programs*

From our assessment, we developed criteria for selecting classroom interactive activities, cultural fair interactive activities, and the teacher training programs. The purpose was to choose activities that fit the needs of the students and the teachers.

#### *Criteria for Classroom Activities*

Based on our understanding of the classroom resources, the difficulties with motivation, and the English fluency of students and teachers, we developed four criteria for selecting classroom activities that would meet the needs of the students and teachers. The activities we selected had to:

- Require little to no extra materials
- Increase motivation
- Be simple to understand and teach for teachers and students
- Be adaptable to different lesson materials, age groups, and English fluency levels

#### *Criteria for Cultural Exchange Activities*

Based on our assessment of the role of English in the lives of students and the existing program, as well as assessment of the importance of culture exchange education, we were able to develop criteria for selecting interactive activities for the cultural exchange fair.

1. Age appropriateness
2. Motivational Impact
3. Educational value
4. Ease of Use

#### *Criteria for Teacher Training Program*

From assessing the existing program at Phon Pang School, we found that teachers wanted to increase their English fluency and learn about teaching methodologies that would increase student motivation in English studies. With these findings, we decided our Teacher Training activities should:

1. Increase English fluency
2. Build confidence in speaking English

### 3. Expand teachers' knowledge of interactive teaching

#### *Evaluation of Interactive Activities*

With criteria for each program, we selected interactive activities for students and teacher training activities for teachers. We then implemented these activities with the purpose of determining if these activities were more effective tools to teach English. Overall, we found that many of the English teaching techniques we piloted in Phon Pang School had a positive impact on both the teachers and students.

- Students' engagement and participation level increased during interactive activities
- When teachers incorporated interactive lessons, students better retained the material they learned.
- Teachers enjoyed songs and thought they were a good technique for learning English.
- Teachers thought pronunciation drills were useful in helping students with the pronunciation of specific sounds.
- Some teachers found some of our new activities complicated to understand and as a result had difficulty teaching them to their class.

#### *Cultural Exchange Interactive Activities*

- Cultural Exchange programs are effective tools in sparking students' interest in English education.

#### *Teacher Training Program*

- Teachers' resources were often inaccessible and unreliable and thus teachers did not use them to their full advantage.
- Teacher training improved the English fluency of teachers.

Lastly, we wished to ensure that the programs we created were sustainable after our team's four weeks on-site. To improve the sustainability of our program, we worked with teachers during our final week to determine the best means of continuing and possibly expanding the three programs at Phon Pang School. From our discussion with teachers, we found that teachers were hoping to continue using interactive activities, incorporating cultural exchange programs, and expanding the teacher training program by continuing meetings.

#### *Planning for Continuation and Extension of Learning Activities*

- Teachers planned to continue using interactive teaching activities in English classrooms.

- Teachers hoped to incorporate cultural exchange activities in their annual English camp.
- Teachers also planned to continue the teacher training program through having teacher meetings to practice their English and to exchange teaching ideas.

## **Recommendations**

From these findings we were able to devise a list of recommendations for Phon Pang and any other school that is looking to use our program. Although many of these recommendations are based on the research done at Phon Pang, we feel that these recommendations will apply to schools in areas similar to Phon Pang.

### ***The Students' Needs for Learning Resources***

- **We recommend that, if possible, the school or the Princess's Office make studying materials such as textbooks more accessible to students.** Our results found that many students did not own a copy of the textbook being used in class. One means of facilitating this is by providing a few copies of the classroom textbooks in a common place such as the school library so they are accessible to all students.
- **We also recommend that the schools offer students resources such as extra help or study groups for those who are interested in furthering their English studies.** In addition to textbooks, we found that there were few opportunities for students to study English outside of the classroom. Opportunities that allow students to study outside of the classroom strengthen the English curriculum because they provide students with extra practice.

### ***Incorporation of Interactive Activities to Support the Current English Curriculum***

- **We recommend that teachers utilize more interactive activities to help overcome student motivation and participation challenges.** Through implementing interactive activities in fourth, fifth, and sixth grade English classrooms, we found that lessons that linked creativity and logic were more effective in language education than traditional teaching methods such as rote memorization techniques. We concluded that these interactive activities made students more eager to learn and as a result, their participation in the activity and the lesson allowed them to better retain the lesson material.
- **We recommend schools of rural Thailand utilize Cultural Exchange programs to support the English curriculum.** In addition, interactive activities that incorporated cultural education were also

another tool that enhanced the English curriculum at Phon Pang School. The students' interest in American culture allowed them to better relate to the language they studied, as well as build their interest in the language.

### *Teachers Benefit from Teacher Training*

- **Therefore, we recommend that teachers use teaching resources such as Internet sites, the King's School Broadcast, and teaching resources books such as our manual to further improve their English fluency and their teaching techniques.** Teachers were motivated to learn new teaching methods to incorporate into their English lessons. Through introducing teachers to Internet resources such as Dave's ESL Café, broadcasts similar to the King's School Broadcast that airs teacher training programs for English teachers, and book resources such as the manual we created, teachers were able to continue this program.
- **We also recommend that teachers hold regular meetings to practice speaking and listening to spoken English, to increase their fluency, and to exchange teaching practices.** During our time in Phon Pang, we held daily teacher meetings. In addition to providing teachers with an opportunity to practice speaking English, these meetings aided the exchange of teaching techniques among teachers. Many teachers said that they would continue to hold similar meetings after our departure because they saw them as beneficial tools.
- **Also, we recommend that schools provide teachers with better access to resources such as a reliable Internet connection and satellite broadcast.** During a computer training session for teachers, teachers became discouraged when the Internet connection prevented them from accessing certain Internet sites and when web pages took several minutes to load. Nevertheless, teachers would take advantage of resources if they were accessible.

### **Summary**

Overall, we hope that our interactions with the teachers have improved the English as a Foreign Language Curriculum in Phon Pang School, and hope that the implementation of our recommendations will improve the EFL curriculum in Phon Pang and similar rural regions. As the English education system improves, the area may hope to see benefits through opportunities that were previously unavailable to them. This program may allow citizens of these regions to enhance or expand current agricultural jobs as well as allow them to pursue other career options by providing them with a

valuable skill. In turn, the implementation of our recommendations has the potential to aid the social and economical development of rural regions similar to Phon Pang.

## **AUTHORSHIP PAGE**

Alyssa Hargraves, Jesse Herrera, Gabriella Serrati, Connie Tran, and Thomas Watson all contributed to the drafting, writing, and revising of this paper. Here is a breakdown of each chapter and the contribution of each group member.

### **Executive Summary**

Alyssa Hargraves wrote a majority of the Executive Summary section of the paper. Gabriela Serrati later revised the draft.

### **Introductory Chapter**

Connie Tran first drafted the introductory chapter outline and Alyssa Hargraves wrote the first draft of the chapter. With the suggestions of the advisors, Connie Tran updated the introductory chapter and each member of the group was able to revise it. However, with more suggestions for changes, Alyssa Hargraves and Thomas Watson drafted the final chapter.

### **Background Chapter**

Connie Tran first drafted the background chapter outline with the help of Gabriella Serrati, who revised the outline. The team split up the background chapter outline by sections and each group member wrote a portion of the draft. With the suggestions from the advisors, we restructured the chapter outline as a team and Alyssa Hargraves edited the Background Chapter draft. Each member updated the chapter during individual revisions, with Jesse Herrera included a section about the link between culture and language. Additionally another update was the addition of pictures to the background, which Thomas Watson accomplished.

### **Methodology Chapter**

Alyssa Hargraves wrote the first methodology chapter with the input of all team members. With the suggestions of the advisors, Alyssa updated the outline and split the methodology into five sections. Each group member drafted a portion of the methodology draft. With the suggestions from the advisors, Connie Tran redrafted the final methodology chapter. Jesse Herrera added a section on developing criteria for cultural exchange activities.

### **Findings Chapter**

Gabriella Serrati and Connie Tran drafted the findings chapter outline with the input of all team members. All five members wrote a portion of the first draft of the Findings Chapter. With the advisors' comments, Gabriella Serrati restructured the Findings Chapter and Connie Tran redrafted the chapter.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations Chapter**

Gabriella Serrati and Connie Tran drafted the first outline of the Conclusion and Recommendation Chapter. With the suggestion from the advisors, as a team, we restructured our outline and Thomas Watson drafted the Conclusion and

Recommendation Chapter. The final draft was redrafted based on suggestions from the group by Connie Tran.

### **Appendices**

Alyssa Hargraves compiled the Appendices portion of the paper. The appendices included an observation form created by Gabriella Serrati and revised by Connie Tran, interview questions that Jesse Herrera created, and lesson descriptions Thomas Watson wrote.

### **Manual**

Jesse Herrera drafted the manual with the help of the group's input on which activities would be included and how to structure the manual. Jesse Herrera also worked with many EFL professionals to find the best means of formatting the manual and distribute the manual.

### **Final Presentation**

Thomas Watson created the final presentation based on input from the team. All five members of the team presented the final presentation.

Alyssa Hargraves, Jesse Herrera, Gabriella Serrati, Connie Tran, and Thomas Watson were responsible for revising all portions of the paper for content, style, and grammar. Thomas Watson did much of the formatting of the paper including the table of context and the paper headings.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                                                                                                               |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>ABSTRACT .....</b>                                                                                                                                         | <b>III</b>   |
| <b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>                                                                                                                                 | <b>IV</b>    |
| <b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>                                                                                                                                | <b>V</b>     |
| <b>AUTHORSHIP PAGE .....</b>                                                                                                                                  | <b>XII</b>   |
| <b>TABLE OF FIGURES .....</b>                                                                                                                                 | <b>XVII</b>  |
| <b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>                                                                                                                                    | <b>XVIII</b> |
| <b>CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION.....</b>                                                                                                                          | <b>1</b>     |
| <b>CHAPTER 2 – BACKGROUND .....</b>                                                                                                                           | <b>4</b>     |
| <b>2.1 – Globalization and its Effects on Thailand.....</b>                                                                                                   | <b>4</b>     |
| <b>2.2 English as the World’s Lingua Franca .....</b>                                                                                                         | <b>7</b>     |
| <b>2.3 – Perspectives on EFL Instruction in Thailand.....</b>                                                                                                 | <b>9</b>     |
| <b>2.4 Efforts to Improve EFL Education in Sakon Nakhon .....</b>                                                                                             | <b>13</b>    |
| <b>CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY .....</b>                                                                                                                          | <b>16</b>    |
| <b>3.1 – Developing Criteria for Activities with Teachers .....</b>                                                                                           | <b>16</b>    |
| <b>3.2 Choosing Activities for Interactive Lessons .....</b>                                                                                                  | <b>19</b>    |
| <b>3.3 – Implementing the Activities in the Classrooms, Cultural Exchange Fair, and<br/>    Teacher Training .....</b>                                        | <b>21</b>    |
| <b>3.4 – Evaluation and Refinement of the Activities .....</b>                                                                                                | <b>23</b>    |
| <b>3.5 – Sustainability at Phon Pang and Replicability in Rural Schools in Sakon Nakhon<br/>    .....</b>                                                     | <b>25</b>    |
| <b>CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS .....</b>                                                                                                                             | <b>28</b>    |
| <b>4.1 – Community Assessment and the Development of Criteria for Choosing<br/>    Interactive Activities and Teacher Training.....</b>                       | <b>28</b>    |
| <b>4.1.1 – The material in textbooks seemed too advanced for the students’ level.....</b>                                                                     | <b>28</b>    |
| <b>4.1.2 – School does not provide students with English instruction outside of the<br/>        classroom in the form of study groups or extra help .....</b> | <b>30</b>    |
| <b>4.1.3 – Teachers and students had difficult with pronunciation of specific English<br/>        sounds.....</b>                                             | <b>30</b>    |
| <b>4.1.4 – Teachers and students lacked confidece in speaking English .....</b>                                                                               | <b>31</b>    |

|                                                                                                                                                            |           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 4.1.5 – Few students at Phon Pang School had English textbooks for English classes .....                                                                   | 32        |
| 4.1.6 – English lessons in the existing English program use few materials.....                                                                             | 33        |
| 4.1.7 – Students seemed more motivated to study subjects other than English .....                                                                          | 33        |
| 4.1.8 – Criteria for Classroom Activities.....                                                                                                             | 34        |
| 4.1.9 – Criteria for Cultural Exchange Activities .....                                                                                                    | 35        |
| 4.1.10 – Criteria for Teacher Training Activities .....                                                                                                    | 38        |
| <b>4.2 – Evaluation of Interactive Activities and Teacher Training .....</b>                                                                               | <b>39</b> |
| 4.2.1 – Students’ engagement and participation level increased during interactive activities.....                                                          | 39        |
| 4.2.2 – When teachers incorporated interactive lessons, students better retained the material they learned .....                                           | 40        |
| 4.2.3 – Teachers enjoyed songs and thought they were a good technique for learning English .....                                                           | 41        |
| 4.2.4 – Teachers thought pronunciation drills were useful in helping students with the pronunciation of specific sounds .....                              | 42        |
| 4.2.5 – Teachers found some activities complicated to understand and as a result had difficulty teaching them to their classes .....                       | 42        |
| 4.2.6 – Cultural exchange programs are effective tools in sparking students’ interest in English education.....                                            | 43        |
| 4.2.7 – Teachers’ resources were often inaccessible and unreliable and thus teachers did not use them to their full advantage.....                         | 44        |
| 4.2.8 – Teacher training improved the English fluency of teachers .....                                                                                    | 44        |
| <b>4.3 – Planning for Continuation and Extension of Learning Activities in Sakon Nakhon .....</b>                                                          | <b>45</b> |
| 4.3.1 – Teachers planned to continue using interactive teaching activities in English classrooms.....                                                      | 45        |
| 4.3.2 – Teachers hoped to incorporate cultural exchange activities in their annual English camp.....                                                       | 46        |
| 4.3.4 – Teachers expressed that a printed reference document such as a manual would be an effective aid to continue our programs at Phon Pang School ..... | 46        |
| <b>4.4 – Limitations of Findings.....</b>                                                                                                                  | <b>47</b> |
| <b>CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>                                                                                                    | <b>48</b> |
| <b>5.1 – Project Summary .....</b>                                                                                                                         | <b>48</b> |
| <b>5.2 – Recommendations.....</b>                                                                                                                          | <b>48</b> |
| 5.2.1 – The students’ need for learning resources.....                                                                                                     | 49        |

|                                                                                                |            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 5.2.2 – Incorporation of interactive activities to support the current English curriculum..... | 50         |
| 5.2.3 – Teachers’ benefits from teacher training.....                                          | 51         |
| <b>PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS .....</b>                                                           | <b>55</b>  |
| <b>REFERENCES.....</b>                                                                         | <b>57</b>  |
| <b>APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....</b>                                                    | <b>60</b>  |
| Appendix A1: Interview Questions for EFL Professionals in Bangkok .....                        | 60         |
| Appendix A2: Interview Questions for Teachers at Phon Pang School.....                         | 61         |
| <b>APPENDIX B: PHON PANG SCHOOL.....</b>                                                       | <b>62</b>  |
| Appendix B1: Representative Photos .....                                                       | 62         |
| Appendix B2: English Class Schedule .....                                                      | 64         |
| <b>APPENDIX C: CULTURAL FAIR .....</b>                                                         | <b>65</b>  |
| Appendix C1: Criteria for Cultural Exchange Activity Selection.....                            | 65         |
| Appendix C2: Results for Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations .....                          | 66         |
| Appendix C3: Culture Fair Material Requirements .....                                          | 72         |
| <b>APPENDIX D: OBSERVATIONS EVALUATION FORMS .....</b>                                         | <b>73</b>  |
| Appendix D1: Classroom Observations Form .....                                                 | 73         |
| Appendix D2: Classroom Evaluations.....                                                        | 76         |
| Appendix D3: Interactive Activities Evaluation Form .....                                      | 84         |
| Appendix D4: Evaluation of Cultural Fair Interactive Activities .....                          | 90         |
| Appendix D5: Interactive Activity Evaluations .....                                            | 95         |
| Appendix D6: Teacher Response to Kusuman Education District Office Survey .....                | 101        |
| <b>APPENDIX E – PERSONAL CULTURAL REFLECTIONS .....</b>                                        | <b>108</b> |
| Appendix E1 – Alyssa Hargrave’s Cultural Reflections.....                                      | 108        |
| Appendix E2 – Jesse Herrera’s Cultural Reflections.....                                        | 110        |
| Appendix E3 – Gabriella Serrati’s Cultural Reflections .....                                   | 113        |
| Appendix E4 – Connie Tran’s Cultural Reflections .....                                         | 115        |
| Appendix E5 – Thomas Watson’s Cultural Reflections .....                                       | 117        |
| <b>APPENDIX F: MANUAL.....</b>                                                                 | <b>120</b> |
| Appendix F1: Criteria for our Manual .....                                                     | 120        |
| Appendix F2: Manual .....                                                                      | 122        |

## TABLE OF FIGURES

|                                                                     |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Figure 1: Map of Thailand with Sakon Nakhon Highlighted in Red..... | 14 |
| Figure 2: Morning Assemble with Total Student Body.....             | 62 |
| Figure 3: Typical Home of Students in Phon Pang Village.....        | 62 |
| Figure 4: Standard Classroom Setup.....                             | 63 |
| Figure 5: Picture of Interactive Activity Implmentation.....        | 63 |

## LIST OF TABLES

|                                                                                                 |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Table 1: Criteria Chart of Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluation.....                           | 37 |
| Table 2: Daily Class Schedule at Phon Pang School.....                                          | 64 |
| Table 3: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Kindergarten and First Grade.....           | 66 |
| Table 4: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Second and Third Grade.....                 | 67 |
| Table 5: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Fourth and Fifth Grade.....                 | 68 |
| Table 6: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Sixth and Seventh Grade.....                | 69 |
| Table 7: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Eight and Ninth Grade.....                  | 70 |
| Table 8: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Grade<br>..... | 71 |
| Table 9: Cultural Exchange Fair Materials List.....                                             | 72 |

## CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Globalization is the increase interdependent between different regions around the world. While globalization presents many positive aspects to development such as supporting the economic development of nations, it also imposes many negative consequences such as creating uneven distributions of wealth. In addition, globalization has created an increase need for communications between nations, which resulted in the emergence of a global language: English. With English becoming the language of globalization, many nations are investing more effort in English education to keep in pace with global movement.

Like many other nations, Thailand has been experiencing some of the detrimental aspects of globalization. In Thailand, globalization has created an uneven distribution of wealth, caused Thailand's rural regions to fall behind in development and affected regional factors such as education (Lockheed & Levin, 1993). Researchers argue that literacy will "sooner or later become a feature of any society that is serious about economic development" (Bruthiaux, 2002). As a result, language education is a key factor in alleviating poverty. Literacy is important because it provides "a practical tool for handling the increasing complexities of economic transactions and a conceptual tool for visualizing hitherto inaccessible opportunities," and English literacy is particularly important because it provides a means of communicating in the global marketplace (Bruthiaux, 2002). The Thai government is working hard to keep up with globalization through incorporating English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education to Thailand's national curriculum in preparation for Thailand to become a more active participant in

globalization. However, the program's quality and effectiveness face many challenges in rural areas.

One key contributor to poverty eradication, education, and the improvement of the English as a Foreign Language curriculum in rural Thailand is the Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects. The office of the Princess has worked with many national and international organizations towards the eradication of poverty in over 400 villages. Specifically, one of the main objectives of the Office of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects is to empower and improve children's standard of living through educational programs (Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, 2003). The Office has recognized that this goal includes improving the effectiveness of the English as a Foreign Language curriculum in Thailand's rural areas. Through increased English fluency, the office of the Princess hopes to bring new opportunities to the rural regions that may ultimately improve the people's standard of living.

Under the sponsorship of the office of the Princess, we worked with Phon Pang School in the Sakon Nakhon Province to improve the educational effectiveness of its English language curriculum. This area is considered to be the poorest region in Thailand and as a result, there are many challenges when attempting to improve English education for the children (Tippadee Ongsangkoon, personal communication, January 11, 2008). Students face limited learning resources, teachers face fluency challenges, and children are sometimes taught with un-engaging teaching techniques. As a result of these difficulties, students miss out on the benefits of learning a language. Other rural schools

face similar problems. Until these challenges are addressed, rural areas will likely continue to face educational and development challenges.

Through working with the Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, we developed recommendations for the schools of rural Thailand based upon our findings at Phon Pang School. More specifically, our goal was to develop, test, evaluate, and recommend new and sustainable teaching techniques to improve the educational impact of the existing English as a Foreign Language curriculum in rural Thailand. To accomplish these goals, we followed three main objectives. First, we determined criteria for choosing activities for students' in-classroom lessons, a cultural exchange fair, and a teacher training program. Second, we selected, implemented, evaluated, and refined our activities for the programs. Lastly, we worked to maintain the sustainability of these programs at Phon Pang School and devised a means of replicating the activities at other rural schools in Thailand.

## **CHAPTER 2 – BACKGROUND**

In recent years, Thailand has developed economically and socially through increasing its connections with other nations and participating more actively in the global economy. However, the Thai citizens have not evenly benefited from globalization's progress and development, resulting in marginalized poverty. The Thai Government has attempted to address this in part through using English language education. Through introducing and continuously supporting English language education, the government is giving students the tools necessary to prepare them for their involvement in the global market. However, the reach of the Thai government's efforts to many rural regions is often limited and schools face many challenges. To provide a better understanding of our project's context, we will provide some background information on four aspects of the project: the effects globalization has had on Thailand's economy, the emergence of English as the global lingua franca, EFL instruction in Thailand, and efforts to improve EFL learning in Sakon Nakhon.

### **2.1 – Globalization and its Effects on Thailand**

Globalization is one of many different factors that have come to influence the diverse economic landscape of Thailand. Although globalization is only a single factor, it profoundly shapes the Thai economy. As Thailand's industry switches from an agricultural-based market to a society based on technology production and international trade, the country is solidifying its place in the global economy. However, globalization has had a mix of beneficial and detrimental results. In this section, we detail the changes that Thailand's economy has gone through in recent years, how globalization and

manufacturing have influenced these changes, and how these economic changes have both reduced and contributed to poverty.

Although Thailand's economy has encountered a few economic hardships over the years, trends show that the country has generally been growing and modernizing. Thailand's recent economic history can be categorized into three stages: prosperity from 1980 to 1995, crisis from 1996 to 1998, and recovery from 1999 to 2002. Although there was a minor lapse in 1996, the national economy has grown from US\$56 billion in 1987 to over US\$140 billion in 2004 (Jitsuchon and Richter, 2007). Similarly, between 1980 and 1986, the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was approximately 5.5% per year, 9.5% per year from 1988 to 1996, -5.9% per year during the Asian Financial Crisis, and 4.1% per year during the recovery years (Krongkaew et al. 2006). Despite the obstacle in 1996, Thailand was able to quickly recover and has continued to prosper.

Many factors contributed to Thailand's rapid economic growth, including the nation's shift from an agricultural to an industrial society and the nation's increase in global trade. Thailand's economy was once largely based on agriculture and labor. However, since the late 1970's, manufacturing in Thailand has grown at a more rapid rate than agriculture and has become a more significant part of the workforce (Pupphavesa, 2002). In 1978, 77 percent of Thailand's population relied on agricultural employment (Rief and Cochrane, 1990). However, by 2002 only 42 percent of Thailand's population had employment related to agriculture (Krongkaew et al. 2006). As Thailand shifted towards manufacturing, its effect on the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) became more significant. The contribution of manufacturing towards the GDP increased from 25 to 47 percent from 1980 to 2002 while the contribution of agriculture decreased

from 71 to 40 percent those same years. Overall, Thailand's increase in manufacturing contributed to an increase in exports and competitive participation in global trade, which has bolstered the development of Thailand's economy (Krongkaew et al. 2006).

The growing economy has contributed both positively and negatively on poverty in Thailand. One effect of the economic growth was an overall reduction in poverty (Shetty, 1996). For example, the number of households in Thailand with incomes below the poverty line dropped from 32.6 percent in 1988 to 11.4 percent in 1996 (Jitsuchon and Richter, 2007). However, the developing economy directly contributed to the increase of income inequality. The shift to a manufacturing-based economy resulted in the loss of many jobs in rural areas. At the same time, new job opportunities were becoming available in the urban areas of Thailand. Many Thais moved from the rural areas in order to pursue new careers. In the early 1960s, Bangkok accounted for 8.1 percent of the country's population and 23.8 percent of the GDP. However, by 2000, over 10 percent of the country's population lived in Bangkok (Glassman and Sneddon, 2003). This migration resulted in not only fewer workers in the rural areas, but also less income being brought to those areas, creating a large disparity in income distribution throughout the nation.

Researchers believe that Thailand will not maintain control over the income inequality until an equilibrium between the agricultural and manufacturing sectors is reached (Ikemoto and Uehara, 2000). As a result, Thailand will likely face challenges supporting the agricultural rural regions for years to come unless agricultural regions can be better incorporated into the globalization process. One means of facilitating this is through English language education that allows for participation in the global market.

## 2.2 English as the World's Lingua Franca

The emergence of English as the global language (the world's lingua franca) provides a common ground for communication. People from different cultures who do not share the same language can use English as a means of communication to share ideas and information. Although English provides increased trade opportunities, its impact is not always positive. In this section, we explain the importance of English in the global market, the beneficial and detrimental effects of English on culture, and the emergence of English in Southeast Asia and Thailand.

The global market is one example of how English provides a means for people of different regions and cultures to work together. English is quickly becoming the main language for business because it allows for people from different parts of the world to easily and effectively make transactions (Carvajal, 2007). This is apparent in Thailand, a nation that has been taking a more active role in the global market. Today, it is “difficult to run away from English,” as stated by Assistant Professor Chalernpol, an English language teacher from the Demonstration Elementary School at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand (Chalernpol, personal communication, January 11, 2008). Even in rural Thailand, English teachers stress the importance of English education, especially for students who plan on graduating and finding jobs in the city. English is the language of work and they need knowledge of the language to survive.

The emergence of English as a global language has many beneficial effects on cultures and societies. For example, a global language encourages the integration of cultures by allowing people of different cultures to learn about and from one another (Rothkop, 1997). Salleh Ben Joned, a supporter of this claim states, “As far as English is concerned, its widespread use can, under the right conditions, be good for the nation.

English cuts across ethnic differences” (Mandal, 2000). As English breaks down barriers between cultures by providing a bridge of communication, it promotes the preservation of the individual identities of unique groups because communication no longer requires compromise of cultures. For instance, as seen in Malaysia, English allowed people of different native dialects to communicate while protecting the purity of the native language (Mandal, 2000).

Despite the benefits, the homogenizing nature of language globalization often negatively affects people by allowing the displacement and disruption of their history and culture (Parijs, 2000). Today, there are over 6,800 known languages in the world. However, due to globalization and the expansion of the English language, approximately 400 languages are at risk of extinction (Ostler, 2003). In Thailand specifically, 14 of the country’s 70 languages are “imminently endangered” (Min, 2006). The replacement of native languages with the global language, English, could lead to the extinction of histories, cultures, and values as well (Mandal, 2000). Social activist Sulak Sivaraksa supports this idea by stating, “urbanization on an American model would undermine Thailand’s cultural specialness” (Phongpaichit & Baker, 1998). Ultimately, in an effort to become more active in the global community, many cultures and nations are adopting English education, and therefore, risking the loss of their cultures and language. Because of this, students should not only learn about the English language, but also should learn to respect and celebrate their heritage.

Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries have recognized the benefits of English education as they have become more involved in the global market. Historically, Southeast Asia did not see much need for English language education until the 1980s

when Japan's economic boom occurred (Renewal, 2008). This event increased the presence of global economic practice throughout Southeast Asia, and consequently, the interest for English language education increased as well. However, Thailand did not invest in English language education until the mid 1990s. In 1995, the Ministry of Education allowed public schools to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and the Thai government encouraged this by offering loans of 20 million Baht to the schools (Renewal, 2008). Since then, there has been continued reform to create national education standards, including a standard for EFL. Currently, EFL education is mandatory and thus a part of every school's curriculum in Thailand.

### **2.3 – Perspectives on EFL Instruction in Thailand**

Thailand's English curriculum is classified as English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and the country faces unique challenges when teaching this subject, especially in its rural areas. In this section, we examine various challenges that Thailand's rural regions face in their education systems that may affect the overall quality of their EFL program, as well as common best practices in EFL instruction.

Although Thailand has made great strides in improving the education system and language education programs in the past years through educational reforms (Renewal, 2008), there are still issues with the current school system that make it difficult for English to be taught effectively. However, work has been made in some areas to improve the situation. Developing countries around the world, including Thailand's rural regions face education hardships. School systems struggle with funding, participation, teacher fluency, and un-engaging teaching practices. All of these factors deserve consideration when implementing a new program in the area.

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges when working on education in rural areas of Thailand is the limited amount of funding. With limited funding, it is difficult to afford highly trained teachers or purchase supplements such as instructional videos or textbooks. The Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects has been working to make the best use of the limited resources available to rural areas. The Office has developed programs to focus on nutrition and self-sustainability, and it provides scholarships to underprivileged people (Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, 2003). Through subsistence programs such as the growing and selling of rice, the children learn a valuable life skill while contributing to their school's funding. However, programs like this are limited, and school funding continues to be an important challenge.

Another concern when dealing with education in rural Thailand is the participation of students. When compared to industrialized countries, developing nations show relatively low participation rates (Lockheed & Levin, 1993). In Thailand's rural areas, school participation is difficult to achieve. The Survey of Children and Youth in Thailand reported that out of all Thai children not attending schools, 91 percent were from rural areas (Khoman, 1993). Likewise, the same survey showed that those who attended schools in rural locations tended to leave much earlier than urban students. Researchers believe these participation struggles may exist for a variety of reasons. Some possible causes may be that many teachers focus on rote memorization, or they focus on material that does not usually connect to the lives of the students (Lockheed & Levin, 1993). However, other factors such as the opportunity to make money instead of

attend class also may play a part. Implementing more engaging lessons may help improve participation, but it is still an area that could use further improvement.

The use of methods which do not fully engage students is one possible cause of the difficulties with motivation and also plays a part in making English a challenging subject to teach. Research has shown that requiring students to translate sentence by sentence is boring and tedious, and has led children to have negative attitudes towards English education (Waugh, Bowering, & Chayarathee, 2005). However, many teachers in developing nations as well as those in Phon Pang follow this practice (Lockheed & Levin, 1993). The rote memorization method may teach children vocabulary, but without practicing and being engaged in the subject, their skills and knowledge of the underlying meaning suffer. A better alternative would be to use memorization to help teach students vocabulary, but supplement those lessons with interactive activities to give them more practice and keep the students engaged.

One alternative to the memorization based teaching technique is an interactive teaching methodology. For example, activities that connect the left and right sides of the brains have been found to be particularly effective (Chalermopol, personal communication, January 11, 2008). Young children are "...very linked to their surroundings and are more interested in the physical and the tangible" (Shin, 2006). The introduction of interactive activities can help capture the students' interest and immerse them in learning the language. Activities that include visuals, frequent changes from activity to activity, themes, stories, and other familiar contexts are all excellent ideas to incorporate in the class schedule (Shin, 2006). One can create activities that connect the

language to the students' everyday lives to give them something they can relate to (Viravathana, personal communication, January 21, 2008).

Another means of teaching children can be through peer learning. Cooperative learning under the student-centered approach is one option. In this approach, students split into small teams to learn, and under the supervision of the instructor, they can work with each other to teach themselves (Diderikson, personal communication, January 17, 2008). Peer learning is especially beneficial in environments where the teachers are struggling with their English skills. Through the addition of more exciting teaching techniques, connections to the children's daily lives, and peer advising, students' enthusiasm towards English is likely to boost and they may even choose to study more outside of the classroom.

Culture is also an issue of great importance to language education. Linguists and anthropologists agree that the uses of a language reflect the cultural values of the society in which the language is spoken (Peterson & Coltrane, 2003). I. Krasner (1999) says that linguistic competence alone is insufficient for students of a language to become fully competent in that language (Peterson & Coltrane, 2003). To communicate with a native speaker, language learners need to be familiar with culturally appropriate ways of communicating within that language. They should learn about the various cultural aspects of a language, such as behaviors and intonation patterns that are different from their own speech community. "Students will master a language only when they learn both its linguistic and cultural norms" (Peterson & Coltrane, 2003). Thus, divorcing a language of its corresponding culture is a grave mistake for language educators to make.

For the reason that English fairs are a relatively common occurrence in the Kusuman district, this provides students with the opportunity learn more about English. However, most schools only focus on language and do not include culture. During our four weeks in Sakon Nakhon, we were aware of three English Fairs that took place nearby as well as the one we implemented ourselves. Additionally, two weeks before our arrival, Phon Pang School was home to its own holiday English fair. Some teachers, such as Junjiraporn Tuninard (Jeannie) of Skonrajwittanukool School have grown accustomed to working with English Fairs due to their frequent occurrence in Sakon Nakhon. However, Jeannie says that having culture included in the English Fair “seems new to [the students]” and it is “worth having the culture since students only learn the language in the text. They never know, interact, or experience the real situations. They should know and learn to respect other cultures as well” (Tuninard, personal communication, February 29 2008). Unfortunately, teachers often do not implement the cultural aspect of English Fairs, and instead focus only on the language, leaving a valuable portion of language education unexplored.

Overall, a combination of teaching methodology, including student-centered learning, memorization, culture education, and engaging activities can benefit the students. They would have access to vocabulary, variety, practice, and excitement in their classes through these methods and activities.

## **2.4 Efforts to Improve EFL Education in Sakon Nakhon**

The province of Sakon Nakhon, located in the northeast of Thailand, faces many of the education challenges that have been described of rural areas. As a result, the Princess’s Office has focused on responding to educational inequity by working to

improve the education systems of Thailand's rural regions. Ultimately, we worked with Phon Pang School in the Kusuman district to develop and implement English activities. In this section, we focus further on the region of Sakon Nakhon and Phon Pang School as well as provide additional information about the Princess's Office's goals.

Sakon Nakhon, which can be seen in Figure 1: Map of Thailand with Sakon Nakhon Highlighted in red, is a province located in the Isan region of Thailand. The Sakon Nakhon province is an agricultural region and inhabitants rely on agricultural production for income. With the recent shift in Thailand's economy towards manufacturing and away from agriculture, Sakon Nakhon is one of the regions that suffered from the negative aspects of globalization.

Our fieldwork took place in the Kusuman district of Sakon Nakhon, which is the poorest district in the province (Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, 2003). The majority of Kusuman's people are of Thai and Lao descent. This mix of cultures is known as the Thai So, and these people have their own language, culture, and beliefs (Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, 2003).

Phon Pang School is one school located in the Kusuman district, and was where our fieldwork took place. The school consists of Kindergarten through 12th grade and is



Figure 1: Map of Thailand with Sakon Nakhon Highlighted in Red

home to 833 students. Reference pictures can be found in Appendix B1: Representative Photos. Students from this region follow the Thai So culture and speak So language at home. In schools, they are taught to speak Thai, as well as other languages such as English, Arabic, and Japanese.

At Phon Pang School, English education is taught to students from grades two to grades twelve. Students study English for two one our sessions a week. See Appendix B2: English Class Schedule. However, one problem faced at Phon Pang School is the qualifications of teachers to teach English. None of the teachers at Phon Pang School are native English speakers, and only a few of them majored in English. As for students in grades one to seven, students learn English from teachers who may have majored in other subjects. As a result, English is a difficult subject for many of the teachers to teach, and their struggles are passed down to the students through problems such as incorrect pronunciation. Ultimately, the students have some English fluency, but their experiences are relatively limited and are dependent upon their teachers' English skills.

The Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects has realized that the rural areas could use improvement in the teaching of English. With English emerging as the global language, the rural regions of Thailand may continue to stay behind in globalization if they cannot obtain more effective education in the language. The Princess's Office hopes to address the difficulties that the rural areas have had with teaching English by focusing first on Phon Pang School, and then implementing the resulting recommendations in other rural regions.

## **CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY**

The goal of this project was to develop, test, evaluate, and recommend new and sustainable teaching techniques to improve the educational impact of the existing English as a Foreign Language curriculum in rural Thailand. In accomplishing our goals, our team spent two weeks in Bangkok doing background research and then spent four weeks completing the fieldwork of the project in Sakon Nakhon. This chapter documents the methods that we used to complete our goal. The strategies are divided into three basic steps. First, we determined criteria for choosing activities for students' in-classroom lessons, a cultural exchange fair, and a teacher training program. Second, we selected, implemented, evaluated, and refined the activities for the programs. Third, we worked to maintain the sustainability of the program at Phon Pang School and devised a means of replicating the activities at other rural schools in Thailand.

### **3.1 – Developing Criteria for Activities with Teachers**

To select appropriate activities and lessons for the students, we devised criteria for choosing activities for the programs. In order to do this, we began by assessing certain factors of the community. The two factors on which we focused our assessments were the role English plays in the lives of students and the condition of the current English education program at Phon Pang School.

We first assessed the role English plays in the lives of the students to determine the importance of having English education as well as to gain a better understanding of the purpose of our project. More specifically, we hoped to find out the significance the Thai curriculum has placed on English studies, why the Ministry of Education has included English education in their national curriculum, and how students use their

English skills outside of the classroom. To gather this information, we consulted a number of different EFL professionals in Bangkok such as the Assistant Professor and Associate Director of Foreign Affairs and Outreach Programs, Chalernpol Daoruang of Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Elementary School, and Martin Fells from the Andrew Biggs Academy. We also spoke to teachers from Sitaburtbamrung School, EFL professionals from Sakon Nakhon, and the teachers from Phon Pang School. Interview Questions are found in Appendix A1: Interview Questions for EFL Professionals in Bangkok and Appendix A2: Interview Questions for Teachers at Phon Pang School.

In addition to determining the role English plays in the lives of students in Thailand, we assessed the current English language program at Phon Pang School, see Appendix D1: Classroom Observation For. We focused our evaluation on the general structure of the program, the English lessons students studied, the English fluency of the students and teachers, the resources available for English lessons, and the challenges the program faced. The information we learned from this evaluation helped us devise the criteria used to select classroom interactive activities, cultural fair interactive activities, and the activities for the teacher training program. We aimed to understand the general logistics of the English education program at Phon Pang School such as the number of students in each classroom, the number of teachers in each grade, and how often each class studies English. This allowed us to limit the number and size of the different activities we planned on implementing. We assessed the English lessons students studied to understand what material our activities should cover. We determined the English fluency of the students to set the level of English difficulty for the classroom activities. Also, by assessing the teachers' English fluency, we determined how well they were able

to teach the lesson material and how the activities we devised should adapt to their English fluency. Moreover, the assessment of the resources available at Phon Pang School restricted material requirements of the programs, which also gave us further insight into the sustainability and the ability to replicate our programs. Finally, we tried to grasp the teachers' opinion of the current program to determine what areas needed more attention. Our hopes were to collect all this information to develop activities that smoothly integrated into the existing English program and that met the needs of the students and teachers at Phon Pang School.

In gathering this information, we spoke with the Princess's Office and informally interviewed six teachers at Phon Pang School, as well as observed four fourth, fifth, and sixth grade classrooms. The Princess's Office gave us general information on the number of students, teachers, and how often students studied English. From informally interviewing the six teachers from Phon Pang School and making personal observations onsite, we were able to assess the materials students studied, the English fluency of teachers and students, the resources available for the English lessons, and the opinion of teachers on the challenges the current program faced. Once we gathered enough information to give us a good understanding of the situation in Phon Pang School, we developed a set of criteria to help ensure that the activities we selected were relevant. Additionally, the criteria helped ensure that our programs could be sustained by Phon Pang School and replicated to other schools in rural Thailand.

We also hoped to gain an understanding of what makes a successful cultural exchange fair or English camp. We did this through speaking with English camp coordinators and observing the camps. One EFL coordinator we spoke with was

Junjiraporn Tuninard of Skonrajwittanukool School, a teacher highly experienced with running English camps and educational activity fairs for students. Additionally, the team observed an educational camp held at Napeangswang Wittayanukul School in the Kusuman district on the 24th of January 2008. During the interviews and observations, we wished to get information on activities that camps have used, note the educational goal of each activity, and the challenges each activity faced.

In addition to improving the students' skills, we also hoped to improve the skills of the teachers. Based on input from Phon Pang's teachers as well as recommendations from teachers in Bangkok, we were able to gather information on what areas teachers hoped to improve. Additionally, we addressed many different teacher training sources such as the Distance Learning program and teacher training books to gather advice on teacher training activities. From the findings, we were able to create criteria for selecting the teacher training program, See Appendix C: Cultural Fair. Using these criteria, we took the next step of choosing, implementing, evaluating, and refining the interactive learning activities for the classroom, cultural exchange fair, and teacher training program.

### **3.2 Choosing Activities for Interactive Lessons**

With the importance and needs of Phon Pang School's English education program in mind, we chose activities for classroom lessons and a cultural exchange fair based on the criteria we established. For ideas of activities, we researched a United States Department of State journal called English Teaching Forum, as well as gathered lessons from other teachers during interviews and observations. One benefit we found from turning to journals, EFL professionals, and other English classrooms was that the list of activities we created had all been tested and deemed successful in teaching EFL. Based

on the criteria for English classroom lessons, we picked activities that met all four criteria. These criteria are further described in Findings section 4.1.9. The activities we chose to implement in English classrooms at Phon Pang School were:

**Games:** Erase, Charades, Total Physical Response, Simon Says

**Songs:** ‘Afternoon Song’, ‘Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes’, and ‘Big Nose’

**Other activities:** Pronunciation drills and artistic activities

We selected interactive lessons for the cultural exchange fair in a similar fashion. First, we determined a schedule and general structure of the fair after analyzing class schedules, number of students, and number of teachers available to help. We agreed to separate the fair into different age groups that participated at different time periods. For each period, we rated each of our cultural exchange activities using criteria we established. These criteria are further described in section 4.1.9. In the event of a tie, the group discussed the activities to select the most appropriate. We selected two activities that would be appropriate for all six age levels and a third activity specific to each age group.

For teacher training, we chose activities based on the criteria we established. We tried to find as many activities that met each specific criterion. The activities we planned on implementing after evaluating them based on the criteria included: having daily meetings with teachers to allow them to practice speaking and listening to native English speakers, introducing new teaching techniques, and researching methods for finding new

interactive activities. We implemented the chosen activities with the teachers during our four weeks onsite.

### **3.3 – Implementing the Activities in the Classrooms, Cultural Exchange Fair, and Teacher Training**

Upon arriving onsite, we began to develop and implement the chosen activities. For the classroom activities, we devised the lessons during daily meetings held with fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teachers. During these meetings, we started by addressing any general questions the teachers had about the week. Then, the team introduced new activities (games, songs, and drills) to the teachers and performed that activity as a group to ensure that teachers understood the goal and the rules of the activity. Teachers practiced conducting the activity with other teachers and the group. Then, we worked with individual teachers to integrate these interactive lessons into the classrooms of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. The teachers suggested that each member of the team work with a specific classroom throughout the four weeks at Phon Pang School to ensure that each classroom obtained the help it needed to develop the English lessons. Connie Tran worked with the fourth grade teacher. Gabriella Serrati worked with the fifth grade teacher. Thomas Watson worked with the first sixth grade teacher, and Alyssa and Jesse worked with the second sixth grade teacher. The purpose of this training was to allow the teachers to have more flexibility when creating lessons that were more interactive and fun for the children. However, one limitation we had during the entire four weeks was adjusting to the schedule of the teachers at Phon Pang School. Every day, teachers worked a full day, thus it was often difficult to find time to meet with them and in many occasions they were unable to meet with us when we needed to speak with them. These challenges may have diminished the findings we gathered.

We implemented the lessons that were developed with the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade classes during weeks two, three, and four of our field work. Two team members attended each English class. One team member aided the teacher in teaching the lesson and with pronunciation, and the other team member sat in the back of the classroom and observed the engagement level of the students, the effectiveness of the lesson, and the teacher's ability to convey the lesson to the students. When observing the classes, observers took notes and filled out an observation form presented in Appendix D3: Interactive Activities Evaluation Form to assess and evaluate the lessons based on the lesson criteria. The findings from these observations allowed us to refine our activities and adapt them to fit different English learning levels and materials.

A goal of the daily meetings was also to develop the English fluency of the teachers and to build their confidence so they could more effectively teach their English lessons. We did this by allowing them to practice their English speaking skills through interactions with native English speakers. In addition, our team also interacted with teachers outside of the meetings during weekend trips with the same objectives in mind: to build English fluency and confidence. During our daily meetings, we also introduced teachers to teaching resources online such as Dave's ESL Cafe, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, and online searching tools. Unfortunately, there is a sustainability risk that is involved with this type of training since native English speakers will not be available to most rural schools at all times.

We implemented the interactive activities for the cultural fair on the 11th of January 2008 at Phon Pang School. The goal of the cultural fair was to provide students with a path of interest to study English through involving them in interactive activities

that focused on English and cultural education. Each period was scheduled for a particular grade level. Period one was designated for Kindergarten and first graders, period two for second and third graders, period three for fourth and fifth graders, period four for sixth and seventh graders, period five for eighth and ninth graders, and period six for tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders. During each period, teachers led students to the fair. The team split the students into one to three groups and assigned team members to each group to lead them through the activities for the rest of the period. The groups of students started at different activities and rotated every 15 minutes to allow the children to participate at all three stations. After the period was over, we sent the children back to their classrooms and the next group of children arrived at the fair. The fair lasted for six periods until the end of the school day.

### **3.4 – Evaluation and Refinement of the Activities**

After developing and implementing the interactive activities and teacher training program, we evaluated these programs to assess whether they met the goals and criteria we established. From the information gathered, we determined problems with the activities, refined them, retested the activities, and finally developed recommendations for implementing and improving them. The goal of this was to produce activities that met the needs of the students and teachers at Phon Pang School as well as other schools in rural Thailand and to ensure that these programs were sustainable and replicable.

The first step in the evaluation and refinement process was to evaluate the success of our programs based on the original criteria. We accomplished this through re-examining our observations and notes for the activities in each classroom, the form can be seen in Appendix D1: Classroom Observation Form. Also, we spoke with teachers

during our daily meetings to gather their opinions of the classes. We focused on determining whether they thought the activities were effective methods of teaching English, whether teachers would be able to teach those activities, and whether the activities motivated the students to learn English. Additionally, during our final week we asked teachers to rate and evaluate the lessons. We originally hoped to create an anonymous survey for the teachers to privately fill out. However, due to communication issues and the language barrier, we found it difficult to convey the purpose of the survey with the teachers. As an alternative, we conducted the survey orally. One possible limitation we faced by performing an oral evaluation instead of a written one was that teachers could have been influenced by other teachers or our team to rate activities a particular way.

The evaluation and refinement of our cultural exchange program followed a similar practice. However, because it was an event that was one day long, we evaluated, adapted, and refined our project during the day of the fair. At the end of every period, we quickly assessed whether our activity fit the criteria we based our activities on. If an activity did not fit our criteria, we modified it for the next group of children. See Appendix D4: Evaluation of Cultural Fair Interactive Activities

Finally, the teacher training program was evaluated by determining whether the events met the criteria that were established for picking the activities. We accomplished this by speaking as a group to determine whether our activities met the needs of the teachers, helped to increase fluency and build their confidence, and expanded their knowledge on interactive teaching methods. Additionally, we spoke with teachers during

the daily teacher meetings to better determine whether or not the training met our criteria and the needs of the teachers. From this information, we were able to refine the program.

### **3.5 – Sustainability at Phon Pang and Replicability in Rural Schools in Sakon Nakhon**

The final factor of our work was ensuring the sustainability of each of our programs in Phon Pang School, and guaranteeing that these programs could be replicated in other schools of rural Thailand. We aimed to accomplish this objective by speaking with teachers at Phon Pang School to discuss the future plans of teachers to use the programs that we developed. Also, we created a manual that included a description of the classroom activities, teacher training advice, and self-research recommendations for teachers.

During the final week on-site, we met with the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teachers, along with the higher level English teachers at Phon Pang to discuss means of continuing the use of interactive activities and teacher training, and to obtain further input on the activities that were implemented during the four weeks onsite. Our questions focused on how they planned to use the interactive activities we implemented and how frequently they planned to incorporate the activities into their everyday English classes. Additionally, we hoped to gain insight on how they thought each activity aided their students in learning English.

One challenge we faced during this meeting was the communication barrier and the cultural aspect of saving face. We were worried that the teachers would not understand our questions without a translator available and that the teachers would be fearful to criticize our programs. To overcome some of these issues, we tried to carefully

word our questions to ensure that they were simple to understand and also welcoming to any suggestions they had.

In addition to sustaining the programs at Phon Pang School, we worked to make our programs replicable for teachers in other rural schools of Thailand. In accomplishing this, we created a manual that compiled interactive classroom activities, interactive cultural exchange activities, teacher training recommendations, and suggestions for the implementation and maintenance of these programs. We delivered this manual to the Office of H.R.H Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects with the request that they translate it into Thai and distribute it to other schools in rural Thailand to be used to improve their English programs.

To create this manual, we first met with teachers during our third week of fieldwork to discuss what material teachers would like to be included in the manual and what material they believed would be useful to other teachers of rural schools in Thailand. We were fearful that during this meeting, teachers would simply agree with our suggestions for the manual, thus we tried to word our question to allow honest and open discussion. From this meeting, we developed a list of criteria, which can be found in Appendix F1: Criteria for a Manual, for selecting materials for the manual and how the material would be presented in the manual. Based on our criteria, we determined that the manual should include descriptions of interactive activities for the classroom and cultural exchange fair, teacher training recommendation, and suggestion for implementation of the activities and teacher training program.

The interactive activities we included in the manual consist of interactive activities that we implemented in the classrooms and culture exchange fair at Phon Pang

School. We only included these activities into the manual because these were tested, evaluated, and refined by both teachers and our team at Phon Pang School. Thus, we knew that they activities could be implemented in other rural schools in Thailand. The teacher training recommendation portion of the manual came from the teacher training program we implemented at Phon Pang School and other suggestions from English teachers. Finally, for suggestions for implementations of the program, we included material that we found would be helpful to teachers based on our observations of classroom, our experience from implementing classroom activities, and our work with the teachers at Phon Pang in implementing and adapting lessons.

After completing our manual, we presented it to the Princess's Office, with hope of it being translated and distributed teachers and other relevant school administrators of rural schools in Thailand. This will Phon Pang school to continue to enhance their English program and allow other schools in rural Thailand to learn about methods for improving their current English program and new means of training their English teachers to more effectively teacher English.

## CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS

Through implementing our interactive classroom activities, cultural exchange activities, and teacher training activities, we were able to gather results and findings. This chapter details the findings that we collected throughout the course of our work. It is divided into three main sections: community assessment and development of criteria for choosing interactive activities and teacher training, the evaluation of the interactive activities and teacher training, and the planning for sustainability and transferability of the interactive activities and teacher training programs.

### 4.1 – Community Assessment and the Development of Criteria for Choosing Interactive Activities and Teacher Training

In developing programs, we aimed to meet the needs of the students and teachers at Phon Pang School. We accomplished this through assessing the need for English education in rural Thailand and assessing the existing English as a Foreign Language education program at the Phon Pang School. The findings we gathered shaped our criteria for selecting activities.

#### *4.1.1 – The material in textbooks seemed too advanced for the students' level.*

In the classroom, we found that the majority of the English teachers at Phon Pang School relied on the classroom English textbook for teaching material. However, we found that many students had difficulty understanding the information presented in the textbooks because it was often more advanced than the students' English comprehension level. Moreover, the students' lack of understanding prevented them from fully learning the material presented to them in the textbook and in the classroom.

We witnessed students struggling to understand the textbook material in a number of occasions. For example, in one case, the textbook presented dialogue that was too challenging for the students in the classroom. We found that as the teacher read the dialogue to the students, they were not learning and understanding the dialogue, but rather they were simply memorizing the words. This problem was also evident with older students. During a study session with a number of seventh graders, we found that they were able to read the passages. However, they were unable to explain their meaning. They had trouble putting into context the material presented in their textbooks because they did not understand it. In addition, when a group of tenth grade students approached our team with questions about their English homework, we found that the material was too complicated for even our team to understand clearly. If native English speakers had difficulty with a tenth grade lesson, it is evident that the material is too challenging for high school students who were studying English as a foreign language. From these examples, it is clear that students had difficulty keeping up to pace with the textbooks used in their English classes.

The discrepancy between the English level of the students and the difficulty level of the textbooks could be due to a number of reasons. One case we found was that the textbook presented material that was not relevant to the lives of the students and thus they were unable to relate to the material and understand it. For example, the passage the seventh graders read discussed topics such as American pop singers, with which Thai students were unfamiliar. Thus, without being able to relate to the presented information, it is difficult for students to understand the context and learn the material presented. Another possible reason is that students were learning at a slower pace than the material

presented in the classroom. When we compared Phon Pang English classrooms to those of Bangkok Schools, we found that students in urban schools were studying more advanced material and at a faster pace. Thus, this would explain why certain students struggled with textbook material that was designated for their grade level.

#### ***4.1.2 – School does not provide students with English instruction outside of the classroom in the form of study groups or extra help***

During our time in Phon Pang, we found that many students struggled with their English studies inside and outside the classroom. Many students expressed their motivation to study outside the classroom to improve on areas they were struggling with, as well as to further their studies. For example, during our onsite research, a number of students approached our team asking for help with their English homework or for English tutoring in general. Additionally, an English teacher at Phon Pang told us that there are a number of students, especially older students preparing for graduation, who are highly motivated to study English because they understand the role English plays in their life and how it could aid them in their future after graduation. Thus, a number of students were interested in studying outside of the classroom to further their English studies. However, we found that the school did not organize study groups or help sessions for these motivated students.

#### ***4.1.3 – Teachers and students had difficult with pronunciation of specific English sounds***

The teachers expressed that they and their students had trouble with pronunciation of certain English words and sounds. The specific example that they discussed included difficulty with differentiating between “s” and “th” sounds, making the ending “t” sounds in words such as “throat,” and the “d” sounds in words such as “head.” Additionally, we

have noted that in Thailand, many people have difficulty producing the “r” sound when saying words such as “rice,” instead they pronounce it as “lice.” Although the teachers’ trouble with pronunciation clearly affected their own English skills, it also directly affected the students’ speaking skills. Their struggle to pronounce certain sounds and words affected the students’ pronunciation. We found this was also evident when we asked students to repeat vocabulary words in the classroom and they had trouble with the same sounds.

When we spoke with teachers, we found that a majority of them had not been in a situation that required them to rely on their English speaking or listening skills. Most of the teachers at Phon Pang School had never interacted with native English speakers. Thus, we found that a possible reason for the teachers’ limited English fluency, especially their trouble with pronunciation, is that they have had little practice.

#### ***4.1.4 – Teachers and students lacked confidence in speaking English***

Many teachers admitted to being shy about speaking English, despite the fact that most possessed the necessary skills. For example, the English teacher for seventh, eighth, and ninth graders at Phon Pang School majored in English studies in college. However, she said she was hesitant to speak in English with native English speakers because she was afraid that her speaking skills were limited. This was also apparent with many of the other teachers who studied English in their past. They too were uneasy about speaking with our team in English because they claimed that they lacked the confidence.

We observed the teachers during a weekend. At the beginning of the trip, we found that teachers were hesitant to speak to us in English. They would laugh and make

fun of each other when attempting to speak English to our team. When they spoke with us, they seemed unsure if they were speaking correctly and were making a conscious effort to speak correctly. However, by the end of the trip, we found that as teachers became more acquainted with our team, they used more English and spoke with less hesitation. From these observations, we concluded that confidence level was a large factor that hindered them from speaking fluently.

However, it is important to note that there are limitations to our findings on teachers and students' English fluency. The presence of native English speaking foreigners is rare. Our presence could have intimidated them and made them more timid to speak in English, preventing us from truly assessing their English fluency.

#### ***4.1.5 – Few students at Phon Pang School had English textbooks for English classes***

We found that teachers relied on textbooks for lesson material. Thus all the material students were studying in the classroom could be found in the textbook. However, we found from our observations of English classrooms that not all students had textbooks to use in the classroom. For example, in the fifth grade classroom, as the teacher read dialogues from the textbook, many students did not have the English book to refer to for the dialogues. Often, the teacher wrote out dialogues and vocabulary from the textbook on the board and students copied them into their notebooks. Although this is an effective way when resources are unavailable, at that young age, students often copied information incorrectly. Therefore, many students who studied from their notebooks were studying incorrect information. One seventh grade student informed us that students did not own copies of the textbook because they were responsible for purchasing their own textbook. A teacher confirmed this statement when she said that some students

could not afford to purchase the textbook. Without resources such as textbooks available to students, their English learning is limited.

#### ***4.1.6 – English lessons in the existing English program use few materials***

From our observations of classrooms and speaking with English teachers at Phon Pang School, we found that the English classes of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students required little resources, besides the textbook. The teachers we observed used the textbook as the main teaching tool. As mentioned earlier, teachers copied textbook material onto the chalkboard for students to copy into their notebooks if they did not have their own copy of the text. On rare occasions, teachers would provide students with colored pencils to draw on white paper or in their notebooks. From information we gathered about resources used in the English classroom, we concluded that lessons we implement should also require few materials so teachers can easily integrate the lessons into their classrooms.

#### ***4.1.7 – Students seemed more motivated to study subjects other than English***

When we first met with teachers, they expressed their concern about the motivation level of students when studying English. They said that for many students, English was their least favorite subject and many students skipped English classes. Similarly, Kru Srisawhang, the Foreign Language Director at Phon Pang, commented that younger students were less motivated to learn English, and in order for older students to succeed in English education, they must find some self-motivation. Our observations of the classrooms confirmed the teachers' comments about students' motivation. We found that during English classes, many students were not actively participating or engaged in the lesson. For example, in all classrooms we observed we found that many of the

students sitting in the back of the classroom were often not engaged. Students were speaking with one another during class lessons and they were preoccupied with other things such as drawing in their notebooks instead of focusing on the lesson.

Additionally, we observed that there was a difference in motivation level between girls and boys. During English classes, we found that girls participated in class more than boys participated. Also, girls often seemed more focused on the lesson than boys, who were more easily distracted. For instance, during class, girls were not afraid to yell out answers and they often raised their hands. We found that boys, on the other hand did not raise their hand, were often drawing in their notebooks instead of copying down lessons from the board, and spoke amongst themselves during classes. When we spoke with teachers, they informed us that boys often did not attend English classes because they lacked motivation to study English.

#### ***4.1.8 – Criteria for Classroom Activities***

From our assessment, we developed criteria for selecting classroom interactive activities, cultural fair activities, and teacher training activities. The purpose was to choose activities that fit the needs of the students and the teachers. The activities also had to be able to be easily integrated into the existing program, sustainable at Phon Pang, and replicable at other rural schools in Thailand.

Based on our understanding of the classroom resources, the difficulties with motivation, and the English fluency of students and teachers, we developed four criteria for selecting classroom activities that would meet the needs of the students and teachers. The activities we selected must:

- 1. Require little to no extra materials:**

In the existing program, we found that teachers had used few extra materials other than the textbook, chalkboard, and coloring utensils.

**2. Increase motivation:**

Teachers expressed their concern with students' lack of motivation to study English and to participate during English lessons. Thus, one criterion we chose for selecting lessons was that the activities must spark the interest of the students in order to motivate them to learn more effectively and willingly.

**3. Be simple to understand and teach for teachers and students:**

Simple lessons that teachers with limited English fluency could teach had a better chance of being sustainable and replicated in other rural schools in Thailand.

**4. Be adaptable:**

To ensure that multiple teachers could use the lesson with different classes, the activity had to be adaptable to different lesson materials, age groups, and English fluency levels.

***4.1.9 – Criteria for Cultural Exchange Activities***

Based on our assessment of the role of English in the lives of students and the existing program, as well as assessment of the importance of culture exchange education, we were able to develop criteria for selecting interactive activities for the cultural exchange fair. We created criteria for selecting activities for the fair to ensure that the activities engaged the students, included some aspect of cultural or language education,

and were simple to implement to ensure the sustainability and the ability to replicate this program in the future. Thus, our criteria included:

**1. Age appropriate:**

Activities had to be appropriate for the age group performing the activity. This was because activities that were too childish or too difficult would take away from other criteria such as educational value and impact.

**2. Motivational Impact:**

Activities we chose had to be engaging and interesting to the students so it would leave a lasting impact on them.

**3. Educational value:**

The ultimate purpose of a cultural fair is to build students' English skills. Thus, we wanted to ensure that there is some educational value to the activities. Activities needed to include English language education and/or cultural education.

**4. Ease of Use:**

To maintain the sustainability of the cultural fair and the activities implemented in the cultural fair, activities we chose had to be simple so that teachers were able to run the activities, be able to accommodate to the number of students at the school, and require obtainable materials.

Below is the 'criterion/activity' table we used to rate the value of each cultural exchange activity. The results for the choosing process of the activities can be found in Appendix D4: Evaluation of Cultural Fair Interactive Activities.

| Activity                | Age Appropriate | Educational Value | Logistics | Impact | Total |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|-------|
| American Food (S'mores) |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Valentine's Day         |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Instrument Making       |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Sing-A-Long             |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Freeze Dance            |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| American Sports         |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Dancing                 |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Board Games             |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Mrs. Fox                |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Telephone               |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Red Light Green Light   |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Bingo                   |                 |                   |           |        |       |
| Simon Says              |                 |                   |           |        |       |

Table 1: Criteria Chart of Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluation

While ranking the criteria, we determined age appropriateness to be the most important characteristic because it affected a number of other criteria. For instance, if an activity was not age appropriate, students would lack motivation and the lesson would hold no educational value. Thus, any activity that failed age appropriateness was automatically disqualified from being considered. Likewise, we wanted at least one of the three activities we held in each period to involve making a product, which they could keep. Therefore, the impact of the activities was also important. The activity ranking rubric we used can be found Appendix C1: Criteria for Cultural Exchange Activity Selection.

#### ***4.1.10 – Criteria for Teacher Training Activities***

From assessing the existing program at Phon Pang School, we found that teachers wanted to increase their English fluency and to learn about teaching methodologies that increase student motivation in English studies. With these findings, we decided our teacher training activities should:

##### **1. Increase English fluency:**

We found that teachers had difficulty with understanding spoken English and with the pronunciation of words. Thus, one of the criteria for selecting teacher training activities was that the activities should increase their English fluency, specifically allowing them to practice listening to English, expand their English vocabulary, and help them improve their pronunciation of English sounds.

##### **2. Build confidence in speaking English:**

From our assessment of the teachers' English fluency, we found that teachers were shy about speaking English. Thus, activities should allow them to practice speaking English in order to feel more comfortable.

### **3. Expand teachers' knowledge of interactive teaching activities:**

Based on our findings, we found that teachers were motivated to learn new teaching methodologies and thus the teacher training activities should introduce teachers to new teaching techniques or introduce them to teaching resources.

## **4.2 – Evaluation of Interactive Activities and Teacher Training**

With criteria for each program, we selected interactive activities for students and teacher training activities for teachers. We then implemented these activities with the purpose of determining if these activities were more effective tools to teach English.

### ***4.2.1 – Students' engagement and participation level increased during interactive activities***

Activities that sparked the students' interest motivated them to learn English and increased overall class participation. Initially, teachers at Phon Pang School commented that the students did not like their English classes. Students were hesitant to speak up and were easily distracted. However, when teachers taught lessons and included interactive activities, the students were motivated to partake in the lessons. In all classrooms, when we played games or sang songs we found that there were more students participating than when teachers did not use interactive activities in the lessons. Teachers as well in a personal survey conducted by the Kusuman District Office, which can be found in Appendix D6: TeacherResponses to Survey Administer by the Kusuman Education District Office, supported this finding that student's motivation increased with interactive

activities. We found that teachers rated student motivation as “excellent,” which is the highest possible score.

One of the earlier motivation issues we found was that girls were often more active and focused during the lesson than boys. However, when we incorporated interactive activities, we found that boys more actively partook in the class activities. Although artistic activities, songs, and drills motivated boys, they were most engaged when playing competitive games such as Erase and Charades. When the class played competitive games, we found that almost all of the boys in every classroom were actively participating and they did not hesitate when the teacher picked them to answer. For example, during the Erase game, many of the boys were raising their hand eager for a turn to play the game and they were yelling out answers to help their teammates find the right vocabulary word to erase.

#### ***4.2.2 – When teachers incorporated interactive lessons, students better retained the material they learned***

Although traditional methods of teaching such as rote memorization are effective at teaching material such as vocabulary, we found that lessons that linked creativity and logic, such as all the activities we implemented, are more effective teaching tools because they are engaging to students and students are able to draw connections between written words and real life. For example, in the game charades, students were able to connect the written name of the animals with the action and sound the animals make. When teachers taught using rote memorization of vocabulary words and dialogues, students had a difficult time learning the material. For example, a fourth grade teacher first taught animals by writing the Thai and English words on the board. However, the next day the students were unable to recall the English words. When we played games such as

charades with animal names, the students in the fourth grade were able to learn the names of the animals and remember more names. We also observed this in the sixth grade while teaching actions with Total Physical Response (TPR). Previously, students had difficulty remembering vocabulary words they had learned the day before. However, when teachers introduced the TPR game and used action words, the students were able to remember the majority of the words and play the game again the next day even more successfully.

Although the motivation of students did increase with the introduction of interactive activities, it is difficult to assess whether it was due to our presence in the classroom or if the interactive activities were in fact engaging to the students. The only method of testing this would be to speak with teachers after we left to see if lessons were still engaging to students.

#### ***4.2.3 – Teachers enjoyed songs and thought they were a good technique for learning English***

In our implementation of activities, we included songs as a technique for teaching English. In the classroom, we found that teachers enjoyed teaching songs. When we introduced the songs to teachers during the daily meetings, they were able to quickly pick up the lyrics and the tune. They were also able to adapt songs to their lessons. For example, in the fifth grade class, our team taught the Afternoon Song. A sixth grade teacher sang a few rounds with her students and adapted the song to say “good morning” instead of “afternoon.” In addition, songs with hand gestures were also popular because it allowed students to be active. They were able to understand the meaning of the songs from the hand movements. As a result, throughout the four weeks onsite, teachers

requested that we include more songs in our lessons. A sixth grade teacher said she liked songs because they were a fun and an easy way for students to remember the material.

#### ***4.2.4 – Teachers thought pronunciation drills were useful in helping students with the pronunciation of specific sounds***

The final type of activity we implemented was drills. One of the drills worked with students' pronunciation of specific sounds in English words. We found that teachers were concerned with students' pronunciation of sounds such as "s," "th," "l," and "r" sounds. All four teachers from fourth, fifth, and the two sixth grade classes expressed that they wanted us to work on correcting students' pronunciation. We also found that teachers were anxious to have us teach their English classes so that the students could hear pronunciation from a native English speaker.

With these findings on the interactive activities, we were able to refine our activities and re-test them in other classrooms. Additionally, we were able to include them in the manual to allow other teachers to replicate the activities in their classrooms.

#### ***4.2.5 – Teachers found some activities complicated to understand and as a result had difficulty teaching them to their classes***

During our daily meetings, we introduced new activities to teachers by creating a mock class where our team acted as teachers and the teachers acted as students. We ran the game a few times and allowed the teachers to practice. However, when teachers had to implement the games in the classroom, they occasionally struggled to explain the lesson to the class. A sixth grade teacher expressed that game instructions were sometimes difficult for her to understand. For example, in another sixth grade class, our group incorporated an artistic activity into the lesson plan to teach students about families. The goal of the lesson was for students to draw pictures of their families and

label each family member. However, the teacher misunderstood the instructions and instead she instructed the students to copy the picture of the family from their textbook. The teacher misunderstood the instructions of the activity and thus was unable to explain the directions to her students.

The teachers' difficulty with understanding the games may have been due to a number of reasons. First, games such as erase were most likely difficult to understand because there were multiple ways to adapt the game to fit to the English level of the students. For the fourth grade class, we had English words on the board and the teacher would read out the English words. However, in grade five, the teacher wrote out the words in English on the board and the teacher called out the Thai words. Although this showed the adaptability of the game, it was also confusing for teachers to understand. Another reason could have been the language barrier between our team and the teachers. Explaining the game was difficult even when a translator was present.

#### ***4.2.6 – Cultural exchange programs are effective tools in sparking students' interest in English education***

English Camps are widely used in Sakon Nakhon as an effective method of connecting English language with culture. They provide students with context to what they are learning and provide them an interesting link to the English language. A number of EFL professionals who have ran or been involved in English camps or cultural exchange fairs have also highly recommended these types of programs for students. Junjiraporn Tuninard said that they provide students with a path of interest in learning English. After running our own culture fair, we also found that the teachers and staff at Phon Pang School agreed that culture fairs are a fun way of sparking students' interest in studying English.

#### ***4.2.7 – Teachers’ resources were often inaccessible and unreliable and thus teachers did not use them to their full advantage***

We found that teachers were motivated to learn how to use teaching resources to find interactive games to incorporate into their classrooms. During a teacher training session, we introduced teachers to a different way of accessing teacher resources. For example, we showed them resources such as Dave’s ESL Cafe for songs and games, the Merriam-Webster dictionary for pronunciation, and Google.com for finding other resources. There was a good turnout of English teachers and non-English teachers at this session, indicating that teachers were motivated to learn new techniques. However, the Internet connection was slow and teachers were frustrated that pages took several minutes to load. Many teachers that attended the computer training session said they would most likely not use the Internet resources because they said it was too difficult for them to access the resources. Additionally, when we introduced teachers to the King’s School broadcast, we found that teachers knew of the broadcast. However, they said that they did not use it often because the teachers do not have access to the television during the times of the broadcast.

#### ***4.2.8 – Teacher training improved the English fluency of teachers***

After speaking with teachers to assess their English fluency, teachers said that they felt that their English had improved. A seventh grade English teacher said that she was able to understand and speak English better after interacting with native English speakers. A sixth grade teacher who had limited English fluency said that she could listen and understand English better after spending four weeks practicing on her listening and speaking skills. We also found that teachers were more confident about their speech by the end of the four weeks on-site. For example, a Science teacher at Phon Pang

School who partook in the teacher training program became more confident about speaking after those four weeks. In the beginning, she was hesitant to speak with the group because she said she was shy to speak with us. However, by the end of the program, she became more confident and open with speaking English, and even acted as a translator for other teachers. We also found that teachers felt they could teach their classes better with their improved English fluency. They were able to conduct pronunciation drills with the students and correct the students when they mispronounced words.

### **4.3 – Planning for Continuation and Extension of Learning Activities in Sakon Nakhon**

One of the most important aspects of our project is ensuring its sustainability. Since we were only able to spend four weeks in Sakon Nakhon, it was necessary to ensure that the teachers continue to make use of the beneficial interactive activities and continue to work to improve their teaching methods. In this section, we focus on the sustainability aspect of our program with regards to interactive activities, cultural exchange, and teacher training.

#### ***4.3.1 – Teachers planned to continue using interactive teaching activities in English classrooms***

During our final week, we met with teachers to determine ways of maintaining interactive activities in their English curriculum. In our discussion with the teachers, we found that they planned to continue using interactive activities in the classrooms because the activities helped students retain the lesson material and increased student motivation to learn. They also informed us that they planned to continue using games and songs in their everyday lessons.

#### ***4.3.2 – Teachers hoped to incorporate cultural exchange activities in their annual English camp***

Through discussion with teachers during the fourth week, we discovered that teachers thought that cultural exchange fairs were a good way of sparking students' interest in English education. They said that the cultural fair was fun for students because it introduced them to something new and different. The teachers expressed their plans to incorporate cultural exchange interactive activities into their annual English camp.

#### ***4.3.4 – Teachers expressed that a printed reference document such as a manual would be an effective aid to continue our programs at Phon Pang School***

Following their interest to continue our three interactive programs, teachers expressed the need for materials that they could reference that would help them continue the programs. For example, some teachers requested that we supply a printed description of certain classroom games. Other teachers expressed interest in educational songs and liked the idea of having a printed collection of songs for future reference. During meetings where we discussed activities and different teaching methods, many teachers took handwritten notes to reference in the future. In addition, the large majority of teachers that attended our Internet tutorial session wanted a printed document of the information to clarify the points made and to have as future reference. These observations solidified our motive to discuss a manual that would include such wanted information. When it occurred, the discussion revealed that many teachers felt that a manual would be an effective way to aid the continuation of our program. These findings support the idea that a manual could be an effective way of transferring our programs to schools similar to Phon Pang such as those in Thailand's rural regions. Please see Appendix F: Manual.

#### 4.4 – Limitations of Findings

The nature of our fieldwork may have brought some limitations to our findings.

The teachers did not understand the purpose of our project or the goals and objectives we wished to accomplish. The group noticed this in various situations. In a sixth grade class, for example, two team members were asked to conduct a class with no teacher present. Additionally, although we hoped to work with the teachers to create activities, they frequently did not have any suggestions or questions when we suggested activities for their lessons. Also, we had hoped to explain the activities to the teachers to have them perform them in class, but in most cases we ended up implementing them in the classrooms. This was due to a variety of reasons. In some cases, two group members taught a class alone because the teacher was in another room teaching another classroom. However, in other cases we believe that the teachers did not take the initiative to perform the activities themselves because of a lack of confidence or because they felt that having native English speakers teach would be more beneficial for their students. Their immediate goals of better pronunciation may have negatively impacted the sustainability of our project because of trouble having the teachers perform the activities themselves.

## **CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 – Project Summary**

Our team worked to improve upon Phon Pang School’s existing English language education through new teaching techniques. The programs we developed to accomplish this goal looked to provide students with a fun environment to learn English through utilizing interactive education techniques. Our team devised a set of activities that we tested in the classrooms of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades and proved them beneficial to students’ English education. We also used interactive activities to introduce students to American culture to provide them context to the language they were studying. We devised a teacher training program to develop the English fluency of teachers and introduce teachers to other teaching resources with the aim of ensuring the sustainability of the programs at Phon Pang School. Additionally, to help ensure the transferability to other rural schools in Thailand, our team developed a teaching manual that includes descriptions of interactive activities, teacher training activities, and other recommendations for EFL teaching.

### **5.2 – Recommendations**

With the findings we gathered from our fieldwork at Phon Pang School in Sakon Nakhon, we developed conclusions and recommendations to enhance the school’s English language education program. Since sources such as the Office of H.R.H Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn’s Projects have articulated that Phon Pang School is a relatively accurate representation of rural schools in Thailand, we believe that these

recommendations will aid other schools in rural Thailand to make improvements to their English education program.

### *5.2.1 – The students’ need for learning resources*

From our observations of classrooms at Phon Pang School, we found that textbooks were the main sources teachers used to develop lessons and the main studying sources of students. However, we discovered that many students do not own a copy of the textbook that teachers use in class for various reasons. Inability to access study materials may hinder the students’ ability to succeed in English because they cannot reference the material they are studying. Thus, **we recommend that, if possible, the school or the Princess’s Office make studying materials such as textbooks more accessible to students.** Although this recommendation is not a literal move towards our goal of ‘new and sustainable teaching techniques,’ we feel that it is an important step toward improving EFL education, especially since some reliance on books will likely remain. One means of implementing this recommendation is to provide a few copies of the classroom textbooks in a common place such as the school library so they are accessible to all students. Although there is a possibility that many students will not take advantage of these resources, the effort to provide students the opportunity to learn would reach those students who are motivated to learn and succeed.

In addition to textbooks, we found that there were few opportunities for students to study English outside of the classroom. During our four weeks of fieldwork at Phon Pang School, we observed that a number of students had difficulty keeping up with the material studied in the classrooms and many students showed interest in studying outside of the classroom. However, we found that the school did not have any school-organized

study groups for students to obtain extra instruction or help with their English studies. Opportunities that allow students to study outside of the classroom strengthen English education because they provide students with extra practice. Thus, **we recommend that the schools offer students resources such as extra help or study groups for students who are interested in furthering their English studies.**

### ***5.2.2 – Incorporation of interactive activities to support the current English curriculum***

Through implementing interactive activities of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade English classrooms, we found that teaching methods that induced students to actively think about the lesson material were more effective in language education than traditional teaching methods such as rote memorization. When teachers incorporated interactive teaching methods to their lessons, students became more engaged in the class. The increased motivation to learn also resulted in students better retaining the material. We witnessed this in almost all of the classrooms in which we implemented the activities. The increased motivation was most evident among boys. When interactive activities were used, there was a clear behavior change from being easily distracted to being eager to participate in the lesson. In addition, we found that students were able to retain more of the information they studied through these activities in comparison to lessons that only relied on memorization and repetition. We concluded that these interactive activities made students more eager to learn and as a result, their participation in the activity and the lesson allowed them to better retain the lesson material. From these conclusions, **we recommend that teachers utilize more interactive activities to help overcome student motivation and participation challenges.**

In addition, interactive activities that incorporate cultural education were another tool that enhanced the English education at Phon Pang School. We found that English Camps were commonly used to support students' English studies. Through our implementation of a cultural exchange fair, we observed that the students showed a genuine interest in learning about American culture. Teachers and the director of Phon Pang School also expressed that they believed many students became more interested in English and American culture, and that the teachers and administrators are planning to incorporate cultural activities in their annual English camp. Students' interest in American culture allowed them to better relate to the language they studied, as well as build their interest in the language. As a result, **we recommend schools of rural Thailand to utilize Cultural Exchange programs to support their English curriculum.**

### ***5.2.3 – Teachers' benefits from teacher training***

The interactive activities for English language education would not be sustainable without a teacher training program. The training program develops the English fluency of teachers to improve their confidence. It also trains teachers to use resources to find, adapt, and implement new teaching methodologies in their classrooms.

During our fieldwork at Phon Pang School, teachers expressed the concern that they had trouble with pronunciation of specific sounds, and were shy to speak English in public, especially in front of native English speakers. However, after four weeks of practicing their speaking and listening skills in English, we noticed teachers were better able to pronounce words. In addition, teachers commented that they felt more confident when speaking English. This increased confidence made teachers more comfortable

teaching English classes because they felt assured of their own abilities to speak English. Therefore, we concluded that with practice teachers were able to improve their English fluency. However, there are limitations to this teacher training program. Teachers will not always have the opportunity to practice speaking and listening to English with a native English speaker. Thus, this program might not be sustainable.

Teachers were also motivated to learn new teaching methods to incorporate into their English lessons. From our findings, we discovered that teachers of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade believed that interactive activities provided students with a fun and healthy learning environment. These activities made students more eager to participate and learn, resulting in students better retaining lesson material. In addition, teachers were enthusiastic about learning ways they could seek teaching techniques beyond what we provided them. Through introducing teachers to internet resources such as Dave's ESL Cafe, broadcasts such as the King's School broadcast that airs teacher training programs for English teachers, and book resources such as the manual we created, teachers were able to continue their training. Therefore, **we recommend that teachers use teaching resources such as Internet sites, the King's School broadcast, and teaching books such as our manual to further improve their English fluency and their teaching techniques.**

During our time in Phon Pang, we held daily teacher meetings. We initiated these to introduce new teaching techniques as well as give the teachers a chance to interact with us. We found that many of the teachers enjoyed these meetings and said that they found the meetings to be extremely helpful with improving their English language skills. Discussions between teachers of strong English fluency and those of lower ability

improved the comprehension and speaking level of both. In addition to providing teachers with an opportunity to practice speaking English, these meetings aided the exchange of teaching techniques among teachers. Many teachers said that they would continue to hold similar meetings after our departure because they saw them as beneficial tools. Thus, **we also recommend that teachers hold regular meetings to practice speaking and listening to spoken English, to increase their fluency, and to exchange teaching practices.**

However, the accessibility of teaching resources to teachers could affect these recommendations. During our computer training session for teachers, teachers became discouraged when the Internet connection prevented them from accessing certain Internet sites and when web pages took several minutes to load. In our final meeting, two teachers remarked that although they thought the Internet sources would be beneficial tools, they did not think they would use them because of their inconvenience. In addition, when we introduced teachers to the King's School broadcast, we found that teachers would most likely not be able to use it as a resource because there was only one television and it is not accessible to them during broadcast hours. It is evident that teachers would take advantage of resources if they were accessible. Therefore, **we recommend that schools provide teachers with better access to resources such as a reliable Internet connection and satellite broadcast.**

Throughout our fieldwork in Phon Pang, we were able to test and evaluate a full range of activities that would help teachers overcome many of the obstacles presented by the current education system in rural Thailand. Also, our teacher training program looks to further provide teachers with information to help improve their fluency and their use of

available resources. Although rural Thailand faces many challenges when looking to keep up with the progress of globalization, with the help of the activities and teacher training that we developed, schools will have new resources available to aid their progress in development.

## PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

### **Assistant Professor Chalermopol Daoruang**

Associate Director for Foreign Affairs and Outreach Projects  
Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Elementary School  
Bangkok, Thailand

### **Anders Dideriksen**

IT Specialist for the Distance Learning Foundation, DLF eSchool  
Bangkok, Thailand

### **Martin Fells**

Director of Studies  
Andrew Biggs Academy  
Bangkok, Thailand

### **English Teacher Celeste Herrera**

Head Start  
Albuquerque, New Mexico, United States

### **English Teacher Valerie Valera**

Saint John's School  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

### **Assistant Professor Nantaporn Viravathana**

Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects  
Bangkok, Thailand

### **Assistant Professor M.L. Siripastr Jayanta**

Department of Chemistry  
Chulalongkorn University  
Bangkok, Thailand

### **Junjiraporn Tuninard**

Skonrajwittanukool School  
Sakon Nakhon, Thailand

### **Khon Srisawang Kumsangaim**

Language Fluency Department  
Phon Phang School  
Phon Phang, Sakon Nakhon, Thailand

### **Assistant Professor Tippadee Ongsangkoon Assistant Principal for Academic Programs**

Chulalongkorn University Demonstration School

Bangkok, Thailand

**Prapatsorn Kosulwat**

Teacher Supervisor

Office of Sakon Nakhon Educational Service Area 1

Sakon Nakhon, Thailand

## REFERENCES

- Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects (2003). Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Development Work in Remote Areas. Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Public Co., Ltd.
- (2004). Image: Thailand Sakon Nakhon. Retrieved February 18, 2008 from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Thailand\\_Sakhon\\_Nakhon.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Thailand_Sakhon_Nakhon.png)
- Bruthiaux, Paul. (2002). Hold Your Courses: Language Education, Language Choice, and Economic Development. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36 (3, Language in Development), 75-296. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0039-8322%28200223%2936%3A3%3C275%3AHYCLEL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Z>
- Carvajal, D. (2007) In Many Schools, The Bottom Line is English. Retrieved February 14, 2008 from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/special/2007/0410bottomline.htm>.
- Foley, J. (2005) English In ... Thailand. *RELC Journal*, 36 (2), 223-234. <http://rel.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/36/2/223>
- Glassman J. & Sneddon C. (2003). Chiang Mai and Khon Kaen as Growth Poles. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*.93-115 Retrieved February 14, 2008 from Sage Journals Online <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/590/1/93.pdf>
- Ikemoto, Y., & Uehara, M. (2000). Income inequality and Kuznets' hypothesis in Thailand. *Asian Economic Journal*, 14(4), 421-443 Retrieved November 2, 2007 from Blackwell Publishing database. from <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1467-8381.t01-1-00117>
- Jitsuchon, S.& Richter, K. (2007). Thailand's poverty maps: From construction to application. In T. Bedi, A. Coudouel & K. Simler (Eds.), *More than a pretty picture: Using poverty maps to design better policies and interventions* (pp. 240-260) World Bank Publications.
- Judd, E. L. (1981). Language policy, curriculum development, and TESOL instruction: A search for compatibility. *TESOL Quarterly*, 15(1), 59-66. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00398322%28198103%2915%3A1%3C59%3ALPCDAT%3E2.0.CO%3B2-R>
- Khoman, S. (1993). Education Policy. In P. G. Warr (Ed.), *The Thai Economy in Transition* (pp. 325-355). Hong Kong: Cambridge University Press.
- Krasner, I. (1999). The role of culture in language teaching. *Dialog on Language Instruction*, 13(1-2), 79-88.

- Krongkaew, M., Chamnivickorn, S., & Nitithanprapas, I. (2006). Economic growth, employment and poverty reduction linkages: The case of Thailand. Unpublished manuscript.
- Lockheed, M. E., & Levin, H. M. (1993). Creating Effective Schools. In M. E. Lockheed, & H. M. Levin, *Effective Schools in Developing Countries* (pp. 1-20). Washington DC: The Falmer Press.
- Mackenzie, A. S. (2002). EFL curriculum reform in Thailand. *Curriculum Innovation, Testing and Evaluation: Proceedings of the 1st Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference*, Kyoto, Japan. 59-67.
- Mandal, S. K. (2000). Reconsidering cultural globalization: The English language in Malaysia. *Third World Quarterly*, 21 (6, Capturing Globalization), 1001-1012.<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=01436597%28200012%2921%3A6%3C1001%3ARCGTEL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C>
- Min, L. L. (2006). Globalization: Saving Thailand's Other Languages. Retrieved 2/14, 2008, from <http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/10/23/features/lang.php>.
- Nayar, P. B. (1997). ESL/EFL dichotomy today: Language politics or pragmatics? *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(1), 9-37. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00398322%28199721%2931%3A1%3C9%3AEsDTLPO%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9>
- Ostler, N. (2003). A loss for words. *Foreign Policy*, (139), 30-31.<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00157228%28200311%2F12%290%3A139%3C30%3AALFW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-V>
- Parijs, P. V. (2000). The ground floor of the world: On the socio-economic consequences of linguistic globalization. *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale de science politique*, 21(2), 217-233.<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0192-5121%28200004%2921%3A2%3C217%3ATGFOTW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Y>
- Peterson, E.& Coltrane, B.(2003) *Culture in Second Language Teaching*. Retrieved February 14, 2008, from <http://www.cal.org/resources/Digest/0309peterson.html>.
- Phongpaichit, P., & Baker, C. (1998). *Thailand's Boom and Bust*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.
- Portnoff, Heléne & Hallerstedt, Jan-Åke. (2005). School observation report – the international school in nacka. Retrieved 12/4, 2007, from [www.isn.nacka.se/engelska/aktuellt/School%20Observation%20Report.doc](http://www.isn.nacka.se/engelska/aktuellt/School%20Observation%20Report.doc)
- Pupphavesa, W. (2002) *Globalization and Social Development in Thailand*. Retrieved 2/14, 2008, from <http://webh01.ua.ac.be/cas/PDF/CAS39.pdf>.

Renewal by Cooperation. (2008, January 15). The Bangkok Post, L1.

Rief, Y. M., & Cochrane, S. H. (1990). The off-farm labor supply of farmers: The case of the Chiang Mai valley of Thailand. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 38(4), 683-698. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0013-0079%28199007%2938%3A4%3C683%3ATOLSOF%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9>

Rothkopf, D. (1997). In Praise of Cultural Imperialism? Effects of Globalization on Culture. Retrieved February 12, 2008, from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/cultural/globcult.htm>

Shetty, S. (1996). Thailand growth, poverty and income distribution (An Economic Report No. 15689-TH) World Bank.

Shin, J. K. (2006). Ten Helpful Ideas for Teaching English to Young Learners. *English Teaching Forum*, 44 (2), 2-7.

Waugh, R. F., Bowering, M. H., & Chayarathee, S. (2005). Creating Scales to Measure Reading Comprehension, and Attitude and Behaviour, For Prathom 6 Students Taught ESL Through A Cooperative Learning Method in Thailand. In R. F. Waugh (Ed.), *Frontiers in Educational Psychology* (pp. 183-221). New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

## APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Most interviews were conducted informally to build trust between our team and the interviewee

### Appendix A1: Interview Questions for EFL Professionals in Bangkok

- How many days a week is your English class?
- What grade do you teach?
- What are the students learning?
- How long is your class?
- Where do you find resources for new teaching ideas?
  - Do you draw upon other professionals' findings?
  - Are there specific books or websites that you can recommend?
- Is there a specific daily lesson plan structure that you follow?
- How are literary skills balanced with oral skills in your scheduled lesson plans?
- How often do you use interactive or activity-based learning?
- Do you think activity based learning is effective in comparison to other methods?
- Are there any specific activities that you've found particularly useful? Why?
- What do you do when you notice a student who is not participating in a class activity?
- Do your students typically have homework?
  - Do you rely on your students' completion of homework to complete lessons on time?
- Do you use television in your teaching?
  - What type of programs do you suggest?
- What do you know about the teaching style and effectiveness of EFL teachers in Isan?
  - What do you feel might be an area of focus for improvement in this area?
  - What do you think could be a valuable way to approach this target area?
- What is your opinion of the activities that we have devised?

## Appendix A2: Interview Questions for Teachers at Phon Pang School

- What is the goal of English language education in Sakon Nakhon?
- How does the community (mainly, the parents of the students) view English education? Do they approve, disapprove, or have no opinion?
- How are parents involved in the student's education?
- How is the English language used in the community?
- How will English language education benefit the community?
- Relative to other subjects taught, how important is English education?
- How often is English taught in the 4-6th grade levels (if they are different)?
- What methods do you use when teaching English language?
- What does a daily English language lesson consist of?
- Are there any activities students enjoy more?
- Are there any activities that are more effective?
- What materials are used to teach English language?
- How do you evaluate the progress the students after each lesson or unit of lessons?
- How are daily lessons planned?
- Do you use any resources to gather information on teaching English? If so, which ones?
- How often are interactive learning techniques used to teach English language?
- How long have you studied English?
- Do you feel strain from teaching English? If so, how?
- What do you feel would make teaching English language easier?

## APPENDIX B: PHON PANG SCHOOL

### Appendix B1: Representative Photos



Figure 2: Morning Assemble with Total Student Body



Figure 3: Typical Home of Students in Phon Pang Village



Figure 4: Standard Classroom Setup



Figure 5: Classroom Interactive Activity Implementation

## Appendix B2: English Class Schedule

|              | Period 1                   | Period 2                       | Period 3                       | Period 4                       |       | Period 5                       | Period 6                       | Period 7                       |
|--------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Time<br>Date | 08.40<br>a.m –<br>9.30 a.m | 09.30<br>a.m –<br>10.20<br>a.m | 10.20<br>a.m –<br>11.10<br>a.m | 11.10<br>a.m –<br>12.00<br>a.m |       | 13.00<br>p.m –<br>13.50<br>p.m | 13.50<br>p.m –<br>14.40<br>p.m | 14.40<br>p.m –<br>15.30<br>p.m |
| Mon          |                            |                                | Grade 4                        |                                | Lunch |                                |                                |                                |
| Tues         |                            | Grade 4                        | Grade 5                        |                                |       |                                |                                |                                |
| Wed          |                            | Grade 5                        | Grade<br>6/1                   |                                |       |                                |                                |                                |
| Thu          |                            | Grade<br>6/1                   | Grade<br>6/2                   |                                |       |                                |                                |                                |
| Fri          |                            | Grade<br>6/2                   |                                |                                |       |                                |                                |                                |

Table 2: Daily Class Schedule at Phon Pang School

## APPENDIX C: CULTURAL FAIR

### Appendix C1: Criteria for Cultural Exchange Activity Selection

All activities were rated based on the following attributes. Of these, age appropriateness was determined the most important characteristic. If an activity failed age appropriateness, then it was automatically disqualified from being considered. From there, activities were selected based on their rating and group discussion was used to select activities in the event of a tie. Below is the rubric for the activity rating system we used. ‘+’ was worth a score of 1, ‘-’ was -1, and ‘0’ was no score.

1. Age Appropriate
  - + All children will understand and participate.
  - 0 Most children will understand and participate. A few may struggle.
  - Majority of children will have difficulty understanding.
2. Educational Value (Connection to English / Cultural Exchange)
  - + Material is highly connected to both English and cultural exchange.
  - 0 Material may only be relevant to one topic (English or cultural exchange)
  - Material does not connect to English or cultural exchange.
3. Impact (Engagement, Memorable, Take Away, Funness)
  - + Students are likely to be highly engaged and will find the activity memorable.
  - 0 Some students show interest in the activity but may not be fully engaged.
  - Students show little interest in the activity.
4. Logistics (Materials, Control)
  - + Resources for the activity are easily obtainable and the activity can be easily controlled.
  - 0 The activity may have some difficult to obtain materials or may be slightly difficult to control.
  - The activity is very difficult to control or has very difficult to obtain resources.

## Appendix C2: Results for Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations

Grades: K and 1

Maximum Number of Students: 60

| Activity                      | Age Appropriate | Educational Value | Logistics | Impact | Total           |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|-----------------|
| Food (Smores)                 | +               | 0                 | 0         | +      | 2               |
| Valentines / American Holiday | +               | +                 | -         | +      | 2 (won by vote) |
| Instrument Making             | +               | 0                 | -         | +      | 1               |
| Sing-A-Long                   | +               | +                 | +         | +      | 4               |
| Freeze Dance                  | +               | -                 | +         | 0      | 1               |
| American Sports               | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age      |
| Dancing                       | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age      |
| Board Games                   | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age      |
| Mrs. Fox                      | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age      |
| Telephone                     | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age      |
| Red Light Green Light         | +               | 0                 | +         | 0      | 2               |
| Bingo                         | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age      |
| Simon Says                    | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age      |

Table 3: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Kindergarten and First Grade

Grades: 2 and 3

Maximum Number of Students: 90

| Activity                      | Age Appropriate | Educational Value | Logistics | Impact | Total      |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|------------|
| Food (Smores)                 | +               | 0                 | 0         | +      | 2          |
| Valentines / American Holiday | +               | +                 | -         | +      | 2          |
| Instrument Making             | +               | 0                 | -         | +      | 1          |
| Sing-A-Long                   | +               | +                 | +         | +      | 4          |
| Freeze Dance                  | +               | -                 | +         | 0      | 1          |
| American Sports               | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Dancing                       | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Board Games                   | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Mrs. Fox                      | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Telephone                     | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Red Light Green Light         | +               | 0                 | +         | 0      | 2          |
| Bingo                         | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Simon Says                    | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |

Table 4: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Second and Third Grade

Grades: 4 and 5

Maximum Number of Students: 60

| Activity                      | Age Appropriate | Educational Value | Logistics | Impact | Total      |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|------------|
| Food (Smores)                 | +               | 0                 | 0         | +      | 2          |
| Valentines / American Holiday | +               | +                 | -         | +      | 2          |
| Instrument Making             | +               | 0                 | -         | +      | 1          |
| Sing-A-Long                   | +               | +                 | +         | +      | 4          |
| Freeze Dance                  | +               | -                 | +         | 0      | 1          |
| American Sports               | +               | 0                 | -         | 0      | 0          |
| Dancing                       | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Board Games (Tic Tac Toe)     | +               | 0                 | 0         | 0      | 1          |
| Mrs. Fox                      | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Telephone                     | +               | 0                 | +         | 0      | 2          |
| Red Light Green Light         | +               | -                 | +         | 0      | 1          |
| Bingo                         | -               | N/A               | N/A       | N/A    | Failed Age |
| Simon Says                    | +               | +                 | +         | +      | 4          |

Table 5: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Fourth and Fifth Grade

Despite the high ratings for Simon Says, we hope to do Valentines cards so the students have something to take home, and because the station will already be set up for them.

Grades: 6 and 7

Maximum Number of Students: 150

| Activity                      | Age Appropriate | Educational Value | Logistics    | Impact | Total                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------------|
| Food (Smores)                 | +               | 0                 | 0            | +      | 2                     |
| Valentines / American Holiday | +               | +                 | -            | +      | 2                     |
| Instrument Making             | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Sing-A-Long                   | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Freeze Dance                  | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| American Sports               | +               | 0                 | -            | 0      | 0                     |
| Dancing                       | +               | 0                 | 0            | +      | 2                     |
| Board Games                   | +               | 0                 | Not Feasible | 0      | Failed - Not Feasible |
| Mrs. Fox                      | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Telephone                     | +               | 0                 | +            | 0      | 2                     |
| Red Light Green Light         | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Bingo                         | +               | 0                 | -            | 0      | 0                     |
| Simon Says                    | 0               | +                 | +            | +      | 3                     |

Table 6: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Sixth and Seventh Grade

Grades: 8 and 9

Maximum Number of Students: 180

| Activity                      | Age Appropriate | Educational Value | Logistics    | Impact | Total                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------------|
| Food (Smores)                 | +               | 0                 | 0            | +      | 2                     |
| Valentines / American Holiday | +               | +                 | -            | +      | 2                     |
| Instrument Making             | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Sing-A-Long                   | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Freeze Dance                  | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| American Sports               | +               | 0                 | -            | 0      | 0                     |
| Dancing                       | +               | 0                 | 0            | +      | 2                     |
| Board Games                   | +               | 0                 | Not Feasible | 0      | Failed - Not Feasible |
| Mrs. Fox                      | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Telephone                     | +               | 0                 | +            | 0      | 2                     |
| Red Light Green Light         | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Bingo                         | +               | 0                 | -            | 0      | 0                     |
| Simon Says                    | 0               | +                 | +            | +      | 3                     |

Table 7: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Eight and Ninth Grade

Grades: 10, 11, and 12

Maximum Number of Students: 180

| Activity                      | Age Appropriate | Educational Value | Logistics    | Impact | Total                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------------|
| Food (Smores)                 | +               | 0                 | 0            | +      | 2                     |
| Valentines / American Holiday | +               | +                 | -            | +      | 2                     |
| Instrument Making             | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Sing-A-Long                   | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Freeze Dance                  | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| American Sports               | +               | 0                 | -            | 0      | 0                     |
| Dancing                       | +               | 0                 | 0            | +      | 2                     |
| Board Games                   | +               | 0                 | Not Feasible | 0      | Failed - Not Feasible |
| Mrs. Fox                      | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Telephone                     | +               | 0                 | +            | 0      | 2                     |
| Red Light Green Light         | -               | N/A               | N/A          | N/A    | Failed Age            |
| Bingo                         | +               | 0                 | -            | 0      | 0                     |
| Simon Says                    | 0               | +                 | +            | +      | 3                     |

Table 8: Cultural Exchange Activity Evaluations for Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Grade

## Appendix C3: Culture Fair Material Requirements

Supplies for the 11 February 2008 Cultural Exchange Fair

| Activity              | Materials supplied by team                                                                  | Materials supplied by school                                                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Making American Food  | 740 Marshmallows<br>740 Graham crackers<br>93 Hershey bars<br>60 Roasting sticks            | 3 Large outdoor grills<br>1 Table<br>1 Tent                                      |
| Valentine's Day Cards | 6 Reams of Colored Paper<br>7 Sets of Crayons<br>8 Sets of Markers<br>7 Scissors<br>Doilies | 1 Table<br>1 Tent<br>4 Floor mats                                                |
| Sing-a-long           | Songs                                                                                       | Sound system<br>Microphone<br>Cables to hookup a laptop<br>One table<br>One tent |
| Simon Says            | N/A                                                                                         | Same station as Sing-along.<br>Nothing additional needed.                        |
| Dodgeball             | 4 Playground Balls                                                                          | One Tent<br>Any playground balls that the school may have.                       |
| Additional Resources  | 10 Large Posterboards<br>Canon MP160 Printer<br>Cartridges<br>Whistles for Station Change   | 4 Trash Bins<br>5 Chairs                                                         |

Table 9: Cultural Exchange Fair Materials List

# APPENDIX D: OBSERVATIONS EVALUATION FORMS

## Appendix D1: Classroom Observations Form

This is the observation form we used during our classroom observations

### Classroom Observation Form

Name of the school: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

### **General Class Information**

How often is the class? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of student in class: \_\_\_\_\_

How long does the class last? \_\_\_\_\_

What does the classroom look like?

---

---

---

---

Class Objectives (Ask Teacher):

---

---

---

---

### **Activities and Materials**

How does the teacher attract the attention of all the students?

---

---

---

---

How many and what type of activities are they engaged in?

---

---

---

---

How much time do they spend using books and what types of books?

---

---

---

---

What other materials are used?

---

---

---

---

### **Student Engagement**

Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?

---

---

---

---

How much time does the teacher spend in front of the class vs. within the students?

---

---

---

---

How often do students participate?

---

---

---

---

How much do students talk to each other in English?

---

---

---

---

### **Speaking**

How often and in what situations do they speak their native language?

---

---

---

---

How strict are teachers about using English?

---

---

---

Does the teacher seem comfortable with his/her English skills?

---

---

---

**Evaluation**

How are students evaluated/assessed?

---

---

---

Teacher's opinion of class:

---

---

---

Reflections:

---

---

---

## Appendix D2: Classroom Evaluations

### Classroom Observation Form

Grade: 4th

#### General Class Information

*How often is the class?*

Twice a week

*Number of students in the class:*

38, 25 girls, 13 boys; they are separated by gender, except for two extra girls

*How long does the class last?*

50 minutes

*What does the classroom look like?*

There are pictures of different animals on the walls. They have folders and individual desks with the teacher's desk in the back. They have windows and a chalkboard. The date is written on the top right of the board in English and Thai.

#### Activities and Materials

*How does the teacher attract the attention of all the students?*

She walks around the classroom speaking loudly. Many of the students in the back are distracted and not paying attention. The entire girls section is very attentive.

*How many and what type of activities are they engaged in?*

They started by counting in English. Then they stood up to welcome us and say good morning. Then, they went on to spell banana. Now, their current activity does not seem to be engaging and some students are not following it. The teacher reviews greetings and introductions. "My name is...". Students are left to draw pictures of fruit in the notebooks and label them. Boys seem to fall behind on work.

*How much time do they spend using books?*

The textbook is utilized for the majority of the class. Many of the students do not own a copy of the book or are not following along.

*What other materials are used?*

Each student has his/her own workbook. Students have pencils and rulers, which they use for drawing

#### Student Engagement

*Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?*

Some students are talking to each other, others are playing with their clothes, others playing with the window, some get up randomly without asking for permission.

***How much time does the teacher spend in front of the class vs. within the students?***

The teacher gives instruction at the front of the class, but then goes around the class to make sure they are doing things correctly.

***How often do students participate?***

Only a few students are participating. The students in the back of the room rarely participate or are called on.

***How much do students talk to each other in English?***

The students speak to each other in Thai.

## **Speaking**

***How strict are teachers about using English?***

The teacher is not strict about using English in the class. Teach is strict about proper pronunciation.

***Does the teacher seem comfortable with his/her English skills?***

The teacher faces English confidence challenges

## ***Classroom Observation Form***

Grade: 5th

### **General Class Information**

#### ***How often is the class?***

Twice a week

#### ***Number of student in class:***

32, 11 girls, 21 boys

#### ***How long does the class last?***

50 minutes

#### ***What does the classroom look like?***

There are pictures of different animals on the walls. They have folders and individual desks with the teacher's desk in the back. They have windows and a chalkboard. The date is written on the top right of the board in English and Thai.

### **Activities and Materials**

#### ***How does the teacher attract the attention of all the students?***

He is standing at the front of the class. Most of the students pay attention

#### ***How many and what type of activities are they engaged in?***

The teacher is covering body parts. He also covers colds. He teaches straight from the textbook.

#### ***How much time do they spend using books?***

The textbook is utilized for the majority of the class. Many of the students do not own a copy of the book or are not following along.

#### ***What other materials are used?***

Each student has his/her own workbook. Students have pencils and rulers, which they use for drawing

### **Student Engagement**

#### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

All students are copying the material on the board. They seem to be extremely motivated. They pay attention closely and write everything the teacher writes. Still some are a little bored.

#### ***How much time does the teacher spend in front of the class vs. within the students?***

The teacher spends the majority of the class moving around the room. He even checks on the students in the back to ensure they are paying attention

*How often do students participate?*

Students participate through out the class.

*How much do students talk to each other in English?*

The students speak to each other in Thai

## **Speaking**

*How strict are teachers about using English?*

The teacher speaks English as often as he can. He has a few pronunciation errors. He tries to get students to speak as often as possible.

*Does the teacher seem comfortable with his/her English skills?*

The teacher faces English confidence challenges

## **Classroom Observation Form**

Grade: 6<sup>th</sup> class #1

### **General Class Information**

***How often is the class?***

Twice a week

***Number of student in class:***

28, 15 girls, 13 boys

***How long does the class last?***

50 minutes

***What does the classroom look like?***

There are pictures of different animals on the walls. They have folders and individual desks with the teacher's desk in the back. They have windows and a chalkboard. The date is written on the top right of the board in English and Thai.

### **Activities and Materials**

***How does the teacher attract the attention of all the students?***

She is standing at the front of the class. Most of the students pay attention. The teacher uses songs and dances to keep the students interested. Great techniques!

***How many and what type of activities are they engaged in?***

Teacher covers greetings

***How much time do they spend using books?***

The textbooks are used for only part of the class time

***What other materials are used?***

Each student has his/her own workbook. Students have pencils and rulers, which they use for drawing

### **Student Engagement**

***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

All students are copying the material on the board. They seem to be extremely motivated. They pay attention closely and write everything the teacher writes. Still some are a little bored. The students are extremely engaged with the song and dance.

***How much time does the teacher spend in front of the class vs. within the students?***

The teacher spends the majority of the class at the front of the class. Students in the back of the room become distracted

*How often do students participate?*

Students participate through out the class.

*How much do students talk to each other in English?*

The students speak to each other in Thai

## **Speaking**

*How strict are teachers about using English?*

The teacher speaks English as often as she can. She is not confident in her English

*Does the teacher seem comfortable with his/her English skills?*

The teacher faces English confidence challenges

## **Classroom Observation Form**

Grade: 6<sup>th</sup> class #2

### **General Class Information**

***How often is the class?***

Twice a week

***Number of student in class:***

28, 13 girls, 15 boys

***How long does the class last?***

20 minutes

***What does the classroom look like?***

There are pictures of different animals on the walls. They have folders and individual desks with the teacher's desk in the back. They have windows and a chalkboard. The date is written on the top right of the board in English and Thai.

### **Activities and Materials**

***How does the teacher attract the attention of all the students?***

She is standing at the front of the class. Most of the students pay attention.

***How many and what type of activities are they engaged in?***

Covered a wide range of vocabulary

***How much time do they spend using books?***

Textbooks are utilized throughout class

***What other materials are used?***

Each student has his/her own workbook. Students have pencils and rulers, which they use for drawing

### **Student Engagement**

***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

All students are copying the material on the board. They seem to be extremely motivated. They pay attention closely and write everything the teacher writes. Still some are a little bored.

***How much time does the teacher spend in front of the class vs. within the students?***

The teacher spends the majority of the class at the front of the class. Students in the back of the room become distracted

*How often do students participate?*

Students participate through out the class.

*How much do students talk to each other in English?*

The students speak to each other in Thai

## **Speaking**

*How strict are teachers about using English?*

The teacher speaks English as often as she can. She is not confident in her English

*Does the teacher seem comfortable with his/her English skills?*

The teacher faces English confidence challenges

## Appendix D3: Interactive Activities Evaluation Form

This appendix is a collection of our observation forms that we filled out during the implementation of classroom interactive activities.

### **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade:     Fifth      
Activity:     Erase      
Teacher:     Gaby      
Observer:     Connie    

#### ***How long is the activity played for?***

25 minutes

#### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

Most of the students were engaged in the activity, but there were many students in the back of the room who were not distracted but not actively participating as well. When Gaby called on them to participate, they willingly participated.

#### ***What problems did the activity face?***

The activity did not have many problems. Students did erase more than one word.

#### ***Recommendations?***

Recommend that stricter point system be implemented so that points are taken away when they erase more than one word

#### ***Teacher performance (were teachers comfortable with the activity?)***

The teacher was not in school that day so we do not know his comfort level with teaching the game. When we introduce the game to him and other teachers during the teach meeting two days ago, he seemed to understand the rule.

#### ***Reflections:***

Game is not as effective as I thought it would be because it only tested students reading skills.

#### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

It was effective at seeing what students knew and didn't know.

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade: Sixth Pom's Class

Activity: Erase

Teacher: T.

Observer: Gaby

### ***How long is the activity played for?***

20 minutes

### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

All of the students are engaged in the game. Even the boys in the back are paying attention. The whole class enjoys the new factor of competition especially when the games are played boys versus girls.

### ***What problems did the activity face?***

- Students initially had difficulty understanding the rules of the game
- Students erased more than one answer (teacher has difficulty explaining which answer was right)
- Students do not understand point system
- Students could not play Thai to English. Played English to English instead
- Children did not know vocabulary

### ***Recommendations?***

Review vocabulary with students before playing

Have teacher explain points system to students

Take away points for incorrect answers

Say each of the words out loud

### ***Teacher performance (were teachers comfortable with the activity?)***

Initially the teacher seemed unconfident with the new activity. After playing a few rounds of the game with the class, the teacher seemed more confident.

### ***Reflections:***

The students enjoyed the game. The entire class was engaged in the lesson. The students enjoyed the physical interaction.

### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

The students' knowledge of the vocabulary increased dramatically the more they played the game. In the beginning students struggled to find some of the words, but after a few rounds were able to quickly find the correct words.

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade: \_\_\_ 7th grade math class \_\_\_\_\_

Activity: \_\_\_ Erase \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_ Connie \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* a math teacher asked us to implement Erase into his math class

### ***How long is the activity played for?***

40 minutes

Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?

All students were engaged because the teacher was very good at making sure all students were participating.

### ***What problems did the activity face?***

There were many answers to the questions he was asking, so that made it difficult for students to pick the correct answer to erase. Also, the questions involved students to solve long math problems, which took a lot of time.

### ***Recommendations?***

Teachers make sure the questions are clear and there is only one answer to the questions.

### ***Teacher performance (were teachers comfortable with the activity?)***

Teacher did a terrific job at conducting this activity on his own. He did not have any problems. The lesson ran very smoothly.

### ***Reflections:***

This activity worked well with the math class because students did not just run up to the board, but they had to work out the problem as a team then run up to the board to erase. Then the teacher made the students work out the problem on the board. This adaption makes the lesson even more effective.

### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

Yes, it made all the students think and learn.

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade: Sixth Grade  
Activity: Total Physical Response (TPR) Game  
Teacher: Jesse  
Observer: Alyssa

### ***How long is the activity played for?***

10 minutes

### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

Initially all the students were engaged in the game. Students enjoyed the physical activity. However, students quickly lost interested as the game progressed

### ***What problems did the activity face?***

Repetitive  
Students had a limited knowledge of verb to use  
Children struggled with some of the vocabulary

### ***Recommendations?***

Review vocabulary with students before playing  
Have teacher do a demonstration  
Say each of the words out loud

### ***Teacher performance (were teachers comfortable with the activity?)***

We did the whole activity for this class. The sixth grade teacher was uncomfortable with her English.

### ***Reflections:***

The game could be used to supplement daily lessons rather than to be considered an entire lesson. This activity would be a great way to introduce new vocabulary. Students may find old vocabulary boring

### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

The direct connection between words and their actions was extremely effective. More games that utilize this style of teaching should be used in classes.

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade: Fourth  
Activity: Chirades and Animal song  
Teacher: Connie  
Observer: Gaby

### ***How long is the activity played for?***

30 minutes

### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

All of the students are engaged in the game. Only a few students seemed distracted during the song.

### ***What problems did the activity face?***

- Animals have different noises in Thai and English (duck in English is quack quack but in Thai is back back)
- Students would tell teammates the answer
- Students do not understand point system
- Children struggled with some of the vocabulary

### ***Recommendations?***

- Review vocabulary with students before playing
- Have teacher do a demonstration
- Have teacher explain points system to students
- Take away points for incorrect answers
- Say each of the words out loud

### ***Teacher performance (were teachers comfortable with the activity?)***

Initially the teacher seemed unconfident with the new activity. The teacher wanted us to do the entire activity rather than learning it herself.

### ***Reflections:***

The students enjoyed the game. The entire class was engaged in the lesson. The students enjoyed the song.

### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

The students' knowledge of the vocabulary increased dramatically the more they played the game. In the beginning students struggled to find some of the words, but were able to learn the vocabulary quickly. The song helps to create a fun atmosphere for students to learn animal vocabulary words.

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade:   fifth  

Activity:   Charade with animals  and  Animal  song  

Teacher:   Alyssa and Jesse  

Observer:   Connie  

### ***How long is the activity played for?***

Charades 40 minutes

Song 10 minutes

### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

During the game, all students were engaged, but many of them were reluctant to raise their hand. For the song, all students were singing and participating.

### ***What problems did the activity face?***

Students cheated by mouthing the words to their peers instead of acting. Many of the boys had their books open. It was difficult to explain the game without a teacher present. Teacher was sick at home.

### ***Recommendations?***

Review vocabulary with students before playing and make sure to call on students that are not actively participating.

### ***Teacher performance (were teachers comfortable with the activity?)***

The teacher was not involved in the game because she was sick that week. There was no substitute so Alyssa and Jesse taught the class.

### ***Reflections:***

The students enjoyed the game. The entire class was engaged in the lesson. The students enjoyed the song.

### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

It was a very good way for student to learn the vocabulary because students linked what words with actions.

## Appendix D4: Evaluation of Cultural Fair Interactive Activities

This appendix is a collection of our observation forms that we filled out during the implementation of the cultural exchange interactive activities.

### Interactive Activity Observation Form

Grade: \_\_\_ 2, 3, 4, 5 \_\_\_

Activity: \_\_\_ songs \_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_ Jesse \_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_ Connie \_\_\_

**Songs sang:** Head shoulders knees and toes, hokey pokey, twinkle twinkle little star, itsy bitsy spider, afternoon, old macdonald

#### ***How long is the activity played for?***

15 minutes

#### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

Because students were in a small group and there was a good student to teacher ratio, all students were engaged. This might be different if not in this situation. Students like being active and having the opportunity to jump around, dance, and sing.

#### ***What problems did the activity face?***

Children struggled with some of the vocabulary  
Had trouble with pronunciation of the songs

#### ***Recommendations?***

Students should sing songs a few times with teacher to learn it and so they will retain the information.

#### ***Reflections:***

The songs were effective at teaching, but alone they will not do the job. Need other activities to support songs.

#### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

The direct connection between words and their actions was extremely helpful at teaching the songs.

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade: \_\_\_ Tenth\_ Eleventh\_ and\_ Twelfth\_ Grade \_\_\_

Activity: \_\_\_ Dodgeball \_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_ T. \_ and Jesse \_\_\_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_ Connie \_\_\_\_\_

### ***How long is the activity played for?***

20 minutes

### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

Initially all the students were engaged in the game. However, as the game progressed girls lost interest in the game.

### ***What problems did the activity face?***

Little English education

Suitable only for boys

### ***Recommendations?***

Use for teaching American culture

Have another activity available for students who are not interested in the game

### ***Reflections:***

Although dodgeball contained very little English education, students were able to experience an American sport and get a taste of American culture.

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade: Sixth and Seventh Grade

Activity: Simon Says

Teacher: T. and Alyssa

Observer: Connie

### ***How long is the activity played for?***

15 minutes

### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

Initially all the students were engaged in the game. Students enjoyed the physical activity. However, students quickly lost interested as the game progressed.

### ***What problems did the activity face?***

- Repetitive
- Students had a limited knowledge of verb to use
- Children struggled with some of the vocabulary

### ***Recommendations?***

Have a list of different verbs present while playing the game

Have the directions translated into Thai

### ***Reflections:***

This game is very similar to the Total Physical Response Verb Game. The game could be used to supplement daily lessons rather than to be considered an entire lesson. This activity would be a great way to introduce new vocabulary. Students may find old vocabulary boring

### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

The direct connection between words and their actions was extremely effective. More games that utilize this style of teaching should be used in classes.

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade: \_\_\_ 1-12 \_\_\_

Activity: \_\_\_ S'mores \_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_ T. \_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_ Connie \_\_\_

***How long is the activity played for?***

15 minutes

***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

All students were very attentive, even when waiting in line

***What problems did the activity face?***

Activity expensive

Little English

***Recommendations?***

Incorporate more English

***Reflections:***

Students really like eating – most popular activity

***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

It was effective at introducing cultural exchange

## **Interactive Activity Observation Form**

Grade: \_\_\_ 1-12 \_\_\_

Activity: \_\_\_ Valentines \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_ Alyssa \_\_\_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_ Connie \_\_\_\_\_

### ***How long is the activity played for?***

15 minutes

### ***Are students engaged or distracted? And if distracted, what distracts them?***

Students were distracted during instructions but they seemed to get into it very nicely

### ***What problems did the activity face?***

- Lots of materials
- Little Time

### ***Recommendations?***

Provide students with more time to work

### ***Reflections:***

Very fun activity, but older kids seem bored

### ***Was the game effective at teaching the material?***

Yes effective at teaching them about Valentine 's Day

## Appendix D5: Interactive Activity Evaluations

During our time in Phon Pang, we developed interactive activities with the teachers and implemented them in the classroom. However, the most important aspect of the program was the evaluation and refinement of the activities. Through understanding the positive and negative aspects of the program, we were able to refine the lesson for other classrooms, as well as present activities in the teaching manual. In this section of the appendices, we describe each activity we implemented, evaluations of the activities, and how we refined them or suggestions we have for future usages of these activities.

### Games

#### *Erase:*

**Positive aspects** – We found that the erase game was engaging to a majority of the students that played the game. The racing, running, and competitive aspects of the game were appealing to many of the students, especially boys, in the classroom. Many of the students voluntarily participated in the game and those that did not volunteer were willing to participate when called on.

**Negative aspects** – This game was difficult for the teachers to explain the students because there were many different ways of adapting the game. When we introduced the game to the teachers, the words on the board were written in English and the Thai word was read in English. However, in the classroom, the teacher wrote the vocabulary words written in English and the teachers read the vocabulary words in English. This made it confusing for teachers because they did not understand the adaptability of the lesson to fit the level of the student and the lesson.

Another negative aspect of the game we discovered was that this activity only focused on students' reading skills. Students are not required to understand and know what the vocabulary words were in order to be successful at the game.

**Refinement/Suggestions**–When we refined the activity, we tried to better explain how this game could be used in many different ways to develop students' different skills such as learning vocabulary from English to Thai, Thai to English, and English to English. In addition, we tried to make the game instructions simpler and easier to understand for teachers and students.

### ***Total Physical Response (TPR):***

**Positive Aspects**– When we played TPR with the students, we found that students enjoyed being out of their seats and being physically active. Additionally, we found that this game was very simple for teachers to teach and for students to understand.

**Negative Aspects** – We found that the games did not hold the students attention well and the activity was only effective in engaging the students for a short period.

**Refinement/Suggestions**– From what we gathered about TPR, we were able refine our activity. Instead of using TPR as the lesson, we used it as a small portion of the lesson. We suggest that TPR only be used as a method of introducing a new lesson to students instead of using it to learn old material because it can easily lose the attention of students.

### ***Charades:***

**Positive Aspects**–We found that charades was a fun game for students because it included competition and physical activity. We found that students enjoyed volunteering to act and students were participating by trying to guess what the student was acting out.

**Negative Aspects** – We found that students often cheated by mouthing out the words to the classmate instead of acting. They also had trouble with screaming out the answer instead of raising their hands.

**Refinement/Suggestions**– We did not refine this activity much because the negative aspect of the program could be properly alleviated by increased discipline by the teacher.

### ***Simon Says:***

**Positives Aspects**– During the cultural fair, we played Simon says with a group of sixth and seventh grade students. The game was good because it allowed students to practice both listening to directions in English and practice giving commands in English. The students also enjoyed the active game that allowed students to get out of their seats and have fun.

**Negatives Aspects**– This game did not hold the attention of students for very long. Students seemed uninterested in the game after sometime. Additionally, we found that students did not completely understand the game at first and they had trouble with understanding some of the commands.

**Refinement/ Suggestions** – During our cultural camp, we ended up not playing “Simon Says” with the next period of kids because we found that it was ineffective. We found that students did not understand the game or had the level of English fluency to play the

game properly. Thus, we recommend that this game should only be played with students with higher English fluency level.

***Dodgeball:***

**PositiveAspects**– During the cultural fair, we played dodgeball with tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students as an American culture game. Students were actively participating in the game, especially the boys. They thought the game was fun because they were able to be active.

**NegativeAspects**– The game did not incorporate English education. Additionally, many of the girls did not actively participate in the game. They usually stood in the back to avoid participation.

**Refinement/ Suggestions** – We suggest that if teachers use this activity that it should only be incorporated as a “cultural” activity and not as an English activity. Additionally, teachers need to be aware that this game will only motivate certain students.

## **Songs**

Good Afternoon song  
Animal Song  
Hokey Pokey  
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes  
Old MacDonald

**PositiveAspects** – These songs required students to get out of their seat and be physically active. The lyrics and tune was also easy for students to learn. Also, some of these songs were easily adaptable. For example, the good afternoon song could use different time of days, the animal song could use different animals, and the hokey pokey song can use different body parts. All the songs had movements, which allowed students to link the lyrics with hand movement, and understand what the song is about.

**Negative Aspects** – The songs were repetitive and the students were only limited to what they learn.

**Refinement/ Suggestions** - We suggest teachers only use songs to supplement other classroom lessons. For instance, when we taught an entire lesson on animals, we used the game charades to teach the students the names of animals, and then we supported it with the Animal song to solidify their knowledge.

## **Pronunciation Drills**

**Positive Aspects**– Pronunciation drills are effective at improving and correcting students’ pronunciation because it allows students to practice speaking correctly. In addition, these drills were easy for the teachers to conduct.

**Negative Aspects**– These lessons, although could be made interactive, were least fun and engaging for students. The material is repetitive. Also these drills require teachers with strong English fluency to ensure they pronounce words correctly.

**Refinement/Suggestions** – From the negative aspects of the drills, we worked to make them more interactive by asking students to come up to the front of the classroom to practice or by having students practice in groups.

## **Artistic Activities**

**Positive Aspects**–Students are able to use art as a means of learning English. For example, when students drew their favorite fruit, they would make a better connection with what the fruit is with the English word. It is also effective because it tapped into the interests of the students, which was drawing, and coloring. Additionally, this lesson was an easy lesson for the teachers to conduct because it required little effort. Finally, the lesson provided students with a product that they could take home.

**Negative Aspects**–These lessons do not allow students to practice speaking and listening in English. Thus, it only helps to increase some aspects of English fluency such as connecting vocabulary words with the meanings.

**Refinement/Suggestion** – Based on the negative aspect of this lesson, we tried to adapt it to include other aspects of English fluency. For example, when students were asked to draw fruits they like and fruits they disliked, the teacher asked the students to read to the class the fruits they liked and disliked. This allowed them to also practice speaking and listening in English.

## Other Activities

### *Making S'mores:*

**Positive Aspects** – This activity that we implemented in the cultural exchange fair was one of the most popular because students enjoyed making food and eating American snacks. It was effective at introducing American words for different American foods such as marshmallow, graham cracker, and chocolate.

**Negative Aspects** – The negatives of this activity was the fact that students were more interested in eating than in learning. Yet, this was not an entirely negative set back because we thought that students' enjoyment in the activity was also important. Additionally, the activity was more expensive than other activities because we had to provide ingredients for all students at the school.

**Refinement/Suggestion**–We refined this lesson by incorporating more English by instructing students in English and emphasizing the names of the ingredients. We also suggest that teachers find alternative ingredients to make the lesson more feasible.

## Appendix D6: Teacher Response to Kusuman Education District Office Survey

Questionnaire to evaluate the satisfaction and opinion to the procedure

Of Science Team and English Team

21 January – 15 February 2008

At Kusumal Wittayakhom School and Ban Phone Phang School

Sakonnakhon Province, Thailand

.....

Explanation: 1. This questionnaire has 2 parts:

Part 1 Teacher's satisfaction to the procedure of Science Team and English Team

Part 2 Teacher's opinion to the model of instructions

2. number of the teachers who answer questionnaires 14.

Male 4 Female 10

3. 4.51 – 5.00 excellence

3.51 – 4.50 good

2.51 – 3.50 fair

1.51 – 2.50 little

1.50 → less

| number                                                                                  | activity                                                                                          | Level of satisfaction |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| <b>Part 1: Teacher's satisfaction to the procedure of Science Team and English Team</b> |                                                                                                   |                       |            |
| Topic of activities (teaching)                                                          |                                                                                                   |                       |            |
| 1                                                                                       | suitable                                                                                          | 4.26                  | Good       |
| 2                                                                                       | Prepare materials for learning activity<br>(materials for laboratory and instructional materials) | 4.35                  | Good       |
| 3                                                                                       | Prepare worksheet, text, explanations                                                             | 4.35                  | Good       |
| 4                                                                                       | Have a plan and well prepare                                                                      | 4.71                  | Excellence |
| Well Design                                                                             |                                                                                                   |                       |            |
| 5                                                                                       | activity                                                                                          | 4.35                  | Good       |
| 6                                                                                       | Inform teachers knowing the plan                                                                  | 4.28                  | Good       |

|    |                                                                        |      |            |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------|
| 7  | Learning activities are attractive                                     | 4.35 | Good       |
| 8  | Have non formal meeting for sharing and learning together              | 4.21 | Good       |
| 9  | Work with teachers as teamwork                                         | 4.52 | Excellence |
| 10 | Motivate teachers eager to learn                                       | 4.28 | Good       |
| 11 | Clear method or procedure and clear explanation                        | 4.35 | Good       |
| 12 | Learning Activities are suitable with time                             | 4.35 | Good       |
| 13 | Give an opportunity to teachers and Thai students to share their ideas | 4.28 | Good       |
| 14 | Respect the views and opinions of others                               | 4.42 | Good       |

Caring and interesting  
15 teachers 4.42 Good

Using suitable instrument in measuring and  
16 evaluation 4.14 Good

Monitoring teaching all the  
17 time 4.28 Good

**Part 2: Teacher's opinion to the model of  
instructions (training)**

18 Learning activities make the children (Thai  
students) need to learn and help each other

students learn with  
19 happiness 4.35 Good

20 Learning activities make the students more  
knowledge and practical skills (from  
experiment, conversation, listening,  
Reading, etc.) 4.35 Good

|    |                                                                           |      |            |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------|
| 21 | Students have good attitude toward Science and English subject            | 4.07 | Good       |
| 22 | Students are active in learning because of attractive activities          | 4.64 | Excellence |
| 23 | Students have responsibility to do their work                             | 4.40 | Good       |
| 24 | Students have good interaction with the Teachers and WPI team             | 4.28 | Good       |
| 25 | Students can use their knowledge and skills and experiences in daily life | 4.30 | Good       |

---

As the result above. The highest score is

WPI team have a plan and well prepare

The lowest score is

Students have good attitude toward Science and English subject

**Comment and suggest.**

Problem in communication, if WPI Team speak in long sentences, we don't understand

Teachers feel worry because they think they may not do well

Problem about pronunciation, listening and speaking

Teachers and Thai students are not good in English

Problem in communication, so we want to make sure of understanding before teaching in the classroom

Problem of translating English into Thai so some activity take much time to understand

There is a gap between WPI team and teachers and Thai students because WPI team spend much time in the office room and look busy so we are afraid to connect or talk may be it will interrupt. We want WPI team have more talking, playing or other thing closely

Energizer ought to teach morality to the students not only funny

Want WPI team have project to push up the Educational Quality Next year in Mathematics and Science

### **Our Impression**

Lesson plan about greeting, about me

Song

New teaching, game

Communication: working with others

Students learn with language owner so they can pronounce correctly

WPI team response and high intend on their duty

It's very good project, WPI team ought to workshop in Kusumal every Year

Your task make teachers creative thinking

WPI team have good relationship that very kind to us and not hesitate to participate in Morning Assembly Activity "English Minute" and Sound Lab. Good attitude to us

Appreciate on WPI teamwork

WPI team make the students active to learn

WPI team have good relationship, can adjust to school, community and the environment which are different from your home in many way

As you see, Year 7's achievement is under national standard, so we need help from WPI team so much

Learning activities can use and apply in daily life

Experience about basic conversation

The students are very active to learn with WPI team

.....

Praptsorn Kosulwat report

Teacher Supervisor

The office of Sakonnakhon Educational Service Area 1

Thailand 47000

[Praptsorn\\_Kosulwat@yahoo.com](mailto:Praptsorn_Kosulwat@yahoo.com)

## APPENDIX E – PERSONAL CULTURAL REFLECTIONS

### Appendix E1 – Alyssa Hargraves' Cultural Reflections

Throughout the time I spent in Thailand, I noticed many aspects of Thai culture and daily life that were significantly different than I have grown accustomed to in the United States. However, I was even more surprised at the differences upon my arrival in Isan. One incident in particular stands out in my mind more than anything else.

During my third weekend in Sakon Nakhon's Kusumon District, I was staying in a small village about thirty minutes from the school where our field work was taking place. While walking around during the day, one of my group members had noticed an adorable puppy tied to a tree at the house next door. We thought nothing of it, and went to sleep later that night. Unfortunately, my sleep and the adorable puppy were both short-lived as I awoke to the screams of a dying dog outside the window below. I told myself that it was the sound of an upset dog who was frustrated from being tied to the tree, and went back to sleep.

When I awoke the next morning, I looked outside the window to be greeted by two old women who were sitting at a table slicing fresh red meat. My worries were confirmed when Khun Sris Sa Whang arrived to pick us up. He informed us that the dogs are killed and cut up at the house next door. While he was describing the process, a pickup truck came down the road, with small plastic buckets lining the top. Although they were simple cheap plastic buckets, we found that those were the buckets families traded their dogs for.

In America, the killing of dogs is unimaginable and causes significant outrage, so I was shocked to see that it is part of daily life for some Isan villagers. Just recently, the

media crazed over the Michael Vick dogfight scandal, and yet, in Isan dogs are killed daily without a second thought. However, as I thought more about the incident I realized that it is much more understandable in Isan than America. Throughout the villages, stray dogs are everywhere. At the same time, Sakon Nakhon's Kusumon district is the poorest in Thailand. As a result, what I see as a family pet may be the only meat that some of the families in that area can afford.

However, even in Sakon Nakhon the practice is controversial. Khun Sris Sa Whang explained that the dog meat market is separate from the normal markets because many Thais are strongly against the consumption of dog meat. Others are uncomfortable with it, but still eat dog. For example, Khun Sris Sa Whang stated that many families eat dog, but will not eat their own dogs. This is very different from the typical attitude towards other livestock that are raised as food.

Although it is understandable given the availability of dogs and lack of money, I am still vaguely disturbed by the events that night. The last thing I expected to encounter on IQP was the sound of dying dogs, but one has to accept disturbing cultural characteristics along with the positive.

## Appendix E2 – Jesse Herrera’s Cultural Reflections

I went to Chatuchak market during a Sunday morning and witnessed elephant mahats trying to sell small pieces of sugar cane so that market goers might personally feed their elephant. The obviously young elephant was lying on the sidewalk and seemed to be breathing with much effort. Upon looking at its face, I immediately realized that its mouth was completely dry from dehydration. Me and the American friend with whom I was walking both stopped in shock and looked at it. The mahats immediately approached us to sell the snack and quickly told us with large smiles, “He’s hungry!” We refused with a slight wave of the hand while our unflinching stares of shock remained on the elephant. People – all of whom seemed Thai by appearance – walked around the hugely encroaching scene. For about three full minutes I stood confused looking at the animal, then at the passing people, then at the mahats who seemed to be trying to make light of the situation by laughing and sitting on the elephant’s side.

I left the place without confronting anyone about the injustice I believe occurred. The reason was that I did not know how to communicate effectively enough to show my feelings in a modest fashion, I did not know what to expect as reactions from the mahats, and I was afraid of how my actions would be perceived by others or if violent action would be taken against me.

As someone who has seen many instances of American public confrontation before and who generally assumes free speech as an understood human right, I was surprised that no one spoke out against this that seemed so horrible. It was appalling to me that so many Thais consciously walked around the elephant but showed no remorse for the elephant nor recognition of my distraught face. I could only think, “If something

like this happened in an American community, someone would say something.” This thought could have manifested from the idea that I would have said something had it happened in America, but I still would expect more people to at least react to the situation. American culture embraces free speech and tolerates public argument, and I believe that many Americans would be more emotive in this situation. Such components would definitely have lead to controversy if applied to the situation.

As I thought about what Americans would do, I also thought about possibilities of why Thais did not act these ways. I have been told that Thai people are generally concerned about saving face. This characteristic would definitely discourage a blameful public argument. Another possibility is that Thai people that shop at Chatuchak might be used to seeing such a scene. I know that mahats at Bangkok markets are a usual thing to see which allows for the frequency of dehydrated elephants on sidewalks. In many places in the U.S.A., it is not a surprise to anyone if pedestrians completely ignore street beggars because they are such a common sight in some cities. To someone who does not see it so often, it might be a shock.

Another consideration is the lack of encouragement for individual and progressive thinking. In much of the literature I have read regarding education, values like challenge, question, query, and creativity are not developed in the classroom or at home. I have seen this attitude reflected in conversations I have had with various Thai people. In several different settings, I have asked Thai students and teachers what they thought of certain social, moral, or, political issues, I noticed answers that were ambiguous and that generally steered away from possible confrontation. There was an interest to learn, but no immediate, one-sided opinion. With this in mind, it is no longer a surprise to see Thais

failing to develop a conflicting opinion with someone when they only have the time it takes to walk by an elephant to think about it. If Thai people are discouraged to quickly develop and convey concrete opinions, they will not express an opinion.

An interesting observation was in the doubts I had in accuracy of my perception of American culture when I started thinking critically about it. I have noticed that exploring another culture has always caused me to subconsciously compare it to my own culture. That comparison has helped me ask critical questions about my American culture and, consequently, has helped me change – and improve, in my opinion – the way I see social interaction and culture as whole subjects.

## Appendix E3 – Gabriella Serrati’s Cultural Reflections

Throughout the four weeks our group spent at Phon Pang School in the Kusuman District of Sakon Nakhon, we interacted with many students, teachers, and administrators of the community, but one event in particular made me think about intercultural differences and the context embedded in these interactions. Since the group perceived that we were seen as respected teachers at Phon Pang School, we attempted to keep up to that expectation. We respected the space of students and teachers while being polite. However, on our last day at Phon Pang School, we were extremely surprised by the reaction of the students and teachers. After that day’s morning assembly, the group waved goodbye to the students and teachers as they assumed would be appropriate. They then noticed that a fourth grade girl seemed very upset. She began to cry. Even more surprising, all the other children began to cry as well. This caught me off guard, and I in turn began to cry as well. The surprises continued when the children began to hug us and kiss us goodbye. I also hugged and kissed the students around us.

I had studied that the Thai people were part of a high context society which frowned upon public display of affection. On the other hand, I am someone from a lower context culture, where physical proximity and public displays of affection are particularly common. I therefore, made an extra effort to act the way that I assumed would be acceptable throughout the four weeks of our fieldwork: no excessive actions of proximity to the teachers and students. This is why, even though I am used to hugging and kissing familiar people, the reaction of the students and teachers shocked me.

After thinking about the events of our last day at Sakon Nakhon, I started questioning the motives of the students and teachers. I did not know if this action was customary for Thai

So culture, the dominant culture in this area, or if the students and teachers knew that we came from a more emotional society, and they assumed we would expect them to act the same way we do. I wondered if they acted this way in order to please us. It is something that worries me, especially since I joined in the emotional events.

I see this as a potential example of two cultural groups trying to meet each others' customs, but somewhere along the way passing by each other missing the middle point. We expected the students and teachers of Phon Pang School to show no proximity or emotions, and they on the other hand expected us to show them. I wonder if we had been a group of Thai students, if the students and teachers of Phon Pang School had acted the same way. Would they have been a little more conservative with people who shared their views on proximity? This doubt will always be in my head and I wonder what image of American culture I left with the students and teachers of Phon Pang School.

## Appendix E4 – Connie Tran’s Cultural Reflections

During the month in Sakon Nakhon, Thailand, I built many strong relationships with the teacher of Phon Pang School. We spent a lot of time with the teachers outside of the classroom and even outside of the school environment. One occasion that I will never forget was the day we decided to walk down into the village near Phon Pang School. As we were walking with many of the students, a car pulled up behind us and a teacher stuck out her head out and yelled for us to get in the car. They took us home for dinner and then told us that they were taking us to scout camp. When she said scout camp, I imagined that there would be students doing fun activities in the woods, pitched tents, and campfires. After dinner, the teachers drove by a lake. There were not any camp activities or even students. We found many of the Phon Pang Schools teachers there barbequing, playing instruments, dancing, and drinking. We learned that they were celebrating the fact that they did not have classes the next day. That night, we witnessed that teachers drank a lot of whiskey, brandy, and beer. They were also pushing our team and each other to drink as well. The next day, when we returned to scout camp in the morning with the students, we found that teachers were still there drinking, even in front of the students. In addition, during that day, one of the teenage scout camp leaders got into a motorcycle accident, which we learned was from being under the influences. It was evident that people view alcohol much differently here in Thailand, then we do in the United States.

It was surprising to me that teachers were that open about drinking. In the United States, drinking is, in a sense, frowned upon. In addition, people usually do not drink in front of children because it sets a bad example for them. However, in Thailand, I find that Thai people tend to have a mai pen rai attitude on life. We have seen this in many

occasions around the school. For example, the teachers drank in front of students, their colleagues, and our team without hesitation. It makes me think that they do not think twice about setting a good example for their students. However, a possible reason is that drinking is not disapproved of in Thailand. When I asked teachers whether drinking in front of students was okay and they told me not to worry and encouraged us to have a good time and relax.

However, it was shocking that the following day, after the scout camp, the English director shared with us that the student who got into a motorcycle accident at scout camp would be severely punished, because he was not supposed to be drinking whiskey at scout camp. Although, it is true that the scout leader broke the rule, it made me think about whether the teachers were being hypocritical or not. It was difficult for me to understand Thai people's view on alcohol after hearing this. I understood that the student should be punished for drinking; however, the teachers, too, should set a good example for all their students. I wonder if teachers had done that, whether the students would also follow their footsteps.

This cultural difference, although did not affect me personally, it did make me think and wonder why there was this difference. Based on what I observed, I realized that the main reason is the difference on how seriously Thai people and Americans view alcohol. As well, this reflects a lot about the Thai mentality of *mai pen rai* and allowed me to link their attitudes I witnessed in this observation to other cultural differences I witnessed.

## Appendix E5 – Thomas Watson’s Cultural Reflections

There was a group of us all sitting together on the ground. Laid before us was a typical Thai Isan feast. I shift my weight a few times to try to find a comfortable position. I never quite mastered the kneeling maneuver so I was looking for a chance to get up and stretch my legs. As we were enjoying our afternoon at Scout Camp, a boy rode over on a bicycle. His face was covered in blood.

He jumped off his bike and stood just long enough for me to get a good look at him before he fainted and hit the ground like a ton of bricks. I immediately went into emergency response mode and ran over to him. A few of the Thai teachers beat me to him. As I bent to help pick him up I noticed something. They were all laughing. I know Thailand is considered to be the land of smiles, but this seemed like an inappropriate time to be laughing. Maybe the word inappropriate is too harsh, but one thing was clear to me which was at a time like this, laughing was the last reaction I had on my mind.

The boy regained consciousness and was able to explain what happened to the teachers. He had been in a motorcycle accident. He also admitted to drinking alcohol before the event. This news did not change the teachers’ mood at all. While the teachers were laughing and taking care of his wounds it was clear that student was in the midst of learning a very important life lesson.

A few of the teachers and I helped the student get into the bed of a pick-up truck. One of the teachers accompanied him in the back and he was taken to the hospital. Admittedly, I was still in shock from the whole event, but there was one aspect to the whole incident that stood out in my mind, the teachers’ reaction.

I found out later that the boy suffered no serious injuries. After picking up his ruined motorcycle it was clear that this boy should be lucky to be alive. However, this thought did not seem to cross the minds of the teachers. I asked the teachers about the whole incident and their main response seemed to be “accidents happen, he learned his lesson”. One of the teachers told me about how a student died last year at Scout camp. I started to think about what would happen if any of the following events happened in America. I would imagine the school would have received an onslaught of legal suits from parents declaring the school was guilty of malpractice and negligence.

I quickly realized that this carefree mindset was part of a larger picture of Thai culture, which alluded to personal responsibility for our own destinies. No one is going to hold your hand and tell you what to do; you must be strong and willing to make decisions on your own. And if you come to a situation like this boy did, you have no one to blame but yourself. The more I become immersed in the Thai culture, the more I realize how much I enjoy this mindset.

It is always so disheartening to hear about another person who won a legal battle against a major company because they spilled hot coffee on themselves and received burns, or another person who rewarded a large sum of money because they injured themselves while trying to break into someone’s house. As a result, Americans are being constantly bombarded with warning labels. I do not need my cup to have a warning label urging me that my coffee is hot. I just ordered it! Of course it is going to be hot! I often find myself wishing that Americans would take more responsibility for their actions rather than simply pointing fingers.

Through casual conversation with Thai people, I have found that they are completely aware of this American mindset. I have asked them if some of the actions of suing people would ever work in Thailand. Most of them laughed at the question. The answer was obvious.

I think that there is a lot that Americans could learn from the Thai culture: Carefree attitudes, acceptance of differing personal views, and just general outlook on life. However, the one area where I think Americans could learn the most from is the Thai mindset of personal responsibility.

## APPENDIX F: MANUAL

### Appendix F1: Criteria for our Manual

Criteria that makes up content and presentation of manual:

#### Useful, Usable, Credible, Humble, Personable

- **Useful**
  - Must have actual things that they can use such as activities or songs instead of just suggestions of *types* of activities
  - Must have precautions that we foresee or have encountered
  - Our recommendations must stem from our most important findings
- **Usable**
  - Organization of chapters must center on content that teachers would specifically use such as “activities” and “resources” versus specific methods of teaching that teachers may not understand at first sight (ex. “Student centered learning” “Channeling students’ energy”. Poor organization may distract a teacher from easily getting the information he/she is looking for and the manual may end up tedious to use.
  - Must be easy to read.
    - Organization of content must be visually understood and simple
    - Wording must be simple and concise
- **Credible**
  - Include reasons for activities/games/songs/methods/training etc.
  - Cite and explain sources that support our reasoning

- **Humble** (so teachers don't feel too challenged, put down, intimidated, or offended)
  - Use concise wording. Explaining or saying too much might make it seem like we're showing off our knowledge instead of simply helping.
  - Use simple wording. Using high diction or complicated and lengthy sentence structure might be intimidating to read.
  - Use cautious wording. Avoid sounding like we know all the answers or that their teaching system was worthless before our help.
  
- **Personable**
  - Avoid placing too much emphasis on the universality of theory behind our recommendations. If the wording sounds too universal, teachers may feel like they're reading a textbook developed for "people" instead of feeling like it's a tool specifically developed for them.
  - Give our primary sources (interviews everywhere and experiences at Phon Pang School) more attention than secondary sources so teachers feel like what they're reading really does pertain to people like them. For example, an Isan teacher might not interpret/view/credit a secondary source the same way one of our professors would.

## Appendix F2: Manual

The Office of Her Royal Highness  
Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects

Chulalongkorn University

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

# **Interactive Teaching Methods for English as a Foreign Language in Rural Thailand**



Alyssa Hargraves  
Jesse Herrera  
Gabriella Serrati  
Connie Tran  
Thomas Watson

## **FOREWORD**

This manual was created by Alyssa Hargraves, Jesse Herrera, Gabriella Serrati, Connie Tran, and Thomas Watson as part of a Worcester Polytechnic Institute student project that was requested by the Office of Her Royal Highness Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects.

The content of this manual is based on our research of effective English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching techniques. This research began in October 2007 and ended in late February 2008 with a four week visit to Phon Pang School of the Kusuman District in Sakon Nakhon, Thailand. At Phon Pang, we worked together with teachers to test various teaching techniques in the classroom as well as discover new ideas for improving teachers' own fluency and teaching effectiveness.

We hope that teachers discover this manual an aid to make teaching English as a Foreign Language easier, more effective, and more enjoyable for them and their students. We encourage teachers to make use of interactive activities in the classroom to promote student participation. Likewise, we hope teachers will make use of the training materials to further improve their teaching techniques.



## Table of Contents

|                                                            |           |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Activity-Based Teaching Philosophy .....</b>            | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Games .....</b>                                         | <b>6</b>  |
| Charades.....                                              | 6         |
| <i>Smack</i> .....                                         | 8         |
| <i>Total Physical Response (TPR) Verb Game</i> .....       | 9         |
| <i>“Simon Says...”</i> .....                               | 10        |
| <b>Songs .....</b>                                         | <b>11</b> |
| <i>Afternoon Song</i> .....                                | 11        |
| <i>Big Nose</i> .....                                      | 12        |
| <i>Hokey Pokey</i> .....                                   | 13        |
| <i>Itsy Bitsy Spider</i> .....                             | 14        |
| <i>Old MacDonald</i> .....                                 | 14        |
| <i>Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star</i> .....                  | 14        |
| <b>Cultural Exchange Fair.....</b>                         | <b>15</b> |
| The Importance of Culture in Language Education.....       | 15        |
| <b>Teacher Training Recommendations .....</b>              | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Dave’s ESL Café Online .....</b>                        | <b>17</b> |
| <i>Getting to Dave’s ESL Cafe</i> .....                    | 17        |
| <i>Looking for Games</i> .....                             | 17        |
| <i>Looking for Songs</i> .....                             | 17        |
| <b>Searching the Internet Using Google.....</b>            | <b>18</b> |
| <i>Basic Searching Techniques</i> .....                    | 18        |
| <i>Advanced Search Criteria</i> .....                      | 18        |
| <b>Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary Online.....</b>            | <b>19</b> |
| <i>Getting to Merriam Webster Online</i> .....             | 19        |
| <b>List of Useful Online Resources.....</b>                | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Teacher Meetings.....</b>                               | <b>21</b> |
| <i>For developing and sharing new teaching ideas</i> ..... | 21        |
| <i>For developing English language fluency</i> .....       | 21        |
| <b>Selecting and Refining Your Own Activities .....</b>    | <b>22</b> |
| <i>Selecting Interactive Classroom Activities</i> .....    | 22        |

|                                                     |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Selecting Cultural Exchange Activities</i> ..... | 22        |
| <i>Refining Your Activities</i> .....               | 24        |
| <b>Other Recommendations</b> .....                  | <b>25</b> |
| <b>References</b> .....                             | <b>27</b> |

# Activity-Based Teaching Philosophy

Teachers and researchers in Bangkok and in cities of the United States of America suggest that interactive or *activity-based* teaching is a highly effective method of teaching young students. Our experiences at Phon Pang supported their claims.

***Educational activities channel students' energy*** towards enjoyable and educational learning experiences. If your students are having fun doing a learning activity, they will be motivated to learn because it is something they enjoy. They will feel good about themselves and they will be more confident learners. We noticed that when the students were having fun and learning, they wanted to learn more. English language became interesting to them and they wanted to participate in class. In addition to increasing motivation, a positive learning experience will also improve a student's attitude toward English language learning in future years.

***Activities can connect creativity with logic.*** A lesson that is able to connect a student's creativity and logical thinking skills helps students learn on a deeper level because students use both sides of the brain together. Without realizing it, your students will be actively thinking in many different ways at the same time, and, consequently, will remember language mechanics such as vocabulary and grammar very well because of it. Many of the activities in the manual assist this type of learning (For examples, see *Other Recommendations – Creativity and Logic*).

***Activities provide a good opportunity to teach through constructive learning.*** A student constructively learns when he/she seeks for answers to satisfy a curiosity or problem. True learning happens when this constructive process takes place. This idea is very different than the notion that students must be *told* facts to memorize. Games easily assist this type of learning because there usually is the prospect of “winning” which encourages students to learn. You can practice specific methods when you are not doing specific games or songs.

# Games

## Charades

This game requires students to have some previous knowledge of vocabulary words. It is best employed with vocabulary that can be demonstrated through actions. The students are required to try to guess what vocabulary the action is referring to. For example, we used charades in our classes to teach animals by having the students act out the actions of the animals.

- Materials
  - Note-card sized pieces of paper containing a picture or word for the child to act out. One for each vocabulary word.
- Preparation
  - Teacher writes or draws the vocabulary words on note cards.
  - Teacher divides the students into two teams.
- To Play
  - The teacher selects one student from the first team to be the actor.
  - The child selected picks a vocabulary word from the note cards, the note cards should be held so the student and the class cannot see what is on the cards.
  - The child acts out the vocabulary word that they chose. They cannot speak.
  - The class should raise their hands if they know what word the student is acting out.
  - The teacher chooses a student (on the team of the actor if any are raising their hand) to answer.
  - If the student gets it correct, their team gets one point.
  - If the student gets it incorrect, give the other team a chance to answer.

To prevent students from yelling out the answer, remove points every time the students answer without first being called on. In our classes, the students initially yelled out answers and the game was chaotic. However, once we removed points from a team for a student yelling out the answers, students began raising their hands. This same idea can be applied in any games involving points to promote good behavior.

## Erase

This game requires students to have some previous knowledge of the vocabulary words that are used. This game can be used a variety of ways. It can reinforce the students' vocabulary from English to Thai or from Thai to English. If students are struggling with recognizing the English spellings of words, it can be used to help the students be able to quickly identify English words.

- Materials
  - Chalkboard or Whiteboard
  - Two erasers
  - Enough space in front of board for two lines of students (half the class in each line)
- Preparation
  - Teacher writes about twelve English vocabulary words in random places on the chalkboard (large print)
  - Students are divided into two equal teams
  - Teams line up in separate lines facing the chalkboard
  - The first person in each line holds an eraser
- To Play
  - Teacher yells out a vocabulary word in Thai
  - The two students with erasers must race to the board and find the corresponding English word
  - The first student to erase the correct word wins his/her team one point
  - Then, erasers are given to the next students in line and the process repeats

You can try a different version of this game where you call out the English word, and students have to relate the word's pronunciation to the written word on the board. This method of racing against another for a correct answer can be easily adapted to other lessons, besides vocabulary, based on your creativity. (For finding or creating other games on your own, see *Teacher Training Recommendations*.)

## Smack

- Materials
  - Large cards with pictures corresponding to students' vocabulary words.
  - Two plastic flyswatters (rolled up paper or sticks can be used as well).
  - One roll of tape.
- Preparation
  - Tape the cards on the chalkboard or wall, or rest them upon the chalk tray
  - Divide the students into two equal teams.
  - Teams line up in separate lines facing the chalkboard
  - The first person in each line holds a flyswatter
- Game
  - Teacher yells out a vocabulary word in English
  - The two students with flyswatters must race to the board and find the corresponding picture
  - The first student to hit or "smack" the correct picture wins his/her team 1 point
  - Then, flyswatters are given to the next students in line and the process repeats

This game can be very helpful with improving students' ability to quickly recognize the meaning of English words, phrases, or scenarios because it pushes students to connect the sound of an English word directly with its meaning instead of first translating it in mind.

### Reference:

- Schindler, Andrea. (2006). Channeling Children's Energy through Vocabulary Activities. *English Teaching Forum*, 44(2), Pg 8.

## Total Physical Response (TPR) Verb Game

- Materials
  - No special materials required, although you may wish to have materials that correspond to the students' vocabulary words.
  - The vocabulary words must be ones that can be acted, or acted upon.
- Preparation
  - No special preparation required.
- Game:
  - Show students the meaning of an action verb by performing the action. For example, if the verb is "touch," teach the students by touching various objects such as a chair and saying, "I touch the chair."
  - Next, have students act out a verb (such as "touch") while saying what they are doing ("I touch the door", "I touch the desk", etc).
  - Give students commands ("Touch the door", "Touch the desk", etc) and have them act out the commands.
  - As students advance, give them more complex commands ("Touch the door with your elbow", "Touch the desk with your leg", etc.)

Other examples of action verbs that have worked well are: *jump, run, walk, fall, sleep, drop, pass, throw, catch.*

- \* Try a variation of this game where you select individual students to lead the class. This engages the students more because they have to pay attention to the lesson in case they are chosen to lead the class. The teachers at Phon Pang School agreed that this was a very fun and effective activity for teaching actions.

Using objects to supplement this game is also very good for teaching certain lessons.

Example: Throw a ball to a student while saying, "Catch!" Then tell the student to throw the ball to someone else. This technique was tried with a group of students at Phon Pang School, and was a fun and engaging way to teach proper use of commands. Here is an example of this lesson:

- The teacher throws a ball to a student and says, "Catch!" The student catches the ball.
- The teacher tells the student, "Throw it to him." while pointing to another boy. The student throws it to the boy.
- The teacher points to a group of students across the room and says, "Tell one of them to catch the ball." The student says, "Nud, catch the ball." and throws the ball to Nud.

### Reference:

- Schindler, Andrea. (2006). Channeling Children's Energy through Vocabulary Activities. *English Teaching Forum*, 44(2), Pg 8.

## “Simon Says...”

This game is similar to *Total Physical Response Verb Game*

- Materials
  - No special materials are required.
- Preparation
  - This game must use vocabulary words that can be physically acted by a person.
  - The teacher may review the vocabulary words that will be used.
- Game
  - The entire class stands.
  - Teacher gives students commands starting with the words, “Simon says...” Students must then act the verb. For example, say, “Simon says, jump!” Students must jump. The teacher may do the action with the students if he/she wants.
  - The main rule of the game is that students must do the command **ONLY** when the teacher says, “Simon says...” first. Occasionally, the teacher may chose to *not* say, “Simon says...” but instead give the command without these words. If a student accidentally acts the command, he/she is **OUT** and must sit down.

To allow students to continue practicing vocabulary while out, you can set a certain part of the room to be where students who are out play.

When students are out, they can continue playing but only in that area.

Other examples of action verbs that have worked well are: *jump, run, walk, fall, sleep, touch, shake, dance, and step.*

You can select individual students to lead the class. This engages the students more because they need to use their own thinking and creativity in order to lead the activity, and they are forced to pay attention more incase they are selected to lead.



# Songs

Songs are a fun way of learning English lessons. They help with the memorization of simple sayings, vocabulary and other English factors. Many of these songs have actions or pictures that go with them that help students learn the meaning of specific words or phrases in the song. All of these songs are meant to be sung several times in a row. A good way to teach the songs to the students is to sing it first on your own and have the lyrics written on a poster so the class can see it. Below are the lyrics to several songs. The actions are in red. You may be able to find the melody to these songs online (See *Teacher Training Recommendations – Searching the Internet Using Google*) or sing your own simple melody and rhythm to see if it works with the lyrics.

## Afternoon Song

This song can be used to teach common greetings. Everyone must stand up and face a partner. If one student is left without a partner, the teacher may pair up with the student.

Afternoon, afternoon [Shake hands with partner]  
Hello, how are you? [Wave to partner]  
You [Point to partner]  
And Me [Point to self]  
See you, [Wave to partner]  
Goodbye [Walk away from partner]  
(Chalermopol, 2008)

\* A fun way to do this song is to switch partners after singing, “Goodbye.” There must be enough room in the classroom to do this. For fun, you may sing it faster and faster!



## Big Nose

This song can be used to teach the names of animals and the sounds that they make. At the part that has [Animal], the teacher can point to a picture of an animal or shout the name of an animal if pictures are not available. Many students also enjoy making animal-related actions when making the animal sounds.

It's a [Animal]. [Sing the name of the animal]  
It's a [Animal]. [Sing the name of the animal]  
[Make the animal sound three times]  
[Make the animal sound three times]  
It's a [Animal]. [Sing the name of the animal]  
It's a [Animal]. [Sing the name of the animal]  
With a great big nose.

(LeLait 2007)

## Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes

This song can be used to teach these body parts. Everyone must stand up. Students touch the body part as it is being sung.

Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes  
Knees and Toes  
Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes  
Knees and Toes  
Eyes and Ears and Mouth and Nose  
Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes  
Knees and Toes

\* Repeat the song. For fun, you may sing it faster and faster! However, students often mispronounce the words as the pace increases. Be sure the correct pronunciation is not lost.

## Hokey Pokey

This song can be used to teach certain body parts as well as the meaning of words *right*, *left*, *in*, and *out*. Stand in a circle facing toward the center. After each time the song is sung, the teacher yells out a different body part. The underlined words are then replaced with different body parts each time the song repeats.



You put your right foot in.

[Move your right foot toward the center of the circle]

You put you right foot out. [Move your right foot away from the circle]

You put you right foot in, and you shake it all about. [Move your right foot into the circle and shake it]

You do the hokey pokey, and you turn yourself around! [Do a funny dance while turning around once]

That's what it's all about! [Clap twice]

\* Some body parts that are funny to use are *tongue*, *head*, and *whole body*.



Teaching the song



"You put your right ear out!"

## Itsy Bitsy Spider

The teacher can choose actions for this song that visually explain the lyrics if the ones written below are unclear.

The itsy bitsy spider went up the water spout. [Make a climbing motion with fingers]  
Down came the rain [wiggle fingers and move them from high to low]  
And washed the spider out. [quickly move hands from left to right]  
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain, [put hands together over head and then spread them wide apart]  
And the itsy bitsy spider went up the spout again. [Make climbing motion with fingers]

## Old MacDonald

This song can be used to teach the names of animals and the sounds that they make. At the part that has [Animal], the teacher can point to a picture of an animal or shout the name of an animal if pictures are not available.

Old MacDonald had a farm  
E-I-E-I-O  
And on his farm there was a [Animal]. [Sing the name of the animal]  
E-I-E-I-O  
With a \_\_\_\_ here, [Make the animal sound]  
And a \_\_\_\_ there, [Make the animal sound]  
Here a \_\_\_\_, [Make the animal sound]  
There a \_\_\_\_, [Make the animal sound]  
Everywhere a \_\_\_\_\_. [Make the animal sound]  
Old MacDonald had a farm  
E-I-E-I-O

## Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

The teacher can choose actions for this song that visually explain the lyrics if the ones written below are unclear.

Twinkle, twinkle little star [Wiggle fingers above head]  
How I wonder what you are [Shrug shoulders]  
Up above the world so high [Form a big circle above head]  
Like a diamond in the sky [Put together forefingers and thumbs to make a diamond shape]  
Twinkle, twinkle little star [Wiggle fingers above head]  
How I wonder what you are [Shrug shoulders]

# Cultural Exchange Fair

## What are the benefits of learning about another culture?

- A fuller sense of security
- The possibility of greater success in the workplace
- The possibility of establishing meaningful relationships with people from the culture
- The possibility of gaining fluency in the language of the host country
- A deeper understanding of one's own culture
- A deeper understanding of one's self

(Gebhard, 2006)

## The Importance of Culture in Language Education

Students will master a language only when they learn about the culture as well (Peterson & Coltrane, 2003).

Knowing the culture of a language gives students a better idea of how to

use the language with a native speaker. Ms. Junjiraporn Tuninard, a teacher at Sakonrajwittayanukool School, who has helped run many language camps and culture fairs throughout Sakon Nakhon and several internationally. She says, "... I think it's worth having the culture exposed to them since students learn only the language in the text, they never know, interact, or experience the real situations. They should know and learn to respect each other culture as well."



## Cultural Exchange Fair Activities

We organized an American-So Cultural Exchange Fair at Phon Pang School on the 11th February 2008. The main goal for the culture fair at Phon Pang School was to interest students in the culture of the English language and for students to show pride and appreciation for their own So culture.

Below are some activities that came from discussion with Ms. Junjiraporn. Underneath each are descriptions of examples.

- **International foods**
  - “Smores” making. Students learn to make the American snack, Smores.
  - Students or teachers bring So foods to share
- **Sports from different countries**
  - Students play Dodgeball or Baseball
- **Dance**
  - Learning American line dancing
  - Show of traditional So dance
- **Music**
  - Concert of So music
  - Concert of American music
  - Sing-along with English songs
- **Gestures**
  - Students learn the different meanings of hand and body gestures in different cultures and compare them to their own
- **Board Games**
  - Students play American board games
- **Games**
  - Play games such as “Simon Says”
- **Holidays**
  - Students make Valentine’s Day cards

# Teacher Training Recommendations

This section is designed to provide teachers with different methods for self-research and suggestions for improving their own teaching ability. Most of these suggestions are from experiences at the Phon Pang School including evaluation of specific methods that were tested as well as discussions with teachers.

## Dave's ESL Café Online

This is a great tool for learning about many ideas for English teaching. The website has:

- Activities
- Games
- Songs
- Many helpful tips

### Getting to Dave's ESL Café

1. Go to: [www.google.co.th](http://www.google.co.th)
2. In the search field type:  
**Dave's ESL Café**
3. The website should be the first result



You can also go directly to the website by entering [www.eslcafe.com](http://www.eslcafe.com) in the address bar (at the top).

### Looking for Games

Dave's ESL Café has many games that you can use in your classroom. Each game tests different English skills

1. Go to: [www.eslcafe.com](http://www.eslcafe.com)
2. Click on [Idea Cookbook](#)
3. Click on Games

### Looking for Songs

Dave's ESL has many songs that you can use in your classroom. Each song can be used for a different theme in the classroom

1. Go to: [www.eslcafe.com](http://www.eslcafe.com)
2. Click on [Idea Cookbook](#)
3. Click on music

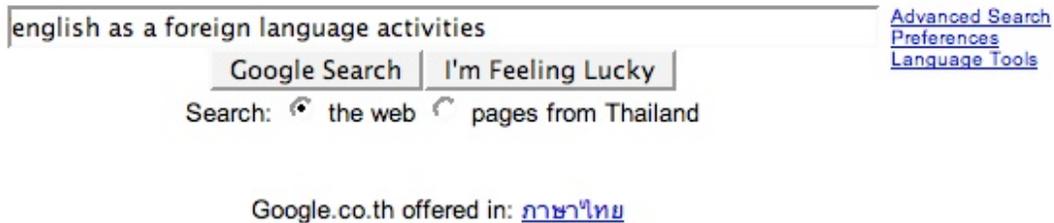
\* Dave's ESL Café has many different resources that can be used any classroom – not just English class.

# Searching the Internet Using Google

## Basic Searching Techniques

Google is a powerful tool that can help you find many new activities. Here are a few tips for using Google.

Start by typing in [www.google.co.th](http://www.google.co.th) into your address bar and hitting the enter key:



Begin by typing your search criteria into the window. For example, the search terms below would be good choices if you are looking for new activities or games:

- English as a Foreign Language Activities
- English as a Second Language Activities
- EFL Activities
- ESL Activities
- English teaching activities
- Interactive classroom activities
- Classroom activities
- Classroom games
- ESL Songs
- EFL Songs

Once you have entered your search criteria, click on the Google Search button.

## Advanced Search Criteria

- To search for a full phrase, you can use quotation marks (“ ”). For example “*English as a Foreign Language*” would search for the entire phrase together rather than the words separated in the text of the webpage.
- To search for a word, but ignore results that include another word, you can use the - symbol. This is helpful when you are looking for information on a topic but do not want information on a related area. For example, *English Teaching Activities -Songs*

would search for English teaching activities, but would leave out results containing songs.

- To search for results where you want to include one search criteria or another search criteria, you can use the OR command. For example, *English as a Foreign OR Second Language* would find information on both English as a Foreign Language and English as a Second Language.

## Merriam-Webster's Dictionary Online

This website is good for seeing the definition of a word and especially for hearing the pronunciation of a word.

### Getting to Merriam Webster Online

1. Go to: [www.google.co.th](http://www.google.co.th)
2. In the search field type: **Merriam-Webster's dictionary**. The website should be the first search result.

You can also go directly to the website by entering [www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com) in the address bar (at the top).

To have the computer say the word:

1. Go to [www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com)
2. In "Merriam Webster Online Search" type the word you want to hear
3. Click the red **Search Button**
4. When the web page has loaded, press the  button for the computer to say the word

## List of Useful Online Resources

| Website            | Address                                                               | Description                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Google             | <a href="http://www.google.co.th">www.google.co.th</a>                | Search engine to help you find new websites with which you can further develop your teaching and English skills.                                |
| Dave's ESL Cafe    | <a href="http://www.eslcafe.com">www.eslcafe.com</a>                  | Includes many teaching resources such as games, activities, and teaching tips. Also includes information for students such as help and forums.  |
| Merriam Webster    | <a href="http://www.m-w.com">www.m-w.com</a>                          | Features definitions of English words and has pronunciation resources to help teachers with correct pronunciations.                             |
| Activities for ESL | <a href="http://a4esl.org">http://a4esl.org</a>                       | Features many sample quizzes, including interactive online quizzes for Thai to English translations among many subjects.                        |
| ESL Partyland      | <a href="http://www.eslpartyland.com">www.eslpartyland.com</a>        | Includes information for teachers and students. Teachers have access to sample class materials and students have access to interactive quizzes. |
| Songs For Teaching | <a href="http://songsforteaching.com">http://songsforteaching.com</a> | Includes songs that may be useful in classroom instruction. Many songs contain audio samples.                                                   |

# Teacher Meetings

## For developing and sharing new teaching ideas

You may find that meeting with other English teachers on a regular basis gives your teaching methods fresh ideas and keeps them as effective as possible. Teachers that meet regularly can share ideas about teaching or discuss problems that they are having. If all of the teachers are involved in the meeting and sharing different problems together, someone might become aware of a chance for improvement that he or she would have otherwise missed. If one teacher would like support on a certain issue, there are other teachers who can help. Remember, you all have different experiences, different teaching styles, and different ways of thinking. Let this diversity help you. It might be confusing to begin, so here are some guidelines that we followed when we met with the Phon Pang School's teachers.

1. Agree on a regular meeting time for at least once a week that will work for most teachers. For example, everyone might be able to meet on Mondays and Wednesdays after school for one hour. Regularly scheduled meeting times makes getting together a simple and reliable process because everyone knows when it happens and what is expected. Not doing this makes it more difficult to call a meeting and will probably make the meeting run less efficiently because no one is used to the process of the meeting.
2. Choose a single person to facilitate the meeting. This person can start the meeting with, "What would you like to talk about?" and then keep the meeting moving by mentioning single topics to discuss. This way, no one ends up distracted or silently looking around, waiting for something to be said. Choosing this person can be a casual process that only takes a couple seconds to decide. Take turns facilitating meetings so that you all get a chance.
3. Prepare for the meeting by writing down specific things you want to talk about. At the Phon Pang School, we arrived at each meeting with a list of specific problems, comments or questions that we wanted to talk about. Doing this will make your presence worthwhile. Even trying to write down a list of problems in your class might help you realize the ways you can improve your students' education.

## For developing English language fluency

At Phon Pang School, we met with teachers and spoke in English with them. This greatly improved their fluency and confidence in speaking English. We have found that many English teachers in Isan do not have many situations when they need to speak English to improve their own English skills. But, teachers with poor English fluency can talk to teachers with better fluency during meetings. Several teachers at Phon Pang School said that they became better English speakers just because they had to speak in English. As a result, we recommend that you converse in English with each other as much as possible, especially during these meetings. You will surprise yourself with how much you know!

# Selecting and Refining Your Own Activities

## Selecting Interactive Classroom Activities

During our time at Phon Pang School, we used a set of criteria to help us determine whether or not the activities we had developed were appropriate for use in the classroom, and whether or not they were successful after trying them in the classroom. The criteria we created for this were specific to the education situation at Phon Pang School. As a result, we encourage you to create your own similar set of criteria so you may select good activities for your classroom.

As an example, the criteria we developed for Phon Pang School's classroom activities are below:

- 1. Require little to no extra materials**  
We did not choose activities that required us to buy many new items. We found that many good activities do not require extra materials and if an activity did, we were able to use common materials that the school already had.
- 2. Increase motivation**  
Teachers expressed their concern with students' lack of motivation to study English and to participate during English lessons. Thus, one criterion we chose for selecting lessons was that the activities must spark the interest of the students in order to motivate them to learn. We noticed that activities involving physical activity and competition helped motivate boys especially.
- 3. Be simple to understand for students and easy to teach for the teachers.**  
Simple lessons that teachers of varied levels of English fluency could teach had a better chance of being successful for a long time.
- 4. Be adaptable**  
To ensure that multiple teachers could use the lesson with different classes, the activity had to be adaptable to different lesson materials, age groups, and English fluency levels.

\* Clearly, these criteria would not apply to every school. However, we encourage you to set up your own set of criteria to have an objective way of selecting and devising interactive activities for your classroom. Likewise, we encourage you to refine the activities so that they improve over time (see "Refining Cultural Activities").

## Selecting Cultural Exchange Activities

While at Phon Pang, we held a cultural exchange fair. To select activities for the cultural exchange fair that we implemented, we created a set of criteria and a means of weighing the criteria to select the most appropriate activities. The criteria we selected are as follows:

### Age Appropriate

- + All children will understand and participate.
- 0 Most children will understand and participate. A few may struggle.
- Majority of children will have difficulty understanding.

### Educational Value (Connection to English / Cultural Exchange)

- + Material is highly connected to both English and cultural exchange.
- 0 Material may only be relevant to one topic (English or cultural exchange)
- Material does not connect to English or cultural exchange.

### Impact (Engagement, Memorable, Take Away, Enjoyment)

- + Students are likely to be highly engaged and will find the activity memorable.
- 0 Some students show interest in the activity but may not be fully engaged.
- Students show little interest in the activity.

### Logistics (Materials, Control)

- + Resources for the activity are easily obtainable and the activity can be easily controlled.
- 0 The activity may have some difficult to obtain materials or may be slightly difficult to control.
- The activity is very difficult to control or has very difficult to obtain resources.

For each activity we were considering, we rated it based on the four criteria giving each a score of +, 0, or -. Once ratings were applied, we created a score for each activity. To score the activity, we added up the results of the 4 criteria. Activities gained 1 point for a + rating, 0 points for a 0 rating, and -1 points for a - rating. Those that had the highest score were selected for the cultural fair. However, they were required to have gotten a 0 or + for age appropriate to help ensure that the students would be willing to participate.

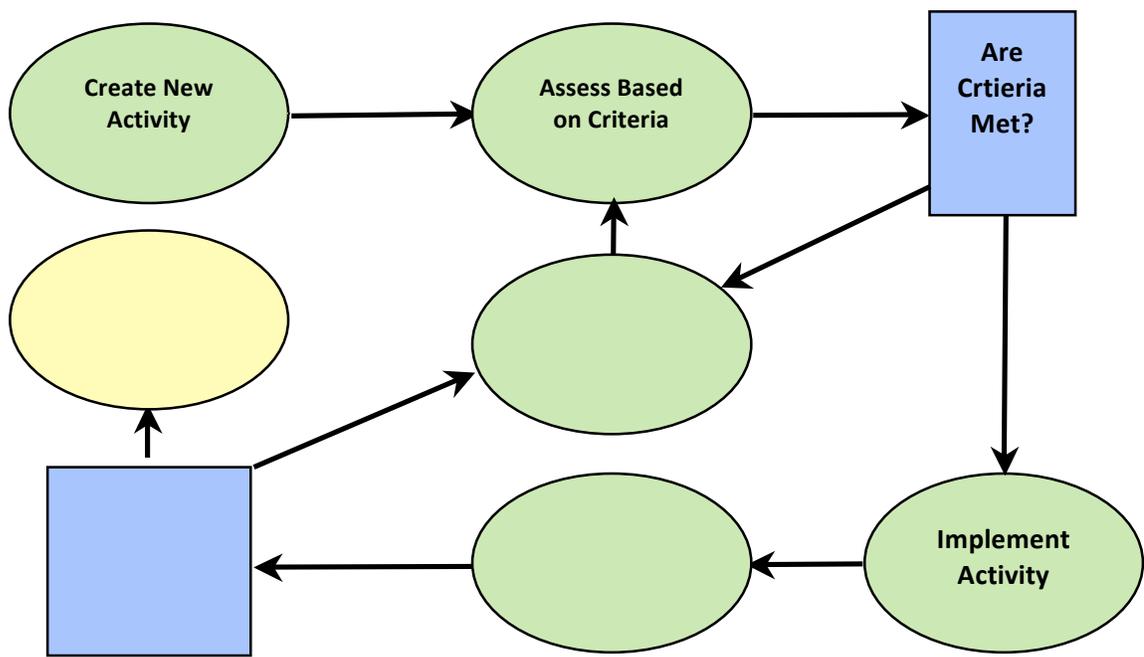
When selecting your cultural exchange activities, we recommend devising your own set of criteria or, if you feel it is applicable, follow the criteria we have created. This will allow you a means of objectively selecting activities that will be relevant to the student's lives, feasible, educational, and entertaining.

During your cultural exchange fairs, we recommend that you observe the activities carefully, taking note of any problems you see and any areas you think are especially successful. Keep in mind that you may wish to do the same activity again in the future,

or you may be doing it with another class later in the day. As a result, take note of any changes that would improve the activity and after observing, evaluate how successful the activity is in meeting your original criteria. See “Refining Your Activities” below for more information.

### Refining Your Activities

We recommend that you continually refine the cultural exchange and classroom activities to help make your teaching the best it can be. When you come up with a new activity, first compare it to your criteria to see if it meets your goals for that activity type (cultural exchange or interactive classroom). If it does not, refine it or create a different activity and compare that to the criteria. If it does meet the criteria, implement it and refine it as necessary. See the diagram below for a more in-depth example:



# Other Recommendations

## ***Teach through constructive learning.***

A student constructively learns when he/she seeks for answers to satisfy a curiosity or problem (Schcolnik et al). Activities easily assist this type of learning, but you can even practice specific methods when you are not doing specific games or songs. For example:

- Do not immediately translate vocabulary for students. Instead, use other techniques like pictures, actions, and contextual stories. When we taught students on our own at Phon Pang School, we were forced to teach students in this manner because we did not speak Thai. This positively impacted students because they practiced *thinking in English* instead of translating the meaning of words into Thai to understand what they meant. For example, teach the meaning of, “hand,” by saying “hand” and showing students your hand. Students will quickly understand the word when they hear it again because they will automatically think of its meaning.
- Refrain from speaking in Thai as much as possible, even if the students don’t completely understand. It allows students to get used to hearing English and pressures them to make a personal effort to understand (Herrera, personal communication, 9 Jan 2008). This technique has been used by many foreign language teachers and has been found effective for them.
- Ask students questions that will require them to think of their own answers. While at Phon Pang School, we noticed that students were used to memorizing and repeating conversation phrases. This is very different from constructive learning because the students do not have to actively think about what they are saying. They just memorize the sounds and say them. Instead, ask an open-ended question to one student at a time such as, “What do you do in your free time?” Be careful that the student is not just repeating what the last one said. Encourage them to come up with their own answer.

***Start your lessons with a fun activity that gets students physically active.*** This will make it easier to keep students motivated and focused throughout the class because you will have their attention from the start. Songs with actions or games like “Simon Says...” are good to start with. This is also a good opportunity to review previous lessons before you introduce a new one (Daoruang, personal communication, 12 Jan 2008).

## ***In your lessons, connect creativity and logic in students’ minds.***

A lesson that is able to connect a student’s creativity and logical thinking skills helps students use both sides of the brain together (Daoruang, personal communication, 12 Jan 2008). This enhances learning because it engages a student on several different levels of thought. It improves the speed that students learn a lesson, and it also enhances students’ recollection power later on (Herrera, personal communication, 9 Jan 2008). Think back to the example of throwing a ball to students while saying, “Catch!” If the teacher tells a student, “Throw the ball to someone else, and tell them to catch it,” the student must use creativity to think of who he/she is going to throw the ball to, and he/she must also use logic to think about the meaning of the

command, “Nud, catch!” Activities such as games that cause students to think about the meaning of vocabulary (logical thinking skills) and also use creativity (like making independent decisions) will connect both sides of the brain and make your students’ education more valuable.

***Be enthusiastic and excited in your teaching.***

For all of the activities and teaching methods we have described, enthusiasm and excitement is what makes it all work. An activity will not work well if the teacher does not seem enthusiastic about teaching (Schindler, 2006). When the team tested activities and teaching methods at Phon Pang School, we noticed that students were much more engaged and had fun when the teacher was enjoying what he/she was doing. When the teacher recognized a funny occurrence in the classroom by laughing or reacting in a comical way, the students laughed also and it made the class more fun for everyone. If the teacher seemed excited to teach, students seemed excited to learn. When teachers do not show a positive attitude to teach (e.g. leaving the classroom, frequently getting upset at students, neglecting to show approval or happiness for students’ successes) students develop negative attitudes toward the subject and become unmotivated to further learn (Herrera, personal communication, 9 Jan 2008). It is crucial to show a positive attitude if you want your students to have a positive learning experience.

*Remember – if your students are laughing with you, they are paying attention; they are probably learning something; and they most likely feel pretty good about themselves.*  
(Schindler, 2006)

# Personal Communications

**Teacher Celeste Herrera**

Headstart  
Albuquerque, NM, United States of America

**Assistant Professor Chalernpol Daoruang**

Associate Director for Foreign Affairs and Outreach Projects  
Chulalongkorn University Demonstration Elementary School  
Bangkok, Thailand

**Teacher Junjiraporn Tuninard**

Foreign Department  
Sakonrajwittayanukool School  
Sakon Nakhon, Thailand

# References

Gebhard, Jerry. (2006). *Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Le Lait, Alain. (2007). Silly ESL Song Teaches Names of Animals. Retrieved February 27, 2008, from <http://www.songsforteaching.com/animalsongs/bignose.htm>.

Peterson, E. & Coltrane, B. (2003) Culture in Second Language Teaching. Retrieved February 14, 2008, from <http://www.cal.org/resources/Digest/0309peterson.html>.

Scholnik, Miriam; Kol, Sara; Abarbanel, Joan. (2006). Constructivism in Theory and in Practice. *English Teaching Forum*, 44(4), Pg 12.

Schindler, Andrea. (2006). Channeling Children's Energy Through Vocabulary Activities. *English Teaching Forum*, 44(2), Pg 8.

Shin, Joan Kang. (2006). Ten Helpful Ideas for Teaching English to Young Learners. *English Teaching Forum*, 44(2), Pg 2.