Feasibility of Using Community-Based Learning
in Thai EFL instruction

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Abstract

It is claimed that the principles in the paradigm shift in second language acquisition has partly been implemented in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) arena. How to make EFL pedagogies suit the shift then becomes an issue of interest for EFL authorities. In Thailand, such an interest has also been raised. This paper argues that community-based learning (CBL) enables Thai EFL instruction to chime with the shift. Moreover, given some commonalities among the principles in the paradigm shift, the principles in CBL, and the principles emphasised in the 1999 Thailand National Education Act, it could be expected that such integration is realisable in practice. In this paper, aside from a commentary on the integration, pedagogic implications involving CBL activities and roles of teachers in Thai EFL contexts are given and potential challenges discussed.

Keywords: community-based learning, EFL, second language acquisition, Thailand's education

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ความเป็นไปได้ของการจัดการเรียนรู้โดยใช้ชุมชนเป็นฐานในการสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศในบริบทไทย

ศุภานัน พรหมมาก
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บทคัดย่อ

กล่าวกันว่า หลักการในการปรับกระบวนทัศน์การเรียนรู้ภาษาที่สองถูกนำมาใช้ในแวดวงการสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศเพียงบางส่วนเท่านั้น ด้วยเหตุนี้ วิธีที่จะทำให้การสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศและหลักการในการปรับกระบวนทัศน์การเรียนรู้ภาษาที่สองเป็นไปในทิศทางเดียวกันจึงเป็นสิ่งที่หน่วยงานและบุคคลในแวดวงนี้ให้ความสนใจ รวมถึงในประเทศไทยเองเช่นกัน บทความนี้ต้องการแสดงให้เห็นว่า การจัดการเรียนรู้โดยใช้ชุมชนเป็นฐานสามารถทำให้การสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศในบริบทไทยสอดคล้องกับการปรับกระบวนทัศน์ดังกล่าว นอกจากนี้ เนื่องจากหลักการในกระบวนทัศน์การเรียนรู้ภาษาที่สอง หลักการของการจัดการเรียนรู้โดยใช้ชุมชนเป็นฐาน และหลักการในพระราชบัญญัติการศึกษาแห่งชาติของไทย ปี พ.ศ. 2542 มีความสอดรับกัน จึงอาจคาดการณ์ได้ว่าการบูรณาการการสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศในบริบทไทยโดยใช้ชุมชนเป็นฐานการเรียนรู้สามารถเป็นจริงได้ในทางปฏิบัติ บทความนี้นอกจากจะกล่าวถึงการบูรณาการดังกล่าวแล้ว ยังนำเสนอนัยยะทางการสอนที่เกี่ยวกับการทำกิจกรรมในชั้นเรียนและบทบาทของครู พร้อมทั้งอภิปรายปัญหาที่อาจเกิดขึ้น

คำสำคัญ: การจัดการเรียนรู้โดยใช้ชุมชนเป็นฐาน, ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ, การเรียนรู้ภาษาที่สอง, การศึกษาไทย

Introduction

The paradigm shift in second language acquisition (SLA) has generally been used as a norm in recent EFL (English as a Foreign Language) pedagogies. Despite its popularity, Jacobs and Farrell (2001) contend that the principles in the shift have partly been implemented. Jarvis and Atsilarat (2005) argue that this can be attributed to inadequate attention given to students' own national and local knowledge and culture. An inclusion of students' sociocultural assets and locality in second and foreign language teaching is actually advocated by many scholars. For example, Pennycook (2010) suggests using contextualised and local relevant activities in second and foreign languages classes. Nieto (2018) has a similar view, claiming that such a use promotes students' second language acquisition and extends their lived world. The culture of the target language and that of students, Baker (2003) claims, are equally important as both can contribute to their successful communication. This implies that while exposing students to Western cultures through typical English learning materials, they should also be sensitised to their own culture.

As an EFL country, Thailand has also endorsed this conviction. The 1999 National Education Act, which is considered to be Thailand's recent educational reform, stipulates that Thai teachers should cultivate in their students the English language and a concept of Thainess (Office of the National Education Commission, 2002). The ideology of the Thainess, according to this act, encapsulates all features of Thai national and local culture and knowledge. Several authorities also suggest grafting the Thainess onto Thai EFL instruction. For example, Kanoksilapatham (2018) conducted a study with Grade 4 pupils in North Thailand to investigate the effectiveness of northern Thainess-based English lessons. Her study revealed that the lessons enhanced not only the pupils' appreciations of northern Thainess but also their English vocabulary. Nomnian (2013) examined Thai cultural aspects in English language textbooks used in a secondary school in Thailand and found that foreign textbook authors recognised some Thai cultural features and included them in their textbooks. Nomnian further suggested that Thai EFL teachers themselves should recognise their own culture and incorporate it into their teaching. Nevertheless, deeming English a Western product, some Thai teachers may find infusing Thai indigeneity into their

English classes confusing and demanding (Kanoksilapatham & Channuan, 2018). As a consequence of this, such infusion does not seem to have been widely heeded.

This paper argues that the convergence of the principles in the paradigm shift in SLA and the Thainess is viable in Thai EFL classes by using a community-based learning (CBL). CBL involves educational institutions, teachers, students, and community members in the learning process through reciprocal exchange, and thereby establishing mutual benefits (Demarest, 2014; Melaville, Berg, & Blank, 2006; Sharkey, Clavijo, & Ramirez, 2016). With such contention, it is hoped that this paper will be useful for those concerned.

Paradigm shift in SLA

The paradigm shift in education can be justified by the need to align education with the changing world where the complexity of life is increasing. Students should therefore be equipped not only with methods for acquiring knowledge but also with other essential life skills. Such a shift has received attention from diverse disciplines, including the SLA field. SLA is understood as "the learning of a nonnative language after the learning of one's native or primary language" (Gass, 2013, p. 4). By this, a second language is "any language other than one's first language" (VanPatten & Williams, 2014, p. 6). From this perspective, both ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) are considered to be under the SLA umbrella.

Jacobs and Farrell (2001) note that the paradigm shift in SLA moves from behaviourism, structuralist approaches, and cognitivism towards socio-cognitivism. In other words, the shift transforms conceptions of learning: from a behavioural result of external factors and a consequence of students' minds towards a conflation of the two. Socio-cognitivism views learning as an outcome of both external forces and human's internal cognitive processes. It understands learning as a social phenomenon, a conception that Geeslin and Long (2014) marks as a social turn in SLA. The premise that social interaction plays a fundamental role in mediating learning can be explained by the sociocultural theory propounded by Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory posits that although people's biological and sociocultural factors engender their cognitive

development, the latter plays a more crucial role (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2015). The sociocultural factors, according to this theory, are influenced by their historical and sociocultural conditions and are in the forms of three types of mediators: materials, symbols, and human beings. This theory suggests a pathway to learning and teaching, namely teachers should arrange their teaching and classroom activities in a way that enhances students' social interactions, particularly ones with more competent human others. Scott and Palincsar (2013) argue that the sociocultural theory develops students' knowledge as well as their learning strategies. Their notion implies that the theory fosters both students' declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. Moreover, this theory also draws special attention to what students bring to their classroom and tap for meaning-making and knowledge construction (Turuk, 2008). This demonstrates the role of students' background knowledge in this theory.

In addition to more emphasis placed on students' social nature of learning, integral to the paradigm shift in SLA is a collection of transformations. Jacob and Farrell (2001) identify eight changes in the shift. These are learner autonomy, cooperative learning, curricular integration, focus on meaning, diversity, thinking skills, alternative assessment, and teachers as co-learners. They note that all of these changes possess an interdependent nature, namely an accomplishment of one can inform those of others. As can be seen, the changes recognise not only teaching and learning processes but also students as a person. This indicates that such a shift aims to develop students in both cognitive and humanistic domains. However, although SLA research and pedagogies espousing the paradigm shift abound, the implementation of the shift seems to be a moot point. Jacobs and Farrell ascribe a partial implementation of the eight changes in the shift to their piecemeal promotion. Here, two implications arise. First, what is in vogue in the literature and what takes place in class may not be the same thing (Hall & Cook, 2014). Second, alternative pedagogic approaches able to promote the eight changes in an integrated fashion are needed.

Jarvis and Atsilarat (2005) perceive the negligence of students' national and local knowledge and culture as causing an unsuccessful implementation of the paradigm shift in SLA. The issue on students' lived worlds or 'funds of knowledge' (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) then becomes a concern to

several authorities (e.g., Baker, 2003; Comber, 2018; Sinlarat, 2005). Students' funds of knowledge can be understood as their prior knowledge mentioned in the SLA literature. Such knowledge is claimed to facilitate second language learning. Nevertheless, students' background knowledge is generally used to support elicitation in EFL classes. More attempts have then been made to make students' lived world part of EFL content. This paper argues that community-based learning (CBL) can bridge the gap between learning English according to the paradigm shift in SLA and using students' funds of knowledge. In the literature, CBL is conceived as the integrated learning, embracing a whole spectrum of learning skills. By blending CBL in EFL instruction, students' English and other learning and life skills are expected to be cultivated in tandem. Moreover, as Melaville et al (2006) claim, CBL can also bolster students' sense of connection to their locality. The following section will detail CBL and its pragmatic benefits.

Conceptions of CBL

The idea of incorporating students' local knowledge into their learning process is not new. According to Fontaine and Todd (2011), this idea derives from John Dewey's (1916, as cited in Fontaine & Todd, 2011) work that suggests associating education with students' communities and civic life. Dewey's conception of education laid the foundation for several pedagogies, including CBL. Fischer, Rohde and Wulf (2007) hold that CBL is an appropriate educational trend for the current age of globalisation where problems surrounding us are more complex and multidisciplinary, and so knowledge should be a by-product of "discursive assignment of meaning and social identification" (p. 76). Moreover, in CBL contexts, each student, each community, and each situation taking place along the learning process is very likely to be unique, all of which are the components similar to those of real-world learning.

According to the Glossary of Education Reform (2014), CBL is described as:

> "a wide variety of instructional methods and programs that educators use to connect what is being taught in schools to their surrounding communities, including local institutions, history, literature, cultural heritage, and natural

environments. Community-based learning is also motivated by the belief that all communities have intrinsic educational assets and resources that educators can use to enhance learning experiences for students."

Sharing this view, Mooney and Edwards (2001) refer to CBL as "any pedagogical tool in which the community becomes a partner in the learning process" (p. 182). As can be seen, these definitions do not specify CBL as a particular method or pedagogy tool. Therefore, CBL could be any learning tasks that engage students in using communities as a source of knowledge. CBL seems thus open for teachers' creativity in devising community-engaged tasks for their students.

CBL is perceived as a contextualised learning, connecting living and learning and heightening students' educational experience, particularly one outside their classroom walls (Fontaine & Todd, 2011). Juxtaposing the contextualised learning in CBL with decontextualised learning mostly found in traditional teaching, the former welcomes students' mistakes as a way of learning while the latter avoids doing so (Owens & Wang, 1996). This indicates that in CBL students learn inductively, discover patterns, and construct knowledge themselves. Melaville et al (2006) similarly state that through CBL, students learn implicit knowledge and build upon it to construct explicit knowledge. In this light, it could be argued that CBL encourages bottom-up learning. With students playing a pivotal part of learning, CBL falls under the rubric of student-centredness. Authorities understand CBL as being informed by some educational concepts and theories. For example, promoting students' social interactions with others (i.e., peers, teachers, and community members), CBL lends itself to the sociocultural theory (Fischer et al, 2007; Melaville et al, 2006). CBL is also deemed as 'situated learning' (Sharkey, 2012) since students are situated in connecting what they learn in class with real-world learning experience and therefore constructing knowledge. Situated learning, Stein (1998) claims, involves students' cooperative activities in their knowledge construction and acquisition. Stein's view indicates that there is a relationship between the sociocultural theory and the situated learning.

Nevertheless, using communities as learning resources may bring a concern on whether it excludes standards-based curricular. Regarding this issue,

Sharkey (2012) argues that CBL "does not ignore the realities of curriculum standards that teachers must address, but emphasizes local knowledge and resources as starting points for teaching and learning" (p. 11). Moreover, it undergirds curricular: making them more meaningful and relevant to students (Melaville et al, 2006). In the literature, relevant learning is acknowledged as effective learning since it can contribute to students' academic development and long-term retention of knowledge.

From the discussion above, CBL appears to give students enhanced opportunities to discover how they can apply classroom content to diverse social contexts, practise using learning strategies outside their class, gain *bona fide* learning experience, and acquire more knowledge and learning strategies. Several authorities mention the benefits of CBL. For example, Sharkey et al (2016) conducted a qualitative case study with four secondary teachers in Alfonso Lopez Pumarejo and found that the participants believed CBL:

> "increased student engagement and motivation, fostered or enhanced existing student-teacher relationships and school-family engagement, increased awareness and appreciation of local knowledge and its value as curriculum resource." (p. 313)

In Sharkey et al's study, the teachers' perceptions on the merits of CBL indicate that CBL is a holistic development in which all relevant units can gain: students, teachers, schools, students' families, and communities. Melaville et al (2006) similarly perceive CBL as integrated learning. Concerning students, Owens and Wang (1996) state that CBL helps develop students' cognitive skills, lifelong learning dispositions, skills essential in their personal life, and citizenship. Owens and Wang add that CBL also nurtures collaborative learning. This type of learning, by its very nature, entails dialogic talks. Nevertheless, dialogic talks in groups of students are different from their everyday talks for the former involve completing assigned tasks to accomplish a mutual goal while the latter do not. Through dialogic talks, they co-construct meanings, discuss ideas, justify them, and build upon others' ideas to express their responses. The likelihood then is that collaborative learning can enhance students' critical thinking (Loes & Pascarella,

2017). With such logic, it could be concluded that CBL can also develop students' criticality.

As presented thus far, we can see that some conceptions of CBL resemble those of principles in the paradigm shift in SLA. The next section will consider their commonalities.

Shared tenets in the paradigm shift in SLA and CBL

The prominent commonality between the paradigm shift in SLA and CBL is that both are driven by the sociocultural theory. Other common features include the eight changes Jacobs and Farrell (2001) consider to be the key changes in the paradigm shift in SLA. To reiterate, the changes are learner autonomy, cooperative learning, curricular integration, focus on meaning, diversity, thinking skills, alternative assessment, and teachers as co-learners. This section presents how the eight changes reside in CBL.

1. Learner autonomy

Learner autonomy is understood as students' ability in taking charge of their own learning. Many SLA scholars have noted its importance in reinforcing second language learning (e.g., Illés, 2012; Legenhausen, 2003; Little, 2007). The concept of learner autonomy is similarly found in CBL where students work on assigned tasks with teachers as their facilitators. Such a teacher role implies that through CBL, a primary source of knowledge is students' communities, as opposed to their teachers. However, this does not mean CBL negates the role of teachers. Teachers still play a huge part but in a different form from traditional teaching. That is to say, instead of directly feeding knowledge to their students, they become more facilitative: organising CBL activities and tasks, encouraging their students to go through the learning process themselves, and providing them with advice and candid and constructive feedback accordingly. With teachers optimising this process-based instruction, we can say that CBL, to some extent, promotes students' autonomous learning.

However, it should be noted that learner autonomy is not restricted to individual work undertaken merely outside the classroom. Sinclair (2000) maintains that group work activities can also cultivate students' autonomous learning inasmuch as they are engaged in conscious awareness of their learning

process. Sinclair's assertion may indicate two implications. First, in CBL, students' autonomous learning can be enhanced by individual and group work activities. Second, community-based learning activities can commence in class before extending to outside the class.

2. Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning is a method in which students work together in pursuit of common goals. As this type of learning is social, it is likely to produce both students' knowledge and their social skills. In the sphere of SLA, it is claimed that cooperative learning increases students' language input and output and therefore is facilitative to their second language learning (e.g., Jacobs & Kimura, 2013; Ning, 2011).

Cooperative learning is also claimed to be enhanced in CBL. CBL, at its core, is concerned with using any segment of communities as a source for learning. This at least implicates cooperation with communities. The cooperation also involves students, teachers and peers. Thus, CBL, by its nature, is cooperative. There are several proponents of cooperative learning in CBL. For example, Melaville et al (2006) note that through cooperative learning, students feel more motivated to learn and problem solve in the context of their communities. Owens and Wang (1996) argue that in CBL, all relevant agents cooperate in the process of learning.

3. Curricular integration

According to Jacob and Farrell (2001), curricular integration is a link of multidisciplinary content and therefore allows students to learn holistically. Jacob and Farrell contend that in second language learning, curricular integration can be found in project work that cultivates not only students' second language learning but also their various types of learning and skills. Hutchinson (1996) points out the merits of project work in language learning, stating that it reinforces relevant learning and bridges the gap between students' classroom learning and their own world.

Learning in an integrated fashion is also an outstanding feature in CBL for students are encouraged to use multiple types of skills and knowledge to complete an assigned task (Melaville et al, 2006). This integrated learning may uncover how students can associate what they learn in different subjects and

apply these in real-life situations, a strategy that classroom learning may fail to do.

    4. Focus on meaning

In SLA, focus on meaning appears to be prioritised over focus on form. The former directs attention to the use of a second language while the latter attends to accurate forms of language (Long & Robinson, 1998). Focus on meaning is also implied in CBL. For example, Melaville et al (2006) argue that CBL can be effectively devised through a process-based approach. In this approach, they maintain, students learn through trial and error in constructing knowledge. This heuristic method suggests that in CBL students use multiple strategies to acquire knowledge, rather than strictly following a prescribed strategy. Given this, we can assume that they do not focus on the form of learning but rather on meanings available.

    5. Diversity

Diversity is also known as individual differences which "concern anything that marks a person as a distinct and unique human being (Dörnyei, 2014, p. 3). The SLA literature has clearly taken into account students' individual differences. Ellis (2004) reviewed relevant literature on individual differences in second language learning and grouped them into seven individual difference factors: language aptitude, learning style, motivation, anxiety, personality, learner beliefs, and learning strategies.

CBL scholars likewise mention the role of diversity. In CBL, students cooperatively work in groups and assign to each other responsibilities (Melaville et al, 2006). With each student's onus likely to be congruent with their attributes and interests, we can say that their diversity is respected, and so their motivation for learning expected. Students' diversity can then be a strength rather than a weakness. Moreover, diversity in CBL can be in various types, such as diversity of community people whom students encounter during their fieldwork, diversity of knowledge and information they can obtain, and diversity of strategies to acquire such knowledge and information.

    6. Thinking skills

It is argued that students' thinking skills, particularly critical thinking skills, facilitate their second language learning (Jantrasakul, 2012; Kabilan, 2000; Lin &

Mackay, 2004). Jacob and Farrell (2001) argue that second language pedagogies should be geared to students' development of higher-order thinking skills which include the upper-three cognitive levels (i.e., analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) according to Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill, and Krathwohl's (1956) taxonomy of the cognitive domain.

Melaville et al (2006) argue that CBL cultivates students' critical thinking skills through a process-based approach. They maintain that in CBL activities, students glean data in communities, distill it, and present it to their classmates. This process may require students' abilities in analysing, synthesising and evaluating, all of which are in accordance with the upper-three cognitive level of Bloom et al's taxonomy, and hence their higher-order thinking. CBL as enhancing students' thinking skills is also implied in Fischer et al's (2007) notion. They argue that CBL encourages students to make proper and informed decisions. Such decision-making needs critical thinking (Brookfield, 2012).

7. Alternative assessment

Assessments able to measure second language students' learning process, particularly in terms of their thinking, are more emphasised in the field of SLA (Jacob & Farrell, 2001). This form of assessments has received more attention from the current literature of SLA since it is claimed to increase a positive washback from the cultivation of the process-based approach and students' thinking skills. Several SLA scholars talk about such assessments. For example, Lam (2014) mention portfolio assessment, and Edwards and Liu (2018) discuss the use of peer assessment.

In CBL, Melaville et al (2006) suggest ongoing assessments that measure students' process of learning. They argue that it should include students' self-evaluation, peer feedback, and teachers' feedback. Owens and Wang (1996) put special emphasis on students' self-reflection on the following dimensions: the process of learning, learning strategies employed, challenges faced, strategies for tackling the challenges, and what they have learned from these.

8. Teachers as co-learners

The promotion of the concept of teachers as co-learners appears in parallel with that of their students' thinking skills. That is to say, in the current educational trend, teachers are no more perceived as those knowing best with

exact right answers. Rather, when activated, students' thinking can contribute to knowledge generated to their peers as well as to their teachers. The role of teachers then becomes a facilitator, empowering students to learn, scaffolding assistance when needed, and learning along with them. This role may be derived from the tenet of the zone of proximal development, a key concept in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Swain et al, 2015). Examples of SLA scholars who endorse such a role are Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) and Littlewood (2014).

The concept of teachers as co-learners can also be found in CBL. Melaville et al (2006) argue that learners in the CBL process include both students and teachers. Melaville et al suggest that while going through the process with students, teachers should reflect not only on what their students have learned but also on what they themselves have learned as a learner. Their suggestion implies that in CBL, teachers and students can be developed alongside. Teachers' experiential knowledge can shape their pedagogical practices (Borg, 2003) and contribute to their professional development (Mann, 2005).

Integrating CBL into Thai EFL instruction

Many scholars have adhered to the incorporation of students' national and local knowledge into Thailand's education. For example, Kaewdang (2001) attributes problems in Thailand to the adoption of Western knowledge in several sectors, including an educational sector. For Kaewdang, it is the Thai indigenous knowledge and culture or Thainess that can solve the problems. Kaewdang's assertion suggests that such knowledge should be made part of Thailand's education. Sinlarat (2005) echoes Kaewdang's notion, arguing that learning by using Western-based standards and materials overlook Thai students' lived world, especially their local realities.

The incorporation of Thai indigeneity into Thailand's education can be traced back to the reign of King Rama V when Western modernisation was adopted. With his criticality, His Majesty insisted that the modernisation adopted in any aspects should not destroy Thai identity (Fry, 2002). Until today, Thailand's education has still followed this trajectory, as shown in the promotion of "pride in Thai identity" in the recently reformed 1999 National Education Act (Office of the National Education Commission, 2002). According to this act, Thai students

are expected to be capable of adjusting themselves to the world's trends while maintaining their Thainess.

Apart from Thai national knowledge and wisdom, the 1999 National Education Act has also promoted Thai local assets, as shown in Section 7, 9 and 23. Using communities as a learning source is clearly stated in Section 29:

> "Educational institutions in co-operation with individuals, families, community organizations, local administration organizations, private persons, private organizations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises and other social institutions shall contribute to strengthening the communities by encouraging learning in the communities. Thus the communities will be capable of providing education and training; searching for knowledge, data and information; and able to benefit from local wisdom and other sources of learning for community development in keeping with their requirements and needs; and identification of ways of promoting exchanges of development experience along communities"

In Section 29, "strengthening the communities by encouraging learning in the communities" has two implications. First, Thailand's education attempts to develop both Thai students and their communities. Second, since the students' communities are used as the basis of the development, such a development can be expected to be sustainable.

Moreover, as evidenced in the literature, Thai EFL instruction encourages the eight changes in the paradigm shift in SLA mentioned by Jacob and Farrell (2001). Here, it should be noted that the changes are shared not only in CBL, as already mentioned in the previous section, but also in the 1999 National Education Act. For example, regarding learner autonomy, this act stipulates in Section 7 that Thailand's education should inculcate in Thai students "self-reliance" and reinforce their "capability of self-learning on a continuous basis". Section 24 sees the importance of Thai students' diversity, stating that activities crafted for Thai students should be "in line with the learners' interests and aptitudes, bearing in mind individual differences". The cultivation of Thai students' thinking, particularly critical thinking, is referred to in Section 7, 24 and 28. Section 24 also indicates the role of teachers as co-learners: "both learners

and teachers may learn together from different types of teaching-learning media and other sources of knowledge".

In addition to some of the eight changes proposed by Jacob and Farrell (2001), the 1999 National Education Act and CBL also share some learning goals. For example, Owens and Wang (1996) contend that CBL helps increase students' citizenship. Developing the sense of citizenship is similarly referred to in Section 27. Melaville et al (2006) view CBL as providing students with authentic learning experience and opportunities to face and tackle unpredictable real-life problems. Such experience and opportunities are also flagged up in Section 24.

A number of studies on the integration of CBL in Thai EFL settings have been found. For example, Rattanaphumma (2006) conducted a study with undergraduate English major students to examine the extent to which CBL enriched the students' English language skills as well as their local knowledge. She found that CBL increased the following three aspects: the students' motivation for learning English, their experiential learning, and collaboration with their communities. Kanoksilapatham and Channuan (2018) explored elementary Thai EFL students and their teachers' attitudes toward the integration of CBL in their English classes. Their findings demonstrated that by using CBL, the students and their teachers possessed highly positive attitudes towards such integration. Inphoo and Nomnian (2019) examined the degree to which an English drama concerning the Northeastern Thai folklore lessened the tenth and eleventh grades students' English speaking anxiety. They found their self-confidence about speaking English was enhanced and their anxiety reduced.

The discussion in this section indicates that CBL and Thai EFL instruction is mutually compatible. The following section concerns some pedagogic implications.

Pedagogic implications

In the literature, there appears to be a paucity of conceptual papers discussing the integration of CBL into Thai EFL instruction and offering feasible ways for pedagogic practices. To shed light on this issue, the current section suggests some pedagogic implications for CBL.

As already mentioned elsewhere in this paper, CBL seems to welcome teachers' creativity in arranging CBL activities. It is worth noting that students use Thai to collect data in their fieldwork and then translate it into English. In other words, in such activities, both Thai and English are used: the former is for interacting with local people while the latter is for generating students' own work products. Given this, rich data is expected to be obtained without language barriers.

Nevertheless, the nature of each English course may be more conducive to a particular activity. The followings are examples of group-work CBL activities. The first activity is 'Composing an English short story' which may be useful for English literature courses. This activity begins with teachers and students discussing components of English short stories and some examples. It is followed up by the students interviewing local people about local stories, beliefs, wisdoms and traditions and using the data to compose an English short story. The second activity, 'Translating histories of sites', can be particularly useful for English translation courses. In this activity, students visit some remarkable sites in their communities. These can be, for instance, temples, mosques, and community enterprise centres. They then glean the data on the histories of the sites by interviewing local people there and accordingly translating the data into English. The third activity is 'Writing step-by-step recipes'. Students interview local people in the communities, asking about their local recipes and how to cook them. The data will be translated into English and placed in a brochure format. The last example of CBL activities is 'Developing tourist attractions'. Students doing this activity visit their nearby tourist attractions and interview local people on the information relevant to the attractions. Afterwards, they brainstorm their ideas on any improvement they deem necessary and suitable for the sites.

Regarding the suggested activities, these can be systematically arranged and processed. Prior to undertaking fieldwork in their communities, students need to brainstorm and plan ahead on what they will do in their fieldwork, such as arranging dates and times, assigning responsibilities to group members, preparing interview questions, and identifying who they will interview. They are also asked to reflect on the process of their learning. Such reflection can include, for example, any challenges they encounter, strategies they use to learn and to

solve the challenges, and how their work changes them as a learner and as a person. Students' self-reflection is considered to be a mainstay of CBL as it helps the students be aware of their learning process. After they complete their community-based projects, their work as well as their reflections will be presented in class with classroom audience members, including their teachers, sharing opinions. Their presentations should open for their creativity. These can therefore be, for example, in the form of role-playing in various situations.

Arguably, as 21st century students, their ICT (Information and Communication Technology) skills should also be cultivated. Here, students are encouraged to apply these skills throughout CBL activities. The ICT skills involve such abilities as using word processors, databases, PowerPoint, and search engines. Since students take active parts in the CBL activities, students' autonomous learning is expected. For example, they may need to use the Internet to search for the information on the communities under investigation, how to conduct a good interview, practical data collection procedures, some English vocabulary items and grammatical points when producing their English work, and effective presentation techniques.

In addition, it is important that teachers invite local people in communities to participante in CBL activities: sharing their knowledge and ideas with students in class. For example, teachers arranging the activity 'Composing a short story' may contact local sages to talk to students about local histories, wisdoms or beliefs. Moreover, teachers need to "visit the location beforehand to identify potential safety issues, establish a relationship with personnel, and clarify the purpose of the field trip" (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2013, p. 14). In case that each group of students explores different places in their communities on their own, to ensure their security, teachers need to inform local leaders in the communities about the time and the places their students arrange for their fieldwork. For students, it is advisable to arrange an appointment with the leaders and visit them first before doing their fieldwork. During their fieldwork, students themselves should be in groups, avoiding being out of sight.

As can be seen, teachers play a vital role in CBL. In class, teachers need to firstly introduce CBL as a learning method to their students, explain its characteristics, and point out benefits the students can gain. Students may need

some evidence that they are learning something. Also, teachers should provide and discuss some knowledge inputs, essential strategies, and appropriate and respectful behaviour for students so that they can apply these in their fieldwork. When teachers assess their students' community-based work, both learning product and process should be taken into account. Students should be informed in advance about assessment criteria and presentation rubrics used for their work and performances. Throughout the learning process, students have their teachers as their facilitators, giving them advice, encouraging them to push their boundaries, and providing constructive, supportive and thoughtful feedback. The fact that students can approach their teachers when faced with unclear information or problems implies that CBL can lessen the distance between the teachers and the students and potentially create a good rapport between them.

Challenges

This section addresses potential challenges when integrating CBL into Thai EFL instruction. The first challenge pertains to teachers' cognitions on CBL: what they understand and think about this type of learning. As Borg (2003) states, teachers' cognitions can shape their teaching practices. It is therefore crucial to ensure that teachers themselves understand the concept of CBL, its benefits, and its pedagogies. This suggests that teachers' training on CBL for pre-service and in-service teachers is warranted.

The second challenge is concerned with teachers' willingness to arrange CBL for their students. Comparing to traditional teaching, CBL increases teachers' workload for they not only teach their students but also invest extra time and energy to craft CBL activities, interact with communities, and provide the students with support and advice on their community-based work. Thus, there can be a tendency for some teachers to opt for traditional teaching, as opposed to CBL.

The third challenge can be teachers' conceptions of teaching. CBL, which focuses on student-centredness, can be particularly challenging in Thailand where teaching and learning has long been teacher-centred with an orthodox belief that teachers know best and are the main learning sources for their students. With such conception, some Thai teachers may hesitate or even feel embarrassed when allowing their students to go through the learning process by

themselves. Some of them may even have intolerance to students' mistakes since in traditional teaching, mistakes are considered to jeopardise learning and thus signify failure.

The fourth challenge is related to students' perception of learning. Thai students in general believe that their teachers know best and then are likely to perceive knowledge generated by others, such as their classmates and community members, as being unreliable. It is therefore challenging to enable students to acknowledge their peers' ideas and those of local experts. This can be more challenging when the experts do not receive any formal education, and their knowledge and wisdom are derived from their expertise and experience. It is thus necessary for teachers to instill in their students respect for others' knowledge and wisdoms. Students should be made aware that knowledge and wisdoms are not restricted only to their classroom. They can learn anywhere and from anyone.

The last challenge is concerning parents' perceptions on what their children will gain from learning outside the classroom. They may not see academic values of studying local issues, something seemingly mundane to them. It is then necessary for educational institutions to provide relevant information on CBL to them.

Conclusion

Based on the literature, although the paradigm shift in SLA has been largely approved, its principles have partly been translated into practice. Some authorities attribute this to lack of attention given to students' local knowledge. ESL and EFL scholars therefore seek methods to infuse such knowledge in ESL/EFL classrooms. In Thailand where English is used as a foreign language, attempts have also been made to incorporate Thai students' national and local knowledge into their EFL classrooms. This paper argues that integrating CBL into Thai EFL instruction can foster Thai students' English language and their local knowledge. CBL appears to enhance learner autonomy, cooperative learning, curricular integration, focus on meaning, diversity, thinking skills, alternative assessment, and teachers as co-learners, all of which are in accordance with the eight changes promoted in the paradigm shift in SLA and thus EFL. CBL itself is in

line with the concept of Thainess, one that has long been encouraged in Thailand's education. These indicate the feasibility of such integration.

EFL-CBL classroom activities suggested in this paper appears to be general and therefore able to be applied in other disciplines. As Mooney and Edwards (2001) argue, CBL can be any pedagogical tool that uses students' communities as their learning sources. Therefore, the implication is that EFL-CBL classroom activities can be any tasks that develop students' English through engaging them in their own communities. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there can be some challenges arising en route. Such challenges involve teachers, students, and parents. This would mean that good preparation for CBL for those concerned is needed.

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