



**POWER DISTANCE AND COLLECTIVISM-  
INDIVIDUALISM IN EFL CLASSROOM**

**BY**

**MISS VIRULPAT JEARATHANANANT**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS  
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS  
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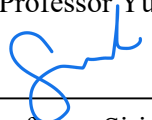
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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of cultural dimensions—specifically power distance and individualism-collectivism—on student behavior and English proficiency in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms in Thailand. Despite English being an essential tool for global communication and economic competitiveness, Thai students consistently perform below average in international assessments. The research investigates how deeply rooted Thai cultural values, such as respect for authority, "kreng jai" (consideration for others), and a preference for group harmony, shape classroom dynamics and hinder student participation and language acquisition. Using a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and semi-structured interviews with university students in Bangkok, the study examines the extent to which power distance and collectivism are perceived in Thai EFL classrooms. Findings suggest that high power distance and collectivist tendencies contribute to passive classroom behaviors, such as reluctance to question teachers or engage in discussions, ultimately affecting students' English proficiency. The research underscores the need for culturally sensitive pedagogical strategies to foster more interactive and learner-centered environments.

**Keywords:** power distance, collectivism-individualism, EFL classroom

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Virulpat Jearathananant

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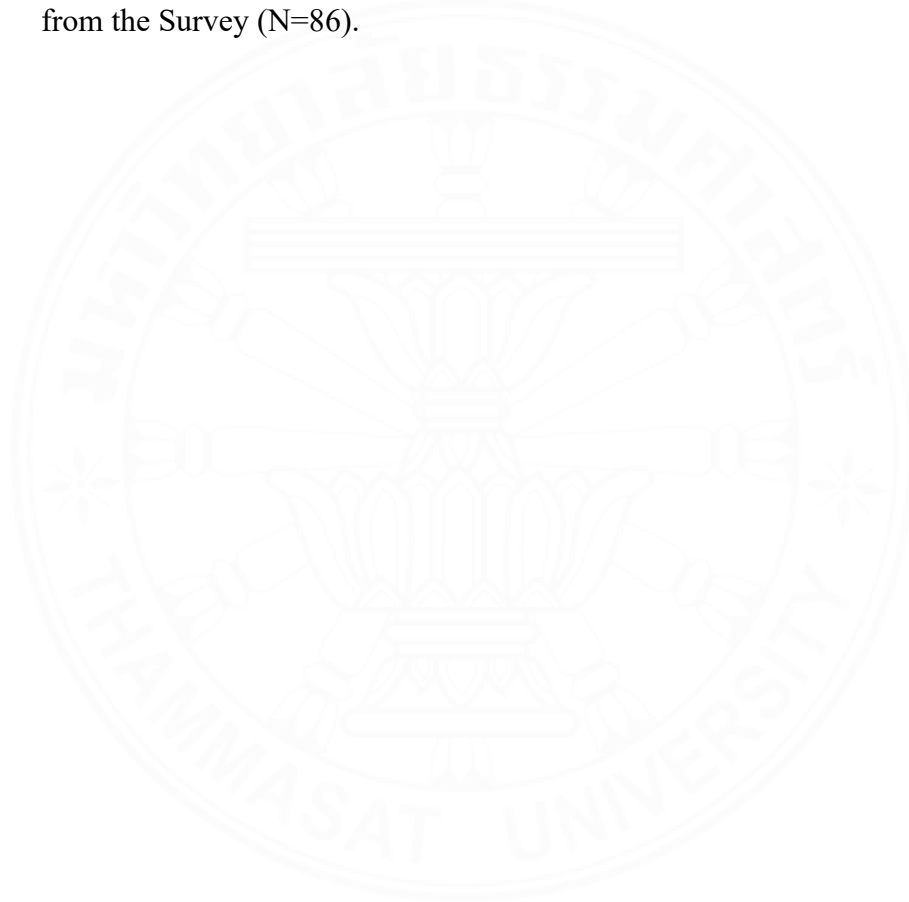
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The research presented in this thesis aims at investigating power distance and individualism and collectivism in EFL classroom, and to explore the relationship between students' anxiety and power distance and individualism and collectivism. This chapter presents six main areas including: 1) background of the study; 2) statement of problem; 3) purpose of the study; 4) research questions; 5) scope of the study, and 6) definitions of key terms

### 1.1 Background

It is undeniable that English has become a powerful tool for occupational and academic advancement. Today, non-native speakers who use English as their second or foreign language, are outnumbering the native speakers who use English as their first language (Brutt-Griffer & Samimy, 1998). In many European countries, for decades, English has been used as second language for official issues including academic matters. Therefore, it increases the importance of English as lingua franca. Later, in Asian countries, English has rooted its power and significance too. For example, in China, more than 250 million children are learning English to keep up with the international trends and communication (McArthur, 2003).

Similarly, in Thailand, English is seen to be one of the most important subjects which is applied in teaching process from primary school to university (Khamkhen, 2010). However, English language is once questioned about its power and attempt to take over other languages and cultures because in the past the spread of English often came with colonization or religious missions. When time passes, the questions are faded since English has been widely used and it is regarded as the basic language for science, technology, and arts (Fassinger, 1995). Zhenhua (1999) also reinforces that English is recognized to be one of the most basic and essential factors to drive a national economy and increase the capacity in global economic competition. Moreover, it prepares citizens to become aware of international community and

communication. As a result, English proficiency covering reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, is indeed essential for citizens in a country, especially for students who will be the important workforce in the future (Hall, 2006).

Researchers are becoming interested in how cultural values influence ways of thinking and learning process. Learning process cannot be accomplished without looking deep into what is deeply rooted in learners, which is cultural background. De Vita (2001) believes that culture somehow controls what we receive, process, and organize in our mental systems such as knowledge acquisition. Everything which is acquired and processed is governed by culture. In fact, everyone holds different perspectives and beliefs, which means they hold different cultural backgrounds. By perceiving different views, it leads to different and various thinking processes. Thai language classroom was once supported to be learner-centered, but with Thai cultural values which teachers dominate the classroom and students are required and expected to pay ultimate respect to teachers, it could not become successful. One more value that Thai people always show, and it seems to hinder students' English competency is "save face" or "kreng jai." (being considerate of others' feeling or opinions). In Thai classroom context, teachers are the most authoritative figures whom students need to maintain good relationship with. By this way, students follow the regulations specified by teachers and do not bring or cause any threats which possibly ruin teachers' confidence or image (Raktham, 2008). Consequently, the suggestion is made by Nisbett (2003) that Asians seem to be dependent and follow the norms strictly, so they are believed to hold the collectivist values. On the other hand, Westerners whose identity is quite independent and concerned about their interests before anyone else are perceived as individualists. Moreover, Asians tend to hold high power distance while Westerners are viewed to carry low power distance according to the view of paying respect. Kettanun (2015) investigated Thai EFL classroom, and the findings revealed that respect was highly perceived by students towards teachers, questions and suggestions were rarely made in the class since teachers were seen to be knowledgeable in everything, and teacher-centered style were preferred because the students were trained for rote memorization.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

With cultural values and their influence, learners' behaviors might be impacted too. Being aware of learners' cultural backgrounds is crucial since it helps improve cultural misunderstanding occurring in classes, including pedagogical approaches. Hofstede (1986) claims that culture is the factor which tends to tremendously influence learners' behaviors and learning process. Therefore, he presents *Cultural Dimensions* which includes individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity-femininity. The concept is used to investigate cultural perspectives in a particular society. In classrooms, individualism-collectivism and power distance are two cultural dimensions which are often used to examine how culture indeed influences learning process. Western classrooms such as in Belgium, Australia, Great Britain, or the United States are normally defined to be low power distance and individualists since students usually ask questions, share their perspectives, and are self-oriented. In contrast, Asian classrooms, such as in Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, including Thailand, are regarded power distance and collectivists because students fear to share their points of views and to make any interruptions. Furthermore, teachers are always seen to be the authoritative figures and knowledgeable. However, Jung, Kudo and Choi (2012) claims that Asian students seem to be comfortable with teacher-centered learning environment rather than exchanging views and asking questions. This is probably because Asian students are accustomed with rote learning style which teachers often give lectures and students only jot down on the note.

Apparently, Asian values have rooted in Asian people's behavior including studying behavior since they were young. Asian students are nurtured to pay respect to elders and family, follow the norm willingly and strictly, bring fame to oneself and family, take a good care of oneself and parents, and study hard and be academically successful (Kitano & Matsushima, 1981). These Asian values are roughly categorized in one group called "Confucianism" which was added as the fifth dimension by Hofstede's (1990). Therefore, researchers believe that cultural dimensions, especially power distance and individualism-collectivism values greatly impact language learning results (Dennison, 2012, Opdecam & Everaert 2011). For example, in Japan, the

government has put a lot of effort in English curriculum development, so students will be ready to deal with international affairs, global changes and career advancement. However, English language proficiency of Japanese students is not satisfying. As mentioned, high power distance and collectivism can be found in Japanese classrooms, students might not be provided enough chance or feel comfortable to perform their skills effectively (Kitano & Matsushima, 1981).

Similar to Thailand, English is highly valued in the roles of global economics, potential in global competitiveness, socio-cultural functions, communication, knowledge acquisition and opportunity for career advancement. English curriculum has also been improved throughout centuries to bring the success to learners. At first, English was taught as an optional subject in secondary schools, and it was expanded to cover primary schools too. Later, English became a compulsory subject in which students beyond grade 4 were forced to take the course. To cope with the rapid change of the world and to balance the standard between private schools and public schools, English learning was applied to students at all levels based on their age development and class level (Khamkhien. 2010). However, even English learning is set as a basic and compulsory subject in Thai classrooms, students' English scores are still low according to TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) in 2010. Thailand was ranked 74<sup>th</sup> in 2019, then dropped to 89<sup>th</sup> in 2020 out of 112 countries which are non-native English speaking, according to the survey by the global language education company, EF Education First (Bangkok Post, 2021). This brings concerns regarding an initial cause which affects students' learning outcomes in English language learning. Some question about the validity and consistency of the tests while others doubt teaching and learning practices in classes. Frequently, cultural values are said to be a significant factor which influences language learning outcomes. As Thailand is regarded as collectivism, plus with Asian values strongly held inside, that is probably why students' English competency has not been advanced to the level that can bring success to learners themselves or the country.

Culture and language cannot be separate from each other. For language learning process, it is assumed to be governed by cultural backgrounds and values held in different areas. Clearly, the cultural dimensions play a vital role in the process since it is believed to influence teaching approaches. Western classrooms belong to low

power distance and individualism, which they are provided the chance to interact with the peers and teachers, so this may help them achieve the language proficiency faster and more effectively. Unlike Asian classrooms in which they belong to high power distance and collectivism, students are not fully given the chance or are reluctant to exchange or share their problems and views, hence their language proficiency may not meet the benchmark or standards.

Furthermore, according to Maftoon and Ziafar (2013), they claimed that EFL classrooms are far from an ideally successful language learning style as Asian people value the group conformity, indirect speech, face saving and preference for teacher dominate classrooms. Unlike western language classrooms, they normally do quick turn-taking in interaction or sharing ideas, this way, it allows learners to be motivated and unconsciously acquire language skills. Also, with learners' behaviors in classrooms, they would rather sit quietly, be obedient and passive than being the center of interest. They believe that by doing so, they would not shame themselves if something in class goes wrong (Kobayashi, 2004). For example, Japanese students would not raise their hands or volunteer to answer questions in class because they are too afraid to make mistakes, or they try to avoid sharing ideas unless they are sure that the answer is totally right. This obviously indicates the power distance and collectivism values in language classrooms of Asian countries. Kimura et al. (2001) suggested that to make the language classroom successful in view of turn-taking or interactive atmosphere, teachers need to emphasize group work or activities and peer support, including creating a comfortable classroom environment where teachers always help support students when they need. Once language classrooms are full of positive and interactive energy, language proficiency would likely to form or be acquired naturally.

However, the research regarding individualism-collectivism and power distance has been conducted in many countries and in various language classrooms, but in Thailand, there are very few studies that explore and investigate these behaviors that affect English proficiency in EFL classrooms through the intercultural lens. Therefore, this study aims to explore the individualism-collectivism and power distance, which is believed to affect the language proficiency in EFL classrooms.

### 1.3 Purposes

Cultural dimensions in view of individualism-collectivism and power distance are believed to be high in Asian classroom contexts, and that they relatively affect students' English language learning outcomes. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate cultural values – individualism-collectivism and power distance – that are perceived by students in Thai EFL classroom.

Research Questions are:

1. To what extent did EFL classroom hold individualism and collectivism value?
2. To what extent did EFL classroom hold high power distance and low power distance value?

### 1.4 Scope of the Study

The survey was conducted in English classes in a certain university around Bangkok, and students who study in such universities were the focus of this study. Additionally, the study mainly focused on students' perceptions concerning power distance and individualism-collectivism in EFL classrooms.

### 1.5 Definition of Terms

**Cultural Dimensions:** It is a framework used for cross cultural communication and it is used to demonstrate cultural values held within members of a particular society. Originally, it is divided into four factors: power distance (PDI), individualism-collectivism (IDV), masculinity-femininity (MAS), and uncertainty avoidance (UAI). Later two more factors are added; Long-term orientation (LTO) and indulgence-restraint (IVR).

**Power Distance:** The willingness to accept inequity in terms of power and status

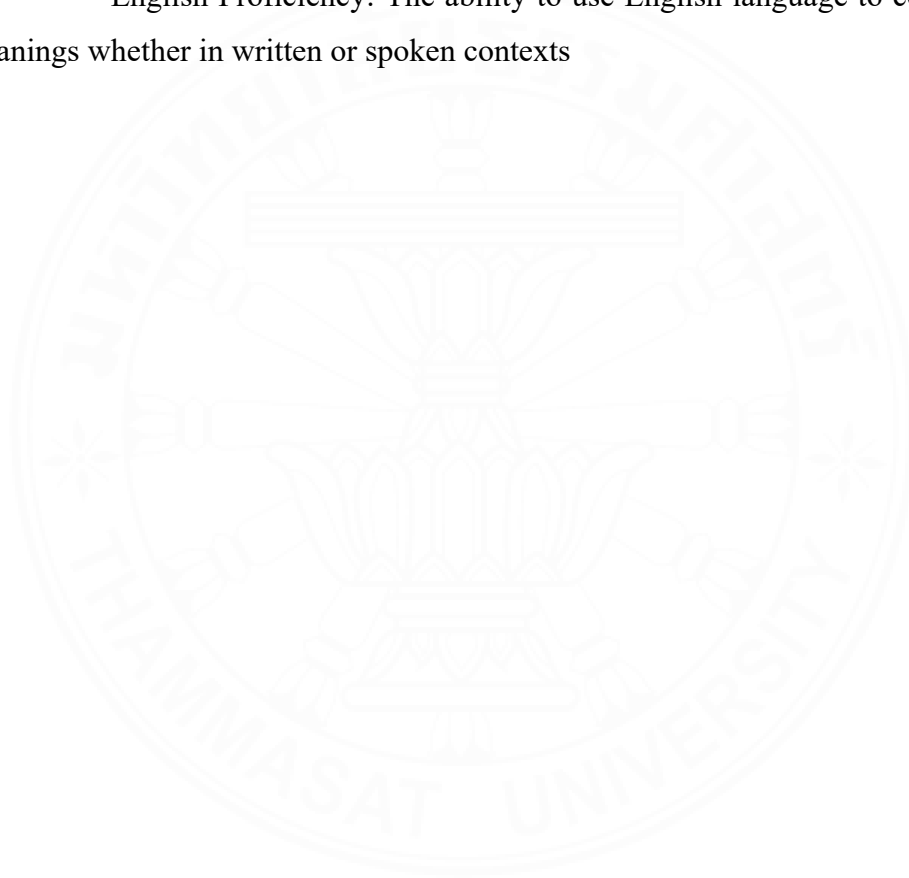
**Individualism:** The individual puts their interests, goals and preferences over social group or the state. The identity does not attach to one specific group.

Collectivism: Members in a society focus on group's interests and achievements rather than themselves. Sacrifice and harmony are emphasized among the groups and identity depends on group characteristics.

ESL classroom: The class which uses English language as the official language.

EFL classroom: The class which uses English language as the foreign language not the official language.

English Proficiency: The ability to use English language to communicate meanings whether in written or spoken contexts



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The following chapter reviews literature relevant to culture, Asian culture, Confucianism, saving face, and cultural dimensions. This chapter consists of five sections. The first section provides the definition and background of culture. The second clarifies the picture of Asian cultural values. The third part is involved with Confucianism. The fourth section presents the save face values rooted in Asian culture. The last section explains the cultural dimensions used in the study.

To achieve the goal in learning foreign language, it needs to consider many aspects which influence the learning process. One of the influences is culture held inside individuals. With different cultures, language teaching is varied. So, we need to understand the following concepts to consider how Thai classrooms are convinced by the culture in English language learning.

#### **2.1 Culture and Language Classroom**

Scholars have put effort and time in defining the word “culture”, yet it seems to appear with new meaning in different perspectives. Through the lens of anthropological and sociological views, culture is perceived as way of life or practices and traditions followed in a group (Talmy, 2004). Tyler’s explanation points out that “Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” (1871: 1). It is insisted by Fukushima (2000) that culture contains various meanings in different disciplines. While Hester and Eglin (1997) mentioned that culture is what differentiates one group from others. It has coherent with Jenks states that culture is defined as “a collectivity that embodies certain qualities, albeit self- appointed, which distinguishes it from the “mass” or more lowly state of being” (2005: 8). Culture has been researched and redefined to suit different perspectives and many scholars are active to link it with any other aspects as many as they can since culture is such a broad term that is fluid

depending on the view we investigate (Hinkel & Long, 1999; Kraidy, Gresset & Boutros, 2005, and Risager, 2007). Thus, culture is believed to be the actions and lifestyles that are repeated daily. Furthermore, it depends on the people, community and society we interact with.

For decades, students have been figured out in view of potential learning and learning strategies. Especially, in second language classrooms, researchers have put attempt to examine the core problem and solve it so that student could productively perform in language learning (Strauss & Quinn, 1997). A wide range of research attempting to explain complication and provide solution for student's learning potential have been published regarding language acquisition, psychological matters, or teaching strategies, but few research has touched intercultural communication matters (Hui, 1988). Culture plays such role in second language learning, and they are inseparable (Hofstede, 1984). Kasuya (2008) noted that to understand student's learning performance, we need to look deep into their cultures that may substantially influence them. Culture is believed as a way of life in which how we live life, how we express opinions and feelings towards some things, and how we engage with others. Meanwhile, culture allows human to interact to each other and all members in society also learn and share culture together (Brown, 1994). Atkinson (1999) mentioned one reasonable argument why there are very few research in terms of intercultural communication in ESL/EFL contexts. He posits that culture is related to norms and rules practiced in one society so that it takes time to change. However, the argument is raised against the claim in which understanding student's culture is important. Spack (1997) argued that ESL teachers should consider students as individualists rather than members in one culture, by assuming students are the same because of cultural values they share might unknowingly put some of them out of the mainstream. Nelson (2000) insisted that perceiving cultural background of students presents good points in both teaching and learning outcomes since culture is constantly changed over time depending on surroundings and environments people interact with. So many papers have been published to discover the importance of understanding student's cultures. Researchers claim that when learners hold the culture that is different from school's culture, they are likely to be less satisfied and it affects their learning results (Delgado-

Gaitan, 1987; Heath, 1983; Hoffman, 1988; Lessow-Hurley, 1990; McDermott & Gospodinoff, 1981; Philips, 1983; and Witkin, Moore, Goodenough, & Cox, 1977).

## 2.2 ELT in Thailand

According to Kachru (1998), English Language use is divided into three circles that include (1) inner circle such as Australia and New Zealand, (2) outer circle such as India, the Philippines and Malaysia, and (3) the expanding circle such as Indo-China, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam (see figure 2.1). For the countries that are categorized in the expanding circle, English is mostly used for trading and tourism. That is why English for communication is emphasized more than other skills in Asian countries. It is obvious that English is viewed as a tool that can be adapted, reshaped, redesigned through regions and cultures (Kachru, 1998).

**Figure 2.1**

*Three concentric Circles of Asian Englishes (Populations in Thousands)*

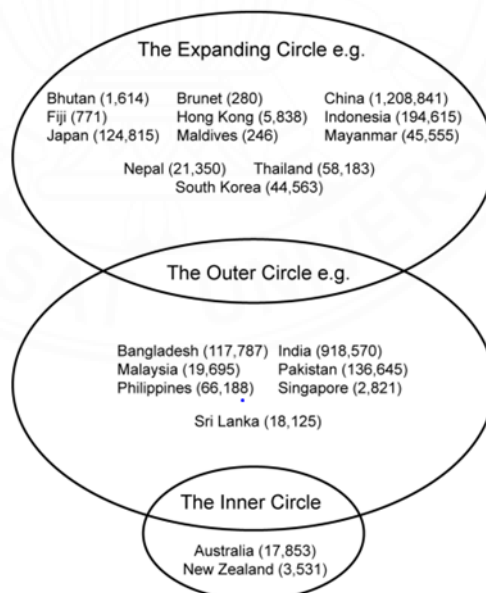


Figure 1. *Three Concentric Circles of Asian Englishes (Populations in Thousands)*  
(Kachru 1998: 94).

English Language Teaching (ELT) has been viewed to be one of the important features for Thai education and workforce. Thai students are required to study English as they are in primary schools, or even in the kindergarten schools. Nunan (2003) notes that English has become a compulsory subject in many Asian classrooms as it is perceived as the global language which is used to connect with the rest of the world. However, the inequality to access the effective materials and instruction still exists, especially in rural areas. Moreover, the language proficiency of teachers and the support from the government are inadequate for English language teaching.

In Thailand, English is used as *lingua franca* to contact with international agencies or for business matters. The mother tongue of Thailand is Thai language, and it has no official second language. However, English is subconsciously perceived as the second language used to communicate with foreigners and for academic and business purposes. Furthermore, it is the language used in media, press, and entertainment other than Thai language (Wongsothorn et al., 1996).

English Language Teaching was introduced to Thailand in the reign of King Rama III (1824–1851) (Baker 2003; Foley 2005; Wongsothorn 2000). At first, it was reserved to only court officials and people who worked in the administrative level that had to contact with foreigners. Later in 1921, it was part of one of the academic subjects for the classrooms. Then in 1996, it became one of the compulsory subjects in primary Thai education. The English teaching is more focused on communication rather than pure academic aspects as the government requires students to be prepared for the IT and the internet world (Wongsothorn, et al., 2003). Indeed, English curriculum is based on four points; culture, communication, connection, and community (the 4 Cs). There is also an effort to shift from ‘teacher-centered’ to ‘learner-centered’ to encourage students to apply their skills in the practical way. In the effort of shifting the teaching method, English language teaching has encountered with various problems such as workloads and too many responsibilities of teachers, lacking resources in teaching, large size class, inadequate and ineffective in assessment, inadequate language ability of teachers and many more (Nunan, 2003). Similar claim was made by Pattaraworathum (2021), it was identified that teaching English language has become one of the significant missions commanded by the Thai government to develop Thai citizen’s language proficiency. However, there is still a mismatch between English

language use and English language education in Thailand due to ideology in using language and cultural aspects pertaining to language acquisition. With these complicated problems, it makes English language performance of Thai citizen in the low rank compared to other countries in Asian.

### **2.3 Asian Cultural Values**

Since culture is the norm and practices influenced by members in a group, it varies across the regions and societies. However, this research will discuss only Asian culture as the participant group is in Thailand, which belongs to Asian culture. Thailand, which is in Southeast Asia region, shares cultural traits with other Asian countries such as China, Japan, and Korea, and those might somehow influence Asian people's characteristics shown in society (Atkinson & Gim, 1989). To categorize Asian cultural values, Asian Americans are numerous studied as most of them live in U.S., which is believed to inherit different cultural values from Asians (Atkinson, Lowe & Matthews, 1995).

According to Ho (1987) and Sue and Sue (1993), the roles in Asian cultural values are strictly fixed and family members always rely on each other as well as members are required to follow their roles sternly. In other word, the roles are primarily and strictly set so that role conflictions are minimized, and members can do their best in their roles. (Sue, 1981; Sue & Sue, 1993). It is stated that the father is a leader of the family (Fernandez, 1988; Ho, 1987; Sue, 1981; Uba, 1994). For mother, her role is generally seen to be a caretaker of family members' chores (Ho, 1987; Uba, 1994). Sue (1981) pointed out that the son is also destined for a good behavior, and when he grows up, he is expected to be a great leader of his own family as well as a good husband. Also, Sue described the roles of daughters in family that they are expected to perform the housework and obey the males' wants.

Fernandez (1988), Kitano and Matsushima (1981), and Tomita (1994) noted that the self-worth and self-identity are highly related to how their family achieves both parental and social tasks. If one of the members succeed in something, it often positively results in family's image. In contrast, if one of the members involves with unsuitable social behaviors or fails to achieve any tasks, the other members in

family are expected to be responsible for those unpleasant results, and these notorious actions can cause them in a position of losing face (Sue, 1981). Therefore, all members in family are tied to the responsibility that they must not cause any kind of situation which make the other members lose their faces. (Ho, 1987; Kaneshige, 1973;. Sue, 1981; Tinloy, 1978). Losing face is a strong and powerful factor which forces Asian family members to strictly follow the family's expectations and rules (Ho, 1987).

In Asian culture, filial piety is recognized to be one of the most important values which all members should bear in minds (Chen, 1982; Ho, 1996; Morrow, 1989; Murakawa, 1986; Sue & Sue, 1993; Tinloy, 1978; Uba, 1994). Chen (1982) explains characteristics of filial piety in Asian family that children should pay respect and honor, and they should be devoted, dutiful and sacrificial to their parents. Moreover, filial piety in Asian family requires no doubts or questions in doing so, and children often need to fulfill parents' expectations, needs, and wishes (Murakawa, 1986). Sue (1981) adds that in paying respect to parents, elders are the authoritative figures in family who deserve the great respect. Furthermore, in Asian culture, the power in making decision and solving problem mainly belongs to parents and elders (Kitano & Matsushima, 1981; Leong, 1992; Sue & Sue, 1993; Sue, 1981; Tinloy, 1978). When young generations encounter troubles or problems, parents and elders are the first people they turn to. These authoritative people in Asian family are believed to have experienced those troubles before, or they have knowledge or expertise to help resolve the situation (Kitano & Matsushima, 1981). Asian Americans in the study, who are seen to strongly attached with Asian cultural values, are recognized to be people who do not want to be in a limelight, live their lives modestly, often avoid the situation or conversation that brings them troubles, and always pay respect to others when interacting with them (Kaneshige, 1973; Leong, 1992; Murakawa, 1986; Tung, 1985; Uba, 1994; West, 1983). Similarly, their achievements and opinions which are seemingly to contrast others are not encouraged. Instead, they are nurtured to be pleased with other's opinions and do not show off what they have succeeded. If any members do so, it might bring negativity to their families (Sue & Sue, 1993). The Confucian value is viewed to be an important role in how Asians communicate and behave. The values they receive from the Confucius's teachings are that they need to have patience, gentleness, and a good

behavior. Moreover, they often adjust themselves to get along with the group (Uba, 1994).

Murakawa (1986) and Uba (1994) note that as Asian Americans who hold strong Asian values are taught to be well-behaved in every aspect, so they are mostly a recipient, a negotiator, or a listener in each conversation and situation. They will try as much as they can to avoid confronting others (Uba, 1994; Tamura & Lau, 1992). That is why, most of the time, they are more comfortable in a passive communication style (Kitano & Matsushima, 1981; Murakawa, 1986). Uba (1994) reinforces that Asian Americans are hardly against other's ideas or opinions because they want to keep the relationship. However, Asian communities prefer using nonverbal communications which are gestures and facial expressions to express feelings (Kaneshige, 1973; Kitano & Matsushima, 1981). Uba (1994) explains that the Asians are taught to suppress their feelings and emotions, and excessively expressing emotions are not encouraged. So, many Asian people need to control themselves- they should know when the most suitable timing is for expressing feelings (Kaneshige, 1973; Leong, 1992; Murakawa, 1986; Tinloy, 1978; Tung, 1985; Uba, 1994). Consequently, being a passive interlocutor in a conversation might be influenced from these cultural values.

However, these values, identified by Kim et al. (1999), to be somehow related to each other. Also, these dimensions are believed to be linked with Confucianism, which is a philosophy that gives support to the values of interpersonal harmony, knowledge, and acceptance of an individual in society and family, obedience, and orientation toward the group (Uba, 1994).

Definitely, Asian values contain several practices and norms, so it is normal to address more than one trait when talking about Asian values. For Tong (1994, p.417) defined Asian values as "a sense of community and nationhood, a disciplined and hardworking people, strong moral values and family ties." While Russell and Doh (2006b, p. 174) characterized as "respect for hierarchy and concern for collective well-being" which are two important values of Confucianism. Thus, it depends on individuals whether which aspect they are investigating.

From the existing literature, there are many aspects and perspectives that have been discussed, but primary values which can be found are, firstly, familism gives the importance to the family both in public and private area. This also promotes the

collectivism in Asian people. Similarly, this value can be linked with the Confucianism as it is family-related norm and individuals should concern about their families no matter what they do (Tu, 1984, p.31). Secondly, filial piety is one of the key values which emerges prevalently in Asian family, and it is also the norm related with Confucianism. It is explained that children should follow the rules specified by parents and they should take a great care of them when they cannot take care themselves. Moreover, children are expected to be unquestionable to whatever their parents tell them to do (Tu, 1984, 31). Thirdly, communalism group's interest and success over individual's. This trait is seen to belong to Confucianism, too. However, Fox (1997, p. 582) explained about Confucian community as "everyone holds to their roles, and everyone, in different times and places, has the potential to show forth, through their participation in community activities, the sort of authority which binds the community together". Fourthly, power and authority including obedience to the ones with higher power and hierarchy are emphasized. Members prefer the authoritative style and mutual consensus rather than individual task and competition. Also, this is viewed to be one of key values under Confucianism (Dalton, Russell & Ong, 2005). Fifth, work ethic and education, members are taught to be self-disciplined, work hard and frugal. This value is also recognized to relate to Confucianism. It is said that in Confucian education, education does not guarantee the members high job position or success, it rather helps build the inner values which is called human virtues (Ackerly, 2005; Tu, 1984).

As Asian children are expected to live up to their parents' expectations and they are also expected to perfect in all roles. When any mistakes that could affect the image of families are made, they would feel embarrassed. Furthermore, respect and honor are much expected to be paid to the elders or superiors. Also, members in families must give importance to the family image rather than individuals and put the family sake first. So, these Asian cultural values straightly promote the members or the inheritors to be collectivism. As well, these values indicate the in society. Therefore, Thai students who are the Asian members are seen to possess these values, and they are somehow believed to affect the learning process and language proficiency.

## 2.4 Thai Culture and ELT

The difficulties of foreign language learning in Thailand have been discussed by some authors and they noted that it was because of the difference of cultures and values shared in societies in which those techniques such as learner-centered or communicative language teaching needed to be adapted in Thai society (Adamson, 2003, 2005; Foley, 2005; Saengboon, 2004). As Buddhism has been mainly inherited in Thailand, it was calculated to be 95 % of Thai citizen who were Buddhist (National Identity Board, 2000). In the past, all the knowledge and teaching were distributed by monks. Even now, many schools are still tied to temples. Since the Thai education has been knotted with the religion, many values are softly and unconsciously shared through such teaching. Saengboon (2005) indicates that Thai education has emphasized the cooperation to maintain natural, hierarchical, and social order. As the main religion is Buddhism, it is tied with the concept of 'karma' which gives importance to detachment and acceptance of the present. Therefore, people would accept their status and avoid confrontation (Adamson, 2003, 2006; Foley, 2005; Klausner, 1993). This leads the younger trying not to argue or harshly encounter with the older. Thai teachers are also placed in a higher status, and that is why Thai students are expected to pay respect and trying not to raise many questions in classes. Furthermore, the juniors should always have a feeling of 'kreng jai' (being considerate of others' feelings) towards the seniors in society since they are recognized as the high-status group. As a result, asking questions or making teachers feel embarrassed is considered to be inappropriate (Adamson, 2003, 2006; Foley, 2005; Mulder, 2000). Other values shared in Thai classrooms such as 'sanuk' (fun or enjoyment) or 'sabaijai' (comfort) which encourages the class to be group orientation and uncritical. This is how religion influences the values shared in society including in classrooms.

These cultural values have led Thai classrooms to be less open to discussion with critical thinking compared the western classrooms (Saengboon, 2004). However, Hongladarom (1998) argued that Asian countries such as Thailand, India, or China has the critical mind, but it is suppressed by cultural values that emphasizes the social harmony. Therefore, the materials of English language teaching can be brought from

the western countries, but they need to be adapted to the local contexts concerning the cultural values and characteristics in each society.

## **2.5 Cultural Awareness and ELT in Thailand**

Cultural awareness has been one of the most essential topics in pedagogy for over ten years (Byram, 1997; Jones, 1995, 2000; Littlewood, 2001; and Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993). As in Europe, learners of foreign language still do not fulfil the needs of international English users, especially, when communicating with people who come from different cultural backgrounds, which are the Asians. According to (Baker, 2008), they present some key features of cultural awareness which include an awareness of the role culture and context play in any interpretation of meaning, an awareness of culture that goes beyond facts, the ability to compare cultures for similarities and differences, an awareness of the relative nature of cultural norms, an awareness of how individuals relate to cultures and the ability to employ these skills in intercultural communication.

Since Thailand is the country where intercultural contexts are increasing, Thai teachers are so much in need to understand intercultural skill so that they can equip students to be ready for cross and intercultural communication. Adamson's (2003, 2005) suggested that Thai teachers can start looking for the contexts that are outside the classroom in which students could explore their own culture and what may influence their behavior, belief, and practices. Furthermore, such practice could make students be more aware of culture in communication. According to (Baker, 2008), there are various methods to develop cultural awareness such as exploring Thai culture, exploring language learning materials (textbooks), exploring the traditional media and arts—film, TV, radio, newspapers, novels, and magazines, exploring IT/electronic media—the internet, e-mail, chatrooms, contact with people from other cultures.

To explore other cultures in Thailand is quite easy as it has various intercultural contacts. Firstly, textbooks are used in Thai classrooms. Mostly, those teaching materials are produced in different local areas so that they can be used as the source of exploring intercultural practices (Greil, 2004; Wongsothorn, et al. 1996). However, it is necessary to consider whether those pictures and actions presented in the

textbooks are stereotype or racism. Therefore, teachers are in need to guide students as appropriate.

Another source is arts and media. There is much information locally produced and published on TV, radio stations, films, and internet sites. Again, teachers and students need to be careful of stereotypical and exaggerated opinions or information. This is linked to IT and electronic media in which internet, or online websites are recognized to present the authentic language, information, and cultures. Hence, teachers and learners can exploit this opportunity in exploring intercultural communication through e-mails, chatrooms, texts or else.

Finally, as mentioned earlier that Thailand has many intercultural contacts, so the learners can take such chance to explore intercultural communication by meeting the foreigners face to face. In classrooms, the possible way for students to explore other cultures is to exchange conversations or information with foreign teachers. By this way, the teachers can provide their own cultural perspectives to students so that they can visualize how other cultural practices are done. Moreover, learners can exchange conversations with Thai ELT teachers who have lived in other cultural contexts so that they can share their feelings and perspectives including comparing how it is different between their own and other cultures. These methods can provide clearer understanding of cultural awareness in classrooms, and also facilitate students to adapt such knowledge in their real practices.

In EFL classrooms, the key role of teachers is to make students understand the concepts and ideas taught in the class through the foreign language which is English. When teachers and students have different cultural backgrounds, it is necessary for them to learn each other's cultural values and background by the suggested methods mentioned above or any methods appropriate for the learners and classroom. Once, the cultural values and background are understood and shared, it would be easier for both teachers and learners to capture the concepts and ideas exchanged in the class.

## **2.6 Cultural Dimensions**

Through the lens of intercultural communication, Hofstede (1984) investigated international organizations and the data were collected from multinational

corporation, IBM from forty different countries. He summed up that “organizations are cultural-bounded” (p.252). According to his analysis, he then proposes four cultural dimensions which include individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity-femininity. These four aspects display the culture values that members in society share together, and they also reflect member’s behaviors in society. Later, Hofstede (1990) added one more cultural named Confucian work dynamics. The survey includes Chinese values and were complemented by 22 university students. For ESL/EFL learning contexts, Power Distance and Individualism-Collectivism are two dimensions that can be easily noticed in classrooms and are mostly researched (Alshahrani, 2017). Therefore, the present paper will emphasize these two cultural aspects as a theoretical framework.

### **2.6.1 Power Distance**

Inequality is something humans try to eliminate but unfortunately, it has rooted everywhere in all cultures, and it seems to multiply. The term power distance was first mentioned by Muak Mulder, Dutch social psychologist (Li & Guo, 2012). Mulder (1977) described power as the ability to order or control behaviors of others, and power distance as the unequal power between a less powerful person and a more powerful individual. Later, Hofstede (1984) coined the word power distance to represent inequality and describes it as power generated from interpersonal communication. Additionally, he mentions that people who are less powerful are likely to accept and conform to more powerful people. Similarly, Schwartz (1994) defined the term inequality as hierarchy in which authorities hold more power over subordinates and expect them to follow the orders. Since power is differentiated depending on groups, cultures, and countries, so the term is categorized into two aspects which are low-power distance.

According to surveys by Hofstede (1980) and Schwartz (1994), the acceptance of power in numerous countries is varied. The countries where subordinates firmly accept and follow the authorities, at the same time, they are pleased with the authoritarian means used by powerful people seem to be defined as high power distance (HPD). Hierarchical rapport is one of the significant characteristics found in HPD society, Hsu (1981) notes that hierarchy is natural and unchangeable and related to age,

rank, seniority, and family background. Additionally, in HPD culture, powerful people try to maintain their power and keep powerful look by dressing formally to earn respect, and they are satisfied with privileges like gifts, working connections, or a seat in a leading school. Sagie, Mainiero and Koslowsky (2000) presented another view of HPD values relating to hierarchy that decision making always falls in hands of authorities because people see them as knowledgeable and experienced ones.

On the other hand, the countries which deny the power distributed by authorities and support impartiality are viewed as low power distance (LPD). Furthermore, there is always a room for subordinates and authorities to negotiate including in family or classrooms. Meanwhile powerful people try not to be outstanding in terms of power by dressing normally. More importantly, in LPD culture, privileges like gifts or connections are not supported. Besides, democratic environment is valued in which the activities that require decision, subordinates are encouraged to participate in expressing their opinions and problem solving (Couto &Vieira, 2004; Nakata & Sivakumar, 1996). Pye (1985) and Wetzel (1993) denoted that in Asian and Western cultures, the difference regarding power distance can be clearly noticed. They claim that in Asian society such as China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, France, Mexico and Malaysia, authoritarian style is preferred which means they carry high power distance value. In contrast with Western society such as US, Canada, Great Britain, power and authority style are considered in a negative way which means they carry low power distance value.

### **2.6.1.1 Power Distance in EFL Classroom**

Because power distance is extremely related to inequality and hierarchy conveyed through interpersonal communication, classrooms are great sources to observe this cultural angle. In learning context, teachers seem to possess more power since they need to provide knowledge and materials, at the same time, they need to control the discussions and learning atmosphere during classes. Likewise, students are seen to be less powerful since they need to sit and listen or express their opinions when necessary. To present the clear picture of power distance in classrooms, Hofstede (2008), therefore, considered the occurrence of power distance in classrooms and notices so many important power distance features showing in educational contexts. According to Li and Guo (2012), they presented identities in high power distance in

classrooms in which the respect needs to be paid to teachers so that when teachers enter the room, students need to stand up and greet in a polite manner. Teaching is set as teacher-centered in which teachers provide all knowledge and materials to students. Normally, in high power distance value, the rules and regulations need to be strictly followed, including in schools. Also, all the conversations exchanged in classrooms are often started from teachers, and students are allowed to share opinions when asked to. More importantly, teachers are not challenged or criticized in front of other students. Jambor (2005) insisted that in high power distance classrooms, teachers are seen to be untouchable persons so that students must respect them both inside and outside the class. Additionally, hierarchy highly plays a role in HPD; it causes younger students to pay respect to students who are older too. This reflects a deep root of HPD society. Another characteristic of teachers in HPD contexts, they are expected to know everything regarding lessons (Hudson-Ross & Dong, 1990). During the lecture, students must not interrupt, or try to distract other student's attention. In other words, students are expected to keep quiet and listen the lecture carefully (Fisher & Waldrip, 1999). One more noticeable feature in HPD learning context is that formality is sternly followed by everyone in society which means that teachers and students need to wear uniforms, and follow the etiquette instructed by the rules (Hudson-Ross & Dong, 1990).

On the other hand, Li and Guo (2012) posited the characteristics in LPD classrooms in which students are treated fairly and equally by teachers and vice versa. Student-centered teaching style is emphasized. Student are allowed to initiate the discussions or conversations, at the same time, students do not need to wait for teachers to provide them knowledge which means that they can explore many sources of knowledge both inside and outside the class and may discuss with teachers and other students in classes. Contrast with HPD classrooms, in LPD classes, the unexpected interruption can be raised up when students do not understand the lessons. Moreover, teachers can be challenged by asking questions or criticized in front of others. Nelson (2000) also stressed that in LPD classrooms, jokes are something common between students and teachers when they are outside classrooms. Sometimes, teachers are called by the first names instead of the titles. What is more, in LPD context, is that dress code is not ruled which means that teachers and students can dress casually. Nelson (2000) as well agreed that teachers in LPD culture do not need to be excellent

in everything, instead students are expected to gain themselves knowledge if it is not presented in textbooks. However, high power distance and low power distance characteristics in classrooms still contain many aspects related to both students and teachers.

For teacher-student and student-student interaction related to the power distance dimension in large power distance, the classrooms are teacher-centered, and most of the time, teacher dominate the class and give only lectures throughout the class. Students need to follow the instructions told by teachers and conversations must ne initiated by teachers. Moreover, the effectiveness of students depends on teachers' excellence. Students expect teachers to set goals in learning for them, at the same time, students are not expected to ask questions or express their opinions explicitly.

For teacher-student and student-student interaction related to the power distance dimension in small power distance, group activities are assigned in the class, effectiveness in learning depends on participation and communication in the class. Furthermore, teachers often ask students' opinions, and they can express their ideas or ask questions straightly in the class. Students have the right and are encouraged to speak up and generate the conversation. Also, they are also expected to set their own goal in learning.

### **2.6.2 Individualism and Collectivism**

The way we live in a society is varied, and those patterns also reflect the degree in which individualism or collectivism is valued. In fact, this cultural aspect has been tremendously researched by a bunch of researchers. With this aspect, it defines values, beliefs, patterns, and behaviors of people in society, and, at the same time, the dimension of it differs for each country (Nelson, 2000; Gudykunst, Yoon, & Nishida, 1987; Ho & Chiu, 1994; Hofstede, 1984, 1991; Hsu, 1983). Hofstede (1983) defines this term as the degree in which how much people in one society give importance to the groups. It is reinforced that the term is used to describe the way of life based on social patterns (Nelson, 2000). In addition, the term is described as behaviors practiced among individuals, groups, or organizations depending on cultures, which its interest is emphasized on personal or group level (Adler, 2002; Bond, 1996; Earley & Erez, 1997;

Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1995; Wagner, 1995). For individualists, Triandis (1995) defined individualism as “a social pattern that consists of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of the collectives” (p. 2). People in this groups are supported to focus on their own dreams, goals, or achievements before anyone else’s, and their identities are created from their successes rather than family or society. The characteristics which can be commonly found are that they are so proud of their achievements, trying to stay competitive, and giving importance to equity (Triandis, Brislin, & Hui, 1988). Moreover, they put their interest before the group’s, and usually, their motivations come from their own needs, preferences, and goals (Wanger, 1995). Triandis (1995) pointed out that individualists can get along with any groups, but their identities do not belong to one specific group. Differently, Triandis (1995) described collectivists as “a social pattern consisting of closely linked individuals who see themselves as parts of one or more collectives (family, co-workers, tribe, nation)” (p. 2). People in this group put group’s needs or interests before their own, and with being a member in a group, it gives a sense of self-identity, which means that norms and roles direct people’s behaviors. Supported by Wanger (1995), he notes that collectivists emphasize the group’s interest before theirs, including the stuff related to self- interest. Among the group, sacrifices and harmony are seen to be something important in which they could bring success to the group, while conflicts and competition and criticism are avoided since they could bring an end to the group. Therefore, collectivists tend to express only opinions or comments that other people in the group desire (Triandis, 1995). Because of the importance of harmony valued in collectivist society, the concept of “face” can relate to the group as well. Govea (2007) explained the term as confidence, respect, and trust of a person. To keep one’s face means that one does not cause or pose any negative matters towards someone else, which presents the sense of harmony. If one by accident or intentionally threatens someone else’s confidence, respect, or trust, they probably make ones lose their faces. Losing faces means that harmony between people in the group is ruined so that social interaction in the group will be broken too. The examples of the countries which are seen to be individualists are US, Canada, Great Britain, Sweden, or New Zealand, and the countries which are viewed as collectivists consist of Korea, China, Japan, Taiwan, Peru, and Mexico (Hofstede, 1984, 1991).

### **2.6.2.1 Individualism in EFL Classroom**

Because individualists place their interests first and give importance to equality and quality (Triandis, Brislin, & Hui, 1988), it makes classrooms more independent and democratic. Hofstede (1986) applies the same set of cultural dimensions used to investigate the workplace with educational settings, then he presents the characteristics found in individualistic classrooms. Firstly, most of students tend to present themselves by speaking up when asked by teachers. The reason they usually answer teachers is that they want to be seen and get attention because they want to be remembered individually rather than a group member. The classrooms are not quiet when questions are given since students will raise their hands trying to express their opinions. Secondly, students asking teachers questions are viewed to be something general. When students do not get clear understandings regarding lessons, they are likely to ask teachers right away, and this is not counted as a selfish manner because they need to be responsible for their learnings. Hwang et al. (2003) also agreed with this because their study shows that students in the individual culture like to ask teachers questions immediately when they have concerns regarding contents or materials. Thirdly, groupwork is not fixed, it can change from class to class. This is fine for individualists because they view themselves as a member of every group not for one specific group, However, this seems to benefit students since it offers more opportunities and knowledge in meeting and working with new ones. It is confirmed by Hwang et al. (2003), they indicated that students who are individualists prefer working alone rather than working with others. Fourthly, students expect teachers to be equal and impartial. As mentioned earlier, equality and equity are important factors that individualists pay attention to, so teachers are expected not to favorite any student over others.

### **2.6.2.2 Collectivism in EFL Classroom**

Collectivism places the group or organization's interest before theirs, so the classroom environment is likely to be less independent and democratic than individualism's. With the same set of cultural dimensions by Hofstede (1983), he proposed some significant characteristics shown in the classrooms. However, we need to be aware that these characteristics may vary from culture to culture. For the characteristics of collectivists in classrooms, firstly, students rarely voluntarily express

their opinions towards teacher's discussions except they are called individually by the names. Moreover, raising hands to generate the discussions seldom happens in the classrooms. This is because they do not want to be the center of attention in classrooms. Secondly, students hardly make interruptions or ask questions during the classes. Students in this kind of culture think that asking or presenting some concerns regarding teaching material is selfish and wasting other students' time. Furthermore, voluntary manners in answering question generated by teachers are unlikely to be found in the collectivist culture. Hwang et al. (2003) added that students who are collectivists tend to never ask questions from professors both inside and outside the classrooms. On the other hand, an act of not asking and answering questions are caused by the "face" concept. Students themselves do not want to lose confidence in front of other students when providing a wrong answer, and at the same time, they do not want to cause teachers to lose face when they cannot give students the right or reasonable answers. Once one of them loses face, the relationship in classroom may not work well or be put to an end. Thirdly, teachers may have some preferential treatment towards some groups of students. For example, in China, some teachers might treat some students specially by providing some extra helps, guidance or recommendations since they know that those students come from the big-name families (Hudson-Ross & Dong, 1990).

These are the possible cultural differences between classrooms in individualist and collectivist cultures. For classrooms in individualist cultures, students are willing to speak up to share their ideas, they often ask questions when they do not understand, or they usually add more information on the topics discussed in the class. When working in groups, members are not fixed, they can change groups throughout the course. Also, teachers are expected to treat students equally and everyone can correct each other's mistake without feeling offended.

For classrooms in collectivist cultures, students rarely speak up in class except when they are called specifically. When students do not understand, they do not usually ask teachers in class, instead, they will their friends or wait until the class ends. Moreover, when group tasks are assigned, members in groups will not be changed until the tasks are completed. As well, teachers seem to have preferences towards some students. Most of all, saving face seems to be the most important thing because when one loses face, it could ruin their good feelings or relationships.

## 2.7 Collectivism-Individualism and Power Distance in EFL Classroom

Jenvdhanaken and Rangponsumrit (2020) explore the cultural differences between Thai and Spaniards in the classrooms aiming to specify the problems caused by cultural differences. Forty students and ten Spanish teachers in a university were interviewed about behaviors and interactions shown in the classrooms. It was revealed that Spanish teachers view Thai students as collectivists as they rarely initiated conversations, asked questions or expressed their opinions. They also mentioned that Thai students were really polite considering from pronouns used in the conversations. Thai students also pay much respect to the elders or authoritative figures. This indicates the large power distance existing in Thai society. Furthermore, the teachers mentioned that Thai students are conformed to the concept of 'kreng jai' (being considerate of others' feelings and conditions). Whenever they needed to express their feelings, emotions, or opinions, they would be reluctant to do so. So, in the foreign teachers' perspectives, Thai classrooms are seen to be collectivists and have large power distance.

As well as Jambor (2005), he aimed to investigate an example from South Korean classroom and finds out that it is one of the countries that holds large power distance and is seen as a collectivist society. Power has rooted deeply in Korean society since very long time because South Korean once adopted Confucian system from China (Watkins, 2000). According to the article, China is the country that strongly shows power issues so that South Korean was influenced by it too.

However, the place where we can easily notice these issues is in classrooms. In most classrooms, teachers are put at the top, which means teachers seem to carry the most power when teaching their students. Most of the time, teachers will focus on the lecture instead of interaction. Moreover, students are allowed to answer or express their opinions only when teachers want them to (Hofstede, 1986, p. 313). Therefore, it is stated that teacher-based classrooms affect student's learning.

South Korean is regarded as a collectivism society, and group harmony is valued. Jambor (2005) stated that in classrooms, when countering problems, students tended to help each other figuring out rather than consult or ask help from teachers. Also, they preferred working in groups rather than working independently. However, not every student will equally receive help from others. When older students show up

in class, younger ones must show their respect by bowing. So, hierarchy which implies the large power distance in Korean society is strictly followed by its citizens at all ages. Gender also plays a role since men hold more authority over women. Furthermore, in classrooms, males and females were separated clearly so it leads to no meaningful contribution concerning power distance. All these issues led to negative learning results; therefore, she proposes the solution for Korean classrooms in terms of teaching method. To bring confidence and long-term learning out of students, CLT (Communicative Language teaching) is probably not the best choice from the beginning. She mentions that ESL classrooms in Korea are used to Grammar Translation Method for so long that it becomes a norm in schools. So, teachers should introduce Audiolingual Method or Situational Language Teaching to students first to let them adjust themselves. At the same time, teachers must be aware of power and other cultural aspects in classrooms, and they must provide more activities which create interactions between both teachers-students and students-students. Also, teachers must explain their teaching styles and cultural differences existing in teaching materials or classrooms. Another way to provide effective teaching under the large power classrooms is to know expectations from both teachers and students so that the issues and negative aspects could be solved. In the meantime, according to Vygotsky's concept, teachers should allow students complete tasks more independently which means teachers can help guide them along the way but let them express their ideas and opinions freely as much as they need (Nordlof, 2014).

Similar to Katsuya (2008), she mentioned that in oral communication course in Japanese classrooms, students rarely spoke up or answer questions voluntarily. Hence, she conducted research investigating some relationship between culture and language learning. She adopted cultural dimensions by Hofstede (1986) which includes individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity/femininity to examine the core of problem. In order to investigate classroom environment in Japan, she emphasized Power Distance since this aspect is considered to influence student's performance in classes the most. It is mentioned that in Japanese classrooms, students are expected to follow teacher's instructions. Also, students are not allowed to interact with teachers if not necessary or asking some

irrelevant questions from lessons. In addition, inequality in both inside and outside classrooms is dominant as cultural norms.

Another important characteristic found in Japanese classroom was teacher-centered, teachers were the most powerful persons in classes and lecture would be demonstrated throughout the class expecting that students would not interrupt. By having these characteristics, Japanese classrooms then fall into High Power Distance. While Low Power Distance classrooms like American is likely to be more open in which students and teachers can exchange point of views freely, they can consult one another when they need, or classes contain discussions over topics related lessons. Moreover, equality is highlighted for every individual, and when they confront any inequalities, they will try to minimize it as much as possible. So, High Power Distance's characteristics which dominantly appear Japanese classrooms appear to hinder student's voluntary participation. The way out of this problem is guided that teachers should concern the cultural aspects of both students and classrooms. Since some students might have no idea about cultural perspectives, it is teacher's responsibility to provide some necessary materials related to cultural concerns to students. With the values held in Asian classrooms, it is undeniable that power distance is deeply rooted for a long time.

To support High Power Distance value carried largely in Asian classrooms and society, Abubaker (2008) studied Chinese people who were taking international courses in UK and found out that Chinese students were strongly attached to their home culture that they show very high level in Power Distance even living among low power distance environment. Another report from Mui, Goudbeek, Swerts, and van der Wijst, (2013), they explored the effect of Power Distance on non-verbal cues of university students from China and Netherlands in gaming context. The result showed that, Chinese students often yielded Dutch students throughout the games, especially when the competitor were teachers. Maulanaa, Opdenakker, den Brok, and Bosker, (2011) also noted that Indonesia was characterized as large Power Distance which inequality could be easily noticed anywhere, especially in classrooms. They claimed that because of strong existence of inequality, it caused both students and teachers some conflicts. Therefore, cooperation and cultural understanding should be practiced in classrooms.

China is likely to be the country which extremely hold high power distance among other Asian countries because of its origin of Confucian value (Jambor, 2005). Li and Guo (2012) intended to explore the effect of second language learning towards learners in terms of power distance value with English Teachers and Non-English Teachers. They believed that culture and language are a match that cannot be separated. Language can reflect the culture of individuals and society, and it can also influence the language use in group (Ting-Toomey, 2007). Consequently, they assumed that when people who have been exposed to foreign language or culture, they would be shaped by that target culture. Li and Guo employed Cultural Dimensions by Hofstede (1980) emphasizing two dimensions easily found in classrooms which are individualism/collectivism and power distance. They claimed that Chinese classrooms tended to carry high power distance since it is teacher-centered teaching style. Teachers will start the discussion and dominate the talk. In addition, teachers will be recognized as Mr. know-it-all in which they are expected to excel at everything in their field and must effectively convey knowledge to students. When low power distance is practiced, it presents student-centered atmosphere, and even teachers initiate the discussion, they will act like a guide who connect and support ideas. This manner, low power distance will contain more friendly atmosphere. Consequently, questionnaires were distributed to students to examine perceptions towards their teachers asking in five domains, illocutionary, discourse, participation, stylish and non-verbal domain. Twenty-six teachers were chosen to be investigated, they come from both English teaching field, namely, Literature and Liberal Arts and Non-English teaching field, namely, science, mathematics, chemistry, and engineering. Three dependent variables which were major, gender and professional title were considered to see their significance towards power distance in classrooms.

Li and Guo (2012) showed that in English teacher's classrooms displayed power distance less than non-English teacher's. In English teacher's classes, they asked their students to participate or follow the instructions indirectly. At the beginning of the class, they would ask general questions before starting lessons, and they as well included many interesting materials such as video or music and activities in their teaching. Another thing was that discussion was initiated by teachers; however, students dominated the talk instead of teachers themselves. Additionally, they encouraged their

students to participate in classrooms voluntarily. Interestingly, humor was used to ease the atmosphere and decrease the distance between teachers and students. The last thing that indicated low power distance in English teacher's classrooms was standing position when teaching. English teachers would often approach their students rather than standing in the center and conveying lecture. In contrast, for non-English teachers who hold high power distance value, they are found to directly tell students what to do in class, and most of the time, they will start the lessons as soon as they enter classrooms. The classroom environment is lecture-based related to lessons. Questions and discussions were also distributed to students, but mostly, teachers themselves will answer those questions or lead the discussions. Surprisingly, humor was used to lessen the atmosphere too. However, for Non-English teachers, they would stand in the center and keep lecturing throughout the class. These results were influenced by major, while gender and professor's title showed no significant effects on power distance in classrooms. According to Li and Guo (2012), Mui, Goudbeek, Swerts, and van der Wijst, (2013), Kasuya (2008), and Jambor (2005), low power distance classroom tends to focus on students and trying to make the classroom more relaxing, while high power distance dominated teachers and the atmosphere is stricter.

With different lenses, Hwang and Francesco (2010), they investigated the influences of individualism–collectivism and power distance on the use of feedback channels. To improve learning results, feedbacks was seen to be one of the effective channels for students, and it included both face-to-face and electronic ways receiving such feedbacks. Students could seek feedbacks from teachers and friends both inside and outside the class. It was noted that collectivism preferred performing tasks in groups rather than do it alone, and they were more likely to ask help from their classmates instead of professors (Earley, 1993). Moreover, they were passive learners in which they would not raise questions directly against professors. While individualism preferred doing tasks alone and finding information by themselves including raising questions straightforwardly to professors (Hwang et al., 2003). So, it is predicted that the collectivism will feel more comfortable receive feedback through online discussion board, while the individualism will be comfortable with face-to-face channel. For power distance issues, in groups or societies that possess high power distance is characterized by obvious hierarchy showing in groups, seniors having more

power over others, decision making reserved only for leaders or seniors (Hofstede, 2001; Sagie, Mainiero, & Koslowsky, 2000). Likewise, students in this kind of society will respect teachers as persons who are more knowledgeable and experienced. In contrast, low power distance groups, subordinates or juniors are supported to express their ideas and opinions and are encouraged to have participation in making decisions including solving problems (Couto & Vieira, 2004; Nakata & Sivakumar, 1996). Hence, it is assumed that high power values will seek feedback from other students, while low power distance values are likely to seek feedbacks from professors both inside and outside classes. This research included 211 students both males and females from U.S. university on the East Coast. It was a quantitative format since questions were set in questionnaire form as Likert scale. The questionnaire contains six main parts asking about power distance and collectivism-individualism issues, namely, stand alone, win all, group preference, sacrifice, individual thinking, and power distance. The result showed that students who had high score in Win All and Individual Thinking were seen to be individualism and tended to seek feedback from professors both inside and outside the class and they tended to pay less attention discussing through electronic board. For collectivism who had high score in Sacrifice and Group Preference value prefer working with others as groups and sought feedback from other students. In view of power distance, students who were grouped as collectivism were seen to carry high power distance since, while low power distance was students who were characterized as individualism. Since it is stated that Asian countries are usually viewed as large Power Distance, so in view of seeking feedback and answers from teachers is quite consistent to Mahmud (2015). He examined undergraduate students at Indonesian State University, and he finds out that 67% of all students liked to ask questions but only 20% were seeking answers from their teachers. In addition, all those students only sought answers from teachers outside classrooms. Therefore, it can be concluded that students who are recognized as collectivism, probably belong to high power distance group. On the other hand, students who are seen to be individualism, tend to be categorized in low power distance group.

In Asian classrooms, students are considered to be collectivism in which they prefer working in groups rather than alone. They are also labeled to have high power distance value as the classrooms are teacher-centered in which students are not

provided much chance to participate in class, and the respect needs to be paid to more powerful figures. It is deemed that these features existing in classrooms are hindering students' abilities, which significantly affect the language learning outcomes.

Culture can be defined in various meanings depending on the surroundings and factors used to investigate. For the basic concept of culture, it might be defined as the actions we repeat daily or the behaviors and perspectives we possess depending on people and community we interact with. Culture, too, can influence our lifestyles and our thinking process. So, it is believed that culture somehow influences our learning process. In Asian countries such as Japan, South Korea, China, or Thailand, they are believed to inherit Asian values through generations. That is why the Asians societies are shaped and fostered to be collectivists and has large power distance. Since the Asians practice these values in their daily life, it is no doubt why their behaviors and thinking process can be strongly influenced. In fact, these values also largely influence behaviors in classrooms as we can notice that students are expected to follow what elders, authoritative figures or even teachers say. When students are influenced by these cultural values, it is likely to affect their learning outcomes as well.

This study investigated the power distance and collectivism-individualism values existing in EFL classrooms. As and collective classrooms are said to affect the students' learning outcomes and language proficiency. Therefore, the researcher can identify the real cause hindering language learning and make improvements later in the future.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this study is to investigate power distance and individualism and collectivism in EFL classroom. This chapter presents the research methodology, which is divided into seven sections. The first section describes research design. The second presents population and sampling. The third section explains the research instrument. The fourth part describes the pilot study. The fifth section describes the validity check. The sixth section is involved with data collection. The last section presents data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

For this study, the researcher adopted a mixed-method investigation based on interview and questionnaire. According to Dornyei (2007), it was noted that mixed method research could provide an in-depth, better and comprehensive understanding of a target situation. This study was a mixed-method study which combined qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. To gain deep and detailed opinions from students, qualitative method, which was interview, was utilized. Cohen et al. (2011) posited that, by interviewing the participants, it was an appropriate channel to explore in-depth and complex opinions. On the other hand, to examine general students' points of view, quantitative, which was questionnaire, was adopted. By using different methods in collecting data, it could help validate the results, gain detailed and richer data, investigate the same phenomenon through multiple views, and improve understanding by bringing deeper dimensions to emerge (Jick, 1979).

#### **3.2 Population and Sampling**

This study adopted survey research to examine power distance and individualism-collectivism values existing in EFL classroom at a certain university. The convenient sampling was used to recruit participants in EFL classroom because of its

merits such as time efficiency in view of availability of the participants (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970)'s table for sample size to ensure the credibility of the results, this study distributed the survey to 86 out of 110 students. Initially, 110 survey responses were collected; however, some were excluded due to incomplete data or detected biases. The target faculty was operated by a big university in Bangkok. The faculty grants bachelor's degree after completing a 4-year education. The faculty had 400 total students in the department. The faculty's curriculum was operated in both Thai and English languages. The lectures and teaching materials were in both Thai and English languages. The number of students for each class depended on the students' interests and the class limit number. Classes were proceeded by both Thai and foreign lecturers. Among the foreign lecturers, there are both native and non-native speakers of English. For the class which was the target of this study was categorized in General Education that was based on English language, and it was taught by Thai lecturers. The class consisted of 40-60 students, and it was taught for 15 weeks. The languages used in class were both Thai and English, and students were assigned assignments both individual work and groupwork. When presenting projects or doing examinations, they were completed in English language.

Participants in this study were senior year students in the target class as senior years students had some exposure to the language class for some time so that they may have engaged with some cultural experiences existing in the classroom. There were two sections in which the classes were operated identically. Language proficiency of the participants was lower intermediate and intermediate who were majoring in Engineering Departments. The class lasted 120 minutes for each class and students had one class a week. The class was lectured about the basic grammars and conversations used in English. Students were provided with materials from the teacher to content clarification along with the commercial book distributed in class. During the class, students also had to listen to audio files in order to fulfil the tasks in the book. Throughout the semester, students had to do the presentations two times to present what they learned in the form of role play lasting from 5 to 10 minutes. Moreover, they were assigned both individual work and groupwork as their homework after the class. At the

beginning of the semester, students were informed that participation counted for 10% of their grade.

### **3.3 Research Instrument**

The research instruments in this study consisted of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. To gain an overall and general picture of individualism-collectivism and power distance, questionnaires were distributed to students. To gain in-depth information regarding individualism-collectivism and power distance, semi-structured interviews were utilized. Thus, the results could be compared from these two approaches.

#### **3.3.1 Questionnaire**

The list of questions pertaining to individualism and collectivism was adopted from Wagner's (1995) study while the list of questions pertaining to power distance was adopted from Robertson and Hoffman's (2000) study. The Cronbach alpha coefficients for the five IC factors show that the scales are reliable ranging from .68 for Win All, .83 for Group Preference .71 for Stand Alone, .82 for Sacrifice, and .70 for the power distance.

##### **3.3.1.1 Individualism-Collectivism**

Individualism-Collectivism was to explore the degree of the individualist versus group preference existing in the classroom. Individualism-collectivism was adapted from the Wagner (1995) study. The scale contained five IC factors which are (1) Stand Alone, indicating the degree of how much students were independent and self-reliance; (2) Win All, implying about the desire to get ahead of others in competitive situations; (3) Group Preference, reflecting the preference to work in group; (4) Sacrifice, demonstrating being aware of sacrifice for the group's sake when performing tasks with others; and (5) Individual Thinking, showing the individual beliefs even in the group situations (see Appendix B). All 20 items were Stand Alone for 5 items, Win All for 5 items, Group Preference for 3 items, Sacrifice for 4 items, and Individual Thinking for 3 items. The scale was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

### **3.3.1.2 Power Distance**

Power Distance was to explore the power and authority exercised in the classroom. The power distance scale was brought from the Robertson and Hoffman (2000) study. There were 5 items listed on the questionnaire and they focus on power and authority distributed between managers and subordinates in the business context. To make the statements fit in the classroom context, wording in some statements is adjusted, for example, the word ‘manager’ was changed into ‘teacher’, and the word ‘subordinates’ was changed into ‘students’ (see Appendix B). The scale measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

### **3.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were employed with five students to gain deeper and insightful information related to individualism-collectivism and power distance in the classroom. The researcher built up the questions in advance. Questions were based on the objectives and research questions related to literature review of the study. Furthermore, the questions for the interview were also related to the questionnaire in order to compare the results. To make the interview become more conversational, the researcher adapted the question order and some words during the interview. In this way, it made the interviews become more friendly, relaxing and stress-free while making sure that the researcher requests in-depth information. The results from the interviews were compared to the questionnaire’s results.

Based on previous studies, the researcher developed the interview questions to be consistent with the two research questions (see Appendix D). Then, the researcher reviewed the interview questions with the advisor and the experts. The interview questions were grouped into two sections. Open-ended questions were employed to encourage the participants to emerge insightful and detailed answers. The first part of interview questions was used to elicit the individual and collective values from the participants. The second part of interview questions was utilized to ask about power distance exercised by the teacher in class.

### 3.4 Pilot Study

The questions were piloted to ensure their validity and reliability as a research instrument. The 30 participants who were majoring in Engineering Departments in senior year were asked to answer the primary questionnaire and interview questions to identify the ambiguity, uncommon terms, and statements according to Johanson and Brooks (2010), they pointed out that a pilot study typically includes 30 respondents because this sample size is large enough to detect potential issues with the research design, identify trends, and ensure statistical reliability while remaining manageable in terms of time and cost. Supported by Van Belle (2008), it was mentioned that a minimum of 30 is often recommended in statistics because it allows for the application of the Central Limit Theorem, ensuring that sample means approximate a normal distribution, which is useful for preliminary analysis. Thus, piloted group of the engineering students were asked to express their opinion or comment on the contents of questionnaire and interview questions. After the pilot test, the researcher improved the quality and credibility of the study by having the questions approved by the experts. To make the questions become more credible, the researcher consulted the experts about the original source, the quality, and the conciseness of the questions.

The researcher conducted validity and reliability tests of the questionnaire by using the pilot study strategy. By doing so, the researcher could be able to seek for problem in understanding the questions and adjust it as recommended. Then, the researcher ran the statistics on those piloted results, the reliability score was at .592. Therefore, the researcher had revised some questions suggested by the respondents. Next, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the targeted participants and then brought those results to the SPSS program to calculate the reliability test. This time, the score of the test was at .734 with the deduction of Individual Thinking dimension, making the score meet the acceptable standard of implementing the questionnaire (see the Table 3.1 *Reliability Test*).

**Table 3.1***Reliability Test*

<b>Questionnaire Distribution</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha Score</b>
Pilot Study (30 respondents)	.592
Full responses (86 respondents)	.734

For the interview questions, the researcher validated the quality and credibility of the questions by utilizing the two experts' views such as consulting an extra resource. Firstly, the researcher created the questions to be relevant to the research questions and literature review. Then, the researcher brought those questions to the experts and consulted with them. Next, the interview questions were revised according to the expert's opinions. Finally, the questions were implemented in the interview.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaire**

The researcher contacts the lecturer who taught the target class and asked for permission from the lecturer. Then, the researcher asked for permission from the students in class. After that, the participants were asked to complete the questionnaire. The consent form was distributed to the participants to inform the general purposes of the study and to ask for their volunteer in completing the survey. The participants were assured that their personal information and responses to be kept confidential. Also, they were informed that the survey responses would not be contributed to the result report if incomplete. The questionnaire contained three sections: individualism-collectivism, power distance, and demographics.

#### **3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews**

The researcher contacted the lecturer who taught the target class and asked for permission from the lecturer. Then, the researcher asked for permission from the students in class and asked for the volunteers for the interview. The interview was

one-on-one method through online platforms and each session took around fifteen to twenty minutes. After recruiting the participants by volunteering method, the contacts were exchanged for making appointments for the interview. After finishing the interview, the conversations were transcribed by the researcher. The information was categorized by coding, categorizing, and thematizing.

### **3.5.3 Ethical Consideration**

The researcher was the only one who could access the data and arranged the interview. The participants were informed that their information would not be used for other purposes or published in other studies. The researcher respects their anonymity and privacy, and all the data collected from the interview would be confidential. To protect their privacy, the information was kept in the researcher's personal laptop, which could be accessed only by the researcher. The tape recording of interviews would be destroyed after completing the research.

## **3.6 Data Analysis**

### **3.6.1 Questionnaire**

A descriptive analysis was employed to analyze the general demographic data received from respondents. Scale reliability analysis was conducted to test the reliability of the measurements. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) was performed to analyze the means, standard deviations and percentages of individualism-collectivism and power distance.

### **3.6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Content analysis was a method of interpretation for this research. Content analysis was adopted to specify themes or patterns in narration. Neuendorf (2016) described content analysis as “a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that rely on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and it is not limited as to the types of variables measured or the context in which these messages were created or presented” (Neuendorf, 2016, p.10). Elo and Kyngäs (2008)

stated that content analysis was a method used in analyzing text messages from verbal or visual communication. It was used to analyze hymns, newspaper articles and advertising magazines, and political speeches in the past. Currently, it is used in many fields such as journalism, sociology, psychology, business, and communication. In this research, the researcher put the themes and concepts based on the literature review first, then grouped the words which showed the tendency under the specified themes.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results from the data collection. The findings from both the questionnaires and interviews are demonstrated and discussed for each of the research questions: (1) to what extent did EFL classroom hold individualism and collectivism value? and (2) to what extent did EFL classroom hold high power distance and low power distance value?

The chapter begins with the demographic information of the participants and discusses the extent of Individualism and Collectivism shown in EFL classrooms. Then, the extent of Power Distance exercised in EFL classrooms was analyzed. Finally, the chapter concludes with the summary of the investigation.

#### **4.1 Participants' Demographics**

The participants of this study were divided into two groups, which were the participants who completed the questionnaire and the participants who accepted the interview. The participants were college students taking English courses as their foreign language. The participants' demographic information is presented below.

Of the 86 responding participants, the majority (47.7%) was female participants, followed by the male participants (45.3%). The smallest group preferred not to specify their gender (7%). Most participants had an age range between 20 – 22 years. The participants who aged 20 accounted for 24.4%, followed by the participants who aged 21 (41.8%), and the last was the participants who aged 22 (33.3%). In terms of year of studying, the third year of studying accounted for 37 students (43.02%), while the fourth year of studying accounted for 49 students (56.97%). Table 4.1 summarizes the general information of gender, age and university level.

**Table 4.1**

*The Demographic Information of the Participants Who Completed the Questionnaire (N=86).*

<b>Demographic Information</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	39	45.3
Female	41	47.7
Others	6	7.0
<b>Age (years)</b>		
20	21	24.4
21	36	41.8
22	29	33.7
<b>University level</b>		
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	37	43.02
4 <sup>th</sup> year	49	56.97

A total of five participants volunteered for an in-depth interview. There were three female students and two male students in their senior years. Table 4.2 summarizes the *Demographic Information of the Interviewed Participants*.

**Table 4.2**

*Demographic Information of the Interviewed Participants (N=5)*

Pseudonym	Gender	Age (years)	University level
Bua	Female	20	3 <sup>rd</sup> year
Jin	Male	21	3 <sup>rd</sup> year
Meen	Male	21	3 <sup>rd</sup> year
Fame	Female	22	4 <sup>th</sup> year
Pun	Female	22	4 <sup>th</sup> year

## 4.2 The extent of Individualism and Collectivism measured in EFL classroom

To answer the research question 1 “To what extent did the EFL classroom hold individualism and collectivism value?” the survey regarding the number of items, means and standard deviation of the respondents who experienced individualism and collectivism while studying in an EFL classroom in a Thai university was used and distributed to eighty-six students. To measure individualism and collectivism in the EFL classroom, the questionnaire contained five dimensions, namely, stand alone, win all, group preference, sacrifice and power distance (see Table 4.3)

**Table 4.3**

*The Individualism, Collectivism and Power Distance Value Gained from the Survey (N=86).*

<b>Individualism and Collectivism</b>			
<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
Stand alone	5	3.355	.691
Win All	5	2.088	.651
Group Preference	3	3.282	.438
Sacrifice	4	3.930	.593
<b>Power Distance</b>			
Power Distance	5	2.734	.761
<b>Overall</b>	22	3.021	.280

*Note.* The higher score indicates the higher extent. Negative items were recoded.

### 4.2.1 Stand Alone

The dimension indicates self-reliance and a belief in individual independence and the results were presented below.

According to the survey responses, they provide an analysis of participant responses regarding self-reliance and independence, across five key statements. The first statement, "This class makes me aware that only those who depend on themselves get ahead in life," has a mean score of 3.17 (S.D. = 1.139) with the

majority agreeing to some extent (30.2% agree, 12.8% strongly agree). The second statement, "This class makes me aware that to be superior a person must stand alone," received a lower mean score of 2.73 (S.D. = 1.278), indicating more varied opinions and less agreement overall. For the third statement, "This class makes me aware that if you want something done right you've got to do it yourself," the mean score is 3.12 (S.D. = 0.991), showing a moderate level of agreement. The fourth statement, "This class makes me aware that what happens to me is my own doing," scored the highest mean of 3.89 and the (S.D.= 0.854), suggesting a strong consensus on personal accountability. Finally, the fifth statement, "This class makes me aware that in the long run the only person you can count on is yourself," also received a high mean of 3.84 (S.D. = 1.046), indicating strong agreement on long-term self-reliance. These results highlight a general trend towards valuing independence and personal responsibility among the respondents.

#### **4.2.2 Win All**

This dimension indicates expressing an overwhelming desire to outperform others in competitive scenarios and the results were presented below.

According to the survey responses, attitudes toward winning were assessed through various statements. The first statement, suggesting that "winning is everything," received a low average score of 1.81, indicating most people disagreed; 44.2% strongly disagreed, and 38.4% disagreed. Another statement, "winning is important in both work and games," had a slightly higher average score of 2.34. (S.D. = 1.026). However, the majority still disagreed, with 20.9% strongly disagreeing and 39.5% disagreeing. Only a small fraction, 13%, agreed. The idea that "success is the most important thing in life" had a more mixed response, with an average score of 3.02 (S.D. = 0.981). About 5.8% strongly disagreed, but 29.1% either agreed or strongly agreed. Respondents reacted strongly against the notion that "it annoys me when others perform better than I do," with a very low average score of 1.63 (S.D. = 0.810). Over half, 53.5%, strongly disagreed with this. Lastly, the statement "doing my best is not enough; it is important to win" also scored low at 1.61 (S.D. = 0.909), showing a strong disagreement, with 58.1% strongly disagreeing, indicating that most people didn't support an overly competitive approach.

### 4.2.3 Group Preference

This dimension indicates showing a preference for collaborating in groups and the results were presented below.

According to the survey responses, the dimension of group preference indicates a tendency to favor collaboration with others over working individually. The data reveals significant insights into this preference among students. For the statement "In this class, I prefer to work with others in the group rather than working alone," the mean score was 3.63 (S.D. = 0.969). The distribution of responses showed that 32.6% of students agreed, and 22.1% strongly agreed with this statement, indicating a substantial preference for group work. Only 12.8% disagreed, and none strongly disagreed, highlighting a general favor towards collaborative efforts. Similarly, for the statement "In this class, working with a group is better than working alone," the mean score was slightly higher at 3.65 (S.D. = 0.967). Here, 37.2% of students agreed, and 20.9% strongly agreed, further supporting the preference for group activities. The disagreement was slightly higher at 14.0%, yet it still indicates a prevailing inclination towards group work. In contrast, the statement "In this class, given the choice, I would rather do a job where I can work alone rather than doing a job where I have to work with others in a group" had a mean score of 3.44 (S.D. = 1.203). This statement saw a more varied response, with 27.9% remaining neutral, 26.7% agreeing, and 23.3% strongly agreeing, suggesting that while there is a preference for group work, a significant portion of students still value the option to work independently.

Overall, these results underscore a notable preference for collaborative work among students, although some still appreciate the ability to work alone when necessary.

### 4.2.4 Sacrifice

This dimension indicates acknowledging the need for personal sacrifices in group situations is important for fostering collaboration and achieving common goals. The results were shown below

According to the survey responses, they provide an insight into the individualism and collectivism values related to the dimension of sacrifice among 86 participants. For the statement "In this class I am aware that if I am part of a group, I

sometimes need to do some things I do not want to do," the mean response was 3.90 (S.D. = 0.83). Notably, no participants strongly disagreed, while 4.7% disagreed, 25.6% were neutral, 44.2% agreed, and 25.6% strongly agreed. This suggests a general awareness of the need for personal sacrifices in group settings.

For the statement "This class makes me realize I do not always get what I personally want when I belong to the group," the mean score was 4.10 (S.D. 0.73). Here, 1.2% disagreed, 18.6% were neutral, 48.8% agreed, and 31.4% strongly agreed, indicating a stronger recognition that individual desires may not always be fulfilled within a group context.

Regarding the statement "This class makes me aware that I sometimes sacrifice for the sake of the group when I am part of a group," the mean score was 4.11 (S.D. = 0.72). A small percentage (2.3%) disagreed, 14.0% were neutral, 53.5% agreed, and 30.2% strongly agreed, further emphasizing the participants' understanding of the necessity of personal sacrifices for group benefit.

Lastly, for the statement "In this class I am willing to sacrifice for the sake of the group's wellbeing," the mean response was 3.59 (S.D. = 0.83). In this case, 8.1% disagreed, 38.4% were neutral, 39.5% agreed, and 14.0% strongly agreed. This indicates a relatively lower but still significant willingness among participants to make personal sacrifices for the group's wellbeing. Overall, the data reflect a considerable acknowledgment and acceptance of the need for personal sacrifices in group situations among the participants.

### **4.3 The extent of Power Distance measured in EFL classroom**

To answer the research question 2 "To what extent did an EFL classroom hold a and low power distance value?" the survey regarding the level of agreement and percentage of the respondents who experienced power distance value while studying in an EFL classroom in a Thai university was used and distributed to eighty-six students. To measure power distance in the EFL classroom, the questionnaire contained five questions which include different aspects towards the classroom and teachers.

### 4.3.1 Power distance

This value indicates the power between teachers and students exercised in the classroom while teaching. The results were presented below.

According to the survey responses, they illustrate the power distance value in the classroom, focusing on the dynamics between teachers and students. The first statement, "In this class teachers should make most decisions without consulting students," had a mean response of 3.12 (S.D. = 1.30). Responses were varied: 15.1% strongly disagreed, 19.8% disagreed, 16.3% were neutral, 34.9% agreed, and 14.0% strongly agreed.

For the statement "In this class it is frequently necessary for a teacher to use authority and power when dealing with students," the mean response was 3.44 (S.D. = 0.98). A small percentage (5.8%) strongly disagreed, 8.1% disagreed, 32.6% were neutral, 43.0% agreed, and 10.5% strongly agreed, indicating a recognition of the necessity for teachers to exercise authority.

Regarding "In this class teachers should seldom ask for the opinions of students," the mean score was 2.25 (S.D. = 0.99). Responses showed that 25.6% strongly disagreed, 36.0% disagreed, 26.7% were neutral, 10.5% agreed, and 1.2% strongly agreed, suggesting that many students favor teachers seeking their opinions.

The statement "In this class students should not disagree with the teacher's decisions" had a mean of 2.19 (S.D. = 0.96). Here, 27.9% strongly disagreed, 34.9% disagreed, 26.7% were neutral, and 10.5% agreed, with no students strongly agreeing, indicating a preference for open dialogue and disagreement with teachers when necessary.

Lastly, for the statement "In this class teachers should not delegate important tasks to students," the mean response was 2.65 (S.D. = 1.21). A significant portion (22.1%) strongly disagreed, 23.3% disagreed, 29.1% were neutral, 18.6% agreed, and 7.0% strongly agreed, reflecting mixed feelings about the delegation of important tasks to students.

#### 4.4 In-depth Interview in Individualism and Collectivism and Power Distance measured in EFL Classroom

This section has discussed about the insightful information gained from an in-depth interview from five participants who had spent their English learning experience in EFL classroom. Interview questions regarding the individualism and collectivism include (1) Does the classroom mostly focus on individual work or group work? (2) If you need to do groupwork, what kind of factors make the group work successful? And interview question regarding power distance include (3) Is the class lecture-based or activity-based? (4) How does your teacher treat you in class? (5) Have you ever made mistakes in class? If yes, what is the reaction from your teachers? (6) Do your teachers accept or listen to different opinions made by you?

##### 4.4.1 Individualism and Collectivism in EFL Classroom

Through the lens of classwork type, which is group work and individual work and their preference in type of classwork, Bua, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student indicated that the class work, in her opinion, tend to be individual work such as lesson assignments or quizzes. She explained that:

*I think most of the work in the class is individual tasks such as quizzes or assignments in lessons. Personally, I prefer working alone rather than in group because when working in group, I think it has endless problems. But when I work alone, I can depend only on my decision and if it is wrong, it is only on me.*

The previous description is related to Jin, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student. He mentioned that most of the class work tend to be individual work, and his preferences fall into groupwork. He noted that:

*While Meen, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, said that he Most of the class work is individual tasks where every student is expected to complete the task based on the learned lessons. After everyone finishes it, the answers will be shared in the next class. Most of the assignments focus on memorizing and writing, I think, for me, I prefer working in*

*group as my English proficiency is not that good, so when working in group, I feel more relaxed.*

thinks most of the classwork is in group such as role plays or presentations if not counting the lesson homework. He noted that he prefers working in group to gain better scores as he considers himself to have low English proficiency. He described that:

*I think most of the class work is in groupwork and personally, I prefer the groupwork rather than individual work, such as presentations or role plays. It is because I am not good at English and if I work alone, I may not get a really good score, but when working in group, I seem to get better score as my friends are better than me.*

The same as Fame, the 4<sup>th</sup> year student, who expressed that most of the class work comes as groupworks rather than individual works such as conversations, role plays or presentations. She revealed that she prefers group work rather than individual work because she can share ideas with friends, feels more confident and do less mistakes. She pointed out that:

*I think the class has more groupwork than individual work such as presentations, role plays or conversations. But I do not think I have gained a lot from those practices as it has only a short time for each group. However, I still prefer to work as a group because when working in group, I feel a bit more confident. In other words, when I do mistakes such as wrong pronunciation, I feel less embarrassed compared to when working alone.*

In contrast with the previous response, Pun, the 4<sup>th</sup> year student, mentioned that most of the class tend to be groupwork, but he prefers individual work as he can depend on his decision. He revealed that:

*In my view, the class focuses more on group work rather than individual work such as group discussion, role plays and*

*presentations. However, I love working individually as I can decide everything by myself. If there is something wrong with the work piece, I can also blame only myself. In addition, I think when working alone can help minimize the problems between friends; for example, if one member in a group does not work, this may cause problems to both the other members and the work itself.*

When discussing the factors which make a group work successful, all of the interviewees revealed similar opinions on this matter. Communication, listening to others' opinions and cooperation when working are key factors that everyone thinks the most important values. They highlighted their opinions as follows:

Bua, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, she noted that:

*The most important factor that makes the groupwork successful is communication, I think. all members need to talk and share their ideas and work together. If there is any obstacle when working, we should again talk to each other to solve it together.*

Jin, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, he pointed out that:

*I think when working in a group, everyone needs to listen to each other's opinions. After we agree to the most suitable opinion, we need to work on it together. And other important factor is communication, everyone should talk when having issues or problems.*

Meen, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, he explained that:

*The most important thing when work as a group is to give cooperation in responsible jobs. If the members are assigned jobs, they should do their best to complete it and if they encounter obstacles, they should talk and share.*

Fame, the 4<sup>th</sup> year student, she described that:

*When it comes to groupwork, I think everyone should listen to different opinions and do the best for their assigned jobs. The work will never be successful if the members do not work on it together or listen to each other's opinions, I think.*

Pun, the 4<sup>th</sup> year student, she indicated that:

*Listening to each other's opinions and provide cooperation for work are the key factors to make it successful. I think all members need to know every procedure of the work, so it will make the work the most perfect and successful.*

#### **4.4.2 Power Distance in EFL Classroom**

In view of class organization, lecture-based or activity-based, in the interview, Bua, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, pointed out this language classroom was based on lectures towards grammars, useful phrases in daily life or vocabularies and their meaning. However, there were still some activities in class. Based on her observation, she explained that:

*Most of the time, the teacher comes in the room and does the lecture around one to two hours per class. She starts from greeting and then does the reading and grammar explanation found in the reading. After that, she focuses on the vocabularies and their meanings. If there is some time left, she will let students to do some activities around ten to fifteen minutes before finishing the class.*

The answer received from Bua is relevant to Jin, the third- year student. He mentioned that his language class mostly focused on the lecture and note taking rather than doing activities. He described that:

*The English class that I experience is lecture-based in which the teacher keeps explaining on grammar usages and writes it on the board. All the students need to do is just taking notes along the teacher. Sometimes, the teacher might do the random pickup of*

*students to answer some questions. However, almost of hours, I just listen to the teacher until the class finishes.*

According to the answer of Meen, the third-year student, he noted that the English class he studied was a teacher-dominated classroom in which teacher was the only person who talks and explains on matters. He mentioned that:

*The teacher just enters the room and instructs all students to be quiet. After that, she starts on the lesson objectives and expectations. After that, if the lesson has the listening, she will open it and let the students listen to it. Next, she will guide students on grammar usages to link to the grammar and vocabularies exercises. If we cannot finish all exercises in class, she will assign us some homework before finishing the class. However, I wish that the class would have more activities for students so that we know how to use what we learn when we encounter real situations.*

In the same way as mentioned above, Fame, the fourth-year student, also illustrated that her language classroom experience is a lecture-based where the teacher acts dominantly and always leads the class. She pointed out that:

*The teacher just comes in and explains the lessons. She starts from the overview of the lesson, then explain on how to use the phrases or vocabularies given in the lesson. All we need to do is just listen and note down as we need to remember it for our quizzes examinations. Personally, I do not like to learn English this way as I do not know how to apply what I learn in my daily life.*

The answer received from Pun, the fourth-year student, is in the same direction as the others. She indicated that most of the class the teacher is the only speaker, and she will sometimes complain if there is noise going round. The lesson is mostly directed to grammars, phrases and vocabularies. She described that:

*The language class is mostly covered with the lessons, grammar explanations, daily phrases and vocabularies. After finishing the*

*readings, the teacher will explain some difficult vocabularies and provide some examples including on grammar matters. For some lessons, there are exercises to evaluate students' understanding. If there is no time left for completing the exercises in class, she will assign us homework both individual and group work. For me, I do not think studying English or any other languages this way would work as we do not have the opportunity to use it in daily life.*

Through the lenses of teacher's treatment in class, Bua the third-year student mentioned that the teacher does not pay much attention to students, in other word, she tends to let students do whatever they want unless it interrupts the teaching. She explained that:

*In the class, the teacher does not scold or blame anyone publicly as she does not pay much attention to students. She just comes and does her job. There may be some complaints from the teacher if the students begin to use loud voices or interrupts her teaching. When the students get the wrong answer, she rather explains or illustrates than brings an embarrassment to the students. Sometimes, the teacher gives us some useful advice not only for the language learning, but also for living life.*

This is reinforced by Jin the third-year student, he emphasized that the teacher rarely pays attention to the class, which means the class can do whatever they want as long as it does not interfere the teaching. He indicated that:

*The teacher does not treat any one specially as most of the time, she focuses on her teaching rather than students' behaviors. She just expects everyone to follow the class rules and regulations. However, when the students tend to be too loud or noisy, she just calms the class down by using a nice strategy by letting the loud students dance or sing in front of the class. I think everyone is treated equally in terms of language learning in this class.*

The above responses are in the same direction as Meen, the third-year student, he pointed out that nobody in the class is treated specially or fondly. The students are in the same pace where we are shared things equally both learning content and advice. He said that:

*The class is in the same environment where the teacher enters and does the long-hour lecture. If the students raise their hands with questions, she just explains it in a calm and active way rather than using aggressive or discontented gestures. Sometimes, if the students play or use some funny jokes to her, she plays it back. However, if it is too much for the jokes or playful behaviors, she may be a bit more serious than usual.*

This is relevant to Fame's response regarding the teacher treatment in the class. She addressed that the students are treated in the same way including herself. No one receives any different gestures. However, there may be some students who can always answer questions, so the teacher might call them quite more often than the others. She explained that:

*From what I have seen, the teacher treats everyone normally, nobody tends to receive any preferences more than the others. But there are times that the teacher might pick up some students to answer the questions as they always respond to the teaching. The rest is normal in which she gets into the class and keeps teaching with a few activities if time allows.*

The last response towards the teacher treatment in the class by Pun, the fourth-year student, still goes in the same perspective of the others mentioned above. She noted that the treatment made by the teacher is normal and equal to everyone in the class. She does not feel that there is any student being treated differently or specially both in view of language teaching and giving advice. She emphasized that:

*The teacher just appears in the class and teaches with some teaching materials. I do not feel that she is treating anyone differently since she may not pay that much attention to the class. She might complain*

*or blame if the students are too loud or interrupt her lectures. However, if the students have questions, she seems to be welcome in answering them.*

When discussing about the teacher's reaction toward mistakes occurred in the class, Bua, the third-year student claimed that she was once blamed by the teacher when she did some mistakes on the class presentation. She noted that:

*I was once blamed by the teacher, I remember that I was assigned to do a presentation in front of the class, but I may have misunderstood the instruction, so I did it based on my understanding, and I got blamed. However, it was not a really rude or swear word, the teacher just explained it by using my case as a wrong example, yet it made me feel a little bit embarrassed.*

This is somehow relevant to Jin, the third-year student, he emphasized his experience in view of doing mistakes in the language class that he has barely faced that apparently negative reactions from the teacher when the mistakes occur. But sometimes, he finds some gestures against his mistakes. He claimed that:

*If talking about the mistakes in the language class, I think I have done it a lot; for example, I pronounce some vocabularies in a wrong way, or I cannot write or speak by using correct grammars. But I do not think I have ever received an obvious blaming from the teacher. I might receive some negative facial expression or jokes when the mistakes happen, but with my personality, I do not take it seriously.*

While the perspective provided by Meen, the third-year student, is quite interesting as he noted that when it comes to the language classroom, which is English, he barely makes mistakes publicly as he never contrasts with the teacher's explanations or ideas. In other words, he believes that the teacher must be correct as she must know better than him in terms of language content. He addressed that:

*I think the teacher seems to listen to students' opinions, but she often provides the reasons or explanations why her ideas are correct. With*

*that, I do not know what to defend, and to be honest, I rarely make mistakes in the class as I trust that the teacher must know everything she teaches, and she must know better than me.*

According to the response collected from Fame, the fourth-year student, in view of the mistakes in the class, she does not think that the teacher often blames or complains when there are mistakes occurring. Fame confessed that she does not get much involved in the class as the class is lecture-based, which means she hardly does the mistakes. She explained that:

*I do not think the teacher often blames or complains to students who do wrongly in terms of language learning. If the students do not understand, she gives us a chance to ask. But sometimes, she skips some explanations due to the time matter. Personally, I think the class mostly focusses on the lecture, so it does not have room for students to ask a lot of questions or make mistakes. For me, I do not make mistakes that much as the class does not have many interactive activities, we just take down the not for the quizzes and exams.*

Based on Pun's response, she expressed that she has done many mistakes both in terms of language learning and behaviors. So, she often gets complaints from the teachers but not in a truly harsh way. She claimed that:

*I often come to the class late or get wrong answers, or even be too loud in the class, so I often get blamed by the teacher. When these mistakes happen, the teacher will give some punishments such as small blaming, point deduction, or even extra assignments. Moreover, sometimes, I may give my opinions on the language content such as grammar usage or vocabulary usage, and the teacher seems to listen to my opinions, yet she will try on giving her reasons to defend her thoughts. When that happens, I am slightly convinced to believe her explanations as she is the teacher.*

In view of accepting or listening to different opinions or ideas shared by students in the language class, Bua, the third-year student pointed out that due to the age and teaching style, the teacher often listens to students' opinions. She claimed that:

*In my opinion, this teacher often listens to different opinions compared to other English teachers I have studied with. Although she might try to defend for her own reasons, she sometimes adapts or change some materials to meet students' need. For example, if there is a student negotiates the submission due date and it is reasonable, she will allow it.*

For Jin's description towards this matter, he claimed that as the class is lecture-based which means there are few interactive activities so that it does not lead to the stage or moment of sharing opinions or discussions. He explained that:

*As I mentioned earlier that the language class that I am learning is mostly based on the lecture, so it does not lead to the moment where students and teacher are able to share or discuss ideas and thoughts. Most of the time, we just listen to the teacher and take down the note. Even when we do exercises and it comes to the answer part, nobody tend to argue or defend anything as we believe that the teacher must be totally right and accurate in the content.*

The previous response is relevant to Meen's explanation. He noted that the class is based on content explanation and note taking rather than activities, so it does not allow much room for students to exchange or share thoughts. He expressed that:

*Personally, I think the teacher listens to our voice, but it needs to be reasonable enough to change her mind. For example, the class negotiated the duration of the group presentation to be a little bit shorter as it would take too much time if using the same schedule. However, most of the time, no one seems to raise hands and share any ideas as most only focuses on jotting.*

By asking Fame and Pun, the fourth-year students regarding the acceptance or listening opinions made by students in the class, they responded in a similar way which indicates the se-mi open-minded of the teacher where she sometimes listens to the different opinions, but at the end, she would put out her opinions at the top. They expressed that:

*There are often times that the teacher asks questions related to the lessons or giving instructions on assignments, and she mostly sticks with her choice; for example, when asking about the date of the quizzes, even some students might not be convenient on the assigned date and try to give her reasons, she still goes with her choice. However, if there are too many students tend to disagree, she will change it to fit the majority's need.*

*For small questions or concerns occurred in the class, I think she listens to them and sometimes she even gives useful advice to the class. Honestly, with the lectured-based type of classroom, we do not have chances to discuss or share opinions. If we had some room for that, I believe everybody would love it.*

When asking about the effect of the power distance, individualism and collectivism in the EFL class, all of the respondents agreed on the potential effect which could lead to the language learning. The following responses are describing the effect acknowledged by the interviewees.

Bua, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year students, she highlighted that:

*The features of power distance and individualism and collectivism can somehow affect the scores or language learning in a long term because the teacher feedback or treatment including teaching style could lead to the language achievement in some ways.*

Jin, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, he revealed that:

*The matter of power distance and individualism and collectivism can absolutely affect the language learning; for example, if I am not good*

*at English, I may not get much attention or recognition compared to the ones who are really good, and it may discourage me in learning languages.*

Meen, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, he mentioned that:

*I do believe that the power distance and individualism and collectivism feature existing in the class can bring negative effect to language learners. To be more specific, if I did not have room for asking or exchanging my opinions to the classmates or the teacher, my language skills and scores would not improve because I did not understand how to use it correctly and effectively.*

Fame, the 4<sup>th</sup> year student, she explained that:

*I strongly believe that it directly affects language learning. To illustrate, if the teacher is not aware of student's proficiency and sticks with his/her own teaching style, students will not achieve the language goals. In addition, getting blamed in front of others could discourage learners and confidence in using language. For individual or groupwork, I think individual work can better help improve language skills as it allows learners to research for information and probably leads to language advancement.*

Pun, the 4<sup>th</sup> year student, she expressed that:

*I personally believe that it affects my language learning because I am one of those who are afraid to get blamed or embarrassed when doing wrong in front of the class. For the class work, I think it depends. For the group work, it allows the room for the members to re-check the work so that we get better scores. For individual tasks, we may miss some important stuff that leads to the score deduction.*

#### **4.5 Discussion of questionnaire results regarding individualism and collectivism and power distance**

Overall, these results highlight the diverse perspectives on teacher authority and the level of student involvement in the classroom.

According to the questionnaire measuring the individualism and collectivism through five dimensions, which are stand alone, win all, group preference, sacrifice and individual thinking, the results for each dimension are reported differently. According to Jenvdhanaken and Rangponsumrit (2020), they revealed that Thai students are seen to be collectivists as they rarely initiate conversations or discussions. Additionally, they are likely not to express their opinions or thoughts unless they are asked. It is also mentioned that Asian countries including Thailand are recognized to be a collectivism society as the respect must be shown towards seniors or authorities in society. Moreover, group interest is one of the most important things that Asians including Thais seem to give importance before individual's, which means Asians are likely to be interdependent to one another in society. Most of the time, Asians are careful to hurt other's feelings because this sort of action could harm relationship and may affect fame or social status (Jambor, 2005).

All qualities mentioned in the previous section quite contrast with the results under the topic Stand Alone which reports that the students in the EFL classroom seem to be self-reliance and rely on themselves rather than others. However, when taking a deep consideration to the results under the topic Win All, they are relevant to the presented traits in Asian classrooms in the previous section, which can be summarized that the students in the EFL classroom tend not to be as much as competitive to others. Also, they do not desire to outperform other students in the class in both game and work aspects. For the result, it may be regarded that the students would rather give importance to relations between friends in the class than be at the top with no friendship.

Followed by the Group Preference, which emphasize the high tendency towards group preference, the result is related to the mentioned qualities in terms of collectivism of Asian classrooms noting that group work tends to be the first option among Asian students rather than individual work, and when comes the problem,

students are likely to work out together in solving or figuring out (Jambor, 2005). However, for the last question in which if given a chance to choose whether to work in group or individually, the result showed a high score in preferring doing work alone. For this view, it can be interpreted that if given choice, many students would tend to work alone but still fine of needed to work in group as they may not want to ruin group relations or moods. In view of Sacrifice topic, the results received from the questionnaire are relevant to the traits of Asian classrooms which are considered to hold a collectivism dimension. Hofstede (1983) noted that in a collectivist society, they place group interest before theirs. In other words, individuals tend to be willing to sacrifice their own interest or preference to achieve goals set by the groups and they are likely not to show any objection in following the instructions led by seniors or authorized figures to accomplish the goals as well.

While most of the results from the questionnaire in view of individualism and collectivism tend to be relevant to the traits specified in the previous studies, the results received from the questionnaire under the topic power distance in the EFL classroom are obviously contrast with what has been discussed in the previous studies. Thailand is believed to be one of societies that hold a high power distance including the educational contexts. According to Li and Guo (2012), they pointed out that, in Asian classrooms, a considerable respect must be paid to teachers and students are not expected to challenge teachers in any aspects while teaching. In addition, teachers are seen to be the most powerful and reliable figure, which means every message and decision made by the teachers are always reasonable. Meanwhile, the results show low power distance in almost every aspect identified in the questionnaire except for the dimension of making decision without consulting with students and using authority when needed. This can be interpreted that students often trust the decisions made by teachers, assuming that teachers are knowledgeable and accurate in their judgments. Also, they may believe that it is acceptable for the teacher to exercise authority at times, as it is deemed appropriate when managing or organizing the class. To clarify, students generally trust teachers' decisions, believing in their knowledge and accuracy, and view the use of authority by teachers as appropriate when organizing or managing the class, at the same time, they tend to disagree when teachers manage or organize the class

without seeking their opinions or when teachers undervalue their input on tasks or shared ideas.

#### **4.6 Discussion of interview results regarding individualism and collectivism**

According to the answers received from the interviews in terms of individualism and collectivism in the EFL classroom, it can be concluded that the class is likely to be classified as collectivism. Through the lens of the class work type in the class, many of the responders are likely to prefer working in group as it helps them maximize their confidence in using language features and gaining better scores. For the aspect of important factors in making the groupwork successful, all of them emphasize cooperation given to the groupwork, listening to each other's opinions and communication throughout the work process. These values belong to the collectivist society according to Wanger (1995), he noted that collectivism society tends to put the group's interest before individuals. Supported by Hwang (2003), he highlighted that the collectivism characteristics include the "face" concept where individuals do not want to lose confidence or be embarrassed in front of others. Triandis (1995) also highlighted that the key values of the collectivism society consist of the group benefits and sacrifices. Harmony and sacrifices seem to play key role in such societies to bring success to the group. Moreover, criticism and competition are mostly avoided as they may harm group relations.

#### **4.7 Discussion of interview results regarding power distance**

According to all responses by interviewing in terms of power distance in EFL classroom, it implies a high power distance considering from actions, gestures and words used in the class. Referred to Li and Guo (2012), they described that in a high power distance classroom, it is designed to be a teacher-centered type of class where the lecture is dominated throughout the teaching hours. This leads to the answer complied from the interviews as all of the interviewees claimed that the class is a lecture-based style where the teacher enters and teaches by lessons. Even some might

mention that some activities are included at the end of the class, but most of hours, the teacher just keeps feeding information and slightly expects all to take down the notes.

When discussing the treatment of the teacher to the students in the class, most of them agree that the teacher does not pay much attention to individuals. However, the teacher expects everyone to pay respect to him/her by keeping silence, not to interrupt the class and to follow the rules or regulations when studying. From the previous statement, it can be interpreted that the class also hold a high power distance in the class treatment aspect. According to Hudson-Ross and Dong (1990), they mentioned that in a high power distance, rules and regulations are strictly emphasized, which indicated that the teacher expects students to follow them strictly. Also, students must be quiet and not challenge the teacher in class. This is supported by Jambor (2005) she was explaining that in a class, teachers are seen as untouchable figures, which means they expect to be strongly respected by the minors and must pay the respect both inside and outside the class.

When considering through mistakes made by students in class and reactions received from the teacher, it still implies a high power distance in the EFL classroom. Some of them were criticized in the class due to their misunderstanding in assigned tasks. Some may experience the negative reaction or gestures towards their mistakes such as deducting point and joking against the mistakes. However, some might not feel that the teacher is intended to negatively react to the mistakes but just want to make the class atmosphere more relaxing. According to Kasuya (2008), she noted that in a high power distance type of class mistakes are not expected to happen as least as possible, or students are encouraged to do things perfectly as instructed by the teacher.

In view of listening to opinions made by students in the class, it shows a quite high power distance. Some mentioned that the teacher often sticks with him/her own reason even if the teacher seems to listen to students' opinions while some described that the teacher can be negotiated if providing reasons. At the same time, some explained that the teacher tends to listen to their opinions, but when the teacher defends with his/her reasons, everybody is likely to trust him/her as he/she is the teacher, which means she must be totally accurate in terms of learning content. These claims are relevant to Li and Guo (2012), they noted that teachers are strongly expected to feed students with totally accurate information as it is their job to do so. Supported

by Nelson (2000), he pointed out that in the high power distance classroom questions or opinions may be asked or shared when necessary or required. Furthermore, teachers' suggestions are believed to be true, and students should not challenge by asking or contrasting with different opinions.

The responses gathered from the interview provide a range of insights that collectively point toward an environment in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) class where high power distance values are evident. This indication is drawn from various aspects, including the students' expectations and interactions with instructors, as well as the hierarchical dynamics observed within the classroom setting. Students seem to exhibit a strong reliance on the teacher's authority and guidance, often deferring to the teacher for approval and validation. Furthermore, there appears to be a distinct separation between teacher and student roles, with limited reciprocal interaction or open dialogue. These factors suggest that students may feel constrained by a traditional hierarchy, preferring a structured, top-down learning approach over more collaborative or egalitarian methods. Consequently, these elements together underscore the high power distance orientation prevalent within the EFL class.

#### **4.8 Discussion of interview results regarding effect of individualism, collectivism and power distance in classroom**

Based on the above-mentioned answers, power distance, individualism, and collectivism are widely believed to have a significant impact on students' language learning experiences and outcomes. Power distance affects how comfortable students feel to approach teachers for help and whether they believe their input is valued, which can directly influence their engagement and confidence in the classroom. High power distance may discourage students from asking questions or seeking clarification, which can hinder their language development. Individualism and collectivism also play a crucial role in a collectivist setting, students may feel more supported through group activities that encourage cooperation and shared learning, which can boost their confidence and willingness to participate. However, individualistic approaches, which encourage independent work, can foster self-reliance and critical thinking, potentially leading to greater language skill development as students take personal responsibility

for their progress. The balance of these factors in the classroom can shape whether students feel empowered or discouraged, influencing their motivation, confidence, and ultimately their success in language acquisition.

#### **4.9 Discussion of results collected from questionnaire and interview regarding individualism, collectivism and power distance**

The questionnaire results and interview responses both provide valuable insights into students' attitudes toward individualism and collectivism. The questionnaire data indicates a strong preference for group work, with students agreeing that collaboration helps them succeed. Similarly, interview responses reinforce this collectivist mindset, as students express that working in groups increases their confidence, enhances language skills, and leads to better academic performance. Furthermore, interviewees emphasize the importance of cooperation, communication, and avoiding embarrassment, aligning with collectivist values as described by Triandis (1995) and Hwang (2003). Both sets of responses suggest that students thrive in a group-based learning environment rather than working independently.

Regarding power distance, the questionnaire results reveal mixed opinions. Some students agree that teachers should exercise authority, whereas others believe students' opinions should be considered. However, the interview responses suggest a stronger inclination toward high power distance. Students describe the classroom as teacher-centered, where instructors dominate lessons, expect strict adherence to rules, and maintain control over discussions. While some students believe that their opinions should be heard, they ultimately defer to the teacher's authority. This aligns with Li and Guo (2012), who describe high power distance classrooms as those where teachers are seen as ultimate knowledge sources, and students rarely challenge them.

Overall, both the questionnaire and interview responses suggest that students in this context favor collectivism over individualism, high power distance in teacher-student interactions, low competitiveness, and a strong willingness to sacrifice for the group's benefit. These findings imply that instructional methods should emphasize collaborative learning, teacher guidance, and supportive group work while gradually incorporate more student autonomy and critical thinking opportunities.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This main purpose of this study is to explore the Individualism, Collectivism, and Power Distance in EFL Classroom. This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion, limitations of this study and recommendations for future research.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

The study explores the impacts of power distance and individualism-collectivism within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in a Thai university setting. Through questionnaires and interviews with senior-year university students, findings reveal that high power distance typically exists in such classrooms, where teachers are viewed as authoritative figures and student participation is often limited. Many students feel they cannot openly question or challenge teachers, and learning primarily occurs in a structured, lecture-based environment, where the teacher directs activities and sets classroom norms. This hierarchical structure can lead to a teacher-centered atmosphere, potentially limiting students' willingness to engage and their confidence in using the language.

On the other hand, collectivism appears to be a strong cultural value within the classroom, encouraging students to prioritize group harmony and cooperation over individual success. Group-based activities and teamwork are generally preferred, with students expressing that collaboration helps build confidence and eases the pressure to perform individually. However, individualism also plays a role, with some students favouring solo tasks to reduce potential conflicts and fully control their work quality. The collectivist approach, particularly in group assignments, tends to foster mutual support among students, enhancing engagement and creating a supportive learning environment that can positively impact language acquisition.

Interestingly, the findings suggest that while collectivism in group work promotes a sense of belonging, high power distance may negatively influence language

proficiency. Students who feel restrained by hierarchical norms might be less inclined to actively participate or clarify misunderstandings, which could hinder language progress. Meanwhile, students comfortable in a collectivist framework are more likely to value group achievements and experience peer support, which can foster motivation and encourage collaborative learning.

To compare the result gained from both the questionnaire and interview process in order to gain a bit deeper insight, the survey shows that students in the EFL classroom largely display collectivist traits, such as prioritizing group work, teamwork, and group interests, while avoiding competition and maintaining harmony. They also show some individualist tendencies, preferring to work independently when possible but valuing relationships and cooperation. While students trust teachers' authority, they prefer inclusive decision-making and feel less comfortable when their input is overlooked. Overall, the results highlight a blend of collectivist values with elements of independence and mutual respect.

While the result gained from the interview process shows how power distance, individualism, and collectivism affect students' learning. In the EFL class, the teacher is in charge, and students follow rules without questioning. The teacher expects respect, silence, and focus on lessons. Mistakes are not welcomed, and students may feel criticized for errors, even if it's meant to keep the class relaxed. While teachers listen to students, they are still seen as the authority, and students trust their decisions. The class mostly focuses on group work, but the teacher-centered style limits student interaction and open discussions.

In summary, the EFL classroom in this Thai context is shaped by both high power distance and collectivist values, where teacher authority and group cohesion play significant roles. This dual influence highlights the need for a balanced approach that values open communication and interaction, potentially allowing for a more engaging and effective learning environment.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The findings from both the questionnaire and interview responses highlight key cultural influences on students' learning preferences in the EFL classroom.

Students predominantly exhibit collectivist tendencies, favoring group work over independent tasks, as it develops their confidence, language skills, and overall academic performance. Additionally, their attitudes toward competition suggest a preference for cooperation rather than rivalry, reinforcing the notion that success is viewed as a collective achievement rather than an individual pursuit. Furthermore, the high power distance observed in classroom dynamics indicates that students respect teacher authority and expect structured, teacher-led instruction, with limited opportunities for direct student participation in decision-making. However, while students generally conform to this structure, some responses indicate a desire for greater involvement, suggesting potential benefits in gradually integrating more student-centered learning approaches.

In view of theoretical framework, this study aligns with Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (1980), particularly the dimensions of individualism - collectivism and power distance. The preference for group collaboration and reluctance toward direct competition reflect collectivist values, while the teacher-centered classroom structure corresponds to high power distance norms. Additionally, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) supports these findings, as it emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and guided participation, which resonates with students' collective learning tendencies. Moreover, Triandis' Theory of Individualism-Collectivism (1995) further explains why students prioritize group harmony and cooperation over individual achievement. These theoretical foundations suggest that an inclusive, culturally responsive teaching approach—one that respects hierarchical structures while gradually encouraging autonomy—would enhance learning experiences in this EFL context.

By integrating these cultural and psychological perspectives into instructional design, educators can create a more effective, engaging, and culturally appropriate learning environment, ultimately improving students' motivation, participation, and academic success. An article in *Higher Education* investigated the impact of culturally sensitive curricula on students' interest levels. The findings revealed that curricula reflecting diverse cultural perspectives and promoting inclusivity were associated with heightened student interest and engagement. This

underscores the role of culturally relevant content in fostering a more engaging and effective learning environment. (Arday, Zoe Belluigi, & Thomas, 2021).

In terms of teaching implication, based on these insights, several teaching strategies can be implemented to optimize learning outcomes. Given the strong collectivist orientation, teachers should incorporate collaborative learning activities, such as group discussions, peer teaching, and team-based projects, to align with students' natural preferences for group work. However, to balance power distance, educators can introduce structured student participation, such as guided discussions and problem-solving activities, allowing students to gradually take a more active role in their learning while still respecting teacher authority. Additionally, since students do not thrive in highly competitive environments, teachers should adopt formative assessments and self-improvement-focused evaluations rather than fostering direct competition among students. Finally, given students' willingness to sacrifice for the group, instructors should ensure that group activities promote equal participation, preventing dominant voices from overshadowing quieter students.

### **5.3 Limitations**

The study faced several challenges that might limit its findings. First, the number of participants was small, with only 86 completing the survey and just five doing in-depth interviews, so the results may not apply to all groups. Also, the study focused only on Thai university students in English classrooms, which means the findings might not be relevant to students from other cultures or educational backgrounds. The teacher-student hierarchy in Thai classrooms may have influenced the students' responses, making them less likely to share honest opinions. Since the data came from surveys and interviews, there is also a chance students answered in ways they thought were expected. Lastly, while the study provided insights into individualism, collectivism, and power dynamics, using additional methods such as class observation could have made the findings more accurate and reliable.

#### 5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

For future research in this area, several improvements are recommended. First, using a larger, more diverse group of students from different universities and regions would make the findings more broadly applicable. Including students from other cultural backgrounds could also help determine if the values of individualism, collectivism, and power distance seen in Thai EFL classrooms are unique or if they apply across various cultures.

Future studies could also benefit from using both qualitative and quantitative methods. For example, combining surveys and interviews with structured classroom observations or standardized tests would provide a fuller, more reliable picture. This blend of methods would help validate students' self-reported answers with objective data. Additionally, gathering teachers' perspectives could provide valuable context, as teachers often have insights into classroom dynamics that students may not fully notice or express. Teachers' viewpoints may reveal more about how these values affect both teaching and learning.

A long-term study that follows students over time could also offer insights into how these values change as students progress in their studies, showing the impact on their learning outcomes over the years. Observing these shifts could give a more complete view of how individualism, collectivism, and power distance influence student development. To reduce bias in responses, future research could also include anonymous surveys or indirect questions, encouraging students to respond more openly and accurately.

By following these recommendations, future research can offer a clearer, more detailed understanding of how cultural and educational factors influence classroom dynamics and affect student learning and engagement over time.

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**APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### Consent Form [Thai Language]

#### หนังสือแสดงเจตนายินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัย (Consent Form)

โครงการวิจัยเรื่อง..ความห่างระหว่างชนชั้น ปัจเจกชนนิยมและกลุ่มคนนิยมในห้องเรียนที่  
ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างชาติ....

วันที่ให้คำยินยอม

.....

ข้าพเจ้า (นาย/นาง/นางสาว).....

ขอทำหนังสือนี้ไว้ต่อหน้าหัวหน้าโครงการวิจัยเพื่อเป็นหลักฐานแสดงว่า

ข้อ 1. ก่อนลงนามในหนังสือแสดงเจตนายินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัยนี้ ข้าพเจ้าได้รับการอธิบายจากผู้วิจัยให้ทราบถึงวัตถุประสงค์ของการวิจัย กิจกรรมการวิจัย ความเสี่ยง รวมทั้งประโยชน์ที่อาจเกิดขึ้นจากการวิจัยอย่างละเอียด และมีความเข้าใจดีแล้ว

ข้อ 2 ผู้วิจัยรับรองว่าจะตอบคำถามต่าง ๆ ที่ข้าพเจ้าสงสัยด้วยความเต็มใจ ไม่ปิดบัง ซ่อนเร้น จนข้าพเจ้าพอใจ

ข้อ 3 ข้าพเจ้าเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้โดยสมัครใจ และข้าพเจ้ามีสิทธิที่จะบอกเลิกการเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้เมื่อใดก็ได้ และการบอกเลิกการเข้าร่วมวิจัยนี้จะไม่มีผลกระทบต่อคะแนนใดๆที่เกี่ยวข้องในวิชานั้นๆ ที่ข้าพเจ้าจะพึงได้รับต่อไป

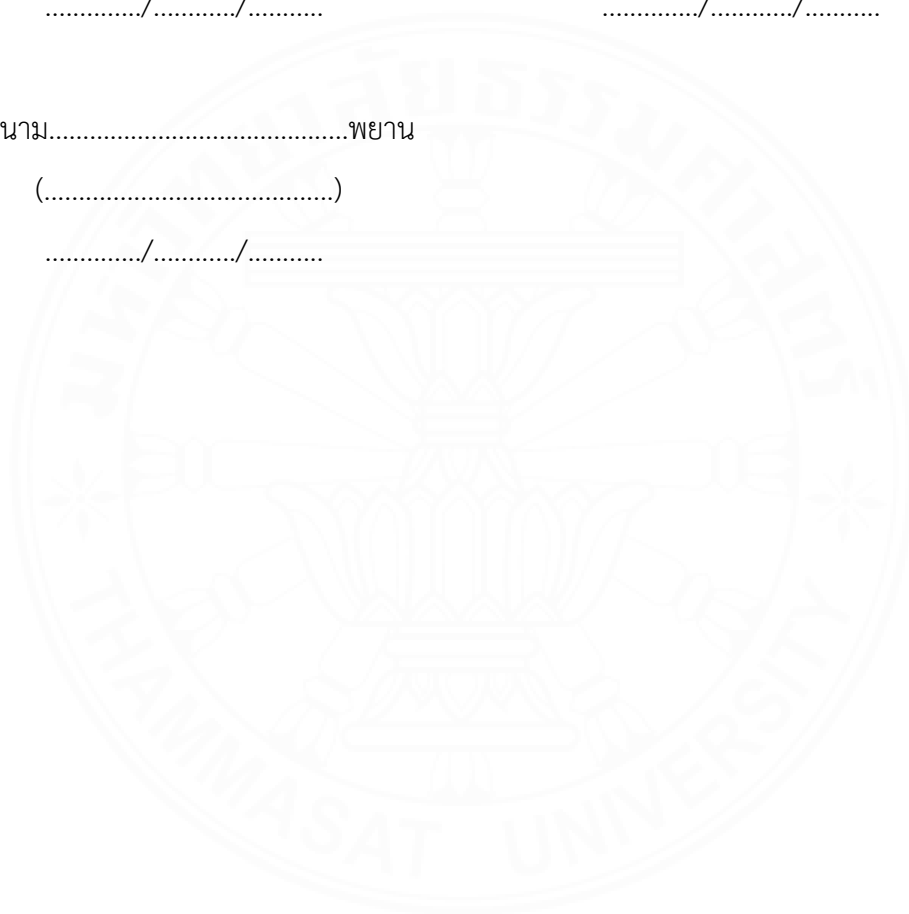
ข้อ 4 ผู้วิจัยรับรองว่า จะเก็บข้อมูลเฉพาะเกี่ยวกับตัวข้าพเจ้าเป็นความลับ และจะเปิดเผยได้เฉพาะในรูปที่เป็นสรุปผลการวิจัย การเปิดเผยข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับตัวข้าพเจ้าต่อหน่วยงานต่าง ๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้อง กระทำได้เฉพาะกรณีจำเป็นด้วยเหตุผลทางวิชาการเท่านั้น

ข้อ 5 ผู้วิจัยรับรองว่า หากมีข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมที่ส่งผลกระทบต่อการศึกษา ข้าพเจ้าจะได้รับการแจ้งให้ทราบทันทีโดยไม่ปิดบัง ซ่อนเร้น

ข้าพเจ้าได้อ่านข้อความข้างต้นแล้วมีความเข้าใจดีทุกประการ และได้ลงนามในหนังสือ  
แสดงเจตนายินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัยนี้ด้วยความเต็มใจ

ลงนาม.....ผู้ให้ความยินยอม      ลงนาม.....หัวหน้าโครงการวิจัย  
(.....)  
...../...../.....      ...../...../.....

ลงนาม.....พยาน  
(.....)  
...../...../.....



## Consent Form

### [English Version]

**Research Project Title:** *Power Distance, Individualism and Collectivism in EFL Classroom*

**Date of Consent:** \_\_\_\_\_

I, (Mr./Ms./Mrs.) \_\_\_\_\_,  
hereby provide this document to the principal investigator as evidence of my consent to participate in the research study under the following conditions:

1. Before signing this consent form, I have received a detailed explanation from the researcher regarding the study's objectives, research activities, potential risks, and possible benefits. I fully understand the information provided.
2. The researcher guarantees to answer any questions I may have openly and honestly, without concealing any information, until I am fully satisfied.
3. I am participating in this research voluntarily and have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. My decision to withdraw will not affect any academic scores or grades that I am entitled to receive in the relevant course.
4. The researcher ensures that any personal information related to me will remain confidential and will only be disclosed in summarized research findings. Any disclosure of my personal information to relevant institutions will be strictly for academic purposes and only when necessary.
5. If any new information arises that may impact the research, I will be informed immediately without any concealment.

I have read and fully understood the statements above and willingly sign this consent form.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ *Participant*  
( \_\_\_\_\_ )

**Date:** // \_\_ \_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ *Principal Investigator*  
( \_\_\_\_\_ )

**Date:** // \_\_ \_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ *Witness*  
( \_\_\_\_\_ )

**Date:** // \_\_ \_\_

**APPENDIX B**  
**Questionnaire**  
**[Thai version]**

**แบบสอบถาม**

**เรื่อง:** ความห่างระหว่างชนชั้น (Power Distance) และปัจเจกชนนิยมและชุมชนนิยม (Individualism and Collectivism) ในห้องเรียนที่ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่สอง

**ส่วนที่ 1:** ข้อมูลทั่วไป

โปรดใส่เครื่องหมาย  ในช่อง  ตามความเป็นจริง

1.1 เพศ  ชาย  หญิง  อื่นๆ

1.2 อายุ \_\_\_\_\_ ปี

1.3 ชั้นปีที่ศึกษา  ชั้นปีที่สาม  ชั้นปีที่สี่

**ส่วนที่ 2:** การรับรู้ของนักเรียนต่อความห่างระหว่างชนชั้น (Power Distance) และปัจเจกชนนิยมและชุมชนนิยม (Individualism and Collectivism) ในห้องเรียนที่ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่สอง

**คำสั่ง:** โปรดใส่เครื่องหมาย  ในช่อง  ตามความเป็นจริง

1 = ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างมาก 2 = ไม่เห็นด้วย 3 = ปานกลาง 4 = เห็นด้วย 5 = เห็นด้วยอย่างมาก

ข้อ	ข้อความ	ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างมาก	ไม่เห็นด้วย	ปานกลาง	เห็นด้วย	เห็นด้วยอย่างมาก
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าคนที่พึ่งพาตัวเองได้เท่านั้นจึงจะมีความก้าวหน้าในชีวิต					

ข้อ	ข้อความ	ไม่เห็น ด้วย อย่าง มาก	ไม่เห็น ด้วย	ปาน กลาง	เห็น ด้วย	เห็น ด้วย อย่าง มาก
2.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าการที่จะอยู่เหนือกว่าผู้อื่นฉันจำเป็นต้องอยู่ได้ด้วยตัวเอง					
3.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าถ้าเราต้องการทำบางสิ่งให้เป็นไปอย่างถูกต้องเราต้องทำสิ่งนั้นด้วยตัวเอง					
4.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าสิ่งที่เกิดขึ้นกับฉันมาจากการกระทำของฉันท					
5.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าสุดท้ายแล้ว คนที่สามารถพึ่งพาได้คือตัวเองเท่านั้น					
<b>WIN ALL</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันรู้สึกว่าการชนะคือทุกสิ่งทุกอย่าง					
2.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันรู้สึกว่าการชนะเป็นสิ่งสำคัญทั้งในเรื่องงานและในเรื่องการใช้ชีวิต					
3.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าความสำเร็จเป็นสิ่งสำคัญที่สุดในชีวิต					
4.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ ฉันรู้สึกภาคภูมิใจเมื่อคนอื่นทำได้ดีกว่าฉัน					
5.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าการทำให้ดีที่สุดนั้นไม่เพียงพอ สิ่งที่สำคัญกว่าคือการที่ฉันชนะ					

ข้อ	ข้อความ	ไม่เห็น ด้วย อย่าง มาก	ไม่เห็น ด้วย	ปาน กลาง	เห็น ด้วย	เห็น ด้วย อย่าง มาก
<b>GROUP PREFERENCE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ ฉันชอบที่จะทำงานกับคนอื่นมากกว่าที่จะทำงานคนเดียว					
2.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ การทำงานเป็นกลุ่มดีกว่าการทำงานคนเดียว					
3.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ ถ้าฉันสามารถเลือกได้ ฉันเลือกที่จะทำงานคนเดียวมากกว่าต้องทำงานร่วมกับผู้อื่น					
<b>SACRIFICE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าถ้าฉันจะเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของกลุ่ม ฉันอาจจะต้องทำบางสิ่งที่ฉันไม่อยากทำในบางครั้ง					
2.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่าเมื่อฉันอยู่ในกลุ่ม ฉันอาจจะได้สิ่งที่ฉันต้องการเสมอไป					
3.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่า เมื่อฉันเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของกลุ่ม ฉันจำเป็นต้องเสียสละเพื่อผลประโยชน์ส่วนรวมในบางครั้ง					
4.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ ฉันเต็มใจที่จะเสียสละเพื่อประโยชน์ของกลุ่ม					
<b>POWER DISTANCE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่า อาจารย์ควรเป็นคนตัดสินใจเป็นส่วนใหญ่โดยไม่ต้องปรึกษานักศึกษา					

ข้อ	ข้อความ	ไม่เห็น ด้วย อย่าง มาก	ไม่เห็น ด้วย	ปาน กลาง	เห็น ด้วย	เห็น ด้วย อย่าง มาก
2.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ ทำให้ฉันตระหนักว่า บ่อยครั้งที่อาจารย์จำเป็นต้องใช้การ บังคับเมื่อต้องรับมือกับนักศึกษา					
3.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ อาจารย์ไม่ควรจะถาม ความเห็นของนักศึกษาบ่อย ๆ					
4.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้นักศึกษาไม่ควรขัดแย้งกับ การตัดสินใจของอาจารย์					
5.	ในชั้นเรียนนี้ อาจารย์ไม่ควรมอบหมาย ชิ้นงานที่สำคัญให้นักศึกษา					

**APPENDIX C**  
**Questionnaire**  
**[English version]**

**Title:** Power Distance and Collectivism-Individualism in EFL Classroom

**Part 1:** Background information

1.1 Gender      Male  Female

1.2 Age                      \_\_\_\_\_ years old

1.3 Year of study          3<sup>rd</sup> year                       4<sup>th</sup> year

**Part 2:** Students' perceptions towards Power Distance and Individualism and Collectivism in EFL classroom

**Direction:** Please put a check mark ✓ in front of an appropriate item.

1 = Strongly disagree    2 = Disagree    3 = Neutral    4 = Agree    5 = Strongly agree

Item from Hwang & Francesco	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
<b>STAND ALONE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	This class makes me aware that, only those who depend on themselves get ahead in life.					
2.	This class makes me aware that to be superior a person must stand alone					
3.	This class makes me aware that if you want something done right, you've got to do it yourself					

<b>Item from Hwang &amp; Francesco</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
4.	This class makes me aware that what happens to me is my own doing					
5.	This class makes me aware that in the long run, the only person you can count on is yourself					
<b>WIN ALL</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	This class makes me aware that winning is everything					
2.	This class makes me feel that winning is important in both work and games					
3.	This class makes me aware that success is the most important thing in life					
4.	In this class, it annoys me when other people perform better than I do					
5.	This class makes me aware that doing your best isn't enough; it is important to win					
<b>GROUP PREFERENCE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	In this class, I prefer to work with others in a group rather than working alone.					
2.	In this class, working with a group is better than working alone.					

Item from Hwang & Francesco	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
3.	In this class, given the choice, I would rather do a job where I can work alone rather than doing a job where I have to work with others in a group					
<b>SACRIFICE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	In this class, I am aware that if I am part of a group, I sometimes need to do somethings I do not want to do.					
2.	This class makes me realize that I do not always get what I personally want when I belong to the group					
3.	This class makes me aware that I sometimes sacrifice for the sake of the group when I am part of a group.					
4.	In this class, I am willing to sacrifice for the sake of the group's wellbeing.					
<b>POWER DISTANCE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	In this class, teachers should make most decisions without consulting students.					
2.	In this class, it is frequently necessary for a teacher to use authority and power when dealing with students.					

Item from Hwang & Francesco	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
3.	In this class, teachers should seldom ask for the opinions of students.					
4.	In this class, students should not disagree with teacher's decisions.					
5.	In this class, teachers should not delegate important tasks to students.					



**APPENDIX D**  
**Guided Interview Questions**  
**[Thai version]**

**แนวคำถามสัมภาษณ์**

**ส่วนที่ 1: ข้อมูลทั่วไป ได้แก่**

1. เพศ อายุและชั้นปีที่ศึกษา
2. ระดับความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษ

**ส่วนที่ 2: การรับรู้ของนักเรียนต่อระยะห่างทางอำนาจ**

3. การเรียนการสอนเน้นการบรรยายโดยอาจารย์หรือให้นักเรียนทำกิจกรรมในชั้นเรียน
4. คุณครูของคุณปฏิบัติกับคุณอย่างไรในชั้นเรียน
5. คุณเคยทำผิดพลาดในชั้นเรียนบ้างไหม หากเคยทำ คุณครูของคุณมีท่าทีอย่างไร
6. คุณครูของคุณยอมรับหรือรับฟังความเห็นต่างของคุณไหม

**ส่วนที่ 3: การรับรู้ของนักเรียนต่อปัจเจกชนนิยมและกลุ่มคนนิยม**

7. ในชั้นเรียนส่วนใหญ่เน้นเป็นงานเดี่ยวหรืองานกลุ่ม และงานแบบไหนที่คุณชอบมากกว่า
8. ถ้าคุณต้องทำงานกลุ่ม ปัจจัยอะไรที่ทำให้งานออกมาสำเร็จ

**ส่วนที่ 4: การรับรู้ของนักเรียนต่อการผลกระทบทางระยะห่างของอำนาจและ ปัจเจกชนนิยม และกลุ่มคนนิยม**

9. ระยะห่างทางอำนาจและปัจเจกชนนิยมและกลุ่มคนนิยมมีผลต่อการเรียน เกรด หรือคะแนนของนักเรียนไหม อย่างไร

**APPENDIX E**  
**Guided Interview Questions**  
**[English version]**

**Part 1: Interviewees' information**

1. Gender, age, and year of study
2. English Language Proficiency

**Part2: Students' perceptions towards Power Distance**

3. Is the class lecture-based or activity-based?
4. How does your teacher treat you in class?
5. Have you ever made mistakes in class? If yes, what is the reaction from your teachers?
6. Do your teachers accept or listen to different opinions made by you?

**Part3: Students' perceptions towards Individualism/Collectivism**

7. Does the classroom mostly focus on individual work or group work? And which one do you prefer?
8. If you need to do groupwork, what kind of factors make the group work successful?

**Part 4: Students' perceptions towards effect from Power Distance and Individual and Collectivism**

9. Do Power Distance and Individual and Collectivism affect your learning, grades, or scores in class? How?